



## The International Highrise Award 2018 Internationaler Hochhaus Preis 2018

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BACKGROUND INFORMATIONS, FINALISTS

### **MahaNakhon, Bangkok**



Photo: Hufton+Crow

Architects: Buro Ole Scheeren, Bangkok/Thailand;  
OMA Office for Metropolitan Architecture,  
Beijing/China

Client: PACE Development Corporation PLC

Function: Mixed use comprising residential, hotel,  
retail and restaurants

Height: 314 m

Completion: August 2016

Location: Bangkok/Thailand

With its name (meaning 'great metropolis'), its 314-metre height – making it now Thailand's tallest building – and its distinctive pixel façade, the MahaNakhon project stands as a symbol of the economic boom in Bangkok.

The pixelated ribbon winds around the entire height of the tower like a snake, spectacularly breaking up the otherwise consciously classical form of the steel and glass cuboid. This broken-up façade serves primarily to create terraces, balconies and freely hovering skyboxes. All of these offer unique views of the cityscape, which can be enjoyed by guests in the hotel that occupies the lower storeys as well as by the residents of the serviced apartments in the storeys above. Crowning the tower is a public observation deck with a 360° view as well as a double-height restaurant and an open-air rooftop bar. The base of the tower, housing the hotel lobby and amenities as well as restaurants and upmarket shops is designed not as a static podium but as a multi-level terraced landscape, rich in green. It picks up on the pixel motif and extends it horizontally, thereby creating a segue into the new public plaza in front.

Having started the planning for MahaNakhon in his position as a partner of the Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA), Ole Scheeren founded his own firm in 2010 and took the project over. During further work on MahaNakhon, he opened a branch of his firm in Bangkok in 2015.



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### Beirut Terraces, Beirut



Photo: Iwan Baan

Architects: Herzog & de Meuron, Basel/Switzerland  
Client: DIB Tower SAL; Benchmark Development SAL  
Function: Residential  
Height: 119 m  
Completion: June 2016  
Location: Beirut/Lebanon

The area around Beirut's yacht harbour still bears deep scars from the Lebanese Civil War (1975–1990) as well as the 2006 Israeli air strikes. This residential district is currently being redesigned. One part of this plan is the spectacular residential tower, Beirut Terraces, constructed from concrete plates, layered and staggered on top of one another. With its white colour and dynamic form, the building clearly stands out from the surrounding grey high-rises.

Beirut Terraces comprises 130 apartments, ranging in size from 200 to 1,000 square metres. Each home includes an additional outdoor space. The mixture of various protrusions results from the stacking of five different types of modular floor plates. Indoor and outdoor spaces merge into each other as the circumferential, floor-to-ceiling glazing and the consistent white colour of the concrete and Carrara marble surfaces blur the transitions. In addition to providing picturesque views of the sea the bands of windows ensure that plenty of daylight reaches the living spaces while the overhangs – at least 60 centimetres deep – protect them from strong direct sunlight. Plant containers of various sizes bring vegetation to the balconies and establish private spaces towards the adjacent units. Thus, the design is adapted to the city's moderate climate and fosters the open-air lifestyle that is typical of Beirut.



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### Torre Reforma, Mexico City



Photo: Alfonso Merchand

Architects: L. Benjamín Romano, Mexico City/Mexico

Client: Fondo Hexa, SA de CV

Function: Office

Height: 246 m

Completion: November 2016

Location: Mexico City /Mexico

In the middle of a region at risk of earthquakes the characteristic façade of the Torre Reforma in Mexico City has more than just aesthetic purposes. The two massive outer walls of exposed concrete and the third vitreous side not only create an extraordinary triangular footprint, but also provide a maximum of earthquake-resistance. The concrete walls reach 60 metres into the ground as a solid fundament. Moreover, the building can move with the forces since large openings are left out from the massive walls as 'crumple zones' and since the steel braces, which carry the floors, merge into flexible hinges in front of the glass façade. During the severe earthquake of September 2017 this concept has already proved to be highly effective.

Beginning at a height of 200 metres, one of the two concrete walls bends strikingly inward. This feature is a response to Mexico City's building regulations: the skyscrapers on Paseo de la Reforma may be no more than twice as high as the width of the street. If a building exceeds this height, the upper part has to be recessed or tapered. Due to Romano's creative handling of this regulation the building, depending upon the observer's point of view, does not only change its materiality, but also its sculptural form.

The entire width of the building's third, glass side opens onto the Bosque de Chapultepec city park. In order to create additional usable space, the storeys here break free from the narrow corset of the triangle. To the front, the seemingly smooth façade forms a nearly imperceptible fourth corner.



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### Chaoyang Park Plaza, Beijing



Photo: Hufton + Crow

Architects: MAD Architects, Beijing/China  
Client: Smart-hero (HK) Investment Development Ltd  
Function: Mixed use comprising office, retail and residential  
Height: 142 m  
Completion: August 2017  
Location: Beijing/China

At the southern edge of the largest remaining park in Beijing's financial district, the ten mixed-use buildings of Chaoyang Park Plaza are distributed across an area of over 30,000 square metres. Their arrangement on the site appears quite random, almost like rock formations in nature. The two asymmetrical office towers rise on the banks of a lake like mountain peaks emerging from the water. Together with the lower-rise residential and commercial buildings, they define the in-between spaces, planted with pines and bamboo. In this way, the green areas and water surfaces of the adjoining park are continued in the complex.

For this project, MAD Architects took inspiration from the landscape images of traditional *Shanshui* painting (*shan & shui* = mountain & water). These are mostly drawn solely in black ink, and represent the pristine, traditional China. The paintings are characterised by meandering, irregular lines that reflect the contours of the Chinese highlands, rather like a topographic map – a formal language that is consciously taken up in the amorphous, dark-glass building structures. Thus, the ensemble not only stands out clearly from its surroundings, it also symbolises a return to the Chinese sense of the organic.

Through his designs Ma Yansong, head of MAD Architects, has not only criticised the ongoing urban development in Beijing but he also aims to inspire the development of a uniquely Chinese architectural language.



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### Oasia Hotel Downtown, Singapore



Photo: K. Kopter

Architects: WOHA, Singapore  
Client: Far East SOHO Pte Ltd  
Function: Hotel and office  
Height: 199 m  
Completion: April 2016  
Location: Singapore

Over the past few years, through their innovative use of green and open spaces, WOHA have defined a new type of tropical skyscraper which, despite all its connection to nature, made no secret of its machine aesthetics. For this work, they were already honoured in 2010, receiving the International Highrise Award for “The Met” in Bangkok. With the bold colours of their Oasia hotel and office tower, they are now forging a new path in terms of design.

The red façade consists of thin, perforated aluminium panels over which creepers grow and spread. In front of the window bands, where the panels appear only widely interspersed, the greenery remains restrained but it is allowed to proliferate lavishly on the four enclosed corners, since each of these contains a service core. This design principle, which makes a central core unnecessary, allows for the inclusion of three sky gardens over the entire surface of one storey and with unobstructed views in all four directions. They divide the building by grouping the storeys into three clusters and by extending upwards as atria through the full height of each. On each of the square floor spaces, the offices or hotel rooms occupy only an L-shape. The quantity of open space – more than 40 percent of the building’s total volume – provides natural cross-ventilation and light to the offices and hotel rooms, which are arranged in double rows opening either to the outside or onto an atrium.

In the midst of the densely developed downtown of Singapore, the Oasia Hotel Downtown thus creates what WOHA call a ‘biophilic environment’.



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### **Further information and Press photos:**

[www.international-highrise-award.com](http://www.international-highrise-award.com) \ [www.dam-online.de/presse](http://www.dam-online.de/presse)

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