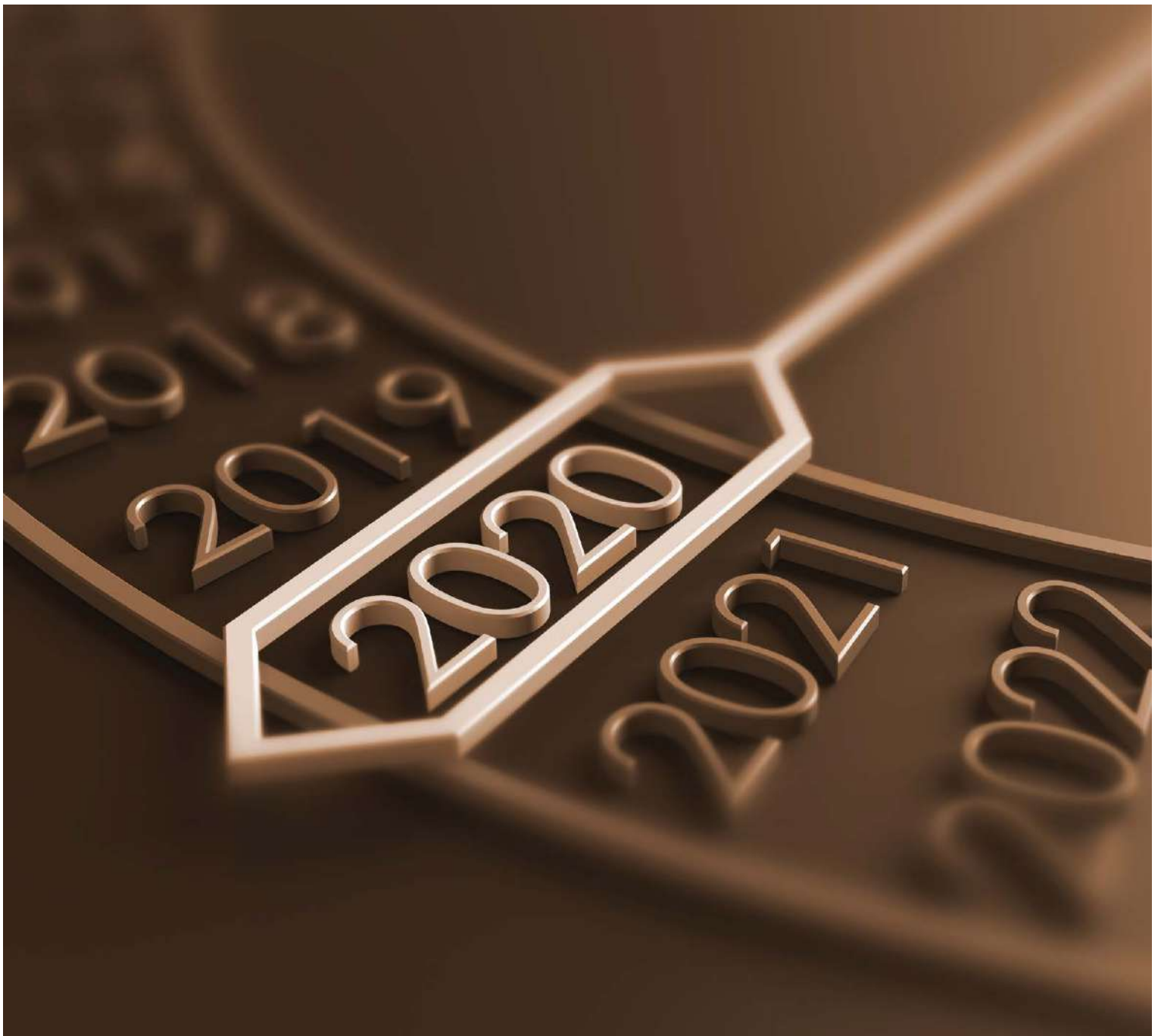


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# FROM THE GROUND UP

Taking cues from his art deco-loving father, Ronald Liang has built his Hong Kong-based practice LWK + Partners into one of Asia's most fluid and diverse design firms

BY ALGERARD DE LA CRUZ

No one has probably witnessed Hong Kong in all its glory – both varnished and unvarnished – like Ronald Liang.

His architecture practice, LWK + Partners, has borne silent witness to history, its diverse portfolio reflective of Hong Kong's evolution from British harbour stronghold to semi-autonomous Chinese region.

The Kowloon-based firm has offices in both Hong Kong and Macau, as well as in mainland China. Its designers fan out all over the region, to commissions in Malaysia, the Middle East, and South Korea.

Liang, who serves as managing director, credits his father as the first of many tastemakers. "My father was born in a golden era of architecture in Shanghai. His descriptions and romanticising of art deco style were imprinted in my mind at an early age," he recalls.

Australia furthered the culturing of Liang, who obtained his professional degree from the South Australian Institute of Technology in Adelaide. "In my high school days in Australia, I assisted an architectural student. This, and my experience with my father, influenced my life and cemented my desire to be an architect as a lifelong career."

Liang's due-paying years in Oz would serve him well on his return to Hong Kong, where he established LWK + Partners in 1986. "Compared to Hong Kong's projects, Australian projects were of a smaller scale with much more emphasis on quality. This informed the basic DNA of the firm," he says.

Professing a form-follows-function creed, LWK + Partners had its hand in the design of several Hong Kong public housing projects in the late 1980s. It would later cultivate a reputation for architecting high-rises, paralleling Hong Kong's transformation into one of the world's highest-density cities. The ONE in Hong Kong, for example, rises 171 metres—the tallest retail complex in Asia.

"Limited space is one of the characteristics of cities like Hong Kong, so we transform this characteristic into our design to fulfil the

needs of users and clients," explains Liang. "For every project we work on, it is important to deeply understand the people, culture and landscape of the community we design for, and to merge these elements into the project."

Hong Kong's post-handover years dawned rosily on the firm. In 1998, LWK + Partners embarked on The Leighton Hill, eight towering apartment blocks that look out to the Happy Valley racecourse. Liang's nostalgic design persuasion steeps the 544-unit project, with its art deco elements, classical porches, charcoal columns, granite driveway, and stone-clad podium with mouldings and relief.

Liang reveals it's still his favourite. "We spent a lot of effort on the residential project to make it a premium address at the time. This project was a great opportunity for LWK + Partners to develop and create a series of luxury houses in Hong Kong and therefore build up our reputation."

The call of the mainland had become a din by the turn of the millennium. In 2001, the firm opened an office in Shenzhen, the first of more than 20 in China. Almost instantly, the disconnect in styles between Hong Kong and the mainland presented itself.

"In China, urbanisation is rapid, and people are looking for new lifestyle [centres] to cater to their diversified needs, for example, live, work, leisure, culture and social needs. Therefore, large-scale and mixed-use projects have been in high demand, from first-tier cities 10 years ago, expanding to second- and third-tier cities in recent years," says Liang.

LWK + Partners' journey in China would set it on a long road of urban planning and design. Transit-oriented developments currently represent a key development area for the firm, especially as the Belt and Road Initiative reshapes China from within. The firm has been involved in developing sites around the Shenzhen Metro and Hangzhou Metro, as well as "The Golden Mile" between two metro lines in Shenyang.

The practice also conceived masterplanned communities like Chongqing Danzishi and the compelling mixed-use projects Olympic



**FOR EVERY PROJECT WE WORK ON, IT IS IMPORTANT TO DEEPLY UNDERSTAND THE PEOPLE, CULTURE AND LANDSCAPE OF THE COMMUNITY WE DESIGN FOR, AND TO MERGE THESE ELEMENTS INTO THE PROJECT**

**RONALD LIANG HAS BEEN HELPING TO SHAPE THE BUILT FUTURE OF HONG KONG AND OTHER CITIES AROUND ASIA SINCE 1985, THE YEAR THAT HE ESTABLISHED LWK + PARTNERS**

Vanke Centre in Hangzhou and Zhengding Li in Shijiazhuang. Meanwhile, projects such as Chengdu IFC and Guangzhou Taikoo Hui show the firm's evolution from residential designer to formidable commercial architect.

"As architects, we provide optimal solutions to urban planning and design that facilitate cultural integration and sustainability while these solutions reveal and respond to the government's strategies and policies on urbanisation and development," says Liang.

Prescience is the name of the game at LWK + Partners. "Sustainability has been a hot topic, and how technology goes hand in hand with sustainable and green architecture will get more and more attention from the industry, governments and the general public," says Liang, no doubt influencing the firm's recent decision to design the Gallium Valley Science Park in Hangzhou.

The formation of a sister company, isBIM, greatly bolstered its building information modelling (BIM) capabilities. "Built spaces today is about creating experiences and encouraging interactions between its users, while technology can help us optimise future designs and accelerate the realisation of true smart cities," says Liang.

As much as it likes to look forward, LWK + Partners cherishes the past. In 2010, the firm added a team of conservation specialists, LWK & Partners Conservation, revitalising heritage sites such as Light Housing in Sham Tseng, Hong Kong and Danzishi Street in Chongqing. "Hong Kong has been so well developed that revitalisation and heritage preservation are rather key to the city, giving the architecture as well as the community a second life," says Liang.

The practice today provides a comprehensive spectrum of architectural solutions, covering the full lifecycle of a project. LWK + Partners are not just architects and interior designers; they are also BIM experts, lighting designers, urban planners, heritage conservationists, and more.

In that way, Liang and his partners are like Hong Kong itself: diverse, never generalist, always moving forward. "I believe that great design has infinite possibilities and direct positive impact on people's lives. The key is to adopt a holistic view on people and built environment," he says. ■



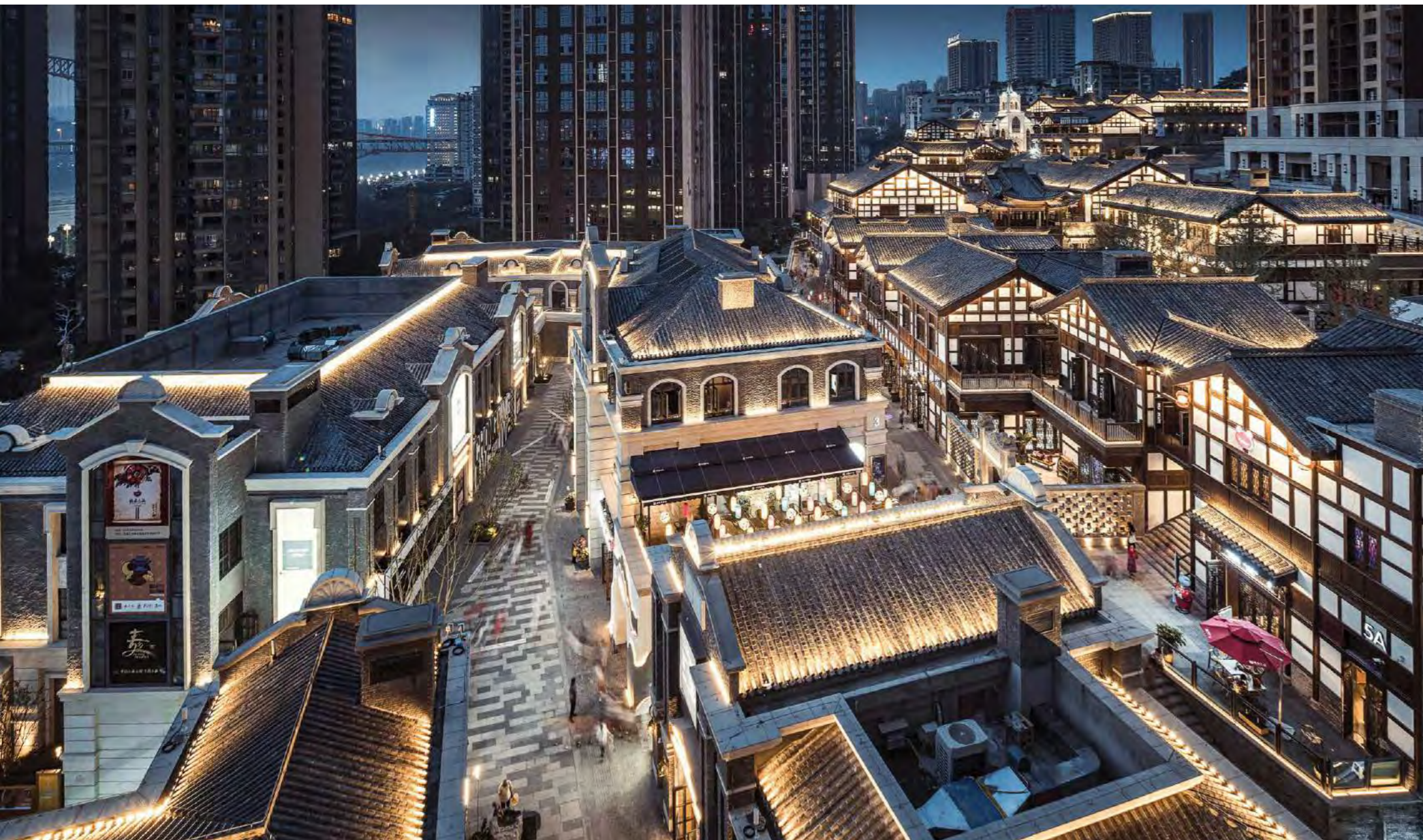
#### CHONGQING JIANGSHAN YUN CHU - LEGEND GALLERY

High above a riverbend in Chongqing sits this (literally) cliffhanging lifestyle gallery covered in more than 180 panes of customised glazing. From a cliff, the Chongqing Jiangshan Yun Chu - Legend Gallery gives occupants marvellous views of the Jialing River, and the upcoming Yue Lai core transit-oriented development (TOD) district. Walking along the gallery's 18-metre-long observation terrace virtually gives visitors a sensation of ascending to the sky. With a gross floor area of 2,500 square metres, the grandiose site comes alive at twilight, testify the design team who were inspired by the scenic gold and crimson light that reportedly colour the vistas at that hour.



## GALLIUM VALLEY SCIENCE PARK

Liang and company aim to house the workforce of the future in this 63,300-square-metre science park, envisioned as the heart of the Cloud Valley technology cluster in Hangzhou. Upon completion in 2021, the riverside park will likely attract some 6,000 STEM professionals to 158,250 square metres of built space that include sophisticated laboratories and coworking spaces. The interior design echoes computer mainboards, while amenities like smart lighting, automated HVAC, and smart lifts make the park a testbed for artificially intelligent property management. Fire-escape staircases for the buildings have been externalised; major recesses into the building envelopes ensure every floor has communal terraces facing a central courtyard. Finally, public spaces like restaurants, retail outlets, and exhibition venues give visitors reason to say science is fun.

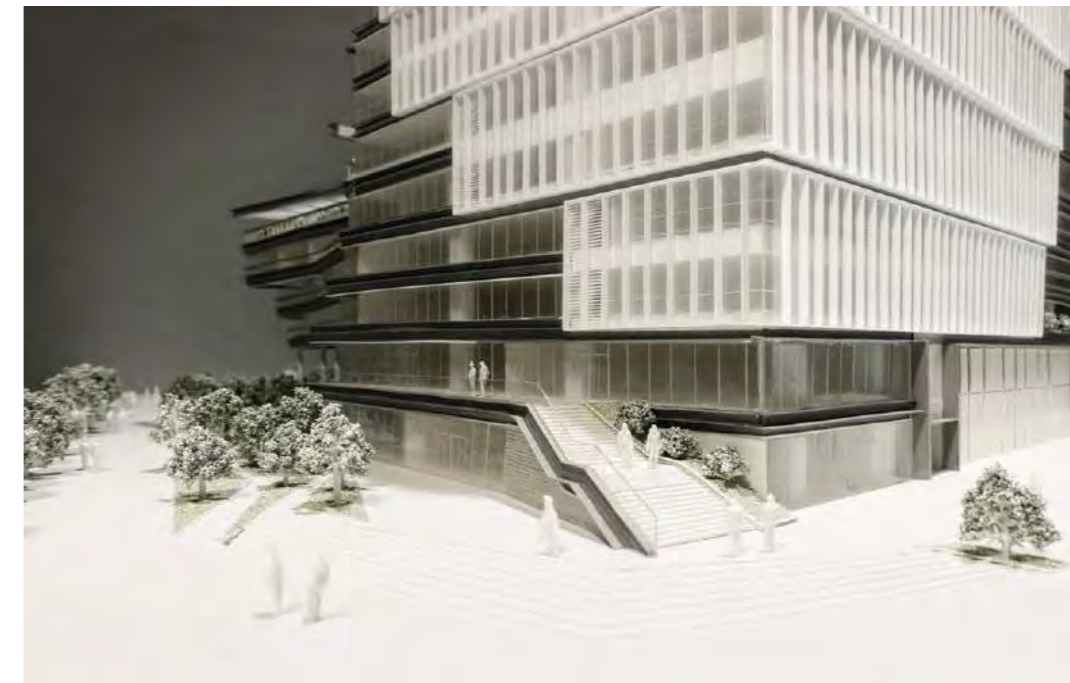


**LANDMARK RIVERSIDE PARK – PHASE II: DANZISHI OLD STREET**

This 21,500-square-metre retail complex in Chongqing's Nan'an District is the first 4A national scenic area in China to have received the honour under the theme of "port culture and Grade 9 hill slope forms." In other words, the waterfront development is a successful reinvention of Danzishi Old Street, a historic thoroughfare that connects docks alongside the Yangtze and Jialiang rivers. Framed-view windows and patterned lattices and screens were installed to direct the line of vision towards the picturesque scenery, while traditional grey brick tiles were renewed with modern materials. Classical motifs were reinterpreted as modern geometric shapes. To ease navigation on foot, the firm devised a multi-platform layout consisting of escalators, stairs, and other forms of vertical transportation.

## OLYMPIC VANKE CENTRE

China Vanke Co Ltd. enlisted LWK + Partners to erect this innovative office development in Hangzhou in time for the opening of the 2022 Asian Games Village. Set in the metropolis' Qianjiang Century City district, the 13,969-square-metre site with a gross floor area of 95,521 square metres comes in two towers that share a podium, plus a three-level underground carpark. Full of F&B options and entertainment spaces, the lifted podium rotates and shears horizontally to open up cascading outdoor terraces; a semi-public roof garden on the podium serves to bridge leisure space between the two office towers. Continuous, deep-set spandrel fins further emphasise the convergence of the two towers at the lifted podium. Meanwhile, a locally sourced ginkgo tree serves as a focal point of the central courtyard, multiplying occasions to network for different building users.





## THE PAVILIA BAY

At the urging of award-winning developer New World Development Company Limited, LWK + Partners designed this waterfront residential project that puts into stark profile the luminous sunset views of Hong Kong's Rambler Channel. Rising out of the sea on reclaimed land, the project juts heavenwards in two towers that reach heights of 174 metres (48 storeys) and 165 metres (45 storeys), respectively. With a gross floor area of 62,710 square metres, the development offers 983 residential units, each oriented to maximise unobstructed views of the channel, especially from their open-air terraces and balconies. Sofas, lounge chairs, and transparent parapets populate such private vantage points. The project stays on a nautical theme, its interior colour palette reminiscent of a super yacht. Designer Philippe Briand was brought in to envisage the interiors of the residents' clubhouse, Blue Pavilion.







#### ZHENGDING LI MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT

The Chinese province of Hebei will never be the same again with the completion of this new commercial district by 2022. Zhengding Li, spread on a 53,591-square-metre site in Hebei's provincial capital Shijiazhuang, is a play on the historic city of Zhengding nearby, with blocks that feature traditional Chinese architectural styles: a seamless blend of pitched roof and pillars and modern glazing. Zhengding Li encompasses a 187,858-square-metre retail precinct, typified by a network of pedestrian-friendly retail streets, plus a resort hotel, SOHO offices, and serviced apartments. Serving as a visual foil to the low, heritage-inspired blocks, the tall blocks in the development favour a contemporary style, with expansive green decks on different levels.

## 平地而起

梁鹏程从小受到父亲对装饰艺术的热爱所熏陶，其创办的 LWK + PARTNERS 建筑设计事务所以香港为基地，至今已发展成为亚洲最多元化、最灵活的设计事务所之一。

撰文：Al Gerard de la Cruz

或许没有人可以像梁鹏程一样，亲身见证过香港从朴素无华到光鲜辉煌的所有不同面貌。

他的建筑师事务所 LWK + PARTNERS 一直默默的见证着历史的变迁，遍布多地的工作室正正反映了香港从英国殖民地港口到成为中国辖下特别行政区的演变。

这家位于九龙的工作室在香港、澳门以及中国内地均设有分部。设计师遍及整个大中华地区，业务亦覆盖马来西亚、中东和韩国。

担任董事总经理的梁鹏程认为父亲是创造品味的先锋。「我的父亲出生于上海建筑的黄金年代，他对装饰艺术风格的描述和浪漫想象早在我脑海中留下烙印。」他回忆道。

梁鹏程从阿德莱德的南澳理工学院取得学位，在澳洲的生活进一步培养了他建筑设计的天份。「在澳洲念高中的时期，我是一名建筑系学生的助理。那次经历以及我的父亲影响了我的人生，巩固了我日后成为建筑师的理想。」

梁鹏程在澳洲的工作经验为他回流香港发展奠下稳固的基础，他于 1985 年在香港成立了 LWK + PARTNERS。「与香港的项目相比，澳洲的项目规模较小，但对质量的重视程度非常高，这成为我日后成立工作室的宗旨。」他说。

LWK + PARTNERS 遵循「形式追随功能」的信念，于 1980 年代后期参与设计多个香港公共房屋项目。及后，公司的高层建筑项目因而声名远播，香港同时间转型成为世界上密度最高的城市之一。其中项目 The ONE 楼高 171 米，是亚洲最高的零售商场。

「向香港这样的城市，有限的空间是其特征之一，我们根据这特征进行设计，以满足使用者和客户的需求。」梁先生解释。「当我们参与每个项目，首要的是深入地了解使用者、社区的文化和景观，并将这些元素融合到设计之中。」

香港回归后对工作室的发展带来正面的影响。1998 年，LWK + PARTNERS 开展了礼顿山项目，八幢高耸的住宅大厦，可俯瞰跑马地马场。梁先生将怀旧元素加入这提供 544 个单位的项目，配以装饰艺术风格、古典门廊、灰黑色的石柱、花岗岩车道及带有装饰线条和浮雕的砌石平台。

# LWK + PARTNERS

他透露，礼顿山仍然是他的最爱，「我们在这住宅项目上花了很多精力，使其成为当时高级住宅的标志。对于 LWK + PARTNERS 而言，这个项目为事务所提供不少往后的良好机会，在香港开发和创建一系列豪华住宅项目，从而提升我们的知名度。」

千禧年后，中国内地市场的兴起不容忽视。2001年，公司在深圳开设了工作室，是中国 20 多个工作室中的首个，而香港与内地之间风格上的差异都几乎在瞬间一一呈现出来。

「在中国内地，城市化发展迅速，人们正在寻求新的生活时尚热点来满足他们的多样化需求，例如在生活、工作、休闲、文化和社交方面。因此，从十年前的一线城市到近年来扩展到二线和三线城市，对大型商业综合体建筑的需求量一直高企。」他续说。

LWK + PARTNERS 在中国内地市场里正走在漫长的城市规划及设计道路上。目前，响应「一带一路」倡议从内部开始重塑中国的背景下，公共运输导向型开发项目是公司的重要发展领域，公司一直参与开发深圳和杭州地铁周边的地段，以及沈阳两条地铁线路之间的「黄金地段」。

工作室亦参与社区性总体规划，如重庆弹子石老街、引人注目的综合体项目杭州奥体万科中心和石家庄正定里等。同时，成都国际金融中心和广州太古汇等项目均展现了事务所从住宅设计师到强大的商业建筑师的演变。

「当我们参与每个项目，首要的是深入地了解使用者、社区的文化和景观，并将这些元素融合到设计之中」



梁鹏程自 1985 年创立 LWK + PARTNERS 起，便投入塑造香港和其他亚洲城市的未来发展。

「作为建筑师，我们为城市规划和设计提供最佳解决方案，以促进文化融合和可持续发展，同时配合和回应政府对于城市化和发展的政策。」梁鹏程表示。

前瞻性是 LWK + PARTNERS 脱颖而出的关键。「可持续发展一直是热门话题，科技如何与可持续发展及绿色建筑紧密结合，将越来越受到业界、政府和公众的关注。」梁鹏程说。毫无疑问，这促成了事务所最近参与设计杭州稼谷科学园的决定。

姐妹公司互网立方 (isBIM) 的成立大大增强了事务所应用建筑信息模型 (BIM) 的能力。「现今的建筑空间旨在营造新体验和促进使用者之间的互动，而科技可以帮助我们优化未来的设计并加速实现真正的智慧城市。」梁鹏程补充。

重视未来之余，LWK + PARTNERS 同样珍惜过去。在 2010 年，事务所增添 LWK & Partners Conservation 的保育团队，活化了香港深井的光屋和重庆弹子石老街等文物古迹。梁鹏程阐述：「香港已经发展得如此发达，活化和保育文物对于这座城市而言至关重要，这给建筑和社区带来了重生。」

今天的 LWK + PARTNERS 提供了涵盖整个项目周期的全面咨询服务，他们不只是建筑师和室内设计师，更是 BIM 专家、灯光设计师、城市规划师、保育专家等等。

梁鹏程和他的合伙人都具备香港精神：多元，从不空泛，坚持进步。「我相信，出色的设计韵含无限的可能性，能够正面影响人们的生活，关键的是以宏观的角度思考人和建筑环境的关系。」他说。

## 重庆江山云出 · Legend 未来人居艺术馆

高高耸立在重庆河岸悬崖之上，这座扣人心弦的艺术馆被 180 多个定制玻璃窗包裹着。游客可从悬崖上饱览嘉陵江和即将建成的悦来核心区绝妙景色。沿着展馆的 18 米长的观景台漫步，几乎可以给游客带来踏进天空的感觉。项目的总建筑面积为 2,500 平方米，在暮色中显得生机盎然。设计团队的灵感来自傍晚时分金色和深红色的天色，形成绚丽的景致。

## 稼谷科技园

梁鹏程和团队在这个项目的目标是为科技专才提供 63,300 平方米的科学园区，位于杭州云计算产业园的核心区。于 2021 年竣工后，预计这个河滨项目所提供的 158,250 平方米空间将吸引约 6,000 名 STEM 专业人士进驻，其中包括先进的实验室和共用工作空间。室内设计的灵感源自计算机主板，而智能照明、自动 HVAC 和智能电梯等设施使园区成为人工智能物业管理的试验平台。设计团队特意把逃生楼梯外置，并在建筑物结构割出大片凹口，确保每层都有面向中央庭院的公共露台。餐厅、零售店和展览馆等公共场所让使用者感受科学的趣味。

## 长嘉汇弹子石老街

位于重庆市南岸区，占地 21,500 平方米的零售综合体，是中国第一个以「开埠文化与城市九级坡地地貌」为主题的国家 AAAA 级的旅游景区。换言之，这个沿岸发展项目成功改造了弹子石老街，作为一条别具盛载历史意义和连接长江与嘉陵江沿岸码头的通道。建筑物上安装了框景门窗、图案隔栅和屏风，能够引导视线观赏秀丽如画的景色，而现代材料则取代了传统的青砖，古典图案被重新诠释为现代的几何形状。为了完善步行路径，设计团队提出了一种多平台布局，包括加入自动扶梯、楼梯和其他垂直运输系统。

## 奥体万科中心

万科企业股份有限公司聘请 LWK + PARTNERS 在 2022 年亚运村开幕之际，在杭州兴建一座创新的办公楼。这座占地 13,969 平方米的建筑物位于钱江世纪城中心商业区，总建筑面积为 95,521 平方米，两座塔楼坐落在一个裙楼上，同

时设有三层地下停车场。裙楼将可容纳多间食肆及娱乐空间及设施，设计以水平旋转和横向扇开，造成层层递进的户外平台；两座办公大楼之间以半开放空中花园连接，提供休憩空间。连续和深陷的拱肩让两座塔楼融合，并在裙楼上相连。同时，项目以本地银杏树为中央庭院的焦点，为不同使用者提供社交空间。

## 柏傲湾

在屡获殊荣的开发商新世界发展有限公司的驱使下，LWK + PARTNERS 设计了这个沿岸住宅项目，柏傲湾在香港蓝巴勒海峡的日落美景下显得格外鲜明。两座塔楼在填海区中从海面上升起，向天伸延，分别高达 174 米（48 层）和 165 米（45 层）。总建筑面积为 62,710 平方米，提供 983 个住宅单位，设计团队尽量扩阔每个单位的视野，露台和阳台以透明护栏包围着，放置沙发和躺椅，成为观景最佳位置。项目以航海为主题，内部色调让人联想到豪华游艇。会所 Blue Pavilion 的室内设计部份邀请了设计师 Philippe Briand 参与。

## 正定里综合发展项目

随着这个新的商业区在 2022 年竣工，中国河北省将从此变得不再一样。正定里位于河北省石家庄，占地 53,591 平方米，受到附近的正定古城启发，项目具有中国的传统建筑风格，中式斜屋顶和立柱与现代玻璃无缝融合。项目包括一个 187,858 平方米的商业街网络、一家度假酒店、小型办公室和服务式公寓。高层大楼采用现代风格，在不同楼层上亦设有宽敞的绿化平台，与受到历史文物启发而设计的低座建筑群互相映衬。