

blueprint asia

architecture + design

OCTOBER / NOVEMBER 2008

channeling utopia

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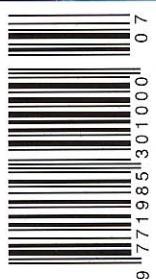
eco-friendly clubbing

media city seoul 2008

singapore biennale 2008

highlights from the venice architectural biennale 2008

BI-MONTHLY MALAYSIA RM18 / SINGAPORE SGD11 (INCL GST) / AUSTRALIA AUD 12.95 / PHILIPPINES PHP330 / BRUNEI BND 11 / HONG KONG HKD85 / OTHERS USD10



AN ENTERPRISING EFFORT



EXERCISING A BIT OF INVENTIVENESS, KUCHING-BASED DESIGN NETWORK ARCHITECTS (DNA) ARCHITECTS MANAGED TO BYPASS TIGHT MONETARY CONSTRAINTS AND REALIZE THEIR CLIENT'S DREAM HOME WITHOUT HAVING TO COMPROMISE ON STYLE.



- + COMPLETION DATE
2006
- + ARCHITECT
Design Network Architects
Sdn Bhd
- + STRUCTURAL ENGINEER
PU Engineering
- + CLIENT
Wee Hii Khoon & Pamela Lau
Pei Mai
- + CONTRACTOR
Bumijaya Klasik Sdn . Bhd
- + PHOTOGRAPHER
Lau Ming Ngi
- + TEXT
Ar. Wee Hii Min

1

1 /
Tall, sliding windows make for an efficient means of cooling down the temperature of the upper level



2 /

A side view of the house

3 /

Clean lines accentuate the classic, simplicity of the entranceway

4 /

Sliding glass doors on the bottom level allow for sufficient ventilation

5 /

Spacious and airy, the living spaces have been devised based on an open plan layout

WITH A SMALL BUDGET to contend with, DNA Architects' greatest task in terms of building the Khoon family house was in devising viable ways of making the most out of limited resources. A simple gable roof was therefore chosen to enable better lighting and ventilation. The ceiling of the upper floor was vaulted not only to facilitate circulation but to also add height to the rooms, making the spaces more vertically elongated. Upstairs, tall, sliding windows were installed as an efficient mode of cooling down the space on the occasions when children played or slept on the floor with the 'thin-ness' of the overall plan proving to be largely beneficial in this respect.

The low level of emphasis on creating a defined frontage is warranted by the fact that the house is located on a landlocked site. While it means that this ultimately entails a lack of street views, the situation also ensures that little of the living areas can be seen from the main façade, making for ample privacy. The rectilinear form of the main house which aptly carves out space for living, dining and other communal areas by implementing an open plan layout, implies a preference for simple geometry while the projecting and cantilevered wall and floor planes serve to add interest to the overall form. A cosy, single storey 'pavilion' containing both the family room and dining area completes the house, fitting snugly into the setbacks. ▀



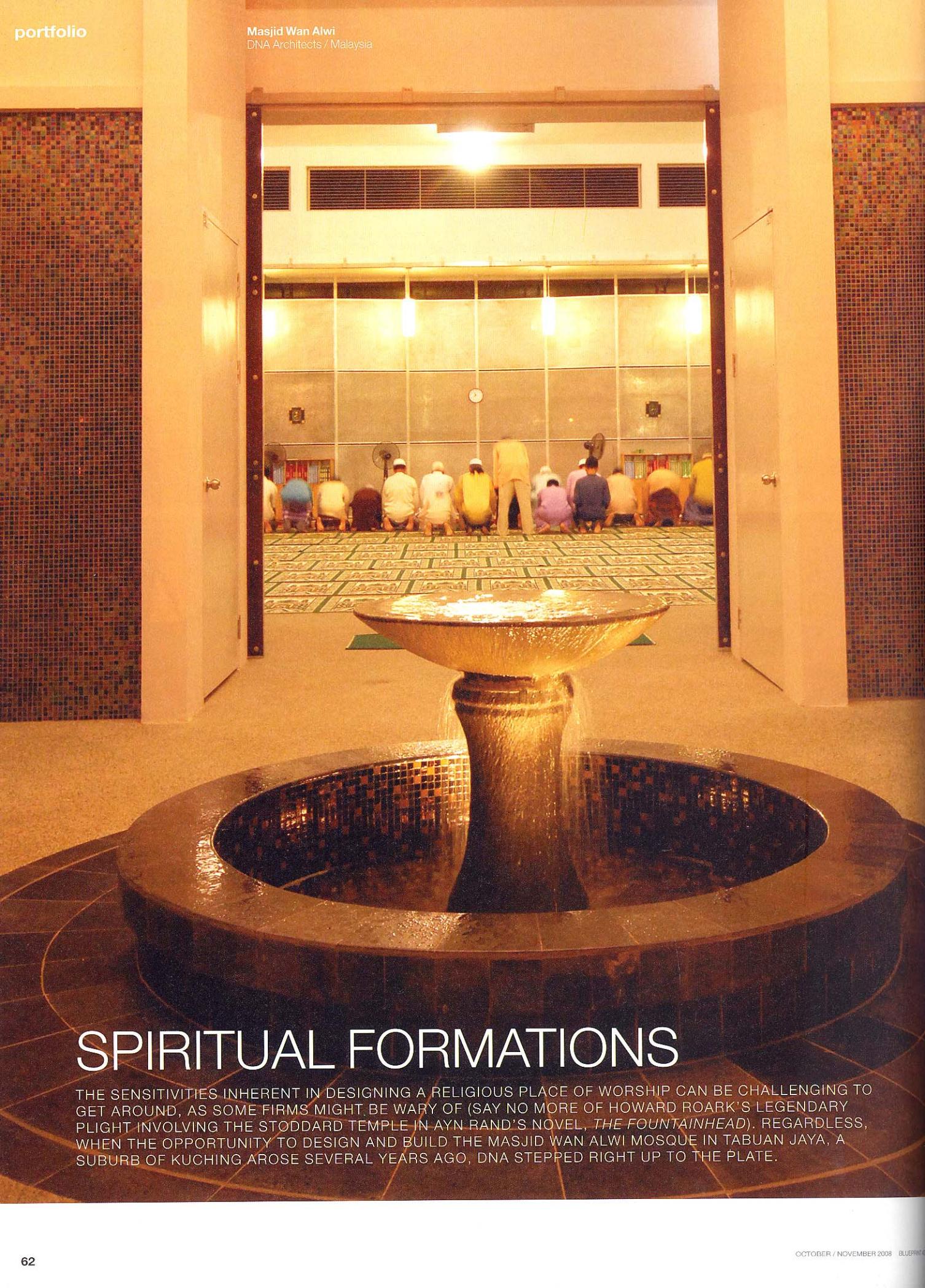


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4



5



SPIRITUAL FORMATIONS

THE SENSITIVITIES INHERENT IN DESIGNING A RELIGIOUS PLACE OF WORSHIP CAN BE CHALLENGING TO GET AROUND, AS SOME FIRMS MIGHT BE WARY OF (SAY NO MORE OF HOWARD ROARK'S LEGENDARY PLIGHT INVOLVING THE STODDARD TEMPLE IN AYN RAND'S NOVEL, *THE FOUNTAINHEAD*). REGARDLESS, WHEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO DESIGN AND BUILD THE MASJID WAN ALWI MOSQUE IN TABUAN JAYA, A SUBURB OF KUCHING AROSE SEVERAL YEARS AGO, DNA STEPPED RIGHT UP TO THE PLATE.



1

2

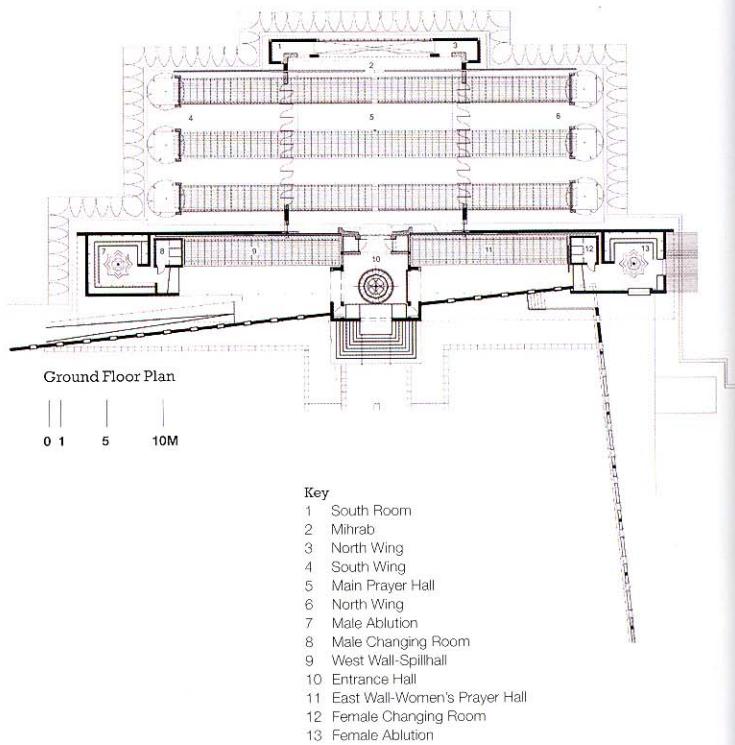




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AWARE THAT THE programme of the mosque would mean logging onto a different kind of thought process than that required of a standard dwelling, DNA embarked on an extensive plan of research which not only involved acquiring in-depth knowledge of how mosques complexes functioned in countries with similar religious dispositions such as Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia; they additionally needed to educate themselves on the kind of architectural components which were generally used in a Kampong context. While Masjid Wan Alwi already laid claim to a prime piece of land within Tabuan Jaya thanks to a 'wakaf' (a donation of land for religious purposes) given to the Muslim community by the area's developers, constructing a mosque in a suburb ultimately meant also having to regenerate the atmosphere of an authentic Kampong in terms of creating a venue which simultaneously encouraged prayer as well as activities involving tradi-

tional communal interaction. After numerous sessions of justifying their designs to the consistently sceptical Masjid committee, DNA's final efforts resulted in a complex development plan which adhered to localized aesthetics and competently corresponded with the local context, climate and surrounding landscape. Subtle details like the extended veranda areas, pyramidal pitched roof made of belian-wood shingles and the wall of Jasmine plants on a timber and steel trellis poetically erected to perfume the prayer halls during evening prayers and to shade the Mihrab wall are part of the small additional touches that deservedly give Masjid Wan Alwi its otherworldly aura. ▀



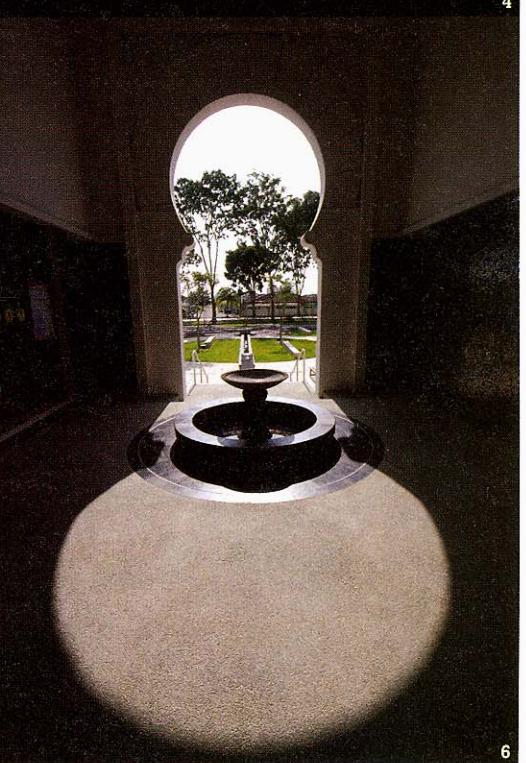


+ **COMPLETION DATE**
 June 2006
 + **ARCHITECT**
 Design Network Architects Sdn Bhd
 + **STRUCTURAL ENGINEER**
 Perunding CHT
 + **M & E**
 CH Engineering S/B
 + **QUANTITY SURVEYOR**
 Ukurbahan PEB S/B
 + **LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT**
 Ecoscape S/B
 + **CLIENT**
 IBRACO Properties Sdn Bhd
 + **CONTRACTOR**
 Pembinaan Kuantiti
 + **PHOTOGRAPHER**
 Lau Ming Ngi
 + **TEXT**
 Ar. Wee Hii Min

4



5



6

1 /
 The tree court of Masjid Wan Alwi is meant for meditation and being at one with nature

2 /
 The religious building references both contemporary and traditional influences

3 /
 Men in the midst of prayer in the main hall

4 /
 The Masjid at night

5 /
 The plaza: A place for teaching, feasting, gathering and learning

6 /
 The main entrance hall boasts a view of the tree court