

Archt.Vijitha Basnayake creates a tranquil interior for a



## colourful display at the saree boutique Rithi

The architect can contribute to creating an environment, which offers far more satisfaction for the user in such a way that it can be appropriated and annexed by all, as a place where the people would enjoy to be. Particularly in the urban settings each space should be linked up with the other based on this concept. The environment of a space can be generated from articulation of forms and structures, segmentation of the spaces and order that is created with them, along with the materials used, colour and lighting conditions. Also, the thoughtfulness given to the interior arrangement of things can heighten the awareness of the inhabitants of the spaces. As a result, the spaces could be perceived as distinctive places of the environment that start an unhesitant dialogue with the people. The relationships people make with these special places are imprinted forever in their minds.

Among the many kinds of built spaces that we move in and out of every day and spend most of our time in, the shop spaces may come second only to the



houses and the office spaces.. Undeniably the space design of shops can be considered a sensitive issue which could be very rewarding if approached carefully and selectively. The activity of shopping has become more than just fulfilling a requirement, today. It is observed that people tend to make personalized relationships with the places they buy special things from, particularly gifts, jewellery, perfumes and clothing. Therefore, a need for designed spaces for shopping has become a necessity. The task of designing a shop interior could be changed primarily according to the type of things and items that are sold. Creating the right atmosphere in a shop interior can be a challenge for the architect and an added bonus for the businessman.





**The saree boutique "Rithihi",** at Alfred House Gardens is a special place designed by Archt. Vijitha Basnayke. Particularly it can be identified that the need for a special space has been satisfied with the independent form of the building which is powerfully felt as a free standing structure, contributing to the built fabric of the streetscape of the Alfred House Gardens. Quite different to flimsily partitioned shop spaces that we come across everyday, it takes a hold and creates much impact as a special boutique in the built fabric.

Saree boutiques can be considered very special places of shopping. Designing a saree boutique can be identified as a pleasurable task considering many unforeseen generators that perhaps can only be identified by the sensitive eye of the space designer.



It can be identified that the patterns of space design have been drawn from the many generators of design. It gives rather calm and quiet atmosphere having a simple entrance door in

The saree boutique can be a very special place because sarees are very special items of clothing. Each one of the sarees that is bought should be carefully chosen for the purpose that carries its own identity. Therefore buying sarees is more than just a business transaction for it is also a pleasureable and fulfilling experience for the customer.

narrow glass sashes. The building is set back a few feet, having provided space for two large 'araliya trees' grown in front.



The araliya trees act as an awning to keep away the bright sunlight at the entrance. It creates a shady and cool atmosphere at the entrance to the building.

The colourful patterns of the sarees in different hues can be observed from outside, through the narrow slits of glass panes, which are fitted frameless on the wall. There is a visible connection of continuity of the materials used such as glass, wood, steel and masonry. These visible connections of different elements give a rich architectural vocabulary to the expressive language of architecture. The double height volume gives a sense of openness and vastness in which the space could be experienced fully.

The well articulated interior arrangement accommodates the displaying of sarees in hung and folded methods. One of the most important factors that gives emphasis to interior seems to be the well-designed lighting conditions. The natural light that comes from the glass panes have been carefully blended with the interior lighting to provide the best conditions possible to enhance the spatial quality of the atmosphere. It gives a mystic quality to the place in some areas and is certainly not a mismatch with the sarees displayed. ▲

Text by Archt. Hiranthi Pathirana

