

ALTERNATIVE FORM

WORDS
LOW SHI PING

/
PHOTOGRAPHY
MARC TEY

THE TOPOGRAPHY OF THE SITE OF THIS HOUSE LED K2LD ARCHITECTS TO MAKE ADJUSTMENTS RESULTING IN UNCONVENTIONAL DESIGN HIGHLIGHTS.



Architects are increasingly committed to designing homes not only from the outside but from the inside out. A house is no longer just a shelter but an expression of the owners' personality and lifestyle.

—
KO SHIOU HEE,
DIRECTOR,
K2LD ARCHITECTS,
ON THE BIGGEST
EVOLUTION TO THE
ARCHITECTURE
OF HOMES

01



01. Courtyard Variant House is located in the undulating neighbourhood of Namly in Singapore.



02. The house is shaped like a C and the upper floors are wrapped with wire-brushed, blackened teak presented as a cladding and screen.



Set on a slope in the undulating Namly neighbourhood in Singapore, Courtyard Variant House is designed by K2LD Architects and born from its topographical context.

Because the site terrain is elevated on the eastern and southern sides, and depressed on the western end, K2LD's Director Ko Shiou Hee arrived at the solution of orientating the length of the house to face the northwest.

That it would result in the building receiving the heat from the afternoon sun did not deter him.

Instead, Ko modelled it in the shape of the letter C, which allowed for a modified version of a courtyard to be inserted between the two wings and double as a focal point.

LIGHT AND SHADOW

Wrapping the façade of the second floor overlooking the courtyard is a custom-made, porous screen made up of numerous individual panels of wire-brushed, blackened teak fixed in place, but tilted at different angles to give the courtyard a sense of movement.

"The idea of a dynamic-looking screen in order not to block the view to the sky completely, and yet create an irregular pattern when shadows are cast in the house, caught the imagination of the client," he explains.

"We proceeded to design the courtyard to look different from the outer skin. The screen details also hide the steel bracing that hold the screen lattice together."

Additionally, it allows the bedrooms that run along it the privacy they require, and

03. A courtyard sits snugly between the two wings of the house with a northwest facing.





**COURTYARD
VARIANT HOUSE**

LOCATION
Singapore

COMPLETION
2019

SITE AREA
718.8m²

GROSS FLOOR AREA
753.59m²

ARCHITECT
K2LD Architects

LEAD ARCHITECTS
Ko Shiou Hee, Charlotte
Wong, Fiorella Amadei

CONTRACTOR
Daiya Engineering &
Construction

C&S CONSULTANT
MSE Consultants

M&E CONSULTANT
LAC Engineers &
Associates

QUANTITY SURVEYOR
WS Surveryorship

04. The custom-made, porous screen is made up of numerous individual panels of teak forming an additional layer between the outdoors and wall of the house.

partially shields against the afternoon sun.

After many mock-ups, it worked with Daiya Engineering & Construction to manufacture it – something that was necessary since the screen must be held in place independent of support from the ground.

It forms an additional layer between the outdoors and wall of the house, creating an interstitial zone where activities can be held.

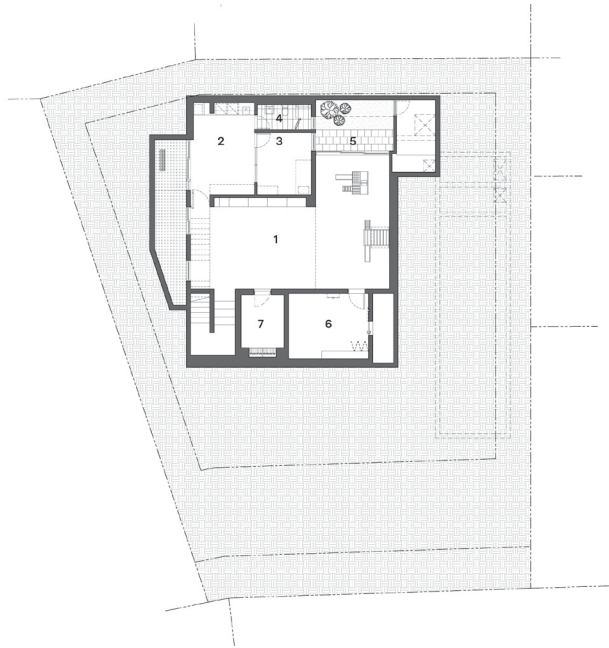
Juxtaposed starkly against it is the

fair-faced concrete used on the walls of the ground floor, which Ko deliberately did.

“We wanted to contrast the subtle texture of the wire-brushed teak with a material that is very neutral.

“Fair-faced concrete can be made perfectly without fuss and yet it has the tie-holes purposefully planned to give it an engineering precision that works with our minimalist language.”

FLOOR PLANS



BASEMENT

- 1. Playroom
- 2. Laundry
- 3. Utility
- 4. Bath
- 5. Deck
- 6. Store
- 7. Wine cellar



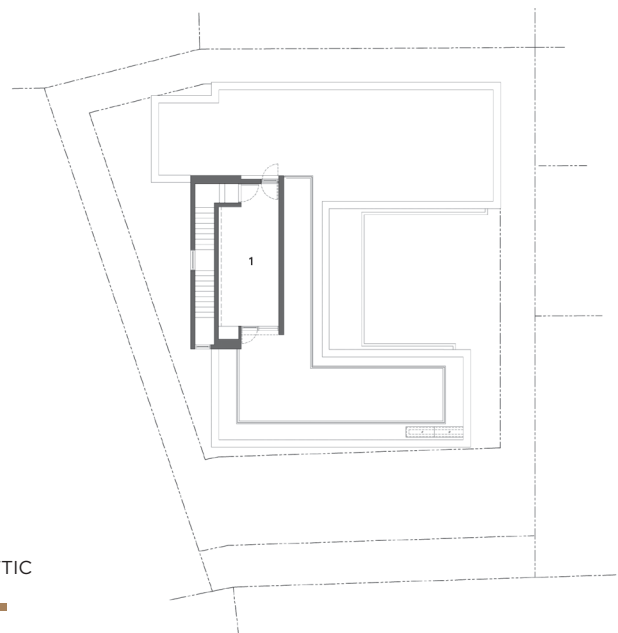
FIRST FLOOR

- 1. Foyer
- 2. Outdoor store
- 3. Changing room
- 4. Living
- 5. Pool
- 6. Kitchen
- 7. Powder room
- 8. Patio
- 9. Guest room
- 10. Guest bath



SECOND FLOOR

- 1. Master bedroom
- 2. Master wardrobe
- 3. Master bath
- 4. Store
- 5. Pantry
- 6. Playroom
- 7. Bedroom
- 8. Bedroom



ATTIC

- 1. Gym

05

05. Above the living room rises a double volume space that adds a touch of drama and also connects the two floors.

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06. The Swiss-made Panoramah window system is used throughout the house, characterised by minimally-thin aluminum frames dividing large glass panels.





SENSE OF SPACIOUSNESS

Step inside the two-storey house that also has a basement and attic and immediately apparent is its expansiveness.

This is enhanced by the Swiss-made Panoramah window system characterised by minimally-thin aluminum frames dividing large glass panels.

The effect is to blur the boundaries between indoors and out, maintaining a strong connection and openness between the two.

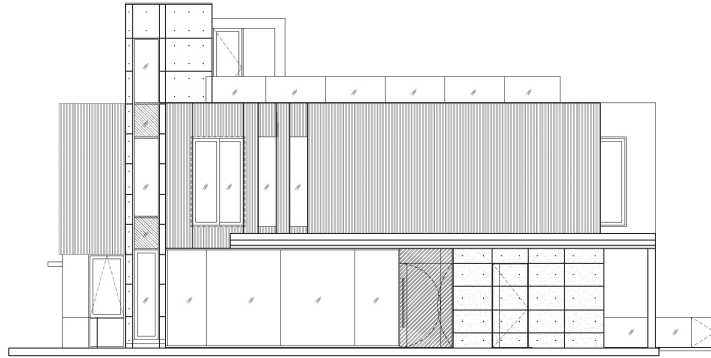
"We have been using the Panoramah system for almost 10 years. In fact, we were the first architect in Singapore to use it in our Namu House back in 2013.

"The thin frame architecture bodes well with our minimalist approach to most of the houses we designed," says Ko.

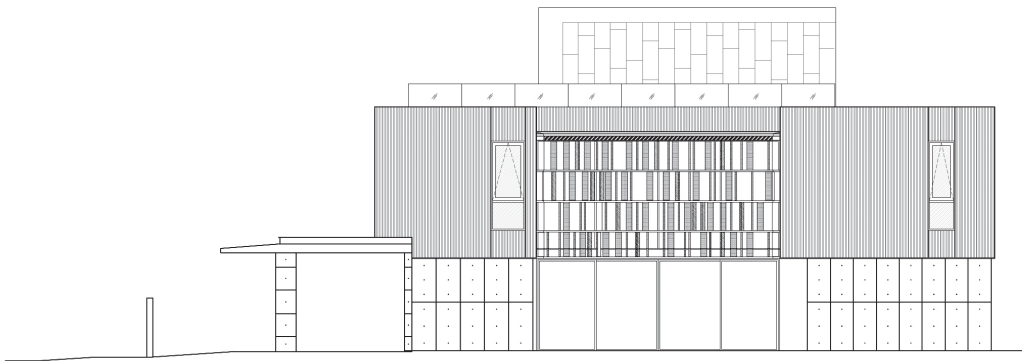
RESIDENCE
SINGAPORE

ELEVATIONS

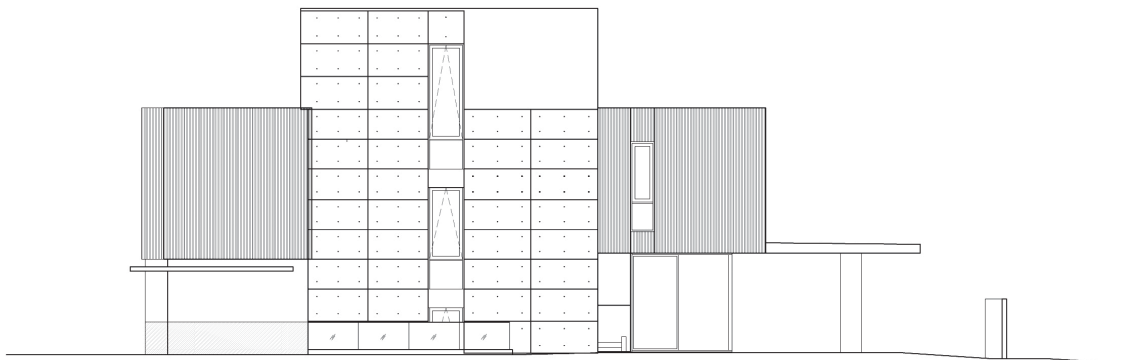
NORTH EAST
ELEVATION



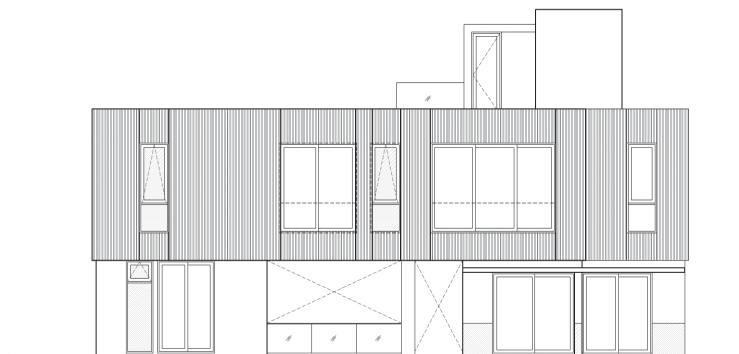
NORTH WEST
ELEVATION



SOUTH EAST
ELEVATION



SOUTH WEST
ELEVATION





07-08. The interior décor is muted and neutral in tone, further enhancing the sense of spaciousness.

Thanks to it, the owner's vintage car collection sitting in the front porch can be admired from the living room, which itself looks directly out to the courtyard and the swimming pool beyond.

Above the living room rises a double volume space that adds a touch of drama and also connects the two floors.

The interior décor is muted and neutral in tone, acting as a background for the owner's art collection that is often colourful and punchy.

Ko rightfully points out that the high cost of land in Singapore tends to push homeowners to maximise the built area, "resulting in increasing bulkiness in our residential neighbourhoods".

"[In fact,] most people do not necessarily need that much space in a normal home."

Not only is Courtyard Variant House the antithesis of that practice, but it also harbours a host of creative and effective design solutions that overcome the limitations of the site, allowing it to truly live up to its name.