

THE PHILIPPINE STAR
LIFESTYLE
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Real escape with real estate genius John Hitchcox



JOHN HITCHCOX, co-founder of Tico, the world's leading property design and marketing company with French design consultancy Philippe Starck; Roberto B. Antonio, managing director of Century Properties Group Inc., the company behind Acqua Igazu; and Marco Antonio, project head of Acqua Igazu Real Estate. "At the end of the day, real estate is a huge family investment, not just an investment that keeps on giving because ultimately, good real estate or a house can be passed on to your succeeding generations," says Marco Antonio.

By JOHN A. MAGSAYSAY

Just when we thought we had seen everything from the latest new place and good developments, we are greeted by a sense of shock, a bit of excitement, and, perhaps, a sigh of relief that, finally, the future of our urban real estate will provide a viable, needed real escape.

In the hands of development dynamo Manoy Antonio and Roberto Antonio — with the incredible pairing of property customizer John Hitchcox and global design genius Philippe Starck — the Acqua Igazu Real Estate Property series doesn't stop at providing well-designed living spaces; it also provides a space designed to bring life.

Inspired by the Amazon rainforest, where the new world wonder Igazu Falls cascades, the Acqua Igazu is meant to merge nature with the city, and community-building in a backdrop that celebrates everyone's innate joy



Future interior design theme dining area. "We really signed a high-end design, but I just got inspired and had to move to go along with it. In this case, it's Philippe Starck. We were very excited in our apartment towards providing this concept of communal living which has never been experienced before even in our other projects," says Roberto Antonio.

REAL ESCAPE WITH REAL ESTATE GENIUS JOHN HITCHCOX

Group must have struck property gold when they sent the Acqua Igazu to the drawing boards.

The Acqua Igazu just broke ground recently and is expected to reach completion in 2018.

Express:

PHILIPPINE STAR: John Hitchcox is at ease in conversations with innovative and inventive real estate developments. What is your process in creating your own development project?

JOHN HITCHCOX: It's been more of an evolution. I wanting to have a look at it most recently, I am not particularly academic and I'm not practical, so what we tried to do, our life is to build things that I like to live in, and sometimes, perhaps, nicely or correctly, that other people might like to live in the same. The focus of attention, most of my life, has been on good plus living. It's about using the word community because I have different conversations and different terms in different contexts. But in community in all aspects, from business, clubs to social housing projects, all included. I've been happy on

Modern Living The Philippine Star SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 2012



Minimal interior design theme bedrooms: The Acqua Igazu just broke ground recently and is expected to reach completion in 2018.



Minimal interior design theme living area. "You're going to be living with like-minded people. These are the new villages of today."



Minimal interior design theme dining area. "You're going to be living with like-minded people. These are the new villages of today."



The guest bed-room is so beautiful guests might not want to leave.



Make these lounge chair.



Inspired by the Amazon Rainforest, the Acqua Igazu is set to merge sustainability, eco-soundness, and community-building in a Philippe Starck backdrop that celebrates everyone's innate joie de vivre.



Living room inspired by nature.



Custom interior design theme statement chair and living area. "What's really about this space is if you want to go read your book in the quiet, you can pair your apartment, which you've chosen from one of these ideas, or you can go and meet around with what will be your main."

inspiring people altogether partly because it's a creative environment that tends to stimulate progress.

The project we are doing here is to find that collaborative complexity. I'm conspiracy against about price or value. It's very much a human project, in as much as we're trying, somehow, to provide an alternative to the home as a commitment, to provide to your leisure life, to your family life. I'm very much more interested in the social context. I'm also a bit of an architect because I'm both a designer and a developer.

Philippe Starck is known to be one of the toughest design barometers in the industry. How do you see his aesthetic and reputation even translate for your own development?

What's been interesting, and these guys (Robbie and Marco) have explored recently in the world of celebrity, and the world of identification and how it has drifted into lifestyle. But Philippe Starck is more than a celebrity. He is

the secret's number one design, and the reason is because his thinking is very beyond design.

How much of your developments are design-driven and how much of it is revenue-driven?

I think I haven't gone to a creative school. I would probably be a high-revenue. I sometimes ask myself this question as well. To answer the question I love building, I love design, I love traveling. What's better? I'm very for social and business, but for me is doing new things, thinking new thoughts. For me, luxury is not about having to think about money.

Most of your noteworthy developments involve transforming the most challenging of urban sites into the city's most desirable piece of real estate. In the case of Acqua Igazu, located near the more notorious, now famous Park View, what are the challenges you faced in drawing up such a development?

I've done lots of these what feel "re-generation projects," and the concept of re-generating projects is not only new. I think what Robbie and Marco have got to be the reason and it's a great reason, because they're betting on much money on it and it's such a nice decision. On the way through, you get a friend, like, "Oh, I've never gonna live there!" But look at where they are now. This project is a dark, they're going to be a great success. It's going to be a fantastic one, a fantastic life.

How do you see the Acqua Igazu changing the urban landscape like in these sky-high settings?

What's lovely about this space is if you want to go read your book and take, you can go into your apartment, which you've chosen from one of these ideas, or you can go and meet around with what will be your main. You know, other people buy into the building, they are gonna get to know a lot of new people that's going to be living with like-minded people. These are the new villages of today before, you are

your corner of the economy growing. Interestingly of course, you have this infrastructure system where they've got every corner covered, haven't they? (Laughs) Equally, you've got a country that is challenged by the fact that you haven't got one piece of land more, you've got weaker sectors which are quite extraordinary with the way of the world. But I'm fascinated how you all just forward.

How is it to work with the Century Properties Group, particularly Robbie and Marco Antonio?

It's been really interesting because there's no such like-minded thinking going on in the market, and it's been an enjoyable process. They've been a complete team to work with, in what the guys in the office have said me to say to you. (Laughs) No, it's quite very, very well. It was sorry to project the reason, it's because Robbie's wife will be going to the states. They're very enjoyable to work with and I've said them times already today and I'm afraid you still have to read the last bit. (Laughs)

What is the future of development design and how do you see it shifting in the next decade?

For all of it, it's actually fascinating at the moment. Urbanization has gone over 50 percent, meaning half of the world's population has been living in a small pocket of time. Urban centers will be busy, and it will be hard to go up because infrastructure is a great huge spend, and infrastructure like that will be the new norm. Robbie and Marco are ahead of the game.