

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **ISLAND**

Double-decker driverless tram designed for Hong Kong

<https://www.andreaponti.com/island.html>



Island is a double-decker driverless tram designed for the city of Hong Kong in the post-Covid era. This highly innovative design concept incorporates industrial design, transportation design, public design, urban mobility and sustainability. The project includes exterior, interior and tram stop design.

With the Coronavirus pandemic, people are shunning public transport and relying much more on private transport. We wanted to reimagine public transport in the post-Covid era from a prevention perspective. Especially in the densely populated city of Hong Kong, where social distancing is hard to achieve.

The idea of designing a tram is no coincidence: trams are one of the city's landmarks and the tramways celebrate their 115th anniversary this year. The concept of social distancing, which limits people's freedom to move and interact became the design challenge and focal point for the new concept. The name Island references the innovative design of the interiors, where large circular benches facilitate social distancing and passengers sit facing outwards in a radial pattern.

The exterior design is inspired by the Hong Kong urban landscape, which features vast surfaces of glass and rounded-corner buildings. Natural light floods the interiors during the day through the curved windows and a domed top, which also provide awe-inspiring views at night.

The driverless technology optimizes the interior space of the tram, making it easier to manage travel times and increase onboard safety. The tram has a retractable connector for rapid charging at tram stops. Large vertical LEDs enhance visibility in all weather conditions.

The interior design contrasts with the exterior. Minimalist design, charcoal black walls, soft circular seating, wooden floors and trims with natural finish all create a neutral and friendly environment. This chromatic diversity, in addition to the dark color palette, frames and accentuates the beauty of the Hong Kong urban landscape.

The simple tram stop structure has sleek, essential lines. Being open on both sides, it facilitates a linear, orderly flow of people and a healthier environment. The graphics guide passengers through the boarding and payment process, made by Octopus Card, before boarding. This streamlines the boarding procedure and optimizes the available space inside.

Island explores a wide spectrum of design aspects, from the product to the urban landscape. It represents the forward-thinking spirit of Hong Kong, and introduces a new concept of public transport that overcomes the practice of social distancing. We shouldn't be dividing and separating but instead rethinking public spaces with a seamless, integrated and effective design approach.

## **The Designer**

Andrea Ponti is an Italian designer specializing in Product and Industrial Design. Since 2013 he has lived in Hong Kong, where he founded Ponti Design Studio. After graduating in Product Design from the Politecnico of Milan, Italy in 2006, Ponti lived seven years in Japan. As a researcher with Kyushu University, he was on various internship programs with leading Japanese companies including Honda Motors and Mitsubishi Electric.

Fascinated by Japanese aesthetics and design, he collaborated with Japanese design masters Toshiyuki Kita, Chiaki Murata and Junzo Yamashita. Ponti has organized numerous exhibitions for the Salone del Mobile in Milan, Italy on the theme of Product Design between Italy and Japan. He has received many international design awards, including the iF Design Award, Red Dot Design Award, Good Design Award and LG Mobile Design Award. Currently, Ponti designs for several global companies including Panasonic, Philips and Samsonite. He also collaborates with numerous startups from North America, Europe and Asia. His projects are featured in major international design media.

## **The Studio**

Ponti Design Studio is a Hong Kong-based product design company specializing in highly distinctive, brand-building and iconic design. Founded in 2012 by Italian designer Andrea Ponti and Japanese design consultant Shiori Kuroiwa, the Studio focuses on high end products combining technological excellence with emotional design language. The product range includes technology, high end electronics, audio equipments, watches and wearables, furniture and lifestyle products. The Studio also provides branding and art direction services to client companies in North America, Europe and Asia.

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