

What Makes a Garden a Chinese Garden?

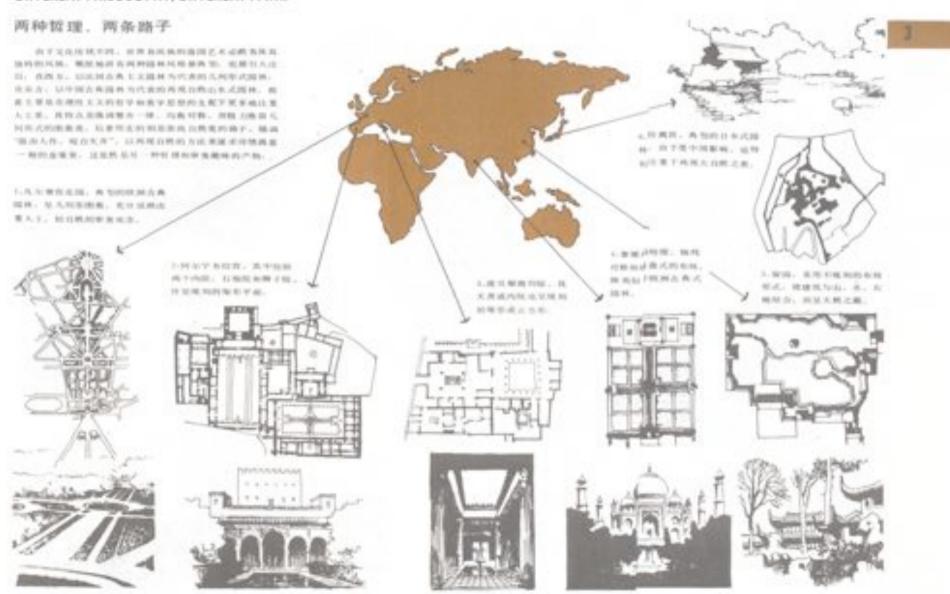
Different Philosophy: Different Path

In the west the garden layouts tended to be geometrical, symmetrical and ordered, as though Man controls Nature.

In the east, the garden layouts tended to be free form, non symmetrical and appeared to be natural.

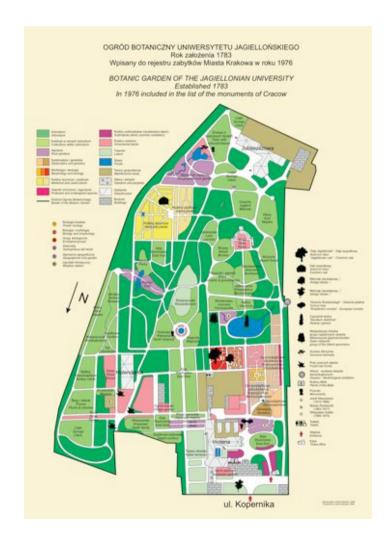
The aim is to respect Nature, "Even though it is made by Man, it looks as though it is made by Nature".

DIFFERENT PHILOSOPHY: DIFFERENT PATH.



Gardens East (Beijing) and West (Krakow)





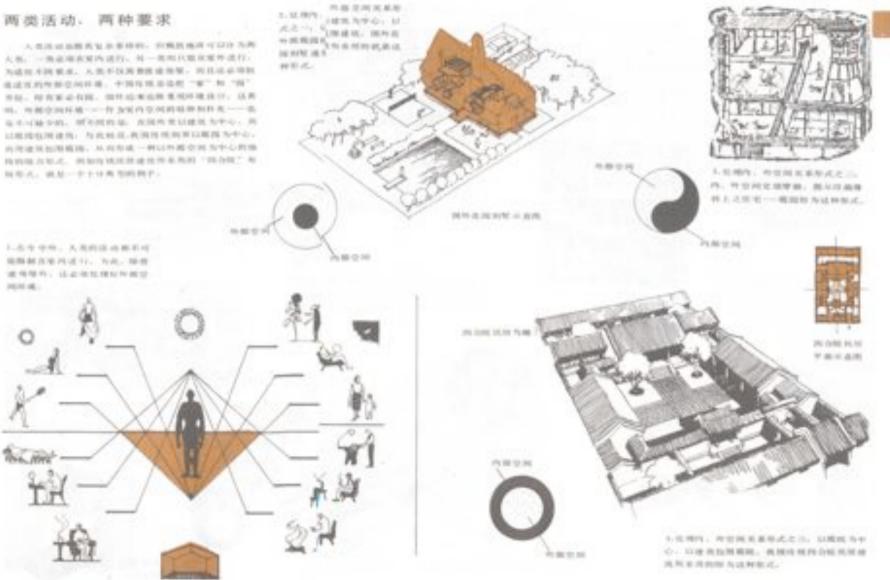
Different Activities: Different layout

Man's activities are many and varied but they can be broadly divided into "indoor' and "outdoor" activities like yin and yang and they should compliment each other.

Therefore, from a traditional Chinese point of view, where there is a home, there is a garden. The internal environment should extend and become part of the external garden.

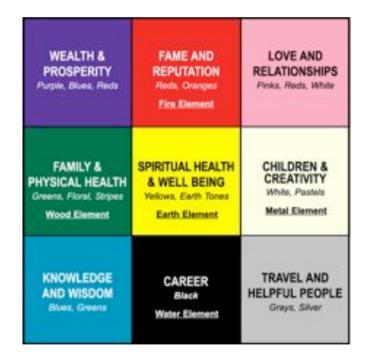
The west puts the building in the centre of a garden and show off the building instead of the garden, whereas the Chinese puts the garden in the centre of a building by wrapping it in a courtyard, .

DIFFERENT ACTIVITY: DIFFERENT REQUIREMENT.



New Age Feng Shui Gardens

Most books one sees in the West nowadays on garden Feng Shui are based on the 3-Doors Bagua method invented by in by Lin Yun in the early 1980s, where a garden is arbitrary divided into 8 segments with associated values and decorated accordingly. It has no site context and is not a traditional way of doing a garden in China.





It is not in keeping with the classical approach as voiced by Ye Jiu-Xing 葉九星, a famous Qing Dynasty Feng Shui Master:

"80% of the Feng Shui input should come from Xingshi (Form and Configurations) and Luantou (Mountain Tops) techniques with the remaining 20% from Liqi (Qi Management) techniques which will determine whether the outcome is cheap or precious".



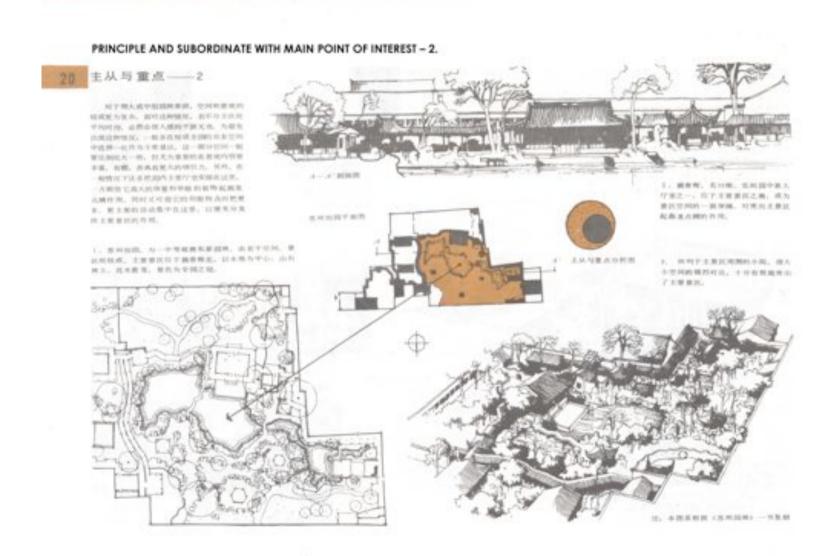
What Makes Good Feng Shui in a Garden?

Being honestly Itself (Benxing 本性),
being Natural and Unpretentious (Ziran 自然),
being Affectionate, that is emotionally engaging (You Qing 有情) and
being Timely (He Shi 合時) = Good Feng Shui.
A garden that is physically, emotionally and Spiritually up-lifting.

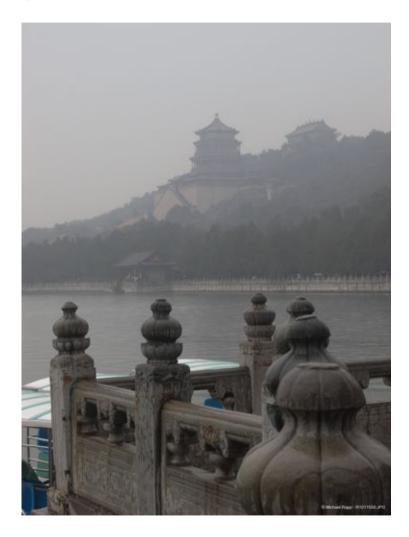
6 simple ways to make a modern Chinese garden

- 1) Contrast the principle with the subordinate.
 - 2) Contrast the stationary with the moving.
- 3) Contrast the looking-in with the opposite views.
- 4) Contrast the substantial with the insubstantial.
- 5) The essence is in the empty and not in the solid.
- 6) Coming together of space and time in human perception.

1) Contrast the principal with the subordinate.



A clear focal point in the Summer Palace, Beijing



2) Contrast the stationary with the moving.

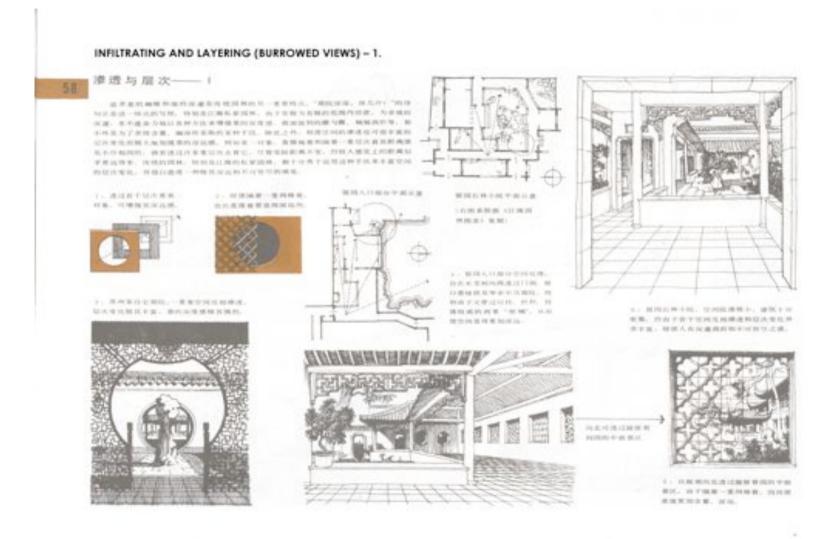


Movement in stillness – Suzhou Lingering Garden

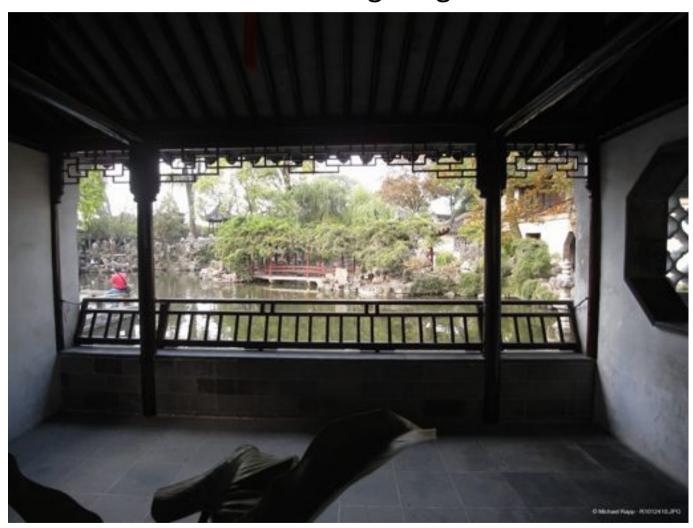




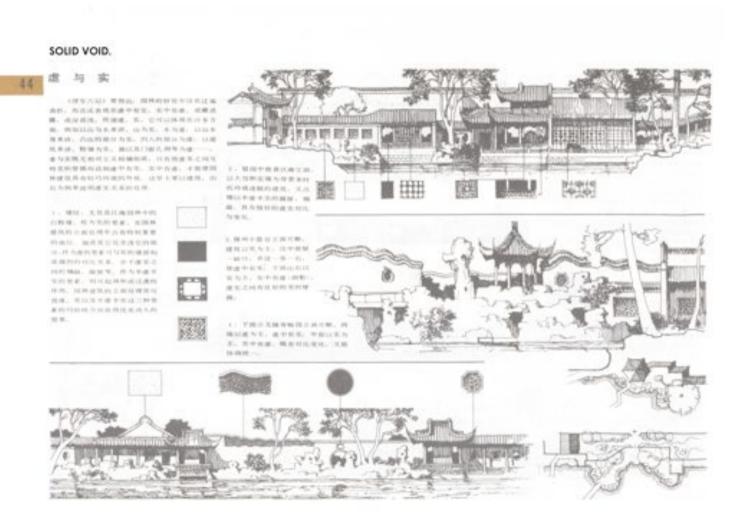
3) Contrast the Looking-in with the opposite views



A framed view from the Lingering Garden in Suzhou



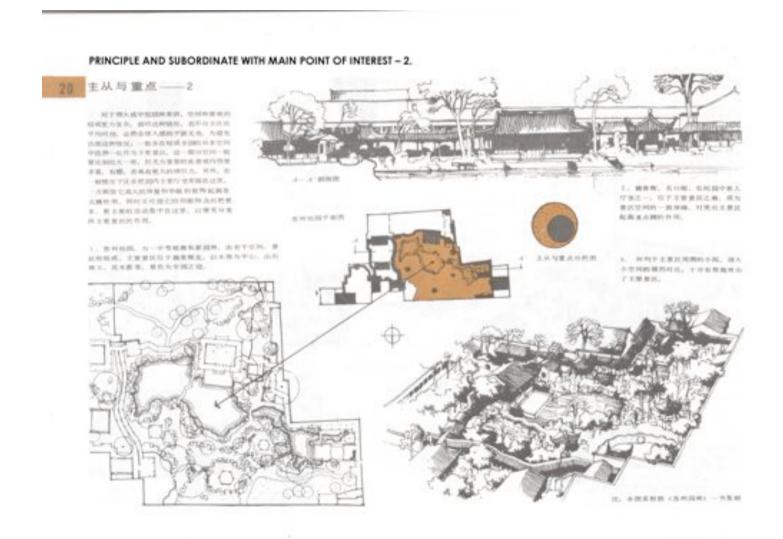
4) Contrast the substantial with the insubstantial.



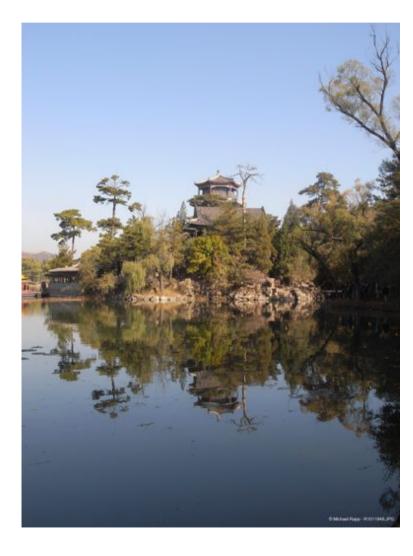
Humble Administrator's Garden - Suzhou



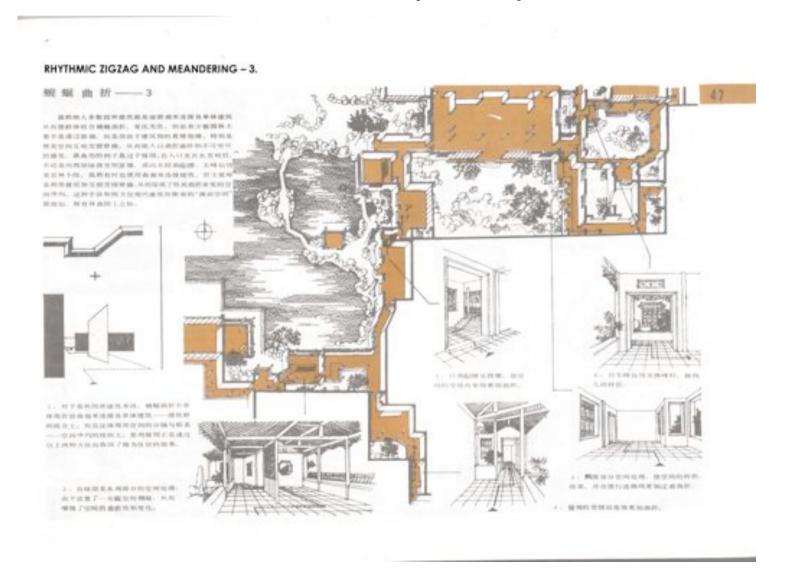
5) The essence is in the empty and not in the solid.



Imperial Summer Palace in Chengde



6) Coming together of space and time in human movement and perception.



Lion's Grove Garden - Suzhou





Eight things to consider when designing a garden:

- 1) Size of a garden
- 2) Purpose for a garden
- 3) Existing atmosphere and characters
- 4) San Cai (Heaven, Earth and Human) analysis
- 5) How to take advantage of the good and avoid the bad
 - 6) How to create yin and yang contrast of all kinds
 - 7) Respect Nature and re-create Nature
- 8) Being Wuwei (go with the flow) and Ziran (being itself)

The clever use of water in Chinese gardens





A checklist of garden techniques to stimulate your imagination:

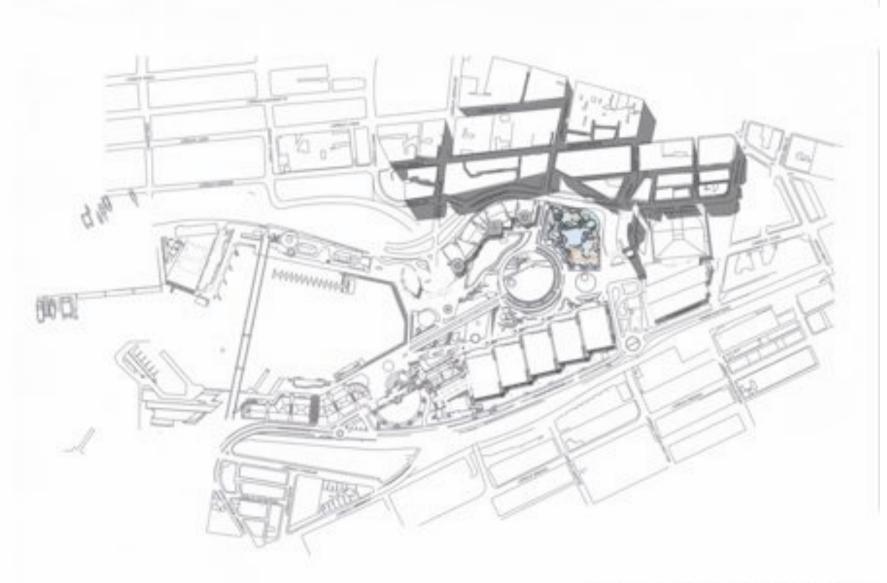
- Internal and external orientations
- Principal and subordinates with a main point of interest
 - Spatial contrast
 - Clear guide and subtle hints
 - Rhythmic zigzag and meandering
 - High and low at random
 - Infiltrating and layering
 - Opposite and burrowed views
 - Earth and rocks piled up
 - Management of water
 - Deployment of flowers and trees.

Two garden samples from our work file

Upgrading of the Chinese Garden at Darling Habour Sydney Australia

A farmhouse garden in Herzfelde Near Berlin Germany



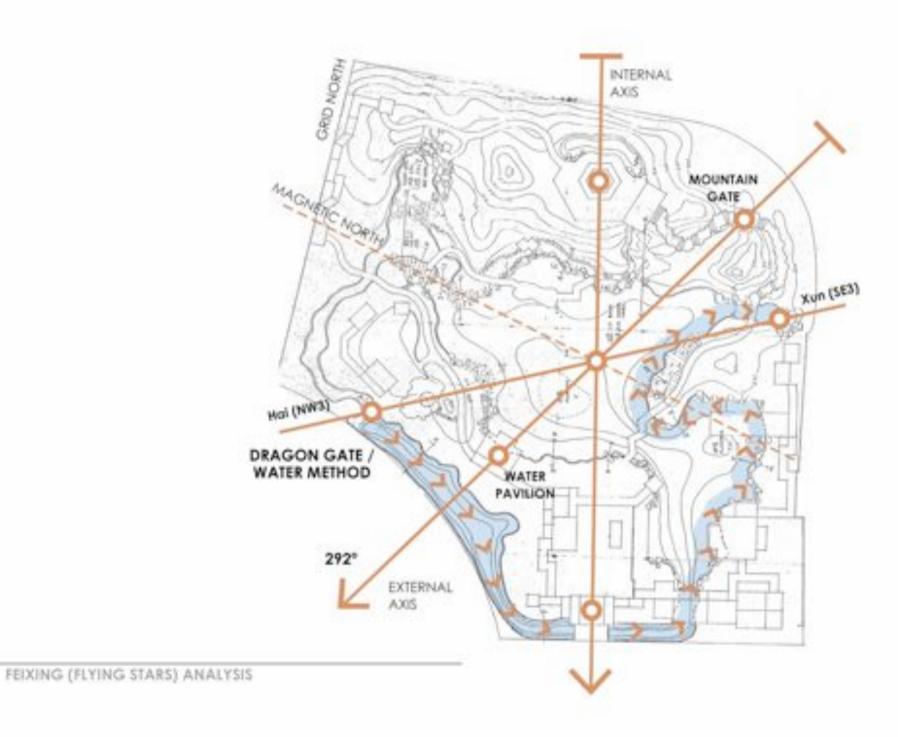


Chinese Garden - An exercise in minimal interference

DARLING HARBOUR CONTEXT PLAN



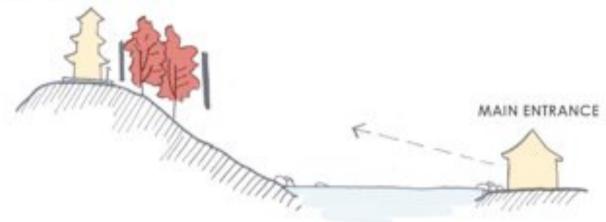
CHINESE GARDEN SITE PLAN

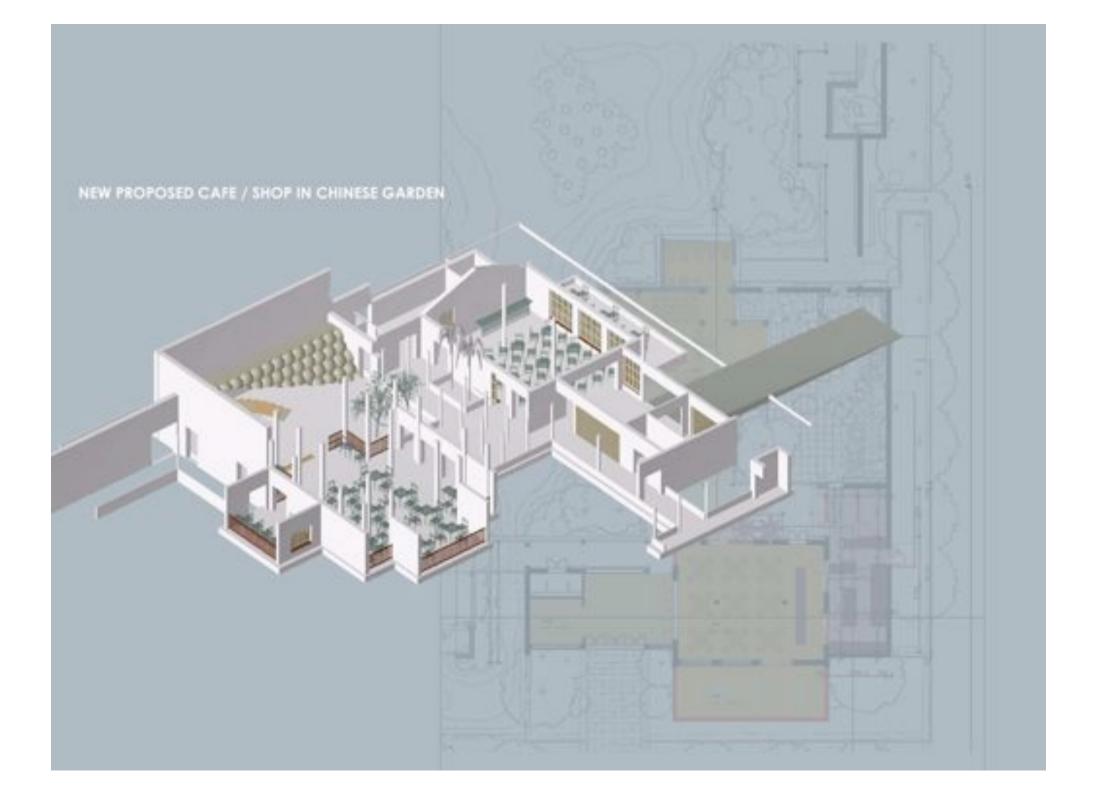


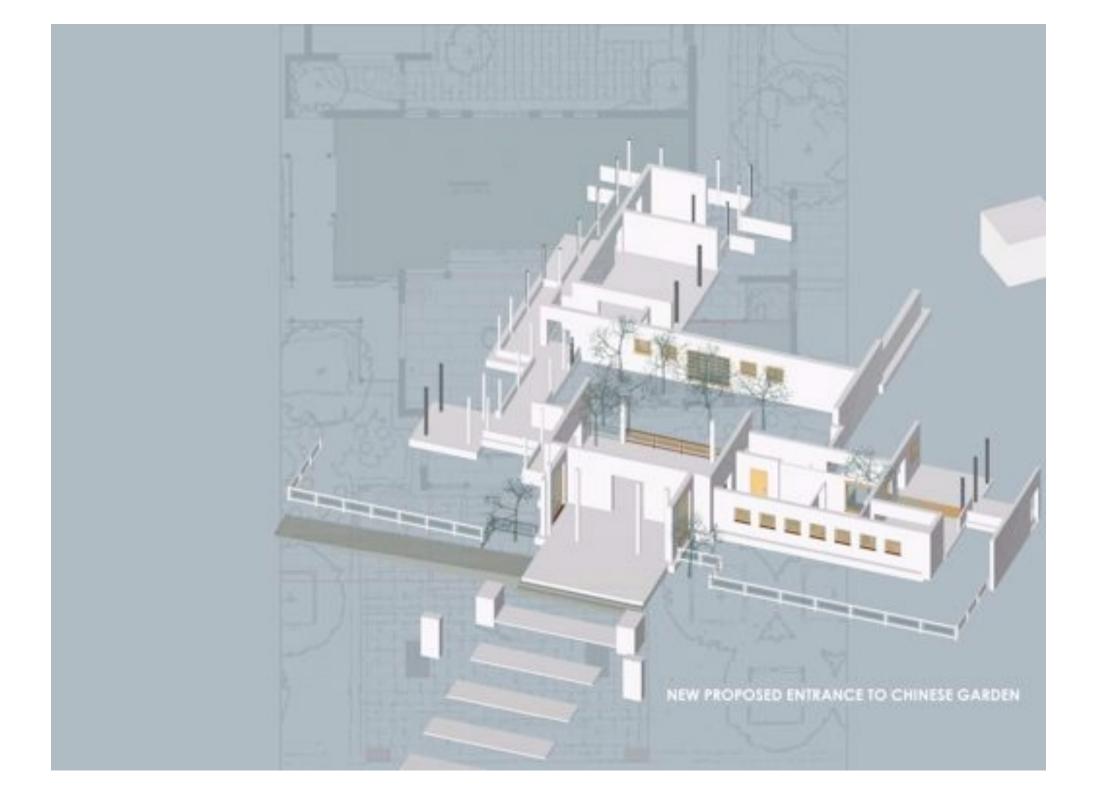


CONCEPTUAL DIAGRAM SHOWING SECTION OF PARK WITH OVERGROWN FOLIAGE BLOCKING VISUAL ACCESS

CLEAR VIEW PAVILION



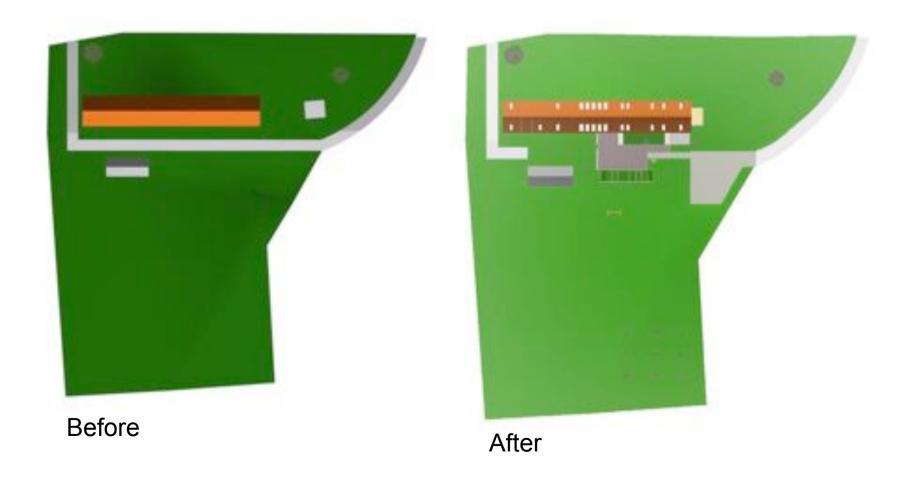


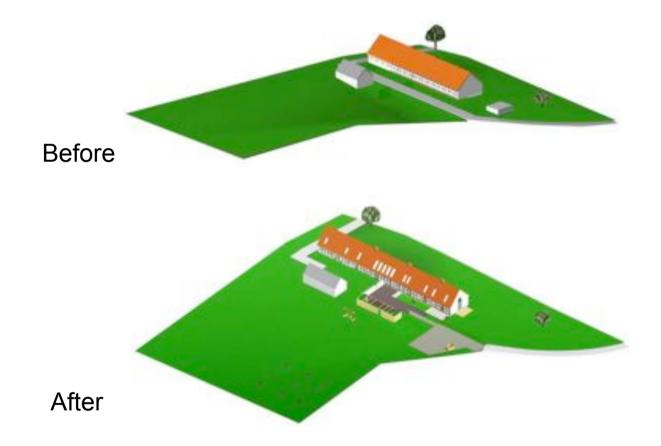






Our farmhouse garden in Herzfelde, Germany An exercise in Ju Qing 聚情 (gathering affections)





Before – Only flow, no containment



After – Field stone wall and timber pavilions to assemble the Sheng Qi in the garden



Timber pavilion to make a big space feel small





Applying Feng Shui principles to practice:
Renovating a 230
years old farm house in Herzfelde Germany using Feng Shui with natural materials and Chinese garden design principles, so it is not only pratically efficient but emotionally engaging.



Wu Wei 無為:
"..not to find a new
and exotic perfume
for her but to let her
original scent come
through both
internally and
externally."

