Altered (e)States: The Repulse Bay Complex

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The late 20th Century was obsessed with biological models for how architecture could adapt to its surroundings. In Metabolism for example, the impetus driving adaptation and morphological transformation is the work's psychological impact. The undercurrent of these architect's theories and motivations (all working against modernity) is not so much the technology or geometry of adaptation, but the resultant alteration that transformed the subject's (the inhabitant's) awareness of their environment.

In the context of collective housing, many of these projects were an examination of the extent to which the architecture of the unit (or house) could transform the entire collective. To this extent, the "Project" underlying architectural morphology, adaptive and genetic methods is the alteration of one's psychological state and the belief that architecture (housing in particular) has the ability to alter one's state of mind and lifestyle.

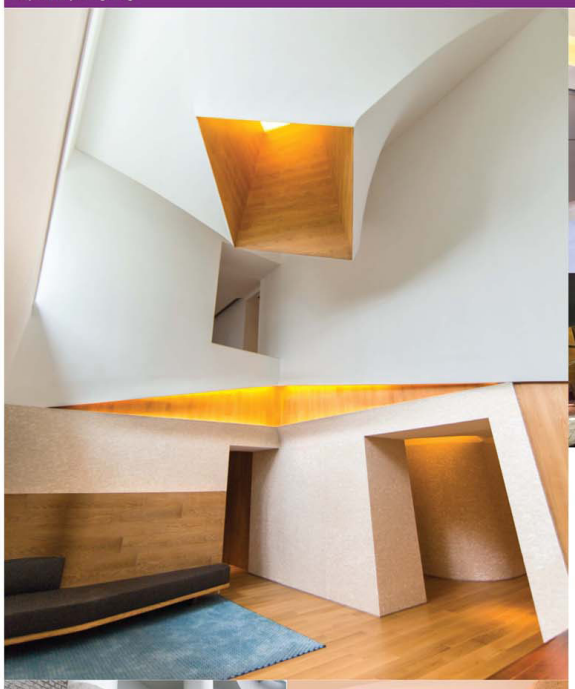
Contemporary China -and much of the housing within it- has little to do with Architects. Unit floor areas and layouts are largely predetermined by developers; driven by well studied and vetted financial and economic models. The 20th century dream of architects designing whole, utopian, housing developments as a means to re-invent community and the contemporary subject, is evaporating if not entirely gone. Yet, architecture continues to suggest that it must have full control over the whole; it remains obsessed with wholism and continuity.

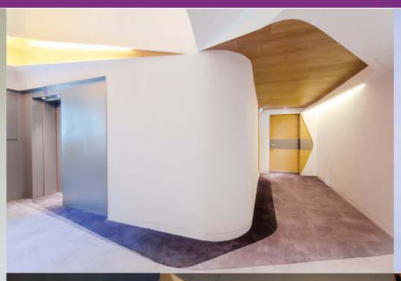
Increasingly, one can see a trend where Architects are being engaged to design only the enclosure, only the common areas or podia of housing projects. In cities like Hong Kong, this trend is taken even further. It is clear that unless an architect is adept at renovating existing housing estates, they will not be able to sustain a practice or experiment on the city. This is a reflection of a number of factors, including the maturity of the physical fabric of Hong Kong, its current economy, and the desire for developers to be environmentally responsible by building less. Projects embracing alteration can be seen as offering solutions to one of many possible futures that can distinguish an architecture born from a blank slate/"open city" (20th century) versus an architecture born from a highly dense city where it must pry, crack and intervene in order to "open" the city. This type of work is both conceptually ripe and deeply ecological.

THE REPULSE BAY COMPLEX

Repulse Bay, Hong Kong

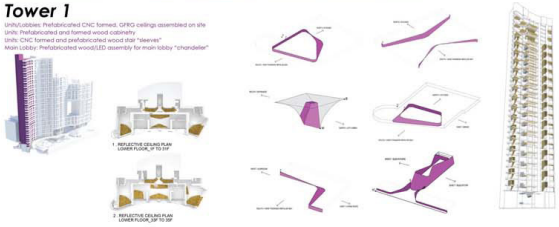
Site area :	23,585.320 sqm
Gross floor area :	13,520 sqm
Year of design :	2011 - 2013
Completion date :	August 2013





Tower 1

Units/Lobbies: Prefabricated CNC formed, GFRG ceilings assembled on site
Units: Prefabricated and formed wood cabinetry
Units: CNC formed and prefabricated wood stair "sleeves"
Main Lobby: Prefabricated wood/LED assembly for main lobby "chandelier"

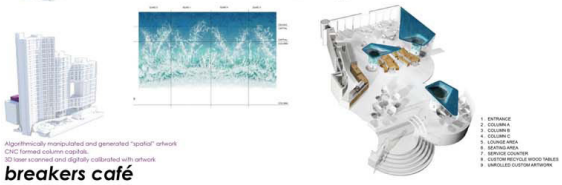


T2-T4: CNC formed glass enclosures
T2: CNC formed, prefabricated wood wall, ceiling, railing assembly
T3-T4: CNC formed prefabricated GFRG ceilings, wood wall and wood ceilings
T3-T4: CNC milled, prefabricated granite cladding

T2 to T4 Lobbies

waterscape

Surface: Digitally calibrated, gradient color, granite and grout "sandwash" discs assembled on site
Surface: Digitally set out stainless steel expansion joints assembled on site
Trellis: Prefabricated wood beam structure digitally set out and calibrated on site
Bench/Planters: Digitally set out wood cladding assembled on site



Algorithmically manipulated and generated "spatial" artwork
CNC formed column capitals.
3D laser scanned and digitally calibrated with network

breakers café