

nikoli se ne ustavimo

no staying still

Fotografije: arhiv arhitekta / Photos: architect's archive



Foto: Andraž Kavčič



Hong Kong.
Hong Kong

Aaron Tan je ustanovitelj in direktor biroja RAD, Research Architecture Design iz Hong Konga. Leta 1994 je z Remom Koolhaasom ustanovil OMA Asia, ki se je leta 2002 preoblikoval v neodvisni biro RAD. Vodi skupino arhitektov, urbanistov, oblikovalcev notranje opreme in medijskih raziskovalcev s celega sveta, z namenom, da njihove globalne izkušnje uporabi za razvoj novega sodobnega azijskega urbanizma in arhitekture. Projekti biroja RAD, med njimi so poslovne stolpnice v Hong Kongu, ekonomsko planiranje Singapurja ter telekomunikacijski center in dizajn hotel v Koreji, so bili predstavljeni v številnih arhitekturnih revijah in na razstavah. Aaron kot aktivni udeleželec urbanega razvoja azijskih mest redno predava v Aziji, Evropi in v ZDA.

Všeč mi je tema današnjega predavanja – novi izzivi. Pred mnogimi leti smo se odločili spopasti z izzivom in svoje delo smo preselili v Hong Kong. Delamo v okolju, kjer je 99% projektov komercialnih in, kjer javna naročila skoraj ne obstajajo. Želeli smo preizkusiti, kako in koliko časa lahko v takem okolju preživimo in pri tem ohranimo svoje intelektualno dostojanstvo. Poimenovali smo se RAD – Research Architecture Design (Raziskovanje dizajn arhitektura), saj nikoli ne smemo opustiti raziskovanja in arhitekture. Poklicali smo vse, ki jih poznamo, in jih povabili naj se nam pridružijo v Hong Kongu, da skupaj preizkusimo, do katere mere lahko izkoristimo in razširimo omejitve arhitekture.

Hong Kong s svojo mestno pokrajino je zelo vznemirljiv. Vsak dan se pojavi kakšna nova zgradba. Posamezno sicer niso kaj posebnega, toda vse skupaj so zelo impresivne. Silhueta Hong Konga

aaron tan



uvodnik
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Aaron Tan is the founder and director of RAD, Research Architecture Design, based in Hong Kong. In 1994, he founded OMA Asia together with Rem Koolhaas, which was re-organised as independent office RAD in 2002. He leads a group of architects, urban designers, interior designers, and media researchers from all over the world with the intention of taking advantage of their global experience in order to develop new contemporary Asian urbanism and architecture.

RAD's projects, ranging from business towers in Hong Kong and economic planning of Singapore to a telecommunications centre and a designer hotel in Korea, have been presented in numerous professional magazines and exhibitions. Actively involved in the urban development of Asian cities, Aaron gives frequent lectures in Asia, Europe, and the United States.

I like the topic of today's lecture – new challenges. Many years ago, we decided to challenge ourselves and try to establish ourselves in Hong Kong. We have put ourselves in a place where 99% of projects are commercially driven and where it is almost impossible to get a commission for a public project. We wanted to test how and for how long we can survive in this environment but maintain our intellectual pursuit. We have to call ourselves RAD, Research Architecture Design, because we have to continue to do research and we have to continue to do architecture. We called everybody that we know from around the world to join us and to be there and to see how much we can explore our limits of architecture.

The cityscape of Hong Kong is extremely fascinating. Every day, there is a new building coming up. Each individual building is maybe not as exciting but put together, they become quite impressive. The



nas je tako navdušila, da smo se jo odločili uporabiti v svojem prvem projektu. Vzeli smo fotografijo Hong Konga, jo ovili okoli zgradbe in jo očrtali. Ugotovili smo, da je črt mnogo. Ker je bila zgradba, ki smo jo projektirali, komercialne narave, smo morali projekt tudi komercialno urediti, tako da je postal finančno izvedljiv: v nered črt smo vnesli neke vrste red. Ker smo zgradbi torej že vsilili eno vrsto reda, so se odločili, da izbirajo barve prepuščajo kocki. Pri komercialnih projektih v Hong Kongu vedno gradiš do roba zazidljive parcele in pozidava največje dovoljeno površino, tako da moramo arhitekti neprestano iskati, kje leži arhitekturni potencial gradnje. Skoraj edini prostor, ki nam je ostal za arhitekturo, je ovoj zgradbe, ta pa nima več kot 200 mm. Neprestano moramo izumljati nova področja, ki jih lahko arhitekturno oblikujemo. Pri tem projektu na primer smo odkrili prostor med nadstropji, kamor smo vstavili luči. Zaradi geometrije in matematike, ki smo ju upoštevali pri projektih, so izvorno vodoravne luči dobile spiralno obliko. Tekom izvedbe projekta smo, celo znotraj svoje lastne dobro znane metodologije, odkrili nov prostor, ki smo ga namenili plavalnemu bazenu. Nanj smo kar ponosni. Nedavno smo slišali, da je naša zgradba nominirana kot ena najpogostejše prikazanih v medijih. Postala je dobro ozadje za naš primer Johna Wooja, ki svoje filme snema v Hong Kongu.

Odkrili smo svoj način ustvarjanja kakovosti znotraj sistema kapitalistične arhitekture, tako da smo se odločili ostati v Hong Kongu. V Hong Kongu je gneča tako velika, da moramo graditi mostove, da se ljudje lažje premikajo. Ne moreš si privoščiti, da bi se ustavil, saj si takoj na zgubi. Nismo več mogli prenašati stalnega gibanja, zato smo začeli iskati alternativne kraje, ki bi bili manj gosti poseljeni in bi imeli boljše podnebje – to je za nas pomenilo sneg, saj v Hong Kongu nikoli ne sneži. Odločili smo se delati v Seulu. Hoteli smo zgraditi nekaj, kar bi bilo videti lepo v snegu. Najprej je bila naša zgradba videti kot božično drevesce, vendar naročnik z našim projektom ni bil zadovoljen, saj bi ga bilo zapleteno čistiti. Prilagodili smo detajle in uredili vogale, tako da zgradba zdaj zažari le z umetno osvetlitvijo. Odločili smo se, da želimo, da naša naslednja zgradba žari v naravni svetlobi. Poiskati smo morali toplejše kraje z veliko naravno svetlobo in močnim soncem, tako da smo se odpravili v Indijo. Imeli smo izgovor, da zgradbo oblečemo v dodaten ovoj, ki nanjo meče senco in ji daje globino. Naša nagubana fasada ni novost, saj jo je navdihnila estetika dinamike, ki je tako cenjena v Hong Kongu. Fasado smo skušali povezati z vsebino zgradbe – hotelskimi sobami. Pred nekaj leti smo v Seulu projektirali hotel z mnogimi različnimi tipi sob, ki je izviral iz ideje o oblaku. Zbiranje oblakov na fasadi je predstavljalo zbiranje različnih tipov sob pod njo. Vlada je zavrnila naš projekt, tako da smo jih skušali prepričati

Hong Kong skyline was so impressive for us that we decided to use it as a starting point for the design of our first project. We took a photograph of the Hong Kong, wrapped it around our building, and traced it. We realised that there were many lines. As the building was commercially driven, we had to commercially sort it out to make it viable to build, so we had to bring order to the disorder. Because we have already imposed some sort of order to the building, we decided to choose the colour scheme of the building by throwing a die.

In Hong Kong, with projects like this, you always build to the limits of the site and to the maximum gross floor area, so architects have to constantly establish where the architectural potential of the building is. The only place that remained for us to do architecture is the skin of the building which is not more than 200 mm thick, so we needed to discover and invent new areas to do design. In this project, we found an area between the floors, where we inserted light. Because of the geometry and the mathematics used to construct the building, the originally horizontal lights accidentally became spiralled. Along the process, we discovered a new space within our methodology and we turned it into the swimming pool. We are quite proud of it. We recently found out that our building is nominated as one of most often seen in the media. It has become a good landscape for people like John Woo to have their movies shot in Hong Kong.

We found our way of creating quality within capitalistic architecture, so we continued to work in Hong Kong. Hong Kong is so full of people that we need to build bridges in order to make it easier for people to move. In Hong Kong you cannot afford to stay still - when you stand still, you are losing money. We could not stand that constant being on the move, so we started looking for alternative places, less dense and with nicer weather - for us this meant snow, as we never get any. We decided to work in Seoul. We wanted to make a building that would look good in snow. At first our building looked like a Christmas tree, but our client was not convinced with the design as it would be difficult to clean. We modified the details, sorted out the corners, and allowed it to capture artificial light only. We decided that with the next building, we wanted to capture the real light.

We had to find a hotter place with strong natural light and sun, so we headed to India. This gave us excuse to make an extra skin to the building that was casting shadow on the building and gave it depth. Our undulating facade was nothing new - it was inspired by the aesthetic of the dynamic that we are constantly looking for in Hong Kong. In this case, we tried relate it with the content of the building, i.e. hotel rooms. A couple of years ago in Seoul, we were designing a hotel with many different types of rooms made around the idea of a cloud. The clustering of clouds represented the clustering of different



Silhueta Hong Konga.
Hong Kong cityscape.



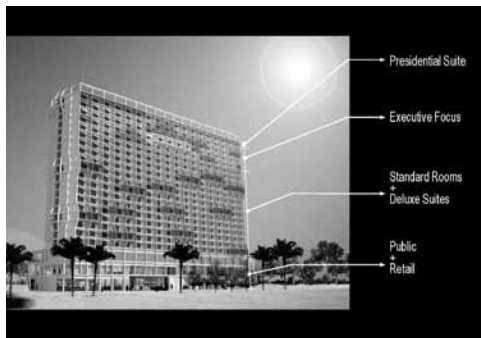
Stolpnica AIA, fotografijo mestne silhuete smo ovili okoli zgradbe.
AIA Tower, we wrapped a photograph of Hong Kong around our building.



Stolpnica AIA, Hong Kong, 1999.
AIA Tower, Hong Kong, 1999.



Stolpnica SK T-Tower, Seul, predhodni projekt, snegu.
SKT – Tower, Seoul, preliminary design, in snow.



Hotel v Indiji, idejni projekt.
Hotel in India, concept design.



Projekt hotela, Seul, Koreja, oblak, ki lebdi nad mestom.
Hotel project, Seoul, Korea, a cloud floating above the city.



Projekt hotela, Seul, Koreja, notranjost.
Hotel project, Seoul, Korea, interior.

z zgodbo, da v resnici ne gradimo zgradbe, ampak jim dajemo le kos oblaka, ki bo lebdel nad mestom. Vlada je to idejo sprejela. Z oblaki smo se navdihovali tudi pri oblikovanju notranjosti. Dodali smo še dež in dobili idejo, kako bi na tleh ujeli dežne kaplje. Včasih te kot arhitekta nekoliko zanese, tako da smo okrogle oblike prenesli še na zunanost zgradbe. Ideja je bila lepa, čeprav ne-načrtovana.

Popeljal vas bom skozi tipičen delovni teden svojega biroja. Ob ponedeljkih začnemo z molitvijo, saj je v Hong Kongu težko delati, potem pa sledi sestanek. R v imenu našega biroja pomeni raziskovanje, pa tudi večje urbanistične projekte.

Naša prva izkušnja z delom na Kitajskem je projekt za zabavišni park, torej program, ki ga nismo dobro poznali. Kot katerikoli drug biro smo se lotili raziskovanja zabavišnih parkov, toda nekega dne smo odkrili, da je zabavišni park sicer majhen, vendar pa bi želel kasneje na njegovi podlagi investitor zaprositi vlado za večji kos okoliške parcele, kamor bi rad razširil svoj park. Opozorili smo ga, da to morda ni najboljša strategija, saj na ta način najverjetneje ne bi mogel dobiti zelene parcele. Predlagali smo mu, da zabavišni park že v osnovi raztegnemo tudi na del parcele, ki je še nima v lasti, da bo lažje dobil vsaj del tistega ozemlja, ki si ga želi prilastiti. To nam je dalo idejo, da ustvarimo zabavišni park, ki bi se raztezal po celotni dolžini parcele. Namesto enodnevnega zabavišnega parka smo si zamisli štiridnevnega. V našem delu sveta se stalno srečujemo s podobnimi strategijami. Ustvarjati si moramo delovna mesta in projekte, ki so za naročnike tudi finančno upravičeni.

Takšen način razmišljanja nas ponese nazaj v Hong Kong. Ko sem študiral na Harvardu, sem izpeljal raziskavo o delu Hong Konga po imenu Walled city – Obzidano mesto Kowloon. Britanci so Hong Kong zavzeli koncem 18. in v začetku 19. stoletja in mesto je ostalo njihova kolonija še nadaljnjih 100 let. Na nasprotni strani zaliva leži kos ozemlja, ki se drži celine, Kowloon, ki je sicer pripadal Kitajski, vendar so ga Britanci od kitajske vlade najeli. Izpustili so majhen del mesta, ki se imenuje Walled City – Obzidano mesto, mestno četrt v velikosti štirih nogometnih igrišč. Včasih je bila od ostalega mesta ločena z zidom, saj je kitajska vlada tam nadzorovala prihode in odhode tujih ladij. Meje soseske so bile jasno določene. Nobena od vpletenih vlad ni nikoli razjasnila, katera od njiju je odgovorna za ta del mesta, in kaj se tam sme početi. Brezvladje in brezzakonje je ustvarilo priložnost za prihod najrazličnejših ilegalnih priseljencev, ki so se tam naseljevali. Gradnja brez pravil je tako zelo vznemirljiva, ker mesta brez pravil rastejo hitreje od reguliranih.

V petsto zgradbah je bilo naseljenih okrog 50.000 prebivalcev: najrazličnejši ljudje, ki so se ukvarjali z najrazličnejšimi posli. Kakor v katerem koli

types of rooms behind it. The project was rejected by the government. We tried to convince them by telling them we were not making a building but giving them a piece of cloud that was going to float above the city. The government accepted the idea. We also referred to clouds in the design of the interior. We started to design the rain and got the idea of capturing raindrops on the floor. Sometimes as an architect you get sidetracked, so we continued to use circular shapes on the outside of the building as well. The idea was nice, even if it was unintentional. I am going to guide you through a typical week in our office. On Monday morning, we begin with prayer, because it is really tough to work in Hong Kong, followed by the office meeting. The "R" in the name of our office means "research", but it also means larger projects, planning projects.

Our first experience with China was the design for a theme park, a topic we were not at all familiar with. Like every other office, we did some research about theme parks, but one day we found out that the idea was to build a smaller theme park and later ask the government for a larger portion of land around it to extend the theme park. We suggested this was not a very good strategy because in this way the client would never get all the land that he wanted. We proposed to him to stretch the initial theme park, so the client would get at least some of the land he wanted. This gave us a new idea about designing a theme park that could be stretched along the whole length of the site. Instead of classic day park, we designed a four-day theme park. In our part of the world, we are constantly confronted with similar types of strategy. We have to create jobs and projects that are at the same time financially viable for the developers.

This way of thinking brings us back to the heart of Hong Kong. When I was at Harvard, I did a research project about a part of Hong Kong called the "Walled City". Hong Kong was taken by the British in the late 18th/early 19th century, and colonised for the next 100 years. On the opposite side of the bay, there was a portion of land attached to the mainland, the Kowloon, which belonged to China and was rented from the Chinese government by the British. They have left out a part of the city called the Walled City, a place in size of four football fields. It used to be a walled city where the Chinese government monitored the passage of foreign ships so the boundaries of the area were quite clear.

The two governments never clarified who was responsible for this small part of the city and what could be done there. This created an opportunity for all sorts of illegal immigrants to move into this place as it was a place with no rules or regulations. Building without rules is often more fascinating, because unregulated cities are growing faster than those with rules. There were five hundred buildings with 50,000 people living inside: all kinds of people with all kinds of businesses going on.



drugem mestu, je tudi to vsebovalo praznine, prezračevanje je bilo učinkovito. Mesto je na splošno dobro funkcioniralo, čeprav ga je bilo težko razumeti. Priložnost za razumevanje mesta se je pokazala v zgodnjih devetdesetih, ko sta se britanska in kitajska vlada dogovorili, da bosta Obzidano mesto Kowloon porušili. Razkril se je prerez mesta. Z mesta so odstranjevali plast za plastjo. Iz prerezov je postalo jasno, da arhitektura lahko raste tudi organsko ter na inteligenten in učinkovit način. Mesto je bilo neverjetno dobro prezračeno, možno bi bilo narisati vonjalni zemljevid mesta. Res je bilo mogoče zavohati kaj se dogaja, in vonj je bil čudovit.

Organska rast je vodila tudi izvedbo sistema vodovoda. Britanci niso želeli, da bi mesto preživel, zato mu niso zagotavljali dovolj vode. Na zunanjem robu mesta se je nahajalo le sedem pip za vodo, tako da so prebivalci začeli kopati vodnjake. Ker pa so bile vse zgradbe v mestu stolpnice, so morali vodo spraviti v zgornja nadstropja, da bi zagotovili vodni pritisk. V praksi je to pomenilo, da je vodovod deloval izmenično. Mesto je samo organiziralo izmenično črpanje vode v višja nadstropja. Mapiranje mesta glede na porabo začne ustvarjati urnik delovanja mesta, ki pove kdaj in kje se odvija življenje, kar omogoči drugačno branje mesta. Obzidano mesto Kowloon je bilo fascinantna sosenska, ki je omogočala več različnih pristopov risanja zemljevidov, ki so prevajali različne informacije. Arhitekture ne moremo presojati le glede na njeno fizično podobo, ampak glede na njen program in vlogo v mestu. Vedno sem bil navdušen nad gospodom Loujem, poštarjem, in se spraševal, kako mu uspe dostaviti vso pošto. Pomislil sem, da bi mu pomagal in narisal zemljevid mesta.

Zanimiv je bil tudi način prisvajanja prostora. Iz zgradb so rasle tako imenovane nezakonite kletke v nezakonitem mestu. Zrasle so kot previsi in originalne zgradbe in začele osvajati prostor sosednje zgradbe. Tudi strukture so se spreminjale. Novejše zgradbe so že od začetka imele previse, vseeno pa so jih nezakonite kletke še podaljševale v prostor sosedov. Če se nekoliko prepustimo domišljiji, vidimo, da je prisvajanje prostora in rast v Obzidanem mestu Kowloon potekala horizontalno.

Estetika Obzidanega Mesta Kowloon je navdihovala mnoge arhitekta v devetdesetih, ki so projektirali zgradbe s poudarjenimi previsi. Vendar pa nobena od arhitektur ni dosegla pravega mesta. Zgodba mesta je se zaključila, ko sta se sredi devetdesetih oblasti obeh strani sporazumeli, da ga porušita. Po eni strani je to seveda velika škoda, po drugi strani pa je bil proces rušenja dragocen trenutek, ko smo lahko preučevali njegovo delovanje. To je med drugim tudi dalo osnove za delo RAD v Hong Kongu.

Just as in any other city, there were voids, the air ventilation was quite good, overall the city was really effective, even if it was very difficult to understand. The opportunity to understand its structure arose in the early 90s, when the British and the Chinese government agreed to demolish the place. It was a wonderful opportunity to see the section of the city. They were peeling off layer after layer of the city. From the sections, you could discover that even architecture can grow organically in a very smart way. For example, the city was fascinating in terms of ventilation: it worked so well that it created an odour map of the city. You could really smell what was going on inside. The city had a wonderful smell. The organic type of growth guided the organisation of the water system as well. The British did not want the city to survive, so they did not give it enough water. There were only seven taps on the outer edge of the city so the inhabitants started digging wells. As all the buildings were high-rises, they needed the water pressure to pump it to the upper floors. Practically this meant that there were times when the pipes were running and times when they were not working. The city organised itself and they were turning on the power for pumping up the water in turns.

By drawing the map of the city in terms of the water, you start creating a timetable of the city, i.e. when and where certain events are going on. This allows you to read the city in a different way. The Walled City was a fascinating place which allowed you to draw the maps of the city in different ways. We can never assess architecture only physically, but by its program and how it works in the city. What also amazes me is Mr Lou, the postman. I wonder how he manages to deliver all the mail through out the whole city! I thought of helping him and giving him a map. What was also extremely interesting was the territorialisation of the space – how buildings or people claim their space. There were, for example, the so-called illegal cages in the illegal city. They grow as cantilevers from the original building and start to claim the space of the building next door because they are so close to each other. The structure also starts to reinvent itself. Newer buildings are built with cantilevered parts, but the illegal cages go even beyond that and enter the next door space. If you use your imagination, the Walled City becomes a place where the territorialisation and the growth are horizontal.

The aesthetic of the Walled City was appropriated by many architects in the 90s and was turned into buildings which sport the fascination with cantilevered extrusion. But none of the buildings was half as fascinating as the real city.

This fantastic city came to an end when the authorities agreed on demolishing it. On the one hand, this is of course sad, but it is also a precious moment for the people like us who had the chance to see how the section of the city worked. This has contributed a lot of foundations for our practice RAD in Hong Kong.



Biro RAD.
RAD office.



Vodovodna napeljava v Obzidanem mestu Kowloon.
Water piping in Kowloon Walled City.



Obzidano mesto Kowloon.
Kowloon Walled City.



Poštni nabiralniki, obzidano mesto Kowloon.
Mailboxes, Kowloon Walled City.