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香港建築師學報



Occupy Towers

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President's Message

President

It gives me great pleasure to present this issue of The Hong Kong Institute of Architects (HKIA) Journal to you. First of all, I would like to express my warmest congratulations to the Editorial Board and the Publication Committee under the Board of Internal Affairs on the successful release of this year's Journal.

With the theme of "Towers", this year's Journal provides a timely opportunity for architects across the globe to explore the impacts of skyscrapers, potential challenges they pose to the built environment, and for HKIA Members to navigate the challenges ahead and embrace such unique opportunities to become an exemplar.

High-rise buildings create Hong Kong's unique skyline which symbolize immediate, decisive and robust collaborations. Many towers have become landmarks of our city. The editors, writers and contributors are pleased to share with you some of the latest

initiatives, insights and inspirations on such an important and timely subject.

HKIA will continue our efforts in facilitating the exchange of information and ideas in relation to all aspects of architecture and matters in connection with the architectural profession.

In this issue, we also pay our heartfelt tributes to our two Past Presidents – Dr Tao Ho and Professor Barry Fegan Will who sadly passed away earlier this year. Both Past Presidents volunteered their valuable time and leadership to scale up HKIA during their presidencies. We will not dismiss lightly their devotion and far-sighted visions for the Institute, the profession and society. They will be forever missed.

Last but not least, let us all join hands to propel Hong Kong's cityscape forward by applying our wisdom, expertise and experience for the benefit of our future generations.

Regards,

Felix Li 李國興 FHKIA Registered Architect President

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選擇、場所與超折衷主義

Occupy Towers

香港塔樓

Hong Kong's distinctive conditions in close proximity to mountain and water have given rise to dense, highrise urban cores. As the dominant building type, towers has become so extensive as to suggest a vertical fabric. This issue is dedicated to the architecture of towers and opens with a series of six public forums deliberating on various aspects of tower design, from freespace, typology, structure and envelope to programme and sustainability, culminating in the "City of Tomorrow" forum which addressed ways to better shape architectural and urban spaces in future developments.

In light of the widespread and ongoing social unrest of recent months, itself the culmination of increasing disaffection in society due to various urban concerns such as land and housing supply shortages, widening economic inequalities and deepening polarization, the critical awareness and commitment of architects to influence the design of towers so as to contribute to providing more equitable, inclusive and liveable environments has never been more urgent.

Vertical Fabric grew out of an exploration of the topic at the 2018 Venice Biennale Hong Kong Exhibition. Over a hundred model towers by architects from Hong Kong and abroad were curated to both demonstrate Hong Kong's compact conditions and incubate visions of vertical "freespace" in response to the biennale theme. A summary of the exhibition is followed by John Sandell's critical review of its framing, content and salient features. Sandell's appraisal identified three dominant tendencies, namely gardens, domestic histories and public space, and deciphered a complex dialogic between towers that suggested a dynamic expansion of meaning through multi-dimensional associations. Giusi Ciotoli examines the morphological criteria of a vertical urban fabric and its horizontal connective structures. For Ciotoli, Hong Kong, with its hyper-connectivity "structured on the reciprocal organicity between infrastructure, retail and the skyscraper", can be considered "the most complete example of vertical fabric at an urban scale to date".

Three essays further elaborate the possibilities of a vertical fabric in terms of structure as form, tectonics as use and programme as framework respectively. Angela Pang's "Rational Form Making" explores the collaborative relationship between architecture and structure by describing her own experiments (graduate studio and installation work) in the pursuit of meaning in forms that has been inspired by the rationalist approach to structure and constructability in architectural design. Au Fai's "Questions of Efficiency" contemplates alternative tectonics in high-rise living in Hong Kong to redefine the city's profitcraving and "absolute will to efficiency". Au uses student projects to test unorthodox youth housing in extreme sites and Tetris Living, a playful project, to generate communal spaces via misfits between apartments. Frankie Lui and Larry Tsoi's "Skyward City" imgines a vertical commons supported by a "symbiotic, collective work-live micro urbanism" in the form of a "levitated streetscape" that is formed by a "walkable core" of cascading public spaces being enveloped by an "open lattice" residential skin.

Thomas Chung / Weijen Wang 鍾宏亮 / 王維仁

The section closes with an interview with MVRDV co-founder Winy Maas. Besides sharing his projects, views and visions for Hong Kong's vertical urbanism as well as China and beyond, Maas reveals a genuine concern for a more ecologically equitable, socially responsible and collaborative future for our world.

Tall Stories begins with a brief narration of the development of Hong Kong's tall buildings in terms of height, structure and construction, technology and equipment and sectional variations. Four features on newly built towers follow: William Lim introduces his latest range of stylish urban towers, while Aedas' pixelated boutique hotel pencil tower in Mong Kok converses with P&T Group's SKYPARK across the road. Florence Chan conceptualises the Victoria Dockside and the ICC, both works of her firm KPF, in terms of how the towers touch the ground. Two worthy adaptive reuse projects of existing towers are then covered: The Murray by Foster + Partners revamped the original designed by Ron Phillips, and AD+RG renovated Szeto Wai's YWCA Kowloon Centre. The section ends by revisiting three iconic towers: Norman Foster's ground-breaking HSBC headquarters, Paul Rudolph's Bond Centre through the eyes of Nora Leung and Tao Ho's *chef-d'œuvre*, the Hong Kong Arts Centre.

Platform pays tribute to two HKIA Past Presidents Dr Tao Ho and Professor Barry Fegan Will who sadly passed away earlier this year in March and August respectively. We remember Tao's exceptional talent, brilliant achievements and wide-ranging influence in and beyond architecture, including the well-attended public Memorial Symposium that celebrated his spirit and lasting legacies for the city. The vivid obituary-cum-eulogy on Barry is a combined effort to recount Barry's wonderfully lived life, his enormous contribution and tireless dedication to the Institute and the architectural profession as well as his instrumental role in establishing many of our schools of architecture. A tower-themed homage to the late architectural giant I M Pei concludes the issue.