

S Q U A R E R O O M S . C O M . S G

Square Rooms

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Space HDB Executive Maisonette

Location Balestier

Reno period Five months

Home to A family of five and their pet dog

Reno budget Undisclosed

New Horizons

Wanting to expand the boundaries of Executive Maisonettes, the designers turned this home's pain points into its best features.

Text YUEN YI YING **Photos** STUDIO PERIPHERY

Having lived here for several years, the residents, a family of five, decided to give their space a full overhaul now that the kids have grown up. Their home was showing its age and had been more child-oriented in its planning, and the family wanted a more comfortable and elevated refresh that would better suit their current stage in life.

Alex and Jay Liu of Right Angle Studio were tasked with the revamp, honing in on pain points that have irked the family such as a dark, stuffy and uncomfortably warm central stairwell and missed pockets of spaces that could be better optimised. To address these issues, the designers, who are brothers, proposed a major spatial reshuffle to improve flow and functionality. Aesthetically, they

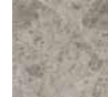
took cues from a seascape photo their clients discovered, a piece titled *Sea Swim* by Lynda Laird, an award-winning photographic artist from England.

The homeowners loved the serenity of Lynda's art and purchased the print to be showcased at the mezzanine. "With this artwork being the centrepiece of the apartment, we decided to base our entire design theme around the photo, thus calling this project the 'Ripple Apartment'," shared the designers.

The concept was to "invite as much natural light into the space whenever and wherever possible," the duo explained. Additionally, they recognised that a key highlight of this unit was the double-volume space at the stairwell. "This area is usually neglected in many apartments,

often causing a dark and lifeless zone," the designers revealed. Indeed, this was the case here so the designers alleviated the problem by inserting window openings on the walls flanking the top of the stairs. This allowed the two rooms on either side to have a view of the stairs and concurrently improved ventilation and illumination across the disparate sections. Adding artificial skylights above the art piece was another masterful move, amping up the effect of natural light and creating the illusion of a top-floor apartment. These key changes not only breathed new life into the stairwell but along with other tweaks to improve the flat's flow and function, eventually transformed the home into a noteworthy space.

HOME IN SPO



Waterfall counter surface
Tundra Grey Marble

Previous page, left and below

Living Room

Reminiscent of a peaceful Japanese *ryokan* (traditional inn), the living room features an ash sliding screen and walls with a limewashed finish that recalls *shikkui* (plaster) surfaces. A custom sofa and armchair sit on opposite ends of the room, creating a more sociable setting.

Right

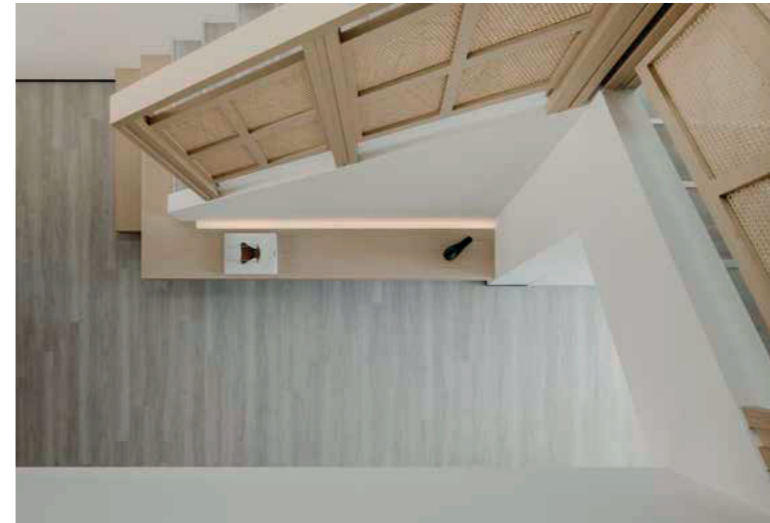
Dry Kitchen

The home's original entryway opened up to face a kitchen wall, but for a more spacious impression, Alex and Jay took down this wall and clad the elongated space with ash panels. A dry kitchen used as a bar and breakfast counter sits at the end, encouraging interaction with the dining area. The fluted wall conceals the entrances to the wet kitchen and a bedroom, keeping the spatial navigation here more focused, explained the designers.



Dining area

"When it comes to bespoke furniture for our projects, the Studio likes to explore forms through origami. That is, using simple forms to intersect and create the ideal structure," the designers state. They designed the dining table with a cylindrical pyramid base and topped it with Tundra Grey marble in a different tone from the bar counter. "If you view the table from the top, it resembles the moon's surface," they reveal. The dining chairs are Fritz Hansen Drop Chairs designed by Arne Jacobsen.



Left

Stairway

Refreshed with a new handrail, the stairway also features a step that wraps around the structure to create a bench.

Below

Central Stairwell

The clients discovered this serene seascape photo by Lynda Laird, which became the inspiration for this apartment. To improve airflow and light in the formerly dark, stuffy and hot stairwell, the designers inserted window openings on either side. Additionally, they took advantage of the additional headroom in this space to install an artificial skylight which illuminates the artwork beautifully and simulates living on the top level. To create this addition, the designers added openings to the ceiling and installed LED strips set at a specific colour temperature to evoke a serene effect. The openings were then closed up with white acrylic panels which create a cloud-like effect.





Main Bedroom

The bedroom has a calming and hotel-like appearance with the addition of the glass window, soft atmospheric light and a pale palette. "We wanted the space to feel clean and uncluttered so the forms were kept simple without compromising on functionality," the designers explained.



Main Bathroom

The clients asked for a more luxurious bathroom, so Alex and Jay proposed bolder-hued materials. The bathroom was also spatially reconfigured to maximise functionality.

