

SP Alliance & Network

SP Alumni eNews

Jan 2024



**ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT:
POISED TO TAKE ON THE
WORLD WITH HIS PASSION**



Mr Saul Kim
 Founder, Saul Kim Studio
 Diploma in Architecture, 2016

BECOMING THE ARCHITECT OF HIS OWN LIFE

SP alumnus, Saul Kim, an accomplished architect and adjunct professor at Hongik University, Korea, shares his unique journey to where he is today, and how his education has impacted his professional trajectory.

Unexpected Beginnings

Saul Kim never thought he would end up becoming an architect. Growing up in Singapore, he wasn't sure what course of study to pursue after secondary school. It was only after a visit to SP, where he was able to learn more about architecture, that he eventually found his calling.

"I was tired of studying a fixed set of subjects, so I was hoping to study something that I really liked. I was already interested in art, technology and design, and I saw that Architecture contained all of that together. That's when I decided to apply to SP Architecture."

SP: Shaping Perspectives

Recalling his time at SP, Saul is thankful to Mr Ho Yenn Giin, his third-year lecturer, for pushing him beyond his comfort zone. He says that Mr Ho played a pivotal role in nurturing his creativity, forcing him to overcome his fear of coming up with ideas that are completely new.

"He was the toughest one, but he was also the one who really helped me to discard my preconceived notions of what architecture should and shouldn't be. And, that allowed me to think more freely."

A Pragmatic Foundation for Success

Saul further credits SP's pragmatic approach to teaching architecture for laying a firm foundation for him to build his subsequent successes. He highlights the focus on environmental aspects, energy-efficient design, and the grading of materials and technology, which was knowledge that proved advantageous, differentiating him in later educational pursuits.

"I was able to gain a lot of technical knowledge that was not taught at the other schools I attended. At SP, everything is about preparing students to enter the workforce."

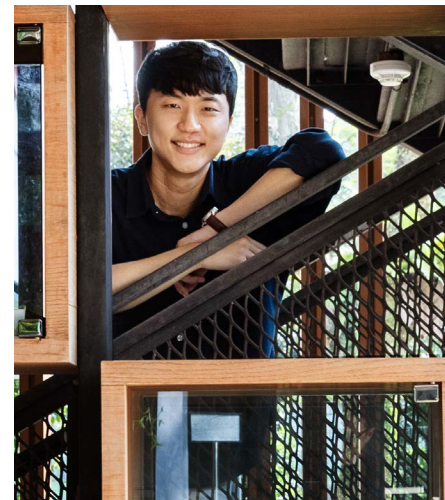
Bridging Practicality with Artistic Expression

Following his graduation from SP, Saul pursued a Bachelor of Architecture at the Southern California Institute of Architecture (SCI-Arc). The transition posed challenges, as his practical background clashed with the abstract approach at SCI-Arc. Nevertheless, the technical knowledge and environmental design expertise he acquired at SP provided a unique perspective, allowing him to excel and eventually win a thesis award.

"At SCI-Arc, the other students realised that I came from a really practical school. So most of them wanted to be my partner or join my group on projects, because I knew all of the environmental strategies that they were never taught."

Discovering his True Self

Saul's journey continued with a master's at Harvard Graduate School of Design, where he established the life philosophies that have guided him since. He emphasises the importance of understanding oneself deeply, pursuing unique interests, and expressing authenticity. Saul also strongly advocates for continuous learning, especially in the face of technological advancements like AI, recognising its transformative potential.



"I figured out what I really like and what I don't like. This was a really valuable lesson that led to the creation of my personal study design series, which went viral on social media. And that allowed me to start my studio in Korea."

Ready for the Real World

Now in his one-man practice, Saul admits to grappling with the challenges of workload management, client interactions, and the necessity to wear different hats. However, he is confident that he has the adaptability and the ability to overcome these hurdles.

"SP has prepared me for the working world. I am thankful for this experience because SCI-Arc and Harvard would never cover this aspect, even though it's one of the most essential skills to have."

Building his Future

Saul hopes to expand his studio globally, maintaining a presence in both Korea and the United States. Despite uncertainties, his commitment to teaching and contributing to the educational landscape remains unwavering.

"Eventually, I will want to return to America, or have studios in different locations in Korea and New York. I would love to keep building and expanding my team. And also, I probably won't stop teaching."

The "One and Only"

Saul Kim's story offers a glimpse into the dynamic and ever-evolving world of architecture. From SP to global recognition, his journey has been shaped by the idea of going against the norm.

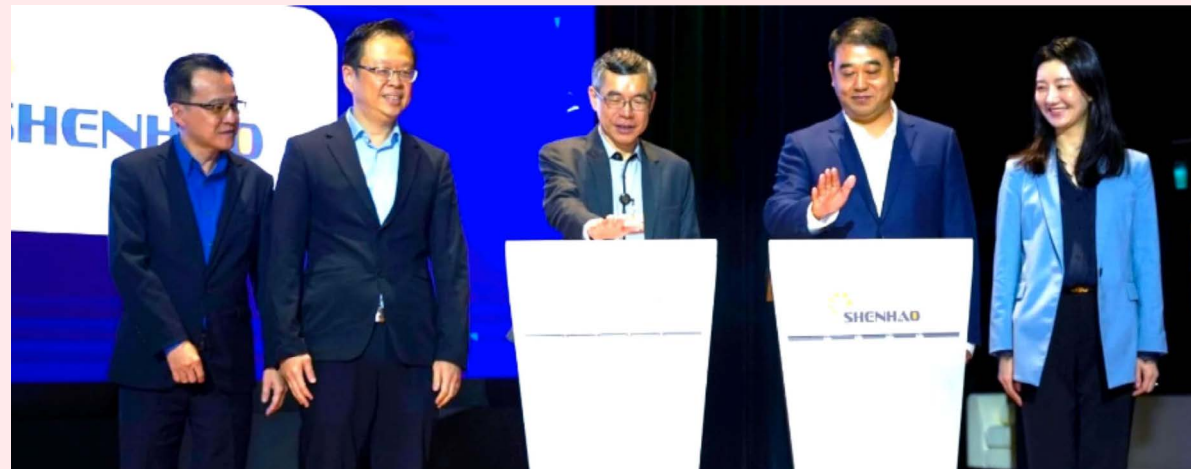
"There's something that one of my musician friends would always tell me: you have to be the one and only in the arts scene in order to survive. So I will try to be the one and only in architecture."



Source: Manufacturing Asia, Dec 2023

SP and Microsoft Collaborate to Upskill Manufacturing Workforce

SP and tech company Microsoft have collaborated to help achieve Singapore’s aim to grow the manufacturing sector by 50% in 2030. The parties are working together to enhance the industry’s digital manufacturing capabilities through bridging the skills and employability gap in the manufacturing workforce, a vital step in achieving the nation’s industrial growth objectives. Dr Chong Chee Wei, Director at the School of Mechanical & Aeronautical Engineering, said that in order to improve employability of the workforce, companies need to equip them with the right technologies and to upskill the workforce.



Source: Human Resources Online, 6 Nov 2023

Robotics Get a Boost with SP-ShenHao Partnership

SP is collaborating with China’s ShenHao Technology through its local subsidiary, ShenHao (Singapore) Pte Ltd, to establish a robotics solution development centre, with the aim to cultivate local professionals in the field of intelligent robots. In the next three years, the centre plans to enhance the professional knowledge and skills of SP staff through training, and work together to develop teaching syllabus for students in related majors, and jointly plan and provide students with local and overseas internships learning opportunities. Through this partnership, staff and students have the opportunity to work with industry experts to develop AI robotics solutions to meet industry needs on a local and regional scale. SP Principal and CEO, Mr Soh Wai Wah said that the establishment of this centre is an important step for science and engineering. Separately, SP also signed MOUs with Indonesia’s Batam State Polytechnic, Malaysia’s Sunway University, and China’s Chongqing University.

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