

Playbook

“Weaving the bigger Picture”

1. Introduction to the Game

“Weaving the bigger picture” is a game that invites architecture students, design students and others interested in the work of South Asian architect Minnette De Silva to interactively learn about her work through exploring one of her later built works—the Kandy Arts Centre, built in 1984. While the game attempts to bring more awareness about the Kandy Arts Centre project among the wider public it is also an invitation to explore the broader themes, related to her work such as, de-colonialism, environment, community, and gender. Sri Lanka has a *history of a 300 yearlong period of colonialization. Although 1948 is known as the year of independence it is hard to trace a clear breaking point from the influence of colonialism that had influenced the citizens’ very ways thinking and ordering the world. The struggles and efforts for*

De Silva within her practice and her role as a female architect through time suggests in some ways how Sri Lanka’s relation to colonial processes and questions of power changed through time. We invite players to create their own narratives surrounding the history of this building. The players should aim to identify the correct story lines, which are depicted as illustrations. But as you will see there would be multiple plausible narratives. We hope that by engaging in narrative building and debating on the plausibility of the narratives you will be able to immerse yourself in some of the issues that she was navigating within the project and be able to do so not only through the evaluation of facts but also through emotion and empathy. It is, after all, about understanding the bigger picture.

2. Game rules

Number of players

The game can be played by a single player or a group of friends who want to learn more about the Kandy Arts Centre.

Components

The game contains 4 groups of cards (input cards, element cards, actor cards and friction cards)

Each card has a drawing or a question with a code on the front to make it easy to identify, and explanatory

On order to keep the cards better organized we prepared a sorting bar.

Input cards ·

On the front of the input cards, the players can find the opening question. Each of these cards indicate the beginning of a narrative about of the Kandy Arts Centre.

The players will try to complete the narrative using the following cards:

- Element cards
- Actor cards
- Friction cards

The code for the input cards is a single dot. You can check the correct answers on the back.

Element cards ··

The element cards show particular parts of the Kandy Arts Centre.

Turn this card over to learn more about its history and read the basic principles Minnette de Silva uses to design these elements.

The code of the element cards is two dots.

Actor cards ···

Actor cards show the main characters who were involved with the design the building apart from Minette.

Different people with different interests had different influences on the story of the Kandy Arts Centre.

The code of the actor cards is three dots.

Friction cards ····

The friction cards show the main issues Minnette de Silva faced when she designed the Kandy Arts Centre. These issues often manifested as tensions or contradictions in the process of building, and Minette had to find ways of working with these tensions and contradictions. The code of the friction cards is four dots.

Sorting bar

The sorting bar is used to sort cards. It will help you to sort the cards. On the sorting bar you can see four columns with a code from one to four dots. You need to sort the cards into these four groups before you start the game.

o Please don't hesitate, if the bigger picture is not continuous, many themes overlap or weave together in the Kandy Arts Centre, one of the side goals of the game is to discuss these overlaps. In other words, we want experience that even though there one narrative appears as the correct answer in relation to recordings of the project history that there are, in fact, many ways of making these connections can be made based on the same set of facts. We hope you get a feeling for how to talk about those connections.

o To get the right answers, you can always check the back of the input cards! In the end, you will again get one row of a continuing bigger picture.

- Now you can continue in a similar way with the rest of the questions.

Step 02 – creation of bigger picture

- At the end you get five storylines with continuous rows of bigger picture.
- Now explore the bigger picture that appears at the end.
- To us this picture represents one of the most important quality of De Silva's practice. Do you think so too? What is the single word you will use to describe this picture?

4. How to play

Step 00 - sorting of cards

- First, make sure the cards are turned face up. On the input cards you see questions and on the other cards you see black drawings of elements, actors or friction surfaces.
- You must then sort all the cards into a table with four columns. To do this, you can use the sorting bar with the codes: input cards ·, element cards ··, actor cards ··· and friction cards ····
- This sorting bar is in fact a header of table, that will help you sort all the cards.
- In the first column you place all the input cards ·, in the second the element cards ··, in the third the actor cards ··· and in the fourth the friction cards ····
- Now the game can begin!

Step 01 – creation of narratives

- Choose an input card, read the question and try to guess which cards match the input cards by yourself or with your friends.
- You can start by selecting one element card. If you want to learn more about a single element, please flip the card. If you have chosen your element card, please place it next to the input (in next steps to the previous) card. That way, you can see the explanatory text and part of bigger picture, that is starting to appear!
- You can now repeat this step for actor and friction cards.
- At the very end, you can check if you have created a correct story line! You have two ways to check it:
 - o If you have chosen correctly, the drawing of the bigger picture should be continuous on the back, to confirm you can turn the input card over to see the right answers. One row of the bigger picture should be continuous.

3. Game topics

The game can be played by two or more people or by a group of people. The aim of the game is to open a discussion about one of South Asian architect Minnette de Silva's final built works – the Kandy Arts Centre. We found it very interesting that this project, set apart from her early work through many years, enables a different way of reflecting and making connections about how ideas and practices can change through time. Here are a few themes that we found important to reflect on when working on the game:

To what extent was Minnette de Silva able to align the values she placed on community, tradition/culture, village forms, with client expectations and how did that differentiate from previous projects? How did Minnette de Silva manage to create a symbiotic relationship between the 'traditional' and the 'modern' in the design of a large-scale project such Kandy Arts Centre where many other stakeholders were involved in the building process? To what extent does the difference in size (of scale) of the Kandy Arts Centre in comparison to most of her previous housing buildings, influence the detailing and execution of the project? How did Minnette de Silva use different materials to their best advantage in the Kandy Arts Centre project? To what extent did the fact, that she was operating within a limited practice(office) set up, affect her work?

We have used these themes in various ways in our choice of setting up the narratives. By assembling narratives and, questioning them in the process we hope the players will find other ways to explore the significance of these questions.

Sources

Here are some sources we used to develop the cards. They can help the conversations you have as you play the game as well.

To what extent did the fact, that Minnette de Silva was operating within a limited practice(of-fice) set up, affect her work?

The Roof

Kandy Arts Centre, Kandy, Sri Lanka, accessible from <https://architectuul.com/architecture/kandy-arts-centre>

Prime Minister

Richardson, John Martin (2005). Paradise Poisoned: Learning about Conflict,

Terrorism, and Development from Sri Lanka's Civil Wars. Kandy, Sri Lanka: International Center for Ethnic Studies.

"Sirimavo Bandaranaike". The Economist. 19 October 2000.

Labour/Political

David Robson, ANDREW BOYD AND MINNETTE DE SILVA, accessible from <https://thinkmatter.in/2015/03/04/andrew-boyd-and-minnette-de-silva-two-pioneers-of-modernism-in-ceylon/>

Anooradha Iyer Siddiqi (2017) Crafting the archive: Minnette De Silva, Architecture, and History, The Journal of Architecture, 22:8, 1299-1336, DOI:10.1080/13602365.2017.1376341

How did Minnette de Silva use different materials to their best advantage in the Kandy Arts Centre project?

Materials

De Silva, Minnette. Kandyan Art Association. In Mimar 23: Architecture in Development, edited by Hasan-Uddin Khan. Singapore: Concept Media Ltd., 1987. accessible from <https://www.archnet.org/publications/3976>

Minnette De Silva. (1965). Experiments in modern regional Architecture in Ceylon 1950-1960., page 14

Crafts Community

Shiromi Pinto, Minnette de Silva (1918-1998) accessible from <https://www.architectural-review.com/essays/minnette-de-silva-1918-1998>

Environmental/Economical

Minnette De Silva. (1965). Experiments in modern regional Architecture in Ceylon 1950-1960., page 14

Tariq Jazeel (2017) Tropical Modernism/ Environmental Nationalism: The Politics of Built Space in Postcolonial Sri Lanka, Fabrications, 27:2, 134-152, DOI: 10.1080/10331867.2017.1301856, page 17

De Silva, Minnette. Kandyan Art Association. In Mimar 23: Architecture in Development, edited by Hasan-Uddin Khan. Singapore: Concept Media Ltd., 1987. page 33, accesible from <https://www.archnet.org/publications/3976>

To what extent does the difference in size (of scale) of the Kandy Arts Centre in comparison to most of her previous housing buildings, influence the detailing and execution of the project?

Climate Control

Tariq Jazeel (2017) Tropical Modernism/Environmental Nationalism: The Politics of Built Space in Postcolonial Sri Lanka, Fabrications, 27:2, 134-152, DOI: 10.1080/10331867.2017.1301856,page 16

Clients

Kandyan Art Association, accessible from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kandyan_Art_Association

Kandy Arts Centre, Kandy, Sri Lanka, accessible from <https://architectuul.com/architecture/kandy-arts-centre>

Modern/Traditional

De Silva, Minnette. Kandyan Art Association. In *Mimar 23: Architecture in Development*, edited by Hasan-Uddin Khan. Singapore: Concept Media Ltd., 1987. page 32, accesible from <https://www.archnet.org/publications/3976>

To what extent was Minnette de Silva able to align the values she cared most about, such as workers, tradition/culture, urban extension of the village and her own architectural vision with client expectations and how did that differentiate to previous projects?

Avanhala - Timber Grille Enclosure

Silva, Minnette. Kandyan Art Association. In *Mimar 23: Architecture in Development*, edited by Hasan-Uddin Khan. Singapore: Concept Media Ltd., 1987. page 32, accesible from <https://www.archnet.org/publications/3976>

Minnette de Silva, Le Corbusier, Craftsmen, Clients

Silva, Minnette. Kandyan Art Association. In *Mimar 23: Architecture in Development*, edited by Hasan-Uddin Khan. Singapore: Concept Media Ltd., 1987. page 32, accesible from <https://www.archnet.org/publications/3976>

David Robson, ANDREW BOYD AND MINNETTE DE SILVA, accessible from <https://thinkmatter.in/2015/03/04/andrew-boyd-and-minnette-de-silva-two-pioneers-of-modernism-in-ceylon/>

Climatical/Postcolonial

Kandy Arts Centre, Kandy, Sri Lanka, accessible from <https://architectuul.com/architecture/kandy-arts-centre>

Tariq Jazeel (2017) Tropical Modernism/Environmental Nationalism: The Politics of Built Space in Postcolonial Sri Lanka, Fabrications, 27:2, 134-152, DOI: 10.1080/10331867.2017.1301856 page 15

How did Minnette de Silva manage create a symbiotic relationship between the traditional and the modern in the design of a large scale project such Kandy Arts Centre project where many other stakeholders were involved in the building process?

Columns

Trinity College Chapel, accessible from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trinity_College_Chapel,_Kandy

Le Corbusier

Minnette De Silva. (1965). *Experiments in modern regional Architecture in Ceylon 1950-1960.*, page 14