

WHY LIBESKIND

A Conversation with Century Properties' Robbie Antonio

What do you say to the people who say that you hire all these name designers for marketing purposes, to differentiate Century Properties from other developers? Of course we want to differentiate. I will never say no to that. That's a primary force driving us. You need to differentiate products because you don't want to be a commodity. We're not selling rice or beans here. You're selling really expensive apartments in different classes. This is obviously our highest end one but in all levels we try to do that in different ways, be it an amenity, designer or a great master plan.

What was the dynamic like between you and Mr. Libeskind during the design process?

I went to see him three times in New York. His team came here as well. You know how many architects just take jobs without seeing the site?

Many. Right, for others, it's just another job. But for him, it was very important.

Why did Daniel land this project and not other starchitects? I'm sure you talked to other ones...

Yes, yes major ones. I started talking to Armani first before Mr. Libeskind. We had met him for separate things on different occasions. It was all just timing—all the pieces of the puzzle fell into place.

Can the market afford it? We sell a lot as well to foreigners. If this were a project in Singapore, with the same equation, it would cost ten times as much. So it's quite a bargain. Economies like Singapore and China are trying to dampen the demand for housing because they're worried about inflation, so where do they look?

Architect Daniel Libeskind with Robbie Antonio, Executive Vice President and the Head of Business Development of Century Properties



The multi-faceted exterior of the Century Spire is classic Libeskind.

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-Robbie Antonio

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They look into neighboring countries. Sure, we’re catering to the local market, but we’re also catering to the world. When I travel for work, I’m amazed by all these landmark projects. When I go to Dubai, I always think of the Burj; the Renzo Piano project in London; and the Bank of China in Hong Kong. What would it be for Manila? We aspire to have landmark projects to leave a legacy for the country. It’s always nation building.

WHY LIBESKIND?

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Professorships

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Ongoing projects worldwide

65

Honors and Awards

120

Staffers in his NYC, Zurich and Milan offices

Will the returns be worth it?
Yes, of course. You need to be bold and daring. Not to prove a point but to effect change.

Do you imagine yourself as a style king maker? I don’t aspire to be thought of that way. I just do. I don’t have a blueprint to try to be like XYZ. We just work. But it’s working on something I love, something I’m passionate about. To truly elevate a country we must have great architecture. To truly create a legacy, the architecture needs to be visionary. For people to take that as a positive or negative thing is really up to them. ■



Armani/Casa’s vision for Century Spire’s interiors

