

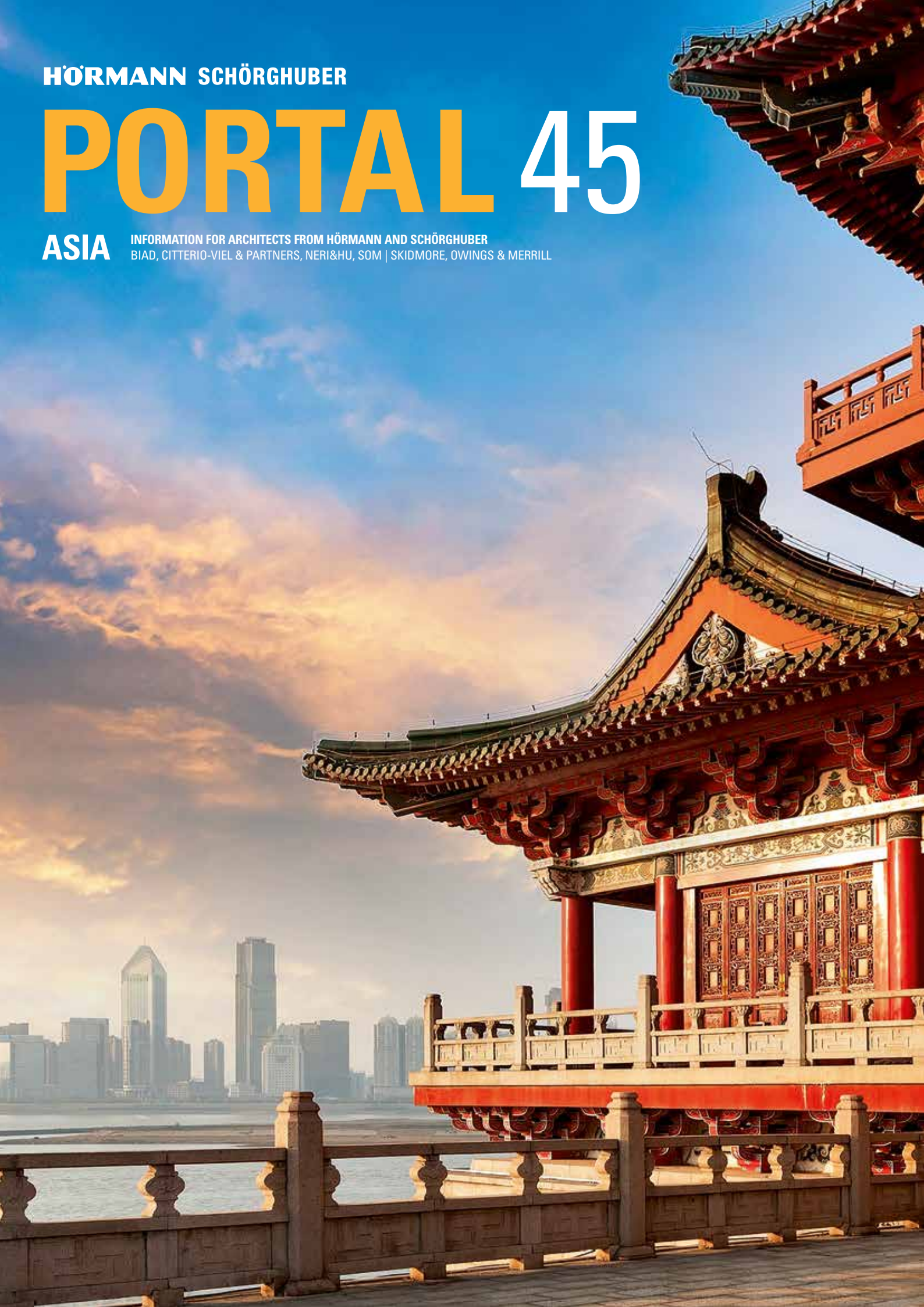
HÖRMANN SCHÖRGHUBER

PORTAL 45

ASIA

INFORMATION FOR ARCHITECTS FROM HÖRMANN AND SCHÖRGHUBER

BIAD, CITTERIO-VIEL & PARTNERS, NERI&HU, SOM | SKIDMORE, OWINGS & MERRILL





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Dear Readers,

Demanding architecture results in a distinct culture. That says nothing about its quality – but at any rate, architecture is a testimony to society's will. If a great deal is built very quickly – as has been the case in the booming regions of Asia in past decades – architects constantly face the question: Should architecture reflect the national or even the regional identity? Should they find and develop a “genius loci”? Or should the local culture deliberately act as a contrast in a globalised mainstream? This question was answered differently in each of the projects we selected for this issue of PORTAL. Two of these projects aimed for a symbiosis: Antonio Citterio and Patricia Viel wanted to bring the Italian flair to life for the Italian hotel Bulgari in Dubai – combining just the right interior with a facade whose design obviously has deep roots in Arabic culture. In their luxurious villas at Lotus Lake in Suzhou, Lyndon Neri & Rossana Hu attempted to combine traditional Chinese materials and the Siheyuan courtyard house well known to the Chinese folk with international living standards, without slipping into folklore. After all, it isn't necessarily

obvious to untrained European eyes what exactly is “typical Chinese” here. The opposing strategy becomes clear in our other two examples: In Shenzhen, Skidmore Owings Merrill have realised a project closely interweaved with the urban environment, but not bound to any specific location in terms of its quality. And the architects from Chinese BIAD ultimately faced the same challenges in their project for the Tiantan Hospital as all other hospital planners across the globe – which is why, logically, the result is similar to all other pertinent international hospital buildings. Design strategies in Asia may appear similar – but three authors describe how the different regions on the continent differ drastically in their everyday planning reality for Europeans in this PORTAL. They went free-lance in India, Vietnam and Japan, reporting for our readers in vivid detail on the possibilities afforded by these countries – as well as the risks one should be aware of. We hope you enjoy reading this Near and Far Eastern issue of PORTAL.

Christoph Hörmann

Thomas J. Hörmann

Martin J. Hörmann

Personally liable general partners

**ABOUT THE TOPIC: ASIA
"THE PROMISED LAND"**



**SYMBIOTIC:
YANGCHENG LAKE VILLAS IN SUZHOU**



**WELL-BLENDED:
BULGARI HOTEL IN DUBAI**



**INDEPENDENT:
THE UPPERHILLS COMPLEX IN SHENZHEN**



**FUNCTIONAL:
THE Tiantan Hospital in Beijing**



**HÖRMANN
AT BAU 2019**



**SCHÖRGHUBER
AT BAU 2019**



**ARCHITECTURE AND ART
JOCHEN MÜHLENBRINK**



**RECENTLY IN ... MUNICH
JIAN YANG**



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Upheider Weg 94-98
DE-33803 Steinhagen, Germany
Telephone: +49 5204 915-167
Fax: +49 5204 915-341
E-mail: pr@hoermann.com
Internet: www.hoermann.com

Editors

Lisa Modest-Danke, Verena Lambers

Architect's Mind GmbH & Co. KG
www.architectsmind.de
Dr. Dietmar Danner, Daniel Najock
Christina Dragoi

Schörghuber Spezialtüren KG
Neuhaus 3
DE-84539 Ampfing
Telephone: +49 8636 503-0
Fax: +49 8636 503-811
E-mail: pr@schoerghuber.de
Internet: www.schoerghuber.de

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In China, tradition and modernism form an especially strong contrast.

ABOUT THE TOPIC: ASIA

THE PROMISED LAND

POTENTIALS AND PECULIARITIES

by Lara de Rooij, Claudia Hildner and René Böttcher

An architecture start-up in Asia may be tempting. Not many bureaucratic hurdles, moderate building laws and above all more than enough jobs to go around. But Asia is diverse, with the requirements varying significantly. We asked young European architects about their experiences in India, Vietnam and Japan.

Asia is kind of the promised continent of architecture. Unabated economic growth over decades has fuelled non-stop construction, revealing demanding architecture as an important feature of marketing competition between metropolises. And there are many other temptations for European architects, including the low number of bureaucratic hurdles, as well as building laws that are still in the development phase, meaning not everything is regulated and allowing much more personal decisions to be made. What more could young, ambitious architects from Stuttgart, Vienna or Delft want? But seen from a certain distance, things may look rosier than they really are. This is why we asked three young European architects who have chosen to live in Asian countries about their experiences. And because Asia cannot be represented by dominating China alone, we opted for India, Vietnam and Japan – three countries that could hardly be any more different.

After opening an office in Mumbai, Dutch national Lara de Rooij has since built luxury apartments between slums and Indian boomtowns for the newly rich in the country, which aims to overtake China. Architecture journalist Claudia Hildner reports from Japan – the first Asian nation to break through as an industrial world power, and which now seems to have reached a peak – the country presenting the greatest challenge for European architects. Finally, German René Böttcher runs a successful office in Hanoi, and is about to acquire Vietnamese citizenship – after all, by now he has

learned to appreciate the particularities of this culture that may at first shatter a German's nerves in Vietnam.

INDIA: LARA DE ROOIJ

"As a Dutch Architect, I set up my own Architectural and Interior design practice in Mumbai in 2007. The initial start seemed good and went well, due to which the projects came in regular every year. We mainly focused on corporate and private clients, and much less on government projects or institutional clients. There was a lot to learn in the initial stages, especially the transformation of drawings of paper to the actual build form. Construction sites in India seem to be quite disorganized, chaotic and unstructured at first, but after multiple executed projects, I realized that there is always an underlying reason why things are done in another way than I had initially expected.

Planning is most of the time not an integrated part of a construction process, which later seemed more reasonable to me, as very little actually goes as planned. Major calamities such as power cuts, floods, train strikes and bhand (closing of the city and society due to the death of a politician, change of government, voting day and many other possible reasons) can effect projects, as people and material then will not reach construction sites on time. Besides these more regular calamities we also faced demonetization and newly incorporated tax laws for VAT in the last two years.

And if planning is less valued and followed, this has an effect on design and production as well. Since quite some years, we do not proceed with a design stage, if construction has not reached a certain level as yet, as there is no urgent requirement and it might mean many changes in the design as the client will have more time to think over it and revise their requirements.

On a more personal level I have to admit that it took me more than six years to find out why there were always so many people who urgently had to cancel meetings, could not deliver or perform, as they had to rush to a hospital as some uncle, aunt or cousin had to be admitted. In Europe, people



Lara de Rooij

Born in Amsterdam, Netherlands, in 1978

Studied architecture in Delft. After finishing her degree in 2004, she first worked on international projects in several offices – including in India. Ultimately, she founded LMC Architects in Mumbai in 2007. Besides her job as an architect, she also gives lectures at the Kamla Raheja Vidyaniidhi Institute for Architecture and Environmental Studies, Sir JJ College of Architecture and Nirmala Niketan College, all located in Mumbai.
www.LMCarchitects.com

only rush to a hospital for a very close relative, or otherwise visit the hospital after work. Not in India, as there all family members are expected to chip in each the maximum amount that an ATM releases to accumulate the total required to pay before a patient is admitted in a hospital.

In vast contrast to unreliable planning, is the trust and loyalty that clients display in me and the company, especially after the first project. Most of our clients are recurring, and some even go to the extent that they do not wish to work with other architects, but rather wait until we have the capacity to take up their new project. The reason for this is that we offer maximum transparency, both in terms of finances and appointments. Although in the initial stages our projects took off quite well, we faced multiple years in the middle in which the company grew slowly but steadily. Two years ago, the company gathered momentum. We are currently working for Tata Steel on the architecture and interior design of a hockey academy with 6000 square metres of space. For the French school in Mumbai, we are working on a new building with 3000 square metres as part of their new Euro campus. We are planning and building the new general consulate for the Netherlands, while designing various interior areas for repeat clients."

JAPAN: CLAUDIA HILDNER

"As much as I love Japanese culture, architects moving to Japan for work will get to know a whole other side of the country. Some things that really take getting used to are the strict hierarchies and rather poor work-life balance. Graduates have to be willing to accept the senior / junior system that is also practiced at university in Japan. One of the unwritten laws at the office – and there are more than enough of them – is that the boss goes home first. The typical office goodbye is: "O saki ni shitsureishimasu." Literally: "I apologise for taking the liberty of leaving before you." Most Japanese people work long hours, but are not exactly efficient as they often have to burn the midnight oil until their boss goes home. If the boss

calls it a day early on, it's time for socialising: the entire team is "piloted" to one or more bars for "nomikai" (after-work events). Young architects often have a sleeping bag and mat at the office to be able to sleep a bit more comfortably under their desk, in case they yet again miss the last train home. Of course, overtime is unpaid, and the average starting salary for graduates with a Master's degree is around 180,000 yens per month (about €1400) gross. A cheap apartment measuring about 20 square metres – a standard size for single apartments in the Greater Tokyo Area – costs about 70,000 yens (around €550).

Japanese graduates looking to go freelance later on generally try to get a job with the most well-known architecture firms. It helps if you manage to make ties to the office during your studies and / or if a professor puts in a good word for you. You have to stick it out in one of these offices for three years and if possible pass the Japanese construction ministry's extensive test designating you as a 1st-class "kenchikushi" (architect). With the favour of the master, the disciple can then open his own studio, generally beginning by designing a single-family home. One of the reasons why there are so many odd small houses in Japan is the need for younger architects to draw attention to themselves.

Those looking for a better work-life balance tend to apply to one of the large architecture firms – for example Nikken Sekkei. Applicants have to submit their portfolio a year in advance, as the recruitment process is elaborate and Japanese companies generally hire new employees in April. How to find success in such an application as a foreigner depends on a wide range of factors, with visa status leading the way. For hard core Japan fans, there's another option to enter the country: as part of a master or PhD programme. Even foreign offices can only open a branch in Japan if at least one of the local representatives has a long-stay visa. As they say, the easiest way to get one has been and will likely always be finding and marrying a nice Japanese man or woman."

Claudia Hildner

born in Munich, Germany, in 1979
studied architecture at Munich University of Applied Sciences from 1999 to 2005. In this time, she received a grant from the European Union to study at the University of Tokyo for one semester, inspiring her passion for Japan. After completing her degree, Claudia Hildner dedicated herself to trade journalism, working for Baumeister in Munich and later Metamorphose in Stuttgart. In 2009, she went back to Tokyo, but returned to Germany in 2011 in the wake of the Tohoku earthquake. She has since worked as a free-lance journalist for various architecture-based publications.
www.childner.de



Photo: Robert Andreas Drude



The countries of Asia have something in common: They are colourful, extravagant and loud – like it is here in Tokyo.



Photo: artinhosmart / iStock

Asian cities have another thing in common: Close living quarters in most metropolises.



Photo: PamelaJoeMcFarlane / iStock

Traces of British colonialism can still be felt in Mumbai today.



Photo: holgs / iStock

Urban living and traffic in Hanoi follow their own rules.

VIETNAM: RENÉ BÖTTCHER

"Vietnam is a good place to live and work as a German architect. After eight years in Hanoi, I feel I can safely say that. If you have all the positive properties attributed to Germans abroad you're off to a good start. But you shouldn't be "too" German either – a lot of things are different here. If you ignore that, you are bound to fail sooner or later. What's important is being open and, above all, unprejudiced. When I left Germany in 2010, it wasn't a spur-of-the-moment decision. I had already worked in China for a year during my studies and saw with my own eyes what economic growth in the 10 percent range actually meant. The country is planning, developing and building on a large scale – all in record time! Hundreds of hectares of urban planning, extensive residential construction, infrastructure and tourism projects, public buildings... a true paradise for architects. I was impressed right away!

Ultimately I can thank my previous German employer for leading me to Vietnam, as they offered me a job in their office here in Hanoi based on my background. But my contract was for one year, and I had only just started to understand and decipher this complex country. After three more very educational years at a Vietnamese architecture firm, I took the final step of going freelance. The bureaucratic hurdles for opening an architecture firm are extremely low in Vietnam – and because the costs of living are also relatively low, smaller projects and a few hundred dollars a month were enough for me to survive as I first went freelance. In Germany, I probably would have had to give up a long time ago – here, I managed to establish a small office with four employees and a wide-ranging customer network in a relatively short period, without any pressure.

René Böttcher

Born in Schmöln, Germany, in 1981.

After training to be a certified construction specialist, René Böttcher studied architecture at Erfurt University of Applied Sciences from 2004 to 2009. He gathered practical experience during his studies in Erfurt and during an internship semester in Chengdu, China. Besides architecture, René Böttcher also took a great interest in the graphic realisation of virtual spaces. This formed the basis for his visualisation studio V-Lab, which he opened in Hanoi, Vietnam, in 2012. At the same time, he has been running MOCCA Architects since 2014.

www.mocca-architects.com

www.v-lab.co



Photo: MOCCA Architects

The combination of German architectural training and experience on the Asian market opens many doors in Vietnam. And if you can speak some Vietnamese, you are sure to impress building owners. Local investors appreciate the qualities of German planning. Plus, architecture “Made in Germany” sells. Admittedly, architects don’t get paid like they would in Germany. But the payroll costs and utilities are much lower, so at the end of the day you make about the same.

The main differences can be seen in the treatment of local contractors and companies. Meetings are often held in restaurants or even cafes. The chemistry between people is really important to them, almost more important than signing a contract. When the building owner orders a round of rice liquor at lunch, that doesn’t mean they’re alcoholics – it’s actually a token of appreciation. After all, who has a drink with someone they don’t like?

Vietnam doesn’t have a true vocational training system (yet), which of course effects the quality of the work. You should take this into consideration in your draft and limit yourself to established construction techniques, avoiding complicated details. And the warranty periods for architects are also much shorter. Five years and the building owner is over the moon. The standard is one to two years, and many local colleagues work without any warranty at all. Generally, the cycles are also much shorter. Investors plan with maximum payback periods of three to five years. With a stable 9 percent economic growth, this is indeed realistic. Workweeks here are six days, and Sunday is the day off.

It sounds exhausting, and it is! But there are a bunch of statutory holidays that make up for it. The Vietnamese New Year “TET” festival is the most important! For two whole weeks, the otherwise dynamic country comes to a complete

halt. You should make sure to have ongoing construction or planning stages done ahead of time. Taking “unfinished work” into the new year brings bad luck according to the superstition. Plus, you would be hard pressed to find labourers willing to sacrifice even an hour of their well-deserved holidays during this time. No way, not even if you offer them ten times their normal pay. I’m speaking from experience. In earlier projects, I often tried my luck, but now I know better. And if you think about it, they have their priorities right. Time with family and friends should always come before money. As a full blooded architect, you often tend to forget that. To this day, I don’t regret being here in Vietnam. On the contrary! The entire country is under construction, with the quality of life improving for people every day. What’s more exciting for an architect than being able to contribute to this development.”

SYMBIOTIC

**YANGCHENG LAKE VILLAS IN SUZHOU BY NERI&HU DESIGN
AND RESEARCH OFFICE**







Courtyards play an important role in Chinese architecture.

Successfully reviving local architectural traditions does not have to slip into decorative folklore. The luxury villas at Yangcheng Lake near Suzhou stand for the aspirations of architects Lyndon Neri & Rossana Hu, subtly establishing a symbiosis between Chinese living traditions and international standards.

Chinese homeowners love traditional courtyards and have done so for at least 2500 years. Everyone here knows this type of home as Siheyuan. Several of these houses built close together formed a quarter – and together an entire city. However, Chinese real estate buyers in the 21st century also love globally successful architecture based on the Western style. The architects Lyndon Neri & Rossana Hu from Shanghai attempted a symbiosis of Western and Eastern building traditions when they created a residential estate of 50 private homes designed to meet both requirements on the outskirts of Suzhou, a city with over a million inhabitants. For European observers, however, the success of this experiment is not immediately comprehensible. The white plastered upper floors rest on a massive base of grey bricks and look quite European. The two long rows of white country villas could just as easily stand on the Havel river in Berlin or on a Dutch canal.

Traditional Chinese designs

In accordance with the Chinese building tradition, the protected inner courtyards only result from the arrangement of the individual buildings next to each other. The outer zones and the jetties in the lake in front also reflect designs from traditional Chinese horticulture – and this is particularly important in Suzhou. The centre of the ancient city is crossed by numerous historic canals. It offers parks protected by World Heritage status and has always celebrated a special relationship to water. Today, Suzhou is a boomtown on the high-speed railway

line between Shanghai and Beijing as well as a preferred location for international corporations. In this case, the direct connection of these villas to the “Yangcheng Lake” is more than an attractive building ingredient. They are part of the special atmosphere of the place. The materials of the villas also tie in with traditions. The brickwork on the base floor, for example, is simply grey to European observers. However, Chinese who are familiar with the area recognise in it the building material that has been preferred in their region for thousands of years.

The public on the ground floor

Inside the houses, delicate surfaces and carefully executed details dominate – completed with the best that the German construction supplier industry has to offer in terms of equipment – from fittings to doors. Here too, however, there are always details that mediate between the building traditions. The Chinese influence becomes particularly clear in the analysis of the floor plans. The basement contains functional areas, a technical room and the maid's quarters. All the “public” functions of the house are concentrated on the ground floor and surrounded by brickwork. The upper floor, on the other hand, is consistently reserved for private use. The “public” living room or the protected inner courtyard serve primarily representative purposes and the entertaining of guests. A second and truly private living area is located on the upper floor between the bedrooms.

This is where the actual family life takes place. The fact that the 600 square metre villas offer no children's room at all or only one, depending on the variant, was originally due to the former “one-child policy”. Meanwhile, however, the families of the up-and-coming Chinese middle class are becoming similar to those in many highly developed Western states in this respect as well and are only too happy to voluntarily limit themselves to a single child.



The lower part of the villas serves representative purposes and the reception of guests. The upper floor remains private.



A village centre on a small scale: The “market place” forms the core of the estate.



Greyish bricks – a material typical for the region – are also used for the base of the chapel.





Exciting: A play of views inside and outside around the centrally located corridor.



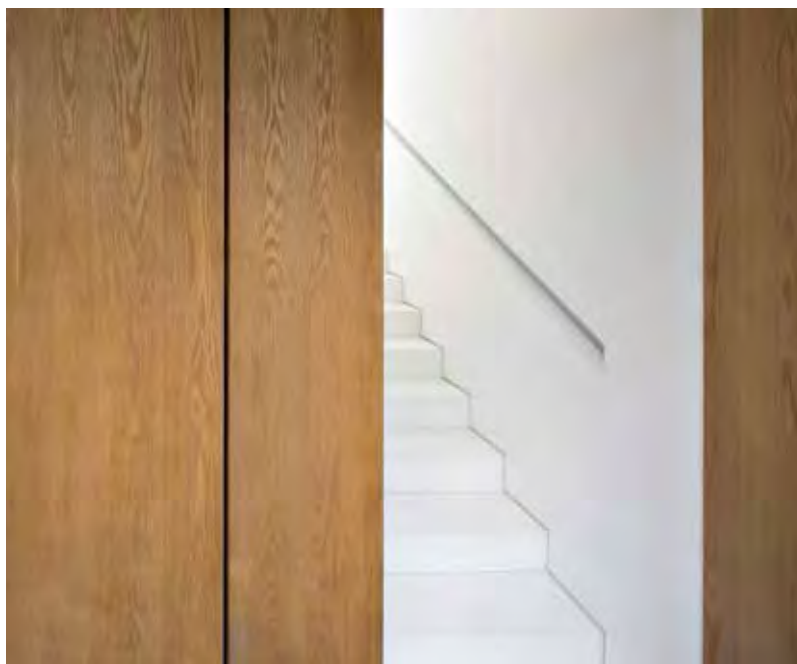
Parts of the kitchen are presented as wooden built-in furniture, while others correspond to the anthracite-coloured frames of the windows.



All representative rooms of the villas have an unobstructed view of the lake.



Curtains separate the individual living areas from each other. A second, strictly private living room is located on the upper floor.



The design, as in the case of the staircase here, was created with great attention to detail.

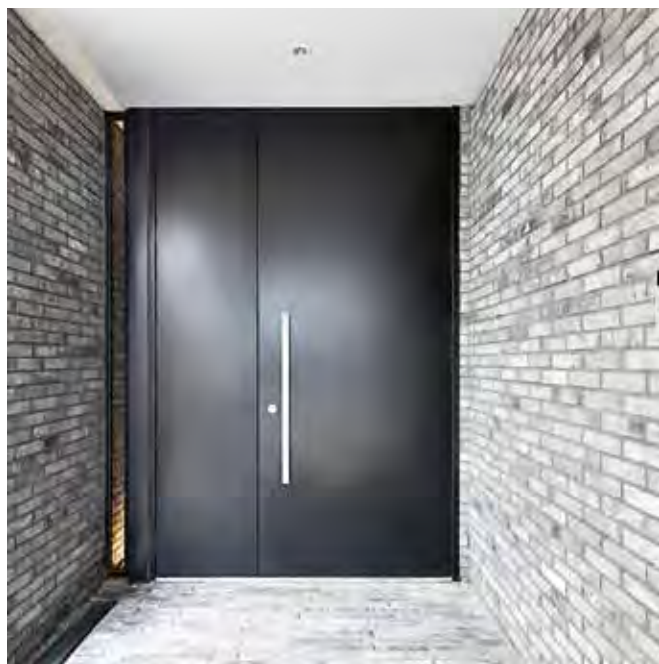
Hörmann expertise: Top Security steel entrance doors

The play of materiality and colour is one of the quality features of this residential estate. The building is characterised by the white plaster of the upper floor, corresponding to warm wood, and the greyish bricks typical of the region and the full glazing of the ground floor. The floor-to-ceiling entrance doors made of Hörmann sheet steel match the colour of the anthracite-coloured mullion and transom construction of the glass facade and provide access to the 50 villas. Depending on the floor plan, they are flanked by fixed glass side elements. The doors consist of two leaves: the normal entrance

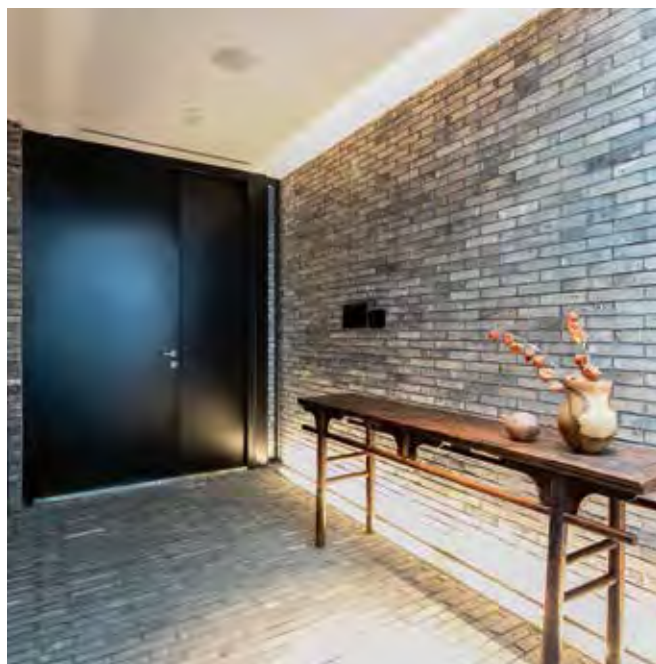
door and an additional fixed side part that can be opened if required. The door leaves consist of steel sheets and a core insulation of PU rigid foam, which ensures an insulation value of $UD = 1.7 \text{ W}/(\text{m}^2\cdot\text{K})$. For a high level of burglary protection, the villas are equipped with doors with particularly effective break-in-resistant security equipment. To emphasise the elegance of the buildings, the architects chose simple, elongated door handles made of stainless steel. Top Security entrance doors are only available on the Asian market.



The break-in-resistant entrance door blends inconspicuously into the dark, reflective glass facade.



If required, the second leaf can be opened.



The width of the door is determined by the floor plan of the corridor.

Location: 199 Yangchenghuan Road, Yangcheng Lake, Suzhou, CN

Building owner: Singapur Wanbang Group, Suzhou, CN

Architect: Neri&Hu Design and Research Office, Shanghai, CN

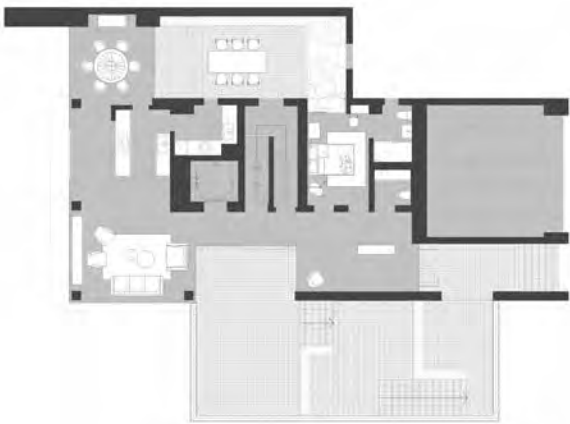
Interior Designer: Neri&Hu Design and Research Office, Shanghai, CN

Gross floor area: 50 villas of 600 sqm each

Completion: 2016

Photos: Pedro Pegenaute, Pamplona, ES / Hörmann

Hörmann products: Top Security entrance doors with RC 3 security equipment (sold on the Asian market)



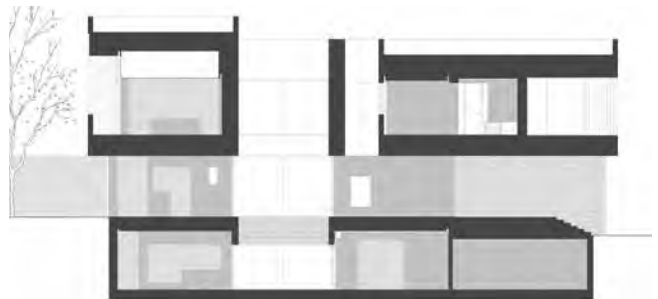
Floor plan of the ground floor



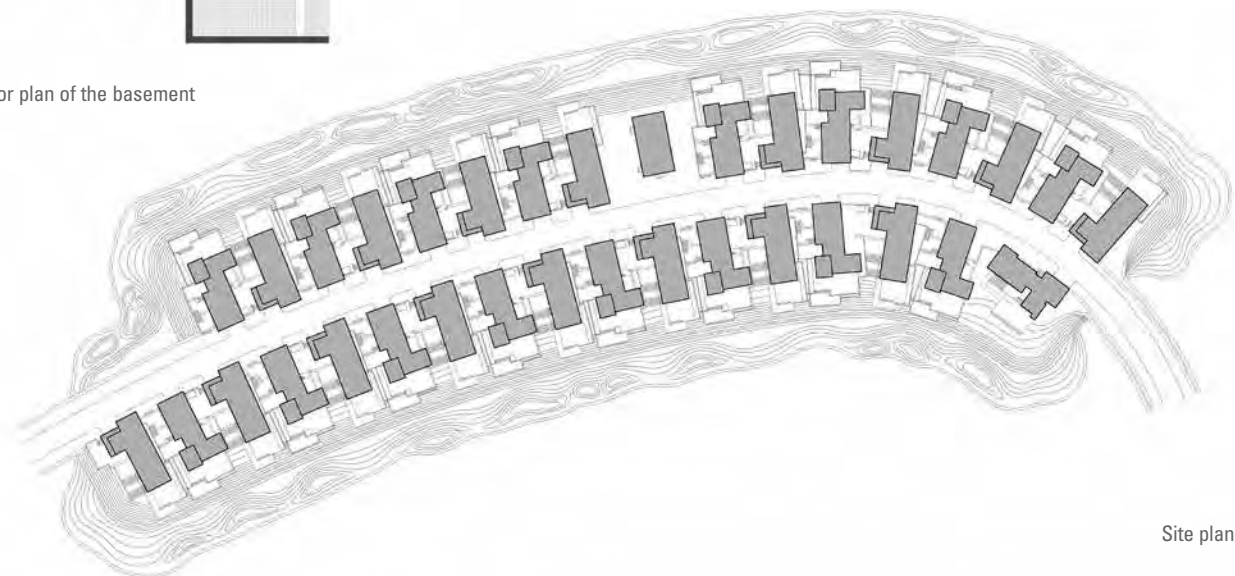
Floor plan for the top floor



Floor plan of the basement



Section



Site plan

WELL-BLENDED

BULGARI HOTEL IN DUBAI BY ANTONIO CITTERIO & PATRICIA VIEL







The ornamental sun guard is reminiscent of corals.

Where once was just desert is now the ideal playing field for innovative architecture. Dubai has become a melting pot for spectacular construction. With their design for a luxury hotel, Citterio & Viel had a more complex goal in mind. The result is a mixture of classic design in the style of the world-renowned Roman jeweller, contemporary Italian architecture and Arab ornamentation.

Luxury has many names. One of the most well known: “Bulgari”. The jeweller from Rome originally focused on jewellery and jewellery alone. But because such a successful brand could be transformed into much more, the Rome-based company opted for a “brand scope”, that is to transfer its brand identity to related product fields such as leather goods, watches or perfumes. In 2001, they entered into a cooperation with hotel chain Marriott, with the first Bulgari Hotels opening in 2004. And as the chain belongs to the empire of the LVMH group of luxury goods, it is continually expanded. Thus, the new 5-star hotels were only constructed in regions where embellishment overtakes modesty, luxury is welcome and better yet showcased almost aggressively. Besides London, Milan and Moscow, this mainly includes prospering Asian metropolises in the Near and Far East – and most recently Dubai.

Detailed perfection

For architects Antonio Citterio and Patricia Viel, who are regularly responsible for designing Bulgari Hotels, this job in Dubai posed a special challenge. After all, placative spectacles are of no use in cities that pull out all the architectural stops just for the fair. What’s left to stand out from the crowd is absolute perfection down to the last detail that makes for a special ambience Bulgari wants to be known for. The large

architectural structure comprising the 101-room hotel is in no way spectacular. In its urban layout, the main building, the 20 private hotel villas, six additional residential buildings with 173 suites, 15 more private residential houses and the first Bulgari marina with yacht club are intended to be reminiscent of a traditional fishing village in Southern Italy. All the constructions are located at the start of the artificial Jumeirah Bay Island, which is supposed to have the shape of a seahorse seen from space. The other artificial islands “The Palm” and “The World” are located in the immediate vicinity.

Islamic ornamentation

The goal was a mixture of classic design in the style of Bulgari, contemporary Italian architecture and Middle Eastern appeal. To achieve this, the methods, but not the form, of traditional Islamic ornamentation provided the inspiration for the numerous surfaces that characterise both the hotel interior and facade. In Arabia, the Islamic prohibition of images resulted in the development of an especially sophisticated ornamentation. But above all, visitors remember the complex asymmetry of the facade of the Bulgari, similar to thick branches of coral. As vertical surfaces, they are intertwined with the Moorish Mashrabiya, the semi-transparent lattices providing privacy while zoning spaces. Arranged horizontally, they are transformed into a classical “brise soleil”, which translates literally to “sun-breaker”. These components mainly introduced to modern architecture by Le Corbusier also originate from the Northern African and Arabic regions, where they also served as a means of protection against the sun. In its latest, highly decorative form, the successful symbiosis of European and Middle Eastern luxury at Bulgari Dubai can essentially be attributed to the hotel’s “brise soleil”.



Prominent position: "The Palm" and "The World" in the immediate vicinity, with the Dubai skyline in view.



Not spectacular, but well thought-out and designed down to the last detail: the facade of the Bulgari.



Romantic: Bath with a view of the sea and sunset.



Guests even have their own view of the Persian Gulf from the suite's bed.



The only reason guests would ever want to leave the suite's living and dining space is to relax on the wraparound balcony.



Modest furniture stands in contrast with the walls clad with natural stone.



Modern interpretation of oriental decoration in the spa.



The villas are a bit secluded from the main building – an exclusive retreat.



The outdoor area is just as generous as the villa itself.



Occupants have lots of space in the bathroom.



The living area inside also offers more than enough space for visitors.

Location: Jumeirah 2, Dubai, UAE

Building owner: Bulgari, Rome, IT

Architect: Citterio-Viel & Partners, Milan, IT

Space allocation: 101 rooms and suites, 20 villas

Gastronomy: 8 bars and restaurants

Spa: 1700 m²

Completion: 2017

Photos: Bulgari, Rome, IT / Nicole Lüttecke, Dubai, UAE

Processor: Alec Engineering & Contracting, Dubai, UAE

Hörmann products: rolling shutters, sectional doors SPU F42 – Micrograin, collective garage doors ET 500

Hörmann expertise: Collective garage doors and rolling shutters

The facades of the villas are clad with light, beige-coloured stone slabs. The garages adjacent to the main building stand out with their narrow, auburn timber panels. Cladded with the same material as the facade, two Hörmann ET 500 collective garage doors provide access to the garage. At the same time, they form a contrast, as the doors are positioned a bit inside, not flush with the facade. Hörmann also provided additional sectional doors, consisting of 42-mm-thick door sections with PU foam infill. The surface

consists of powder-coated steel featuring an embossed wave profile, producing attractive light and shadow effects. Some of these doors are controlled via a WA-300 and the others via a SupraMatic HT operator. The underground garage is accessed via Decotherm DD series rolling shutters, offering high opening speeds and controlled via a direct drive operator. The rolling shutters have a minimal fitting depth and roll up behind the lintel during opening to save space.



The villas are fitted with ET 500 collective garage doors from Hörmann, cladded with the facade material.

INDEPENDENT

THE UPPERHILLS COMPLEX IN SHENZHEN BY
SKIDMORE OWINGS MERRILL







Such shopping malls are a familiar sight the world over – globalisation is also rolling through Shenzhen.

From the UpperHills Complex, Shenzhen presents itself as the new global centre for consumer electronics – and the world-famous architects from SOM provided the appropriate architectural backdrop. In terms of urban planning, the ensemble is closely intertwined with its location, but the design is as strictly international as the local high-tech industry.

In 1950, Shenzhen had 3000 residents and was hardly more than a fishing village, but had an attractive location on the border to Hong Kong. At that time, Mao's successor Deng Xiaoping decided to create a special economic zone. He formulated his intentions poetically: "Let the west wind in. Wealth is glorious." Today, Shenzhen has almost twelve million residents and the highest income per capita in China. Seen in this respect, Shenzhen has basked thoroughly in Deng Xiaoping's "glory". His open-door policy was the starting shot of a construction boom that could only be called extreme, even from a Chinese perspective. The "UpperHills" project from SOM | Skidmore Owings Merrill is a current high point, but by no means represents the end.

Conceptually noteworthy

On its own, a typical mixed use with offices and hotels, flats, restaurants and shopping zones would be nothing new in such a global design. The CEEC, the Consumer Electronics Exchange and Exhibition Centre, is what makes this concept so noteworthy. Initiated by the provincial government, this centre will demonstrate on a global scale (both online and at its location in Shenzhen) how capable and innovative the city is as a hub for international consumer electronics. Along with the architecture, UpperHills will become a symbol of this Chinese claim to leadership. Anyone who uses a mobile phone these days is connected to Shenzhen. The US company

Apple manufactures here, Huawei is currently expanding on the smartphone market and numerous other Chinese companies produce components for the global telecommunications market. Shenzhen's economy is racing from record to record. This desire for records can be clearly seen in the cityscape. Buildings here have international fame and the local record of 600 metres height held by the Pingan International Finance Centre is the work of the large US office Kohn Pedersen Fox.

Design simplicity

In contrast, the two SOM towers from "UpperHills" appear almost modest with just a height of 299 and 388 metres. Nevertheless, they are a landmark that is immensely important for the city. The project connects the two largest parks in the city, Lotus Hill and Beacon Hill, thus creating a green belt. SOM design partner Gary Haney uses his personal experience in single-handed sailing to explain the design simplicity. If you are out alone on a small boat, then you know that every construction component must be scaled down as far as possible, whilst maintaining its strength. This type of reduction can also produce sound architecture. He consistently designed the higher tower without any columns not to obstruct the view of the greenery. And for both towers the storey-high facade panes with a width of three metres produce the greatest amount of transparency that is technically possible. Whereas the smaller tower only contains offices, the larger tower includes a Mandarin Oriental hotel on floors 67 to 79. Here, hotel guests have a view of a plaza raised above street level. This area connects the two towers, the residential blocks, the CEEC and the Mandarin Oriental conference centre. On the levels below, visitors find a variety of restaurant zones, luxury shops and a shopping centre, all done up with a modern and global interior design. There, successful Shenzhen residents can turn their freshly acquired wealth into consumer goods, in line with Deng Xiaoping's famous quote.



A model of the small-scale section of the UpperHills complex is located in one of the administrative areas.



The versatility of its use can be seen in the facade.



Compared with the surrounding skyscrapers and blocks, the merely three storey buildings of the plaza are quite modest.



Hörmann expertise: Fire-rated doors and garage doors

With a gross floor area of 1,200,000 square metres, UpperHills is certainly one of the largest construction projects in Shenzhen. Such a project requires an accordingly large number of fire-rated doors, which were supplied by Hörmann. Over 8000 doors were installed in the various buildings in the complex. All doors and frames are made of steel. A special feature: Some of the door leaves come with different cladding materials. For example, the administration areas have a surface finish made of oak laminate. The entrance

to the IMAX cinema is much more extravagant. This door has a combination of matt wood and reflective metal surface finishes that have been joined to create polygons of various shapes. The door leaves for both the single-leaf and double-leaf versions have a thickness of 60 millimetres, putting them in fire-resistance class B and security class C in accordance with the Chinese National Standard. Furthermore, Hörmann has provided sectional doors with 40-mm-thick PU-foam insulation for this project.



You don't need a superhero to provide safety in the case of a fire. The fire-rated doors at the entrance to the IMAX cinema take over this feat.



An oak surface finish hides the fact that these doors are actually steel fire-rated doors.

Location: 5001 Huanggang Road, Futian District, Shenzhen, CN

Building owner: Shumyip Land, Shenzhen, CN

Architects: SOM | Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, New York, US / Urbanus, Shenzhen, CN / Gravity Partnership, Hong Kong, CN

Gross floor area: 1,200,000 m²

Research area: 332,700 m²

LOFT area: 100,000 m²

Area for flats: 170,000 m²

Commerce: 167,000 m²

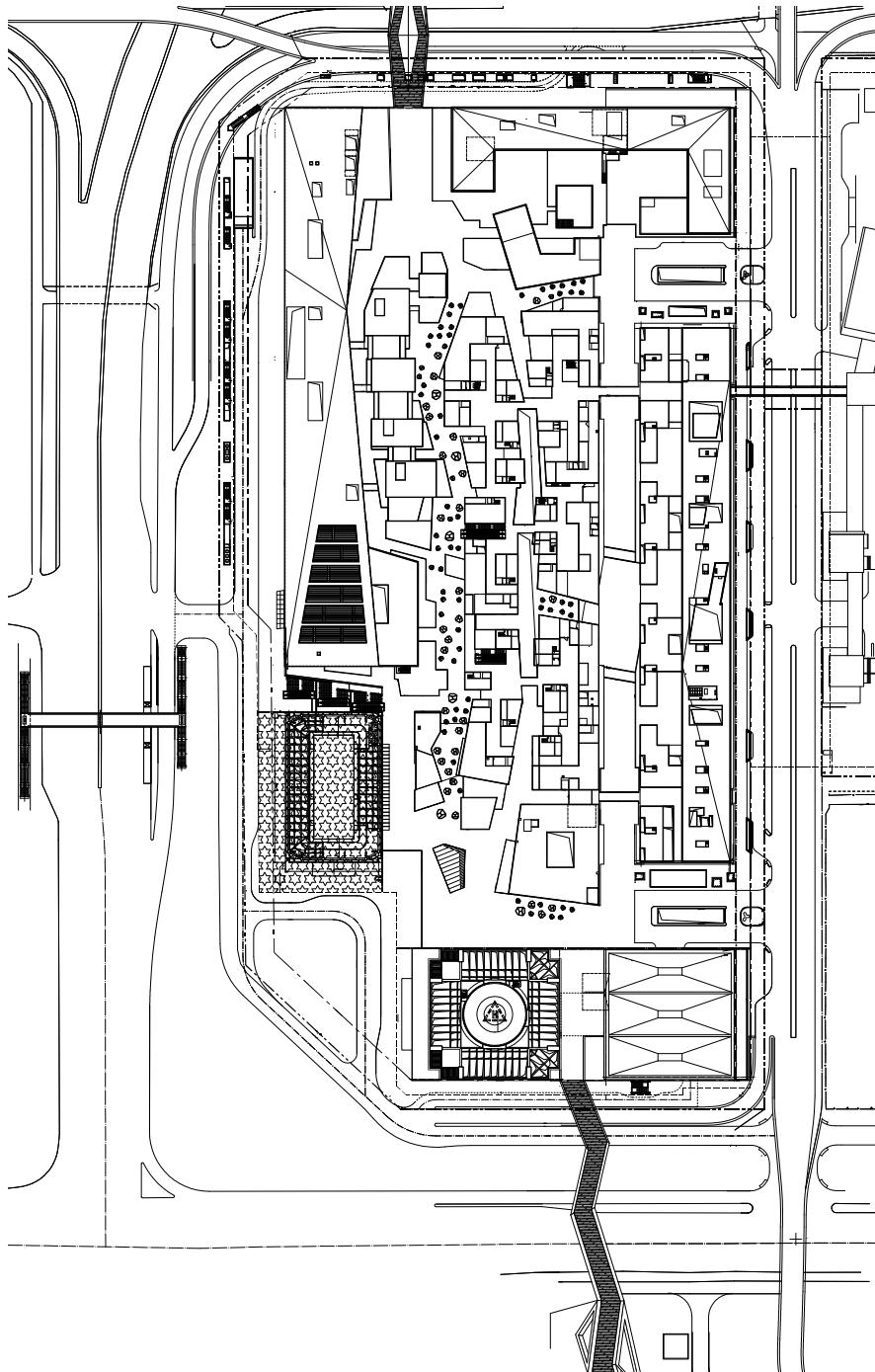
Hotel area: 50,000 m²

Green area rate: 40 %

Completion: 2018

Photos: Zhang Li, Nanjing, CN

Hörmann products: cladded fire-rated doors HC, sectional doors LPU 40



Floor plan of the ground floor

FUNCTIONAL

THE Tiantan Hospital in Beijing by B+H







Over 2000 internal doors of the hospital were provided by Hörmann. They are extremely robust and resistant to chemical cleaning agents.

For healthcare buildings, Louis Sullivan's old rule still applies: "Form follows function". And because hospitals overflow with functions, there are evidently hardly any possibilities for variation in form. By contrast, the Tiantan Hospital has been created with the very poetic motto of "five feelings and six senses". It is one of the leading international neurology hospitals – and boasts a facade with a regional reference.

Healthcare buildings are rarely used as models for particularly spectacular architecture. Construction dimensions to be tackled are too large, planning times are too long, the purely functional demands are too high, and individual wards are converted too frequently. And due to the footprint of the buildings, it is virtually impossible to integrate modern hospitals in historical city structures. As a result, diagnoses and treatments are almost only carried out on the outskirts of cities. This is no different in China compared to Europe, and the new Tiantan Hospital in Beijing is a prime example.

Architectural competition

Beijing's city centre is also in urgent need of relief to avoid its collapse. And the enormous Tiantan Park, protected as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, does not tolerate competing buildings in its immediate vicinity. However, this is exactly what would have happened if the city administration had expanded the "Beijing Tiantan Hospital", founded there in 1956, with the required capacities on site. In 2010 it was therefore decided to move the hospital to the Fengtai district, an area that was still dominated by traditional Hutong architecture in the mid-1980's – today it has several million inhabitants. In the run-up to this major project, the implementation of the task was also considered with German

participation but in the end the building was completed by the Chinese office BIAD – Beijing Institute of Architectural Design.

Modern facade

The architects handled this enormous task by dividing the total required volume into functional units and structurally subdividing it into several building structures – all in all, in its large form, similar to an aircraft carrier. The most striking design is clearly the main building of the complex. It has been given a lavish, state-of-the-art facade whose ornamental wickerwork has been the latest fashion in international architecture since Herzog & de Meuron completed the National Stadium in Beijing in 2008. In the case of the Tiantan Hospital, however, the wickerwork is reduced to a white net on the outermost layer of the facade skin, serving at most as a reflection of the local stadium. The other ward buildings lined up behind them do not feature this creative element.

Poetic motto

Instead, the entire complex was designed based on the very poetic motto of "five feelings and six senses". Because patients, visitors and employees should experience with all their senses that respect, authority, trust, safety and comfort prevail in this hospital. This goal is achieved through the colour and feel of the selected surfaces, careful planning of acoustics, lighting technology and ventilation. In total, the facility accommodates 352,000 square meters of various specialist clinics, outpatient departments, waiting areas, technical buildings, administrative offices and 1650 hospital beds. According to Tiantan, this makes it one of the three leading neurology hospitals in the world. However, national health insurance patients from Germany might consider the bed halls typical for the Tiantan Hospital somewhat unusual, making them think fondly of the two-bed rooms in wards at home. While hospital construction has become increasingly globalised, these types of national differences still remain.

Location: Fengtai, Beijing, CN

Building owner: Beijing Tiantan Hospital, Capital Medical University, Peking, CN

Architect: BIAO – Beijing Institute of Architectural Design

Gross floor area: 352,294 m²

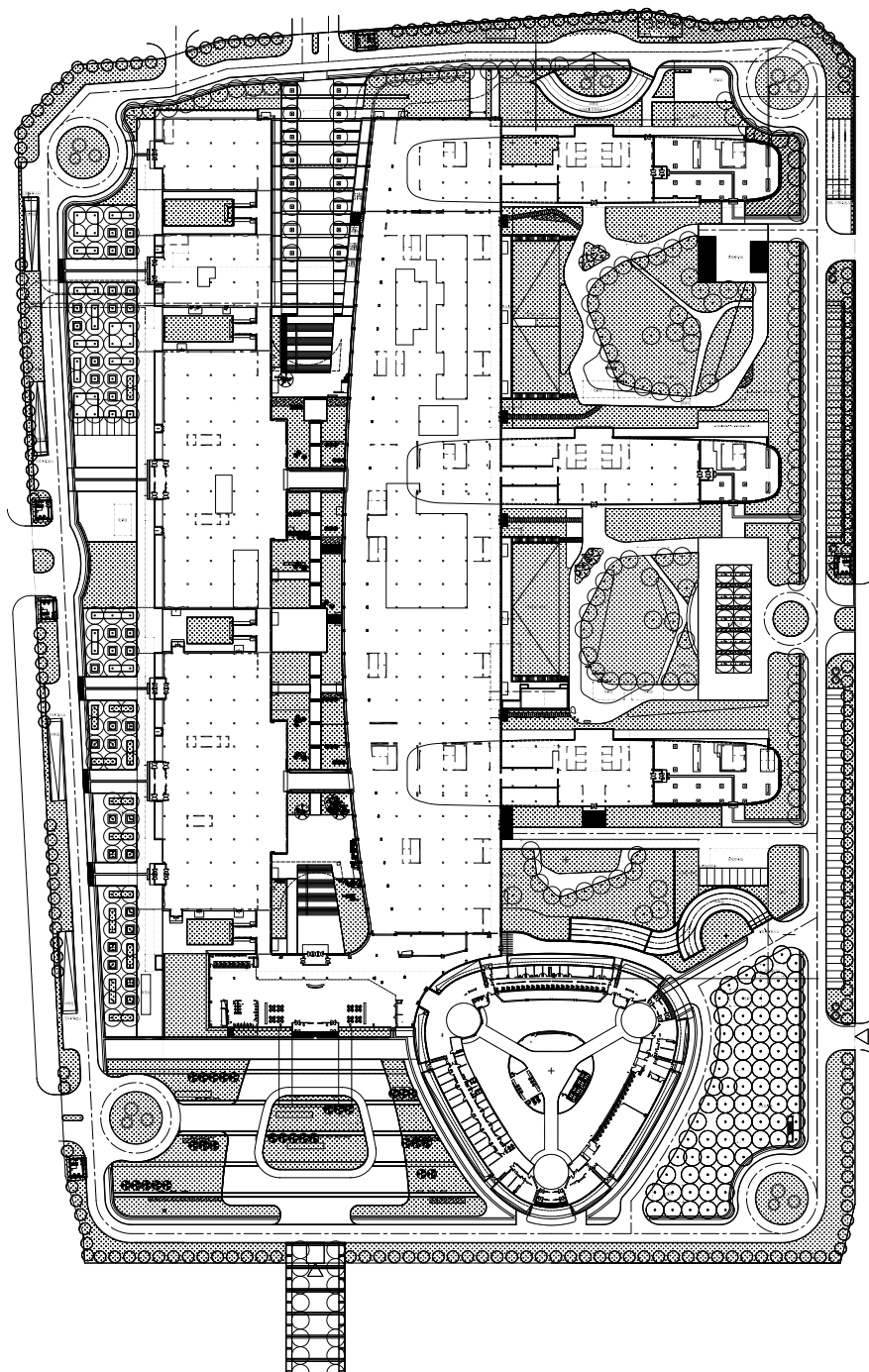
Capacity: 1650 beds

Costs: 450 million euros

Completion: 2017

Photos: Chen Su, Beijing, CN

Hörmann products: ZK sheet steel doors



Floor plan of the ground floor

Dirk Fell and Jochen Nippel from Hörmann on their experience with business in Asia

Hörmann has been represented in China since 1998. Dirk Fell, current directing manager, and his successor Jochen Nippel provide insight into the particularities of business relationships in Asia.

Are Europeans and the Chinese more similar than is often suggested, or do the traditional stereotypes hold true?

In modern China, the image of a calm, balanced Chinese man as characterised by Confucius is wrong entirely. Many Chinese people are driven by a permanent impatience, making the country the perfect platform for dynamic development. The Chinese are often good salespeople and hard in negotiations.

What influence do social and cultural differences have on practices in the supplier industry?

You have to make fast decisions, in addition to being flexible

and open to changes. Signing a contract does not necessarily mean that it will be fulfilled – instead, this is seen as the basis for business down the road. Very often, external influences come into play: be it that production is stopped or deliveries aren't possible. In some cases, this makes it very difficult to predict deliveries.

What are the biggest differences in practices between China and Europe?

In China, architects play a completely different role. This is something you have to consider as a supplier. Architects are simply service providers, and not creative decision makers. They bend entirely to the building owner's will. Renowned European architects have a difficult time accepting this. Suppliers also have to adapt to the Chinese tastes and market to be successful here. There are no standard sizes for doors – all doors are tailor-made. So, production systems have to be flexible.



Eye-catcher: The Hörmann factory in Beijing contrasts with its surroundings.



Dirk Fell

Asian countries are considered technically innovative. Is there still a kind of basic trust in German workmanship?

German companies and the “Made in Germany” slogan still enjoy an incredible level of confidence. By contrast, trust in Chinese production is very low.

How do demands on products of Asian architects compare with those of Europeans?

Generally, there is no pronounced understanding of quality in building materials. But premium quality is expected from Hörmann as a premium manufacturer.

Can Asian building owners be compared with European ones? Or is this a whole different world?

In Asia, everything is faster, larger. But little value is attached to sustainability and durability. This is why there is a disproportionate amount of project business at Hörmann China.



Jochen Nippel

What differences are there in standards, for example related to fire protection?

In Asia, there aren't really uniform standards for fire protection. On the one hand, there are countries without own standards, where the “British standards” apply. On the other hand, China has a very progressive fire protection standard. All fire-rated doors are fitted with microchips that contain all technical data, the manufacturer and the installation location. The true challenge lies in universal application of standards and the monitoring of compliance.

How are warranties regulated in Asia?

Each country has its own legal system and own warranty law. In many Asian countries, there is only a minimal understanding for warranties and claims are generally low. By contrast, Japanese warranty law and understanding for quality are much more prominent than in Germany.



Photos: Hörmann

Hörmann is involved in spectacular projects in Beijing, such as Galaxy Soho by Zaha Hadid, completed in 2012. Here, Hörmann supplied the internal doors.



From July 2019 Hörmann will add textile fire protection curtains to its fire protection range.

FIRE PROTECTION CURTAIN FLEXFIRE

Hörmann offers a large portfolio of fire protection products, ranging from steel and stainless steel doors, tubular frame parts made of steel or aluminium, fully glazed system walls and fire sliding doors. From July 2019, Hörmann is expanding this range to include textile fire protection curtains for large openings, and specifically for fitting situations that do not have sufficient storage space above or to the side of the opening, such as would be required for a sliding door. The FlexFire textile fire

protection curtain is only 0.5 millimetres thick and is particularly suitable for objects such as hotels, public buildings, offices or department stores. It is available up to fire resistance class E120. Particularly sophisticated side guides ensure that the textile fire protection curtain remains inconspicuous. The FlexFire is operated using a hold-open device in accordance with EN 14637. Visual smoke sensors monitor the door area and ensure reliable closing of the curtain if smoke is detected. The control unit can also be connected to the building's fire alarm system. The textile curtain is available in dimensions

of up to 5 x 5 metres and consists of glass filament fabric reinforced with V4A wire. Larger dimensions are also possible with case-by-case approval. In the event of a fire, the fire protection curtain closes within just 4 seconds per metre. ift Rosenheim has issued an Environmental Product Declaration (EPD) for the FlexFire in accordance with ISO 14025, permitting the use of the fire protection curtain in certified sustainable buildings.



Suitable for small parking lots up to multi-storey car parks: perimeter protection systems from Hörmann.

PERIMETER PROTECTION SYSTEMS FOR LONG-TERM PARKING

Hörmann offers barriers, entry and exit stations, as well as automatic pay stations for entry and exit control, from small car parks to large multi-storey car parks. Hörmann barriers are available in various sizes and versions. They can close off passages up to a barrier width of 10.5 metres and are available as a flat, round and octagonal boom or, in the case of limited heights, as a folding barrier boom. Barrier systems that allow for a passage with various controls and identification media such as hand transmitter, number plate recognition, induction loop, various transponder cards or a smartphone can be used for private

parking spaces. For long-term parking systems, Hörmann not only offers barrier systems but also entry and exit stations as well as the associated automatic pay stations. The administration can take place using an ID management system, which is connected via LAN or WLAN. The barrier and parking systems can be optionally managed via a web server in a flexible and location-independent manner. This makes it possible to access the parking system from anywhere in the world and to analyse malfunctions quickly and independently of location.

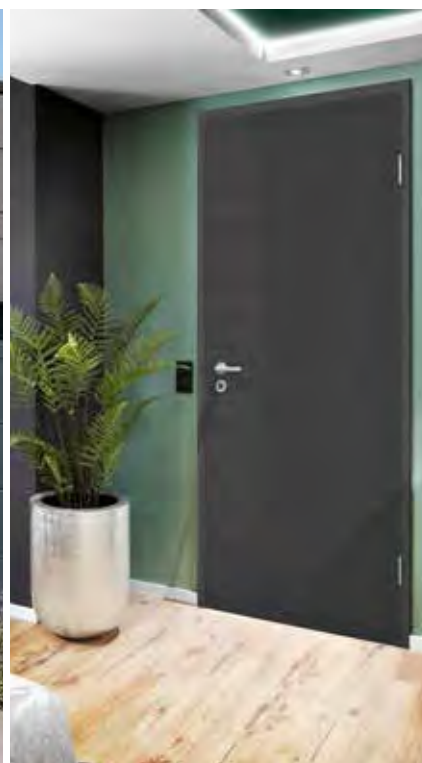
EXPANSION OF HIGH SECURITY LINE

Products from the Hörmann High Security Line allow perimeter protection in high security areas. The High Security Line will now feature the new products automatic bollard A 275-M30-900 E and A 275-M50-900 E. According to the manufacturer, this combination of a brushless motor and an optional EFO emergency function – ensuring the curtain can be lifted within 1.5 seconds – is available on the market for the first time. The new automatic bollards meet the high security requirements of safety classes M30 and M50 and have a high resistance to impacting vehicles. Depending on the impact energy, passage is prevented or greatly decelerated so that an area or building can be sealed off particularly safely. This is proven by the certification of internationally recognised crash tests by independent testing institutes. The M30 certified bollard A 275-M30-900 E withstands a lorry weighing approx. 7.5 tonnes with a speed of approx. 50 km/h, while the M50 certified bollard A 275-M50-900 E withstands a lorry weighing approx. 6.8 tonnes with a speed of up to 80 km/h.



The High Security Line is designed for high-security areas.

HÖRMANN AT THE 2019 BAU



Photos: Hörmann

The door leaf of the ThermoPlan Hybrid aluminium entrance door is flush-fitting with the frame on both sides. DesignLine Concepto in a 4x4 concept.

HÖRMANN THERMOPLAN HYBRID

The Hörmann range of entrance doors offers a variety of different models and styles for every style home. Whether aluminium or a combination of aluminium and steel, the programme offers an entrance door fitting every taste and budget. In the area of premium aluminium entrance doors, Hörmann has now introduced the ThermoPlan Hybrid to its range. Besides colour and design, concealed hinges and the flush fit are quality features of the door. It is characterised

by its door leaf flush-fitting to the frame on both the inside and outside, giving it an especially generous and elegant appearance. A wide variety of design and colour options are available. The combination of aluminium and stainless steel, only available from Hörmann, ensures an especially shape-retaining construction. ThermoPlan Hybrid also has an excellent insulation value of $0.78 \text{ W}/(\text{m}^2 \cdot \text{K})$ as well as RC 3 equipment as standard.

4X4 CONCEPT: INTERNAL DOORS IN A TRENDY DESIGN

DesignLine Concepto internal doors are the perfect complement to a modern interior design style, available in four different surface finishes as well as four colours as part of the 4x4 concept. Surface finishes to choose from include ultra-matt, high-gloss, textured and linen designs. These can be combined with the popular colours White, Anthracite, Grey and Taupe. All 16 designs are very robust, as they are mainly supplied in the very resistant Duradecor surface finish.

SLIDING DOOR: HIGH ACOUSTIC INSULATION IN XXL

High acoustic insulation in XXL – the new sliding door from Schörghuber. With maximum dimensions of 2200 millimetres by 2800 millimetres (WxH), the single-leaf sliding doors can be used to close off especially large passages and hallways and separate individual areas. In addition, the door with acoustic insulation up to 42 dB ensures quiet and discretion in kindergartens, hospitals, care facilities and hotels. Sliding doors are especially space-saving, easy to operate and do not pose an obstacle for people or objects, as the door leaf does not swing out, but instead runs along the wall. Plus, very large sliding doors are easier to use than hinged doors. If

the surrounding walls permit, use of an XXL sliding door instead of a double-leaf hinged door is recommended for large passages in construction projects. The XXL sliding door from Schörghuber with acoustic insulation up to 42 dB can be operated manually or with an automatic operator. It runs in front of the wall, and has no threshold or protruding fittings. When open, the door provides complete passage without barriers. The XXL acoustic insulation sliding door is available to Schörghuber partners from autumn 2019.

DOUBLE DOOR SYSTEM WITH ACOUSTIC INSULATION UP TO 60 DB

When construction projects require extremely high acoustic insulation of at least 56 dB, double door systems, consisting of two doors in direct succession with a fixed clearance, are the perfect solution. Thanks to an advanced design, the double door systems from Schörghuber achieve acoustic insulation values of up to 60 dB (Rw,P), proven by testing. To ensure functionality, the door must close reliably in day-to-day business. For double-door systems, this means equalising a counter pressure. At Schörghuber, this cushion of air is counterbalanced without compromising on appearance.



The acoustic insulation sliding door is suitable for large passages.



Double door system with high acoustic insulation.



Attractive price-performance ratio: Zeroline living.



Concealed aluminium frame Zeroline living is combined with a composite timber door leaf.

ZEROLINE ALUMINIUM FRAMES

Modern and minimalistic interior design is currently trending, with demand growing for flush-fitting, reduced looks in commercial and residential construction. In pursuing this trend, Schörghuber has now updated its range of concealed frames. The Zeroline function aluminium frame, integrated completely into the wall, was presented in early 2017. Suitable for virtually all areas of project construction, it is the first concealed aluminium frame available on the market featuring tested T30 fire protection. The frame also meets requirements for

smoke protection, acoustic insulation and break-in resistance as well as offering wet room suitability. Now, Schörghuber has rounded out its offer with two more variants: Also characterised by their unframed, flush-fitting appearance, Zeroline living and Zeroline glazing are designed specifically for residential construction, without special functional requirements. In the "Zeroline living" version, the concealed aluminium frame is combined with a composite timber door leaf and does not meet any other functional requirements. This and an attractive price-performance ratio make Zeroline living ideal for private

residential construction especially. On average, at least one door in every residential unit is an all-glass door. With Zeroline glazing, this is now also possible in combination with a frame integrated in the wall. Combined with an all-glass door, the frame not only makes for a modern design, but also improves natural lighting and transparency in the living space. Thanks to a special aluminium profile that can be spackled, plastered or cladded after fitting, the Zeroline frames can be fully integrated into the wall, enabling an unframed, flush-fitting appearance. A plaster net that can be clicked into the frame ensures a flowing transition and



Design of the concealed Zeroline frame.

prevents hair-line cracks from forming between the door frame and wall. Matching or contrasting, the Zeroline aluminium frames from Schörghuber offer all new design possibilities. The new frame variants were launched in February 2019.



The LightAccess control system of the Smart Door is integrated flush with the door exterior.

SMART DOOR

Smart Door is Schörghuber's intelligent solution to access control systems. It is suitable for use in all areas of project and residential construction requiring smart, yet flexible access control. Acting as the key, the so-called LightPass is a time-adjustable digital access code that can be transferred to the smartphone via app or platform-independent as a link via SMS or e-mail. Similar to a QR code, it is shown on the smartphone as a light signal to allow door opening and closing. In addition to transmission via light signal with LSA technology (Light Speed Access), only available from Schörghuber, other technologies are also available for operating the Smart

Door, including RFID, NCF or Bluetooth. This is key for project construction, where it is not always possible to rely on smartphone operation alone due to time restraints or economic reasons. Access permission to the Smart Door is managed using an app or the cloud-based LightCommand platform. This administration tool enables users to create, delete and modify access rights easily, securely and intuitively. Flush-fitting to the outside of the Smart Door, the Access module recognises access permissions and sends a signal to the door's opening mechanism.



From spring 2019 Schörghuber will offer a high-quality door with intelligent access control.

ARCHITECTURE AND ART

JOCHEN MÜHLENBRINK



OT (Lupo), oil on canvas, 80 × 60 cm, 2015



Square, oil on canvas, 70 × 100 cm, 2017

It may be bad manners, but observing the works of Jochen Mühlenbrink, you will likely feel prone to touching them. After all, Mühlenbrink plays with the senses of art lovers, who stand before his pictures and ask themselves, is this real?

The art world calls this technique of painting *trompe-l'œil* – translated, deceive the eye. Jochen Mühlenbrink hangs seemingly empty canvasses slightly offset on the gallery wall. Observers see nothing more than the shadow of a window – a window that doesn't exist. On another wall, several pictures are staggered. But they aren't even unpacked – protected from damage with bubble wrap, colour-coded, in some cases with their shipping labels and thumbnails intact. Yet another illusion. All of this is “just” painted, in extreme detail. Art historian

Christian Malycha describes this as follows: “As the image pretends not to reveal anything at all, it reveals its entire intention. Everything that constitutes a picture is there. And it also reveals the observational thoughts related to imagery.”¹ The observer ponders – for example, if someone paints the back of a picture, what would you see on the “front side”? With some of his work, the artist also provides an answer: this series is called “Ohne Bild”, meaning “no picture”. In other pieces, observers may be tempted to turn “the picture” over to see whether the “real” picture is hiding behind it.

¹ Christian Malycha in “Jochen Mühlenbrink. FRAGIL. Bilder einer Ausstellung”, Radius-Verlag, Stuttgart, 2013 FRAGIL. Bilder einer Ausstellung”, Radius-Verlag, Stuttgart, 2013

Artist: Jochen Mühlenbrink

studied under Markus Lüpertz at Kunstakademie Düsseldorf until 2007. In 2010, he received an promotional award for painting from Öffentliche Versicherungen Oldenburg (public insurance of Oldenburg), followed by the Bergisch art award from the Solingen Art Museum and the National-Bank Wuppertal in 2012. His works have been presented in over 50 exhibits. Most recently, Radius publishing house released a catalogue of his work as part of an exhibit at the Oldenburg city museum. Jochen Mühlenbrink lives and works in Düsseldorf and Oldenburg.

ASPEN

Spinnereistr. 7

04179 Leipzig

www.aspngalerie.de



Photo: Lea Breetz



Photos: Ivo Faber (OT 'Lupo'), Hendrik Reinert (Square), Stefan Fischer (Afterimage 'Triptych VII')

Afterimage (Triptych VII), oil on canvas [three parts], 300 × 360 × 36 cm, 2017

RECENTLY IN ... MUNICH



Photo: Nickl & Partner

Jian Yang came to Germany to study architecture. A bold move, not only owing to the over 7000 kilometres separating Germany and China – the cultures could hardly be any more different either.

What brought you to Germany?

The history of modern architecture. I was raised by a family of architects. Bauhaus has had a huge influence in China. But the quality of German buildings in general has a good reputation in China. This is why many people believe that those looking to study architecture should go to Germany.

Has any specific building in Germany particularly fascinated you?

Our office at Nickl & Partner in Munich – the Lindberghatelier. It is a building with low construction costs and a short construction period, featuring high spatial quality, energy efficiency and low operating costs. These five things are exactly what Chinese architects and construction firms are hoping to learn in Germany.

And what surprised you about Germany?

Lots! For example, the DIN and other standards in Germany are so unbelievably detailed and complete. German architects base their buildings on these standards, producing the highest of quality. I guess this makes it an unsurprising surprise.

How is life in Germany for you?

I studied at the Berlin Institute of Technology and lived in Berlin for five years. I have to say: Compared with other cities in Germany, Berlin really is unique. Life there is so easy going and relaxed. After that, I moved to Munich. For me, Munich is a very traditional, but elegant German city. The quality of life here is higher.

What cultural differences have you noticed?

To sum it up in two words: quiet and loud. I think when Germans visit China for the first time and go to a Chinese restaurant, they will find it to be extremely loud. By contrast, public life in Germany seems very quiet to me.



Photo: Werner Huthmacher

Nickl & Partner designed its own office building, the Lindberghatelier, in 2002. In 2017, they added an extra storey.

Jian Yang

born in Beijing, CN, in 1985.

He studied architecture at the Technical University Berlin, where he became acquainted with the methods and approach of Professor Nickl-Weller. After graduating, Jian Yang worked for Nickl & Partner Architekten in Berlin and Munich, until returning to Beijing in 2015. There, he has helped the firm's Chinese branch in realising numerous healthcare buildings, including Xi'an Rehabilitation Medical Center, Shenzhen 2nd Children's Hospital and the Mother & Child Hospital in Qingdao. Zu diesen gehören unter anderem das Xi'an Rehabilitation Medical Center, das Shenzhen 2nd Children's Hospital sowie das Mutter-Kind-Krankenhaus in Qingdao.
www.nickl-architekten.com

Have you managed to integrate yourself into German life?

I didn't have any problems integrating into daily life. I believe I am someone who likes the calm. But at work, I try not to integrate myself too much, as my role in the office and in architecture is to form a bridge between China and Germany.

Why did you ultimately decide to return to China?

I guess it was the right time to return to China. China has developed rapidly in the past few decades, but changes in the healthcare sector have only made a noticeable impact in the last five years. We are now working on several hospital projects in China, and Nickl & Partner has opened a branch in Beijing.

Is there anything you will miss about Germany?

Yes, I miss sitting in beer gardens and drinking a cool Bavarian beer. And of course I miss the quiet life in Germany.

You can read the full interview on www.hoermann.de/portal



Typical Bavarian: socialising at a Munich beer garden.

Photo: Deluxa-Pix / iStock

Topic of the next issue of PORTAL: Production

If form always followed function, a majority of production buildings would live in the shadows. But there are some business people who have recognised that corporate architecture, as it is called, plays an important role in the perception of a company. Even the exterior of buildings with an allegedly profane function plays a part in their image – and so, even production sites, logistics buildings, warehouses and workshops should reflect a high degree of creative will. In PORTAL 46, we will present a selection of industrial projects Hörmann had the pleasure of contributing to. You will also learn more about industrial doors and loading technology.



Photo: Stephan Falk

Architecture in the industrial context of TAU Architectes / Pascal Varone.



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