



ARCHMARATHON explores the most relevant issues in contemporary architecture across cultures.

Strongly human-centred and cosmopolitan in approach, ARCHMARATHON is based in Italy but has its roots in the wider world.

ARCHMARATHON demonstrates a successful negotiation of new and old, actual and latent resources and possibilities, vernacular and complementary languages, formal and informal modes of organization, the inspiration of nature, structure, colour, light, materiality and capacities for hybridity. Together the overall selection represents an immense richness of human innovation and guiding responses, both to the life and times of today and to tomorrow's possibilities.





ARCHMARATHON

INTERNATIONAL ARCHITECTURE AWARDS

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	2
ARTS & CULTURE CULTURAL CENTRE LE CRESTE AREAPROGETTI AND UNA2 ARCHITETTI ASSOCIATI DAKAR INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE CENTER TABANLIOĞLU ARCHITECTS FINE ARTS MUSEUM OF ASTURIAS FRANCISCO MANGADO MANGADO & ASOCIADOS POISSY GALORE AWP+HHF SEASHORE LIBRARY VECTOR ARCHITECTS	5
EDUCATION BUILDINGS BAAN NONG BUA SCHOOL JUNSEKINO ARCHITECT AND DESIGN CASE WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY, TINKHAM VUNIVERSITY CENTER PERKINS+WILL LEARNING HUB HEATHERWICK STUDIO THE PINCH: LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY CENTER JOHN LIN AND OLIVIER OTTEVAERE	27 VEALE
HOTEL & LEISURE BORGO MERLASSINO DEAMICISARCHITETTI HOTEL BABYLON VO TRONG NGHIA ARCHITECTS HOTEL MINHO VÍRGULA I PRICELESS MILAN PARK ASSOCIATI YUNLU ECO-RESORT ARES PARTNERS AND ATELIER LIU YUYANG ARCHITECTS	45
MIXED TENURE HOUSING & BUILDINGS 317 SOCIAL HOUSING UNITS \$V60 CORDÓN & LINÁN ARQUITECTOS CITTÀ DEL SOLE LABICS KLEINE RITTERGASSE 11 FRANKEN ARCHITEKTEN SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGE URKO SÁNCHEZ ARCHITECTS	67
PRIVATE HOUSING A HOUSE FOR OISO DGT. DORELL.GHOTMEH.TANE/ARCHITECTS ALPS VILLA CAMILLO BOTTICINI ARCHITECT	85

HYUNAM IROJE ARCHITECTS&PLANNERS

YTAA - YOUSSEF TOHME ARCHITECTS AND ASSOCIATES

SAIGON HOUSE A21STUDIO RELIGIOUS BUILDINGS ÅLGÅRD CHURCH LINK ARKITEKTUR VÅLER CHURCH

RETROFITTING & REFURBISHMENT

107

153

RETROFITTING & REFURBISHMENT

COURTYARD HOUSE PLUGIN
PEOPLE'S ARCHITECTURE OFFICE

DACHENG FACTORY ADAPTIVE REUSE/UABB VENUE
NODE ARCHITECTURE AND URBANISM

ECOBAR
GIUSEPPE GURRIERI
LES DOCKS
5+1AA

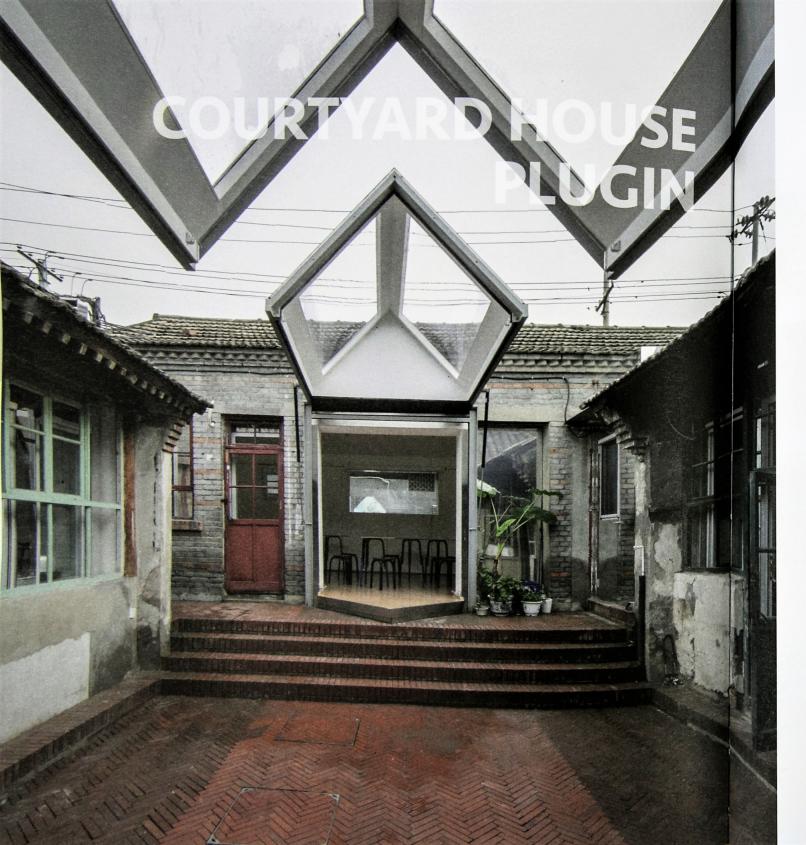
RECOVERY OF AN AREA CALLED "EX FURNACE" FOR THE
REALIZATION OF A SECONDARY SCHOOL, A THEATRE AND AN
OFFICE BUILDING
PIETRO CARLO PELLEGRINI

TRANSPORT
BIRMINGHAM NEW STREET STATION
AZPML
LUCHTSINGEL PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE
ZUS ARCHITECTS

MATERNITY AND ONCOLOGIC PARKING DÍAZ Y DÍAZ ARQUITECTOS

URBAN DESIGN & PUBLIC SPACES
FOOTBRIDGE OVER THE PÉRIPHÉRIQUE
DWD, ARCHITECTES, INGÉNIEURS, DESIGNERS
MERCHANT SQUARE BRIDGE
KNIGHT ARCHITECTS
SANTA POLA - GRAN ALACANT BIKE ROUTES
RAS ARQUITECTOS
SKATEPARK SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGE BETHLEHEM
MAIER LANDSCHAFTSARCHITEKTUR/BETONLANDSCHAFTEN

WORKSPACES
HOUTLOODS
BEDAUX DE BROUWER ARCHITECTS
OFFICE ON THE WATER
ÁLVARO SIZA AND CARLOS CASTANHEIRA
OMICRON LIVING ROOMS
Lehm Ton Erde Baukunst and Studio Anna Heringer
THE FOUNDRY
00 ARCHITECTURE
WWF-UK'S LIVING PLANET CENTRE
HOPKINS ARCHITECTS



COURTYARD HOUSE PLUGIN

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Photos courtesy of People's Architecture Office

Category
Retrofitting and refurbishment
Project selected
Courtyard House Plugin
Location
Beijing, China
Year
2014

Description

The award-winning Courtyard House Plugin is essentially a house within a house. It is a prefabricated building system for inserting modern living conditions into dilapidated courtyard houses. This alternative approach to urban renewal does not require tearing down existing structures or relocating residents. Currently, over a dozen Courtyard House Plugins have been built with more under construction. It is part of Dashilar Project, an initiative aimed at rejuvenating an historic district in the center of Beijing.

People's Architecture Office has developed a proprietary prefabricated panel that can snap and lock together with a single hex wrench. The panels are light, easy to handle, and inexpensive to ship. A few people can construct a complete Plugin structure in one day, requiring no special skills or training. The result is a well-sealed and insulated interior that reduces energy use by one third. 'Plugging in' is half the cost of renovating and about a fifth of the cost of building a new courtyard house.

In China vast areas are still being torn down, forcing people from their homes, severing social ties in tight-knit communities, and erasing traces of a rich and tumultuous history. The Courtyard House Plugin offers an alternative option. Its simplicity and low cost give local residents access to participate in the process of upgrading their city and preserving their heritage.























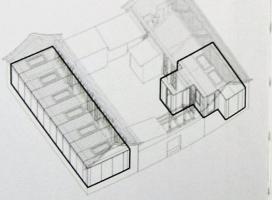








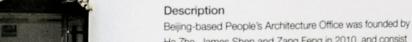




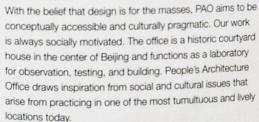
PEOPLE'S ARCHITECTURE OFFICE

Tiaozhou Hutong, Yard No.37 Xi Cheng District, Beijing, China 100051

www.peoples-architecture.com



He Zhe, James Shen and Zang Feng in 2010, and consist of an international team of architects, engineers, product designers and urbanists. The studio has been honored with international awards including multiple Architizer A+ Awards and Red Dot Awards as well as the World Architecture Festival Award.



In collaboration with our sister company People's Industrial Design Office, PAO strives to integrate product design and architecture. We view this as a way of bringing architecture to a broader public.



Main projects

Courtyard House Plugin, Beijing, China Tubular Baitasi, Beijing, China People's Canopy, Preston, Lancashire, England

21 Cake Headquarters, Beijing, China River Heights Pavilion, Taiyuan, Shanxi Province, China

River Heights Residences, Taiyuan, Shanxi Province, China

Juxing Tower Showroom, Taiyuan, Shanxi Province, China

Container Stack Pavilion, Taiyuan, Shanxi Province, China

Work in progress

Baitasi Street Façade Renovation, Beijing, China

Courtyard House Plugin, Beijing, China Dali Village UNESCO Office, Guizhou Province, China

Dali Village Information Center, Guizhou Province, China

Qiyun Mountain Courtyard Renovation, Huangshan, China

Kolkata Chinatown Urban Rejuvenation Project

Cangzhou Planning Exhibition Hall, Hebei Province, China



