



M+: Architecture

M+ Overview

M+ is Asia's first global museum of contemporary visual culture. Designed by the world-renowned architecture firm Herzog & de Meuron in partnership with TFP Farrells and Arup, the M+ building is one of the largest museums of modern and contemporary visual culture in the world, set to become a significant addition to the global arts and cultural landscape as well as a new international architectural icon.

The 65,000 square-metre M+ building houses 17,000 square metres of exhibition space across thirty-three galleries. It also includes three cinemas*, a Mediatheque*, a Learning Hub, a Research Centre, two museum shops, restaurants*, a tea and coffee bar, a members' lounge, and office spaces, with a Roof Garden that commands spectacular views of Victoria Harbour.

Most galleries are arranged on a large podium level on the second floor offering visitors a fluid, interconnected experience of the exhibitions. The tower defines a visual dialogue with the urban landscape of Hong Kong. The podium and tower are united as concrete structures clad in ceramic tiles that reflect the changing conditions of light and weather while standing out from nearby glass and steel skyscrapers. The tower facade also features an LED system for the display of collection works, special commissions, and content related to the museum, making a distinctive contribution to the city's vibrant night-time environment.

* will be open to the public progressively

Location

West Kowloon Cultural District, 38 Museum Drive, Kowloon, Hong Kong

M+ is located within the West Kowloon Cultural District on the Victoria Harbour waterfront of the Kowloon Peninsula in Hong Kong.

The West Kowloon Cultural District is one of the largest and most ambitious cultural projects in the world. Its vision is to create a vibrant new cultural quarter for Hong Kong on forty hectares of reclaimed land located alongside the Victoria Harbour. With a varied mix of theatres, performance spaces, and museums, the West Kowloon Cultural District will produce and host world-class exhibitions, performances, and cultural events, providing about twenty-three hectares of public open space, including a two-kilometre waterfront promenade.

The development of the West Kowloon Cultural District was based on a conceptual plan designed by Foster + Partners. M+ stands at the centre of the West Kowloon Cultural District at the boundary between the urban sector and the Art Park.

Key Project Dates

2012 West Kowloon Cultural District Authority announced architectural competition for M+



2013	Herzog & de Meuron (design architect) and TFP Farrells was selected as the winning team in the M+ competition
2015	M+ construction began
2020	M+ construction completed; fit-out starts
2021	Public opening of M+

Project Leadership

The M+ Board, chaired by Victor Lo, is responsible for formulating the vision and mission, as well as the strategies, policies, and guidelines in relation to museological matters and professional standards of operations for the museum.

Suhanya Raffel, Museum Director, M+, leads M+ as a whole and oversees all museum activities, including acquisitions, programming, collections care, development, research, institutional collaborations, and museum operations.

Executive Architecture Team

For the M+ project, Herzog & de Meuron formed a design team with TFP Farrells as local partner architect and with Arup as an engineering consultant. 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.

M+ Project Specifications

Total area: 65,000 square metres
Site area: 25,000 square metres
Exhibition space: 17,000 square metres
Learning Hub: 1,200 square metres
Research Centre: 1,500 square metres
Building dimensions: 130 x 111 x 94 metres
M+ Facade: 110 x 66 metres
Number of floors: 18

Architectural Features and Key Facts

Glazed Ceramic Facade

Glass-clad skyscrapers are ubiquitous in Hong Kong. Departing from this visual language but remaining in dialogue with it, the M+ building features ceramic components as a modular facade system, with 140,000 elements used for the Tower. The dark green glazed ceramic facade reflects conditions of light and weather in many different facets and shades—an ever-changing skin with a crafted and rich surface quality. Ceramics also provide a localised environmental solution for the M+ building, to protect it from the long-term corrosive effects of heat, humidity and wind.

Fully Integrated Tower Facade

The south facade of the tower is a dynamic, evolving LED media display screen, made up of 5,664 LED tubes. It is a visual amplification of M+ programmes and accentuates the museum's connection with the urban landscape facing Victoria Harbour and Hong Kong Island.

Found Space

The MTR Airport Express and Tung Chung Line tunnels lie beneath the site of the M+ building. Excavations around the tunnels reveal a 'found space' that



provides an anchor inside the building and can host dynamic rotating installations. In a remarkable feat of engineering, five mega trusses—large steel elements encased in concrete frameworks—help support the massive structure and prevent it from bearing down on the tunnels.

Lightwell

A lightwell inside the building, created by massive cutaways in the floor plates and the skylights, connects basement floors, the ground floor, and the podium level, while offering visitors an immersive experience of the architecture and the museum from above and below.

Grand Stair

Apart from connecting the atrium to the podium's gallery spaces above and to the cinemas below, the Grand Stair is its own generous public topography—a place that can be freely-accessed for informal gathering off the street, or, completely blacked-out and closed off to transform into a flexible auditorium for lectures, screenings, and other events. With spectacular views of the harbour, the Grand Stair is where the city, the public, and visual culture coincide. It is one of a number of multi-purpose spaces in M+ which offer visitors, as well as curators and artists, a range of possibilities for access and use.

Learning Hub

The Learning Hub is a space for learning, interpretation, and inspiration set against the backdrop of Victoria Harbour. It houses a Forum, workshops, and seminar rooms hosting programmes for all ages and interest groups. The pitched roof of the Learning Hub also provides access to the Roof Garden.

Roof Garden

The Roof Garden is located atop the podium. It is an outdoor space that directly connects with the Art Park of the West Kowloon Cultural District and offers sweeping vistas of Victoria Harbour, Hong Kong Island, and outlying islands.

Locally Inspired Bamboo Furniture

Furniture, such as reception desks and ticketing counters, are locally inspired and made from bamboo, recalling the informal structures found throughout Hong Kong.

A Campus of Buildings

The M+ building is part of a campus that also includes the Conservation and Storage Facility (CSF) and the WKCDA Tower. The CSF is devoted to the conservation, restoration, and storage of the growing M+ Collections. The WKCDA Tower is a sixteen-storey building that houses the new head office of the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority and in the future retail, dining, and entertainment facilities.

Sustainability

The design of M+ incorporates the latest proven technologies and has adopted sustainability as a core principle in its development. M+ aims to become a 'low carbon and low energy' landmark venue in the District. Green building and energy saving design strategies have been considered for both collection and non-collection areas where practicable. Designed for performance throughout, M+ will provide a high-quality environment whilst significantly reducing energy consumption and potable water consumption. The Roof Garden provides a publicly accessible, landscaped garden that capitalises on a local microclimate



refreshed by the harbour breeze. Internally, skylights allow pockets of daylight to animate selected gallery spaces, reducing the need for artificial lighting. Architectural shading on the facade minimises heat gain and the energy needed for cooling. The remaining building loads are served by district cooling and supplemented by solar hot water panels to reduce energy consumption.

Throughout the whole development of the M+ building, the project team has aimed to follow BEAM Plus standards (a comprehensive environmental assessment scheme widely adopted in Hong Kong, similar to BREEAM and LEED) at Gold or above ratings and West Kowloon Cultural District Sustainability KPIs as far as practicable for sustainable building design features. Emphasis has been placed on Integrated Sustainable Building Design (ISBD) for the whole M+ development—integrating architectural, construction, mechanical, electrical, and other technical disciplines throughout the design process for M+, in order to minimise energy consumption and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. In particular, provisions for energy and water sub-metering, occupancy controls, and high-capacity waste sorting facilities are in place to facilitate the sustainable and smart operations of M+, in line with national targets and long-term goals to achieve carbon neutrality.

Accessibility and Inclusion

The design of the M+ building considered accessibility and inclusion. Visitors and staff will be able to get around the M+ easily with no barriers to hamper movement or to prevent them from accessing designated spaces. M+ incorporates the principles of Universal Design—a broad-spectrum solution that produces buildings, products and environments that are usable and effective for everyone. Social integration to maintain a high quality of the visitor's experience, addressing human diversity and participation for all is a priority.

Architecture and Engineering Team

Herzog & de Meuron

Established in Basel in 1978, Herzog & de Meuron is a partnership led by Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron together with Senior Partners Christine Binswanger, Ascan Mergenthaler, Stefan Marbach, Esther Zumsteg, and Jason Frantzen. An international team of nearly 500 collaborators including the two Founders, five Senior Partners, ten Partners, and 41 Associates work on projects across Europe, the Americas and Asia. The main office is in Basel with additional offices in London, New York, Hong Kong, Berlin and Copenhagen.

The practice has designed a wide range of projects from the small scale of a private home to the large scale of urban design. Many projects are highly recognized public facilities, such as museums, stadiums, and hospitals, and they have completed distinguished private projects including offices, laboratories, and apartment buildings. Awards received include the Pritzker Architecture Prize (USA) in 2001, the RIBA Royal Gold Medal (UK), the Praemium Imperiale (Japan), both in 2007, and the Mies Crown Hall Americas Prize (USA) in 2014.

TFP Farrells



TFP Farrells is an international firm of architects, urban planners, and designers, founded by Sir Terry Farrell in 1965. With headquarters in London, Hong Kong, and Shanghai, the firm is a group of diverse talent that has delivered a broad range of projects worldwide. We work at all scales and sectors, including urban masterplans, cultural, civic, transport-related infrastructure, residential and mixed-use commercial complexes. We are committed to creating innovative, social, and transformative architecture that sustainably connects people, community, and the environment.

Our major landmark projects include Charing Cross Station, SIS Headquarters, Chelsea Waterfront, The Royal Institution, Great North Museum, and The Deep in the UK; Incheon Airport GTC and Gwacheon National Science Museum in Korea; Vattanac Capital in Cambodia; and China Zun, Beijing South Railway Station, China National Petroleum Headquarters, Shanghai Shipyard, KK100 Development, Qianhai One Excellence, and Guangzhou South Railway Station in China.

In addition to M+, our Hong Kong landmarks include the Peak Tower, British Consulate General, Kowloon Station Development, Development Plan of West Kowloon Cultural District, Kennedy Town Swimming Pool, Kowloon East Regional Headquarters, Kwai Chung Hospital Redevelopment, and Expansion of Hong Kong Science Museum and Museum of History.

Arup

Arup is a global firm of more than 15,000 designers, engineers, architects, planners, consultants, and technical specialists, working across over 90 disciplines, with projects in more than 140 countries.

We opened our Hong Kong office in 1976, and today our influence can be seen everywhere in the city, from its tallest building to its longest bridge, at the airport gateway and through a large share of its sophisticated railway networks, to designing sustainable buildings and planning the next-generation towns.

From the Sydney Opera House and the Centre Pompidou to our more recent work like the V&A Museum Shenzhen and Taipei Performing Arts Centre, Arup has played a defining role in the design and development of some of the world's favourite cultural buildings.

Our multidisciplinary team offered total design services for M+ including civil, structural, geotechnical, MEP, facade, and fire engineering with lighting, acoustics, landscape, security, and transportation design and consultancy.

###