

# Design

Middle East

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## Design MIDDLE EAST Awards

ALL THE BIG MOMENTS FROM THE GLORIOUS NIGHT THAT CELEBRATED THE TOPS GUNS OF DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE





*Lambert Ma, director, LWK + PARTNERS, talks about his career, current projects, and challenges in the industry*

#### Tell us something about yourself?

I was born in Hong Kong and studied in the US. I have been practising architecture in Hong Kong for over 24 years. I have been associated with LWK + PARTNERS (LWKP) for over 10 years now, specialising in large scale and mixed-use commercial projects.

#### What's your take on projects/commissions taking place in the Middle East and other GCC countries?

LWKP picked Dubai as our base in MENA precisely because of its strategic location as a gateway to the GCC countries. Dubai is a maturing market with intense competition, but we believe by having a presence here would expose us to a variety of interesting opportunities in the region. The Middle East has a robust demand in hospitality and retail/entertainment projects in which we feel we can make positive contributions adopting our expertise in China being an active participant and key contributor to its urbanisation and transformation of cities in the last 20 years.

#### What's been your biggest career accomplishment that you're most proud of?

Being involved in and taking a lead role in high profile projects in major cities such as Shanghai and Chengdu that are transformative in its nature and power that reshape the urban dynamics and transform the lifestyle of the locals in a positive way. I feel privileged and empowering as an architect being able to participate as part of the LWKP team in this remarkable process of urban transformation.

#### Are there certain elements that are in high demand at the moment or things that you see falling out of style?

We've been seeing a major paradigm shift in the last five years or so in China's retail/commercial sector, which makes up a significant portion of my projects, where we find the once-dominant, established model of mega shopping malls are making way for more experience-driven retail facilities that speak more about individualities and story-driven. We are also seeing a gradual acceptance and interest towards open retail



Gallium Valley Science Park in Hangzhou, China, proposes a new office-park typology

streets that encourage a vibrant and diverse street life, which has a significant impact on the urban streetscape.

#### How does technology help you deal with design challenges and meet sustainability goals?

LWKP has been pushing VR technology in presentations and visualisations, which provide tremendous help in clients' decision making. We are also a strong proponent in BIM project application, which optimises the way we design and manage projects and has been encouraging our clients to adopt.

#### What are the biggest frustrations you have to deal with in this field?

The indecisiveness of clients, which drags project progress, and in more extreme cases hurts creative momentum. This is sometimes contributed by an overly democratised company structure of the client by which too many stakeholders' opinions are voiced without having a single authoritative lead to consolidate and decide. It is much easier to work with clients with a strong vision who knows what they want.

#### Are you currently working on any projects that you're excited about?

I am working on an incubator project for Tencent's founder Pony Ma in Shenzhen, China. Also a retail

project for Swire in Shanghai, which is conceived to be the third iteration of their revered Taikoo Li development after Beijing and Chengdu.

#### Tell us about your recently won awards at Cityscapes' Emerging Markets?

- Winner, Retail Project Award (Built) – Landmark Riverside Phase II: Danzishi Old Street in Chongqing is an exciting mixture of old and new, western and eastern within a unique historical context offering a diverse retail and entertainment experience, which has been regarded as a benchmark for some of the newer retail developments in China.
- Winner, Retail Project Award (Future) – Zhengding Li Mixed-use Development in Shijiazhuang is LWK + PARTNERS' newest open street retail development which seeks to further explore and experiment with this specific typology through the refinement of circulation and logistical planning.

#### What does it mean to be a global practice?

A truly global practice in my view is about being able to cross-pollinate expertise of different offices of diverse cultural and technical background in creating a synergy that can drive the practice forward as a conglomerate of specialised knowledge.

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## 环球愿景

LWK + PARTNERS 董事马桂霖谈及他的事业、手头项目和业界挑战

### 请您介绍一下自己

我在香港出生，在美国读书，并在香港从事建筑行业超过 24 年，服务 LWK + PARTNERS 至今超过 10 年，主要专注于大型和混合用途的商业项目。

### 您对于在中东及其他海湾阿拉伯国家合作委员会地区进行的项目有什么看法？

LWK + PARTNERS 之所以选择迪拜作为我们在中东及北非的基地，正是因为其优越的地理位置可作为通往海湾阿拉伯国家合作委员会地区的管道。迪拜市场日趋成熟，竞争激烈，但我们相信通过在迪拜开展业务，便可在该地区获得各种有趣的机遇。中东地区对酒店及零售娱乐项目需求很大，而我们过去 20 年于中国城市化及城市转型上积极参与和贡献，当中累积的经验对我们在中东的工作很有参考价值。

### 您最引以为傲的职业成就是什么？

参与并领导上海及成都等主要城市的知名项目。这些项目都具有变革性的本质和力量，并重塑了城市活力，对当地市民的生活方式产生了正面影响。作为建筑师，我很荣幸能成为 LWK + PARTNERS 的一员，在这个非凡的城市转型过程里参与其中。

### 目前是否有某些需求量很高的元素，或任何渐渐过时的事物？

在过去五年间，我们一直看到中国在零售及商业模式上产生了重大的转变，这些项目亦构成了我工作的一大部分。我们发现一些曾经占主导地位的大型购物中心正逐渐被以体验为导向的零售设施取代，这些设施均更体现个性及以故事驱动。我们还看到人们对开放的商业街逐渐接受和产生兴趣。这些街道鼓励充满活力和多元化的街道生活，并对城市街道景观产生了重大影响。

## 科技如何帮助您应对设计挑战及实现可持续发展目标？

LWK + PARTNERS 一直在推动虚拟现实科技在演示和视觉化方面的应用，这对客户的决策提供了莫大的帮助。我们同时亦大力推动建筑资讯模型的应用，它优化了我们设计及管理项目的方式，因此我们一直在鼓励客户采用。

## 您在这个行业面对的最大挫折是什么？

客户的犹豫不决拖延了项目进度，在极端的情况下，更损害了创新的动力。这有时出现在过于民主化的公司结构。在这种结构下，太多持份者表达意见，而没有一个权威的领导来整合及作出决策。因此，与具有远见卓识及明确了解自身需求的客户合作则容易许多。

## 您目前正在进行什么让您感到振奋的项目吗？

我正在为腾讯创办人马化腾进行一个位于中国深圳的孵化项目。同时亦在为太古集团进行一个位于上海的零售项目。继北京及成都太古里之后，该项目将成为第三个备受关注的同系项目。

## 请告诉我们您最近获得的 Cityscape 新兴市场建筑大奖。

获取“已建零售项目”大奖的中国重庆长嘉汇弹子石老街是个融合了新与旧、中与西的项目。在独特的历史背景下，它提供了多元化的零售和娱乐体验，被视为中国一些新型零售发展的标杆。

获取“未来零售项目”大奖的中国石家庄正定里综合项目是 LWK + PARTNERS 最新的开放式街道零售项目，旨在透过完善流畅的物流规划，进一步探索和实践这种零售模式。

## 成为国际事务所意味着什么？

我认为真正的国际事务所能够结合不同文化和技术背景办公室的专长，建设强大的协作效应，推动事务所发展成为实力宏厚的专业知识大本营。