

MAD Architects' Cloudscape of Haikou Opens in Haikou, China
A Vessel that is Simultaneously Intimate and Infinite, Transporting Visitors to New Worlds

[Haikou, CN](#) – April 21, 2021 – MAD Architects today announced the opening of The Cloudscape of Haikou, located in the 20-acre Century Park overlooking Haikou Bay. Home to both an intimate library and a waystation for park visitors, the sinuous, biomorphic 11,000-square-foot vessel expansively embraces the surrounding sea, sky, and land, blurring the boundaries between them. Inviting visitors on a journey that transcends time and space, like reading itself, The Cloudscape of Haikou embodies MAD's "anti-material" approach, which prioritizes spatial feeling over structural expression.

The building's interior volumes and exterior shape have been formed by a single, sweeping ribbon of concrete that creates a seamless flow of walls, floors, ceilings, entries, apertures, skylights, and terraces, celebrating concrete's liquid nature. In its curving, porous form The Cloudscape of Haikou appears to have been carved by natural forces over millennia, but was achieved through significant technical innovations and hands-on craftsmanship. Its concrete aesthetic builds upon MAD's designs for the [Harbin Opera House](#) and [Yiwu Grand Theater](#).

"Spirituality is the core value of architecture," said Ma Yansong, MAD Founder and Principal Partner. "It contributes to the humanistic atmosphere of a city. We want the building to be an urban space that people would like to make part of their daily lives. Architecture, art, humanity and nature meet here, and they will open up a journey of visitors' imaginations to explore and appreciate the meaning that different beauty brings to their lives."

The Cloudscape of Haikou is the first of sixteen coastal pavilions that the Haikou Tourism and Culture Investment Holding Group has commissioned to improve public space along the coast as part of the rejuvenation of this historic port city. Spread across Haikou Bay, the initiative is known as "Pavilions by the Seaside," and will feature designs by architects and artists including Anish Kapoor, Sou Fujimoto, Thomas Heatherwick, Bjarke Ingles, Kengo Kuma, and MVRDV, among others.

The interior and exterior of the building are cast in fair-faced concrete to create a single, unified vessel. To maintain a flowing, uniform appearance in a building that does not have a single right angle, MAD used both a CNC-cut and 3D-printed model. Its roof and floor feature double-layered waffle slabs that support the building's scale and large cantilever. To minimize visual intrusions in its surfaces, The Cloudscape's mechanical, engineering, and plumbing is hidden within the form's concrete cavity, and most of the bookcases are in shelving recessed into the walls.

The 7,500-square-foot library is comprised of a series of spaces that flow into and out of one another, organized around a central reading room containing 10,000 volumes that spirals up two stories to a large oculus. The first floor also houses a reception area, office, and a flexible reading and event space, while the second floor features a tunnel-like children's area with reading alcoves and an intimate reading room that looks out over the water.

Retractable glass curtain walls, curved sliding doors, large windows, and skylights open up over half of the building's surface, suffusing natural light and fresh air throughout the interior and creating a

sustainable and energy-saving building. The extensive use of glass also provides expansive views across the sea and into the sky, inviting respite, reflection, and reverie among visitors.

A covered foyer separates the library from The Cloudscape's 3,500-square-feet of amenities for park visitors, which include a café, restrooms, showers, a nursery room, and bike storage. A large rooftop terrace provides unobstructed 360-degree views, and open and semi-enclosed second-floor terraces extend interior spaces into the outdoors. On its grounds, The Cloudscape features a reflecting pool, plantings, and sanded areas.

About MAD

MAD designs environments that are inspired by their surroundings, abstracting natural elements to create buildings that connects visitors to nature while also prioritizing the emotional response to setting. Their work is informed by their philosophy Shanshui City, which literally translates to "the city of mountains and water," and references traditional Chinese scroll landscape paintings. MAD's realization of Shanshui City draws upon an Eastern approach in which humanity seeks spiritual refuge in the natural world in balancing the demands of urban density with the beauty of nature.

MAD is a global architecture practice committed to developing future-focused, nature-informed, technologically advanced buildings that foster a dynamic interplay between individuals, the city, and the surrounding environment. Their designs advance their client's mission while embracing the spiritual and emotional responses of users and residents in the surrounding community.

Current projects include [China Philharmonic Concert Hall](#), [FENIX Museum of Migration](#), [Harbin Taiping International Airport Terminal 3](#), [Jiaxing Train Station](#), [Lucas Museum of Narrative Art](#), [Quzhou Sports Campus](#), [Shenzhen Bay Culture Park Masterplan](#), [Xinhee Design Center](#), and [71 Via Boncompagni](#), among others.

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