

Eight Architects To Watch

SEEKING TO DESIGN AND CONSTRUCT MEANINGFUL ARCHITECTURE, THESE EIGHT RISING STARS BREATHE LIFE INTO BUILDINGS AND FORMS WITH THEIR DISTINCT STYLES AND PHILOSOPHIES.

WORDS
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Goy Zhenru
FOUNDER,
GOY ARCHITECTS

Combining her passion for vernacular architecture with craftsmanship, Goy Zhenru aims to grow her regional team and set aside more time for material research development. She has recently opened a pop-up research office in Chiang Mai, Thailand that seeks to collaborate closely with local artisans to create experimental material palettes to apply in their regional projects. She noticed many crafts are assisted by machines but perfected by hand, and that gives additional warmth and character to the material or joinery. As a trained architect who also loves to design interior spaces, Goy adopts a more holistic approach to her architecture works, combining it with the planning of intricate interior spaces, right down to built-ins and furnishings. One of her fondest projects is a farm stay, Sukasantai, in Sukabumi, Indonesia. Besides it being the studio's first commission, they have learnt a lot through the design and construction process in a rural setting, and applying environmental sensibilities in their designs to reconnect guests back to nature.

01. Goy and her team learned to work with locally available materials and workers for the studio's first commission, a farm stay, Sukasantai, in Indonesia.

02. Instead of a dispersed layout, Sukasantai features 12 bedrooms lined across a linear block to promote interaction among guests, as well as simplifying room service operations.
Photos: Fabian Ong





Calvin Chua
FOUNDER,
SPATIAL
ANATOMY

03. Showcased during ArchiFest 2020, the Green Agora was conceived as a living, nature-oriented public space, comprising a framework of patented aluminum modules lightly clad with steel mesh that allowed native plants to grow on it.

04. A minimalist, Chua minimised the Singapore Airlines Training Centre's column footprint and created an illustration of a "floating entrance roof".



Wu Huei Siang
FOUNDER,
WASAA ARCHITECTS &
ASSOCIATES



Wu Huei Siang seeks to design beautiful spaces with natural light and meaningful architecture that embodies the qualities of simplicity, repose and delight. He believes these are the fundamentals in ensuring that the design is developed with a good focus on pragmatics and poetry, tectonics and tactility. The Pedagogical Landscape Gardens at Westwood Primary School is one such example. The landscape design is subtly scaled towards a child's perspective to foster a richer relationship between the students and nature. Layered *bucida bucidaras* trees – whose leaves extend just above a child's height – were carefully planted to provide a gentle shade and create a feeling of intimacy, while playing under the shadows. The placement and design of the solid teak benches were also thoughtfully tailored to create intimate pockets of spaces amid the landscape planter beds, promoting interaction and conviviality. Wu's latest projects includes Singapore's upcoming largest skatepark/youth space in Jurong Lake Gardens.



05. The placement and design of solid teak benches at the Pedagogical Landscape Gardens at Westwood Primary School were thoughtfully tailored to create intimate pockets of spaces amid the landscape planter beds to promote interaction and conviviality.



Adrian Lai

FOUNDER,
META ARCHITECTURE

Meta Architecture is interested in exploring spatial structure and its experience. Winner of the 2018 URA Architectural Heritage Award and one of his most notable projects, the rejuvenated Khong Guan Building exemplifies its founder Adrian Lai's passion in creating significant spaces to crystallise the character of the project, and finding new forms for old uses and new uses for old forms. Adding a new wing to the previously three-storey conservation building, the revamped commercial building is now eight-storeys tall and takes reference from the form and scale of the historic wedge-shaped building. He continues his exploration of desirable atmospheres for modern live-work-play with a residential project located at West Coast Road. Designed for a family with three generations living under one roof, Lai created many pockets of communal spaces interspersed throughout the five floors, providing family members with their own space yet allowing familial opportunities at every turn.

06. Lai added a new wing to the Khong Guan Building and took reference from the form and scale of its historic wedge-shaped building.
Photo: Fabian Ong

07. Designed for a multigenerational family, this residential project at West Coast Road features intimate pockets of communal spaces and an innovative facade accentuated with metal flutings.
Photo: Khoo Guojie

06



07



Iskandar Idris

FOUNDER,
SUPER ASSEMBLY



Iskandar Idris likes to approach every project by means of open-ended inquiry to ensure that the work is able to deeply relate to community and place, culture and nature. As his firm is currently dealing a lot more with landed residential, he and his team have been exploring various configurations of domestic spaces, while asking themselves questions such as "how can a space be delightful enough to draw people out from their individual rooms to spend more communal time establishing family bonds?". "How far can the blurring of boundaries between inside and outside be pushed?" The firm's first project, the Window House, was a collaboration with Formwerkz Architects, Idris' former employer. Designed to revolve and evolve around layers of windowed spaces that frame and inspire connections with nature and create *mise-en-scene* within the house, it is Idris's most memorable project and one that embodies his design principles and approach. Currently, he is working on a forest retreat in Croatia.

08



08-09. The Window House was designed to revolve and evolve around layers of windowed spaces that frame and inspire connections with nature, as well as creating *mise-en-scene* within the house.

09



Amanda Gunawan

CO-FOUNDER,
OWIU

Unlike most people who take comfort and security in predictable outcomes, this millennial architectural designer welcomes surprises and unknown outcomes during the design process, referring to them as ideas that are beyond the realm of what she can conceive beforehand. Amanda Gunawan believes that spaces should not simply be built to last, but rather built to evolve. This is a recurring theme inherent throughout her projects, which she thoughtfully leaves room for the space to grow with its inhabitants. Merging the minimalism concept and Japanese-inspired Zen aesthetic with Southern California industrial elements, Biscuit Loft, an apartment in Los Angeles, is an embodiment of her design philosophies, which are fundamentally grounded in thoughtfulness and detail. Providing well-planned interventions that compartmentalise space and maximise usage, her team is able to retain the apartment's expansive feel, while creating a comfortable and intimate living environment that inspires the space. This allows its inhabitants to develop relationships so that they serve one another's needs and grow together.

10. The firm's detail-oriented approach accentuated Biscuit Loft's expansive feel with carefully selected fixtures such as the minimalistic hanging Noguchi Akari pendant lights in the living area.

11. Biscuit Loft's upper mezzanine floor functions as a semi-private study/reading room that rests above the open kitchen and living area.

Photos:
Justin Chung

10



11





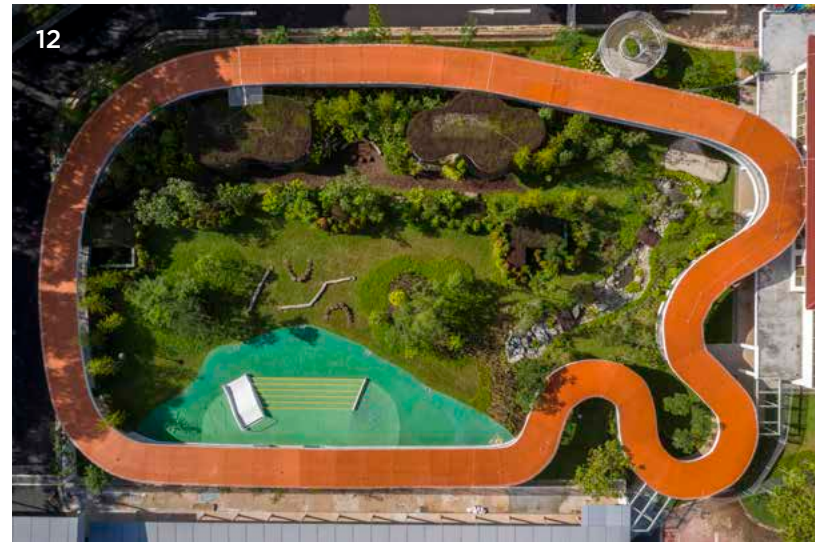
Kee Jing Zhi

(RIGHT)
CO-FOUNDER,
FREIGHT ARCHITECTS



Kee Jing Zhi believes that childcare centres need to be fun for the young ones. The typology offers leeway for creating whimsical and story-like narratives, which he enjoys designing through unique forms and spaces. He also focuses on biophilic designs that facilitate outdoor learning and connecting indoor spaces to outdoor. Drawing inspiration from sheltered linkways commonly seen in HDB heartlands, his team at Freight Architects designed an orange ribbon trail that connects indoor class spaces to an outdoor biophilic playscape and learning pavilions for the Radin Mas Childcare Centre. Kee also places emphasis on children-centric designs by being more sensitive to the usage of materials and the emotional aspects of children. Freight Architects has also started bringing this sensibility to designing senior care spaces. Given a limited space in an old void deck senior care centre, they created a dramatic canyon-like space with curved walls to entice the elderly to use the Gym Tonic at Fei Yue Family Service Centre.

12. The distinctive orange ribbon trail connects indoor spaces to an outdoor biophilic playscape for the Radin Mas Childcare Centre.



13. Kee's latest projects include the Fernvale Childcare Centre, which features a fern leaf-shaped ETFE roof hovering above the building. Photos: Darren Soh



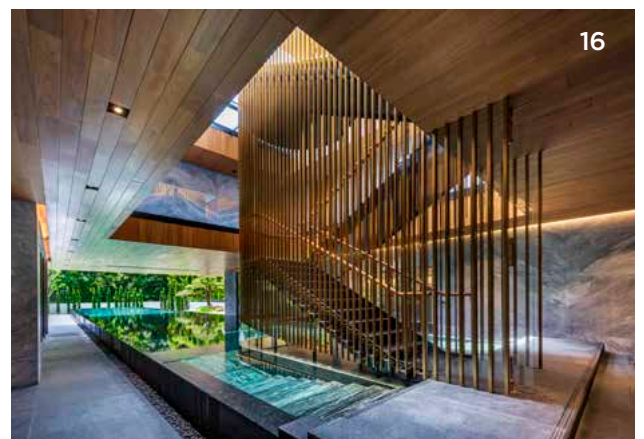


Tay Yanling

FOUNDER,
TA.LE ARCHITECTS

Believing that architecture is about the relentless pursuit of beauty and a singlemindedness in unravelling complexity into simple things, Tay Yanling employs a human-centric approach, integrating isolated solutions into a seamless user experience in all her designs. In the re-making of the Nordic European Centre at the International Business Park, Tay designed and transformed the building into one that encourages partnership and the freedom to work, without being desk-bound, through the introduction of collaborative spaces in the form of semi-outdoor pavilions, indoor semi-enclosed discussion pods, formal and informal meeting spaces. The team further enriched the user experience by providing a spatial quality with an integrated "soundscape" to simulate different ambience at different parts of the day. She demonstrated her deftness in the interweaving of heritage and modernity in The Hidden House, a good class bungalow at Ridout Road, where she retained the dignity of a pre-war bungalow that overlooks the entire project, while allowing the new bungalow to have its own contemporary look and feel.

14. Tay incorporated super tree pavilions along the linkway outside the Nordic European Centre, which serve as activity nodes equipped with power points for collaborative working and even provide shelter from our hot weather.
Photo: Rendy Aryanto



15. The Hidden House project consists of two buildings: an existing pre-war bungalow and a new insertion. To facilitate two different architecture styles to co-exist harmoniously, Tay designed the new wing with a receding form from the front, so as to maintain the austerity of the conserved bungalow.

16. The new wing of the Hidden House project showcases a water court at the lowest level and within it is a feature staircase, highlighting the residence's high volume space.