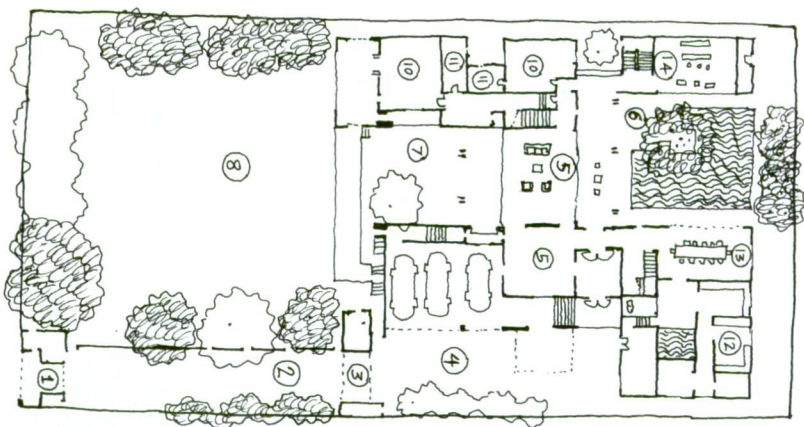
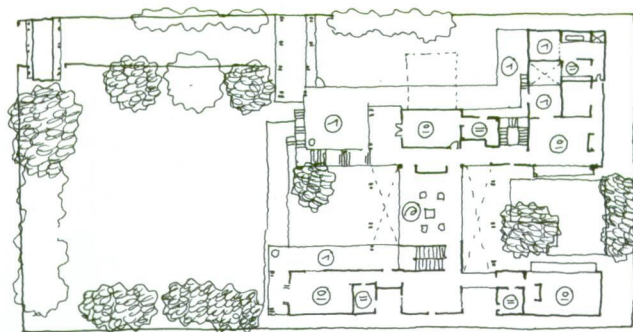


AN URBAN HOUSE AT ELIBANK ROAD

Archt. Thisara Thanapathy







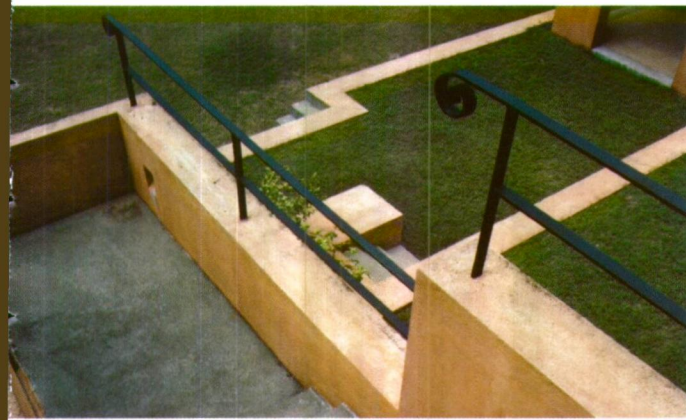
The refined elegance of the residential areas of Colombo is rapidly diminishing as complicated large buildings with minimal open areas are constructed on the gardens of one time picturesque grand old residences. No. 07, Eli- bank Road, offers a delightful change as shown in these pages.

Amidst the shades of the giant old trees of the Elibank Road lies this 75 perch land. The house is owned by a Colombo businessman and his family. The challenge before the architect in taking on this assignment was to create an environment where business colleagues of the client, their family and friends could be entertained while retaining the homely atmosphere for

his family which included three young children. The views to and from the house, across the turfed terraces, living room, and the pool serve to enhance these aspects.

A major feature in the design is the positioning of the house. It is positioned at the far end of the site with only minimum rear space. This provides a distance to dramatise the approach to the house. The remainder of the land is a secluded garden space, located in the front of the house only to be discovered at the climax. The building spreads its full width, so that a possibility is created for the garden to flow from the middle of the house to the rear.

The approach is from the 2 storey-entrance pavilion facing Elibank Road. On entry from the road side, one is directed along a paved path. The side-walls of the path gives no clue to what lies within other than glimpses of the garden through the small high openings. The path ends at another entrance gate. The shrine room that is located above this acts as a gesture of blessing all those who enter the house through the portal into the entrance court located beyond this. It is from here that you enter the lobby of the house. From the lobby a courtyard at the far end is brought into focus. The lobby leads you into the double height veranda within the "climax" of the house.





All common spaces are connected to this space affording tantalizing views of connecting areas within and interacting in a conducive disciplined manner. The pool within the dining area and the bar merges with the front garden via the living room. Turfed terraces flow down from the living room. The terraces of the upper floor bed-rooms also converge at the ground level. The family room above the living room, bridges the front and the rear common areas. In front, the main garden, the terraces of the upper floor bed-rooms, and in the rear, the swimming pool, bar, dining, and the upper floor rear bed room balconies. The gym is hidden away under ground floor with access to the front garden at ground level. Private spaces lead away from the centre to their respective areas.

This house celebrates SPACE. FORM is used only in the manner of strengthening the celebration of space. Solid and void are balanced in composition. Detailing does not distract the place. Double height -double timber columns maintain the lightweight quality of the space and connect it vertically. Handrails and all the other accessories are simple designs.

It is through the emphasis of space that the architecture of the building comes into being, creating a congenial atmosphere that the inhabitants can enjoy and relax in ●

Text by R.S.D. Wickramanayake





