

Annex

Supplementary Information on The M+ Building Design Competition

The Competition

M+ is an ambitious project. The scale of the museum building alone, at around 60,000 square metres, will be on par with the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Situated on the waterfront of the Victoria Harbour at the edge of a 14-hectare park, it will be one of the first batch of arts and cultural venues to be completed in the West Kowloon Cultural District ("WKCD"). M+ will be the flagship hub for visual culture from the 20th and 21st century, alongside major performance spaces, creating interdisciplinary exchange between the visual arts and the performing arts in the city.

The physical design of M+ will be shaped around the museum's core values. Principally it will be a museum for the Hong Kong people, firmly rooted in the location and its unique culture, providing a Hong Kong perspective, with a global vision, expanding to other regions of China, Asia and the rest of the world. It will provide space for artists to meet, exhibit and experiment, and house a world-class permanent visual culture collection of Hong Kong, Chinese, Asian and beyond in all its forms, providing and presenting multiple flexible platforms for multidisciplinary programming, exploring art, design, architecture and the moving image, celebrating the fluidity between the art forms that is characteristic of Asia's cultural ecology. Facilities will provide ample space for exhibition, conservation and storage, an education centre, an archive library and bookstore, theatres and screen facilities, art studios and outdoor green spaces.

Based on these requirements and with the support and advice by an Independent Professional Advisor, the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority ("WKCDA") launched a global invitation for expression of interest to design M+ in September last year. The invitation drew over 80 responses from all over the world, including some of the world's best known architectural practices. For overseas practices, it must collaborate with a Registered Practice of The Hong Kong Institute of Architects with an office in Hong Kong.

In parallel, a Jury Panel making up of internationally-acclaimed representatives from different professional disciplines was formed to shortlist design teams to enter the competition. The Panel was chaired by Prof Colin Fournier, an architect/architectural educator from the United Kingdom and currently guest professor at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. Other members include (in alphabetical order): Eve Blau, Adjunct Professor, Graduate School of Design, Harvard University; Kathy Halbreich, Associate Director of Museum of Modern Arts New York; William Lim, leading Hong Kong architect; Victor Lo, Chairman of Board of Directors, Hong Kong Design Centre; Leslie Lu, a leading Hong Kong architect; Lars Nittve, Executive Director, M+; and Uli Sigg, the world's leading collector of Chinese contemporary art.

Six teams were selected in December last year and invited to submit conceptual designs for the building. The teams were:

- Herzog & de Meuron + TFP Farrells
- Kazuyo Sejima + Ryue Nishizawa/SANAA

- Renzo Piano Building Workshop
- Shigeru Ban Architects + Thomas Chow Architects
- SNOHETTA
- Toyo Ito & Associates, Architects + Benoy Limited

The Panel adjudicated based on a set of assessment criteria which included Architectural Design Aspects, Technical Design Aspects, Sustainability Design Aspects, and the ability of the design team to work harmoniously with the Client Team including the stakeholders. Furthermore, the WKCD is not only selecting a design, but also a design team which can communicate effectively with the WKCD and its stakeholders to deliver a project that would work for the genre, the performers and the audience. The assessment process thus consisted of interactive workshops and presentations. The fairness of the competition was upheld through setting up open and equitable competition rules, for which the Independent Commissioner Against Corruption was consulted, and conducting the competition in conformance with these rules as supported and facilitated by an Independent Professional Advisor.

The Herzog & de Meuron + TFP Farrells team was unanimously selected by the panel as winner for they had submitted a “memorable design that draws power from the simplicity and clarity of its *parti* and the internal layout is inviting to the public, offering a spatial organization that is easy to understand and navigate.”

Welcoming the result, **Mr Michael Lynch**, CEO of WKCD, said, “Today’s announcement of world-class architects for the design of M+ represents a fantastic commitment by Hong Kong to develop cultural infrastructure. With the M+ design now unveiled and the ground breaking for the Xiqu Centre this Autumn, we begin to see a vision of the future, with WKCD as an important site for cultural exchange, artistic development and education.”

Dr Lars Nittve, Executive Director, M+ said, “Herzog & de Meuron + TFP Farrells have given Hong Kong not only a museum that, in its purity and simplicity, stands out in the urban landscape, but more importantly will be extremely well-functioning, accessible and democratic. Creating a design for a museum like M+, expressing the diversity of visual culture with a global perspective but rooted in Hong Kong, is a complex task. But Herzog & de Meuron has succeeded. This unique design gives us a flagship venue which will come to represent the best of Hong Kong, Asian and international contemporary visual culture.”

On the design, **Jacques Herzog** of Herzog & de Meuron, said, “For art to enter into the life of a city like Hong Kong it has to come from below, from its own foundations. Our M+ Project does exactly that, by literally emerging from the city’s underground.”

Pierre de Meuron of Herzog & de Meuron, said, “We have made the underground tunnel of the Airport Express the *raison d’être* of a rough, large-scale exhibition universe that literally anchors the entire building in the ground. The tunnel has been uncovered, creating a radical space for art and design, installation and performance; it is a space of unprecedented potential and a challenge to artists and curators alike.”

Ascan Mergenthaler of Herzog & de Meuron, said, “The outcome is a building that is not simply anchored in its surroundings; it is also formed by them. It is a clearly defined, almost archaic structure that echoes the iconic tradition of Kowloon’s skyline and transforms it into a beacon of art and artists. M+ is a public space, a forum, a built natural environment for people and art.”

The Winning Design

M+ is not just another museum. M+ is a cultural centre for 20th and 21st century art, design, architecture and the moving image. As such, it embraces the entire spectrum of spaces, means of display and activities related to exhibiting and viewing these media. They range from the conventional white cube, reconfigurable spaces, screening rooms and multipurpose facilities to so-called third spaces and even an "industrial" space. It was the special request for this "industrial" space that motivated us to take a closer look at the specificity of the centre's future location. How should a post-industrial space be created from vacant land? A mere 20 years ago, the ground occupied by the WKCD was part of the seaport. Section by section, the land has been reclaimed from the sea and the natural harbour filled with earth. This artificial piece of land is now the construction site for the new buildings of the WKCD. What can lend authenticity to reclaimed land? Paradoxically, yet another work of engineering defines the specificity of this place: the underground tunnel of the Airport Express. Initially an obstacle that complicated planning, this distinctive feature has become the *raison d'être* for our project, consisting of a rough, large-scale exhibition universe which quite literally anchors the entire building in the ground. By uncovering the tunnel, a spectacular space is created for art and design, installation and performance; the excavations reveal nature of a "second order", a "Found Space" that is a challenge to artists and curators alike, a space of unprecedented potential. Together with an adjacent, L-shaped Black Box, a flexible, easily reconfigurable Studio Space, direct access to the loading dock and a large part of the storage area, a sunken forum and exhibition topography have been created, which are not only tailored to the needs of art and design in the 21st century but also set the stage for a unique art experience, inseparable from the specific character of this location.

The horizontal building hovering above this "industrial" landscape houses the more conventional display spaces. As in a city, the arrangement of all the galleries is based on an orthogonal grid. A central plaza provides direct access to the entire exhibition area. This includes not only the temporary exhibitions but also three clearly defined Anchor Rooms. A tall Focus Gallery, with two lateral bands of daylight just below the ceiling, rises out of the horizontal exhibition building and plugs into the lower part of the vertical staff and education building. A sequence of galleries is accessed from each of the four corners of the central plaza. A specific space introduces each sequence: an elongated sky lit gallery, a courtyard with direct access to the roof terrace, a room with extensive glazing towards the Park and an auditorium facing Victoria Harbour. These distinguish and structure the sequence of exhibition spaces, which can in turn be combined or divided into smaller units by additional third spaces. The galleries themselves may be illuminated from above or from the sides; they may be introverted or extroverted. A variety of precise openings in the façade frame views of the Artist Square, the Park and the skyline of Hong Kong Island across the harbour.

In the joint between the "Found Space" and the horizontal, floating exhibition building, there is a spacious entrance area for the public. Instead of building a solid object that blocks off access, light and views, this covered area forms a bright, welcoming platform that can be entered from all sides and levels: open and transparent yet shielded from direct sunlight. It becomes a forum and focal point between the West Kowloon Cultural District and the Park, the newly built Avenue and Victoria Harbour. Here visitors encounter all the uses and activities of M+ at a single glance. Specific functions are assigned to each quadrant of the platform. Ticketing, museum shop and information are situated in the corner next to Artist

Square. The large temporary exhibition space faces the Park and is accessible directly from the main platform. Overlooking the waterfront promenade and Victoria Harbour, there is the auditorium on one side while, on the other, the glazed rotunda of the Resource Centre receives interested visitors. A broad diagonal opening in the floor of the platform affords a view of the excavated "Found Space". And through a large circular cut-out above, visitors see the exhibition level and also a view of the vertical building and open skies.

The vertical plane of the M+ building is centred on the horizontal slab of exhibition spaces and spans its entire width. The two elements form a single entity, fused into the shape of an upside down T. Making full use of the height specified in the master plan, the vertical building establishes M+ as part of the Victoria Harbour skyline. It is here that most of the educational facilities and museum offices are housed. Abundant daylight and expansive views make learning and working a special experience. A series of multi-storey interior courtyard spaces and meeting zones establish varied connections between front-of-house and back-of-house. The top floors of the vertical building contain restaurants, bars and a sky garden. Integrated into the sun-shading horizontal louvers of the façade, an LED lighting system activates the building as a coarse-grained, oversized display screen for works of art selected by curators or created especially for M+.

The resulting structure is not simply anchored in its surroundings; it is also formed by them. The precise and urban, almost archaic, shape reiterates the iconic character of Kowloon's skyline on one hand, yet on the other hand, this convention is subverted by the transmitted message of the art and artists, visible from afar, that will consequently make M+ a site of constant renewal, rather than being locked to a predefined form. This is a universal place with an inner organization whose openness and transparency make it possible to link the complexities of the content and the space in many different ways. Through its specificity, it becomes a distinctive, singular and unmistakable piece of Hong Kong. But above all, M+ is a public forum, a built platform for the exchange, encounter and activity of people and art.

The Winning Team

Herzog & de Meuron + TFP Farrells

Herzog & de Meuron is a partnership led by five Senior Partners – Jacques Herzog, Pierre de Meuron, Christine Binswanger, Ascan Mergenthaler and Stefan Marbach.

Founded in 1978, Herzog & de Meuron have designed a wide range of projects from the small scale of a private home to the large scale of urban design. While many of their projects are highly recognised public facilities, such as their stadiums and museums, they have also completed several distinguished private projects including apartment buildings, offices and factories. The practice has been awarded numerous prizes including "The Pritzker Architecture Prize" (USA) in 2001, the "RIBA Royal Gold Medal" (UK) and the "Praemium Imperiale" (Japan), both in 2007.

TFP Farrells has 45 years of international architecture and planning experience with offices in the UK, Hong Kong, and China. Established in 1991, the Hong Kong office takes projects through all stages of design in a structured process and has successfully delivered numerous projects throughout Asia Pacific, including the Peak Tower, KK100, Kowloon Station Development and the recent West Kowloon Cultural District Development Masterplan.

For the M+ project, Herzog & de Meuron have formed a design team with TFP Farrells as local partner architect. This global team combines wide international perspective with deep local knowledge of Hong Kong and comprehensive experience in the development of the West Kowloon Cultural District site.

While sharing a common spirit of innovation and responsiveness, each team member also contributes specific expertise. Herzog & de Meuron is a recognised leader in museum architecture, urban cultural vitalisation and public spaces, as demonstrated in landmark projects such as the Tate Modern in London and the National Stadium ("Bird's Nest") in Beijing. TFP Farrells brings extensive experience on complex infrastructural projects such as the West Kowloon land reclamation, Kowloon Station, and the WKCD development master plan.

M+

M+ is the new museum for visual culture in the West Kowloon Cultural District, encompassing 20th and 21st century art, design, architecture and the moving image from Hong Kong, China, Asia and beyond. From its vantage point in one of the world's most dynamic regions, M+ will document the past, inform the present and contribute to the future of visual culture within an ever more interconnected global landscape. The museum will take a multidisciplinary approach that both challenges and respects existing boundaries, while creating a meeting point for a diversity of perspectives, narratives and audiences. M+ has already embarked on a number of public programmes and exhibitions, and begun to assemble its permanent collection in the run-up to the opening of its around 60,000 square metre building located in the West Kowloon Cultural District overlooking Hong Kong's iconic Victoria Harbour.

West Kowloon Cultural District

The West Kowloon Cultural District is one of the largest cultural projects in the world. Its vision is to create a vibrant cultural quarter for Hong Kong, a vital platform where the local arts scene can interact, develop and collaborate, and major facilities to host and produce world-class exhibitions, performances and arts and cultural events. It will be a low-density development, providing ample open green space and embracing two kilometres of a vibrant harbour-front promenade, 23 hectares of open space and a green avenue, and closely connected with the neighbourhood. It also comprises a variety of arts and cultural facilities, including Xiqu Centre, M+, Free Space, Centre for Contemporary Performance, Music Centre, theatres of different sizes, etc.

WKCD's first cultural event was the West Kowloon Bamboo Theatre which was staged at the site of the future Xiqu Centre near Canton Road during the Chinese New Year in 2012. *Mobile M+: Yau Ma Tei* marked the second program presented by WKCD and the first in the series curated by M+ scheduled to occur leading up to the opening of the M+ museum.