

# FIGURE OF 8

KSK Land teams up with British design company Yoo and interior designer Kelly Hoppen for the RM5.4 billion 8 Conlay's recently launched Tower B.

By MARK LEAN



8 Conlay will be Kempinski's first property in Malaysia. Facing page: the interiors of Yoo8 Serviced by Kempinski.

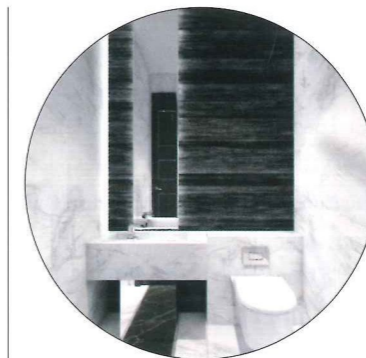


She might be diminutive in size, but Joanne Kua's ideas and ambition are big and bold. As group CEO and executive director of KSK Group, she brings together some of the biggest international names to 8 Conlay. It is the company's first property development project, built over 1,599 hectares of prime commercial land, with a gross development value of RM5.4 billion. It targets a 2020 completion date and will feature two towers of branded residences called Yoo8 Serviced by Kempinski and an additional hotel tower, also managed by Kempinski.

Kua contends that 8 Conlay is not a traditional building. "We are designing for the future and wanted to create something unique

that will not fade over time. We wanted to create a building with architecture that is liveable," she says. The architecture, the work of KL's RSP Architects, frames the development.

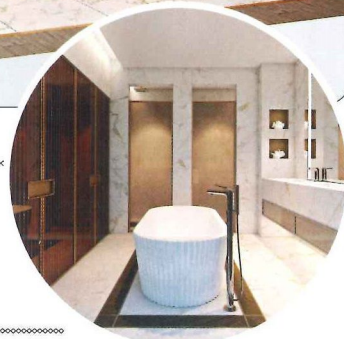
**"We wanted to create something unique that will not fade over time."**



With this in mind, 8 Conlay's towers engage the cityscape and are connected with two sky bridges on the 26th and the 44th floors, aptly named Water Lounge and Green Refuge. These outdoor spaces are the work of Kobkongsanti of Bangkok-based Trop Landscape. In Kuala Lumpur, Kua feels that it has become increasingly difficult to find green spaces where communities can flourish.

As a solution, for 8 Conlay's exterior, she envisions a tropical environment for the sky bridges.

Yoo8 Serviced by Kempinski features branded luxury residences ranging from 65sqm to 122sqm. Kua has brought together two game-changing companies. "Yoo injects youth and sleekness," she says, while Kempinski Hotels is about



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“the underlying level of service and sense of luxury that never changes. It commands itself.”

The interiors of the 498 units in the 57-floor Tower B also hold their own. Kua’s considerable powers of persuasion led to the collaboration with Yoo and talented UK-based South African-born interior designer Kelly Hoppen who redefined the rules of her industry with her 1997 book *East to West: Global Design for Contemporary Interiors*. Hoppen and her team are working on 49 projects around the world, and through these endeavours she “takes people out from what was previously considered the norm”.

At Yoo8 Serviced by

Kempinski, the designer reveals two stunning interior creations: Spring and Urban. These designs project, from the vision board, Hoppen’s talent and intuition along with her precise management of a grid system to “analyse space, delineate vistas, impose structure and establish order”.

Kua sees the logic in this. “To many people, design is about the feel and the look of a space or object; it’s about decoration,” she contends. A good designer, however, can “define everything you do in that space the moment you walk through the front door”.

“8 Conlay is about taking care of everything else so you have time to create your own stories,” says Kua.

The green-focused Spring concept spaces make the most of neutral materials, weathered surfaces and unbleached fabrics.

There is a sense of comfort and ease. Foldable doors extend the living room to incorporate the balcony. Then, there are the thoughtful little touches. “There are shoe cabinets and the powder rooms, so when you have guests they don’t enter your personal space,” she continues.

John Hitchcox, Yoo’s founder and chairman, believes that Yoo8 Serviced by Kempinski is also about the power of placemaking, a concept he brought to global consciousness and perfected with the Manhattan Loft Company that transformed London’s property market with the

introduction of homes in large post-industrial buildings. “Placemaking is a way we bring areas forward. It’s about watching people designing their own homes, creating new hubs, a world where people share similar aspirations,” explains Hitchcox.

With any project that Yoo undertakes, he and his creative partners, including Steve Leung and Kelly Hoppen, “take a view of the demographic and create



According to Joanne Kua, “Yoo8 is designed to offer unmatched luxury lifestyle experiences”.

communities, create beauty and a timeless sense of luxury”.

From a design standpoint, Yoo’s projects, including Yoo8 Serviced by Kempinski, are about emphasising the quality, and the passion that went into the creation of the space. Hoppen adds: “With my interiors for Yoo8, the bathtubs are made from tactile material that warms to one’s touch. The bathrooms are the showpieces.”

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