

**30 August 2013**

**Skycourts and skygardens: greening the urban habitat for the 21<sup>st</sup> century city**

The incorporation of skycourts and skygardens into developments are no longer a gimmick or trend, but a quintessential element within the urban vocabulary of the 21<sup>st</sup> century city, according to Jason Pomeroy, Founding Principal of award-winning sustainable design practice, Pomeroy Studio. Over 100 guests gathered on the sky terrace at the Park Royal hotel, Singapore, for an evening hosted by Esquire magazine and Heineken to celebrate the launch of his new book, 'The Skycourt and Skygarden: Greening the Urban Habitat'.

Pomeroy, who was one of the featured 'Heineken Ministry of Mavens' in the August issue of Esquire, is one of the world's leading authorities on skycourts and skygardens, and has for the past 10 years researched the social, spatial, economic, environmental, cultural and technological attributes of such sky-rise social spaces around the world. His latest book, with a foreword by eco-architect Ken Yeang, and published by leading academic publishing house, Routledge, brings together his research into one concise volume, due for global release in October.

At the event, Pomeroy lucidly presented how such vertical landscaped social spaces have been incorporated into cities as a consequence of inner city migration, urbanization, and depletion of open public spaces. Ambient temperature reduction (and thus a reduction in energy consumption), income generation through fee levying of skygarden observation desks, and enhanced productivity of the workforce given the presence of space and urban greenery, are just some of the benefits of incorporating such social spaces. In addition, he explained how they help reduce perceived densities of high-density urban habitat, and provide a means to replenish the loss of open space as a consequence of urbanization.

Referencing historical and contemporary precedents that range from the hanging gardens of Babylon to the National Library Singapore, he provided insights into his book that investigates how skycourts and skygardens have become the new accepted urban social spaces of our time. Using graphics and full colour images throughout, Pomeroy explores 40 current and forthcoming skycourt and skygarden projects from around the world, including the Shard (London), Marina Bay Sands (Singapore), the Shanghai Tower (China) and the Lotte Tower (South Korea), and draws conclusive 'prompts for thinking' for the future design.

Pomeroy has gleaned considerable interest from not just the private sector of property developers looking to increase their selling prices, given the economic benefits of incorporating such recreational landscape spaces in the sky, but also been courted by leading government agencies looking to consider their incorporation as planning guidelines, from around the world.

The evening concluded with Pomeroy, who holds a Professorship at Nottingham University, awarding Matthew Humphreys with the 2013 'Design for a Sustainable Future Award' – an award programme established by Pomeroy Studio in the interests of encouraging and promoting green design amongst the best global architecture students.

Pomeroy, who is also speaking at the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Tall Buildings Asia Conference this October in Singapore, will be commencing a book tour later this year that will take in Europe, the US and SE Asia universities. He believes that the subject matter comes timely, "Skycourts and skygardens act as flexible and adaptable social spaces that adjust to a city's idiosyncratic future expansion plans – thus addressing the issue of urban densification by being able to 'top-up' on existing building's roof tops, or 'fill-in' the intermediate skycourt spaces as the need arises. To this end, they future-proof the design of our cities, and acknowledge the importance of a spatial sustainability to replenish the loss of social space through urbanization. On a simpler levels, they are also wonderful places to hang out in!"

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To find out more, read 'Skycourts and Skygardens: Greening the Urban Habitat', available end of October in Kinokuniya and other major book retailers.

#### About Pomeroy Studio

Pomeroy Studio is an international team of designers and thought leader of sustainable built environments. The studio comprises of master planners, landscape architects, architects, and interior designers, as well as environmental consultants and academics. A rigorous academic approach to the quantitative and qualitative research compliments an interdisciplinary design process that lies at the foundation of their creative design and decision-making. This has allowed the studio to generate award-winning, people-centered places that push the envelope of design and research by balancing a 'creative vigour with an academic rigour', and deliver innovative sustainable solutions from the microscale of dwellings to the macro scale of cities.

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