

text: courtesy, Elizabeth John
photographs: courtesy, Felix Glory Raj

Tirupur House

Tirupur, TamilNadu, India ad rem2.0



The design for a house cum office in Tirupur by Chennai-based firm ad rem2.0 for their client Rajendran, a garment export business, is the essence of the design firm's philosophy which is 'Simplicity'. Mies van der Rohe's quote of 'less is more' is too often debated upon but the designers make every attempt convinced to prove the depth that lies in that statement through simple lines, shapes and textures that carve the world around. In design, the architects impress great importance on the design process that helps to lay down a basic framework guiding the design. This is achieved with their design ideology which pivots around three basic criteria forming the skeleton system for their design viz. function, concept, aesthetics.

FUNCTION - a necessity

The client requirement forms the foundation for the design and is purely functional. Design is an art that involves not only accommodating requirements, spaces etc but creating an understanding of the given requirements, their functionality, spatial requirements, and connectivity within and with the surroundings. It is crucial to balance the client requirements with the site challenges and the design philosophy.

CONCEPT - a process

The function eventually drives the designers into the concept that further shapes the design and adds strength and character to



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it. Here, the designers envision the experience of the user. The concept is what brings life to the design and hence needs to be woven into every design layer. In doing this, the design begins to speak for itself and every design has a very interesting story to narrate.

AESTHETICS - achieved through minimalism

Finally, the statement that the design leaves behind needs to visually soothe the eyes rather than clutter the mind. The rich and pure essence of anything comes out when seen against a subtle pitch. This is the very essence of minimalism as we



Felix Glory Raj is the founder and principal architect of the Chennai based architectural design firm ad rem2.0 which stands for 'precision' in greek. Before starting ad rem2.0 with Interior designer Meera Glory Raj in 2007, he was trained by the well-known architects Sanjay Mohe of Mindscape, Bangalore and Sashikanth Shivaji at Spacescape, Chennai. As a young architect, he has won distinctive honors including First place for the National level architectural competition (Saint Gobain) and citation for National level design competition (Tata steel). He is also a visiting faculty at Meenakshi College of Engineering, Chennai and Anna University, Chennai.



the building fit well into the context - interesting to the eye and not disturbing the context.



the white spiral steel staircase invokes interest against the horizontality.

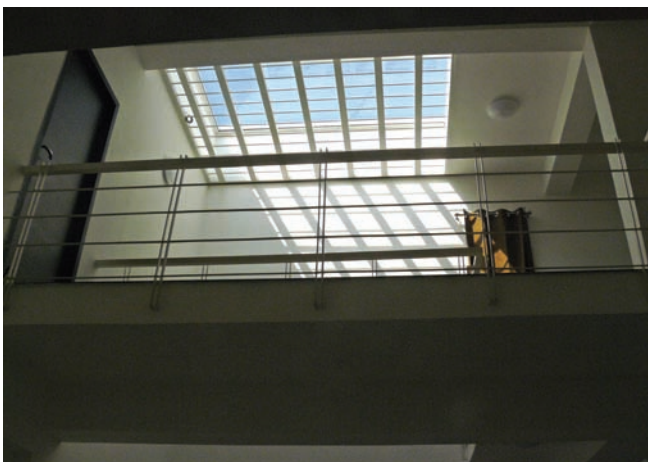
understand it and express the richness of the style in our designs through minimal use of lines and forms, colours and patterns, materials and textures in its purity.

THE PROJECT

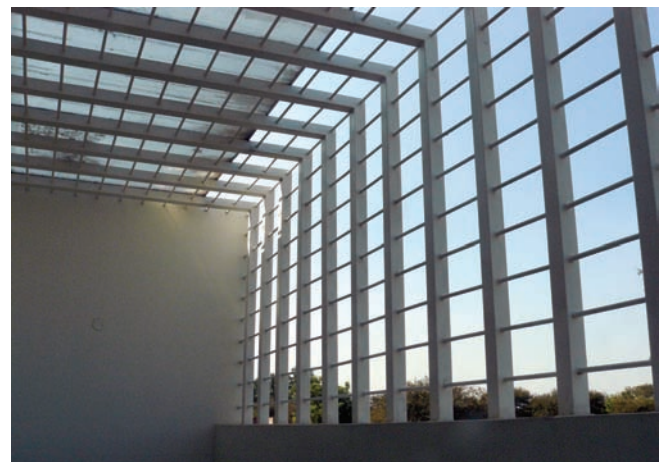
The task at hand was to design a flexible space that would function as an office initially, and later be converted into a residence easily. A dedicated space was to be provided for the client out station visitors. The challenge was to design and build a house of around 2,500-sq.ft with a fixed budget. Sufficient building frontage was a criterion along with natural bright lit office for colour approval of garments. While being used as a commercial space, it would be essential to provide platforms for interaction at various levels right from the building entrance which is more public till the office that is a private space.

The client was keen on a porch at the entrance (as seen in art deco styles) functioning as a shading element. This 90 x 44-in rectilinear site to the advantage of the design is oriented along the east-west orientation. This protects most of the building from the harsh western solar radiation and thereby allows feed in the north daylight, which is best suited. Behind the site, there is a vast expanse of corn field, the colours of which keep changing through the year and provide for a great visual treat. Since the plot is linear and the setback in the front is less, it was decided against providing the frontage in the front along the longer plot length as the approach road is narrow and one will be unable to view the building in totality.

The open space was provided on one side of the plot, and the ground structure of the building placed on the other half. This block could accommodate the semi public function of the office space and hence



a view of a bridge suspended in the double height living space seen against the skylight.



semi covered balcony spaces defined with pergolas not only provide shade and protection but add to the interesting design features.



the north light drawn in through a linear stretch of windows facing the north that diffuse the light. This evenly light up the interiors increasing the building efficiency during the day.



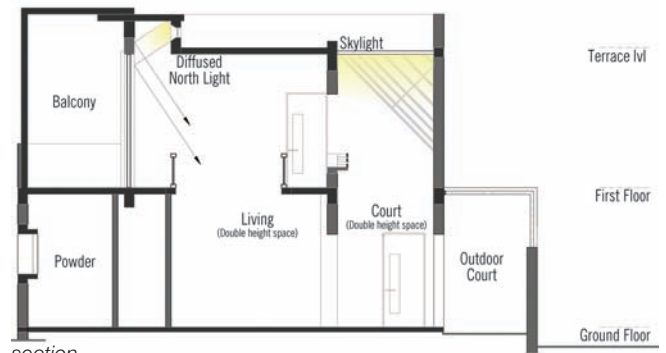
view of the first floor.

was given an introverted nature with visual connectivity to the corn field behind. Because of the site advantage, a rectilinear block was erected above along the length of the site, which sits over the ground floor structure to accommodate rest of the functions. This gives it an extroverted character with views to the fields and balconies which extend over the ground structure incubating the interiors. To create interest, three slender *slanting columns* emerge from the ground supporting this *cantilevered structure* adding to the dynamics of this form. The *cantilevered* portion provides shade over the ground floor structure and open space is thus translated into a *contemporary porch* (ideal as per requirement).

Despite the western wall being short in length, the ancillary spaces like toilets and wardrobes are pushed to this end function as buffer. To maximize efficiency, double height spaces were designed with *skylights* and *pergolas*, not only to bring in diffused natural light into the interiors but to create interesting patterns of natural light due to which one never gets bored with the expanse of space and play of light. The length of the form captures the best day light and diffuses it through windows facing the north. The interior is well lit through the day increasing the efficiency.

The building *fascia* painted white visually lightens the structure and distracts the context less. The extended *fin* along the periphery provides a

neat definition and adds to the scale of the elevated form. Added features of grey concrete wall in the front, along with a white spiral staircase create interests against the white rectilinear elevation, which could otherwise bore the eye. In working with just two forms and a few elements like the *skewed columns*, a minimal *spiral steel staircase* and a concrete wall, the design fits well into the context making a bold, yet subtle statement. ▲



section.

fact file:

- project : Jayalakshmi's residence
- location : Tirupur, Tamil Nadu, India
- client : Rajendran
- architect : Felix Glory Raj, Meera Glory raj and Elizabeth John
- other consultants : Cubicwheels Consultants Engineers
- dt of commencement : February 2011
- dt of completion : May 2012
- area : 3641sq.ft
- cost : INR 55, 00,000

