

# The Art and Science



Anang Karna

of creating form out of fantasy By Kate Allen



Komang Suardika



Photo by Nirwana Group Ltd

The architect Komang Suardika, of Jeghier Architect, is only 29 years old, and for someone of such youth he has much experience across South East Asia, working on many projects with his architectural partner Anang Karna. Over four years this partnership has forged a deep friendship and mentor relationship where Anang Karna with Komang Suardika through his vast knowledge and experience into a space. In conversation Komang Suardika is dynamic; his hands shape and design the air before him as his eyes focus on the images he is creating.

Komang Suardika comes from a successful Singaraja family. His father was a coffee and vanilla farmer,



Photo by Richard Watson

while his brother and sister are working in electronics and tourism. As a child of this family Komang Suardika began his love of design early, excelling in drawing at school where, he tells me, he always achieved 8 or 9 out of ten for each piece of work.

Inspired by the work of Frank Lloyd Wright, particularly "Falling Water," Komang Suardika entered Udyana University in Denpasar, Bali to study architecture in 2001. He has emerged confident and competent and eager to expand his ideas into real experience and has been working on projects from office buildings, private residences, Boutique Hotel, to a Resort in areas as diverse as Hong Kong, Kuala Lumpur to Reunion Island, Taiwan and Costa Rica.

He has discovered a love for working with clients who enjoy being able to expand on the creative process, he likes the ideas and dreams that come from his clients and the challenge of turning dreams into reality, making the imagined real and the intangible concrete.

Like Frank Lloyd Wright, Komang wishes not to be defined by a signature style. He wants to be known for his freedom of expression in design and this is no self centred dream, this is also a dream he has for Bali: that Bali be looked to, as it was in the past as a centre, a generator of arts, crafts and dance. Today though, in the twenty first century, it could be looked to as a place of exemplary designs that all find their place within a great movement of modern design.



Photo by Richard Watson

Whilst fully embracing all that modern technology has to offer, entwine these forward movements with the charm and style of the past, the traditional Balinese structures infused with great flashes of inspiration from Turkey and the Mediterranean, or the beauty of Hindu architecture in India combined with the modern villa concept.

Komang Suardika talks as enthusiastically of blending design, form and function as a chef might talk of blending ingredients for a feast or a wine maker

speaking of his grapes. His youthful enthusiasm and his ability to think way outside the box makes him an engaging conversationalist and it is easy to imagine the great joy you could have in getting Komang to design your dream project. It would be actually quite tempting to challenge him with the wildest of dreams but for one very realistic draw back. His mentor has a great length of experience in masonry, construction and form and knowing Komang you could find that by spinning him your wildest dream he would actually find a way to create it in the three dimensional world.

I asked him what his first step is in recreating a client's desire into a plan, a blue print and finally a structure. He described for me the conversations he likes to have with his client and then with all that shared knowledge in his mind he visits the site. Here he enters a meditative state and searches for the 'feel' of the site.

This might sound a little far out but he assures me there is an energy that he can feel, he gets a sense of what is where, what would suit which aspect and he stays on the site as long as is necessary to feel he has an understanding of the ground which will become his

canvas and his own homage to the great art of architecture. Bali is fortunate to have claimed back one of its sons as the continued offers to work overseas were tempting but Komang has made a commitment to his home and, asked where in the world, to do anything he wanted, he would go, his answer was immediate: "Bali, I would always choose Bali."

He continued to explain why. How the craftsmen of Bali are so gifted, how almost everything that is needed can be found in Bali and how easy it is to access imports from India or China to enhance the visions of his clients. With young men like Komang around the future of development in Bali is looking beautiful.

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