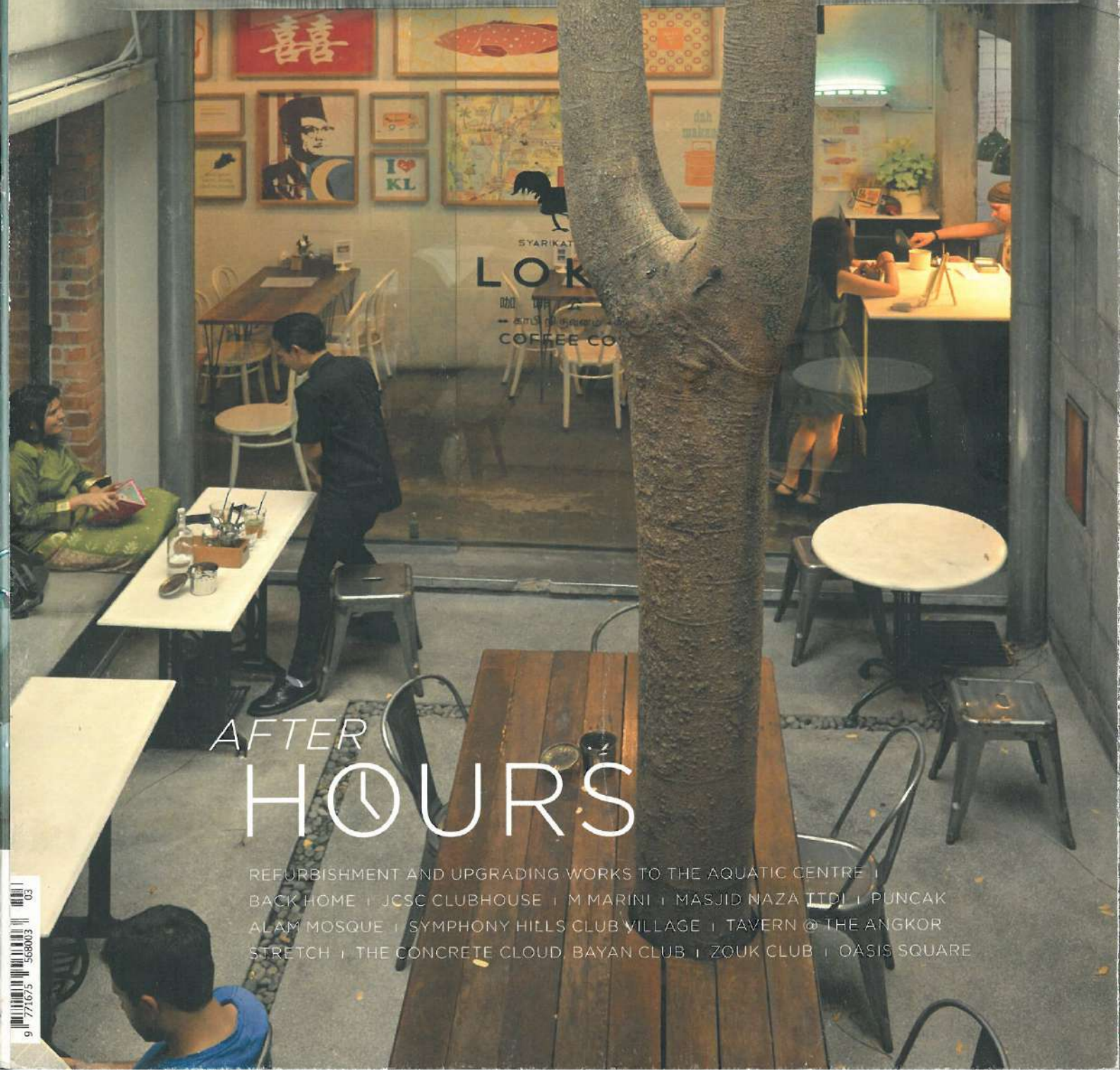


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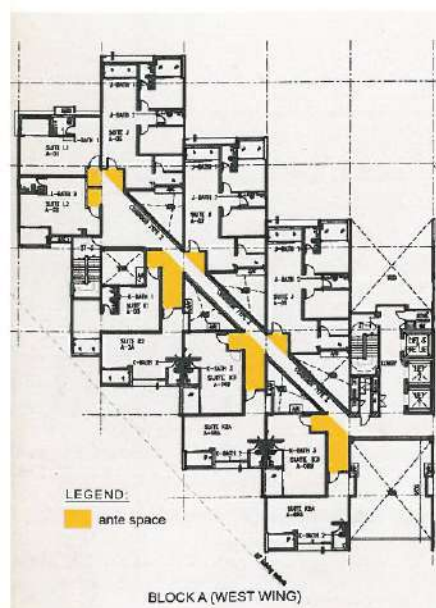
AFTER HOURS

REFURBISHMENT AND UPGRADING WORKS TO THE AQUATIC CENTRE |
BACK HOME | JCSC CLUBHOUSE | M MARINI | MASJID NAZA TTDI | PUNCAK
ALAM MOSQUE | SYMPHONY HILLS CLUB VILLAGE | TAVERN @ THE ANGKOR
STRETCH | THE CONCRETE CLOUD, BAYAN CLUB | ZOUK CLUB | OASIS SQUARE

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A NEW PERSPECTIVE ON BÉTON ARMÉ

Reinventing facades, making spaces



FROM LEFT: Typical floor plan of Univ 360 Place Block A East Wing by Atelier Alan Teh Architect; The triangular pocket spaces of Univ 360 Place



We have seen tremendous growth in high-rise developments across the country and around the world in the past decades. Throughout the years, there is only one significant objective to the high-rise typology – to multiply the floor plate to make full use of air space due to economics and limited urban space. The failing Modernism's Super Block ideologies were heavily debated amongst academicians as well as practitioners.

If we were to travel back in time to revisit Le Corbusier's *Maison Dom-ino* and his *Five Points For a New Architecture* and even the *Unite d'Habitation*, there was so much optimism and positivity in them. The original ideologies of the pilotis with elevated slab for greenery, linkage of external and internal space, ample light and

ventilation and the communal green space as propagated by Le Corbusier were so convincing and livable in his *Ville Contemporaine* composed of *Immeuble-Villa* units. However, as the economy of scale took priority, this large urban form began to consume everything within it. The form was retained but the ideology was discarded. Soon, adversity grew and the Western society

started questioning the relevance of the Modernist blocks. The Pruitt-Igoe urban housing project in St. Louis has become an icon of urban renewal failure.

As we were doing research on the theoretical background of our design approach, the *Plan Obus for Algiers* by Le Corbusier caught our attention. The image was exactly what we were trying to achieve – to bring the inhabitants back to greens, light and ventilation rather than confining them in concrete boxes.

In our latest completed work Univ 360 Place, there were a few experimentations made with the conventional column-beam-shear wall structural system at the early stage of design, which was intended to set a new paradigm in the architectural approach for reinforced concrete high-rise buildings.

The appearance of a building is very much dependent on the initial stage of design – block and grid planning. From a conventional square grid system, the arrangement of the units was sheared from a linear formation to a 45 degree formation. This has created triangular pocket spaces, substantially and intentionally, for social interactions as well as more external walls that enable the placement of window openings.

At the same time, it forms a dynamic building shape.

Zooming into micro planning, the typology of each unit was varied by changing the position of the balcony and introducing bay windows to the habitable rooms within the controlled working grid. This approach has enhanced the quality of the internal space and provided some variations to its external appearance.

Another variation we explored was the removal of units horizontally within the shear wall block at mid-level to create communal spaces. This sky terrace was achieved by introducing mini transfer beams to convert the shear wall into a column and back to shear wall again at the units below. The resulting space is a large interconnected communal space with a better visual connection compared to the shear wall system that divides up the large space.

This project has enabled us to set up a more systematic design and technical framework to work with reinforced concrete structures to allow more possibilities of a better, greener and communal-friendly urban block, and we are optimistic that it will shed some positive light in the spirit of *architecture nouvelle*. ❦

Plan Obus for Algiers (1930) by Le Corbusier

