



Pyramid and a quadrangle

Theatre person N.S. Yamuna's home in Injambakkam blends the modern and the traditional to create an aesthetic, yet highly functional, living space



Location: Injambakkam
Architect: Benny Kuriakose

It was just a thatched hut that peaked skywards at its centre. Theatre person and trustee of Tejaswi Foundation N.S. Yamuna had it built by artisans from Auroville to provide a setting for theatre workshops. Five years back, when Yamuna decided to convert this space into a home she could live in, the shape of the thatched structure seemed too distinctive a spatial expression to let go off. So, architect Benny Kuriakose decided to retain the shape of the



SERENE LIVING The tiled roof and house proper (clockwise, from top left), mezzanine platform with study, the elegant interiors with athangudi tiled floors, and N.S. Yamuna. PHOTOS: HEMA VIJAY

structure, and build the house along the lines of a pyramid.

A brick layer was raised along the periphery of the thatched space (where earlier, seating ledges had been positioned) to form external walls. Mangalore tiles over were used to line the external face of the sloping roof. The peripheral cuddapah seating ledge was narrowed down by a foot to make for art deco ledges that now run on the inner edge of the house's perimeter walls.

At the very centre of the pyramid, where the height of the structure is about 30 feet, a mezzanine platform was raised to locate an open study. This study overlooks a sweepingly huge space which encompasses the living,

dining, kitchen, and other spaces. There is a flight of steps from the study, which takes you up right to the top of the pyramid, whereby you get to step on to a small, cozy, wooden-floored space with windows all around.

Meanwhile, inside the house, beautiful, sea green athangudi tiles on the floors generate a sense of dreamy, fluid dynamics. The ancestral old wood furniture and copper knick-knacks that N.S. Yamuna has retained adds to the aesthetics of the house. Dashes of other colours pop up here and there, as from the scarlet lampshade that stands by the sunken quadrangle right underneath the study. As for the house's private spaces, they lie on the other side of this quadrangle.