



## LUCID LIVING

BY Architect Gihan Muthugala and  
Architect Nilooshi Eleperuma

**B**uilding on a 22-perch site situated in a residential enclave in Katubedda – surrounded on three sides by a cluster of two and three-storey houses – the requirement was to accommodate the client's generous and spacious brief while allowing for plenty of garden space. The site had an excellent canopy of trees, which included large fruit trees like mango, avocado and jak. So retaining and integrating them within the built space was a key aspect of the design.

The design aesthetic of a T-shaped plan was developed, and included two gardens at the front and rear thereby preserving and enveloping the existing trees. The transparent living pavilion, which connects the gardens, bisects the house wing that consists of more private spaces such as bedrooms, bathrooms, dressing areas, a kitchen and utility areas. The wings of the T-form are split into heights



of two and three floors, to break the monotony in geometry of form.

The design was principally conceived with clarity of lines, which is manifested in the overall plan and transmitted to its elevations, with an intense focus on details that convey consistency in expression. An open uncluttered entry is crafted by the cantilevered structural mass of the first and second floors of the wing that houses the more private areas.

Enhanced by a reflecting lily pond, the front garden is framed by the cantilevered mass. The split-level landscape is formed using the existing trees in the front garden, which offers an increased sense of privacy from the paved access road.

The living, dining and family spaces open out to each other on the ground and first floors, forming a simple double-height pavilion, with clean lines that lead to the front and rear gardens through permeable façades. A simple





but tactile palette of materials with less visual mass in steel, timber and glass have been used predominantly to connect the indoor spaces with the outdoors and allow the light in. Doors and windows are crafted with slender sections of local teak to avoid disturbing the view across the living area pavilion, and enable the depth of the site to be viewed from a single perspective.

Framing the large avocado tree, contained by the T-shaped plan, the rear garden offers privacy for the swimming pool and deck, and provides a relaxed ambiance. The tree penetrates the deck, reaching the roof level of the structure, which allows the occupants of the bedrooms that open to the rear garden the opportunity to enjoy its canopy.

The house offers a variety of semi-open spaces that provide a pleasurable interface with the outdoors. A skylight above the living room sofa floods the double-height volume with screened daylight. The living pavilion



culminates in a large landscaped terrace where visitors can be entertained. And the first floor TV lounge and bedrooms access a timber deck, which is cantilevered above the pool that opens to the rear garden.

With minimum walls and reduced obstructions to form the space, the large area requirement is essentially realised in linear terms. The colour palette that has been selected for both the interior and exterior is subtle, with neutral tones that reduce visual clutter, and maintain clarity and tranquillity in design.

This unpretentious structure stands in contrast to the greenery that surrounds it, reflecting the nature and pragmatic disposition of its owners. There is a constant feeling of lucidity throughout the design, mirroring the acuity of the owners and the transparency they value.

#### WRITTEN BY

**Architect Nilooshi Eleperuma**

**PHOTOGRAPHY**

**Architect Gihan Muthugala**

#### PROJECT DETAILS

Clients:	Dr. Lakshmi and Mrs. Shivanthi Peiris
Land extent:	22 perches
Floor area:	5,705 sq. ft.
Architects:	Architect Gihan Muthugala Architect Nilooshi Eleperuma
Structural engineer:	Wasantha Kumara
Completion:	2014