

Büro Ole Scheeren

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Nature bursts into spiralling heights with Büro Ole Scheeren's landscaped high-rise ensemble for Vietnam's next generation

Empire City, a spectacular ensemble of high-rise towers and public spaces, marks Büro Ole Scheeren's expansion into Vietnam. It is set to become a new focal point of Ho Chi Minh City, sculpting a symbiotic vision of nature and living within the space of the city.

Situated on a central peninsula of the Saigon River, the project will generate an integrative environment that fuses natural landscape with the rapidly growing metropolis. As a result, new qualities of urban living will emerge in this mixed-use environment of work, life, culture, entertainment and public enjoyment.

Three skyscrapers will soar above a mountain-shaped, garden-like podium, with the central Empire 88 Tower reaching a height of 333 meters. Its 88 floors will encompass residences, apartments, a hotel and a public observation deck. Breaking open the shaft of the tower and projecting vertical gardens at towering heights, the expressively undulating platforms of the "Sky Forest" will elevate the podium's urban landscape into the sky. Hovering terraces will cantilever in manifold directions around the tower's central axis, reaching out into the urban context and the peninsula's natural surroundings as a gesture of reconciliation between the city and the countryside.

The "Sky Forest", with its alluring interplay of interior and exterior, will create a magical journey through Vietnam's tropical landscape. Densely populated with a variety of local plant species and water features, the multi-level experience will give breathtaking views across Ho Chi Minh City and the Saigon River, accessible to the tower's residents and the public alike.



At the very top of the landmark tower, the "Cloud Space" will complete the vertical journey and stage a public arena with flexible possibilities for events and recreational activities, celebrating the glistening views of the bustling metropolis.

The podium will echo Vietnam's mesmerizing landscape, with its poetic soft hills and cultivated terraced rice fields, and will anchor the tower ensemble to the ground.

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A variety of layered, open spaces will engage the public in a multitude of experiences throughout this grand urban garden. An extensive network of public activities will be threaded throughout the modulated structure, connecting commercial areas with recreational environments. Custom-designed co-working spaces will be integrated into multiple floors of this terraced foundation and engage the collaborative spirit of Ho Chi Minh City's vibrant startup culture.

In addition to the soaring landmark tower, two accompanying high-rises will comprise more traditional office typologies and residential spaces atop the landscape podium.

The project is developed by Empire City Limited Liability Company, a multi-national joint venture of prominent names in real estate development in Vietnam, Singapore and Hong Kong - Tien Phuoc Real Estate JSC, Keppel Land Ltd., Gaw Capital Partners and Tran Thai Lands Co., Ltd.



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Empire City further demonstrates Büro Ole Scheeren's ability to shape new visions for the future, aimed at improving our cities and the lives of its people. It joins the practice's highly successful global portfolio of large-scale urban projects, after the completion of The Interlace in 2014 in Singapore, and the imminent completions of DUO in Singapore, MahaNakhon in Bangkok, and the Guardian Art Center in Beijing. Further ongoing work includes 1500 West Georgia, a residential high-rise in downtown Vancouver, and Riverpark Tower, the conversion of an office tower into high-end apartments in Frankfurt.

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Büro Ole Scheeren

Ole Scheeren

Ole Scheeren is a German-born architect and the principal of Büro Ole Scheeren. His landmark projects shape the way we interact with our cities and generate new social narratives in highly integrative environments.

Scheeren is Büro-OS's chief designer and responsible for steering the company's creative vision and strategic development. His projects have won numerous awards, including World Building of the Year 2015 and the CTBUH Urban Habitat Award 2014 for The Interlace in Singapore, as well as the global CTBUH Best Tall Building Award 2013 for the CCTV Headquarters in Beijing.

Highlighting the need for visionary, transformative solutions to the challenges facing contemporary society, Scheeren's architecture is characterized by a 20 year commitment to grounding this idealism within pragmatic, highly successful, real world projects, including the completion of three major developments in 2017; the MahaNakhon skyscraper in Bangkok, the DUO mixed-use towers in Singapore, and the Guardian Art Center in Beijing.

Büro Ole Scheeren's large-scale projects are complemented by Scheeren's independent collaborations with filmmakers and artists, as well as research projects exploring his personal interest in cinema, media and narrative space. He created Archipelago Cinema (2012); a floating auditorium in a lagoon on the Andaman Sea for Thailand's Film on the Rocks festival (also featuring at the 2012 Architecture Biennale in Venice, Italy), and Mirage City Cinema (2013) for the Sharjah Art Foundation, paying homage to the Gulf city's historic architecture.

Prior to founding Büro Ole Scheeren, Scheeren was a director and partner at OMA, where he was responsible for the practice's expansion into Asia as well as its work for Prada, with flagship stores in New York (2001) and Los Angeles (2004). Scheeren was also the partner-in-charge of the groundbreaking CCTV Headquarters for China's national broadcaster in Beijing (2010). Subverting the traditional typology of the skyscraper, this monumental building challenges architectural convention and creates a giant loop of interconnected activities of people and the city.

Alongside his architectural work, Scheeren has created exhibition designs for New York's Museum of Modern Art and London's Hayward Gallery, contributed to triennials in Beijing and Milan, and participated in the Rotterdam Film Festival. He has been a TED speaker and regularly lectures at international institutions and conferences, as well as serving on juries for architectural awards and competitions.

Having lived and worked across Europe, the United States and Asia, Ole Scheeren was educated at the universities of Karlsruhe and Lausanne, and completed his studies at London's Architectural Association. He was awarded the RIBA Silver Medal – the most prestigious European prize in architecture education.