

Upper House (Koichi Takada Architects)

Project: Upper House

Design Team: Koichi Takada Architects

Size: 19700 m²

Location: South Brisbane, AUSTRALIA



Feature:

Project - In Brisbane's South Bank, Koichi Takada Architects has unveiled Upper House, a 33-story residential tower that intertwines nature and architecture in an unprecedented way. Drawing inspiration from the iconic Moreton Bay fig tree's serpentine aerial root system, the building's facade flows upwards in three colossal timber-clad "roots" crafted from locally-sourced hardwood. This organic, sculptural form punctuates the skyline, celebrating Australia's ancient rainforests.

But Upper House isn't just a feat of biomimetic design - it reimagines the high-rise typology entirely. The tower's crown jewel is the Upper Club, Australia's first double-height rooftop amenity spanning two floors. Here, a 1,000 sq m tropical oasis offers an infinity pool, fitness facilities, outdoor lounges and lush landscaping, fostering community connections often lacking in vertical developments.

Sustainability principles guided every decision, from rainwater harvesting and solar power to electric car-sharing and over 3,500 regionally-adapted plants insulating the terraces. Indigenous artist Judy Watson's five-story facade artwork also roots the design in cultural narratives. The result transcends a typical residential tower, expressing Takada's vision for enhanced wellbeing through nature-inspired, socially-catalytic architecture.

Design Team - Established in 2008, Koichi Takada Architects has emerged as a vanguard in biomimetic and organic architectural design. Led by principal Koichi Takada, the Sydney and Brisbane-based firm develops architecture that harmoniously coexists with the natural world, drawing inspiration from the inherent beauty and intelligence of ecological systems.

At the helm, Takada imbues his Japanese sensibilities into distinctly Australian designs that elicit emotional resonance through organic forms and a profound consideration for the human experience. The practice's award-winning portfolio spans an array of typologies across Sydney, Brisbane, Melbourne, Tokyo, Shanghai, Los Angeles, Doha, and Mexico City.

Koichi Takada Architects' multidisciplinary team, comprising directors Georgia Wilson, Richard Storey, Fabiola Monasterio, and Masa Sado, excels in translating Takada's "naturalized" design philosophy into built environments that seamlessly interweave nature and urban living. Their innovative approach positions the firm as a frontrunner in sustainable, human-centric architecture that empowers connection with the planet.