

## Fumihiko Maki's Shenzhen arts complex opens with V&A Gallery celebrating 'Values of Design'

BY KIM MEGSON | 04 DEC 2017



The Sea World Culture and Arts Center (SWCAC), located in Shenzhen Bay, is formed of three white cantilevered volumes atop a deconstructed plinth / Design Society



**A cultural hub designed by Japanese Pritzker-winning architect Fumihiko Maki has opened in Chinese megacity Shenzhen in partnership with the V&A – the first collaboration between a British museum and a Chinese partner.**

The Sea World Culture and Arts Center (SWCAC), located in Shenzhen Bay, is formed of three white cantilevered volumes atop a deconstructed plinth.

A tilted landscaped roof, open to the public, provides panoramic views while pathways extend towards the different urban axes and merge into the adjacent Nüwa coastal park.

"The structures are sort of a homage to the surrounding context – we call it the trilogy of city, park and ocean," lead architect Yasuko Okuyama told *CLADglobal*.

"We wanted to have some kind of open space that does not intrude with our project design – what we call a 'ma' in Japanese terms, which means a mitigator or an intermediary space."

Maki has said his architectural approach will "enable cultural conversation and dialogue," and the main component of the project is Design Society – a collection of leisure facilities including three galleries for temporary exhibitions, shops, restaurants, a theatre, a multi-purpose hall and learning facilities.

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– **Ole Bouman, director of Design Society**



### Values of Design – Trailer



The most headline-grabbing space is the V&A Gallery, founded by main developer China Merchants Shekou Holdings in collaboration with the London museum.

The V&A has provided professional advice, consultancy and staff training in order to establish Design Society as a cultural platform that “will connect China to the world and empower the inter-connectivity between design and society, design and everyday life, and design and industry”.

The V&A Gallery opens with the site-specific exhibition, ‘Values of Design’, designed by Sam Jacob Studio, featuring over 250 objects from the V&A’s collections. Exhibits include a version of WeChat (Weixin), the most widely used social platform in China, and a Phantom drone developed in Shenzhen.

Two major V&A touring exhibitions will also come to Design Society in 2018 and 2019 and community design and innovation workshops will be organised.

Tim Reeve, deputy director of the V&A, said: “Our role as founding partner of Design Society marks an important milestone for the V&A’s history of international engagement, as well as the design community of Shenzhen, with this the most significant international collaboration in our history.

“The UK’s creative industries continue to be one of Britain’s greatest and most enduring achievements, and we’re delighted to be sharing our 165 years of experience and expertise with the wider design world.”



Ole Bouman, director of Design Society, added: “After three years of close collaboration, the moment of unveiling to the public has come. We’re very proud to offer our audiences a slice of the vast design collection of the V&A to help people understand the power and value of design.

“We look back to a collaboration that brings fresh ideas, new acquisitions, expanded networks and site-specific narratives for Design Society and the V&A. This will be a catalyst for Design Society’s role to elevate creative industries and help the public in China to learn, appreciate and enjoy design.”

The SWCAC and Design Society are the latest high-profile leisure developments to open in Shenzhen. The Coop Himmelb(l)au-designed [Museum of Contemporary Art and Planning Exhibition \(MOCAPÉ\)](#) opened last year and a host of other schemes are in the pipeline - including [an athletics centre and theatre](#) designed by MVRDV; [a new art museum and library](#) by KSP; a neighbourhood sports centre by Urbanus; [a mixed-use Book City](#) by Atelier Global; and [a colossal mixed-use district](#) by Mecanoo.

You can read more about the rapid cultural development in Shenzhen [in the recent CLADmag feature](#).

Fumihiko Maki   Shenzhen   V&A Gallery   V&A   Sam Jacobs   Architecture   Design   China



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