

FIRST PLACE: ASIA, AUSTRALIA, OCEANIA

HOUSING/BRIDGING: A HOUSING PROJECT ON/ACROSS THE BORDER BETWEEN CHINA AND HONG KONG

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In 1997, Hong Kong will transfer from a British colony to a special administrative district of the Chinese government. To reflect aspects of life in Hong Kong and record this moment, we propose housing on the Lo Wu border between Hong Kong and China, which is a river, and can be considered the Check-point Charlie of Hong Kong.

Our housing takes a bridge form that crosses and links the two territories to symbolize the reunion. It also links people that have been separated for one hundred years. The line of separation, the river, is becoming a place for reunion. Thus, the housing is organized along this river, which will witness the moment of reunion and also helps define various spaces. Individual-type housing on both ends floats on the river to ensure privacy, whereas family-type housing is situated on both sides of the river to create a family-based gathering place. In the middle of the bridge, an amphitheater is embraced by the river.

Concerning our cultural heritage, the essence of the traditional Suzhou house is transformed in modern function and idiom. On the other hand, modern technology is employed to enhance socialization: all lift systems are connected to a communal deck on the third floor; escalators bridge housing on opposite sides. A traveller circles around the community house and plaza in the middle of our bridge-housing.

JURY COMMENTS

It's troubling how you have a statement that is so connected with a point in time retaining validity outside of that particular issue it's choosing to address; of the solutions that we saw that took this point of view, this one is the most successful in being able to exist in its own right after this issue of the Hong Kong border has disappeared. The scheme is very successful in terms of making a new interpretation of the local vernacular architecture in a very inventive way, and it creates beautiful spaces along the canal—it grabs the magic of the site. It does some beautiful things in terms of the spaces between the individual structures as well as between the built form and the ground plane; it creates a series of articulated spaces between the buildings that a lot of the schemes didn't address. What makes it stand out among the other schemes is that it has a variety of residential types along a linear parti, which the others didn't seem to have. It's very well presented, and very convincing in terms of detailing.

This project is also striking in that elevators and escalators are represented as part of the community realm rather than a particular building, so they become public rights-of-way in the same manner a street is; that is an interesting way of conceiving an elevator, which is generally thought of as relating to private space.



