

PINGYAO

Connecting a city to its history
and projecting it into its future





Urban
planning in
Pingyao

« Connecting a city to its history
and projecting it into its future »

Credits

Program:

Study of the urban development of the new urban area south of Pingyao City and realization of public spaces

Place :

Pingyao, China

Delivery :

2008

Surface area :

71 hectares

Client:

Pingyao Planning et Paysage du Nouveau Quartier Sud

Architect :

Agence d'architecture A. Bechu & Associés

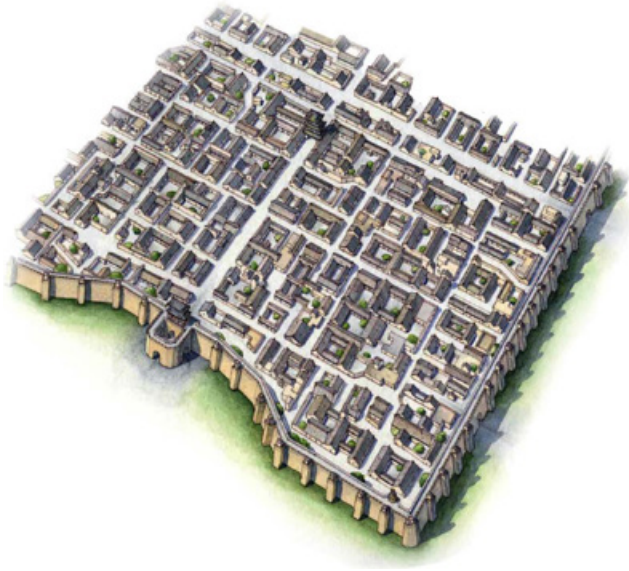
Associate Architect

France Concept



Introduction

Located 800 kilometres to the south-west of Beijing in the province of Shanxi, Pingyao is one of the most ancient cities in China. It was here that bank notes were first invented in the 12th century. Protected by six kilometres of ramparts that remain intact today, this Han city was miraculously able to conserve its palaces, temples and houses inherited from the Ming and Qing dynasties as well as from four large banking families. These architectural gems saw the city being listed in 1997 by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site.



The urban morphology would recreate connections with the heritage fabric in a fractal manner, with the architecture providing a contemporary reinterpretation of the traditional framework capitals (tou kung) well as

The project

Inited to develop a new mixed district along the axis leading from the Yingxun (south), gateway, Anthony Bechu suggested that these 71.2 hectares should be used to develop two districts constructed on a contemporary grid around the two existing citadels that his project would bring back to life. One would be used to provide a hotel complex and restaurants while the other would contain conference rooms and exhibition galleries as well as a university. The new natural and constructed landscape that he proposes is intended to enhance the historic city and place emphasis on the entranceway while at the same time also providing eco-responsible links with natural spaces (Ping Yun water reserve) and the old neighbouring villages. The urban morphology would recreate connections with the heritage fabric in a fractal manner, with the architecture providing a contemporary reinterpretation of the traditional framework capitals (tou kung) as well as the brick modenatures.

Acting as a green buffer zone, the upper area of the park running alongside the wall will be partially planted with softwood and hardwood trees. Dotted with islets, a lake will provide a poetic mirror that will soon merge reflections of the rich built architectural heritage and the new, growing city. On the opposite bank, an elegant square already organises a longitudinal gallery whose form evokes the well-known corridor running through the Summer Palace in Beijing's Forbidden City. With their terraces, these romantic semi-waterside venues will provide perfect settings for amorous meetings, the nostalgic reveries of the elderly, as well as places for children to play under the watchful eyes of their parents.

















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