

"If you think of Paris, you don't think of the Eiffel Tower, really, you think of the wonderful streets that you get lost in," he says. "Likewise in Rome, where people tend to remember the river, the fabric of the background buildings, the squares and public places. There is some great architecture there, but that's not really what you remember.

"You can't set out, when you're building a commercial building, to build a landmark every time. There is a bit of a crisis with that right now, because everyone wants to build a landmark.

"A city can only have a few icons and landmarks. Great cities are built from thousands and thousands of high quality background buildings. It takes a bit of time to build an authentic place."

KPF's impressive global portfolio includes projects as diverse as the Shanghai World Financial Center, The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, IBM World Headquarters in New York, Glasgow Harbour, The World Bank Headquarters in Washington DC, The Wharton School in Philadelphia and several major airports.

Among its mixed use developments is the lively urban centre "Roppongi Hills" in Tokyo, an ambitious 27-acre project that incorporates cultural, retail and commercial uses and has had more than 46 million visitors since it opened in 2003.

KPF's only building in Australia, ahead of the Gold Coast development it is designing for Thakral, is Chifley Tower, which opened in 1992 and is one of Sydney's most prestigious office buildings.

Katz believes Australia has a wealth of architecture talent, which has led to, among other things, a very high quality of high rise living. He says the blending of indoor and outdoor spaces is done better in Australia than anywhere else in the world and he is attracted by the opportunity to take vertical living to the next stage.

Katz's aim is to use the climate and the unique site at Budds Beach to create a "completely different experience" both for people who use the building and those who live around it. "It's got to come out of the climate

and context, we want each building to be different," he says. "We're looking forward to doing another building in Australia."

Queensland architect Barry Lee is so passionate about green design he even lays the framework for initiatives not yet approved by regulators.

In his innovative design for Thakral's Alchemy at Broadbeach development on the Gold Coast, Lee has allowed space for tanks and pipes to capture stormwater for use in watering gardens or flushing toilets. "The plumbing regulations don't allow us to do it yet, but we've made a provision for it," he says. "We are future-proofing the building."

Lee, who is the director of design for Queensland firm DBI Design, says the recently approved Alchemy project will be "one of the most sustainable buildings the country has seen". Water and energy-saving initiatives include cross ventilation, outdoor terraces designed to catch winter sunshine, water collection, water recycling and bulk recycling.

As well as green initiatives, Lee has incorporated a large amount of public art, in the belief that a building should "satisfy the whole person". In addition to art installations, the building will feature photographic art on awnings and walls.

Another key design feature of Alchemy on Broadbeach is having only two apartments per floor, with a central lift opening on both sides. "That means every lift has its own private lift lobby, you never have to share a lift lobby with anyone," Lee says.

World-famous artist Brett Whiteley certainly appreciated the view of Sydney Harbour from the quiet pocket of Lavender Bay, between Milsons Point and McMahons Point. Whiteley made his home on a site not far from where Thakral's dress circle Alchemy development now offers postcard views of the Sydney Harbour Bridge and Opera House.

The sleek apartments in the Alchemy development feature large, private balconies to allow residents to make the most of the view that inspired the late artist and there is also plenty of space inside, with each apartment covering more than 200 square metres.

Thakral's \$100 million "AIR" development was a joint winner of the multi-residential housing section of the Queensland Awards in 2006, following its completion the previous year. Air, designed by internationally renowned Sydney architect Ian Moore, was praised for its bold design and sophisticated external treatments, which include fine-textured sun control louvers.

Pictured right is the distinctive yellow facade inspired by the flags of the surf lifesaving that has made Air a landmark at Broadbeach.

ACCOLADES FOR AIR

Air on Broadbeach has been named joint winner of the multi-residential housing section in the Royal Institute of Architects' Queensland Award.

Designed by Ian Moore Architects and built over the eastern end of Thakral's Oasis Shopping Centre, the \$100 million tower with 133 apartments was a virtual sell out before construction started.

The development has received wide praise for its bold design and sophisticated external treatments. These include fine-textured sun-control louvres and a number of environmental features, including sun shading, cross-flow ventilation and low energy usage.

Air has become a Broadbeach landmark by virtue of its standout yellow façade. The judges of the 2006 Queensland Awards describe the 36-story apartment tower as "retro with a lemon twist."

Award jury chairman Paul Fairweather commented that the apartments were unlike any he had seen on the Gold Coast and congratulated Thakral for its determination to achieve something different.

John Hudson described the award as an exciting endorsement of the escalating standard of high-rise design on the Gold Coast, especially at Broadbeach.

"We believe Broadbeach has become the pacesetter in high-rise design in Australia and the Queensland architectural award vindicates Thakral's decision to take a bold approach with Air."

