

SINGAPORE \$18 MALAYSIA RM18 HONGKONG HKD90 AUSTRALIA AUS\$12 OTHERS US\$12

# da<sup>®</sup>

DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE

/ WWW.DESIGNANDARCHITECTURE.COM /

/ ISSUE 108. 2019 • S\$8 /

## YANGON EXCELSIOR ARCHETYPE GROUP & HBA BANGKOK

**14 BLAIR ROAD**  
A\_COLLECTIVE ARCHITECTS

**ARTE S**  
SPARK ARCHITECTS

**H QUEEN'S**  
CL3 ARCHITECTS

**TECH TOOLS  
FOR ARCHITECTS**  
EQUIP YOURSELVES WITH  
THESE NEW ESSENTIALS





WORDS MICHELE KOH MOROLLO

# ART RISES IN HONG KONG

Vertical gallery and lifestyle complex H Queen's takes contemporary art to new heights in Hong Kong.



When property developer Henderson Land Development approached architect William Lim of CL3 Architects to design a new commercial building in a prime location in Central in downtown Hong Kong, he proposed something that was never done before – a vertical art gallery and F&B

complex that would be the first of its kind in the world. They eventually christened it H Queen's.

An advocate of the adage “form follows function”, Lim believes it is difficult to design a commercial space if the architect doesn't know who will be moving into it.

“I like to look at the project from inside



**ABOVE**  
At 125m tall, the H Queen's building is clad in low-e glass and achieves LEED Gold status. The exterior is triple-glazed with zero UV penetration.

out, and imagine how it's being used," says Lim. "I also knew that there were many international art galleries which were contemplating opening in Hong Kong, but were having a hard time finding the right type of space.

"This was in 2012, and the first Art Basel in Hong Kong was taking place the following year, so I proposed the idea of a vertical gallery building that would be a new art venue in the middle of the city."

An avid art collector himself, Lim had previously worked with Henderson Land Development on a residential project where he helped them select pieces for the interiors. He knew his client appreciated art, and might be open to his unconventional proposal.

While stacking art galleries isn't exactly a new concept – there is the seven-story New Museum in Manhattan, and galleries in Japan that are housed in adapted



industrial buildings – this is the first time that a 125m-tall, 24-floor building has been built solely for the purpose of celebrating contemporary art.

H Queen's contains commercial pop-up gallery spaces on the ground floor, 16 levels of galleries (home to major global brands such as David Zwirner, Hauser & Wirth, Pace and Whitestone Gallery), F&B establishments on the lowest and top three storeys, and a rooftop bar.

### PERFECT COMPLEMENT

Because it sits right next to the historic stone steps of Pottinger Street – one of Hong Kong's oldest – Lim decided on glass for its modernity and lightness, which would reflect the stone steps and its downtown surroundings, rather than overwhelm the streetscape with a large, heavy mass.



The bottom and top three floors where the F&B outlets are located have staggered terraces for al fresco dining, which creates a unique, interlocking sculptural form.

“Alongside the historic Pottinger Street, and the two-lane wide Stanley Street, a series of terrace setbacks was created to open up the restaurant space, and draw in daylight through Stanley Street,” says Lim.

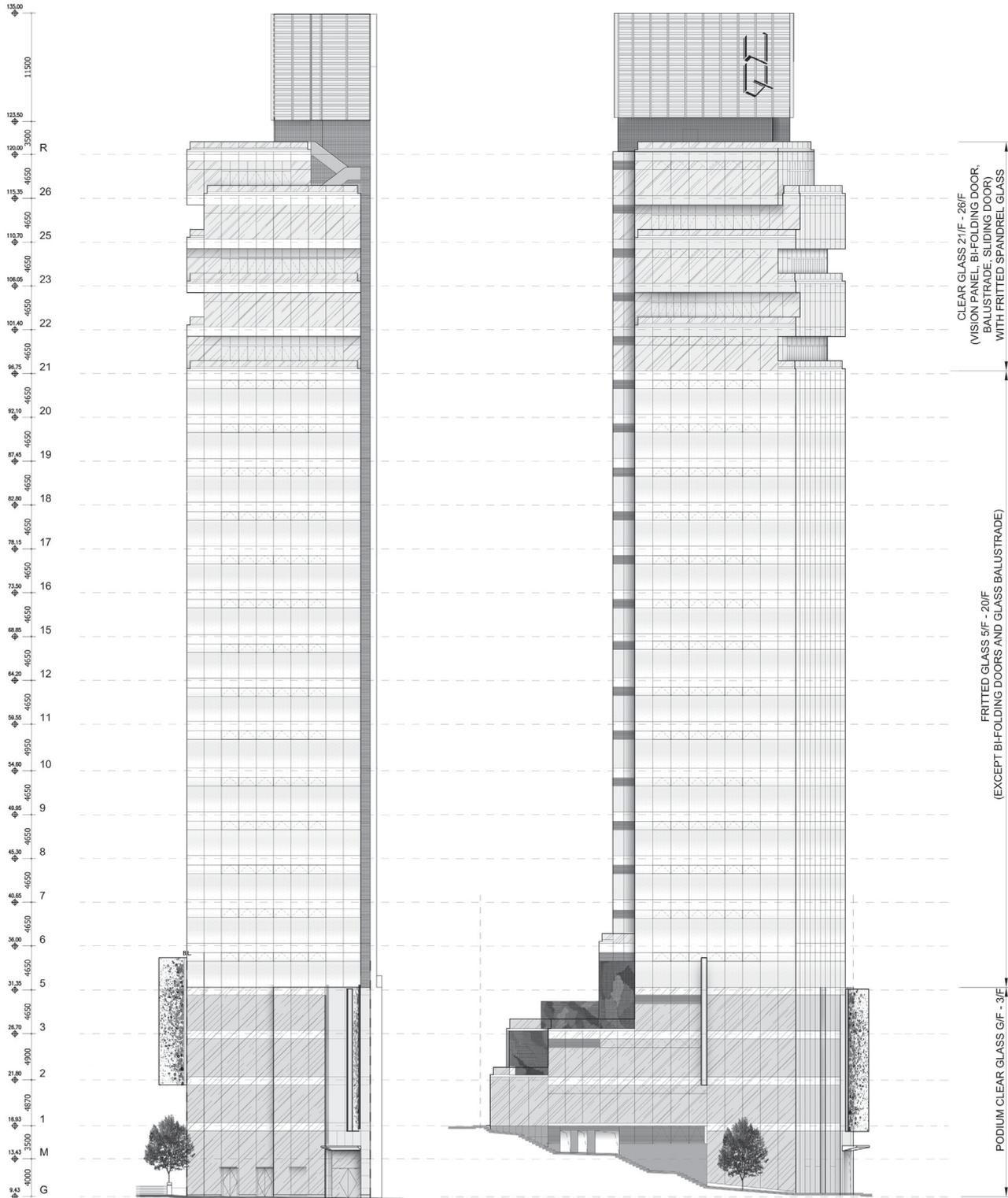
Designed with art in mind, the 6,921m<sup>2</sup> building was clad in triple-glazed, low-e glass that cuts out all UV light to protect the valuable artworks within.

**/ 1**  
The bottom three floors house F&B outlets with staggered terraces for al fresco dining, that gives the building its interesting, interlocking form.

**/ 2**  
The challenge of loading large artworks into the building is solved by mounting a crane on the roof that can hoist them directly onto each floor.

/ COMMERCIAL /

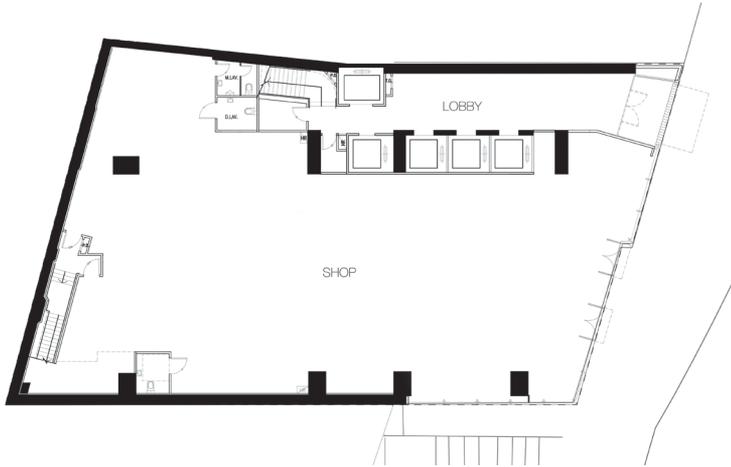
ELEVATIONS



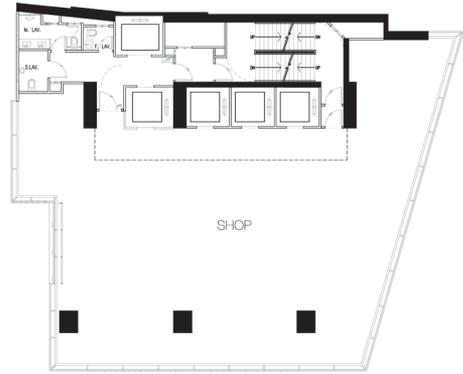
FRONT ELEVATION

SIDE ELEVATION

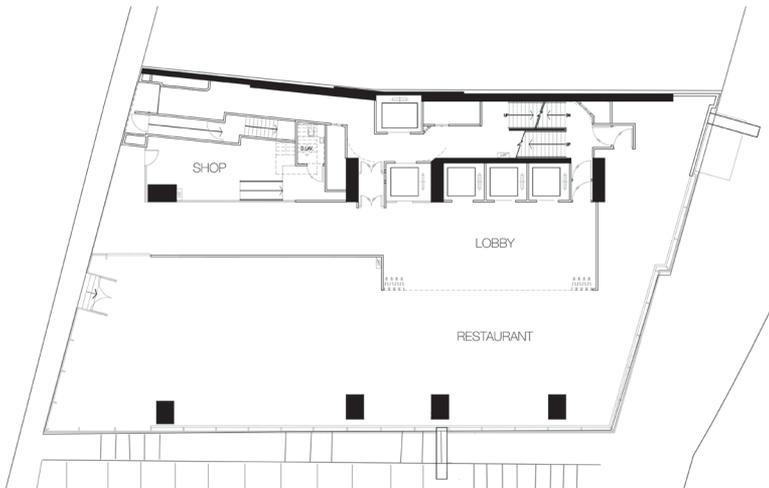
FLOOR PLANS



GROUND FLOOR



TYPICAL FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR



26TH FLOOR

“Logistics are crucial for exhibition spaces, so the art, sculptures and installations can be moved around without getting damaged,” says Lim.

He and his team solved this issue by mounting a custom-made retractable crane on the roof of the building.

It hoists artwork and sculptures from the ground level on Stanley Street, lifting them up to their respective galleries, where a 3m-by-4.5m, operable curtain wall panel opens to let the artwork in.

“This crane, which can lift up to 1.25

tons, has a counterbalance mechanism so its arm can enter into the building to deliver the artworks,” says Lim.

The operable curtain wall façade can also be opened up for natural ventilation during the cooler months of the year.

Each gallery has clear ceilings that are between 3.8 and 4m high, and floor loadbearing values of 5kPa.

“Normal commercial buildings do not have enough floor loading capacity to bear the weight of some of the heavier sculpture mediums, such as solid steel or rocks,

**H QUEEN'S**

- LOCATION** / HONG KONG
- COMPLETION** / 2017
- SITE AREA** / 461M<sup>2</sup>
- FLOOR AREA** / 6,921M<sup>2</sup>
- ASSOCIATE ARCHITECT** / IE SIU & CHUNG ARCHITECTS
- DESIGN ARCHITECT** / CL3 ARCHITECTS
- CONTRACTOR** / WECON
- QUANTITY SURVEYOR** / WT PARTNERSHIP (HK)
- DEVELOPER** / HENDERSON LAND DEVELOPMENT
- AWARDS** / 2018 AIA HONG KONG HONORS & AWARDS, MERIT AWARD FOR ARCHITECTURE;  
 ASIA PACIFIC PROPERTY AWARDS 2015 - RETAIL ARCHITECTURE;  
 CHINA PROPERTY AWARDS 2014 - BEST COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT (HONG KONG);  
 LEED FOR CORE & SHELL PRECERTIFICATION IN 2014 - GOLD LEVEL;  
 CHINA GREEN BUILDING DESIGN LABEL IN 2015 - 3-STAR RATING



so we had to ensure that we constructed sturdy floors that have similar floor loading capabilities as factory buildings," says Lim.

**HOME FOR ART**

The individual galleries hired their own designers to customise the interior fit outs. Among them are the acclaimed Kengo Kuma who did the interiors for Whitestone Gallery, and Annabelle Selldorf who liased with CL3 Architects to incorporate two interior staircases to the double-floor galleries of David Zwirner, and Hauser & Wirth.

According to Lim, the biggest challenge with H Queen's was convincing his client that his idea, which had never been done before, would work for them.

"Hopefully, H Queen's will encourage other developers to think a step further when designing commercial spaces, and consider bespoke rather than generic projects," says Lim.

Though H Queen's only opened its doors in early 2018, it is already 85 percent occupied, and sees a steady stream of art-loving visitors, and collectors.

Along with the recently completed Tai Kwun Centre for Heritage and Arts, which also opened on the opposite end of Pottinger Street, H Queen's heralds the establishment of a new art district within downtown Hong Kong that will elevate the city's position as a world capital for art.

**/ 3**  
 16 of the 24 floors are designed for art galleries that are each 4.65m high floor to floor.

**/ 4**  
 The restaurant on the top floor opens to a rooftop bar.

