



B+U's Housing Tower Rethinks Window DNA

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by Barbara Porada

Skyscrapers Sustainability Animated Apertures B+U Lima Peru

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Los Angeles based **B+U Architects**, a design office recognize techniques and use of new technologies and material resource boundaries of architecture and urban design with its Animated Apertures Housing Tower project in **Lima, Peru**. The conceptual framework for the design arose from a "clear interest in emphasizing an architecture that can exist between nature and technology," inspired by natural patterns, movements and colors with the overarching goal of creating an "interactive and intelligent building organism". According to the architects, its design aesthetic embraces incongruence, disruption and deformation rather than homogeneity and parametric smoothness – a common solution in many digital designs that the firm wished to avoid.

More after the break ...

What makes Animated Apertures so unique is its attempt to rethink and redesign the DNA of the window in terms of function, components, appearance and materiality and then its application to a 20-story tall housing typology. The apertures function as inhabitable spaces or thresholds between interior and exterior that respond to environmental forces such as sun and wind and exploit potential energetic exchanges between the natural and built environments. The exterior of the building is a direct result of the interior spaces and their relationships to specific points in the city, with linear extensions along the window frames that create a soft, blurred building edge that is always in flux rather than a traditionally sharp and rigid one.

The building consists of underground parking for 90 cars, a ground floor entry with a cafe

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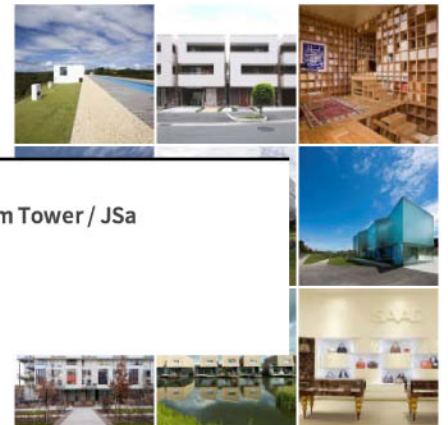


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and L-shaped living units stacked on top of each other with a North-South orientation. Each unit occupies three levels, giving it a double height living room that is oriented to the San Isidro Golf Club with access to two gardens. Both living room and dining room areas have large foldable glass walls that can be opened to create a continuous indoor-outdoor living experience with plenty of cross-ventilation. The Housing Tower also has a penthouse unit and a rooftop with large pool and garden.

The overall structure is a cast in place concrete slab and core structure with most of the exterior enclosure made of cast in place concrete. The rough textured concrete shell contrasts sharply with the highly articulated fiberglass composite apertures that are translucent and illuminated with LED's from within, giving the tower a distinguished colorful glow at night. These apertures will be made out of advanced silicon composites that mix material properties on a molecular level, are able to move without mechanical parts and ultimately mimic systems found in nature. In addition, the new window frames will be coated with thin solar film that produce significant solar energy for the building. B+U's hope is that with these special technological components, Animated Apertures will help revolutionize and redefine the built environment so that buildings become less invasive and instead become closer to functioning as adaptable organisms.

Architect: **B+U – Herwig Baumgartner, Scott Uriu**

Location: **Lima, Peru**

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Plan 02; Courtesy of B+U



Courtesy of B+U

Design Principals: **Herwig Baumgartner, Scott Uriu**

Project Team: **Nema Ashjaee (lead), Aaron Ryan, Jack Gaumer, Ricardo Lledo, Anthony Morey**

Type: **Housing tower**

Size: **5,000 sqm**

Material: **Advanced silicon composites, ETFE, concrete, glass**

Photo credits: **B+U, LLP – Herwig Baumgartner, Scott Uriu**

