

Nos. 63 & 65 Emerald Hill Road

Two Distinct Personalities



2005 AWARD

CATEGORY B

Owner:

Mr Yeo Eng Koon & Mr Yeo Eng Huat

Architect:

Teh Joo Heng Architects

Engineer:

Tham & Wong

Contractor:

Holden Tiling and Construction Pte Ltd

Designed in the Late Style, this pair of two-storey terrace houses were built in the early 1900s with identical façades. Now owned by two brothers, the design briefs for each unit express their distinct personalities. Unit 63 accentuates an informal and fluid flamboyance, while Unit 65 has neat and varied spaces.



Identical Late Style terrace houses restored to original

Light for Like

The architect utilised the top-down approach and the 3R principles, identifying the exposed timber floor joists and the party walls as the most fundamental to be retained and restored.

The original living room layout, with its dividing wall between the living and dining areas, was retained for Unit 63, while Unit 65 was turned into an extended continuous volume. This allowed for two very different expressions of space - distinct, compact pockets in Unit 63 and overlapping, indeterminate boundaries in Unit 65.

Dual De-Light

The narrow and deep interior space of a conservation terrace house made natural lighting a central problem. This was resolved with the clever introduction of a sculptural light reflector for Unit 63, while

Unit 65 employed a high-volume airwell with retractable glazed panels, letting in an abundance of natural light and ventilation.

New lightweight stairs and link bridges were then constructed for both, and the architect chose to set them back from the party wall to reinforce the feeling of spaciousness.

The spatial qualities of both units were further enhanced by using recessed steel

channels embedded in party walls, small-diameter pipes and concealed plumbing to hide the mechanical and electrical services.

Finally, the three-dimensional qualities of the ornate motifs were first immaculately restored, then highlighted with expressive colour schemes. The original Peranakan wall tiles, patterned glass, wrought-iron gates and intricate Straits-Chinese style carvings on the timber window panels and salon swing doors were carefully reinstated.

Space Out

The effect is a showcase of how two similarly enclosed spaces can be designed to fit the personalities of those who dwell within. Together, they exude a pleasing blend of spatial boundaries and daring experiments with light.



Ornate details of the front façade sensitively restored



Rear façade with screening



Traditional entrance foyer at Unit 63



Sculptural light reflector and glass link bridges at Unit 63



Modern interpretation of traditional interior spaces at Unit 65



Original patterned glass kept at Unit 63



Ornate carved timber details of pintu pagar



High volume air-well with retractable glazed panels at Unit 65

Emerald Hill Conservation District

Emerald Hill had undergone a series of disparate land uses since the landing of Sir Stamford Raffles in 1819; from primeval jungle, to gambier leaf production, and to nutmeg plantations – before the land was subdivided for residential development in 1901.

The area contains some of the finest examples of terrace houses of the Late period, built by wealthy Teochew Straits-born Chinese and Peranakans as they became more affluent.

Emerald Hill was accorded conservation status on 7 July 1989. Their low-rise buildings stand in contrast to the neighbouring new and modern high-rise developments. Remaining as an attractive and quiet residential area, the district has maintained its unique charm and ambience to this day.

No. 63 + 65

This pair of shophouse units was built around the early 1900s. Designed in the Late Style, each features three French windows at the second storey, and two casement windows and a door at the 1st storey to allow maximum ventilation. The absence of the tiled over-hangs above the five-footway are common in terrace houses of the later period. There are elaborate and decorative plaster mouldings above the second storey windows and in the forecourt entrance gate, the beauty of these terrace houses are further enhanced by the decorative Corinthian columns and pilasters. Distinct Straits-Chinese influences are reflected in the bat-motif vent openings, the Peranakan tile motifs, and intricately carved swing-doors.



UNIT 63 FRONT ELEVATION



UNIT 65 FRONT ELEVATION