

# Architecture: The Sky's the Limit

International architecture practice OMA positions its Hong Kong office as the gateway to significant projects across the Asia-Pacific region.



Courtesy of OMA / Photography by Marko Seifert

“ Hong Kong’s geographic advantages, coupled with an open market structure, create an operational environment where we readily have access to a plethora of resources, business acumen and greater visibility to potential investors from nearby regions. ”

**Chris van Duijn**  
Partner  
OMA

In the nearly five decades since its inception by Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas, OMA has evolved alongside the global architectural landscape. Yet all of its concepts remain rooted in rigorous research and critical thinking. Today, its projects include typologies from large-scaled masterplans, public buildings and commercial spaces to more human-scaled retail boutiques and installations. Its eight partners oversee offices in Rotterdam, Hong Kong and New York; while each studio initiates and develops projects independently, together their shared expertise supports the firm’s culture of diversity.

## Unlocking Game-changing Opportunities in the Region

The Hong Kong studio recently added major Asia-Pacific projects to its portfolio: Taipei Performing Arts Center, department store Galleria in Gwanggyo and Genesis Gangnam in Seoul. Its latest Mainland China work includes Tencent’s headquarters in Beijing, and a masterplan design for Chengdu Future City, while Hangzhou Prism and mixed-use tower CMG Times Center in Qianhai will be completed soon. With innovative retail experiences being a strength for the studio, OMA is also involved in the design of a mega-size K11 shopping complex in Shenzhen’s Nanshan District.

“The pandemic has heightened public consciousness about the value of outdoor social spaces, with the commercial and retail sectors now dedicating more room for public programmes,” said Chris van Duijn,

who oversees OMA’s Hong Kong studio. “It is for this reason that Asian clients look to us for ideas, because of our experience in public buildings and urban planning.”

The Hong Kong office has increased momentum in the region over the past several years. “The Central government’s efforts to establish the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) into an economic powerhouse have brought us numerous new opportunities in Qianhai,” van Duijn revealed. “There is such a strong appetite for architectural innovation in the GBA and other developing Chinese cities. And there are aspects that still require growth and improvement – for example, in terms of sustainability. This is where OMA can contribute and add value by putting forward our knowledge connecting different possibilities to bridge the gap. This capability will be pivotal for us to stay competitive in the years to come.”

## Global Connections

With the Hong Kong studio operating since 2009, the city continues to be a strategic hub in Asia and a gateway to the rest of the world for OMA. “Its geographic advantages, coupled with an open market structure, create an operational environment where we readily have access to a plethora of resources, business acumen and greater visibility to potential investors from nearby regions,” van Duijn noted. “The multiplicity of the city’s cultural fabric attracts creative talent from all parts of the globe.”

Alongside expanding its scope in Mainland China, van Duijn is keen to explore opportunities in Southeast Asia and Korea. He is confident that OMA’s team is well-equipped to handle what may come. “We are aptly sized to allow us to work flexibly across projects,” he stated. “This level of fluidity means we are also able to shift resources around quickly to accommodate changing needs of the office, client or project.”

## OMA

- Established in 1975, the architectural and urbanism projects of international firm OMA stem from research and critical thinking
- OMA works in tandem with its in-house research and design think tank AMO to develop research studies, publications, exhibitions and lectures
- Its studio in Hong Kong employs 40 staff members and is one of OMA’s three main global design hubs

 [oma.com](http://oma.com)