

Qingyin Garden

—The Chinese Garden for International Exposition of Gardens in Stuttgart

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1. Intention

The elites of Chinese gardens are the gardens south of the Changjiang (Yangtse) River where, as a great achievement, the theory of Chinese painting has been applied to the art of garden-making, to condense the natural landscape into a smaller space and moreover to blend the natural landscape and architectural views into one another so as to mould free and open garden views in infinite sequence as if works of landscape painting were displayed piece by piece before your eyes.

The proposed Chinese garden for the Exposition is designed as a representative work of gardens south of the Yangtse River. The proposed Chinese garden for the Exposition is Qingyin Garden, the name of which is quoted from a poem by the poet Zuo Si of the Jin Dynasty. It means that not only the strings and flutes play music, but also mountains and waters strike up melodious tunes. The image and spirit as well as the sound and rhythm of landscape are paintings as well as musical compositions, which make the visitors entrust their feelings to the landscape to reach the realm of interplay of feelings and views. This is the unique artistic conception of Chinese gardens.

2. Layout

According to the ideas of the German garden specialist investigation group headed by Mr. Pantke while visiting in China, the proposed Chinese garden for the Exposition should be a typical literati garden south of the Yangtse River, and reveal again the features of strongly contrasted landscape and unique style of architecture of the scene "Juan Shi Dong Tian" (Rock-rolled-up Grotto) in Yangzhou and at the same time include the merit of gardens south of the Yangtse River: buildings arranged close to the water. A summary of the German party, ideas for the proposed Chinese garden layout as follows:

Views of high mountains and flowing water are to be performed by laying hills and handling water in the garden.

This is the theme of the whole garden whose name Qingyin itself is taken from views of hills and waters. There is a Chinese saying which goes like this: Zhiyin makes eternity of friendship (Zhiyin means a friend who keenly understands what one plays on the strings, i.e. bosom friend). It implies the friendship between China and Germany, and between Jiangsu Province and the State of Baden-Wurttemberg as well. Water pool is taken as the center of composition and the water-side hall, hill pavilion, rockery and stone bridge are arranged around the pool according to circumstances, making the scenes compact and scattered alternatively as well as up and down intricately. A color match of white walls, red balustrades and Grey tiles expresses fully the archaic characteristics of Chinese gardens.

3. Design

On the west side of the garden the main entrance is designed in the form of a typical trimmed stone doorway of the style south of the Yangtse River, simple in color. Against the wall a semi-pavilion at the doorway, archaic and solemn, is used as the lobby. There is also a fine brick tablet over the doorway inscribed with the name of the garden.

Entering the doorway, one can see a rocky peak standing as a screen in front of him. This is a typical method of "obstructing one's view" in Chinese garden-making, an application of the painting principle to hide the scene before displaying it. Turning around the rocky peak one will find a suddenly opened space, a lake with blue ripples. Over the lake is a yellow stone rockery, tall and profound, towering high in the sky. A picturesque realm is in sight.

Turning right and entering the Siyi Hall Friendship-in-Mind Hall, one enjoys looking the beauty of landscaping works as well as the exquisite of traditional Chinese architecture. There are hanging screens of wood carvings with the theme of pines, bamboo and plum blossom in the middle of the hall and furniture of the Ming Dynasty style are displayed in the front while Chinese paintings and calligraphy in couplets are hung on both sides in the hall, a typical Chinese way of dis-

playing for a tea room as well as for playing strings and chess and enjoying paintings and calligraphy. At the west of the hall is a small courtyard where jagged rocks stand and climbing vines dance. From inside the hall through the window one can enjoy a three dimensional Chinese painting of trees and rocks as drawings against the white wall as paper. Out from the hall one comes to the rock projecting over the water where one can see the towering rockery of yellow stones at the north-east corner of the garden. The whole rockery mountain is quite distinct in its hilliness and gully and its scenery is quite rich in sequence. All these create a form and space just as what was described in the poem by the great writer Su Dongpo of the Song Dynasty. The general idea of the poem is as follows:

It is a mountain range when seen frontally and becomes a peak when seen from aside. It changes differently when it is seen from far or near, from above or below.

From the highest point of the verdant rocky peaks a stream flows out of the rock gap, forming a waterfall in different level form down into a deep pond and through brooklets and creeks developing into a wide and open lake.

There is a pavilion at the top of the artificial hill, the highest point in the whole garden.

South from the Siyi Hall one comes to the paved pattern path, and along the way eastward one may find the space getting smaller as a courtyard with white walls and pattern windows, and there one can enjoy rocks, pool, and wonderful flowers and plants. The environment is full of the flavour of the open country.

Along the lake eastwards, one reaches the large type of artificial hill. There are stone steps at both ends of the hill. The whole system, full of vigour and vitality, is quite successful in composition with profound caves and deep gullies. Rocky gullies, watery hillocks, caves and crack gaps are de-

signed in imitating natural views. The whole rockery is shown in the form of water and hill interdependent and each shining more brilliantly in the other's company.

Against the hill is erected a hill pavilion on the posts, short or long according to the topography of the hill. As the extreme climax the hill pavilion is named "All Direction Pavilion". It has the meaning of picking up scenes from all sides and inviting guests from all over the world to meet here.

Plantation views in the whole garden are to be arranged with the characteristics of gardens south of the Yangtse River. On the artificial hill is planted evergreen trees with deciduous trees and shrubs well blended to enrich seasonal changes. For individual pieces of works precious strains of evergreen trees are mainly used for their daintiness and picturesqueness. Precious planted as adornment around the hall and other buildings should be carefully selected in terms of their postures and they should be worth appreciating individually. On the artificial hill and by the stony embankment along the lake low and dwarf strains of plants and climbing vines are to be planted for their vitality as well as their nattiness and archaictaste. For achieving more effective natural landscape a few clusters of lotus are to be planted in the pool and some reeds are to be near the pool bank. All plants selected are of local strains and are required to be the scenes in the garden while growing up in the same year.

After Fanghua Garden was built in 1983, Qingyin Garden is the exhibit contributed by Landscape Architecture Corporation of China for the second time to participate in IGA held every decade in Germany. At the Closing Ceremony of this Expo, this garden was granted the Gold Prize of International Garden Expo Stuttgart, Germany 1993 and the Bronze Medal of Honour Prize from German Agriculture & Forestry Ministry.