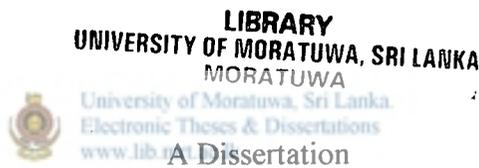


**ARCHITECTURAL COMPOSITION:
AN EXAMINATION OF ITS USE AS A DESIGN STRATEGY
TO CREATE MEANINGFUL ARCHITECTURE**



Submitted to the Department of Architecture of the
University of Moratuwa in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of

Master of Science

in

Architecture

85459



University of Moratuwa

by

**A.N.C.K. WIJESOORIYA
17-01-2004**

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DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation represents my own work, except where due acknowledgement is made, and that it has not been previously included in a thesis, dissertation or report submitted to this university or to any other institution for a degree, diploma or other qualification.

UOM Verified Signature

Signed:

(A.N.C.K. Wijesooriya)



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PREFACE

This is the dissertation submitted to the University of Moratuwa for the final examination of M.Sc. in Architecture for year 2004.

The M.Sc. dissertation is based on research and analytical thinking where the student is expected to display the skill in developing an argument into an accepted statement by proving it with research and analysis. Thus communicating it effectively.

This dissertation is examining a design Strategy already existing but not examined as a design strategy that uses the principles of composition. At the same time it is trying to identify the relation between composition and meaningful architecture.

The principles were discussed briefly while trying to illustrate as much as possible examples within Sri Lankan Context even though many written books are western in origin and the principles are illustrated through western examples.

The selected case studies even though they may not have been done conscious according to this strategy , will be analysed within the given strategy to establish meaningfulness and degree of composition and the adaptability of the design strategy.

ARCHITECTURAL COMPOSITION: AN EXAMINATION OF ITS USE AS A DESIGN
STRATEGY TO CREATE MEANINGFUL ARCHITECTURE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Declaration	....	....	....	.ii
Acknowledgements....	....	....	....	.iii
Preface	....	....	....	.iv
Table of Contents....	....	....	....	.v
List of Illustrations....	....	....	....	viii
Abstract	....	....	....	.x
Introduction	....	....	....	.01
• The Study Area	....	....	....	.02
• Criticality of The Study	....	....	....	.03
• Intention of The Study	....	....	....	.05
• Objectives of The Study	....	....	....	.05
• Scope and Limitations	....	....	....	.05
• Methodology	....	....	....	.06
 CHAPTER 01 - MEANINGFUL ARCHITECTURE(1500)				
1.1. Architecture: A Meaningful Art	....	....	....	.08
1.1.1. Architecture as an art	....	....	....	.08
1.1.2. Meaning in arts	....	....	....	.10
1.1.3. Meaning in Architecture	....	....	....	.12
1.2. Expression communicating meaning	....	....	....	.14
1.3. Levels of Meaning	....	....	....	.21
1.3.1. Representational meaning....	....	....	....	.21
1.3.2. Responsive meaning	....	....	....	.23
1.4. Essence of Meaning: Strategies Adapted	....	....	....	.25
1.4.1. Cosmic orders	....	....	....	.25
1.4.2. Functionalism	....	....	....	.27
1.4.3. Spatial progression	....	....	....	.28
1.4.4. Composition of built form....	....	....	....	.29
1.5. Concluding Remarks	....	....	....	.31
 CHAPTER 02- Composition in Architecture				
2.1. Composition	....	....	....	.33
2.2. Principles of Composition....	....	....	....	.35
2.2.1. Rhythm and Repetition	....	....	....	.35
2.2.2. Proportion	....	....	....	.36
2.2.3. Scale	....	....	....	.38
2.2.4. Unity	....	....	....	.40
2.2.5. Contrast	....	....	....	.41
2.3. Principles used in Combining of Elements....	....	....	....	.42

2.4.	Types of Compositions	....	....	....	.46
2.4.1.	Composition of form	....	....	....	.46
2.4.2.	Composition of space	....	....	....	.51
2.4.3.	Decorative Composition	....	....	....	.55
2.4.4.	Colour Composition	....	....	....	.56
2.4.5.	Textural Composition	....	....	....	.60
2.5.	Concluding Remarks	....	....	....	.61

CHAPTER 03- Composition of Form and Space as a Design Strategy

PART I- Design Strategy

3.1.	Meaningful Composition of Form and Space	..	..	..	63
3.2.	Single Element: Meaning of Shape .	....	....	....	.64
3.2.1.	Basic Shapes	....	....	....	65
3.2.2.	Transformed Shapes	..	....	....	.74
3.3.	Composing Multiple Elements	....	....	....	.78
3.3.1.	Combining Two elements	....	....	....	.78
3.3.2.	Cumulative Composition and Subtractive Composition	..	....	....	.80
3.3.2.1.	Dominant Element	...	....	....	80
3.3.2.2.	Avoiding Duality in form	....	....	....	80
3.3.3.	Geometrical Organizations	...	....	....	82
3.3.4.	Regular and Irregular Composition	....	....	....	.90
3.4.	Ordering of the composition	....	....	....	.93
3.4.1.	Axis and the Centre of Gravity	....	....	....	.93
3.4.2.	Symmetry	....	....	....	.98
3.4.3.	Repetition	....	....	....	.99
3.4.4.	hierarchy	....	....	....	101
3.5.	Composition of Surface Planes .	....	....	....	104
3.5.1.	Edges and corners	....	....	....	104
3.5.2.	Openings	....	....	....	107
3.6.	Progression through axes and centres	....	....	....	113
3.6.1.	Approach	....	....	....	114
3.6.2.	Entrance and Climax	....	....	....	116
3.6.3.	Progression path	....	....	....	117
3.7.	Concluding Remarks	....	....	....	119

PART II- Case Studies

3.8.	Introduction to Case Studies	....	....	....	121
3.9.	Case Study -01- Parliament complex at Sri Jayawardanapura	....	....	....	122
3.10.	Case Study - 02-National Museum at Colombo	....	....	....	142
3.11.	Case Study -03- Triton Hotel at Ahungalla	....	....	....	162
	CONCLUSION	....	....	....	180
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	....	....	....	190

ABSTRACT

There is no doubt to the fact that architecture must be meaningful. This is needed in Architecture as it is an art; yet a unique kind of art. Expression of the built form will convey the meaning or the message in Architecture. there are different expressions that contribute to the total expression in architecture: Symbols of function, Expression of technique, Expression of Form, Expression of Space, Expression of functional Elements, Expression of decorative elements. It the grasping of the total expression that one will be able to understand the true meaning of Architecture.

There are several strategies since ancient times that man has experimented trying to create meaningful architecture. Earliest attempt was to reflect the cosmic realities they believed through Architecture,

geometric principles in composition to create meaningful built forms , space concept was exploited in creating meaningful spatial experiences and the concept that for follows function was used in creating meaningful architecture. Composition plays a major role in determining the expression of the built form when it finally comes to realising of the concept into architecture.

The principles involved in architectural composition are numerous but proportion, scale, unity, element in contrast and accentuation are essential to be discussed. The principles of combining elements and ordering principles are also widely used in architectural composition. Several types of compositions prevails each having their own implications: composition of Form, Composition of Space, Composition of progression path, Composition of functional elements, Decorative Composition.

Merely understanding the principles would serve no purpose unless the methods of applications are researched and studied. As composition is relation of parts to the whole a composition strategy would start from the single element then transforming it to the required form and then combining of different elements according to principles. After composition of basic form the spaces within the form will be composed or the composition of plan may occur. Yet this is a two way process where the plan can revise the form and form again can revise the plan. The ordering and articulation must be based on the axes and centres of the composition to make it really meaningful. To take the strategy further in to making the built form more meaningful proper surface articulation must be done.

In this way composition can be successfully used to create meaningful built forms, which serve the ultimate purpose of architecture.