

FALL | AUTOMNE 2011  
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IN CANADA

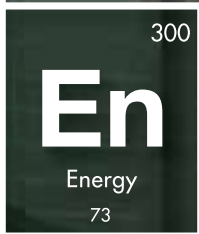
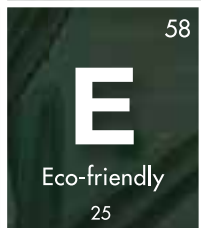
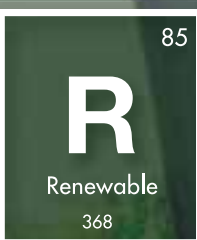
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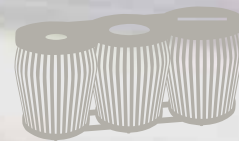


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LANDSCAPE  
ARCHITECTURE  
IN CANADA  
L'ARCHITECTURE  
DE PAYSAGE  
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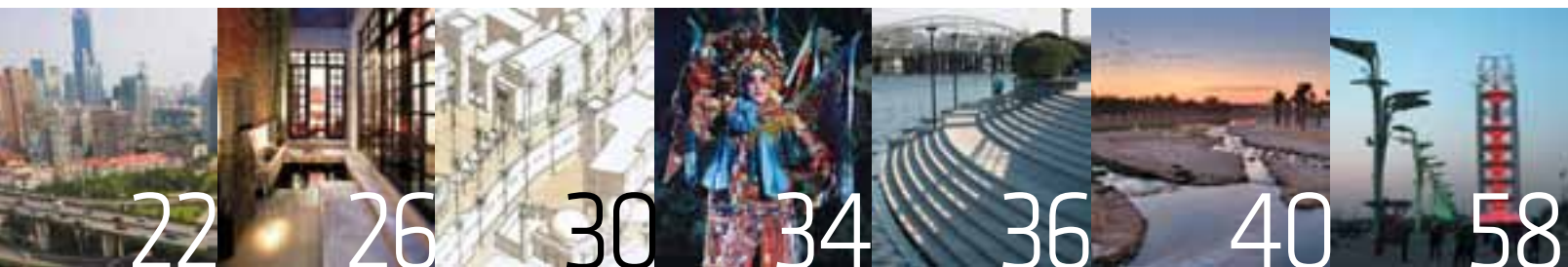
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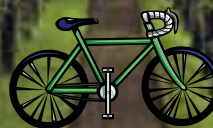
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**MARK VAN DER ZALM  
VINCENT ASSELIN**



## ON THE WORLD STAGE SUR LA SCÈNE MONDIALE

ENG\_

Welcome to the international issue of LP! We believe you will be enthralled by your peers who have lived, worked and excelled in diverse climates, cultures and communities around the world. From narrow Lilong redevelopment on a Shanghai lane to Olympic scale plazas...from a National Wetland park in Wuxi to an ecosystem restoration in Saudi Arabia...be prepared to absorb the potential for dramatic change and restoration within our profession.

As we reviewed submissions for this issue, it was evident that opinions vary, both here in Canada and among our colleagues around the globe. As Jill Roberston learned in Morocco (see page 30), finding a common language is critical. Respect for the cultural landscape in any jurisdiction is a fundamental component of successful design.

Much of this issue centres on Canada's extensive presence in China, and we take time to examine how western designers experience the Far East and millennia-old approaches to design on the land. By examining our own preconceptions about landscape—aesthetics, function and environment—we hope to encourage discourse. We invite you to take a trip abroad with LP!

FR\_

Bienvenue à l'édition internationale de LP! Nous croyons que vous serez captivés par vos pairs qui ont vécu, travaillé et excellé dans divers climats, cultures et communautés par le monde entier. Du réaménagement d'une étroite Lilong dans une ruelle de Shanghai à des places de dimensions olympiques... d'un marais aménagé à Wuxi ou à la restauration d'un écosystème en Arabie Saoudite... soyez prêts à affronter les changements dramatiques dans notre profession.

En examinant les articles pour ce numéro, il était évident que les opinions varient, tant ici au Canada que chez nos collègues du monde entier. Comme Jill Robertson l'a appris au Maroc (voir page 30), il est indispensable de trouver un langage commun. Le respect du paysage culturel dans toute juridiction est une composante fondamentale du design réussi.

Comme une grande partie de ce numéro porte sur l'importante présence du Canada en Chine, nous prenons également le temps d'examiner comment les designers occidentaux vivent l'expérience des approches orientales millénaires de conception sur le terrain. Nous espérons encourager la discussion en examinant nos propres idées préconçues sur le paysage – esthétique, fonction et environnement. Nous vous invitons à faire un voyage à l'étranger avec LP!

# LP 2011

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## LETTERS | COURRIER

### A YEAR OF NEW BEGINNINGS

With this issue – our last of 2011 – we chalk up a full year of change at LP. In every issue, we've ushered in something new: a brand new design...heftier issues...new columns...vivid interviews (continued online)...scan codes for quick links to online sites. Now, we're taking a deeper plunge into the digital age, with a fully interactive digital version. Click on the links for immediate access to our authors and our advertisers... and while you're at it, let us know what you think! Here is what you said about our super-sized summer Awards of Excellence issue.

JUDY LORD, Editor in Chief, judylord12@gmail.com

### LP BRAG BOOK

> Congratulations on the Summer 2011 issue. I especially appreciate how Cynthia Girling's work was presented under the banner of LACF funding. We need to raise the profile of the foundation and this is a great way to accomplish that.  
CECELIA PAINE, University of Guelph  
cpaine@uoguelph.ca

> Glad to see that you have Ron Williams on board as an ongoing contributor. The most recent magazine is certainly a keeper.  
FAYE LANGMAID, The Municipality of Clarington  
flangmaid@clarington.net

> Je viens de voir ton dernier numéro!!!! :)  
wow...wow...wow!!!  
BRIGITTE BINET, directrice, graphisme + branding  
GROUPE IBI-CHBA  
brigitte.binet@groupeibi-chba.com

> Congratulations on the Summer issue of LP. Elizabeth Smart (Interim ED) brought me a copy Friday and I was filled with pride when I enjoyed every page. It is a beautiful thing.  
PAULETTE VINETTE, CSLA Executive Director on medical leave, paulette@solutionstudioinc.com

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### UN UNIVERS MÉCONNU

Le congrès 2011 de l'Association des architectes paysagistes du Canada a permis à ses participants de se familiariser avec un univers méconnu, celui du Grand Nord. Les conférences ont démontré l'importance de l'ouverture aux différences géographiques et culturelles, en illustrant des solutions adaptées, innovatrices, apportées par des architectes paysagistes, depuis les projets de F.L. Olmsted tirant parti du chaparral de l'Ouest américain ou des marais salant de Boston, jusqu'aux tendances les plus récentes.

Des groupes de participants ont profité de ce saut au pays de la toundra et des glaciers pour mieux savourer les grands espaces de l'Arctique, voyage en avion, en bateau, en canot ou à pied. La randonnée en sac à dos dans le parc national Auyuittuq, fjord dominé par les glaciers, restera marquée dans ma mémoire et celle des autres participants, troublés par ces paysages dont notre cerveau, habitué aux paysages du Sud, sous-estimait dramatiquement les dimensions.

Un très grand merci à l'infatigable Chris Grosset et à ses collaborateurs, Cameron DeLong et Marla Limousin. Vous nous avez fait découvrir le Grand Nord, l'une des zones de la planète dont la température s'échauffe le plus rapidement et qui se transforme à l'avenant.

DANIEL CHARTIER Ville de Montréal  
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# UPFRONT | PROLOGUE...

## WALKING LIGHTLY TO TOP IFLA HONOUR



**THE INTERNATIONAL** Federation of landscape Architects (IFLA) presented Cornelia Hahn Oberlander with the Sir Geoffrey Jellicoe Award at the IFLA 2011 World Congress in Zurich in June. The Award, the highest honour that the IFLA can bestow upon a landscape architect, recognizes the lifetime achievement of an individual whose work is respected internationally for its unique and lasting impact. The honour is the latest in a long list of plaudits for a landscape architect who is widely respected among her Canadian peers not only for her work, but also her spirited advocacy of the profession. IFLA Jury Chair Jenny B. Osuldsen, who interviewed Oberlander in the June IFLA Newsletter, noted her lively spark, commenting on the “enthusiastic engagement and sense of humour” she exhibits in her lectures. (YouTube carries several examples.) Speaking in Zurich at the IFLA Congress, Oberlander delivered a lecture distinguished by its appreciation of mentors who have gone before. Our favourite anecdote, reprinted here as she recounted it, discusses her debt to LA Dan Kiley, from whom she learned the connection between landscape and ecology. “One day after a walk in the wood, Dan said, ‘Cornelia, walk lightly in the woods.’ I replied, ‘But Dan, I always wear sneakers.’ He looked at me quizzically and commented no further. Later on, it dawned on me that he meant ‘study the woodland and preserve it.’ Thus I learned about the ecology of New England and later of the Pacific Northwest. These few words made me understand that we must learn from nature by observation.” For her entire Zurich address, go to [www.corneliaoberlander.ca](http://www.corneliaoberlander.ca)

CORNELIA HAHN OBERLANDER WITH RONALD AND SACHI WILLIAMS IN IQALUIT, AT THE CSLA CONGRESS 2011. IS SHE WEARING SNEAKERS? | PHOTO PETER BRIGGS

## THE PURPLE DOOR MICHELLE KULY HOLLAND

**“IT’S LIKE AN IMAGINATION!”** That’s what 13-year old Victoria Marцениuk had to say when she first entered the Nature Playground, a brand new addition to one of Winnipeg’s most treasured public spaces, Assiniboine Park. Kids and adults of all sizes duck through the child-sized purple door and dash down a tree-lined path and in the process are transported to an inspired space conceptualized as a place for childhood discovery and imagination. In our spring 2012 issue, read more about how Winnipeg firm Scatliff+Miller+Murray and their client the Assiniboine Park Conservancy embarked on a unique collaboration and a thorough exploration of play, to realize the site’s potential as a diverse, all-age nature and adventure play environment.

THE CHILD-SIZED DOOR TO THE NATURE PLAYGROUND IN WINNIPEG’S ASSINIBOINE PARK | LA PETITE PORTE D’ENFANT DU TERRAIN DE JEU DE LA NATURE DANS LE PARC ASSINIBOINE DE WINNIPEG  
PHOTO SCATLIFF+MILLER+MURRAY | MICHELLE KULY HOLLAND, who is with Scatliff+Miller+Murray Inc., is looking forward to her first trip through the purple door with her new baby | [www.scatliff.ca](http://www.scatliff.ca)





## LA RUE SAINT-VIAEUR EST : UN NOUVEAU CYCLE DE VIE

MICHELINE CLOUARD | VLAN PAYSAGES



**SITUÉ EN PLEIN CŒUR DE** Montréal, dans l'Arrondissement du Plateau Mont-Royal, le quartier Saint-Viateur jouit depuis quelques années d'une nouvelle population d'artistes et d'entreprises liées à la création, qui ont élu domicile dans les anciens ateliers de l'industrie du vêtement en déclin. La nouvelle rue Saint-Viateur Est offre une vie de quartier unique où le contexte industriel en transformation cohabite avec des îlots résidentiels. Ce projet est né de la volonté d'affirmer le secteur Saint-Viateur par la création d'aménagements encourageant un cadre de rue agréable, des zones de rencontres et d'échanges favorisant l'inclusion sociale, et une meilleure accessibilité aux réseaux de transport.

La vision de revitalisation aiguillonne le développement à venir et oriente les acteurs municipaux et citoyens sur une même lecture du

lieu qui met en valeur son essence, ses origines, son évolution, sa nature et la nature de ses résidents.

Vlan paysages a été mandaté pour étudier les composantes paysagères, définir cette vision et la développer à l'échelle de la rue et du piéton. La vocation industrielle du lieu, la mixité d'usages intégrant diverses typologies architecturales, la diversité d'espaces verts spontanés infiltrés dans les interstices urbains, et les déplacements piétons informels ont inspiré une vision poétique des lieux. Les interventions proposées traduisent dans le domaine public les points de couture de l'industrie du vêtement : la maille, la broderie, l'ourlet, associé au fil et au tissu, sont transposés dans le béton et la plantation.

MIRRORING STITCHING IN CONCRETE | ÉVOCACTION DE LA COUTURE PAR LE BÉTON PHOTOS GABRIEL JONES

**MICHELINE CLOUARD** est cofondatrice de vlan paysages. Elle crée des paysages contemporains, minimalistes, durables et mène une pratique parallèle de recherche et développement qui lui permet de redéfinir régulièrement sa démarche et son territoire d'intervention. | [micheline@vlanpaysages.ca](mailto:micheline@vlanpaysages.ca)

## TERRA INCOGNITA PETER SOLAND

**DEPUIS PLUS DE DEUX ANS**, nous accompagnons la Ville de Montréal dans la restauration et la mise en valeur des vestiges archéologiques des fortifications de Montréal au Champ-de-Mars. Au fil des conversations, j'ai réalisé avec étonnement combien l'histoire de Montréal est méconnue, notamment la période du régime français pendant laquelle la ville était fortifiée! Bien que les vestiges aient été mis en évidence dès 1992 lors du 350<sup>e</sup> anniversaire de Montréal, beaucoup de gens sont surpris d'apprendre l'existence de ces fragments de murs arasés. En allant vers le Vieux-Montréal, le passant flotte au-dessus de ce patrimoine sans en saisir le sens et la portée identitaire.

La restauration des vestiges s'accompagne d'un volet de mise en valeur peu commun dans la pratique de l'archéologie urbaine. De concert avec les spécialistes de la Ville et du Ministère de la Culture, des Communications et de la Condition féminine, un nouveau couronnement des vestiges poursuit l'objectif de protection et de mise en valeur des vestiges archéologiques avec contemporanéité : des blocs de calcaire taillés et des bandes gazonnées s'insèrent dans un peigne d'acier inoxydable. Ce peigne incorpore les composantes techniques d'une mise en lumière des vestiges ainsi que d'un éclairage événementiel. Trouver le ton juste pour ce projet représentait non seulement un objectif de design, mais un défi de communication : convaincre tous les intervenants de la valeur d'un geste contemporain dans la lecture et la compréhension de vestiges historiques. En attendant le verdict des spécialistes du patrimoine, le concept souligne la géométrie militaire des murs, leur arasement au début du XXI<sup>e</sup> siècle, ainsi que leur intégration dans la plaine gazonnée du Champ-de-Mars : un nouveau paysage urbain où archéologie, design et paysage se chargent de ranimer dans l'imaginaire collectif un pan de l'histoire de Montréal.

PHOTOS PETER SOLAND

**PETER SOLAND** est chargé de projet pour le regroupement Urban Soland / Lafontaine & Soucy architectes / Genivar. Tak Design (design industriel) et Photonic Dreams (éclairage) ont également participé à ce projet piloté par l'architecte paysagiste Marie-France Charlebois de la Ville de Montréal. | [info@urban-soland.com](mailto:info@urban-soland.com)





## WABI SABI CARVED IN SNOW DANIELLE DAVIS

**WHEN I SIGNED MYSELF UP** for an internship in Northern Japan, I envisioned days of sitting in front of a computer copying bollards on AutoCad, but at Takano Landscape Planning (TLP) in the frigid Japanese countryside, it is not business as usual. I woke up one February morning to a chilling -20°, and by 8 a.m. all eight designers of the firm, including me, were piled into cars headed for the Myonnoka School where we were building an outdoor classroom out of snow. Takano, the principal of the firm, explained that the project was part of the ongoing master plan for the school, intended to connect the city children with their natural landscape. Like many of the firm's projects, this would be achieved through a series of hands-on workshops which would allow the school community to contribute directly to the design and build of their school grounds. We spent the whole day with the children, teachers and the principal, teaching the basics of snow fort building. By the day's end, the children were contributing their own design ideas and managing the build themselves. As parents arrived, the children proudly gave them

tours of their space. As their parents pried them away, many of the children resisted and continued to meticulously repair and add to their classroom. This dynamic process, typical of Takano, resonated with me. I saw firsthand how meaningful the local landscape became to people as they worked to make it their own, but equally, how enriched my work became as I grew closer to the unique communities and environments in which I was working. TLP design methods are built upon the realities of place building, emphasizing a transitory and constantly evolving process that harmonizes the asymmetry of people and space. Their process reflects the comprehensive Japanese world-view known as *Wabi Sabi*, which is based on the acceptance of the three Buddhist realities of nature: Impermanence, Imperfection and Incompleteness. By combining compelling forms with an impelling process at the grassroots level, TLP not only creates landscapes that have enduring beauty and meaning but nurtures a community paradigm of people who truly care about their local landscape.

PHOTO KATHERINE LIM

**DANIELLE DAVIS**, who graduated from the University of Guelph in spring 2011, received the CSLA student award. She hopes to enter Dalhousie University's Planning Program, to focus on participatory community design. [david@douguelph.ca](mailto:david@douguelph.ca)



FROM DIETMAR STRAUB TO ANNA THURMAYR, WITH LOVE | DE DIETMAR STRAUB À ANNA THURMAYR, AVEC AMOUR.  
PHOTO DIETMAR STRAUB

## THE POETRY OF A LAWNMOWER DIETMAR STRAUB

**ON MOTHER'S DAY, PLENTY OF** people remember to buy flowers or jewellery. Some pledge to devote the whole day to Mom as a present. But I am not one of them: I am inattentive and forgetful when it comes to this special occasion. The problem: what to do when the big day has arrived, and we are visiting relatives in Massachusetts, which is not a place where Mother's Day is forgotten. The other members of this family—Dad and the kids—are fully prepared. A beautiful breakfast is laid out, presents ready to be opened. But what do I have to offer? There is not enough time for extravagant presents. What unique way can I find of quickly expressing how I feel? It needs to be original and entertaining but still perfectly clear, and time is running out. The solution employs the lawn as its playful medium. So my gift—which is also my first landscaped garden in North America—ends up being a mixture between a traditional American lawn and the poetry of mowing.

**PROFESSOR DIETMAR STRAUB** and his wife, Professor Anna Thurmayr, teach at the University of Manitoba. In winter, Dietmar had another art attack: he used his Jetta on a Winnipeg parking lot after a fresh snowfall. [straub@cc.umanitoba.ca](mailto:straub@cc.umanitoba.ca)



# LP 2011

## Version améliorée

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## CARVING OUT NEW TERRITORY

DREW ADAMS

"This is an unmistakably clear and radical idea for the future."

ARCHITECT, VERNON D. SWABACK, CHAIRMAN OF THE JURY

**WHEN THE ARIZONA CHALLENGE WAS** announced in early 2011, our interest was immediate. The ideas competition posed the ambitious challenge of formulating new, visionary forms for healthy, arid-climate communities. There were no constraints. Speculative competitions such as this are intended to open the public's eyes to new possibilities.

We set out to re-imagine our living environments by carving out new territories beyond current urban reaches. Our entry, The Autonomous City, envisioned compact, self-sufficient and resilient enclaves embedded in the landscape. For our inter-disciplinary team of Daniel Ibañez (urban design), Fadi Masoud (landscape architect) and myself (architect), these autonomous communities were a response to current, exhausted models of urbanism. Today's cities are facing significant demographic change and are beset with rising energy costs. We wanted to address the collapse between the production and consumption of resources and their recovery, aiming for net-zero outcomes at a community level.

We were especially pleased to learn that the Jury endorsed our vision, awarding us first prize "for the thoughtful and artful qualities of the Autonomous City proposal. Replacing the out-moded downtown core with a great central, infrastructural park celebrates not only the use and pleasure of its citizens but also the metabolic processes and relationships between man and nature." The team is preparing to travel to Phoenix to participate in a series of workshops pertaining to this competition and subject. See [www.thearizonachallenge.org](http://www.thearizonachallenge.org)

THE AUTONOMOUS CITY CONCEPT TOOK FIRST PRIZE IN THE ARIZONA CHALLENGE |  
LE CONCEPT DE VILLE AUTONOME A RAFLÉ LE PREMIER PRIX DE L'ARIZONA CHALLENGE  
**DREW ADAMS**, who recently completed his Master of Architecture degree, has  
worked for Baird Sampson Neuert Architects in Toronto. He is now at the University  
of Waterloo as an adjunct instructor. [dadams@bsnarchitects.com](mailto:dadams@bsnarchitects.com)

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CORINNE THIBAUT

# NATURE ET PAYSAGE EN CHINE

## DIFFERENCES CULTURELLES ET PRATIQUES COMMUNES



1

*Les jardins...restent empreints  
de ce mystère latent d'une  
culture ancienne...*

1 YU'YUAN EN MAI 2 SUR LE BUND |  
1 YU'YUAN EN MAI 2 ON THE BUND  
PHOTOS 1 VINCENT ASSELIN 2 JEAN LANDRY  
AU DESSUS LES CARACTÈRES ZHUANTI : PAYSAGE |  
ABOVE THE ZHUANTI CHARACTERS : LANDSCAPE

ENG\_

### NATURE AND LANDSCAPE IN CHINA

China's continuing emergence as a superpower is characterized by extraordinary urban and economic growth. Inside the country, its rise to the status of competitor with the great powers is expressed in burgeoning, ultra-modern mega-cities – a showcase for the modern Chinese identity. The resulting new urban issues demand expertise appropriate to the scale, constraints and complexities of today's cities, in areas such as urban and landscape design,

resource management, and coordinated urban development – issues common to the world's biggest cities. Western expertise, which has long grappled with such questions, is being sought out in China to help lay the foundations for new urban spaces built for living, interaction and enjoyment. But the homogenization of global urban culture does not imply a clean break from local cultural identities and traditions, which form the foundation for the richness, complexity and ambiguity of today's China.

[www.csla.ca](http://www.csla.ca) 

2





**LA CHINE S'INSCRIT AUJOURD'HUI** comme une puissance mondiale caractérisée par un extraordinaire essor économique et urbain. La mise en compétitivité du pays au regard des grandes puissances se traduit sur le territoire par le développement effréné de mégapoles qui transcrivent une image urbaine moderniste et composent la vitrine identitaire de la Chine contemporaine. Les nouveaux enjeux urbains nécessitent une expertise adaptée à l'échelle, aux contraintes et à la complexité des villes contemporaines, tant en termes de gestion urbaine, de paysage, d'utilisation des

ressources et d'aménagement concerté de la ville. Autant de problématiques qui touchent désormais les mégapoles du monde. L'expertise occidentale, rompue de plus longue date à ces questions, est ainsi sollicitée en Chine pour fonder de nouveaux espaces de vie, d'échange et de convivialité en milieu urbain. Mais cette homogénéisation de la culture urbaine mondiale ne se soustrait pas totalement des identités et des traditions culturelles locales qui fondent la richesse, la complexité et l'ambiguïté du socle culturel chinois.

C'est dans ce contexte en perpétuelle mutation que les professionnels du paysage occidentaux sont amenés à composer de nouveaux paysages. Les enjeux sont de taille. Quelles formes, quels usages du paysage proposer ? Quelles modalités de nature composer ? La question du paysage, de la nature, de leur adaptation et de leur soutien au développement des villes se pose désormais de manière accrue dans le milieu urbain chinois.

#### **LE PAYSAGE COMME FIGURE ET CONTREPOINT DE L'URBANITÉ**

Le paysage participe aujourd'hui de manière plus ou moins implicite à l'identité urbaine et moderniste des grandes villes chinoises. Les perspectives du paysage se sont ouvertes à une réflexion plus globale sur les moyens d'assurer un environnement urbain viable impliquant tous les aspects du développement : planification, urbanisme, architecture, environnement. C'est cette vision du paysage comme regard global sur la ville, aujourd'hui familière à l'Occident, qui s'applique désormais au territoire chinois. Dans les centres-villes, les espaces paysagers font contrepoids à la densité de l'habitat. Dans les zones de développement, ils participent à l'image de marque des quartiers. Cette forme évidente d'intérêt pour le paysage s'exprime aujourd'hui en Chine dans la droite ligne de l'image moderniste médiatique qui qualifie la ville à l'échelle planétaire. Mais elle participe aussi à la nécessité de mettre en place un cadre de vie dans des villes de plus en plus insoutenables. Le paysage devient à la fois participatif de la vitrine moderniste et

inscrit en contrepoint comme un élément d'équilibre ou de compensation.

Ainsi à Shanghai comme dans d'autres grandes villes se multiplient les aménagements d'espaces de vie constitutifs de la vie urbaine, mais aussi porteurs d'une vision contemporaine du paysage. Pour exemple le parc de l'échangeur Yan'an, Shanghai, qui irrigue le cœur de la ville, se décline en cinq jardins thématiques (WAA-Williams, Asselin, Ackaoui Inc). En utilisant des espaces d'anciens quartiers associés aux espaces délaissés et de proximité sous le viaduc, ils composent un cadre de verdure en plein cœur de la ville et accompagnent par une canopée touffue le paysage des automobilistes. Ainsi également des aménagements tels que l'avenue du Siècle à Pudong (Century Boulevard, Agence Arte Charpentier) traçant un axe monumental majeur qui relie le nouveau centre des affaires aux berges du fleuve Huang Pu. Ses jardins contemporains, inspirés de la tradition chinoise, agrémentent le parcours piétonnier tout au long de l'avenue.

#### **UNE VERSION CONTEMPORAINE DU PATRIMOINE CULTUREL**

Avec l'ouverture de la Chine, émerge dans les années quatre-vingt, un retour à une identité culturelle historique et locale, socle d'une identité nationale en plein essor. Les notions de patrimoine et d'authenticité, inusitées en Chine, s'inscrivent dans la nouvelle politique apparente de protection des biens culturels. La réalité sur le terrain est fort décevante. Elle révèle pour partie le lien paradoxal que les Chinois entretiennent avec leur héritage culturel, visible davantage dans la transmission active des valeurs spirituelles et morales que dans leurs traductions matérielles. Ce paradoxe de la protection du patrimoine urbain se traduit sur le territoire par la promotion d'une identité urbaine qui fait appel à l'histoire locale tout en étant propice au développement du tourisme. Cela donne cours à toute une série de réalisations qui vont du meilleur au pire. Dans les espaces touristiques, certains sites sont entièrement reconstruits, tel le nouveau « vieux Shanghai » aux abords du



1



2

*La nature, longtemps négligée... se forge peu à peu une place réelle dans les villes chinoises...*

célèbre jardin classique du Mandarin Yu, datant du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle. Conçu à la gloire du tourisme aux dépens des habitants qui ont été déplacés en périphérie, il reconstitue, par de nouvelles constructions de béton savamment habillées, un quartier pastiche de l'ancien aux toits traditionnels pentus, aux façades décorées de bois travaillé, aux échoppes colorées habillées de lanternes. Ce site de grande fréquentation est un lieu particulièrement apprécié des touristes chinois comme étrangers.

En plein cœur de Shanghai, le quartier historique de Xintiandi témoigne au contraire d'une reconversion réussie d'un quartier résidentiel de Shikumen, maisons traditionnelles de l'époque Ming et Qing,



3

renové en combinant architecture moderne et conservation des Shikumen. Son cœur touristique, entièrement piétonnier, ceint d'un mur de brique percé de portes de pierre et abritant restaurants, boutiques de luxe, commerces, galeries d'art et musée, est devenu un des lieux prisés de la ville.

### LE CONCEPT DE NATURE, ENTRE SYMBOLES ET PRATIQUES

L'idée de nature, avec laquelle le développement humain et urbain occidental s'est construit (en l'intégrant ou en s'en protégeant), est historiquement absente de la culture chinoise. Dans la Chine antique, le jardin traditionnel manifeste une vision du monde qui fonde le projet humain en harmonie avec les lois de l'univers. Loin d'être une simple représentation de la nature, il s'inscrit comme un microcosme symbolique de l'univers qui tend, en traduisant l'unité et la perfection, à préserver l'harmonie universelle. Pour exister pleinement à titre symbolique, le jardin a besoin d'être nommé, d'où ces inscriptions qui ornent les pierres à l'entrée des jardins ou de certains paysages.

Dans le contexte de développement de nos sociétés contemporaines, la prise en compte de la nature est devenue incontournable pour pouvoir créer un environnement viable sur le long terme. En Chine, des concepts tels que la renaturation, l'utilisation de plantes indigènes, la gestion des ressources boisées et l'épuration des eaux par les plantes sont introduits comme des stratégies novatrices qui nécessitent un réel apprentissage.

L'introduction d'initiatives à visée écologique, par leurs aspects expérimentaux, leur visée d'autonomie par rapport à la ressource ou simplement par leur matérialisation sous forme de « milieu naturel » plutôt que de « nature jardinée » n'est pas encore complètement acquise à la culture locale. Pour autant, la nature, longtemps négligée en tant que valeur intrinsèque, se forge peu à peu une

place réelle dans les villes chinoises, non seulement comme outil d'aménagement, mais aussi dans le cadre élargi d'une réflexion sur le territoire urbain et ses enjeux. Le plan général des parcs et des espaces verts de Shanghai, inscrit dans le schéma directeur 2000-2020, en est un des exemples témoins.

### KALÉIDOSCOPE DE PAYSAGES

Ces différentes facettes du paysage, intimement liées, fondent ensemble, par leur complémentarité, leur interdépendance et leur cohésion, la richesse et la complexité du rapport des Chinois à leur milieu.

À la forme objective de nature urbaine souhaitée par les décideurs et aménagée par les professionnels, se superpose un socle culturel qui fonde l'assise identitaire chinoise, elle-même nourrie de référents diversifiés, issus des traditions comme des nouvelles appropriations de modes et d'espaces de vie. L'usage urbain des espaces de paysage se nourrit également de connotations symboliques inscrites implicitement dans les pratiques urbaines, support invisible, mais extrêmement tenace d'un rapport aux espaces concrets du territoire qui peut entraîner résistances, incompréhensions voire adaptations de certains aménagements. Cet ensemble de références, d'appropriations, d'usages et de projections identitaires compose ce qui fonde le sens du paysage contemporain dans la ville chinoise.

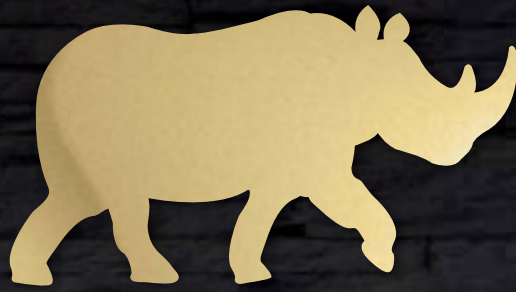
Et toujours, au cœur des villes, les jardins, loin d'être de simples espaces de nature, restent empreints de ce mystère latent d'une culture ancienne qui se glisse en filigrane dans la modernité urbaine.

**1** AUX ABORDS DU JARDIN DU MANDARIN LU  
LE NOUVEAU QUARTIER ANCIEN DE SHANGHAI  
**2+3** XINTIANDI, LE RÉCENT QUARTIER TOURISTIQUE  
PIÉTONNIER PRISÉ DE SHANGHAI | **1** NEAR  
MANDARIN LU'S GARDEN, THE NEW OLD TOWN  
OF SHANGHAI **2+3** XINTIANDI, SHANGHAI'S NEW  
PEDESTRIAN TOURIST AREA  
**PHOTOS 1-2** CORINNE THIBAUT **3** VINCENT ASSELIN



Nature





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# SHANGHAI GREEN SPACE

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*En 1993, le taux d'espace vert par habitant avait grimpé à 1,15 m<sup>2</sup>. En 2007, il atteignait 12,01 m<sup>2</sup>.*

**1** A BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF YAN'AN ROAD IN SHANGHAI (A PROJECT OF WAA) **2** SHANGHAI RING GREENSPACE | **1** VUE AÉRIENNE DE L'AUTOROUTE YAN'AN DE SHANGHAI (PROJET DE WAA) **2** CEINTURE VERTE DE SHANGHAI  
PHOTOS 1 INMAGINE

FR\_

## L'ESPACE VERT DE SHANGHAI

Ce que nous voyons à Shanghai est essentiellement ce qui est énoncé dans les manuels occidentaux sur la planification scientifique. Dans les années 1980, le Bureau de la planification de Shanghai a élaboré la première version d'un plan de réseau d'espaces verts, établissant – à partir de zéro – un système complet, y compris des ceintures vertes le long de toutes ses voies routières principales, des coins de verdure, des ceintures bleues le long de ses 2000 rivières et canaux, et une typologie complète de parcs et de jardins. Les auteurs décrivent l'évolution du plan et sa réussite spectaculaire. En 1949, lorsque la Chine nouvelle a été fondée, les espaces verts de Shanghai n'occupaient que 0,132 m<sup>2</sup> par personne. En 1993, ce taux avait grimpé à 1,15 m<sup>2</sup>, malgré la montée en flèche de la population. La ville a pris des mesures radicales afin d'accélérer le changement : en 1999, elle a déménagé quelque 10 000 personnes pour faire place au parc Yan'an Zhong Lu. En 2007, le taux d'espace vert par habitant était de 12,01 m<sup>2</sup>. La ville espère porter ce taux à 15 m<sup>2</sup> ce qui fait d'elle un modèle pour les autres villes chinoises sinon pour le monde entier.





1

**SHANGHAI HAS EVOLVED** from a small fishing village into an international metropolis striving for recognition in economics and finance as well as in shipping. With rapid urbanization over the past three decades, the city leaders have concentrated on improving living conditions for their 23 million citizens, and demonstrating to the world that this city is serious about its environment.

In fact, what we are seeing in Shanghai is essentially what is spelled out in western text books on scientific planning. The first major urban renewal projects, which were intended to provide efficient access to the downtown area of Puxi, were not realized easily. To create new and modern roadways including Yan'an Zhong Lu, the North-South expressways and various ring roads, the city moved thousands of people, leaving scars in the urban fabric.



Shanghai



2

*What we are seeing in Shanghai is essentially what is spelled out in western text books on scientific planning.*

Initially, the Shanghai Planning Department opposed the Park Bureau's concept for concentrated green spaces within the city's core: the idea did not seem practical or easy to achieve. Of course it was not easy! It wasn't until the birth of Yan'an Zhong Lu Green Space in 1999, the first major green space to be realized, that things moved on.

#### A GREEN SYSTEM – FROM SCRATCH

In the 1980s, the city planning bureau developed the first version of a green space network plan. Again, if you want details about components of the plan, look up your planning principles in any western text book. The city created—from scratch—an entire Green System including green belts along all its major roadways, green wedges, blue belts along its 2,000 rivers and canals, and a full typology of parks and gardens.

Shanghai has set clear goals for 2020: green space of 15 m<sup>2</sup> per person, 35 per cent of green space and overall, 40 per cent green coverage. This ultimate green network will include urban parks at the heart of the system, suburban large-scale ecological forest, green belts along roads, transport corridors, rivers, lakes and the sea: an overall layout composed of "ring, wedge, corridor, garden, park, forest and ecological and conservation areas."

#### RINGS, WEDGES AND CORRIDORS...

The green rings include the 98 kilometre long outer city ring surrounded by a 500 metre wide green belt, and a 180 kilometre long suburban ring flanked by a 500 metre wide forest green belt on both sides. Individual suburban town green rings will have a 50 to 100 metre wide green buffer around each town. Eight wedge-shaped greenspaces penetrate from the outer city into the downtown, supplying fresh air and green spaces to alleviate the heat island effect.

The corridors include massive plantings along the city's main roads, the rivers, the power lines, the railway and major municipal pipelines. Along both sides of the Huang Pu River, a green belt of up to 200 metres wide is underway; along secondary rivers, 25 to 250 metre wide green spaces are planned. A very good example of the impact of such spaces would be evident to any landscape architect who visited Shanghai during the World Expo. Expo's most successful landscape projects were the waterfront green spaces along the Huang Pu River. The historical public space called the Bund was rehabilitated with greatly improved accessibility, and its modern counterparts were built on both sides of the river as well as along the Expo site.

#### A MODERN TYPOLOGY

The Master Plan defines three types of parks: city parks, outer city parks and suburban town parks, which are graded by size. First level parks are over 10 hectares; second level are 4 to 10 hectares, and so on. Parks are evenly distributed to ensure that all citizens have access to a park of at least 3,000 m<sup>2</sup> within 500 metres of their homes. This is no simple task in a dense, old urban fabric.

When the Garden Bureau organized an international competition for the design of Yan'an Zhong Lu Park in 1999 (won by WAA Inc), it was to be 23 hectares. This expanded to 28 hectares, but eventually, with the addition of smaller plots, the park developed into a green axis crossing the downtown and reaching the Huang Pu River. Together with the People's Park and surrounding public institutions, it created a major green core in the city. The response to this risky undertaking was so positive that it stimulated a push to increase the pace of Green Network development,

*In 1993, Shanghai's greenspace per capita had increased to 1.15 m<sup>2</sup>... By 2007, greenspace per capita had reached 12.01 m<sup>2</sup>.*



**1** IN XUJIAHUI PARK, HU YUN HUA DISCUSSES GREEN NETWORK MODERNISATION (VINCENT ASSELIN BACK CENTRE) **2** YAN'AN ZHONG LU PARK, GARDEN OF SENSES **3** CHANGFENG PARK, A MODERNIZED RIVERFRONT PARK **4** XIUAHUI **5** DOWNTOWN XINTIANDI **6** THE DRY RIVER GARDEN, YAN'AN ZHONG LU PARK **7** A WELL CRAFTED RIVER PARK AT EXPO **8** TRADITIONAL AREA OF OLD CHANGFENG PARK **9** MAGNOLIA PARK, A MODERN POCKET PARK DOWNTOWN ALONG THE N-S EXPRESSWAY **ABOVE:** PARKS WITHIN 500 M OF EVERY HOME | **1** DANS LE PARC XUJIAHUI, HU YUN HUA EXPLIQUE LA MODERNISATION DU RÉSEAU DE VERDURE (VINCENT ASSELIN DERRIÈRE, AU CENTRE) **2** PARC YAN'AN ZHONG LU, JARDIN DES SENS **3** PARC CHANGFENG, PARC RIVERIN MODERNISÉ **4** XIUAHU **5** CENTRE-VILLE DE XINTIANDI **6** LE JARDIN DE LA RIVIÈRE SÈCHE, PARC YAN'AN ZHONG LU **7** UN PARC RIVERAIN BIEN CONÇU À L'EXPO **8** PARTIE TRADITIONNELLE DU PARC DU VIEUX CHANGFENG **9** PARC DES MAGNOLIAS, ENCLAVE DE VERDURE AU CENTRE-VILLE, LE LONG DE LA VOIE RAPIDE NORD-SUD **CI-DESSUS** DES PARCS À MOINS DE 500 M DE CHAQUE HABITATION  
**PHOTOS 1** JEAN LANDRY **2-10** VINCENT ASSELIN

and was soon followed by the 10 hectare Xujiahui Park (designed by WAA Inc), which replaced an obsolete industrial site in the French Concession. The Shanghai Green Network Plan had quickly become as relevant and necessary as the new modern Public Transit System. Soon after, Mayor Han Zheng, the official who had been the vice-mayor responsible for the Green Network, came into office. He pushed forward the implementation of 125 stations of the Metro System in time to serve the city needs of Expo! These initiatives moved Shanghai in the same direction, creating a more livable and modern city.

#### FROM 0.132 M<sup>2</sup> TO 15 M<sup>2</sup> OF GREEN SPACE PER PERSON!

In 1949 when New China was founded, the greenspace in Shanghai totalled only 0.132 m<sup>2</sup> per person. By 1993, the greenspace per capita had increased to 1.15 m<sup>2</sup>. At the same time, the city population was

ballooning. By 1999, when the city moved residents to make way for Yan'an Zhong Lu Park construction, they relocated more than 10,000 people and about 400 businesses and institutions. In the historic and cultural Xujiahui district, they relocated old factories that had caused serious pollution to create a much needed greenspace. By 2007, greenspace per capita had reached 12.01 m<sup>2</sup>.

At the same time, work was underway on the outer ring green belt, corridor plantings and suburban woodlands. More recent numbers suggest that Shanghai has eclipsed Singapore with its green ratio surpassing 13 m<sup>2</sup> per capita. This demonstrates how serious the undertakings were, but in fact, the city is not competing on numbers! They have established a vision, and they are implementing it.

The staggering scope of the change becomes clear when the population dynamics are





Shanghai



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factored in. In 1949, when the population of Shanghai was a fraction of today's, the green network was simply a handful of small historical green spaces. Today, Shanghai's green spaces are all public spaces. In addition, planning regulations require private developers to provide up to 35 per cent of green space within residential projects and often more than 10 per cent in commercial projects. All of these actions contribute to making the city more sustainable.

#### WHAT MORE FOR THE FUTURE?

The pace of green modernization cannot continue with the same intensity. Relocation costs are becoming overwhelming: it will be more difficult, if not impossible, to create new public green spaces by removing old buildings. Yet Shanghai's land is limited. Therefore, the city is adding vertical greening and green roofs to add more green to the city core. To increase the green cover, the city is using trees and planting as much as possible.

Even future parking structures, built to alleviate parking problems in the city core, will contribute to the ecology: the structures will be partly buried and covered with vertical green and green roofs.

Green is Ecological! China is a Landscape Society, and people appreciate nature and planting, valuing the positive impact of new landscapes. In the city, the heat island effect has gradually eased, air quality has greatly improved and the urban landscape is more beautiful. When international businesses consider establishing themselves abroad, they consider various key indicators such as quality of life and greenspace. By providing a comprehensive green network for their citizens, the city leaders are in fact creating highly favorable conditions for their city's economy. Shanghai emerges as a modern green metropolis and model to other Chinese cities – if not the world.

#### A SILVER MAGNOLIA

Following the design of Yan'an Zhong Lu Park, Mr. Asselin received the Magnolia Silver Medal, the highest distinction given by the city of Shanghai to foreigners for their contribution to the development of the city. This was the first time that a LA received this honour. Since this was also the first time the Garden Administration's proposal for a nominee was accepted, it was an immensely proud moment for the Garden Administration Bureau, and then-Director Hu Yun Hua.

BRYCE GAUTHIER

# SHANGHAI ON THE LÒNG-TANG

## TREATING SMALL SPACES WITH REVERENCE



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### FR\_ SHANGHAI SUR LE LÒNG-TANG

Le motif architectural archétype de Shanghai est le Lilong, une étroite maison en rangée qui forme avec ses voisines de longs alignements tissant la trame urbaine de la ville.

Pendant que Bryce Gauthier vivait à Shanghai, il a rénové avec son épouse architecte de nombreux lilongs pour le compte d'hommes d'affaires étrangers et chinois. Chargé de livrer une expérience captivante dans un espace étroit, Gauthier s'est inspiré du concept chinois d'un jardin encadré, d'une image soigneusement composée que l'on aperçoit des espaces de vie adjacents. Le travail était libérateur à bien des égards et l'on pourrait encore raconter toute une histoire sur les entrepreneurs chinois qui ont construit ces créations.

**1** EACH RENOVATION WAS A COLLABORATION BETWEEN LA BRYCE GAUTHIER AND HIS ARCHITECT WIFE, SHOWN HERE (A00 ARCHITECTURE) **2-4** HISTORY WAS NOT KIND TO MOST LILONGS **5** PAPER MOCK-UPS **6** ELIMINATING THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN INSIDE AND OUTSIDE **7,8,9+11** [NEXT PAGE] FUXING: WATER FEATURES, FLOOR-TO-CEILING GLASS DOORS, RE-POINTED RED BRICK + ITALIAN TERRAZZO **10** SPACE TO EMPHASIZE ONLY ONE ELEMENT | **1** CHAQUE RÉNOVATION ÉTAIT UNE COLLABORATION ENTER L'AP BRYCE GAUTHIER ET SON ÉPOUSE ARCHITECTE, QU'ON APERÇOIT SUR LA PHOTO (A00 ARCHITECTURE) **2-4** L'HISTOIRE N'A PAS ÉTÉ TENDRE ENVERS LA PLUPART DES LILONGS **5** MAQUETTES DE PAPIER **6** ÉLIMINATION DE LA FRONTIÈRE ENTRE L'INTÉRIEUR ET L'EXTÉRIEUR **7,8,9+11** [PAGE SUIVANTE] FUXING : JEUX D'EAU, PORTES VITRÉES PLEINE HAUTEUR, BRIQUE ROUGE REJOINTOYÉE ET TERRAZZO ITALIEN **10** L'ESPACE MET EN VALEUR UN SEUL ÉLÉMENT

**PHOTOS** BRYCE GAUTHIER. MORE PHOTOS AT | AUTRES PHOTOS À [WWW.AZEROZERO.COM](http://WWW.AZEROZERO.COM)



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**SOME TIME AGO**, I met with a friend who had recently returned from the hustle of life in Shanghai, and was still suffering from a bad case of reverse culture shock. Craving Chinese street food, we sought out a dive off Kingsway and after a few plates of noodles and dumplings, began to reminisce about our lives in Shanghai and becoming re-accustomed to Canada. We laughed at having to remember to obey traffic lights, complained about having to file our own paperwork, and lamented about having to CAD rather than draw by hand. "I drive people crazy always talking about China," I said. "I don't even try. No one understands." I told him I had offered to write an article on some of my work in China. He looked at me like I had gone mad. "How many words?" "1200."

"That's it?? Good luck."

How do I distill living and working in Shanghai in such a small space? How do I describe the frenetic activity of a city of 20 million people, or the pace of work? Perhaps the most unusual story I can tell is about some of Shanghai's personal spaces: how the design of tiny 10 square metre courtyards came to challenge all of my perceptions about space, precedent and place.

### LILONGS ON THE LANE

Shanghai's archetypical urban form is the Lilong, a narrow row-house dwelling typically only a few metres wide. Long rows of these attached dwellings are the threads of Shanghai's urban fabric, a fabric that is rapidly disappearing as whole neighbourhoods are razed to make room for modern condos and highrises.

While living in Shanghai, my wife (an architect) and I renovated several Lilongs for successful foreign and Chinese entrepreneurs who wanted to convert them into boutiques, bars or residences. Typically, when a client purchased a Lilong, they were buying barely a shell punished by years of neglect. It was our job not just to restore them, but to turn them into show pieces they could use to impress friends and neighbours.

As a landscape designer, naturally my role was to focus on the exterior. Lilongs typically consist of several enclosed outdoor spaces: a tiny entry court framed with high walls, a small light well in the center, and roof decks. This typology ensured adequate light and ventilation in every room. It also created a powerful relationship between interior and exterior space. These were the building blocks I had to work with.

In the past, these exterior spaces served strictly functional purposes. Entry courts were used for storage, light wells for preparing food, and roof decks for hanging laundry. Since Lilongs generally had lanes front and back, the laneway became the social space. Here, neighbours kept tabs on each other, meeting and gossiping, hanging fish and laundry, fixing bikes and even autos.



9, 10



*We were kids in a candy shop, living a kind of designer's fantasy.*

As a result of years of neglect and abuse, the outdoor spaces were often in the worst shape. Walls were pitted and stained, entry gates found rusting off their hinges, and ornaments smashed – a legacy of the Cultural Revolution. Sometimes, the houses had been divided into two, with families sharing the stairs that wrapped around the central courtyard. In others, we found makeshift levels between the original floors, to double the number of people who could live in the unit.

My challenges went beyond mere renovation issues. First, there were practical constraints. Lawn or large planting areas were difficult to maintain given that good planting soil, mulch and irrigation were next to impossible to find. Because the tiny courtyards were surrounded by two-metre high concrete walls, they were not the best environment for plants.

Second, our clients were not interested in the typical Canadian backyard. Shanghai's climate is not conducive to outdoor entertainment: it is cold and damp in winter, sweltering in summer. Our clients wanted something they could appreciate from the comfort of their living room.

Charged with delivering a captivating experience in a tiny space, I needed inspiration, something rooted in this unique place and time, but with a clear link to Shanghai's past. The layout of the Lilong house with its strong relationship between interior and exterior spaces, led me back to the basic premise of the courtyard house and its distant relationship to traditional Chinese gardens. The Chinese concept of a framed landscape, of a carefully composed picture seen from adjacent living spaces, was my first inspiration.

#### A GUILTY PLEASURE

I actually found this concept liberating – my designs were all about creating a look, without the weighty considerations we landscape architects typically bring to our work. We often began by installing glass floor-to-ceiling doors and windows along the entire length of the entry court to bring the view completely into the adjoining rooms. We weren't interested in a simple connection between inside and outside; we wanted to virtually eliminate the distinction between the two.

Small details were refined, and then elevated to focal points: there was space to emphasize only a singular element, such as an over-sized door, a water feature or a cast-in-place seat. The palm we encased in a concrete bench is just one example. And before I am judged for dooming this tree, let me say that the client wanted it gone until we turned it into a conversation piece.

These elements had to be resolved in such a way that they ceased to be seen as functional items, and instead became feature elements in themselves. Water features, for example, were designed to create a dramatic entry, yet they also provided cooling and muffled noise from the lane. In one case, we created an entry feature where the water rose like a moat when the house was empty, then fell slightly to reveal a step when the residents were home.

#### PEOPLE IN GLASS BOXES

The light wells in the center of the houses had windows on all sides, creating views from every room. We added statues and water features, and at night, the glass box effect was striking. One project featured metal planters suspended from above with down-lights installed underneath, creating the effect of passing under a giant green chandelier.

Roof decks were transformed into outdoor lounges for entertaining at night when the heat became less intense. One project had a four metre long bar made from hand-hewn timber posts and concrete seats that were lit from underneath. The lounge area became a favourite place for guests to take-in the Gotham-like views of Shanghai at night.

The abundance of vintage architectural detail that these old houses contained was restored, then juxtaposed with modern materials and finishes. We made water features out of copper and planters out of polished stone. We re-polished terrazzo and marble floors or carefully cleaned and reused old Spanish inlaid tiles, reminiscent of Shanghai's last great colonial era.

#### ON THE LÒNG-TANG

The Shikumen or "Stone Gate" house were far grander than the Lilongs. These two or three-story townhouses, which evolved in the Troubled Times Period during the Taiping Rebellion, were connected by straight alleys known as lòng-tangs. In a neighbourly nod to socialism, entryways were always understated from the lane. High brick walls and heavy doors emphasized privacy, but enticing details hinted at the wealth within. We added only subtle elements, perhaps a small and stylish name plate, light or door knocker. But once inside, the goal was instant drama.

In one home, we had the red brick painstakingly re-pointed by hand, then introduced the smooth surfaces of Italian terrazzo, a technique brought to China by foreign craftsman over a hundred years ago. We incorporated a dramatic water feature which doubled as a plunge pool to keep the residents cool on sweltering days. Faced with stacked slate, the tall, narrow profile referenced the volume of the courtyard itself. On the upper balcony, the dining and entertainment space, a large beam salvaged from construction became a seating bench and leaning bar with lighting underneath. A wooden screen provided shade from the setting sun.

#### THE SHANGHAI DREAM

The story of the people who helped us build these little creations is the most interesting of all. They were migrant, semi-literate peasants who, like me, had come to Shanghai seeking opportunity. Their entire families would move right into the construction site, living amidst the dust and rubble. Wives cooked and hung laundry in the rafters, while children played in the piles of debris. On one site visit, I stumbled on three children doing homework under step ladders, their books propped up on paint cans, the smell of thinner hanging in the humid air. Another day I showed up and everyone was gone. Where did they go? Back home to their village to plant rice. They always came back, or sent family members in their stead if they found better work elsewhere.

Though we came from very different backgrounds and cultures, the bond between us was closer than a typical contractor-architect relationship because what we were doing was unique. We communicated in basic Chinese and hand gestures, mocking up models, drawing details or sketching in the sand. In a way, we were kids in a candy shop, living a kind of designer's fantasy. What I designed, imagined and drew always got built, with few compromises, and we were there every day, working with the contractors to see it built – ten square metres at a time.

**Bryce Gauthier shared a version of this story with B.C. readers in *Sitelines*, June 2008.**





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JILL ROBERTSON

# FOUND IN TRANSLATION

## ZENATA + THE LANGUAGE OF DESIGN



### FR\_ TROUVER UN LANGAGE COMMUN

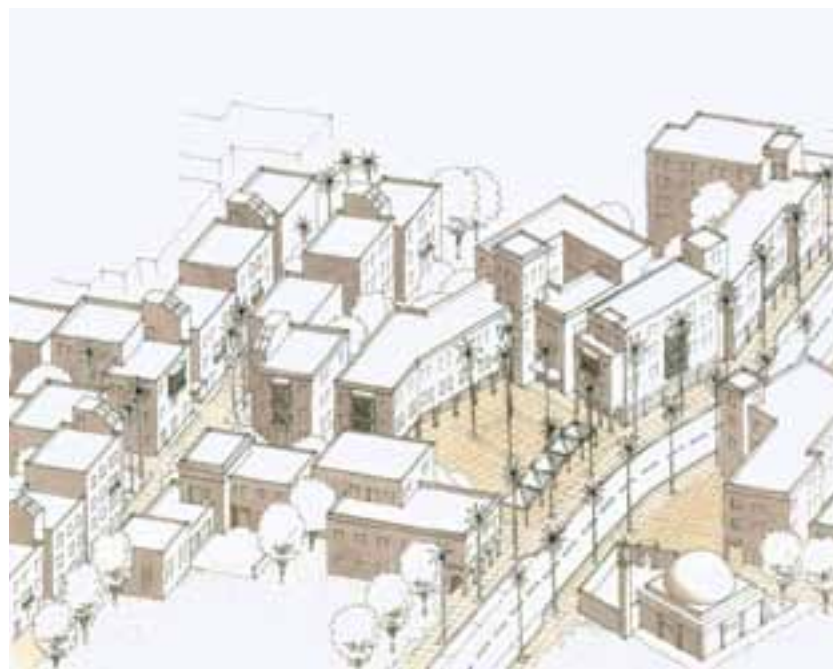
La conception d'une ville entière est intrinsèquement complexe et devient de plus en plus difficile avec l'obstacle de la langue. Le processus itératif de LANDinc s'attaque directement à la mauvaise communication des idées pour en arriver à un langage commun dans la conception de la nouvelle ville verte de Zenata au Maroc. L'auteur défend que tous les projets cherchant à unifier des intérêts disparates doivent commencer par l'établissement d'un langage de conception commun. Ce n'est qu'à cette condition que peut émerger une vision commune reflétant la réalité du développement urbain pratique.

**AS LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS FROM** diverse backgrounds, we often believe that design is the one unifying language that ties everything together. Through good design and its realization, we have the potential to break down barriers, bringing people and space together in meaningful ways. While this may be true, the reality of this vision requires the development of consensus between often-disparate stakeholders, who together must define a vocabulary of design to achieve a harmonious language. Nowhere is this more true than when working abroad, when the design principles are not the only elements that need translation.

### THE MOROCCAN MIDDLE-CLASS

The Kingdom of Morocco is a North African constitutional monarchy undergoing significant change. Rising instability in North Africa and the emergence of a more economically stable middle class has placed increased pressure on the long-term planning for Moroccan cities. In 2010, LANDinc was commissioned to lead an international team in designing a new city for this emerging middle class.

The City of Zenata is intended to be Morocco's first green city: a leading example of Morocco's modern evolution, and a case study in integrating sustainability into urban planning and Moroccan politics. Strategically located along the coastline between Casablanca's largely industrial eastern edge and the resort city of Mohammedia, the 2000 hectare site is expected to become home to 400,000 of Morocco's middle class.







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LANDinc, a Toronto, Halifax and Abu Dhabi-based landscape architecture and urban design firm, was selected for its process-oriented proposal that focused on developing a thorough understanding of the landscape and the people of Morocco. When the LANDinc team arrived in Casablanca in September of 2010, the scope of work had already been defined and a multi-disciplinary team charged with articulating the language of the urban form: transportation consultants from Switzerland, energy consultants from Germany, and local engineers and architects to complement LANDinc's own landscape architects, architectural designers and civil engineers.

### SHADES OF GREEN

Upon arrival in Casablanca, it quickly became evident that even a concept as straightforward as a green city means many different things to many different groups. The LANDinc team wanted to focus on a broad scale environmental and economic model. Zenata would need a self-sufficient and sustainable local economy that would drive the city, but not at the expense of the surrounding landscape. To the LANDinc team, this meant looking beyond the strongly rooted industrial history of the site and considering a broad range of factors.

The client's initial approach to sustainability was different, with a predominantly economic focus based around the existing oil refinery, light industrial and container storage and logistics. This was the more typical approach to Moroccan urban planning. Sustainability could be integrated into the design on a site-by-site basis, the industrial base "greened up" with site specific solutions such as trees and open space.

The clients did not perceive an inherent conflict between this traditional industrial development model and the green city concept. The ideal vision of the consulting team, however, was a city design based on a holistic, landscape-scale approach to sustainability.



3

*LANDinc ...directly tackled the miscommunication of ideas to strike a common language for the urban design of Zenata. | LANDinc s'est attaqué directement à la mauvaise communication des idées pour établir un langage commun en vue de la conception de Zenata.*

Clearly, the design could not move forward until everyone was using the same vocabulary.

### A COMMON LANGUAGE

Achieving a common language is no easy task. What IS a sustainable city? This had to be defined specifically to meet the goals of both clients and consultants, and the critical discussion went beyond the colour green. It was of primary importance to articulate the principles that would become the foundation for Zenata's urban design. The team began to extensively revisit North American principles for well-accepted sustainable practices including site hydrology, dune restoration, open space and integrated recreation, and green energy generation. How could these be applied in the Moroccan context?

Establishing design consensus would eventually take many months. The LANDinc team (Walter Kehm, Patrick Morello, Rob LeBlanc, Jill Robertson and Bureau EAST architect Aziza Chaoui) led the entire consulting and client team through a full-day workshop, broadly soliciting the key attributes of Zenata, eventually refining and categorizing them into overarching guiding principles for the new city.

Many languages swirled around the table: French, English, Arabic and German. Patrick led the group through a bilingual carding session, where Zenata's desired attributes were suggested, and then translated into French and English. It was through this session

**1** CONCEPT PLAN FOR ZENATA **2** 60% OF MOROCCANS ARE UNDER 30 **3** BIDONVILLE | **1** PLAN DE ZENATA **2** 60% DES MAROCAINS ONT MOINS DE 30 ANS **3** BIDONVILLE

1-3



4-6



that many language gaps became clear, and the translations between French and English were refined. Green City became “ville durable,” as opposed to “ville verte,” and with that small modification, a common language of sustainability began to emerge.

#### EXAMINING THE BIDONVILLES

As diverse themes emerged, so did challenges, such as the need to integrate the client’s required industrial uses into a broader program for a modern, alternative economy. The existing Bidonvilles on site, or Moroccan slums, added to the complexity of the urban programming conversation. To ensure a practical, contextually appropriate use of space and built form, the team carefully considered both the economic realities of Bidonville residents and the social/cultural dynamics. The program had to accommodate over 4000 units of social housing for Bidonville residents. Affordable housing was essential but so, too, was energy efficiency and desirable neighbourhood spaces. LANDinc proposed that Zenata move away from traditional, oil-based energy to produce 50 per cent of the city’s power through active solar generation, and integrate affordable housing components into an overall residential strategy. Moreover, these neighbourhoods would be designed to meld seamlessly into the overall urban character of the city, something not typical of Moroccan urban planning.

Through this and other defining workshops, LANDinc revisited key principles which initially had not been considered important for Morocco: the importance of integrating open spaces with built form, of shaping economic strategies while respecting coastal ecology, of incorporating social diversity for sustainability, and so much more. The end result was the consensus-based establishment of common principles.

*Achieving a common language is no easy task. | Établir un langage commun n’a rien de facile.*

#### SPEAKING THE SAME LANGUAGE

The design of an entire city is inherently complex, and becomes increasingly challenging when language is a major obstacle. The LANDinc iterative process directly tackled the miscommunication of ideas, to strike a common language for the urban design of Zenata. Thus far, the work has paid dividends: the project’s foundation has remained clear amongst the myriad of details, standards and policies that urban design requires in Morocco.

The build out for Zenata is expected to take thirty years, and new development pressures will undoubtedly evolve. The work to craft a clear design language will become increasingly important as the project moves forward, helping ensure consistency of vision. In fact, all projects that seek to unify disparate and sometimes discordant interests should begin by articulating a common language. Only then can a common vision emerge, which reflects the realities of practical urban development.

**1-5** A SUSTAINABLE CITY FOR THE EMERGING MIDDLE CLASS WILL INCLUDE AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND NEW ECONOMIC STRATEGIES **6** LANDINC WORKSHOPS ARTICULATED COMMON DESIGN PRINCIPLES | **1-5** UNE VILLE DURABLE POUR LA CLASSE MOYENNE ÉMERGENTE INCLURA DES HABITATIONS À PRIX ABORDABLE ET DE NOUVELLES STRATÉGIES ÉCONOMIQUES **6** LES ATELIERS ONT PERMIS D’ÉTABLIR DES PRINCIPES DE CONCEPTION COMMUNS  
**PHOTOS** JILL ROBERTSON





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# LANDSCAPE SONATA

## CREATING A MASTER METAPHOR FOR THE YINGKOU OPERA HOUSE & LIBRARY



1

### FR\_ SONATE PAYSAGÈRE

En Chine, tous les grands projets gouvernementaux ont pour ordre de marche « en avant toutes ». C'est spécialement évident dans la ville portuaire de Yingkou dans le nord-est de la Chine, avec l'initiative Cinq Points – une ligne qui développe rapidement cinq ports le long de la côte est pour la distribution mondiale des produits chinois. Fidèles à la pratique chinoise contemporaine, les villes développeront non seulement leur industrie, mais aussi leur infrastructure culturelle. VDZ International conçoit le terrain de l'opéra Yingkou et de la bibliothèque centrale, complexe situé en plein cœur du quartier des affaires. Pour créer les liens et séparations harmonieux sur ce site achalandé et varié, VDZ a utilisé la métaphore d'une sonate.

**IN CANADA, LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS** are accustomed to a methodical pace of project development. This can vary from project to project with the economy, market dynamics and political motivation, but the process is most often deliberate with key check points along the way.

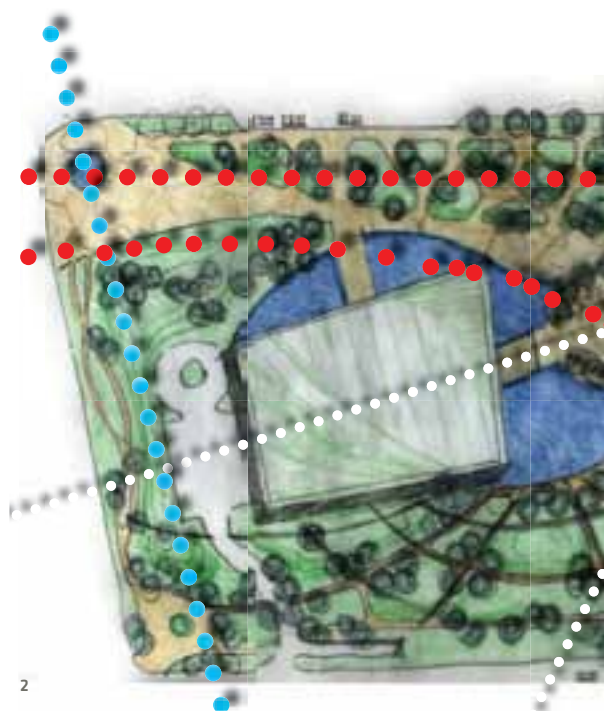
### FULL STEAM AHEAD

In China, the overwhelming timeline for large government-funded initiatives is “full steam ahead.” Nowhere is this more evident than the port city of Yingkou in northeastern China. In 2005, the Communist ruling party announced a dramatic initiative, “Five Points, One Line”, for rapid expansion of the five major ports along the eastern seaboard, to create a powerful line for distribution of Chinese goods throughout the world.

With modernization would come population growth and expansion of infrastructure. The cities were to become not only industrial hubs, but also cultural centres supporting social well-being and advancement of fine arts. This has not always been the case in China. Previous industrial cities which focused solely on commerce have failed or become less-than-attractive islands of mechanized efficiency. Contemporary China has a new philosophy, which was on display at the Beijing Olympics 2008 and Shanghai World Expo 2010. The city of Yingkou, born at the Treaty of Tianjin 1858, and a relatively ‘new’ urban centre by Chinese standards, displays this industrial/cultural duality.

A year after the “Five Points, One Line” policy was announced, van der Zalm + associates inc. established a Chinese branch office in Beijing city to support our extensive work in China's northeastern provinces. In 2009, VDZ International was invited to participate in a design competition for the Yingkou Opera House and Central Library, which would serve as a centre for cultural awareness, performance and exhibition for the eastern seaboard.

The competition bureau expected a strong theme emphasizing the performing arts, and it set an ambitious timeline typical of new Chinese mega-projects. The design competition was to be followed by six months of design development, working drawings and construction start-up. Initially, design teams had one month to create a site concept. A fully-developed plan for the six-acre site would incorporate parking for 550 cars, outdoor performance space and passive areas with pedestrian accessibility throughout, all within a major downtown urban park. As part



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of the initial design concept, deliverables included in-depth site analysis (everything from view-sheds and geotechnical reporting to stormwater and slope analysis, sensitive areas review, and microclimate modelling.) Our team, collaborating with the Dalian Zhongwanjian Landscape Design Institute, also proposed LEED Platinum registration for the development. This target put additional emphasis on the site's sustainability and integration with natural systems.

#### DEGREES OF SEPARATION

Cars posed a major problem. Pedestrians in surrounding parks and plazas needed to be separated from the massive number of vehicles expected to access the site for special events. As well, the Opera House and the Library were very different buildings

*In China, the overwhelming timeline for large government-funded initiatives is "full steam ahead." En Chine, tous les grands projets gouvernementaux ont pour ordre de marche « en avant toutes »*

with very different roles. We needed to differentiate the highly programmed spaces from the contemplative ones. How could the design team create linkages and harmony within this challenging environment?

To keep pedestrians well away from vehicles, the design team confined parking to the western portion of the site, giving priority to transit and pedestrian drop-off. The remaining parking requirements were all placed below grade. A dramatic and extensive water feature, which surrounds and reflects the Opera House, acted as a further buffer, separating the vehicular zone from the expansive park and plaza zone. The water feature elements further delineated the space, enclosing activity areas within the quieter library zone with its outdoor reading and teaching spaces.

#### SONATA IN FOUR MOVEMENTS

For the design team, the harmonious linkages and separations stemmed from a master metaphor, the musical form of the Sonata. This complex form includes four movements, each differing in tempo, rhythm and melody but held together by subject and style. We too had four distinct sections: the vehicular zone, the contemplative zone, the performance zone and the social activity zone. The Sonata vision lent cohesion to the overall form, helping us divide and connect the four zones to create a consistent and enduring rhythm composed of landscape elements. The review panel, which included members of the national ruling party, local

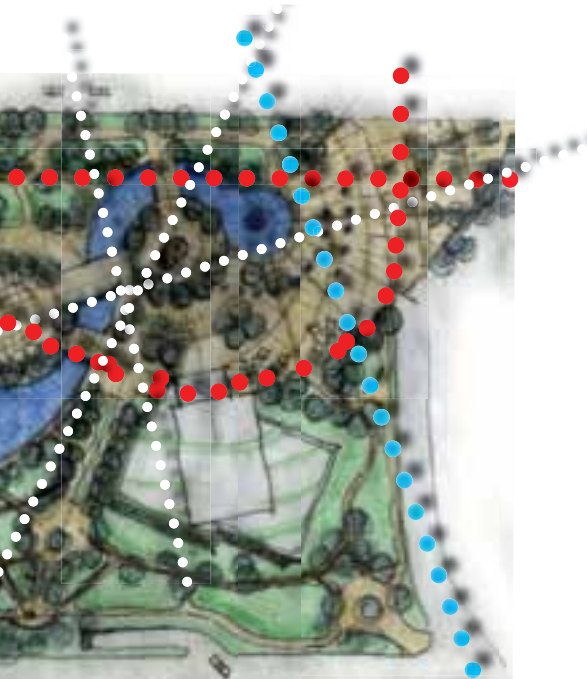
government and representatives from the arts, selected our composition as the winning entry.

#### IN MUSIC, A MESSAGE

In China, projects of this magnitude are commonplace. In fact, a six-acre [2.4 hectare] site is considered small by most standards. The Yingkou Opera House and Library, however, made a major statement. The complex, located within the heart of the central business district, tells Yingkou people that social and creative endeavour will be as much a part of the new port city as its industrial achievements.

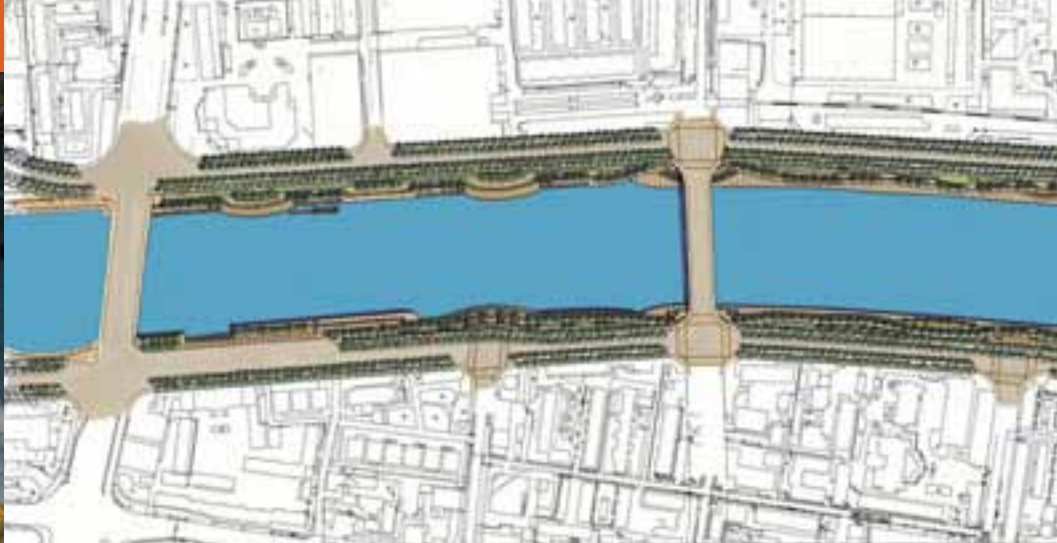
For landscape architects working in China, the Landscape Sonata conveys a second message. The Chinese increasingly appreciate the western design aesthetic, and seek clear, elegant design solutions that convey meaning and respect historic context. Strong concepts that are easily explained and thoroughly reinforced will resonate with decision-makers and users alike. The positive reception from competition officials is indicative of an opportunity for Canadian Landscape Architects to participate in the exciting evolution of public gardens and open spaces throughout the nation.

**1 CHINESE OPERA 2 THE HARMONIOUS SEPARATION OF DISTINCT ZONES IN THE LANDSCAPE 3 THE CONCEPT: THE YINGKOU OPERA HOUSE & LIBRARY | 1 L'OPÉRA DE CHINE 2 LA SÉPARATION HARMONIEUSE DE ZONES DISTINCTES DU PAYSAGE 3 LE CONCEPT : OPÉRA ET BIBLIOTHÈQUE XINGKOU**  
**PHOTOS 1 INMAGINE 2 + 3 QIANG SHAN, DAVID DAVIES BCSLA**





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2

CHRIS STERRY + ANN JACKSON

# PLAYING WITH THE STRAIGHT AND ON THE TERRACES OF TIANJIN'S HAIHE RIVER

## FR\_ DOUCEUR ET FLUIDITÉ

En 2003, la ville de Tianjin, dans le nord-est de la Chine, a invité PWL Partnership Landscape Architects à concevoir une section de trois kilomètres du parc riverain Haihe dans le cadre d'un réaménagement majeur de 12,5 km de terres urbaines. PWL savait que la rive serait utilisée de façon intensive. Dans les villes chinoises, en effet, les grands espaces de tous genres sont extrêmement fréquentés. Comme de nombreuses rivières de Chine, la Haihe est un cours d'eau canalisé dont le niveau est contrôlé par des barrages et par des murs de rétention. L'équipe a adopté un plan courbé qui introduisait des formes douces et fluides à l'intérieur du site étroit, qui ne faisait que 25 m de large de chaque côté de la rivière. Modifier l'alignement rectiligne du bord de la rivière était hors de question à cause de la navigation et de l'évacuation des crues. Pour surmonter cette difficulté, le concept final comprenait des promontoires en porte-à-faux pour ponctuer le bord de la rivière et fournir des lieux de rassemblement spacieux.

## WITH THE DIVERSITY OF LANDSCAPES

across the world, it is no surprise that many landscape architects are excited at the prospect of working on projects outside their home countries – especially when the potential client is in the midst of a major transformation of its urban waterfront. So it was for the design team at PWL Partnership Landscape Architects, when in 2003, the northeast Chinese city of Tianjin invited us to prepare designs for a three kilometre-long section of the Haihe riverfront park.

For the last decade, Tianjin has set out to transform approximately 12.5 kilometres of urban land along the banks of the Haihe River; by 2003, the renovation project was already advanced. Ultimately, the city intended to improve flood defenses, build new riverside roads, landmark bridges and parks, and redevelop land parcels along the corridor. Many well-known Asian, North American and European design firms were involved in the process.

## DEFINING A RIVER

Our three km project was not large by Chinese standards, but it was certainly significant in North American terms. We had been given

the opportunity to define the character of an important urban riverfront. This challenge, together with the complexities of integrating the waterfront with the adjoining city, would make this a fascinating exercise in design and intercultural collaboration. Working in partnership with MCMChina, a Beijing-based representative office, PWL would prepare the conceptual and design development drawings, and later provide construction drawings in partnership with a Chinese landscape design institute.

1-3-4 SOFTER FLOWING FORMS AND GENTLE CURVES REFLECT THE NATURAL MOVEMENT OF WATER 2 HAIHE RIVER MASTERPLAN 5+6 PLATFORMS PROVED VERY POPULAR WITH FISHERMEN AND FISHMONGERS | 1-3-4 LES FORMES FLUIDES ET LES COURBES PLEINES DE DOUCEUR REFLÈTENT L'ÉCOULEMENT NATUREL DE L'EAU 2 PLAN DIRECTEUR DE LA RIVIÈRE HAIHE 5+6 LES PLATE-FORMES ONT FAIT LES DÉLICES DES PÊCHEURS

PHOTOS PWL PARTNERSHIP LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS



3





# NARROW

*A curving plan...introduced softer, flowing forms within the narrow site...| le plan incurvé... a introduit des formes douces et fluides sur un site étroit...*

## A NUANCED HISTORY

Many people outside of Asia are unfamiliar with Tianjin, even though it is one of only four Chinese cities that are direct-controlled municipalities. (Beijing, Shanghai and Chongqing are better known.) Tianjin is a major port city of over 10 million people. As the most important commercial and industrial centre in eastern China, it is the main departure point for goods leaving the country.

Tianjin and the Haihe River have fascinating and nuanced histories. As a result of relatively recent colonial occupation, the city's built form exhibits a strong European influence. From 1860 until as recently as 1945, the city was a treaty port, divided into as many as nine colonial concessions that included British, German, Russian, Italian, American and French interests. The section of riverfront under redevelopment was originally part of the German quarter.

Nonetheless, early visits to the site were not inspiring. Like many North American cities, Tianjin had neglected its riverfront. The river, still a heavily-used commercial shipping route, was noticeably polluted. Despite this, residents were using the river for casual recreation, fishing and swimming.

We knew that the riverfront would continue to be used intensively. In Chinese cities, open spaces of all types are heavily frequented



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## *Cantilevered promontories...punctuated the river's edge | Les promontoires en porte-à-faux jalonnent la rive*

by children, adults and the elderly alike. In some locations, the close relationship of older neighbourhoods to the river was still very evident. In other areas, where the city and the river were completely disconnected, we needed to forge new links with adjoining neighbourhoods.

### A RIVER IN CHINA

As with many rivers in China, the Haihe River is a channelized river with water levels controlled by weirs. Within the city, the river is lined by vertical walls or sloping stone embankments, all of which were to be completely replaced. The need for continuous retaining walls reinforced the linear nature of the riverfront site, which averaged just 25 metres wide on both sides of the river. To avoid a repetitious and monotonous design solution, the team adopted a curving plan that introduced softer, flowing forms within the narrow site. These gentle curves, reflective of the natural movement of water, created a more spacious and informal atmosphere.

Modifying the rather straight alignment of the river's edge to create a more varied shoreline was out of the question, given the need to conform to the cross-sectional area of the river required for shipping and flood drainage. To overcome this, the final design included a series of cantilevered promontories organized at street ends and at intermediate intervals along the river. These promontories punctuated the river's edge and provided more generous gathering spaces with views out over the river.

### PROMONTORIES AND PLATFORMS

The narrow width of the park, which varied from only 15 to 30 metres, became the primary design challenge. The new shoreline needed to accommodate a continuous platform at an elevation of 4 metres above water level to provide flood protection. In many cases, this upper platform was higher than the adjoining streets and properties that flanked the riverfront, creating challenges for accessibility and views. To provide a more direct connection to the river, we created platforms and terraced areas just above water level.

For the city's large numbers of cyclists and pedestrians, a broad, multi-use "parkway" path was essential. It was primarily located along the upper platform where views of the river are best. The design team also added

a more casual intermittent route at a middle elevation. This not only provided additional spaces for other uses, but also minimized the scale of the retaining walls needed to form the site.

The platforms proved to be very popular with local fishermen and swimmers. Despite its apparent pollution, the Haihe River still supports a myriad of small river fish. Some swimmers combine both activities, catching fish by swimming with nets. Areas of terracing that provide direct access to the river edge also attracted commercial fishermen selling fish from pans and buckets.

### ENDURING FORMS

Since excessively varied detailing is a common problem in modern Chinese landscapes, the designers focused on a restrained and continuous pattern of forms and patterns, using locally-available materials worked by capable craftspeople. To suggest the district's colonial history, retaining walls of poured concrete incorporated stone-facing on plinths, columns and cap stones. For the paving, honed and flamed Chinese granite was mixed with the beautiful grey clay bricks, placed on edge, which are typical of traditional Chinese detailing.

For the most part, the design was implemented faithfully by our Chinese partners. The planting was perhaps the least successful, with many substitutions and design changes made in the field. Until recently, the variety of plant materials commercially available in northern China has been limited, and planting design has been somewhat rudimentary. Although this project marked an improvement, much of the approach to planting was lost.

Nevertheless, Tianjin's Haihe River waterfront project showcases the creative potential of cross-cultural landscape design and has become an iconic feature of this ever-adapting city.

**1** STREET LIFE **2+3** PROMONTORIES PROVIDE GENEROUS GATHERING SPACES **4** PAVING COMBINED CHINESE GRANITE WITH BEAUTIFUL TRADITIONAL GREY CLAY BRICKS | **1** VIE URBAINE **2+3** LES PROMONTOIRES CRÉENT DE VASTES LIEUX DE RASSEMBLEMENT **4** LE PAVEMENT COMBINE LE GRANITE À LA BRIQUE DE GLAISE TRADITIONNELLE  
**PHOTOS** PWL PARTNERSHIP LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS **DESIGN TEAM:** CHRIS STERRY + PAUL LIGHTFOOT







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1

GEORGE STOCKTON + DREW WENSLEY  
IN CONVERSATION WITH JEAN TROTTIER  
ENTREVUE AVEC JEAN TROTTIER

# IF YOU BUILD IT....THEY WILL COME

## FR\_ CONSTRUISEZ... LES GENS VIENDRONT

Sauver tout un écosystème de l'extinction, voilà comment George Stockton et Drew Wensley, de Moriyama & Teshima Planners décrivent leur tâche. La restauration de l'oued Hanifah, une rivière de 120 km traversant le cœur de Riyad, en Arabie Saoudite, est en effet un remarquable hybride d'ingénierie environnementale et d'architecture de paysage éclairée. Le jury du Réseau Aga Khan de développement l'a confirmé en remettant à MTP et à son partenaire britannique, Buro Happold, son prix d'architecture de 2010. Nous avons rencontré Georges et Drew pour discuter de l'héritage de l'oued Hanifa. Pour plus d'informations sur le projet, visitez le site Web de MTP : [www.mtplanners.com/mtpwadiinfo.html](http://www.mtplanners.com/mtpwadiinfo.html).

Lire la version française sur [www.aapc.ca](http://www.aapc.ca) 📖

*"What we've managed to collectively achieve here is something that performs way better than a very high-tech and very expensive sewage treatment plant. And you get landscape out of it."*



## ENG\_

**SAVING AN ENTIRE ECOSYSTEM** from extinction, that's how George Stockton and Drew Wensley, of Moriyama & Teshima Planners, described the task at hand. The restoration of the Wadi Hanifah, a 120 km river corridor running through the heart of Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, is indeed a remarkable hybrid of environmental engineering and enlightened placemaking. The jury of the Aga Khan Development Network agreed and gave MTP and its UK partner, Buro Happold, its 2010 Award for Architecture. We've met with George and Drew to discuss the legacy of Wadi Hanifah. For more information on the project see MTP's web site: <http://www.mtplanners.com/mtpwadiinfo.html>.

A longer version of this interview is on LP's website. [www.csla.ca](http://www.csla.ca) 📖





2 3

**JT:** When you began the Wadi Hanifah project, you admitted feeling like medieval cathedral builders that never lived to see the end of their work. How do you sustain such a long process?

**GS:** Right from the beginning, everybody knew that the master plan was just the “foyer” of the real project, which was implementing it. Once we started with the enhancements, the client knew that they had to deliver this thing. Even while we were under construction we had D9s and big piles of dirt and, right next over, families spread out and having picnics by the water features we were creating. Now tens of thousands of people come every weekend. They are spreading the word.

**DW:** When you open a project to the public you sort of hold your breath and say: “Well, now that we’ve built it, will they come?” But there they were: the kids were playing, families were interacting in a way that they are seldom doing in Riyadh because it is such a walled-off, gated city. It was overwhelming. [...] We knew that once people embraced it and made it their own there would be no turning back. [In fact] at some point our client told us, “You did such a good job with the restoration that people will forget what the wadi looked like.” His fear was that we would actually revert to the horror show that was the wadi before.

**GS:** When we started, the wadi was literally not on the maps. Now the ADA [Arriyadh Development Authority] is putting the wadi in shopping malls. There are school projects on the wadi. There is an education layer that is really important because it is the young people that will take this over. [...] It is part of that teasing apart of the closed Saudi society: to show people that you can get out there, enjoy yourself, participate and contribute.



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**JT:** So, the project actually changed how residents of Riyadh socialize?

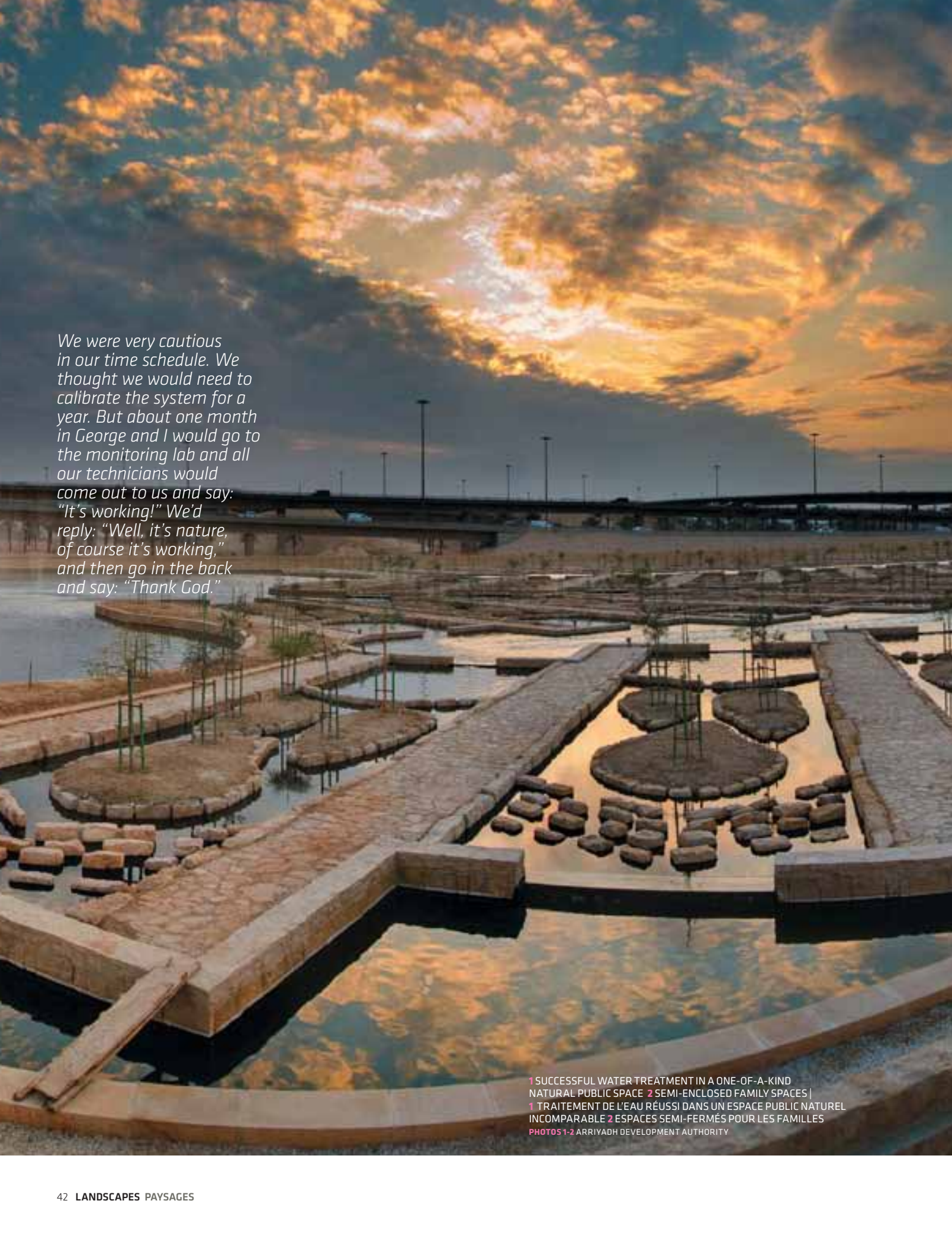
**GS:** Absolutely. Because people are used to living in their little air-conditioned boxes, either at home or in their cars [...] they’ve probably lost the instinct [...] of living socially, culturally and in a more open communal way. This is something we are trying to redress. There is very little open space in Riyadh and this project really is a major catalyst for public use. It unquestionably broadens out the level of social interaction. We have families and single people – who never mix traditionally – out there having fun, throwing Frisbees, barbecuing, just enjoying the out-of-doors. That is a kind of subtle social, cultural success.

**JT:** Saudi Arabia's neighbour, the emirate of Abu Dhabi, hired Vancouver planner Larry Beasley to develop its urban master plan. It also commissioned Foster+Partners to plan the world's first zero-carbon city. Is there an urban renaissance taking root in the Middle East?

**GS:** An Arab Urbanism Spring? Yes. Every country has something going on. Water is a major issue. Energy is a major issue. [...] We’ve spent the last two-plus years working on a major environmental plan for Mecca and we are hopefully about to start a Wadi Hanifa-like project in Medina. [...] We’re working on a new sustainable city right outside of Riyadh [that] strives to strike a whole new set of relationships in terms of people, the climate, microclimate, bio-diversity, naturalization. All of those ideas that we started thinking about in Wadi Hanifah we are now applying at a city scale. We are even looking at water capture for offsetting some of the potable water demands. This is literally a no-holds barred, state-sponsored city to do research on sustainable design and urbanism so that they can redirect what happens in the Kingdom. It’s very bold.

**1** IMPROVING THE CHANNEL'S FLOOD PERFORMANCE WITH REPROFILING  
**2** RE-ESTABLISHING THE NATURAL LANDSCAPE IN THE CATCHMENT AREA ABOVE THE WADI BED **3** THE PARK DESIGN CREATES “FAMILY COMPARTMENTS” SO FAMILIES WILL NOT BE DISTURBED BY NEIGHBOURS  
**4** DREW WENSLEY + GEORGE STOCKTON **5** THE IMPRESSIVE BIO-REMEDIATION FACILITY | **1** LE NOUVEAU PROFIL DU CANAL AMÉLIORE SA CAPACITÉ DE CRUE  
**2** RESTAURATION DU PAYSAGE NATUREL DU BASSIN HYDROGRAPHIQUE EN AMONT DE L'OUED **3** LE TERRASSEMENT CRÉE DES « CELLULES FAMILIALES » OÙ L'ON NE CRAINT PAS LES VOISINS **4** DREW WENSLEY ET GEORGE STOCKTON **5** L'IMPRESSONNANT BASSIN DE BIORÉMÉDIATION PHOTOS  
**PHOTOS 1-2-3** ARRIYADH DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY **4** MORIYAMA & TESHIMA **5** WAEL SAMHOURI  
**1-2-3** OFFICE DU DÉVELOPPEMENT D'ARRIYADH **4** MORIYAMA & TESHIMA **5** WAEL SAMHOURI





*We were very cautious in our time schedule. We thought we would need to calibrate the system for a year. But about one month in George and I would go to the monitoring lab and all our technicians would come out to us and say: "It's working!" We'd reply: "Well, it's nature, of course it's working," and then go in the back and say: "Thank God."*

1 SUCCESSFUL WATER TREATMENT IN A ONE-OF-A-KIND  
NATURAL PUBLIC SPACE 2 SEMI-ENCLOSED FAMILY SPACES |  
1 TRAITEMENT DE L'EAU RÉUSSI DANS UN ESPACE PUBLIC NATUREL  
INCOMPARABLE 2 ESPACES SEMI-FERMÉS POUR LES FAMILLES  
PHOTOS 1-2 ARRIVADH DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY



JT: The citation for the Aga Khan Award commended the project for “eloquently [demonstrating] an alternative ecological way of urban development.” I understand that the bio-remediation of urban wastewater has generated quite a lot of interest, especially from cities in developing countries?

DW: We’ve been to the UN a couple of times to present our experience in Riyadh. In 2004, we were invited into Lithuania by a development network that was hosting a forum for mayors. We were talking about the same issues: water, urban design, and how cities will be evolving in the future [...] They wanted to know as much as possible so that they could steer their communities in a way that would leapfrog the problems that we’ve all endured. [We] also hope to be soon engaged in Jordan’s Zarqa river basin, which has issues similar to the ones found in Wadi Hanifah in 2001. We’re seeing similar opportunities in Northern Africa and China. It’s happening globally. Developing nations all need this technology.

GS: What we’ve done, because it affects people’s health, their communities, their environment, has applications in so many places. I don’t think we could have done a Wadi Hanifah on the Don River Valley because of the political process here. But if you have real needs, and probably a top-down political will to make improvements...

The Middle East is a very interesting place to work because they have crushing problems that affect people’s lives and it’s pretty simple to help them out. [...] Nothing we did was very complex or highly technological. It was all, as they call it here, low tech/high thought. It’s a whole series of pragmatic designs that could be applied in India, China, Australia, anywhere.

DW: And it’s scalable. What we’ve done with bio-remediation and the polishing of urban wastewater, we’re doing at a very large scale in Saudi Arabia but we could do at any scale around the world. And it is a third of the price of a sewage treatment plant. [Such] environmental infrastructure will take over in the next decade.

GS: By the way, everything we did in Wadi Hanifah was built by Third World labour. There’s nothing special about it. It’s dirt simple in terms of construction. It’s accessible to just about anybody who can build. The bio-remediation facility was built by about one hundred Afghani workers in their sandals. And they achieved something that is a world landmark in terms of how well it works.

DW: George and I would be at the end of the shovels some days, working alongside these people. They understood what they were building. They were very proud of it.

GS: What we’ve managed to collectively achieve here is something that performs way better than a very high-tech and very expensive sewage treatment plant. And you get landscape out of it.

JT: So there’s a potential for jumping a whole technological generation, the way wireless communication took over in developing countries?

GS: This is really at the centre of the politics of ideas. We are providing a whole new level of ideas that are accessible to a heck of a lot of people around the world. It’s the scale that we apply it to that is remarkable.



2

DW: It’s challenging. But our client also challenged us. You can’t do a project like this without a superior client. We kept on throwing ideas at them and they would say, “Okay, let’s try it.”

GS: Even our engineers told us, “How could you recommend bio-remediation at such a scale when there are no precedents?”

DW: It makes for very interesting meetings, I can tell you that!

GS: The amazing thing is that if the science is right and the construction is reasonable, you stand a really good chance of meeting your goal. Within two weeks after putting water in the bio-remediation facility, the thing had started coming to life, way faster and more vigorously than we expected. [...] The tilapias were breeding after two weeks. It’s actually quite remarkable. We’ve just finished a full biopsy of all organisms: the whole food chain is working.

DW: We were very cautious in our time schedule. We thought we would need to calibrate the system for a year. But about one month in, George and I would go to the monitoring lab and all our technicians would come out to us and say, “It’s working!” We’d reply, “Well, it’s nature, of course it’s working,” and then go in the back and say, “Thank God.”

JT: These days, it is common to see landscape architects working in civil engineering firms. But your primary partnership is with a renowned architectural firm. Does that distinguish your practice?

GS: Definitely. I’ve been here for a long time and the reason I stuck around was the attitude that Ray [Moriyama] and Ted [Teshima] had towards nature and the kind of broader view of what we were doing, including culture and society. This is probably the richest learning environment I have been in. This office has never been just an architectural practice. We’ve looked at long-term, large-scale issues and developed a way of thinking...Wadi Hanifah is just a natural outcome of this. I would hope that architectural firms who talk the talk can now start expanding what they are doing. The whole world needs a level of professional grit because of what we are facing in the next few decades.

DW: Ray and Ted built this place to embrace this kind of work. When you walk in this office and see the courtyard, the boardroom, you realize that this place was built to have ideas flow. That leads to projects like Wadi Hanifah. I really want to practice like that for the rest of my life. The [Wadi Hanifah] project on the wall looks quite comfortable here.



# THE IMPERATIVE OF THE FUNCTIONAL LANDSCAPE

MARK SCHOLLEN, BLA, OALA, CSLA

## FR\_ L'IMPÉRATIF DU PAYSAGE FONCTIONNEL

À Shanghai, les paysages sont faits pour être contemplés et non explorés. Surtout, cette approche unidimensionnelle et principalement décorative manque tragiquement de régler quelques-uns des sérieux enjeux environnementaux qui ont accompagné toutes les grandes villes de Chine. Cette tragédie nous donne cependant la chance d'explorer l'idée du paysage comme un système fonctionnel plutôt qu'un aménagement esthétique et de défendre un argument convaincant selon lequel le paysage peut effectivement amortir l'impact écologique du développement urbain.

TYPICAL SHANGHAI STREETSCAPE – BUSES, BIKES, SCOOTERS AND CARS  
JOCKEY FOR POSITION | RUE TYPIQUE DE SHANGHAI : LES AUTOBUS,  
VÉLOS, SCOOTERS ET VOITURES SE DISPUTENT LE DROIT DE PASSAGE

PHOTOS SCHOLLEN & COMPANY INC

**ON THE SECOND FLOOR OF** a building located at 230 College Street in Toronto is the door to the office of Associate Professor and Associate Dean Robert Wright of the Faculty of Architecture, Landscape and Design at the University of Toronto. On this nondescript grey metal door there is a small black and white poster that reads simply, "The answer has always been landscape." Every Wednesday during the winter session I walk by that door and every time I do, the profoundness of those six words strikes me – six simple words of truth and inspiration and a weekly reminder of the power and potential of the profession of landscape architecture.

Some fifteen thousand kilometres separate College Street in Toronto from the People's Republic of China, and yet the words on that faded poster remain valid and their message more essential given the country's rapid rate of transformation. The pace of this change has been staggering and its implications profound.





### ON THE THRESHOLD

It has been over seven years since the venture to expand my practice into China was initiated with an exploratory trip aimed at assessing the potential of this new market. On that first trip to Shanghai, the seam between the idled aircraft and the jetway existed as the threshold to a completely different culture and society. The 40 minute drive from Pudong Airport to the core of Shanghai was an experience. Notwithstanding the frenzied traffic and every driver's creative interpretation of the rules of the road, it was the landscape that struck me most. Thirty-five kilometres of meticulously maintained hedges and gardens lined both sides of the highway: kilometre after kilometre of trees and shrubs planted in repetitive geometric patterns with a background of incredibly dense tree plantings that concealed from view the squalid villages and antiquated factories beyond. At that time Shanghai was undergoing a dramatic renaissance. Emerging from the remnants of the old city was a new modern metropolis fashioned of concrete, glass and steel that was replacing the row upon row of grey apartment complexes from the Communist era. Parks, streetscapes, courtyards and plazas were generously woven into this new city fabric. However, as I further explored the cityscape it would become apparent that the perspective of landscape was very different in this place.

### REPEATED GEOMETRIES, PAVING PATTERNS AND FLORAL DISPLAYS

Just like the endless ribbon of ornamental landscape along the highway, the majority of parks that we visited were designed as "scenes" – intricately formed and detailed but largely compromised in terms of function. These were landscapes to be viewed but not experienced. This observation was reinforced by the presence of army or police personnel who discouraged public access, as if public use would mar the landscape and spoil the scene. When viewed from the upper floors of one of the many towers in the city, this focus on the decorative became even more evident. In plan-view streetscapes consisted of endless patterns of repeated geometries – waves, circles, squares and lines. Parks were punctuated by Spirograph-like paving patterns and floral displays, all incredibly maintenance intensive, but few making any real contribution to the life of the city and well-being of its residents.

More importantly, this unidimensional and principally decorative approach to landscape represented a tragic loss of opportunity to address some of the serious environmental issues that have accompanied the rapid rebirth and expansion of Shanghai, and indeed all of the major cities in China. Degradation of air quality, impairment of water quality, and loss of habitat are acute concerns. It is both remarkable and telling that within this city of over 25 million people, no faucet can provide clean, drinkable water. Smog is so dense and so persistent that forecasts of rare "blue sky days" are cause for anticipation amongst the populace.

### INTEGRATING THE SCENE WITH THE SCIENCE

However, from this tragedy arises the opportunity to explore the idea of the landscape as a functional system rather than an aesthetic amenity, and to provide a convincing argument that landscape can indeed address the ecological impacts of urban development. The concept is not a new or novel one: Frederick Law Olmsted conceived Central Park as the antidote to the urbanity of New York City more than a century and a half ago. In Canada, the majority of my firm's work has successfully promoted this ideal. However, in China, the rate of urban growth reinforces the urgent need for innovative solutions to cleanse urban runoff, create habitat and improve air quality, by hybridizing landscape and technology, melding form and function and integrating the scene with the science.

### THE POTENTIAL TO LEAPFROG

I gained perspective one evening as I stood in the check-in queue at Ghangzhou Airport. I was next in line behind a Tibetan monk. Dressed in a traditional full-length red robe with a tassel rope belt and modest well-worn canvas rucksack, he intrigued me. I thought of the centuries-old culture and traditions of the Orient and wondered how these could be intermingled with western technology. And then it rang. From beneath his crimson robe the monk produced a cell phone. Here was the successful juxtaposition of tradition and technology; maybe...it could be done. Just as China leapfrogged the "land line" stage of telecommunication technology, building out a comprehensive cellular network instead, this society also had the ability to adopt current landscape-based stormwater management, water quality improvement, and urban ecology technologies effectively leapfrogging the decades-long process of evolution that played out in North America. Ever since the first subdivisions

*"The answer has always been landscape."*

*<< ...within this city of over 25 million people, no faucet can provide clean, drinkable water. >>*

*<< ...this unidimensional and principally decorative approach to landscape represented a tragic loss of opportunity to address some of the serious environmental issues that have accompanied the rapid rebirth of Shanghai. >>*

*<< ...from this tragedy arises the opportunity to explore the idea of the landscape as a functional system rather than an aesthetic amenity. >>*

*<< Just as China leapfrogged the 'land line' stage of telecommunication technology, building out a comprehensive cellular network instead, this society had the ability to adopt current landscape-based...technologies, effectively leapfrogging the decades-long process of evolution that played out in North America. >>*



sprawled across the landscape in response to the American Dream, North American society has grappled with the impacts on natural resources that have occurred as a result. Six decades of analysis, research, design, implementation and monitoring have resulted in the application of current Low Impact Development techniques that integrate built form and landscape to achieve sustainability objectives. This approach provided the foundation for the firm's practice in China, and we have made in-roads through projects including the Wuxi Chang Guang Xi National Wetland Park. (See sidebar.)

Notwithstanding our success and optimism in applying this approach, significant opportunities continue to be lost. For example, the 2008 Olympics site in Beijing is a barren and expansive landscape comprised of hard-paved plazas punctuated by the striking event venues such as the "Bird's Nest" and the "Water Cube." In spite of being touted as a green Olympics, there is no evidence of ecological function within the landscape. This vast area held the potential to filter stormwater, recharge groundwater reserves, moderate microclimate and provide habitat without compromising the function or ambience of the place. This was an opportunity lost in a city where few others exist at this scale.

The transformative power of landscape architecture done well is irrefutable as evidenced historically through iconic landscapes such as Central Park and more recently, Millennium Park in Chicago, the High Line in New York City and closer to home, Sherbourne Common, Sugar Beach, and H<sub>2</sub>O Park on Toronto's waterfront. The challenge lies in the ability to meld traditional views of the landscape in places such as southeast Asia, with western thought related to ecology and function. How does one address the environment and societal challenges imposed by the exponential growth of urban centres in the rapidly developing countries? Landscape is the answer.

**1** PHASE 1 DEMONSTRATION SITE AS CONSTRUCTED  
**2** WUXI CHANG GUANG XI NATIONAL WETLAND PARK  
 MASTER PLAN | **1** LE SITE DE DÉMONSTRATION PHASE  
 1 TEL QUE CONSTRUIT **2** PLAN DIRECTEUR DU PARC  
 NATIONAL DE TERRE HUMIDE WUXI CHANG GUANG XI  
**PHOTOS** SCHOLLEN & COMPANY INC.

## WUXI CHANG GUANG RIVER NATIONAL WETLAND



**SOME DECADES AGO**, the Municipality of Wuxi responded to the acute pollution problems within the ten kilometre long Chang Guang River by installing monumental flow control gates. The gates diverted polluted water from one location to the next. The river could flow in either of two directions as dictated by the operation of the gates or concentration of rainfall in the watershed. However, as the municipality grew, pollutant levels continued to climb until all areas in the river and lake system were overwhelmed. Tai Lake effectively died and the treatment plants that supply water to municipal residents were no longer able to process water drawn from the lake. Dilution was no longer a viable solution. A new strategy was imperative, a strategy that utilized the landscape as a functional system, employing natural processes to filter and cleanse water.

The municipality, with the support of the Central Government and the UN, commissioned us to develop a master plan for a national wetland park, a 975 hectare functional landscape that would employ wetlands, filtration beds and attenuation ponds to restore the health of the river and two lakes. The centrepiece, an 80 ha water quality wetland fed by water pumped from Tai Lake, continually nourishes the river to provide a sourced clean base flow. Phase 1, completed in 2009, integrated the full suite of technologies to enable the monitoring of each element. The monitoring demonstrated dramatic improvements in water quality within the first year. The demonstration site includes an interpretive centre, outdoor classroom and trails and melds western technology with eastern forms and aesthetics.







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## SITE SPECIFIC &gt; TRAIL OF THE CARIBOU

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As this issue of *LANDSCAPES|PAYSAGES* shows, Canadian landscape architects have been increasingly involved in international practice during the last fifteen years. Yet many decades earlier—even before Expo 67 put Canada on the world design map—Canadians had already designed outstanding landscapes abroad. Among these works were war memorials on the battlefields of Europe. These memorials, carried out in the aftermath of World War I, achieved a remarkable integration of landscape and sculpture. Unique among them are five landscapes in northern France and Belgium that are collectively referred to as the *Trail of the Caribou*.

**JULY 1, 1916** I was first introduced to these landscapes during my childhood stamp collecting days back in the early 1950s, when I came into possession of a series of Caribou stamps from Newfoundland (which issued its own stamps prior to becoming a province of Canada in 1949.) I asked my father why all those stamps looked the same and he told me about the First World War and Newfoundland's role in it. Newfoundland was involved in the war from the first day to the last, paying a terrible price in a series of major battles from Gallipoli, Turkey, in 1915 to the final advances of autumn 1918. The Newfoundland Regiment always seemed to be "in the vanguard of an attack or in the wrong place at the wrong time," according to one military historian. Thrown into the offensive at Beaumont-Hamel in the first hours of the gigantic Battle of the Somme on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 1916, the regiment lost 712 of its 801 soldiers.

**THE CHAPLAIN'S DREAM** Tom Nangle (1888–1972), the regimental chaplain, went through all the harrowing experiences of the war with his fellow citizens of Newfoundland and Labrador. Deeply affected by the courage and dedication of the soldiers, he sought to preserve their memory on the regiment's five most important battlefields. Nangle campaigned tirelessly to gain support and to raise money to purchase land for the memorials. To unerringly identify the memorials with Newfoundland, he chose the province's native animal as a central symbol – the caribou, which flourishes on the lichens supported by the island's often sterile soils. Nangle engaged British sculptor Basil Gotto (1866–1954) to create six bronze sculptures of the caribou and in 1922, found the man who could make his dream a reality by providing magnificent landscape settings for these sculptures. This man was Rudolph Cochiu (1880–1944), a Canadian landscape architect of Dutch origin who knew Newfoundland well. Cochiu had assisted



**1** COCHIUS INSTALLED THE SIXTH CARIBOU IN ST. JOHN'S, NEAR BOWRING PARK'S HIGHEST POINT  
**PHOTO 1** DERRICK TURNER





2



3

*...during my childhood stamp collecting days back in the early 1950s...I came into possession of a series of Caribou stamps from Newfoundland*

the celebrated Montreal landscape architect Frederick Todd on the realisation of Bowring Park in St. John's, that city's great pastoral public park. Following the pattern of the time, Todd delegated the on-site work to his assistant, who stayed on in St. John's from 1912 to 1917, presumably enjoying a degree of autonomy in the execution of the park. Cochius was in Holland when Nangle engaged him for the European memorials; he and his growing family lived in Albert, France, throughout their construction. Thereafter, he moved back to Newfoundland, working there until the late 1930s, then spent his last years in Montreal, once again working with his old friend, Frederick Todd.

#### A FRAGMENT OF NEWFOUNDLAND

**IN EUROPE** Rudolph Cochius designed memorials on the battlefields of Gueudecourt, Masnières and Monchy-le-Preux in northern France, and at Courtrai in Belgium, but the keystone was that at Beaumont-Hamel, completed in 1924. The battlefield is approached across a dark, wooded plateau, from which one emerges into a broad, open landscape of battle-lines and no-man's-land, the terrain falling away

to the north. Here, right at the edge of the plateau, Cochius placed the caribou, sculpted in a heroic and defiant posture by Gotto, atop a dynamic and angular rocky crag some 15 metres high. The crag was surrounded by the topography of conflict: the trenches and bomb craters were conserved to remain as permanent reminders of the horrors of war, unlike the landscapes of the surrounding countryside, which have regained the bucolic aspect that is characteristic of rural France. Other elements within the memorial's vast 16 hectare precinct include a military cemetery impeccably maintained by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, and the replica of a single battle-torn tree that somehow survived the carnage of 1916.

The other memorial parks, considerably smaller, follow a similar format: the caribou is always situated at the top of a fragment of Newfoundland landscape transplanted to Europe, and is always oriented to face the line of trenches that the Newfoundlanders were to attack. Gotto's sixth sculpture was installed back home in St. John's in a key location near the highest point of Todd and Cochius' Bowring Park. Once again, Cochius

designed a dramatic landscape setting for the sculpture, and indeed, for two sculptures by Gotto, whose *Fighting Newfoundlander* is located nearby within the park.

The Newfoundland memorials, like most World War I monuments, went through an extended period of neglect and decay. But in recent times, many of these unique treasures have been extensively restored, including Beaumont-Hamel in 2000-2005, under the direction of landscape architect John Zvonar. (See John's article in LP, Spring 2011.) Today the rehabilitated memorial is beautifully maintained by Veterans Affairs Canada, which administers all Canadian memorials abroad. Knowledgeable young students from Canadian universities provide able interpretive services here and for the nearby Canadian memorial at Vimy Ridge. Still presided over by the caribou, the war-torn battlefield of Beaumont-Hamel remains a remarkably striking and moving landscape.

See *The Newfoundland Regiment and The Great War*: [www.therooms.ca/regiment/](http://www.therooms.ca/regiment/)

**2** NEWFOUNDLAND PRODUCED A SERIES OF CARIBOU STAMPS COMMEMORATING KEY BATTLES OF THE NEWFOUNDLAND REGIMENT **3** THE BOWRING PARK CARIBOU, HEROIC AND DEFIANT **PHOTO 2** ROBERT MERCER, COURTESY JOHNSON FAMILY FOUNDATION **3** CITY OF ST. JOHN'S ARCHIVES

# NORTHERN STARS | AURORES BORÉALES

## RECOGNITION | RECONNAISSANCE

**QUEBEC LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT** Daniel Chartier perhaps said it best. « At the 2011 Congress of the CSLA, participants had a privileged look at a world that too many of us barely know: the Far North. The sessions underscored the importance of being open to geographical and cultural differences by highlighting landscape architects' innovative, adapted solutions... »

It was a time, too, to honour our own – those remarkable individuals who embody the remarkable capabilities of the profession at its best. In these most welcome rituals, preceded as they were by ceremonial rituals of the Inuit, the CSLA honoured the deep convictions of professionals who regard the landscapes of our planet with a reverence akin to that of Canada's northern peoples.

**FR\_ ARCHITECTE PAYSAGISTE** québécois Daniel Chartier est peut-être celui qui a le mieux résumé l'événement. « Le congrès 2011...a permis à ses participants de se familiariser avec un univers méconnu, celui du Grand Nord. Les conférences ont démontré l'importance de l'ouverture aux différences géographiques et culturelles, en illustrant des solutions adaptées, innovatrices, apportées par des architectes paysagistes... » C'était aussi l'occasion de rendre hommage aux nôtres : ces personnes remarquables qui incarnent le meilleur de la profession. Dans ces mots de bienvenue, précédés par des rituels inuits, l'AAPC a rendu hommage aux convictions profondes des professionnels qui contemplant les paysages de notre planète avec une révérence similaire à celle des peuples du Grand Nord canadien.



1

2

## CSLA HONOURS | CSLA HONOURS

**LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD |**  
**ENSEMBLE DES RÉALISATIONS**

**John C. Laird, CSLA, BCSLA, NuALA**  
(posthumously) à titre posthume

**COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD |**  
**SERVICE COMMUNAUTAIRE**

**Bill Mackenzie Humanitarian Society,**  
**+ Iqaluit Greenhouse Society**

**SCHWABENBAUER AWARD |**  
**PRIX SCHWABENBAUER**

**Christopher Grosset, AAPC, NuALA**

**PRESIDENT'S AWARDS |**  
**PRIX DU PRÉSIDENT**

**Presented by |** Remis par Neil Dawe :

**Sara Jane Greutzner, AALA, FCSLA**

**Presented by |** Remis par Ed Versteeg,  
Président, APALA :

**Peter Klynstra, CSLA, APALA**

(posthumously) à titre posthume

JOHN LAIRD, who sadly passed away on September 2, 2010, demonstrated excellence throughout his career. With his enthusiasm and tireless spirit, he defined the profession north of 60, making a meaningful impact on both people and the landscape in Nunavut.

THE BILL MACKENZIE HUMANITARIAN SOCIETY is a non-profit organization committed to improving the quality of life for Nunavummiut, through initiatives that foster civic pride and enhance community involvement. The Society promotes responsible waste management and the beautification of Iqaluit.

THE IQALUIT GREENHOUSE SOCIETY, Iqaluit's first community gardening centre, demonstrates that vegetables can be grown in Arctic climates and serves as a model for other northern greenhouses. More than 80 gardeners participate.

CHRIS GROSSET brings remarkable enthusiasm and dedication to every project. As a Director on the CSLA Board, as 2011 Congress Chair, and as a member or chair of countless CSLA committees, he has enriched the profession, exhibiting particular commitment to NuALA and communities north of 60.

SARA JANE GREUTZNER, AALA, FCSLA, is a "true champion of the profession," said President Neil Dawe. Her exhaustive list of contributions to the CSLA and Canadian parks and greenways was shaped through her talents as a born adventurer and leader who believes values are the essence of self.

PETER KLYNSTRA, APALA, CSLA was an "intelligent, curious, perceptive and cultured man," said Ed Versteeg, whose gentle and wise imprint on the landscape is found in a tremendous variety of works in Atlantic Canada. A consultant, a teacher, a mentor, an advocate – his impact is difficult to overstate.

**FR\_ JOHN LAIRD**, qui est malheureusement décédé le 2 septembre 2010, a fait preuve d'excellence dans toute sa carrière. Avec son enthousiasme et son esprit infatigable, il a défini la profession au nord du soixantième parallèle, produisant un impact significatif sur les gens et le paysage du Nunavut.

LA BILL MACKENZIE HUMANITARIAN SOCIETY est un organisme sans but lucratif qui s'attache à améliorer la qualité de vie du Nunavummiut par des initiatives qui favorisent la fierté civique et la participation communautaire. La Société encourage la gestion responsable des déchets et l'embellissement d'Iqaluit.

**1** CHRIS GROSSET, A CONGRESS COORDINATOR  
+ RECIPIENT OF THE SCHWABENBAUER AWARD  
**2 + 3** EXPERIENCING NORTHERN LAND +  
CULTURE | **1** CHRIS GROSSET, COORDONNATEUR  
DU CONGRÈS ET RÉCIPIENDAIRE DU PRIX  
SCHWABENBAUER **2 + 3** DÉCOUVERTE DU  
PAYSAGE ET DE LA CULTURE DU GRAND NORD  
**PHOTOS 1+2** PETER BRIGGS **3** DANIEL CHARTIER



<< Un très grand merci à l'infatigable Chris Grosset et à ses collaborateurs, Cameron DeLong et Marla Limousin. Vous nous avez fait découvrir le Grand Nord... | Heartfelt thanks to the indomitable Chris Grosset and his colleagues, Cameron DeLong and Marla Limousin. You opened the Far North to us... >>

... DANIEL CHARTIER, AAPQ, FCSLA



3

## 8 NEW FELLOWS | 8 NOUVEAUX AGRÉÉS

L'IQALUIT GREENHOUSE SOCIETY, premier centre de jardins communautaires d'Iqaluit, démontre que l'on peut cultiver des légumes dans l'Arctique et sert de modèle pour d'autres serres nordiques. Plus de 80 jardiniers y participer.

CHRIS GROSSET apporte un enthousiasme et un dévouement remarquables dans chaque projet. En tant qu'administrateur du Conseil de l'AAPC, comme président du Congrès 2011, et en tant que membre ou président d'innombrables comités de l'AAPC, il a enrichi la profession. Il s'est spécialement dévoué envers la Nuala et les communautés du nord.

SARA JANE GREUTZNER, AALA, FCSLA, est une « vraie promotrice de la profession » a déclaré le président Neil Dawe. Sa liste exhaustive de contributions à l'AAPC et aux parcs canadiens a été façonnée par ses talents d'aventurière née et de leader qui croit que l'on se définit par ses valeurs.

PETER KLYNSTRA, APALA, (à titre posthume) était un « homme intelligent, curieux, perspicace et cultivé » a dit Ed Versteeg. On sent les traces de sa gentillesse et de sa sagesse dans une très grande variété d'aménagements dans les provinces de l'Atlantique. Consultant, enseignant, mentor, avocat – on ne peut surestimer son impact.

THE CSLA COLLEGE OF FELLOWS hosted its annual investiture ceremony to admit eight new Fellows-Elect, in conjunction with the 2011 Congress. Inducted to the College, in recognition of their outstanding contributions to the profession over an extended period of time, were Cynthia Girling (BCSLA), Ian Wasson (BCSLA), Karen LeGresley Hamre (NWTALA), Liane McKenna (BCSLA), Myke Hodgins (AAPQ), Penny Dunford (AALA), Robert Leblanc (APALA), and Wendy Shearer (OALA).

Election to Fellow is the highest honour the CSLA/AAPC bestows on its members. New Fellows will follow in the prestigious tradition of 179 Fellows elected since 1964. The Fellows take the lead in the Landscape Architecture Accreditation Council, established by the College in 1986, and the Landscape Architecture Canada Foundation, founded in 1987. They serve on accreditation teams to review university programs, and through the Campaign of Fellows, they have raised over \$320,000 for the LACF's annual grants program. A presentation booklet, featuring profiles of the new Fellows, will be placed on the CSLA Web site. [www.csla.ca/en/csla-college-of-fellows-announces-eight-new-fellows](http://www.csla.ca/en/csla-college-of-fellows-announces-eight-new-fellows)

FR\_ L'ORDRE DES AGRÉÉS DE L'AAPC a organisé sa cérémonie annuelle d'investiture pour introniser huit nouveaux agrées, en conjonction avec le Congrès 2011. Les intronisés, en reconnaissance de leur contribution exceptionnelle et de longue date à la profession, ont été Cynthia Girling (BCSLA), Ian Wasson (BCSLA), Karen LeGresley Hamre (NWTALA), Liane McKenna (BCSLA), Myke Hodgins (AAPQ), Penny Dunford (AALA), Robert Leblanc (APALA) et Wendy Shearer (OALA).

L'élection au titre d'agrée est le plus insigne honneur que l'AAPC/CSLA accorde à ses membres. Les nouveaux agrées suivront la prestigieuse tradition de 179 agrées élus depuis 1964. Les agrées dirigent le Conseil d'agrément en architecture de paysage, établi par l'Ordre en 1986, et la Fondation d'architecture de paysage du Canada, établie en 1987. Ils siègent à des comités d'agrément qui révisent les programmes universitaires et, par le truchement de la Campagne des agrées, ils ont recueilli plus de 320 000 \$ pour le programme de bourses d'études de l'AAPC. Une plaquette de présentation, avec les profils des nouveaux membres, sera publiée sur le site Web de l'AAPC. [www.csla.ca/en/csla-college-of-fellows-announces-eight-new-fellows](http://www.csla.ca/en/csla-college-of-fellows-announces-eight-new-fellows)

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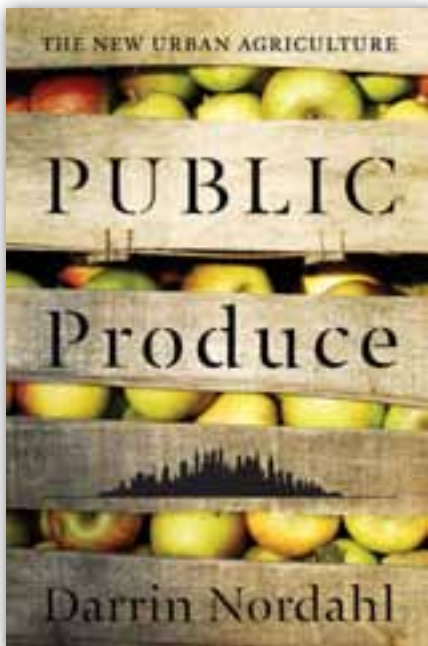
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## BOOKS > PUBLIC PRODUCE: CREATING VALUABLE EDIBLE LANDSCAPES



### Book info:

#### PUBLIC PRODUCE: THE NEW URBAN AGRICULTURE

Darrin Nordahl

Island Publisher, October 2009

ISBN-13: 978-1-59726-588-1

*Landscape architects  
can create new, edible  
landscapes...*

**IN PUBLIC PRODUCE**, we meet Tom Flaherty, Parking Manager for the City of Davenport, Iowa, who cultivates vegetables and herbs in a small plot adjacent to the downtown City Parking Office and offers the bounty freely to passers-by. A block away, we meet “Chef Charles” who applies to the City of Davenport for a conditional use permit to plant, maintain and harvest produce in an urban park adjacent to his restaurant with the aim of providing his patrons with fresh, locally-sourced offerings. And we meet anew Mayor Daley who initiates a rooftop apiary atop Chicago City Hall that supplies the honey marketed by the city to support cultural events.

#### THE MOST FORMIDABLE HURDLE

In introducing us to these individuals, Nordahl relates innovations, large and small, in urban agriculture. Yet throughout the book, Nordahl contends that leadership is required to take the urban agriculture movement to a next step. In Nordahl’s writing, his theme is clear: the movement’s most formidable hurdle is the indifference of municipal officials.

Nordahl envisions a “public network of food growing opportunities” in public spaces. He looks ahead to innovative use of public space and to public policies crafted to fulfill urban needs for individual and communal self-sustenance, and for food education. He looks also to social equity: making food available to individuals and families of all means in the face of rising food costs, food insecurity and unemployment. To his credit, Nordahl recognises the economic reality of land prices in growing cities, and argues that community gardens on vacant, underused lots – traditional darlings of the urban agriculture movement – are only one opportunity for food production. Indeed, Nordahl devotes most of his book to documenting food production efforts in *bona fide* public spaces such as urban parks, street boulevards and medians, and rooftops of municipal buildings. And he examines opportunities to include edibles in “perceived” public spaces such as university campuses and retail parking lots. To add to

this research, I would like to have read more about the Tragedy of the Commons, a topic Nordahl touches on too briefly in the second chapter.

Leadership in urban agriculture, Nordahl suggests, might take the form of municipal officials codifying the use of fruit trees in the public right-of-way and initiating joint maintenance regimes with retailers and homeowners for mutual benefit. (Chef Charles’ proposal is a good example.) Landscape architects and urban planners, Nordahl argues, can champion opportunities for food cultivation in designing public spaces. Landscape architects can consider sustenance as they do safety, comfort and aesthetics in the landscape. (Specifically, landscape architects can create new, edible landscapes, using plants such as the banana passion fruit vine, grapevine, wild strawberry and kale, and at the same time can encourage better use of traditional plantings, such as harvesting olives, to mitigate problems of fruit drop and liability.) Similarly, it behooves urban planners to include urban agriculture as a principal ingredient of vibrant and sustainable communities, just as they include a mix of housing, retail and commercial activities, balanced transportation and great parks.

To this end, land use practitioners and municipal officials have many tools at their disposal. They can issue clear invitations to urban agriculturalists, through the language of comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances; they can use funding from a Capital Improvement Program to construct a garden; they can assess food cultivation supply and demand to calibrate design and maintenance regimes; they can offer developers incentives to set aside land for agriculture (just as they are required to provide for open space uses); and generally, they can encourage innovative strategies to create more valuable public spaces. In this context, Nordahl contends, urban centres would encourage local produce, locally pioneered.

# international practice | pratique internationale



**VINCENT ASSELIN [1]** is a principal of WAA-Williams, Asselin, Ackaoui et Associés Inc (Canada), whose head office is in Montreal. He has received national recognition both in Canada and in China, and been honoured with the Magnolia Silver Medal (see p. 25). The firm is undertaking projects in Wuhan, Harbin, Beijing and Shanghai. Mr. Asselin has been President of AAPQ and CSLA. [vasselina@waa-ap.com](mailto:vasselina@waa-ap.com)

**MARK van der ZALM, CSLA, BCSLA, OALA, ASLA, [2]** is principal Landscape Architect with van der Zalm + associates inc. in British Columbia. He is design team leader for three offices located in Canada, USA and China. Mark is past president of the BCSLA and currently serves as the Chairperson of the provincial board of examiners. [mark@vdz.ca](mailto:mark@vdz.ca)

**CORINNE THIBAUT [3]** est une architecte paysagiste et urbaniste qui travaille depuis une quinzaine d'années dans l'architecture de paysage, dont notamment deux ans au sein de la firme WAA à Montréal et Umlaut : Shanghai. En 2007, elle écrit un doctorat sur le thème de son essai. Elle travaille aujourd'hui en France dans une grosse société d'architecture, d'urbanisme et de paysage. [Corinne\\_thibaut@yahoo.fr](mailto:Corinne_thibaut@yahoo.fr)

**HU YUN HUA [4]** is former Vice Director of the Shanghai Botanical Garden in 1979, and world expert in Penjing (Chinese landscape bonsai). Mr Hu was appointed Director of Shanghai Garden Administration Bureau in 1994. With his unique knowledge of art, science and park design he was instrumental in carving out the Shanghai Green Master Plan until his retirement in 2003. Thereafter he served as Deputy Minister of Urban Construction and Environment Protection Committee of Shanghai People's Congress until 2008. He now consults on special high profile projects.

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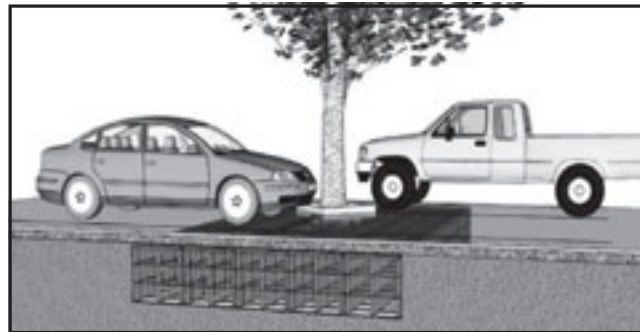
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## HISTORY DOES NOT MARCH BACKWARDS!

**YES, CHINA IS A COUNTRY** of superlatives! But neither the statement, «*I have seen the future!*» nor «*What a an environmental catastrophe!*» can really sum it up. We westerners are too quick to judge. Too many of us come to China (or indeed, any other place in the world) with preconceptions that prevent us from understanding the local cultural context. Too often, we make superficial judgements and unfair evaluations, failing to see that in China, there is a different way of appreciating the world. As Corinne Thibaut explains in her essay (page 18), the Chinese perspective on Nature and Landscape has very little to do with our own.

For example, I believe Beijing's Olympic Park is a success story. Some time ago, Beijing decided to preserve the old structure of the city while rebuilding a new central district. Then came the Olympics and the opportunity to further modernize the city along its traditional north-south axis, both by adding major buildings and creating green spaces.

Critics were quick to deplore the destruction. Both the Forbidden City and the Heavenly Temple lie on this north-south axis, and the critics alleged that the harmonious balance of the city had been lost, the old Hutongs have disappeared, and so on. Yes, most of the Hutongs are indeed gone: this is the subject of many books. But if you take a close look at the city plan, you will notice that the new opera building spared this historic axis. To the Chinese, the modernization was not destructive, but exactly the opposite. They had actually improved on the original idea, emphasizing the north-south axis while meeting new challenges!

I tend to fully agree with them! *L'histoire ne connaît pas de marche-arrière!* In fact, this is quite similar to the case in Paris when the city

built along its 10 kilometre historical axis from the Arc de Triomphe, to create La Défense, the prime high-rise district of the city. It is also true that the Beijing Olympic Park, like so many other Olympic sites, is out of scale. It is huge – not human scale at all. But I must say that when I was there, I couldn't believe how Chinese this site was. Its very size reflects the local culture, and the taste of northern Chinese for their public places. Thousands of appreciative people visit the site daily, proving how well it fits.

I have many more reservations when I think of Shanghai's Expo 2010 legacy. Forget the LED lights of Expo! Yes they are beautiful, but they hide the reality. Expo 2010 did not succeed in demonstrating the "BETTER CITY - BETTER LIFE" concept to the world. The fair's timing was perfect, but the results were not there.

Ironically for those of us who work in Shanghai, EXPO 2010 failed to reflect the principles of its host city. Quite the opposite! Shanghai is making a major effort to craft and implement a Green Master Plan of substance, which goes well beyond competitive number-crunching (see page 22). China's cities, like so many others around the world, are facing tremendous pressure from expanding urbanisation and climate change. These are the real issues; these are the things we should be debating. Only then will we build understanding and hopefully, offer better solutions as professionals.

Through this issue of LP, I invite you bright people hiding out there to add your critical voice to the discussion. Email us!

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