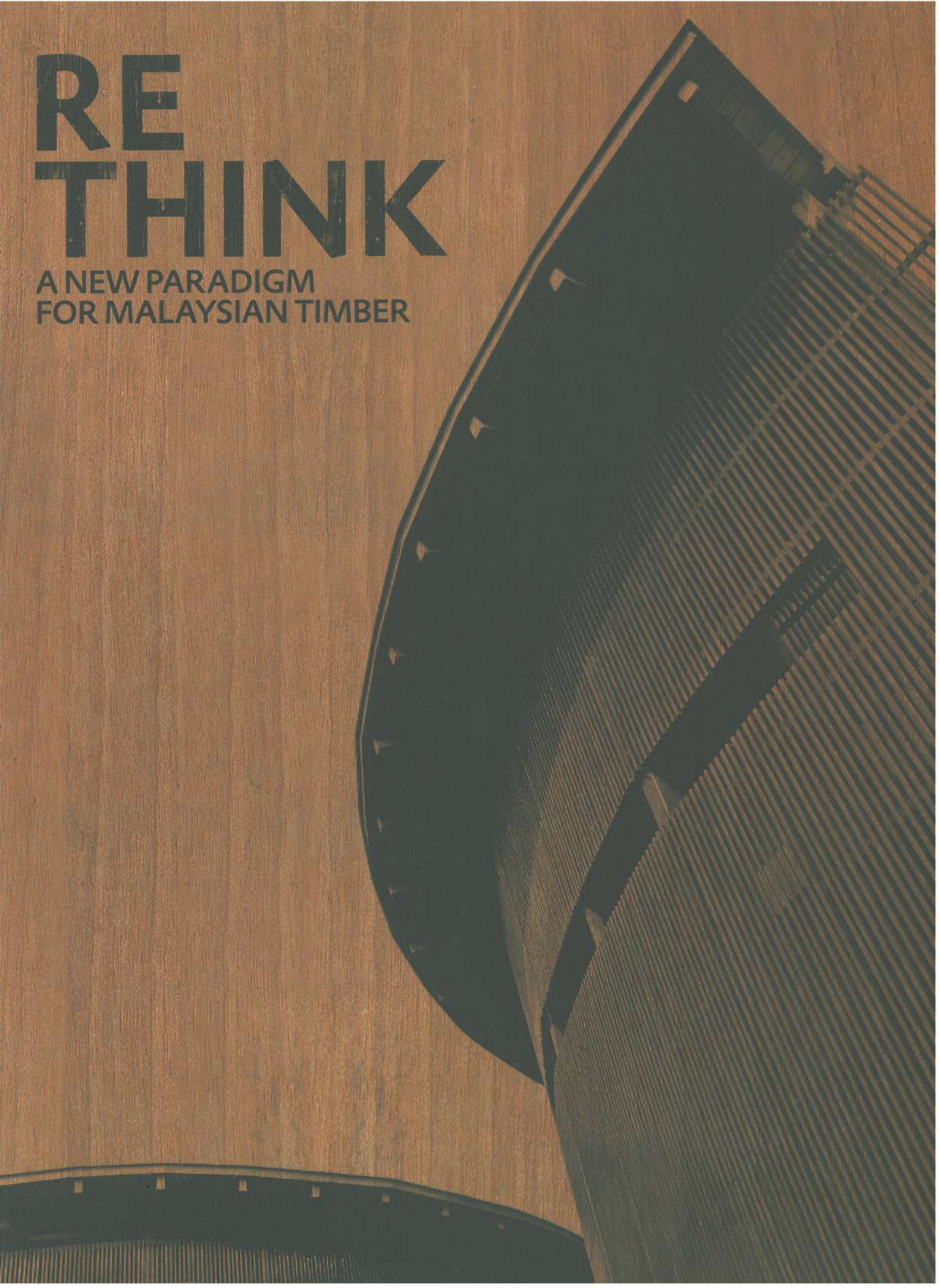


RE THINK

A NEW PARADIGM
FOR MALAYSIAN TIMBER



ALMAZ'S WEEKEND VILLA, SELANGOR, MALAYSIA

On two acres of rubber estate land turned homestead, architect Almaz Salma Abdul Rahim built her dream weekend home in Kuang, a town near Sungai Buloh in the Malaysian state of Selangor. This self-sufficient villa is built from a mix of recycled timbers such as Chengal, Balau and Kempas, with all the living spaces hugging a centrally-placed plunge pool.

The timber was sourced from old shoplots, derelict houses and sawmills in the state of Perak. They range from chunky twelve-inch round columns, 8" x 8" posts, 3" x 5" floorboards, to 2" x 5" roof rafters and delicate full-height adjustable louvered windows. Antique teak-framed stained glass windows were found in Malacca and retrofitted into the house.

The four-foot wide overhanging eaves keep the house well shaded from the tropical sun while the extensive use of timbers for the 'breathing' walls and floorboards help dissipate heat. These, coupled with the house's numerous timber windows, full-height wooden doors and a central open-air plunge pool facilitate cross ventilation. There is thus no need for air conditioners in this autonomous house, which even has its own well supplying fresh water for cooking, drinking and bathing. A rainwater-harvesting system has been installed for flushing the toilets and watering the plants.

To 'make up' for all the timbers that have been used in the house, even though they were recycled, architect Almaz has planted several hardwood trees such as Chengal, Nyatoh, Kembang Semangkok, Teak, Damar Minyak and Merbau at the edge of her property. This is partly an experiment in tree-cultivation, and partly an attempt to leave a natural legacy for her children and grandchildren.



A dream weekend home built with recycled timber sourced from old shoplots, derelict houses and sawmills.

Right — The central plunge pool surrounded by decking and timber-framed glass sliding doors.

Next page — Adjustable wooden-louvered windows for natural ventilation in this non-air-conditioned house.

"... A piece of history, a part of the rainforest, resurrected in my home."

— ARCHITECT ALMAZ SALMA ABDUL RAHIM



