

Design Forum architects - Lilantha Wijayapala and Rajiv Senanyake create a resort in an urban context

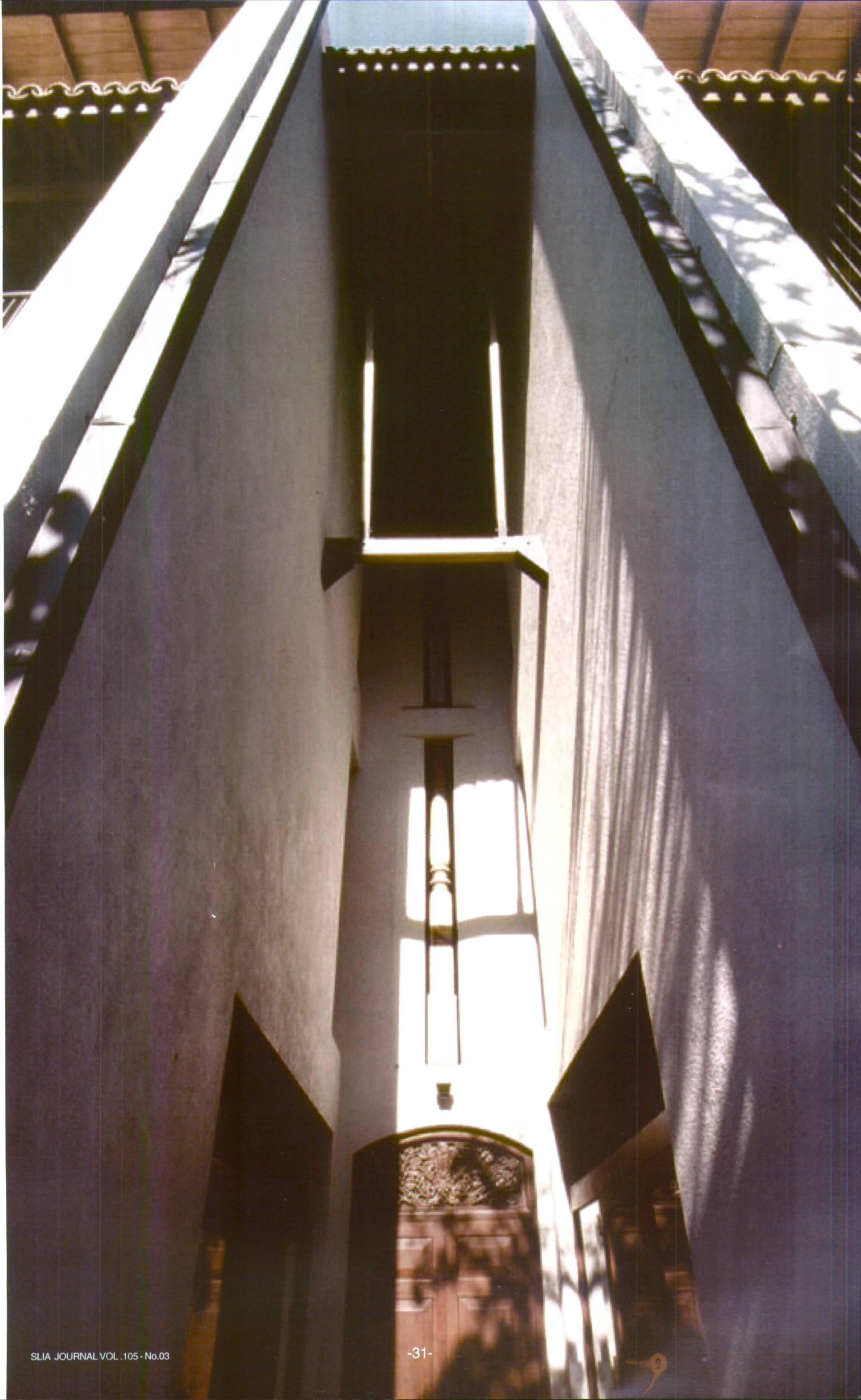
The Gomes Residence was designed for a leading and entrepreneur, whose devout love for the arts is expressed through his collection of artifacts from a variety of cultures. His brief called for the house to be a studio for a collection of art while being an abode for the intricate living of three generations of the family.

The land is located in a triangular area in the hectic capital of Sri Lanka. The considerable extent of land is enhanced by its natural vegetation. The house embraces a total covered floor area of 670 square meters laid on a mere 240 square meter ground cover

along the eastern boundary. This has ensured the preservation of the lush vegetation on the west. The Entrance simulates the compact, introverted urbanity enhanced by the ascending solid façade and the sharp extensions of interior elements to the outside.

The entrance is thus moulded to form a solid white sculpture representing the sky line in the changing neighborhood. Yet the garden is framed through secured slits in the façade in order to greet guest with a thin view of the interior. The pond at the entrance is designed to house the Gods according to the teachings of *Vastu* also enhance the sense of tranquility.







The main stairway ascends and fades away at an angle and continues the entry to the private areas of the house. The entrance foyer provides a point of transition with its imprecise boundaries. The theme is enhanced by a water feature bubbling and overflowing, yet being still and reflecting the inside to the outside.

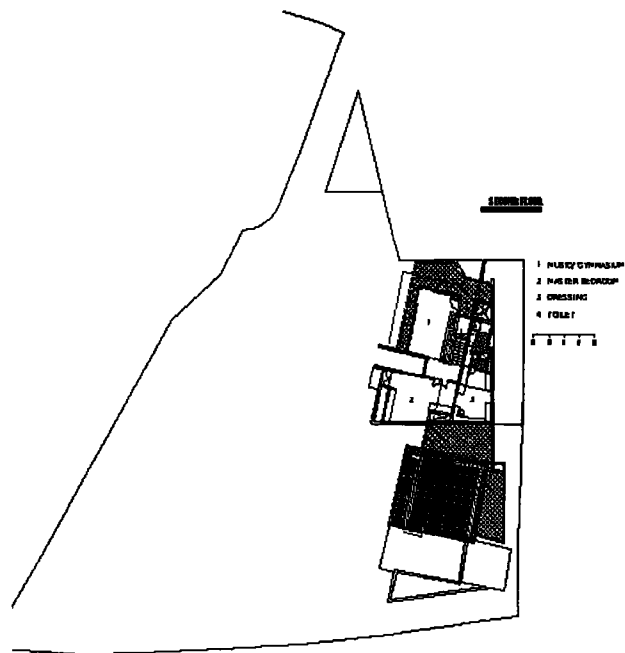
The lounge signifies hospitable living, home to visitors and friends alike. While the main lounge is the focal point, a private yet open area is designed on a lower level to house varying functions. The volume of the main lounge is increased by creating a void to the upper floors with a simple and sleek deck running around the area at the upper level. The simply detailed timber deck provides a platform for artifacts while assuring access to the terrace on the first level. The void connects the lounge to the private zones of the house visually while ensuring privacy to an accepted extent. The lounge opens out to the garden through a verandah totally on one side and continues invariably with the rest of the house.

The main stair way is designed as a feature in the lounge. A subtle change of width at the top of the stairway attempts to create a sculptural illusion while continuing the upper rise in steel embedding a touch of complex modernity.

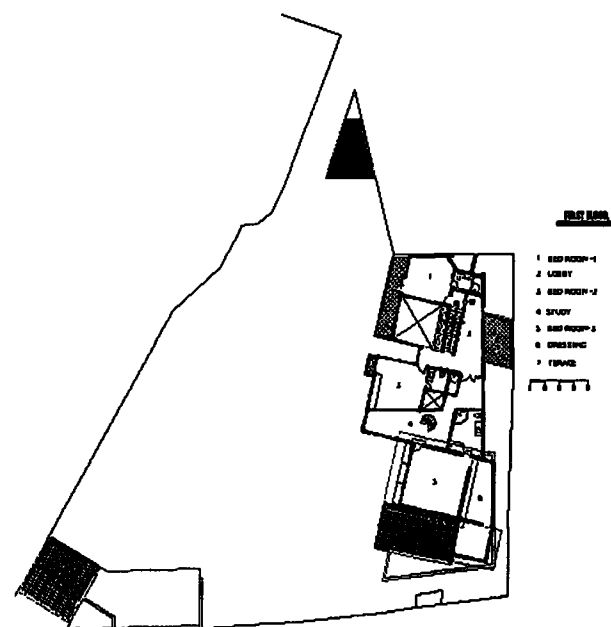
The dining area is linked to the lounge through a multifunctional courtyard, providing optional access while creating a space in-between. The function is located in the centre, focusing on the pool, creating a visual continuation. The converging levels of the dining and the pool deck enhances the extension of the house to the exterior.

The hub of the house is the pantry. Its location, the size and the accessibility to the private areas of the house make it an ideal place for family gatherings. The pantry is large enough for all three generations of the family to engage in common activities. The bed rooms of senior members of the family are located in closer proximity to ensure their active participation in the modern family realm.



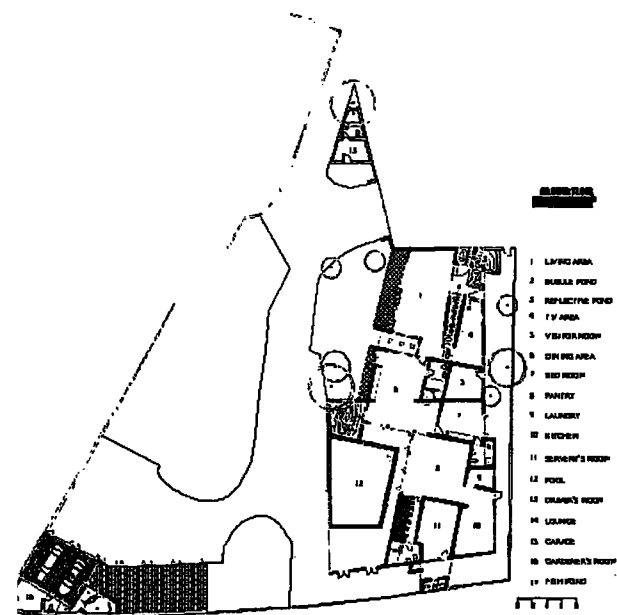


The bed rooms are functionally designed to suit modern compact living but are also airy to ensure adequate cross ventilation . The Living is made luxurious on the third level with a cinema room and a library. The balconies extend the house to the garden while voids within connect the inside through the levels with indirect views and a cascading skylight. Each space of the house within is linked in one or many ways through intermediate spaces avoiding corridors. The master bed room is located reasonably away, for privacy and a view of the garden from the first floor.



The swimming pool can be highlighted as a focal point. Visually connected to every corner of the house the pool is placed as the core to the whole complex. This large reflecting feature magnifies the house adding extra value. The pool deck, worked out of recycled railway sleepers provides for a variety of functions. The overflowing water is detailed to disappear under the deck creating an indefinite threshold.

The bar-house provides an ideal entertainment retreat and an edge to the extending house. The area being away from the main house gives the family privacy. The bar-house is directly linked to the garden to house a large gathering.



The smooth white finishes on the walls provide a contrasting back drop for all works of art, enhancing its studio atmosphere. The internal floors are either lined with timber or glazed cemented. Elements from the past are used at random to combin tradition with the modern. Bright colors are used selectively and occasionally to enhance a refined clarity. The general lighting in the house is contemplated on the eyelevel apart from the Main Lounge where the focus is exclusively on the artifacts. All materials are used in a molded and refined form mostly as contrasting combinations; Timber is mostly used to achieve solidity while steel is used to overlap with tension.

The overall theme is to create a resort in an urban context. The residence is multifunctional to suite the aspects of multidisciplinary urban living. It is an image, a studio, a retreat and an abode for the family.

The Gomes Residence, is poetry. It's gently cascading garden...its touch of old-world charm and its streak of modernity orbits its central theme, as perhaps the lines from a Shakespearean ode would wrap itself around its main inspiration ●



