

- A book dedicated to homeowners and designers concerning about design and decoration of a small home.

- A collection of 31 projects completed worldwide, providing the latest practical reference guide on how to create a cozy home.

- In the design narratives, the designers talked about their design process and experience, including layout, circulation, furniture and furnishings, and decoration.

SMALL HOME

30 m²
~
80 m²

Layout and Decorating

Patrick Lam

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DESIGN
MEDIA
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LIMITED

SMALL HOME

30 m²
~
80 m²

Layout and Decorating

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- Space
- Moving Line
- Storage
- Furniture
- Materials
- Furnishing
- Color
- Style

DESIGN MEDIA PUBLISHING (UK) LIMITED

SMALL

H **30 m²**
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Layout and Decorating

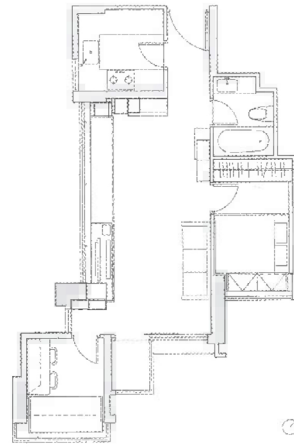
Patrick Lam

Design Strategies of Small Residence

By Patrick Lam, Founder of Sim-Plex Design Studio



Bay House Concept Sketch



Bay House Plan



Bay House Living Room Details

Hong Kong is known for its skyscrapers and busy urban landscapes. However, within the dense context of the city, we used Hong Kong's crowded landscape as inspiration to creating design solutions with adaptive complexity for residential living. Skilled in both architecture and fine arts, we think of every possibility a small space could offer.

I lived in a small, old tenement apartment in Kowloon City for many years. This long-term experience of living in a tiny space forced me to investigate the possibilities of expanding a limited space. To me, designing a tiny space is even more difficult than designing at a bigger scale since we have to think of several spatial scenarios to expand the possibilities. Therefore, even more time is consumed for the design process, but the end result is rewarding.

The below are a few points of the design strategy of Sim-Plex for designing small residence:

1. Live Beyond the Limit

Not only lacking of space is a common phenomenon in the world, but also lacking of imagination of space. I and my collaborators reinforce a core vision: to enrich our living environment with endless possibilities within a limited space.

2. Search "Complexity" Among "Simplicity"

Originally, space and requirements for living were simple. What we are trying to do is search for natural and adaptive complexity or spatial transformation among the simple details of living. After researching on the patterns of living, we aim to improve and expand the possibilities and imagination of limited space. That is also where the name "Sim-Plex" comes from – "Searching for complexity among simplicity".

3. Ambiguity Between Art, Design and Living Space

Art opens up our imagination of living. With the strong belief of "the theory of avant-garde" of Peter Burger in 1984, art is not only restricted to gallery and separated from living. The practice is redefining the balance point between art, design and living space. I studied for Masters in Fine Arts for two years after being an architect for some time. I was frustrated with how art was being kept within an exhibition hall or being restricted as an "art piece to visit". I believed a true avant-garde should release the work from the restriction of any physical location or this mindset of an "art piece". Therefore, in the work of Sim-Plex, we are constantly searching for a balance point between art and living through the projects.

4. Deconstruction and Reconstruction

Not bounded by the original definition of every space and furniture, Sim-Plex is eager to deconstruct every single part, with the process of analyzing and merging, the space is reconstructed with new definition. For example, a dining table is not an isolated item but integrated with the cabinet and with the storage space to put in some chairs. The definition of the furniture is deconstructed and reconstructed in a new way.

5. Site Specific and Uniqueness

Design is tailor made for every site and this leads to the uniqueness of every project by Sim-Plex. In the case when working for an old tenement apartment, we would try to research about the materials along the old staircase and lobby of the apartment, and then inspired the interior design of the apartment and create the dialogue between the inside and outside.

6. Poeticness, Imageries and Story Telling

Routine lifestyle restricted our imagination. We tend to drill into every part of the project: background, history, clients, site, etc. and grab a line of thinking which forms the spine of a story. The story-telling genes of the projects sometimes create poeticness

connecting with scenery in nature and injecting imageries into our lives.

7. Maximization of Capacity

Micro apartment is no strangers to Hong Kong, where space is premium. Storage space is therefore becoming more and more valuable. How do we design our storage space smartly? Space is treasurable and it is the mission of Sim-Plex to save each space and maximize the capacity. In many projects of Sim-Plex, storage platform or ceiling would be used to create extra storage.

8. Transformation and Choices of Living

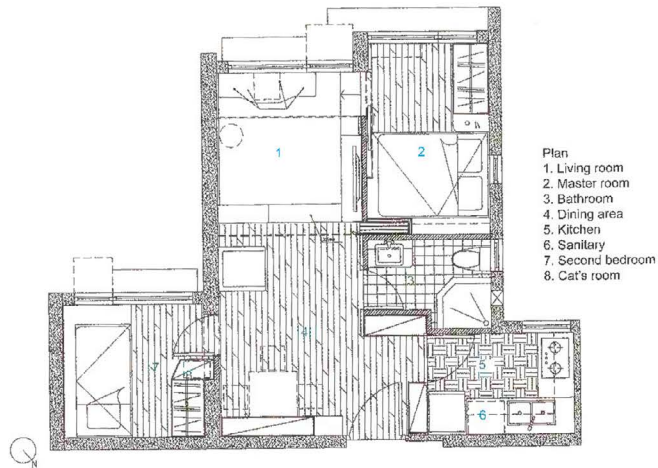
To maximize the space of living, the practice investigates to incorporate flexibility into space. Transformation of space creates the choice of living. There are many kinds of solutions to search for the potential of architecture and space, but we believe transformable space or extendable furniture can help to create flexibility for free space, and allow to serve another function when necessary.



40 m²
~
50 m²

The Pets Playground Between Two Generations

Creating playground for pets, and achieving a balance between privacy and communion through layout design



Location: Hong Kong, China

Completion: 2019

Area: 42 m²

Design Company: Sim-Plex Design Studio

Lead Designer: Patrick Lam

Photography: Patrick Lam

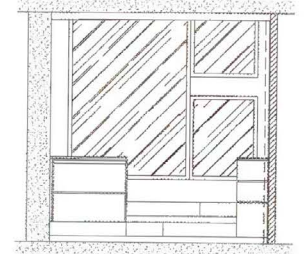
Main Materials: Wood, ecological melamine faced board, fritted glass

Background

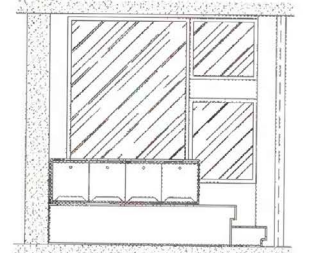
The young couple treat their pets like family members. The pets have their own personality and need to have their own space. The owners also choose to live with the mother so as to take care of each other. They are eager for a new living space which could give the couple, mother and pets a partly private and partly communal space. Sim-Plex then created a flexible layout for the young couple, Ken and Teri. The pets could have their own space of activities, and it could fulfill the different living requirements of the two generations of people.

Design Concept

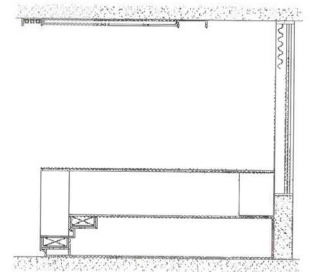
"Pets Playground" not only is a project designed for pets, but also as a standpoint to achieve a balance between privacy and communion through spatial layout, bringing a new inspiration to the co-living social problems of the young and elderly.



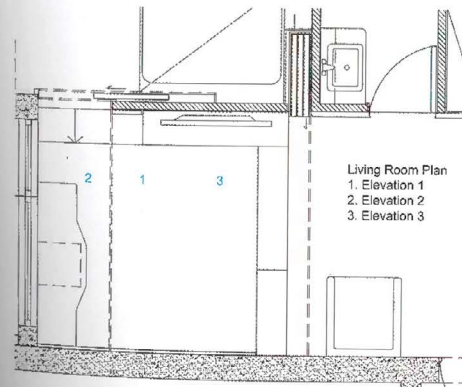
Elevation 1



Elevation 2



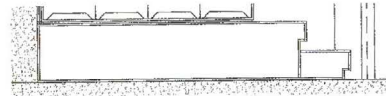
Elevation 3





The Circulation of Parrot, Cat and Three People

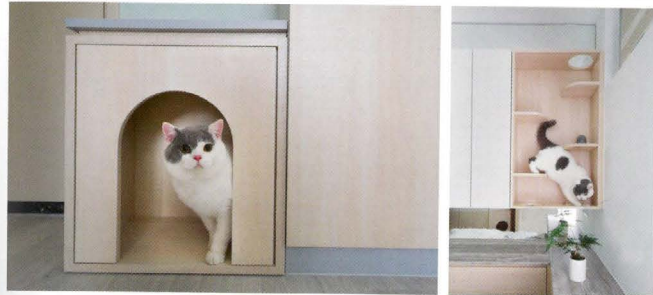
Ken and Teri raise a parrot and the mother raises a cat. The parrot needs to live in a large cage and preferably could get the sunshine. In terms of the layout, the master bedroom is connected to the living room, while the mother's bedroom is connected to the dining room. After consultations with the owner, Sim-Plex decided to place the parrot cage on the low cabinet in front of the large window of the living room, which is closer to the master bedroom. The middle section of the cabinet is larger at top, which is more fit to the parrot cage; setting in middle of the window, it is because of the direction to the west, so that the sun could be captured in the parrot cage in the afternoon; the parrot sometimes would come out from the cage, so the top light trough of the whole house could not be too deep, to prevent the parrot to foul on it. The three fritted glass sliding doors could also



Platform Section 1



Platform Section 2



be closed when the parrot is out to prevent direct contact between the parrot and the cat; the wood platform of the living room master bedroom is connected to the dining room, which helps reduce the chance of the cat from walking towards the parrot's area.

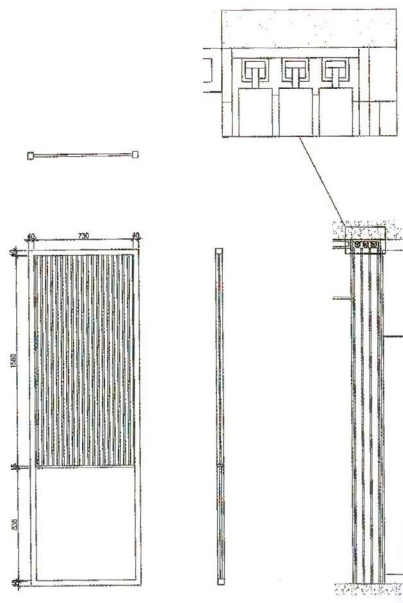
The cat has been living with the mother for many years. Although the house is not big and there are three people living in it, the mother also wants a space where the cat could move around. Sim-Plex then designs the dining table to be integrated into the dining room cabinet; most of the time, it is hidden to create more space for the cats; there is a cat toilet next to the entrance, and it is also a seat for changing shoes before going out; the central part of dining room cabinets is a void with cat round holes and walkways; mother bedroom's wardrobe is integrated with a cat house; the cat could also come from the bed front low cabinet, through the cat walkway, and jump to the top.



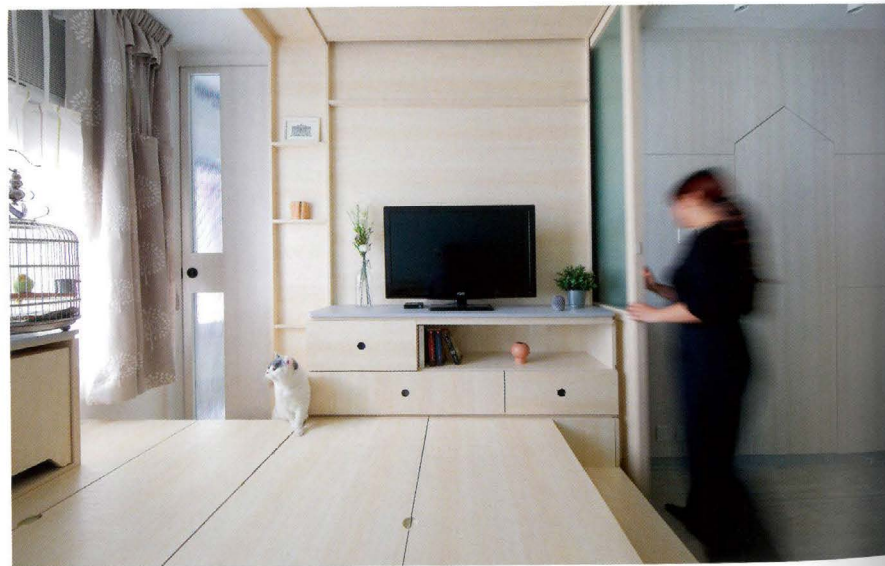


The Privacy and Communion of the Young and Old Generations

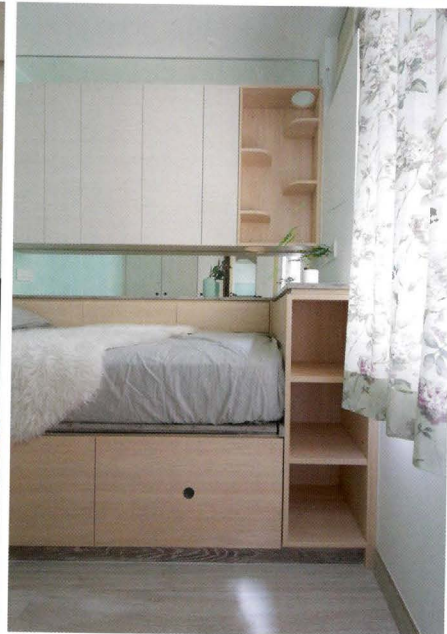
In Hong Kong, the children of many families will leave their home after growing up. The elders left behind are inevitably lonely. The causes are also related to the increasing emphasis on privacy and freedom of the younger generation. After receiving this project, Sim-Plex hopes that the flexibility of the layout will enable the homeowners and their mother to have private and communal living spaces which would stop creating the same problem.

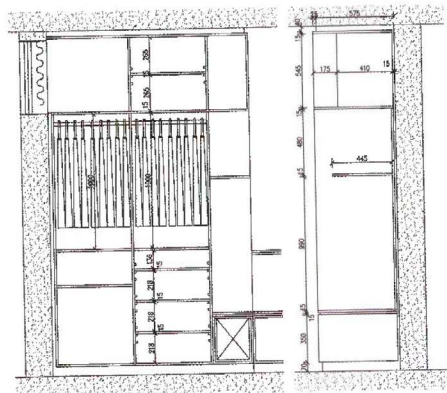


Door Section



The three frosted glass sliding doors are placed in the middle of the dining room, cleverly becoming the separation of the zone of master bedroom and living room, and the zone of mother bedroom and dining room. When the couple needs privacy or the parrot comes out, they can close the sliding doors; during dining or family gathering, the sliding doors could be opened to form a large space.





Wardrobe Elevation

Materials

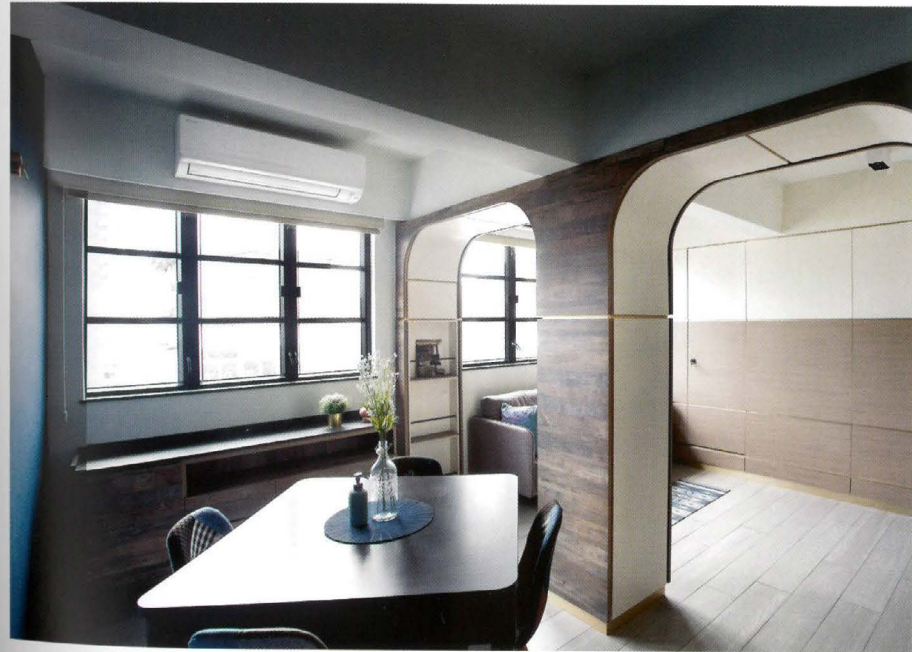
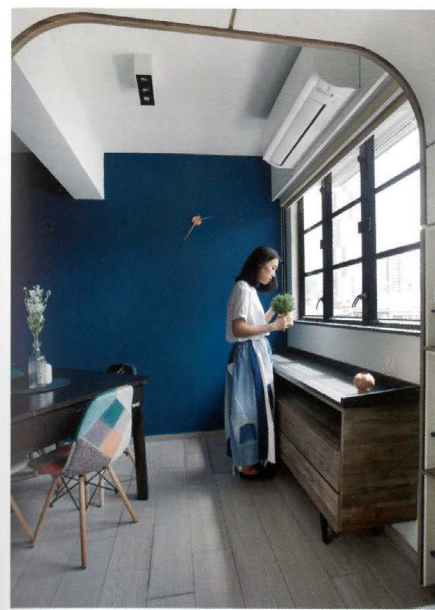
In the material selection, the master room and the living room area are decorated with light maple wood and gray color, while the mother room and the dining room are mainly white oak color; the bright color solves the problem that the dining room is far away from the window and the light is not quite sufficient. Although there is difference of materials in the two districts, there is also sense of harmony to ensure the two zones could also be treated as one space.

A Balance Between Storage and Safety

Ken and Teri hope to have a large storage space. Sim-Plex proposed a wood platform layout, but after considering the elderly, finally the platform was set in the living room, and the mother could easily come from her room to the dining room, bathroom and kitchen. This design takes care of the safety of elderly and also makes it more difficult for the cats to enter the parrot area.

In the low cabinet at the bottom of the big window in the living room, four movable chairs are placed below, and could be used together when the dining table is opened; the kitchen and bathroom doors are all topped with a house shape, which is more suitable for the theme of pets. The kitchen door is also embedded with fritted glass so that the inner can be observed when cooking. All wooden furniture is made of ecological melamine faced board to avoid the cat scratching, and this reduces the amount of formaldehyde which creates damage to human and pets.



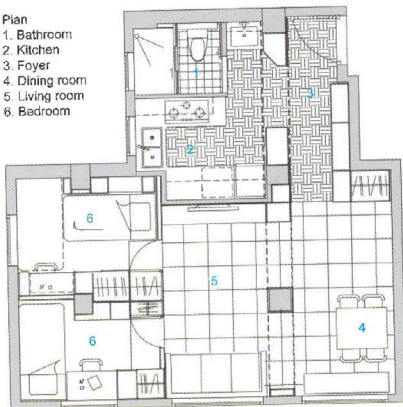


40 m²
~
50 m²

Arch Co-Residence

Experiencing the beauty of space between the arches

- Plan
1. Bathroom
 2. Kitchen
 3. Foyer
 4. Dining room
 5. Living room
 6. Bedroom



Background

The Mood of Old Tenement Apartment as an Inspiration

Sim-Plex has renovated a 49sqm old tenement apartment in Hong Kong, with a symbolic arch-form cabinetry as a spine of the project. Three youths will move into this 1970s old tenement apartment in one of the oldest district, Kowloon City in Hong Kong. "The conflict between young people and old

Location: Kowloon City, Hong Kong, China

Completion: 2018

Area: 49 m²

Design Company: Sim-Plex Design Studio

Photography: Sim-Plex Design Studio

Main Materials: Wood, mosaic tile, marble

district is already an interesting point to us. When we first examine the site, the nostalgic green mosaic tiles and terrazo floor along the staircase and lobby impressed us a lot. However, when we stepped into the apartment, the supreme big columns block the main space, which gives us a big design challenge," explained by Sim-Plex.

Design Concept

Arch as the Foundation of Nostalgia and Daily

"How could we transform these design constraints to suit the daily needs of youth and respond to the context of tenement house or even the old district?" continued by Sim-Plex.

The main concept is to integrate the cabinetry with the columns and beams to form an arch wall. Not only to camouflage with the column structure but also integrate daily functions and provide a symbolic meaning. Sim-Plex examined the pattern, texture and size of the lobby tiles. The selection of the vintage pattern floor tiles



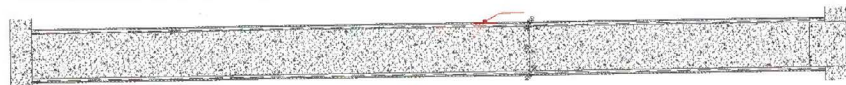
and marble wall tiles at the foyer helps to establish a contextual relationship. The usage of raw wood surface and deep blue wall paint also enhance the memorial experience.

The Beauty of Youth Co-Living Space

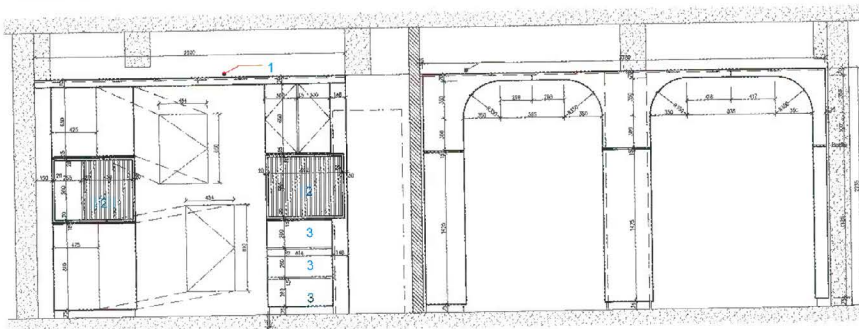
Hong Kong is famous for its expensive land and rent price, and recently, there is a trend to represent a co-living space for youth to share and save the cost. Old tenement apartments become the common target. However, some of these co-living units have sacrificed

the spatial quality in order to pack more people and reduce the cost. "We sincerely hope this project could set a standard for co-living," said Sim-Plex.

After the renovation, an arch cabinetry is set across the living dining room, semi-open kitchen and bathroom. Circulation and space are penetrating between the arches. It is the spine of the apartment and providing storage, magazine tray, lighting, etc for the daily needs. The spatial arrangement of the arch also maximizes the penetration of daylight.



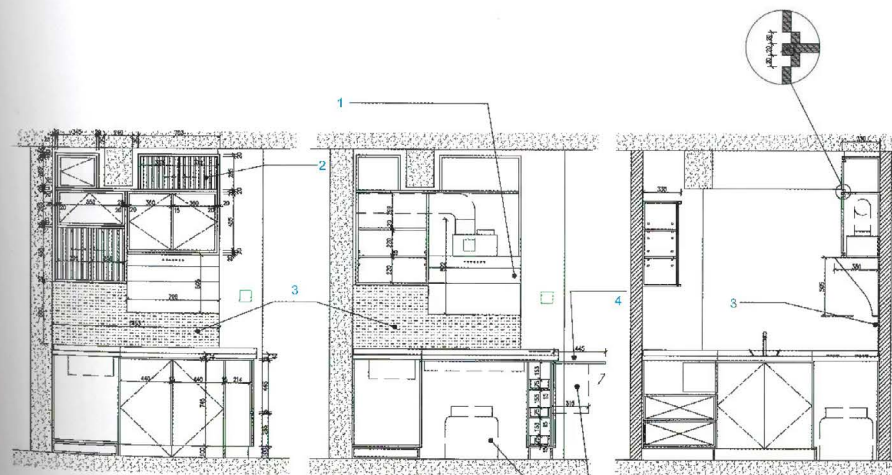
Living Room Cabinet Plan



Living Room Cabinet Elevation

1. LED light strip
2. Embossed glass
3. Drawer

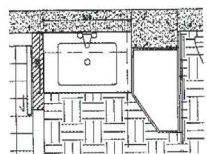
The kitchen is behind the arch and is opened up to the foyer. The adoption of fritted glass increases the sense of lightness. Vintage patterned tiles are used on the floor to create a similarity from the outside lobby to the inner.



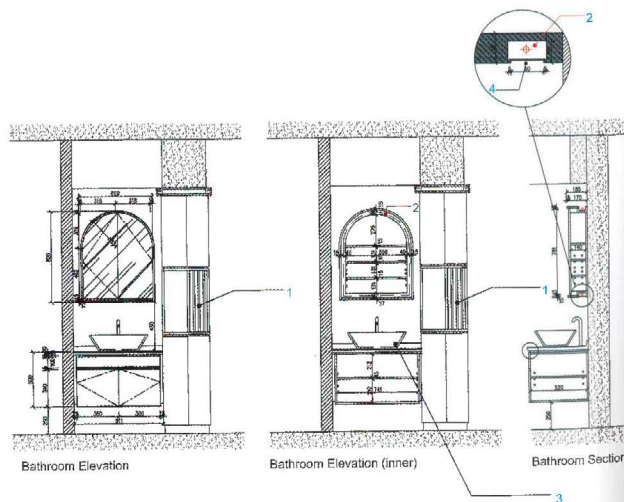
Kitchen Elevation

1. Kitchen ventilator
2. Embossed glass
3. Stainless steel back panel
4. Raised table
5. Open support plate
6. Medium gas canister

The water basin of the bathroom is opened to maximize the space and create flexibility in daily usage. The two bedrooms doors are concealed behind the wooden wall. Wooden platform is added for each room to enhance the storage. This project demonstrate a prototype of a better co-living space for tenement apartment in Hong Kong.



Bathroom Plan



- 1. Embossed glass
- 2. LED light strip
- 3. Wash basin
- 4. Ground glass

Bathroom Elevation

Bathroom Elevation (inner)

Bathroom Section

