

CHATSWORTH PARK

Frank Ambitions

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Owner:
Ms Goh Chiat Jin

Architect:
Eco-id Architects Pte Ltd

Engineer:
MSE Consultants Pte Ltd

Contractor:
Huat Builders Pte Ltd

This delicately restored iconic Frank Brewer bungalow has retained its frontage and remains the centrepiece of the property through the deliberate design and use of a subdued grey colour tone for its extensive new wing as a backdrop and the clever re-positioning of its new driveway. The old-and-new integrated residential project now celebrates the character and heritage of this stately mid-20th Century colonial home.



Restored iconic Frank Brewer bungalow

Making New

Although the conserved bungalow was in relatively good condition, much effort was put in to return the building to prominence. The classic Brewer touches such as the oriole casement windows, latticed and louvred timber windows, overhanging eaves and natural clay roof tiles were carefully repaired, restored or reinstated.

Commendably, the architects convinced the owners to retain the signature Brewer exposed brick pillars that were the worse for wear. These were skilfully patched up using old bricks salvaged from a former outhouse that was demolished for the new wing. Old terracotta tiles on the car porch entrance were replaced and the incongruent ad-hoc additions like the glass panel windows were appropriately replaced.

The striking departure from the original interior of the conserved bungalow was the repositioning of its timber staircase. This was carefully orchestrated with the rebuilding of a new stairwell and stairs to reinforce the dramatic double-volume space at the entrance foyer. The new staircase in simple and clean lines bears the signature of a bygone Art Deco era.

Supersize Me

The biggest challenge of this project was to fulfill the owner's brief to insert a new wing three times the size of the original house. This required the re-imagining of the entire property as a cohesive and functioning modern residence for an art-loving multi-generation family. The project team expertly executed this without affecting the grandeur and prominence of the old.

The new wing honours the spirit of the original by subtly borrowing detailings such as the overhanging roof eaves and horizontal louvred timber windows from the past and expressing them in contemporary language. The predominantly subdued grey shade of the new wing provides a neutral backdrop that allows the original bungalow to continue to front the property.

Bridging Old and New

The old and the new spaces flow seamlessly and effortlessly into each other via a carefully planned linkway. The architect also cleverly designed a new approach to the property that accentuates the view of the conserved bungalow. The verdant home-on-a-hillock feel is still very much alive, thanks to the sensitive planting, soft landscaping and the gently undulating terrain.

Overall, the project is a masterful restoration and the integration of old and new that retains the original bungalow's pride of place at the front and centre of the development.



Repositioned timber staircase



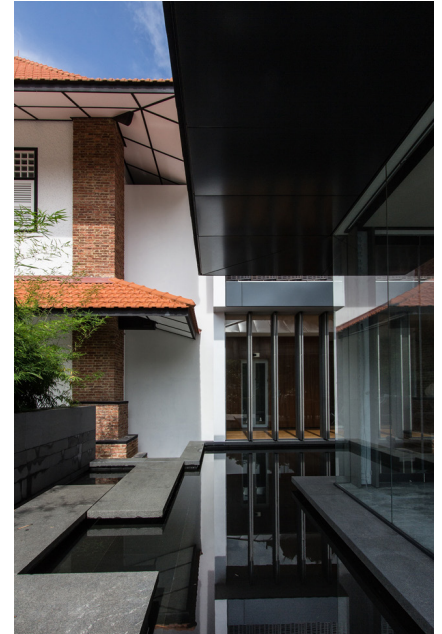
Latticed and louvered timber window kept



Master bedroom



Restored parlour and music room above porte cochere



Detailings of new wing inspired by old



Old and new integrated residential project with new approach amidst soft landscaping



Signature Brewer exposed brick pillars

The Conserved House : A brief history

The colonial house was designed in 1927 by English architect, Frank W. Brewer , who did some of the most prominent buildings in colonial Singapore in the mid-20th century.

It used to serve as the residence for straits trading top officials during the British colonial era. Characterized by simple, geometrical arches with keystones at its porte-cochere, it has all the classic brewer hallmarks of flared eaves, buttressed walls, oriole windows, and exposed brick voussoirs.

It incorporates common features of the Art Deco style (late 1920s-1930s), which includes roughcast plaster rendering, unglazed natural clay roof tiles supported by timber brackets, grid ceilings, latticed transom with glazed panels and exposed brick pillars.

Designed for tropical living, it has large overhanging roof eaves and large brewer oriole casement windows, timber lattice, and fixed horizontal timber louvres which used to serve as vents for ventilation.

The impression of robustness and solidity remains in this classic Brewer's residential work after careful restorations.

