The Concourse Complex, Singapore
1981, under construction
Rudolph regards the Concourse as the culmination of his five-decade career. The complex combines an office tower, shopping mall, residential hotel, and garage into a self-contained urban village. Every function displays a different aesthetic expression. Rudolph thus rejects Mies’s philosophy of the all-purpose, steel-and-glass skin, adopting instead a belief that variety enlivens urbanism. Two triangular plazas funnel pedestrians and cars into the large, five-acre site. The complex’s eight-sided tower spires off this circulation geometry, as does a serpentine shopping mall, which surrounds its own three-story skylit atrium. The shape of the office tower pays subtle homage to the pagoda. Eight 90-foot-tall columns, which support the tower, ascend through low-rise buildings of zigzag profiles. Throughout the complex, sloped-glass windows reflect the sun’s rays and create patterns of diagonal lines in section that mirror those in plan.

Paul Rudolph’s remarkable buildings move us with the power of architecture’s essentials. Form, light, and space are Rudolph’s primary concerns. His buildings are complex and serious. They engage both nature and the machine and respond to the urbanism of their environment without resorting to pastiche. Rudolph never clothes his buildings in historical dress; rather, he confronts architectural history by forging a unique synthesis of elements from the Italian Baroque to Frank Lloyd Wright. Rudolph’s buildings also look to the future. They attest to the still-potent powers of Modernism, a flexible tradition able to encompass the most personal and passionate of visions.
Office and Dining Facility
Addition to Burroughs Wellcome
Research Complex, Research Triangle Park, North Carolina, 1982-1986
Rudolph’s addition to his 1972 research facility for the Burroughs Wellcome pharmaceutical company includes offices for 250 medical personnel and a dining room for 600. The building’s angled steel supports echo the slopes of nearby hills. Arranged in sequence, they resemble a crystalline structure, with offices along the exterior and the dining room within. One-story tall along its perimeter, this dramatic room rises to a height of five stories at its skylit center. Rudolph further modulates the space by breaking the floor into three stoppe-like platforms.

246 East 58th Street Building,
New York City, 1989, under construction
While the facade of 246 East 58th Street is ultramodern and asymmetrical, Rudolph adopts a design strategy not unlike that of Andrea Palladio, whose church facades diagram their interiors. Rudolph conceived the 58th Street facade as a formal abstraction of the spatial complexity behind. Within a three-foot-deep frame of white structural steel, clear-glass planes recede and project to delineate the building’s ground-floor shop, mezzanine-level office, and duplex apartment. A proposed multi-level penthouse will complete Rudolph’s visionary design.

Beach Road II Office Tower,
Singapore, 1981, unbuilt
The complexity of the Beach Road II tower evolves from a X-shaped plan within a right-angled grid of reinforced-concrete columns. Rudolph organizes the tower into groups of four-floor units, each featuring three-story atria and terraces. The building’s design contrasts long, dense facades with short facades that seem to erode, revealing the tower’s skeletal structure. Located near Singapore’s waterfront, the building, according to Rudolph, “seems to move in and out, back and forth, suggesting a living organism by the sea.”

International Office Tower,
Singapore, 1990, pending
The International tower continues Rudolph’s efforts to humanize the workplace by breaking the monotony of the standard office block. Rudolph juxtaposes expansive, loft-like floors for clerical workers with cantilevered private offices for executives. Tendril-like columns support the body of the tower, which Rudolph crowns with a three-story, sloped-glass penthouse.

Dharma Corporate
Headquarters, Jakarta, 1982-1986
In response to Jakarta’s hot, humid climate, Rudolph designed the 26-story Dharma tower with sloped, cantilevered spandrels to shield the building’s glass from the direct rays of the sun. Three typical floors rotate to create balconies, terraces, and an intricately chiseled silhouette. Visitors enter the building at the base of the tower through a multi-level courtyard of setback overhangs, canals, and waterfalls. The low labor costs of Southeast Asia allow Rudolph to create complex shapes in formed concrete, which at Dharma are clad in white tiles.

Institution Hill Condominiums,
Singapore, 1967, unbuilt
Institution Hill relates to its surroundings as hill town and acropolises. A multi-story terraced housing, bridges, and promenades encloses a plaza, which affords panoramic views of downtown Singapore and the Pacific Ocean. The crescent-shaped setback of its long facade echoes the form of the site’s natural hill and strikes a dramatic skyline silhouette. The complex is built up from a standard floor plan that the architect varies by extending master bedroom suites on alternate floors. These cast dark shadows that counterpoint dramatically with brightly lit views of the sky through open elevators. Rudolph’s design strategy breaks the complex’s massive scale into a dematerialized screen of pulsating energy.

The Colomac Condominiums,
Singapore, 1980-1987
The Colomac condominiums realize the architectural rhetoric, if not the structural reality, of Rudolph’s unbuilt 1967 Graphic Arts Center in Manhattan. Unlike the latter, where a series of prefabricated trailers were to be plugged into a structural frame, the Colomac employs traditional cast-in-place concrete construction to achieve a syncretic facade of intersected apartment blocks, floor-to-ceiling windows, and recessed terraces. Rudolph treats the ground floor as a parade of monumental columns surrounded by curvilinear gardens and pools.

Bond Centre Office Towers,
Hong Kong, 1984-1988
Most of Rudolph’s skyscrapers expose their jagged-edge geometries; Bond Centre keeps its secrets under mirrored-glass sheaths. The result is a twinned-tower complex whose appearance changes in response to natural light. On overcast days, the towers of Bond Centre seem pensive as they rise in muscular gestures. Sunny weather brings the towers to shimmering life, dissolving each building into jewel-like facets of bewildering reflections.

23 Beekman Place Apartment,
New York City, 1976-1978
Rudolph’s own residence, a futurist aerie atop a traditional Manhattan townhouse, has constantly evolved in response to the architect’s aesthetic explorations. Open-riser stairways and precast-glass bridges connect a dozen different levels. Rudolph complements his interior of airborne planes with metal-framed dining chairs of floating precast glass panels. The visitor’s eye never rests as it bounces off shimmering surfaces of white marble, black leather, stainless steel, chrome, and glass. Natural light reflected off the East River bathes the main living space.