

BETWEEN THE LINES

Student Newsletter of The City School of Architecture

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CONTENTS

01

UPCYCLED!

The CSA Annual Stall 2020 | Pg 1

02

ARCHI-ISOLATION

Contagious Creativity | Pg 2

03

LODHIYA

Port City Competition | Pg 1

04

PLAY THE WALL

Interactive Wall | Pg 1

05

MACHANG

The Annual Social | Pg 1

06

FAREWELL CSA

Valedictorian Speech | Pg 6

07

COLOUR THE WORLD

Akzonobel Awards | Pg 6



UPCYCLED!



BY SANDUNI FERNANDO

Sri Lanka Institute of Architects gives the opportunity for the Sri Lankan current and future generations of architects to prove to the world that the small paradise island is indeed potent enough to compete with even the international greats.

The 2nd year students of CSA came up with an out-of-the-box-thinking concept which mesmerized the audience; upcycling bicycle parts in the design of the students' exhibition space.

The design included bicycle wheels as a façade and rotatable panels using the mechanisms seen in bicycles. Alongside this were bicycles that viewers could utilize to circulate through the entirety of the exhibition. It was a highlight of the façade alongside the rotatable wheels enabled by an artful creation of movable gears.

The concept behind this design was to promote sustainability and physical mobility. The bicycles and its components were an example of up-cycling. By using these throw away materials, the students added value to waste materials (which would otherwise have to be disposed of into another mountain of trash) by recycling them artfully and we can all agree that is not the natural alternative. The bicycles also add aesthetic value because they act as sculptural elements coinciding with the main theme of the exhibition, "Art in Architecture."

The CSA students did not just create a space with the bicycle parts; they also showcased the simple and sustainable methods of energy transformation. Using the concept of a dynamo, through cycling, kinetic energy can be used to produce electricity and light up the space created.

Connectivity and Mobility are also themes that have been considered in this design. By cycling, it not only lights up the façade, it also creates a chain reaction that shows how connectivity can turn an immobile façade into a mobile façade - similar to a "ripple effect". The students hoped that the ideas that were promoted would have the expected results, both aesthetically and experientially and it was indeed a sight to remember.

ARCHI-ISOLATION

LIFE IN THE TIME OF COVID



BY SANDUNI FERNANDO

Sri Lanka Institute of Architects gives the opportunity for the Sri Lankan current and future From Australian wildfires to a persisting pandemic caused by COVID-19, 2020 has been a rollercoaster ride (the kind that leaves you nauseous and praying.) Like many universities worldwide, CSA too shut down, carrying out the academic year online despite the dire conditions while us students were confined to the comforts of home. Where once our days were filled with deadlines and models scattered throughout, found ourselves dealing with too many hours of free time almost overnight. It was initially a welcome vacation but most of us (possibly even the introverts) miss being social but this was no longer a choice. And what do we do best when unbothered by work? Wreak chaos at home! (Respect for our mothers for cleaning up after us.) From art and sculpture to baked delicacies the students of Studio-two dived into a world of creation. Here are a few to entertain and inspire you!

The messy artists, well, sort of. Gayya (Gayashini) who had already developed a hobby of drawing cartoons based on her own life developed some rather funny and relatable pieces. Drawn into the world of fashion magazines, Viniliya sketched out her own ideas experimenting with different media in her spare time. Inspiration stemmed for Ari (Tharindu) from frustration and boredom at being stuck at home, his abstract art mimic the current social condition of people. Stranded in the UK for a few months Isuri's homesickness boosted her appreciation for the human connection as she created a series of minimal art pieces while satisfying her sweet tooth with homemade pies, muffins and much more. While DJ (Dewmini J.) found self-growth through music realizing the lyrics helped breathe life into her own goth art style. And I, sought escape from reality, although I enjoyed being home. Plus, I ran out of paper for a time being and reinventing myself began with drawing on my favorite jeans (or all of them).

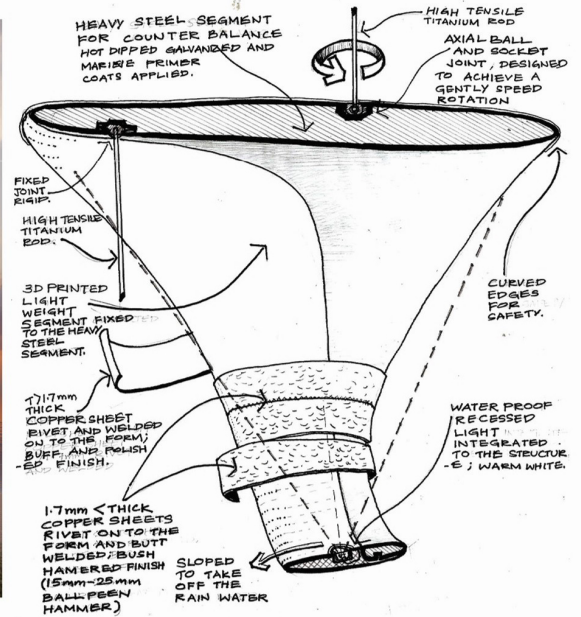
Presenting the fun- loving creators. The amateur cement masons – Dede (Devni D.) and Tharindi – workaholics who experimented with leftover bags of (possibly expired) cement. Where Dede found her forms in the leaves and added new pieces to her hobby of creating jewelry, Tharindi opted for geometric shapes (an architectural approach) ideal for small plants and cacti that could “allow plants to grow in a pretty house.” Our very own MasterChef Mahisha cooked up some wonderful baked treats finding joy in cooking for others. She was one of the few who actually looked forward to quarantine and well-deserved rest. Facing several moments of intense boredom Abu (Abudussalaam) collected leftover pieces from models and reinvented them to create his sculptures. His curiosity paid off in the form of a hand sculpture, in addition to dining on homemade Italian cuisines – pasta and pizza. Sula (Sulakshana) created everyone’s favorite snowman, Olaf, going back to her roots of quilling and paper crafting in the abundant spare time provided – she hopes to finish several more pieces before quarantine ends.

Quarantine led some of our batch mates to find motivation become entrepreneurs. For Thameesha the pandemic provided an opportunity to hone his photoshop skills aided by a friend, from not understanding the software to the founder of a logo and design page – Grayscale designs. He hopes to expand it into video manipulation in the near future and finally feels “On track!” The inseparable Vaish and Anju (Vaishini and Anjali) launched Jotter – handmade year planners for the year 2021. They follow a “customized themes for their clients designing the pages to stand out with color and creativity.

And last but not least, our very own driven campaigners. With Keshan leading them, supported by Aimee for PR materials required and Vindya translating documents to Sinhala, they campaigned for the Green Avenue Rotaract Club of Pearl Island and The Youth Wing of the Wildlife and Nature Protection Society. Diving into nature welfare and discovering a world besides architecture, they helped in several community service projects which is commendable in these difficult times.

We hope we inspired you to make the best out a difficult situation, be it baking, art, stitching or dyeing your cat purple with Necto (don't ask me how I know this). This vacation will be over before you know it, bringing us back to deadlines and sitting on the hallways wishing for relief. So, stop binging F.R.I.E.N.D.S and get movin', be creative, be odd and best of all, have fun!

LODHIYA



BY SANDUNI FERNANDO

The young minds of CSA have 'wowed' the Sri Lankan community with their awe inducing creativity on numerous occasions, the most recent being the beach sculpture competition hosted by Port City Colombo. Encouraging the hidden creativity of the Sri Lankan youth to participate in laying the foundation of their future. The beach is usually associated with fond memories; from kite flying, to a place that one retreats to find escape from urban realities coupled with a sunset on the horizon and one would find their stresses melting away like ice cream in the hot sun.

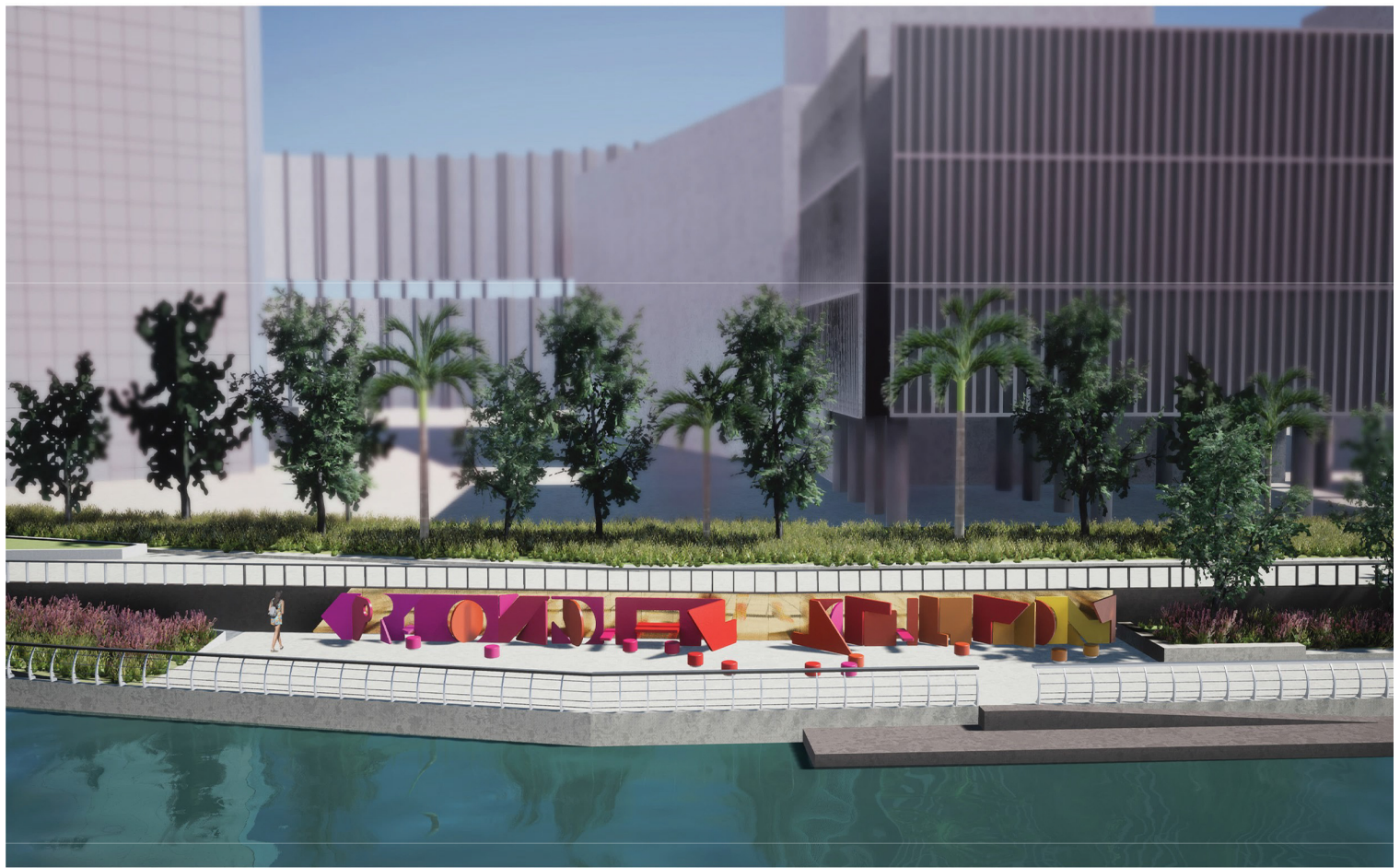
Setting the theme of the beach competition as "Dream" is symbolic, as beaches are usually considered as the ideal embodiment of a "dream-like" sensation that Port City Colombo is best known for. It gives a sense of freedom, community and allows individuality for the independent mind in an advancing world. The sculpture submitted for the competition was expected to capture the essence of this sensation.

The competition launched on 29th of July 2020 and the doors were open for submissions until the 25th of August 2020. The multitude of entries were meticulously evaluated by a jury panel which comprised of several notable figureheads such as Artist Anoma Wijewardena, Architect Ruchi Jeyanathan, Textile designer Shilanthi Abeygunawardhana and Xia Yuang, Associate Director/Landscape Designer of Atkins. Among the top 3 finalists revealed on the 9th of September 2020, included the entry submitted by our very own graduates Tharindu Perera, Viranga Waduge and Pulasthi Handunge. The students were placed under the mentorship of Ismael Abedin Ingelmo, founder of DXMID, an international Interior design and Sustainability consultancy, for a period of one month.

The sculpture in question is based on the notion that "the only constant in life is change itself," the idea is that change is slow, and it gives a false interpretation that change is non-existent; while it is a constant ongoing process. This was the thought process of Greek philosopher Heraclitus. The students cited the venture of King Vijaya as an example; at first, the Sri Lankans showed reluctance to accept the change brought by the new king, but in time these changes were subtly integrated into the culture of the future generations. Likewise, the objective of the sculpture is to create a link between the past, present and the future therefore creating a dream like experience. Leaving room for ever-lasting change and a multitude of contrasting interpretations according to the viewer's perspective.

The base material used in the sculpture is copper. Reminiscent of the copper-colored beaches of Ceylon that earned its name 'Thambapanni'. This makes it a monolithic construction. The "Lodiya" sculpture as dubbed by the designers is subjected to change on a daily basis. Its movement can alter considering various factors like the movement of the wind. However, the change that is expected over time is the discoloration of the surface as it gets plastered with patina which formulates on the surface of copper. This symbolizes the cycle of aging over time as it eventually becomes one with the environment. The silver orb hung on the center keeps the sculpture's form and shape; thereby maintaining balance. Viewing this kinetic sculpture in the distant future, one might be able to see the aspects which have changed, and realize what have remained constant. This will create a link between the past and the future while bringing in a sense of nostalgia for someone who was present to witness the creation of the sculpture. It was only a matter of time till this entry earned them the honor of being recognized as the victors of the competition. As the depth of their triumph kicked in, the winning members shared their personal experience of the victory;

Pulasthi Handunge mentioned, "Being a student and having the opportunity to call such a landmark design our own is a huge achievement for us all. Especially when it's the first public art installation in such an illustrious location. The whole series of workshops was a wonderful exposure for us as students and will help to enrich our career." Tharindu Perera further added, "For me it's an achievement of a lifetime. I have been creating assembled art for a while now so this was a great opportunity to showcase our work. It was also a great team effort as we each contributed in our own ways and we came this far because of the strengths of each team member. Winning this makes us want to keep doing more art and share it with the world". The final presentation was graced with the presence of world-renowned engineer Cecil Balmond. With such influence and inspiration accumulated along with yet another glorious triumph of our graduates, they have truly inspired us all to take the future into our own creative hands.



PLAY THE WALL

BY SANDUNI FERNANDO

The Interactive Wall competition was one of the platforms laid by Colombo Port City that allowed the young architectural minds of Sri Lanka to showcase their creative potential. The theme of this competition was set on “Vitality” accurately representing the excitement, liveliness, diversity and sense of community in the boulevard of Port City Colombo. The competition officially opened for entries on the 29th of July 2020 and accepted entries till the 8th September 2020. The entries were evaluated by the same Jury as the Beach Sculpture. The CSA Alumni who submitted an entry for the competition included the team of designers Nethmini Liyanagamage, Shavendra Goonetilleke and Azamul Huq Abdul Haleem.

Their entry narrated a tale of visual poetry which fused daily activity with the ‘greater’ vision of Port City Colombo. In 2021, the Vitality Wall aims to be a centerpiece, a visual cue that grabs the attention of visitors, engaging with them, and enriching the space around it. Its colors and anamorphic mirror will be a kaleidoscopic belt along the waterfront, capturing the panoramic view of future Colombo. Through this, the artists hoped to create an iconic ‘public place’ for the Port City.

The wall is expected to radiate a sense of belonging. By 2040, the wall will have become a part of the daily routine and a local landmark for residents. It will activate the space by inviting people to casually exercise, provide a place of rest, and present moments for photographic opportunities. In an increasingly digitalized and distant world, the wall will become a point of physical human connection, a conversation starter, a catalyst of human interactions that bring people together. This wall allows users to manipulate their personal ‘environments’ by moving these physical elements to their liking, allowing personalized experiences of the wall.

Additionally, the next issue that needed to be addressed was the changing urban context. The choice of color coding used in the design is custom made to give a solution to this issue. The pink, red and orange compliment the soft green landscape and contrasting the hard textures of surrounding skyscrapers and create a well-balanced color palette. The partially hidden golden-hued mirror behind it creates a dynamic illusory reflection of the evolving cityscape and the wall is expected celebrate the development of the CBD. Percolating through the reds, the new architecture of the city will be in a picture-perfect composition (ideal for a quick photoshoot.) Materials selected for the construction of the wall, as well as its finishing treatments was chosen carefully considering its oceanic climate, the potential for high wind, harsh sunlight, and salt-water sprays. The solution? HDPE boards! They ensure climatic durability, stability in high winds, and protection from acid rains common in air polluted cities.

This entry earned CSA the Runner-Up prize in the completion while 3 Masters students Sarala Hapuarachchi, Kawmali Waduge and Nipuni Wijerathne got an honorable mention at the interactive wall competition. Indeed a proud moment for all of us at CSA!



MACHANG

BY SANDUNI FERNANDO

Traditional Sri Lankan attire is quite common in April. Ever heard of it in December? That was what @20 2019 was all about - held on the 23rd of December 2019 at The Women's International Hall. The students of CSA and their guests dressed up in traditional attire complete with girls pinning Araliya flowers in their hair and boys in colorful sarongs.

Passersby who noticed the guests parading into the venue must have wondered in what world did Awurudu come two days before Christmas (we did enjoy their confusion.) The site was tastefully selected since it depicted traditional Sri Lankan architecture, the facades we propped up gave way to the spacious hallway that became our dance floor. The DJ on the dais played the best upbeat tracks (interrupted occasionally by a faulty sound system) making our hearts beat as one to the rhythm. Although, we had to shout at each other to be heard over the sound of music, we were all lost in the moment (no regrets about the resulting sore throats.)

With fairy lights lighting up bright children's pots, a thatched backdrop for the iconic photoshoots with hilarious handheld signs, the chaos caused by the sound of dancing feet on the wooden floor (sore feet for the ladies and gents alike) and a delicious spread supplied by the event caterer. The photobooth that gave us hardcopies of the memories of the night (until it ran out of photopaper), voting the best dressed "prince and princess", or in this case, people who had the perfect traditional get up and a spontaneous umbrella dance were the highlights of the evening. The night was a homage to the past with a modern twist and when the night drew to a close, we wished that it had lasted longer. @20 2019 by Studio-two united the machangs of CSA for a night of epic fun and paid off in treasured memories that would last a lifetime.



FAREWELL CSA

BY TAMEEZ BOHORAN

Valedictorian speech delivered by Tameez Bohoran at the CSA Graduation 2019

I've spent the past couple of months trying to reflect on the last 7 years at CSA. It reminded me of a cross country marathon. One that requires high levels of endurance and will. Everyone starts with so much energy and enthusiasm, that it's hard to tell who's in the lead. Some may pass out mid way and leave the race because maybe a marathon isn't for them. Some get cramps but try to keep going, and for some it is a breeze to finish the race. Although it's exiting to see who builds up that bit of adrenaline to bag the gold, the crowd will still cheer on everyone who crossed the line. My fellow graduates, we made it. This day validates all the blood, sweat, sleepless nights and gallons of tears that were shed over the past few years in order to go out there and move the world.

Today, I want to share with you a few things I've come to learn over the past couple of years. Firstly, nothing will prepare you to face the real world out there. Not even 7 years of architecture school that throws at you some of the biggest challenges, each one more daunting than the last, that will sometimes make you second guess your choices in life. However, it is these challenges that will mould you into a resilient individual who knows that deep down you've got it in you to keep going. Secondly, your GPA does not define you. Do not believe anyone that tells you you aren't good enough. What defines you is what you've gained as a person over time and how you could use this to transform the dying earth. And I believe as architects we have the edge to do so. Thirdly, the journey you experience is certainly more important than your destination. We can always look back at these years talk about how we managed to squeeze in those after crit parties despite the never ending assignments. How we lied to our parents that we had group work overnight so we could go dancing all night. How we had to negotiate deadlines with our lecturers because we procrastinated so much and how their blood pressure might have sky rocketed each time we'd show up without the adequate work. Nevertheless my friends, we are here, we made it. Fourthly, your batch mates may not always become like your family. That's what people may expect you to say after 7 long years. The way I see it, your batch mates will become a significant part of you whether you like them or not. We've spent over 7 of the most crucial and vulnerable years of our lives watching each other grow and transform for the better or worse.

When the rest of our friends were out there living their lives and most of all making the big bucks by 25, we were here burning the midnight oil to get through one more interim crit that may or may not take us closer to our final year. We've seen each other get torn down by critique after critique, we've seen each other at our worst and ugliest. It might actually come as a surprise to see that we actually own suits sarees and shoes as otherwise we look like the walking dead. We can never judge each other because somebody will have a hard drive full of pictures that they've saved for the annual presentation at the student stall or the talent show videos that can tear the little dignity you have tried to salvage. Your batch mates are a huge part of you and who you will become.

To the ones that did indeed become like family. 7 years is no joke. You cannot get through it alone. Each of us has had a background army fighting so we could meet those drawings submission deadlines. It's all about dragging each other along the way so that no one gets left behind. I for one couldn't have survived this final stretch without a few. To our lecturers, tutors and the staff at CSA, I'm sure some of you are relieved to finally see us graduate, for all the trouble we may have caused. We were quite the dreaded ones. You have shown us what to do, what not to do and most importantly put up with us over the past 7 years or more. Each and every one of you have been instrumental in guiding us to where we are now. We wouldn't have made it without you. To our parents, family and friends, you have been the real force behind each and every one of us here today. You have earned our scrolls as much as we did. For all the sacrifices and hardships you went through to ensure we achieved our goals, we are forever indebted. I remember how my mother would sleep on the couch just to keep me company everytime I had to pull an all nighter. How my father would never complain about driving me to the printers at the crack of dawn or doing a thousand runs to the supermarket cause I was out of redbull. I wouldn't be standing here if not for you.

To my class, each and every one of you is a winner. We crossed the finish line. Throughout these years, we've had to go through a rollercoaster of a journey together. We've grown, gained and lost. Although we might be fairly dysfunctional, we have managed to pull through and rise to the occasion when needed. I think we all agree that past two years have certainly been the most challenging of all, with us having to bid farewell to one of our own and one of our best, Nirasha, who is probably looking down upon us from heaven, proud that we overcame and made it through. My batch and I would like to dedicate this day to her. Leaving CSA certainly feels like an end of era. Today is the start of a new chapter. I have no doubt in my mind that we are going to go on and do great things in life. But as of now, let's enjoy this moment we have waited for forever and deal with the reality tomorrow!



COLOUR THE WORLD

The Dulux colors competition is an annual event open for 1st years students, as a means of allowing them to explore their creativity through color. Following the final critique, the following students were awarded cash prizes by AkzoNobel;

2018-2019

Keshan Perera, Vindhya Seneviratne, Vaishni Ambikaibalan,
Mahisha Gunawardena & Tasnim Ahlak

2019-2020

Sanggavi Thomas, Ranushki Seneviratne, Anudi Samarasekara, Dinal
Karunaratne & Dilith Kumarasinghe.



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