

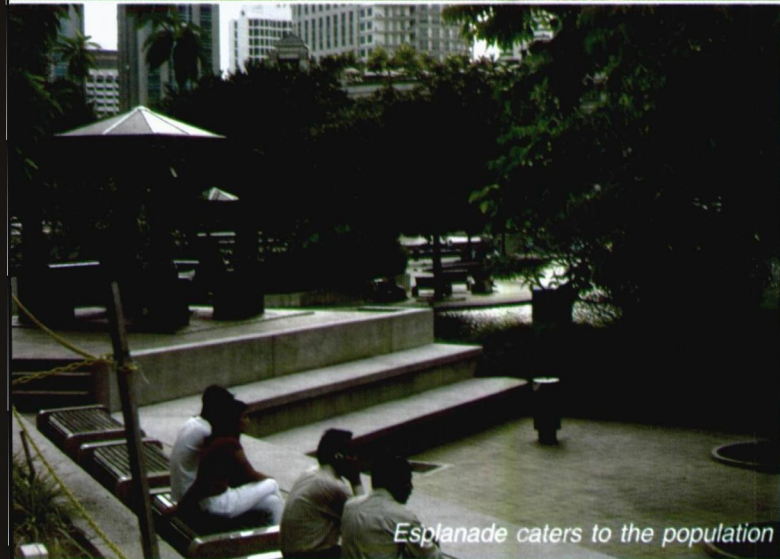
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I n t e r s t i c e s



Archt. Ragupathy Sambasivam

"My success story or my pride is that almost everything that I am going to show now is designed by Malaysian architects, and built by Malaysians with Malaysian materials"



Esplanade caters to the population in the rest hours in the evening



Student working in the summer house



pedestrian walkways and parks with water bodies

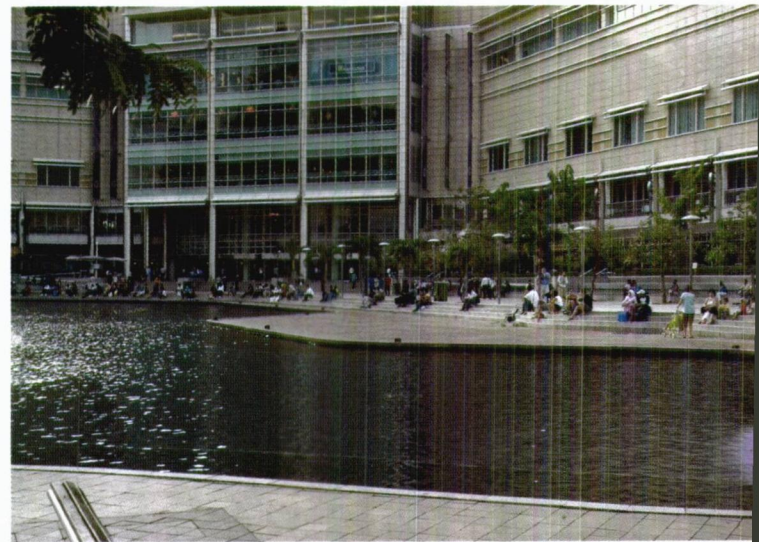
An 'Interstice' is basically something that grows between two built forms. It is defined in the dictionary as a gap or chink between two rocks or solid forms. If you go out into your garden or along the road, the plant or the line forms the growth in between rocks - these are interstices. So, it is the line forms that are in plenty that can make the spaces happen if you really look at it - if you really gave it some thought.

At the beginning way back in the early 80's and mid 80's when the city started bursting its limits. Kuala Lumpur became a dead city, because after five everyone went home and the city was really dead. The Government then realized it had to give some life to the city, so people would walk around in the evening hours. Thus, the previous government decided to turn Kuala Lumpur into a city of lights.

As we are now looking at the city of Kuala Lumpur to see how the fluid spaces in between the solid forms have been dealt with to transform the once dead city into a lively one.

It is necessary to state that Malaysia is climatically very similar to Sri Lanka. People who visit Malaysia are surprised how we have treated outdoor spaces – so much so that there has been a sudden change of culture in the sense that Malaysians have found sitting outdoors more attractive than within air conditioned spaces. This I feel is a good trend. I have always been a strong believer that in tropical countries we should try to minimize the use of air conditioning. But this of course cannot happen to structures more than 10 storeys high for practical reasons.

The PETRONAS Twin Towers is a landmark that is very familiar. In the foreground of this massive development is Suria KLCC, which is Kuala Lumpur's premier shopping complex and an esplanade which caters to the population in the rest hours in the evening which joins up with the park.



When the setting sun is on the other side of the tower, the Esplanade becomes shaded although a certain amount of sunlight comes down into the park areas. In spite of the heat and humidity people use the tranquility of such places to relax to work— as can be seen in the photo- a girl in the summer house actually working- she has a sheet spread out, she had a laptop and she was actually working within the space.

The esplanade is a place where people just sit around the water body even during the working day which shows how if an environment is designed and built for its purpose it will be used irrespective of the time and day.

A point to note is that Malaysia is climatically very similar to Sri Lanka and yet with outdoor spaces planned and provided with the correct infrastructure had proven to be successfully adopted.

A part of KLCC park is just across the shopping mall, and has constructed pergolas, which we call *wakafs*. The KLCC Park designed by the late Robert Burle Marx park contains 66 species of trees and palms -all local or indigenous to Malaysia. There are 1094 trees and palms planted here.

Water fountains provide wondrous calming effects to a day packed with appointments, and as one can see people simply relaxing and soaking up the beauty of nature along the steps of this lagoon. The symphonic fountain has a 304 animations changing at 20-second intervals. the one you see comprises scallops.

Water features are used to enhance the surroundings. A fountain detail has been designed as a weir. This is just a cascade of water that just spills over with a seat in front of it. People just sit around the weir fountains.

- 1-2 - animated fountains
- 3 - a weir fountain
- 4 - soaking up the beauty of nature



KLCC has many pedestrian walkways and a number of outdoor seating and dining facilities. As mentioned earlier Malaysia is a humid country like Sri Lanka and sitting out can be an uncomfortable experience. But with the introduction of the 'mist fans' people are comfortable even in the hottest part of the afternoon.



Pedestrian walkways

Pedestrian walkways were a requirement under our by-laws, and then an avenue for trees to grow and the road. There was insufficient creativity to thinking on how we could plan this until lately - over the last two to three years. We have realized this by working around the pedestrian walkway and the service road. We took off the service road and we blanket them together with the pedestrian walkway - we got a very large pedestrian walkway, now





Tele-banking is a familiar sight.

we really did not need all that walk way. We needed to give it a bit of life to give it interest and by providing top cafeterias, bars, bank facilities we could make people use the facilities.

Tele-banking is a familiar sight. A popular Bank provides a banking facilities where everything is automated. The doors are open and it is all monitored by camera for security reasons.

As stated at the beginning, way back in the early 80's and mid 80's when the city started bursting its limits. Kuala Lumpur became a dead city, after five everyone went home and the city was really dead. The Government then realized it had to give some life to the city so people would be able to walk around in the evening hours. Thus, the previous government decided to turn Kuala Lumpur into a city of lights .

Today we have tremendous amount of lighting pedestrian lighting. You will notice some of the details of pedestrian lighting

The avenue between the shopping complex and Mandrin Oriental Hotel in KLCC is mainly a fire brigade access. There are 9 such avenues which allow the fire brigade to drive into the development. Other vehicles are not allowed to drive through this way. There are lots of trees on either side of the tree avenue.



1. tree planted walk ways
2. pedestrian crossing
3. protected trees by the road
4. place to rest - to take a break
- 5-6. the monorail above and the road in two levels
7. taxi stand





Details of ramps, walkway and tree lined avenues

Tourists both foreign and Malaysian are an every day setting Tourism Malaysia has allowed for the local industry, the local art industry to set up little stalls which at one point of time were not allowed. They required proper license. But of course even here they do have a license, but these stalls are movable. So you just wheel them away when you do not require them or they become a nuisance. Kuala Lumpur has an area identified as the 'golden triangle' The road through the golden triangle is a major street known as Jalan Sultan Ismail. Several major hotels are located here. The Shangri – la, the Concorde, the Equatorial, the Mutiara and Istana are along this road.

The main road of Bukit Bintang, is a major shopping complex area. Further down the road is Plaza Rakyat or People's Place. The entrance to the plaza is basically a lane between two buildings. It was actually a vehicular lane. The authorities closed it and converted it into a mall and here we have a roof structure that covers it right across and it takes a bend around. It serves the purpose and at the ground level we have lots of stalls and eateries. The old architecture too has been retained in shop houses that used to be the front of the roads. They old façade was maintained and the new structure is built behind it.

The entrance to the famous Bukit Bintang and Metrojaya is another shopping complex in Kuala Lumpur. The green here gives that environmental friendly feeling to the public, and we have the railway track which cuts right across the road. Can you imagine it without the track- how did the city look like previously? Now here again we need to focus on what we should do and should not do. Whether we could have done away with the mono rail track. Could we have taken it at ground level? That could have been some possibility with a lot of hardship as well because the city of Kuala Lumpur is quite old- not as old as Colombo but there are lots of services running across underneath the road which may have been most costly to re-route



Tree lined pedestrian walkways



monorail link - advertisements - and moveable stalls





preserving the old facade and building the new structure behind it .



column detail

For a very long time we did not have a monorail link. Now we have one and it sort of breaks the beauty of this road. An interesting venture into dressing up the columns holding up the monorail track has provided vantage area for advertisement that shed some colour and excitement to other monolithic columns. It is an avenue to receive returns from advertisements.

Entrance details are taken special care of. Treatment of steps as one walks up into shops. Grown trees are protected by allowing seating around it, with the required amount of breathing space for the roots. Pedestrian walkways are located around the area and carefully maintained.

Wayside kiosks for dining , coffee, information, etc create and attractive environment.





giant pots with orchids

Now with the introduction of these pedestrian walkways some of the shops have also taken that interesting elevation. - That is you do not go into the shop at ground level. You either go down to the concourse level or you go up to a mezzanine level and then the ground level of the shop is set back and give a sort of a tree level entrance.

Tree lined avenues and flower boxes are built such the people can sit wherever they want to very informally and as it reaches the intersection of the Bukit Bintang road the train goes into it. Now again I would like stress or rather emphasize that the architecture of all the stations and every thing that has been presented so far is all Malaysian.

A pedestrian walkway is lined with huge jars with potted orchids to ensure people don't nip the flowers these potted jars are raised very high. As can be seen in the picture with a person walking by it. Orchids are very expensive plants but it grows quite easily in Malaysia

Some other forms of landscaping facilities are the flower boxes. The flower boxes have plants which are full blown floral plants which are arranged in these bowls at flowering stage and within a week they are replaced.





outdoor spaces in the city of Kuala Lumpur





outdoor dining

a very long bus stand outside the JW Marriott which merges with the rest of the shopping complex



In strategic locations a map of the location for tourists and basic amenity such as dust bins are provided. We pay special attention to curbs considering the handicapped. The curbs are brought down to almost road level so a person on a wheel chair will be able to wheel himself or herself over and then on to the pedestrian area and then across the road where there is a zebra crossing.

Some times it is necessary to identify the location. There is a special meeting point and inter-section of the Sultan Ismail Road and P. Ramli Road - the pavement area is designed such it has a smiling face. Now it is easy to identify and for some one to say 'meet me at smiley'

Bus stands and taxi stands are the responsibility of the building behind them. We have a park and recreation department in the city hall and part of their planning submission is to provide for taxi stands and bus stands. By coincidence if the bus stand lands in front of a building, the building owner has to take charge of the design of it and the architect has the freedom to design it. As such no two bus stands or taxi stands look alike.

A detail of a very long bus stand outside the JW Marriott Which merges with the rest of the shopping complex along Bukit Bintang Road. It has a canopy structure to create the main porch and to protect the 5 foot ways of the pedestrian walkway with their required shelter.



a pavement with a smiling face

The circular shaped tensile structures with LCD screens do not have walls or doors It has circular shaped baluster around it which defines the circular space within.

So it is the spaces that we are looking at - the out door spaces where many activities can happen if you really gave it some thought.

I hope I have covered from the infrastructure point of view, what the architecture and all of you can do to contribute towards the infrastructure of the streets of Colombo taking into account that the climate of Malaysia and Colombo are very similar .▲

Tensile structure

