

The 5th Skyrise Greenery Awards 2013 Nurturing Excellence in Skyrise Greenery in Singapore

Text by Lok Yan Ling
Images as credited

Skyrise greenery, a concept coined in Singapore, refers to both rooftop and vertical greenery. The skyrise greenery footprint in Singapore has grown exponentially over the years, with more than 60 hectares (equivalent to 84 football fields) of green roofs today. This approach to multi-dimensional greening espouses the country's "City in a Garden" vision and contributes to a unique tropical architectural landscape, where green roofs and walls compose an elevated pervasive green matrix.

Launched in 2008, the Skyrise Greenery Awards is the first set of awards in the region to recognise and reward skyrise greening efforts in developments. The Awards recognises the concerted effort of architects, building owners, designers, developers, landscape architects, and contractors who have creatively integrated sky gardens and vertical greenery in their projects.

The Awards was previously jointly organised by National Parks Board (NParks) and Singapore Institute of Architects (SIA). In 2013, NParks took the lead in organising the Awards, in collaboration with Building and Construction Authority, Landscape Industry Association (Singapore), Singapore Green Building Council, SIA, Singapore Institute of Landscape Architects, and Urban Redevelopment Authority.

Over the years, the Awards has attracted entries that display innovative and refreshing incorporations of skyrise greenery in their developments and has awarded projects that have since become architectural icons,

which have woven their way into Singapore's skyrise greenery tapestry.

The judges, comprising representatives from NParks and supporting partners of the Awards, had tough decisions to make this round. The Awards received a record high of 77 submissions, the highest since its inception. The projects ranged from small to large-scale rooftop and vertical greenery installations.

As Singapore continues to urbanise, these project submissions challenge the essence of greenery and density, and exhibit balance and integration between the two entities. Hence it was deemed fitting that the award ceremony for Skyrise Greenery Awards 2013 was held in conjunction with the 2nd International Skyrise Greenery Conference (ISGC), which was themed "Density and Greenery: Evolving into Collaborative Cities", on 7 November.

The winning projects of the Skyrise Greenery Awards 2013 received plaques and trophies from Guest-of-Honour Mr. Desmond Lim, Minister of State for National Development, at the opening of GreenUrbanScape Asia. Singapore's first regional landscape and urban greenery trade event, it was colocated with ISGC and held at the Singapore EXPO from 7 to 9 November 2013. Cash prizes were also presented to the winning projects.

The Outstanding Award was accorded to PARKROYAL on Pickering, in Singapore. The one-of-a-kind "hotel in a garden" project stood out from the other submissions as the overall process, from conceptualisation

to implementation of the skyrise greenery elements, was well conceived. Sensitive to its location next to Hong Lim Park, the integration of greenery within the building premises and with the surrounding environment was seamless.

Six Excellence Awards were given out to projects that displayed exemplary incorporation and execution of skyrise greenery within their development, both in terms of design and functionality. The following projects received this award:

- Double Bay Residences, where vertical greenery was carefully and artfully integrated into the podium car park's façade to complement the conserved rain tree at the centre of the development
- Hougang Primary School, which features a self-created green wall that is cost-effective, easily installed, and maintained without professional help
- ITE Headquarters and ITE College Central @ Ang Mo Kio, whose vertical greenery spans across the façades of seven blocks and is complemented by extensive landscaping
- Ocean Financial Centre, which features an impressive and easy-to-maintain vertical greenery installation
- Punggol Breeze, which demonstrates effective space utilisation by connecting a lush green nucleus to every residential block
- T-House, which achieved a synergy between indoor and outdoor greenery space within a small private residential development



To recognise projects that have distinctive unique features, six Special Awards were given out to the following projects:

- Bedok View Secondary School and Sky Garden @ Jurong Central (community garden) for "Community Engagement"
- Wellington Primary School and Hougang Primary School for "Innovation"
- Coach Park Link Bridge at Sentosa and Tree House (Condominium) for "Design for Maintenance"
- Hougang Primary School for "DIY Project"
- Education Resource Centre of National University of Singapore for "Extensive Green Roof"
- Gardens by the Bay for "Skyrise Greenery in a Garden"

More details on the winning projects can be found at www.skyrisegreenery.com.

1. Outstanding Award Winner PARKROYAL on Pickering is conceived as a "hotel in a garden" (Photo: Patrick Bingham-Hall).

2. Lush indoor landscaping at the hotel lobby (Photo: Lok Yan Ling).

3. Greenery is visible at multiple levels of PARKROYAL on Pickering (Photo: Patrick Bingham-Hall).



2

Outstanding Award Winner

Name: PARKROYAL on Pickering
Award Recipients: OUL Group Limited, WOHA Architects, Tiong Seng Contractors (Pte) Ltd, TEP Consultants Pte Ltd, BECA Carter Hollings & Ferner (S.E. Asia) Pte Ltd, Rider Levett Bucknall LLP, Tierra Design (S) Pte Ltd, Lighting Planners Associated (S) Pte Ltd, and Meinhardt Façade Technology (S) Pte Ltd
Location: Singapore
Completion Date: 2013

“What is great about this project is that the idea of including greenery into the building envelope was considered at the very beginning of the design stage . . . (This) was later translated into a beautifully integrated architectural piece, successfully interspersing the green against the grey throughout the development.”
— extracted from Judges’ Citation

Designed as a hotel and office in a garden, PARKROYAL on Pickering showcases how greenery is preserved in a built-up high-rise city centre and multiplied in a manner that is architecturally striking, holistic, and sustainable. A total of 15,000 square metres of sky gardens, reflecting pools, waterfalls, planter terraces, and green walls was designed, making up 215 percent of the site area, or equivalent to the footprint of the adjacent Hong Lim Park. A diverse variety of plant species used, including shade trees, tall palms, flowering plants, leafy shrubs, and overhanging creepers, creates a lush tropical setting.



3

Excellence Award Winners

Name: Double Bay Residences
Award Recipients: Secure Venture Development (Simei) Pte Ltd, DP Architects Pte Ltd, Elmich Pte Ltd, Nature Landscapes Pte Ltd, and Salad Dressing
Location: Singapore
Completion Date: 2012

“Considerable efforts can be seen to integrate greenery to soften the built environment in this condominium development.”
— extracted from Judges’ Citation

Double Bay Residences is a 646-unit condominium that comprises 14 blocks of residential units and a multi-storey car park. As the car park has a relatively large presence on site, it was critical to find ways to integrate it with the surrounding landscape. Vertical planting was introduced in the car park façade facing the courtyard. This translates into a five-metre-high green backdrop, which is landscaped vertically with a waterfall. On the other side of the car park facing train tracks, creepers are used to soften the façade, creating patterns and textures. The roof of the car park was turned into a landscape deck. This level is connected to the adjacent apartment blocks and can be directly accessed from the club house and car park, making it a very well-used social space for residents.

Name: Hougang Primary School
Award Recipient: Hougang Primary School
Location: Singapore
Completion Date: 2011/ 2013

“The judges were impressed with the self-created green walls that are cost-effective, easily installed, and maintained without professional help.”
— extracted from Judges’ Citation

Having used up all available plots for gardening, Hougang Primary School decided to create its own green wall. The school’s self-created green wall was inspired by Patrick Blanc, a well-known green wall inventor. It was created with low cost and can be easily installed and maintained without professional help. The green wall has many uses in the school; it serves as a learning tool, it helps to cool classrooms, and it provides a comfortable learning environment for students.



4



5

4. Double Bay Residences condominium carefully and artfully integrates vertical greenery (Photo: DP Architects Pte Ltd).

5. Hougang Primary School impressively designed, constructed, and installed its own green walls (Photo: Lok Yan Ling).

Name: ITE Headquarters and ITE College Central @ Ang Mo Kio
Award Recipients: Institute of Technical Education, RSP Architects Planners & Engineers (Pte) Ltd, Elmich Pte Ltd, Nature Landscapes Pte Ltd, and Grant Associates
Location: Singapore
Completion Date: 2012

“Spanning across the façades of seven blocks, the green wall complements the extensive landscaping and forms the backdrop for the focus of student life.”
— extracted from Judges’ Citation

At 5,300 square metres, ITE College Central has one of the world’s largest vertical greenery installations. The strategy is to integrate greenery into the buildings, through weaving green “fingers” into the campus’ main activities spaces. Within the heart of the campus, the central spine is defined by a series of themed gardens. These gardens, situated at ground level, provide a continuum of green features that seamlessly meld the interior “green” areas of the atrium with the exterior “green” landscape.

Name: Ocean Financial Centre
Award Recipients: Keppel Land Limited, Tierra Design (S) Pte Ltd, and Consis Engineering
Location: Singapore
Completion Date: 2013

“The scale of this vertical greenery installation is very impressive . . . This green wall will definitely be enjoyed by people, helping to mitigate the harsh urban environment of the city and positively impact the public space at Raffles Place.”
— extracted from Judges’ Citation

Covering a total area of 2,125.56 square metres, Ocean Financial Centre’s green wall has been certified by the Guinness World Records as the Largest Vertical Garden. Inspired by the financial centre’s international outreach, the green wall uses different plant species to depict maps of Singapore, Southeast Asia, and the world. Adopting a unique “digitised-pixelation” technique, approximately 51,000 potted plants were used to create the imagery of maps and special “3D” effects that mimic mountainous ranges, land masses, and oceans.



6. ITE Headquarters and ITE College Central @ Ang Mo Kio uses greenery to provide a conducive learning environment for students (Photo: RSP Architects Planners & Engineers (Pte) Ltd).

7. Ocean Financial Centre softens the urban hardscape at Raffles Place with a large green wall (Photo: National Parks Board).

8. Punggol Breeze is an example of cost-effective skyrise greenery adopted in a public housing project (Photo: Surbana International Consultants Pte Ltd).

9. T-House is a small-scale but fruitful collaboration between architect Linghao Architects and the owner (Photo: Jovian Lim).

Name: Punggol Breeze
Award Recipients: Housing and Development Board and Surbana International Consultants Pte Ltd
Location: Singapore
Completion Date: 2013

“The rooftop garden on top of the Multi-Storey Car Park sits at the centre of the whole development. Being closely integrated with the apartment blocks, it provides easy access for the residents to the greenery.”
— extracted from Judges’ Citation

At the heart of the development is an 8,160-square-metre roof garden, a green nucleus featuring pockets of contemplative and activity space for residents. This new “ground level” seamlessly connects to every residential block. The variety of outdoor communal facilities, such as seating corners, fitness stations, playgrounds, pavilions, pergolas, and landscaping, makes the roof garden a welcoming and tranquil space for all. Punggol Breeze demonstrates a sustainable public housing development design.

Name: T-House
Award Recipients: Mr. Tan Yung Ming and Linghao Architects
Location: Singapore
Completion Date: 2012

“This is definitely an exemplary project of how even a small development can incorporate greenery significantly . . . The passion of individual owners can make the difference in pioneering new ideas and energy efficient solutions of houses.”
— extracted from Judges’ Citation

The roof of this private residential house has a garden, measuring 6 by 12.5 metres, that covers the entire buildable footprint. It is a space for planting, weeding, and cultivating, as well as for morning teas, evening conversations, and occasional parties. Simple planting schemes were developed, incorporating close to 100 species of hardy, flowering, low and tall plants connected by meandering paths. The blend of nature and man-made has created a habitat filled with insects, birds, bees, butterflies, and other life. 

