From Wall to Threshold

A Speculative Architecture of Negotiation, after Derrida and Jian

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20 November 2026 14:30 Session 5B, Thresholds of Meaning

First Floor Back, 33 Bedford Square, London

Cover photograph · Lin Guangsi, Mountain Villa Guesthouse, 2019

Contents



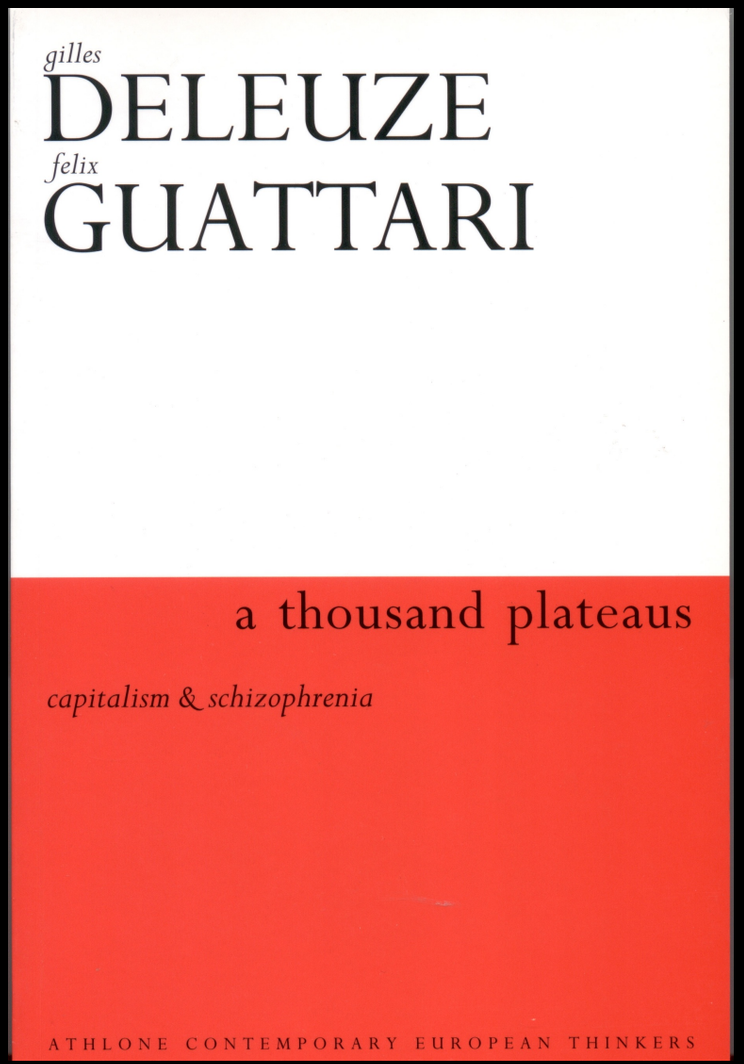
A Stroll in the Garden, a Dream Interrupted.

Of the Refrain	*3*
Threshold as a Spatial Scene Fragment	*6*
Chinese Jian in The Craft of Gardens	*8*
Four classical garden fragments	*9*
Mountain Villa Guesthouse	*12*
Riverside Passage	*16*
Qishe Courtyard	*20*
Conclusion	*24*
Bibliography	*25*
Acknowledgements	*27*

A Thousand Plateaus

“1837: Of the Refrain”

Translated by Brian Massumi
University of Minnesota Press, 1987



Cover image · The Athlone Press, *A Thousand Plateaus*, hardcover edition, 2000.

De La Ritournelle

Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari

French excerpts with English working translations

French edition

Mille plateaux (Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1980), 382, 387.

English edition

A Thousand Plateaus, trans. Brian Massumi
(Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 311, 315.

Finding one's bearings

« Il marche, s'arrête au gré de sa chanson. »

He walks and stops as his song leads him.

Mille plateaux, 382

Territory and expressive rhythm

« Il y a territoire dès qu'il y a expressivité du rythme. »

There is territory as soon as rhythm becomes expressive.

Mille plateaux, 387

Opening the circle

« on l'ouvre, on laisse entrer quelqu'un »

One opens it and lets someone in.

Mille plateaux, 382

How an encounter acquires a rhythm

Finding a bearing

A child uses a song to guide walking and stopping.[1]

At the Lingering Garden, the same peak can be seen from two facing rooms.[2]

Marking a place

A rhythm marks a territory when it becomes expressive.[3]

At the guesthouse, the water court comes back into view from gallery and bridge.[4]

Opening the circle

The circle opens so someone can enter or venture out.[5]

At Qishe, the new veranda links the three courts and changes the approach to rooms.[6]

composed a Threshold…

1. Deleuze and Guattari, "Of the Refrain," 311.
2. Li et al., "Through the Garden," fig. 9.
3. Deleuze and Guattari, "Of the Refrain," 311, 315.
4. Lin and Lü, "Shanzhuang lüshe," figs. 1, 5.
5. Deleuze and Guattari, "Of the Refrain," 311–12.
6. ARCHSTUDIO, "Qishe Courtyard."

The *Threshold* as a *Spatial Scene Fragment*

Two views of the same stone

Yifeng Pavilion and Dongtian Yibi face Wancui Peak from opposite sides. From one room the rock is backlit. From the other, its face catches the light.[1]

Recurrence and orientation

The song in "Of the Refrain" gives the child a point of orientation while walking. I read the reappearance of the stone in the garden in the same terms.[2]

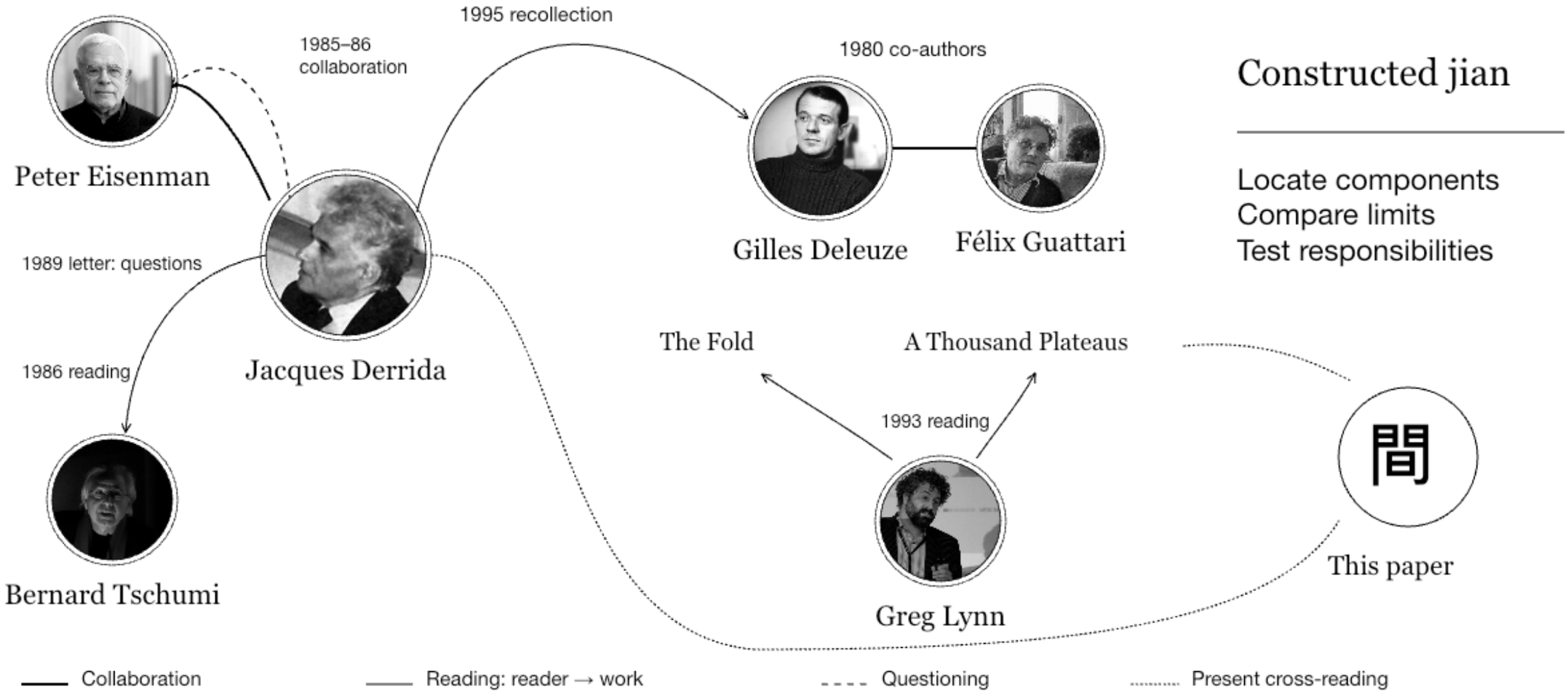
The interval between views

For Derrida, spacing is what allows a relation to take form. Here the gallery and opposed openings separate the two views. The first view informs the second.[3]

At the Mountain Villa Guesthouse, the gallery leads along the water to the guest rooms. The bridge offers another approach to the same court.[4]

1. Li et al., "Through the Garden," fig. 9.
2. Deleuze and Guattari, "Of the Refrain," 311–12.
3. Derrida, "Différance," 13. Yang, "Seeing Wancui Peak Again."
4. Lin and Lü, "Shanzhuang lüshe," figs. 1, 5.

Cooperation and reading

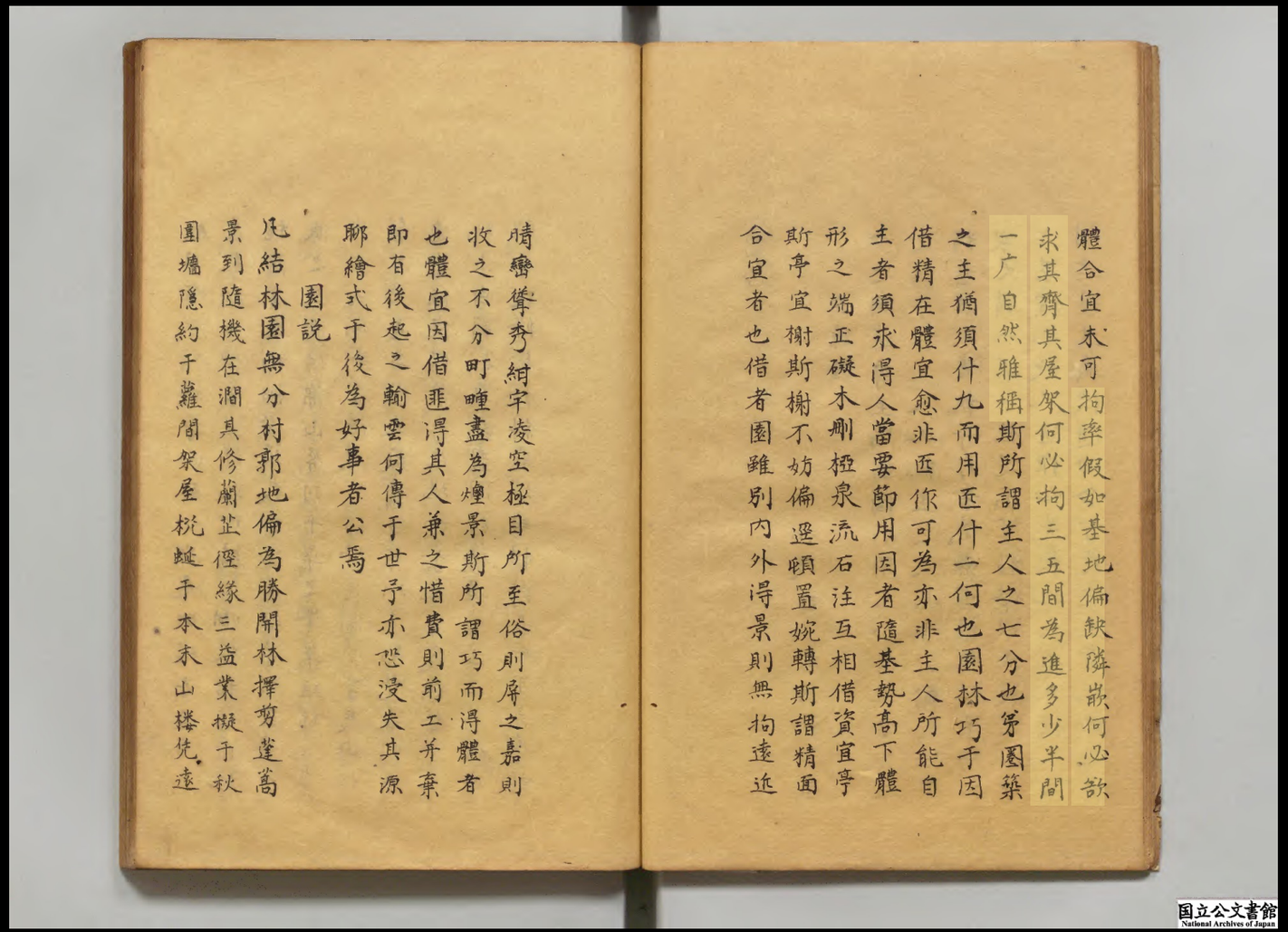


Constructed jian

Locate components
Compare limits
Test responsibilities

Earlier FILARCH study · Historical exchanges and this paper's cross-reading. Portrait and source credits in the notes.

Chinese Jian and the disposition of bays



『其屋架何必拘三五間為進』

Why must the roof frame be fixed at three or five bays in depth?

— *The English translation*

The bay is adjusted to the site.

Locating the four garden fragments



Canglang Pavilion

1045 · Northern Song

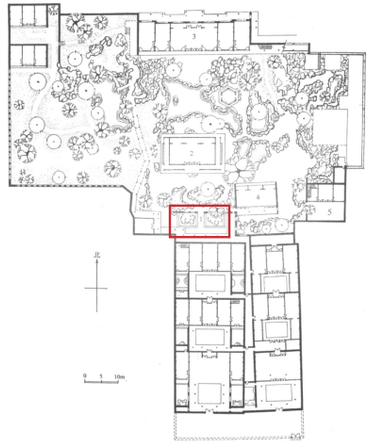
The double gallery along the garden's north edge.



Lingering Garden

1593 · Ming

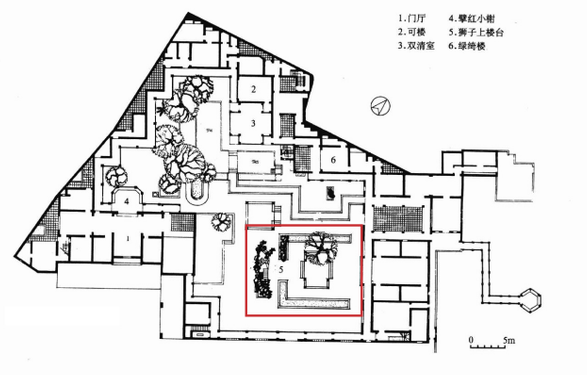
Stone Forest Court (1807), centred on Wancui Peak.



Geyuan

1818 · Qing

The moon gate at the spring entrance.



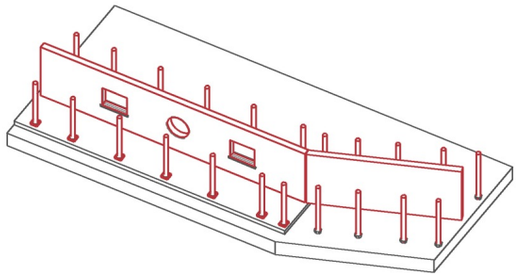
Keyuan

1850 · Qing

The Lion Rockery and its raised terrace.

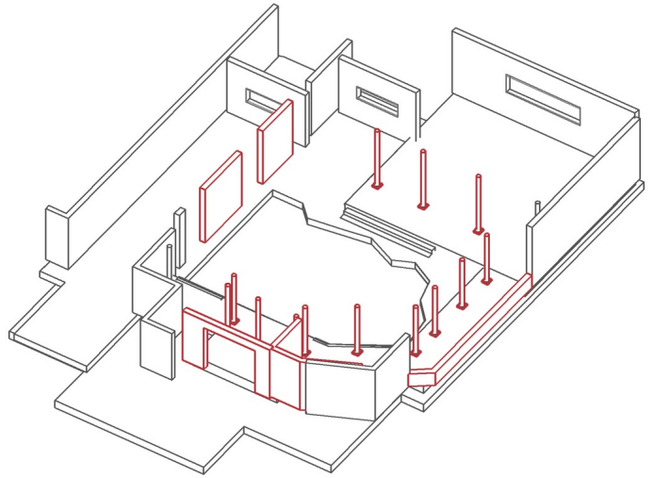
Plan sources · Ivashko et al., fig. 8A, Liu Dunzhen and Li et al., Yang, Five Courtyards, R03, and Xia and Mo, fig. 4-24.

Walls, floors and columns



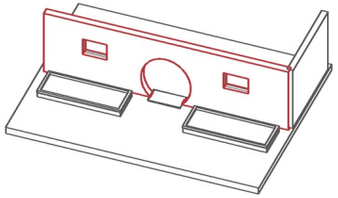
Canglang Pavilion

1045 · Northern Song



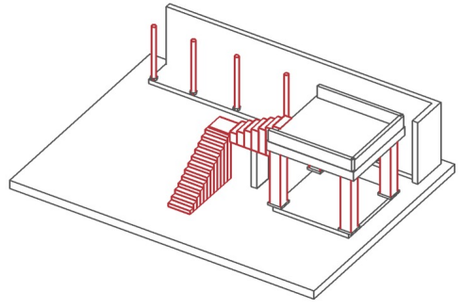
Lingering Garden

1593 · Ming



Geyuan

1818 · Qing

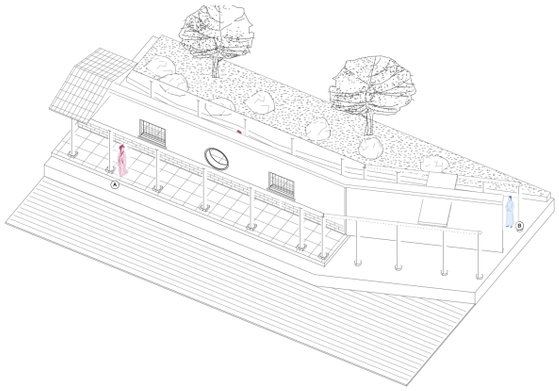


Keyuan

1850 · Qing

0 2 4 m *Drawn at the same scale.*

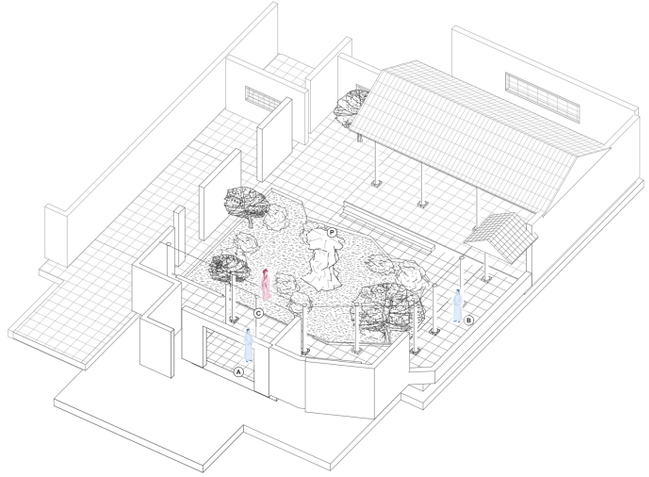
Four garden *Spatial Scene Fragments*



Canglang Pavilion

1045 · Northern Song

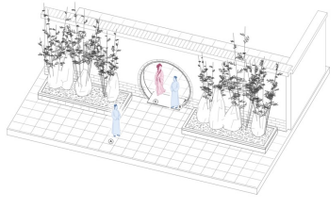
The pierced wall keeps two walks beside one another.



Lingering Garden

1593 · Ming

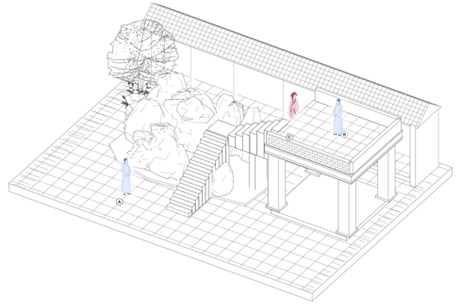
Wancui Peak is visible again from a second room.



Geyuan

1818 · Qing

The spring moon gate is a passage through the wall.



Keyuan

1850 · Qing

The stair gives the same yard a second viewing height.

0 2 4 m *Drawn at the same scale.*

Contemporary Chinese Translation, Case 1



Mountain Villa Guesthouse

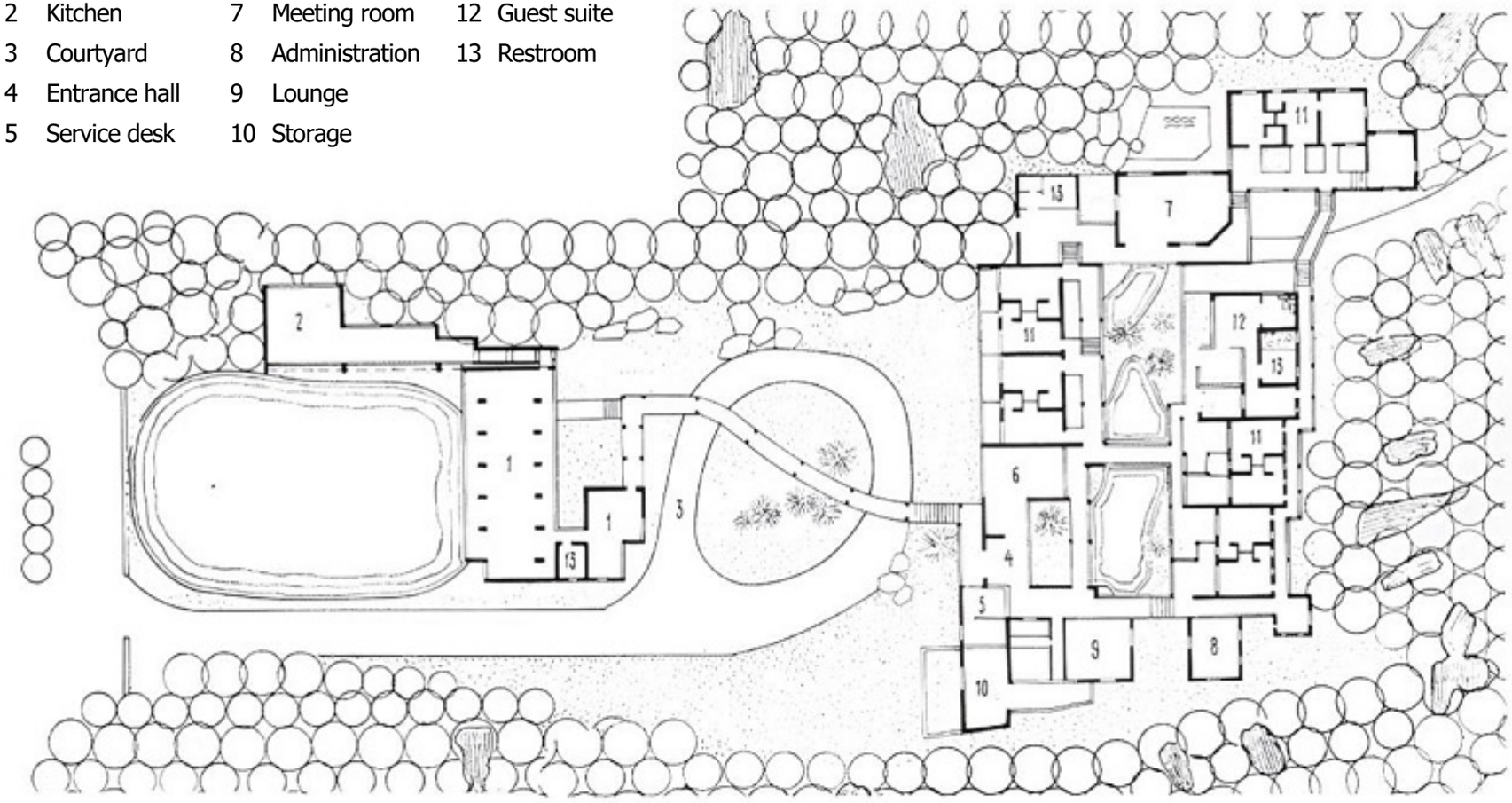
Guangzhou
Inner water court
First phase, 1965

Lin Guangsi, photograph, 2019. Guangzhou Forestry and Landscaping Bureau, fig. 5.

Lin Guangsi, photograph, 2019. Published in Lin and Lü, "Shanzhuang lüshe" (2025), fig. 5.

The inner court in the site plan

1	Dining room	6	Reception room	11	Guest room
2	Kitchen	7	Meeting room	12	Guest suite
3	Courtyard	8	Administration	13	Restroom
4	Entrance hall	9	Lounge		
5	Service desk	10	Storage		

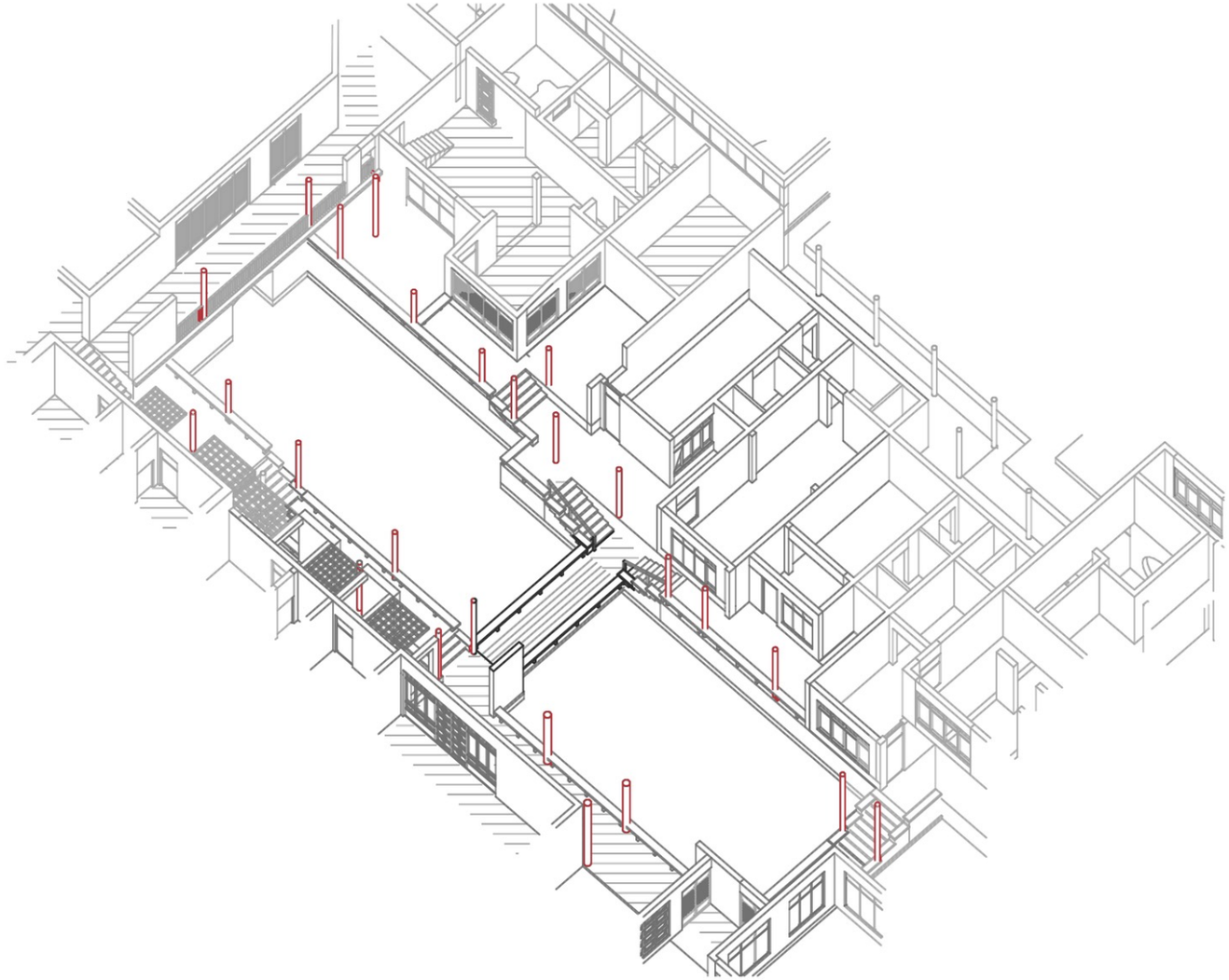


Four courts in sequence

Forecourt
Middle court
Inner water court
Rear court

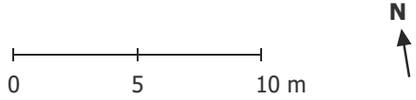
Lin Guangsi and Lü Bowen, "Shanzhuang lüshe," Guangzhou Forestry and Landscaping Bureau (2025), fig. 1.

The structure of the water court



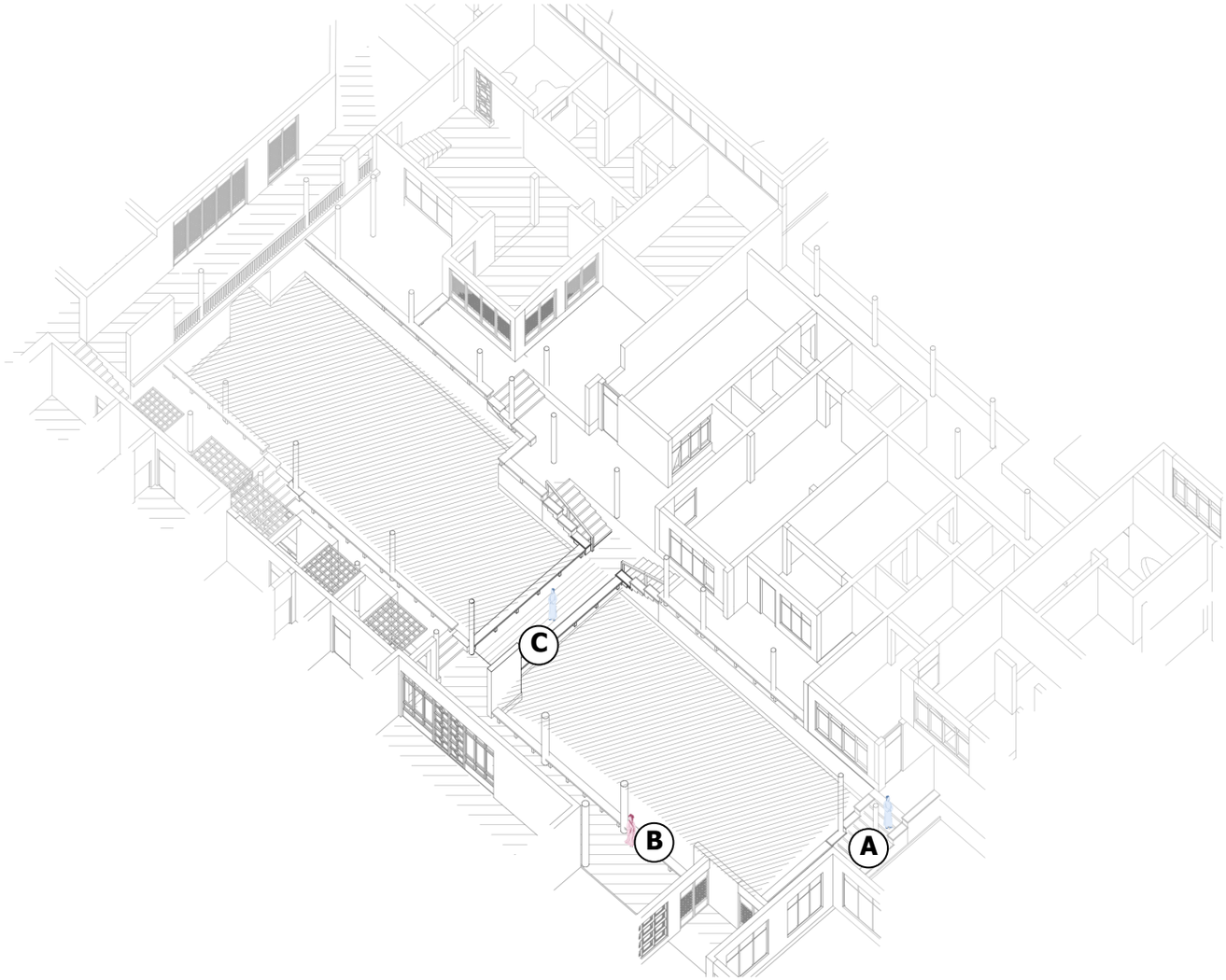
Water courtyard

Rhythmed colomns
Composed the
Water Boundary



Yanzhi Yang, Five Courtyards, R03, plate 2. T01–A parallel projection.

The turn at the open bridge

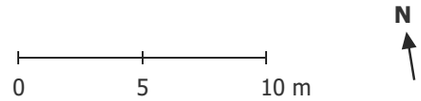


Three stations

A Eastern steps

B Southern Reception

C Open bridge



Yanzhi Yang, *Five Courtyards*, R03, plate 2. Analytical axonometric after the 2019 research plan.

Contemporary Chinese Translation, Case 2



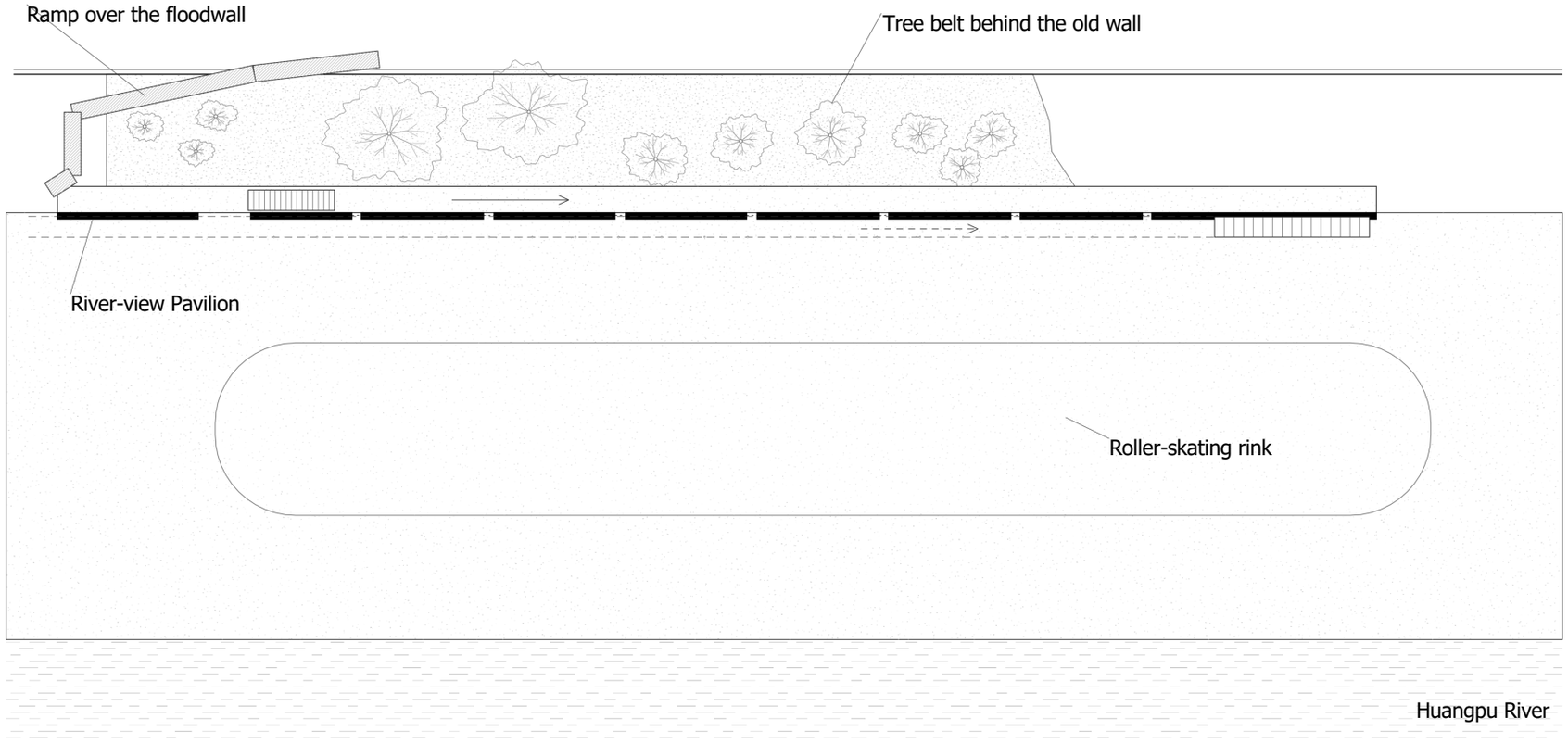
Riverside Passage

Shanghai
The river-facing gallery
Atelier Deshaus, 2019

Tian Fangfang, photograph.
Atelier Deshaus project
publication, 2020.

Tian Fangfang, photograph. Published in Atelier Deshaus, "Riverside Passage" (2020).

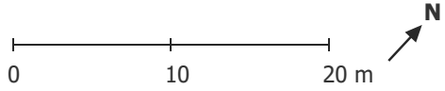
Where the two walks run in plan



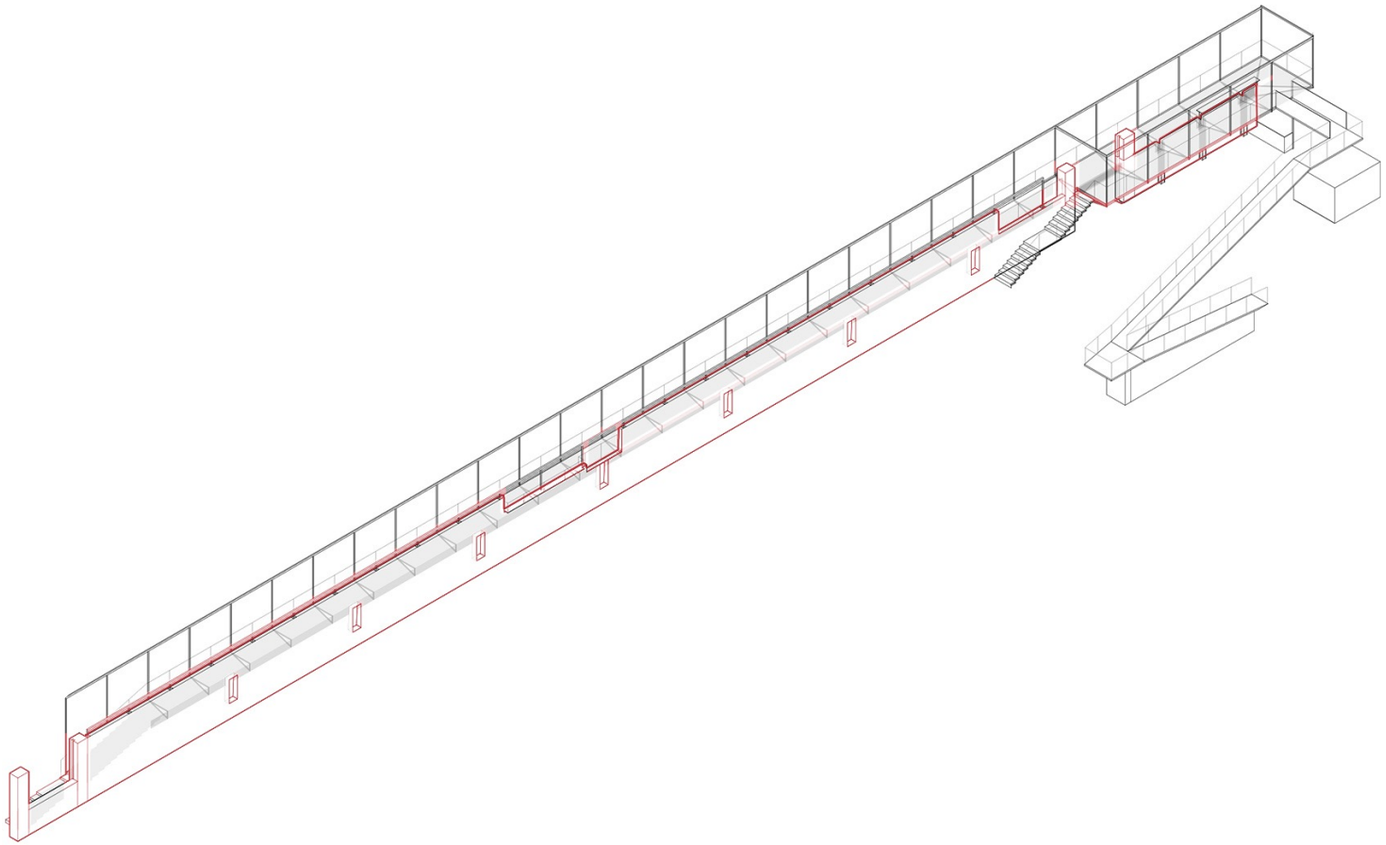
Ground level

Trees line the wall on the landward side.

The upper walk is shown in projection.



The wall and two floor levels



Retained coal wall

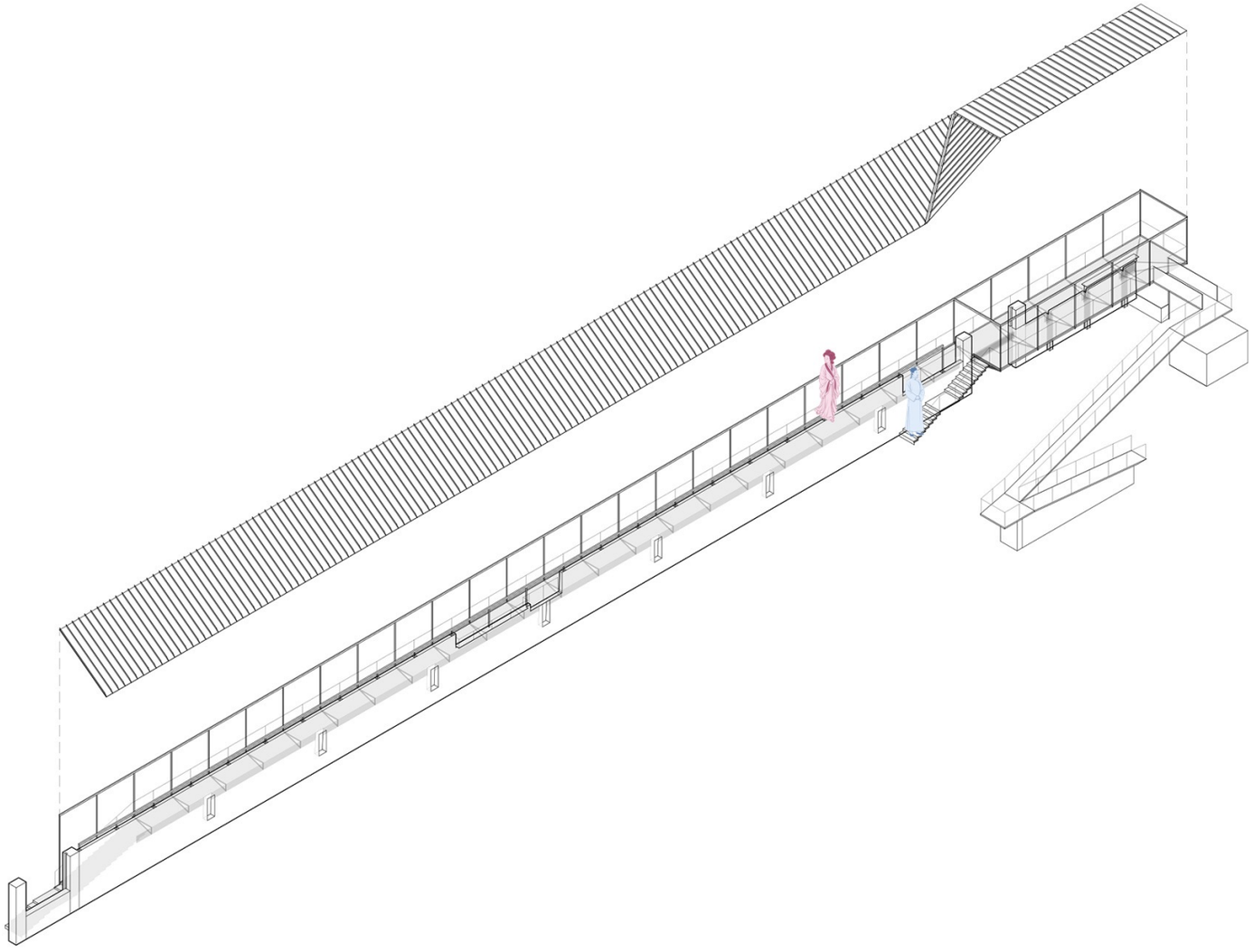
Wall and Windows

Approx.

0 10 20 m N

Atelier Deshaus, project axonometric. Published in "Riverside Passage," gooood (2020).

One wall carries two walks



Retained coal wall

The lower walk faces the trees. The raised walk faces the river.

Approx.
0 10 20 m N

Atelier Deshaus, project axonometric. Published in "Riverside Passage," *gooood* (2020).

Contemporary Chinese Translation, Case 3



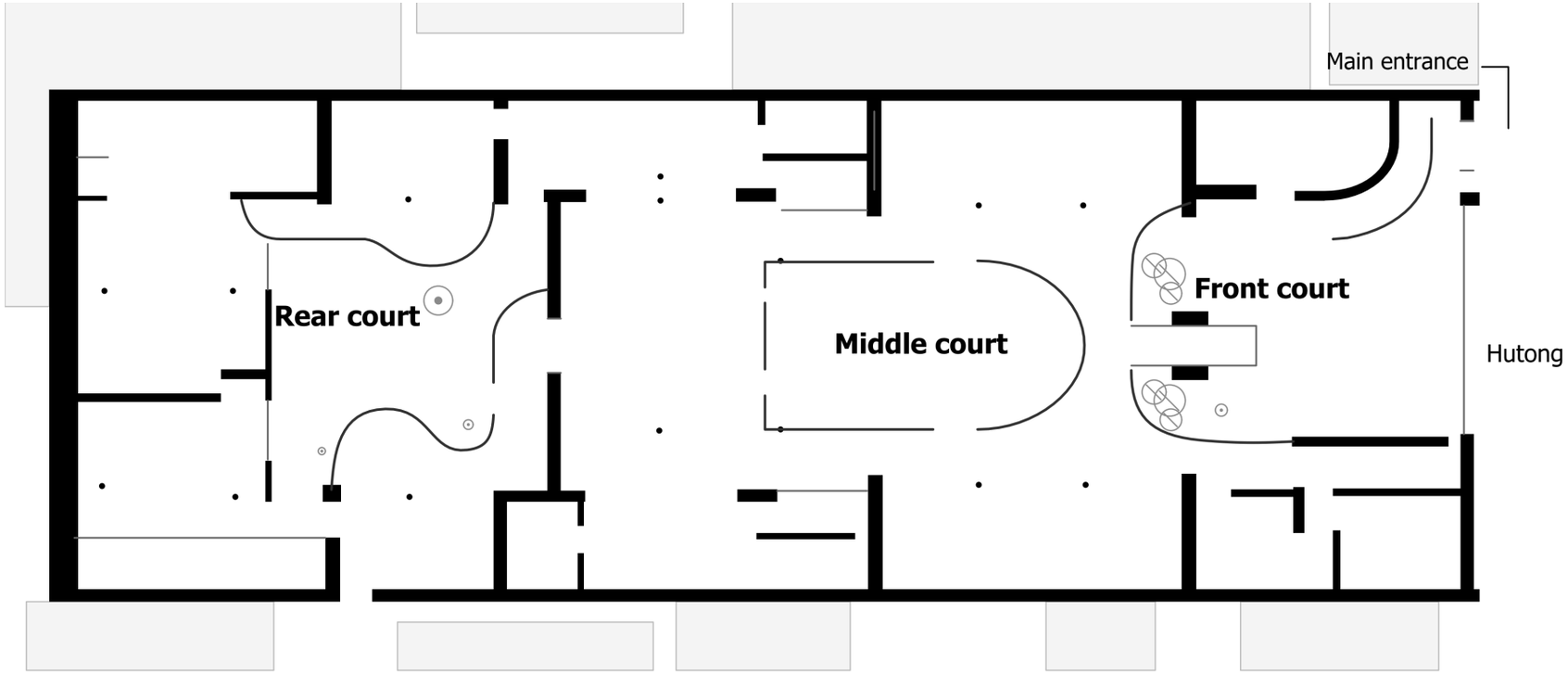
Qishe Courtyard

Beijing
The rear court
ARCHSTUDIO, 2020

Wu Qingshan, photograph. ARCHSTUDIO project publication, 2020.

Wu Qingshan, photograph. Published in ARCHSTUDIO, "Qishe Courtyard," *ArchDaily* (2020).

The veranda through three courts

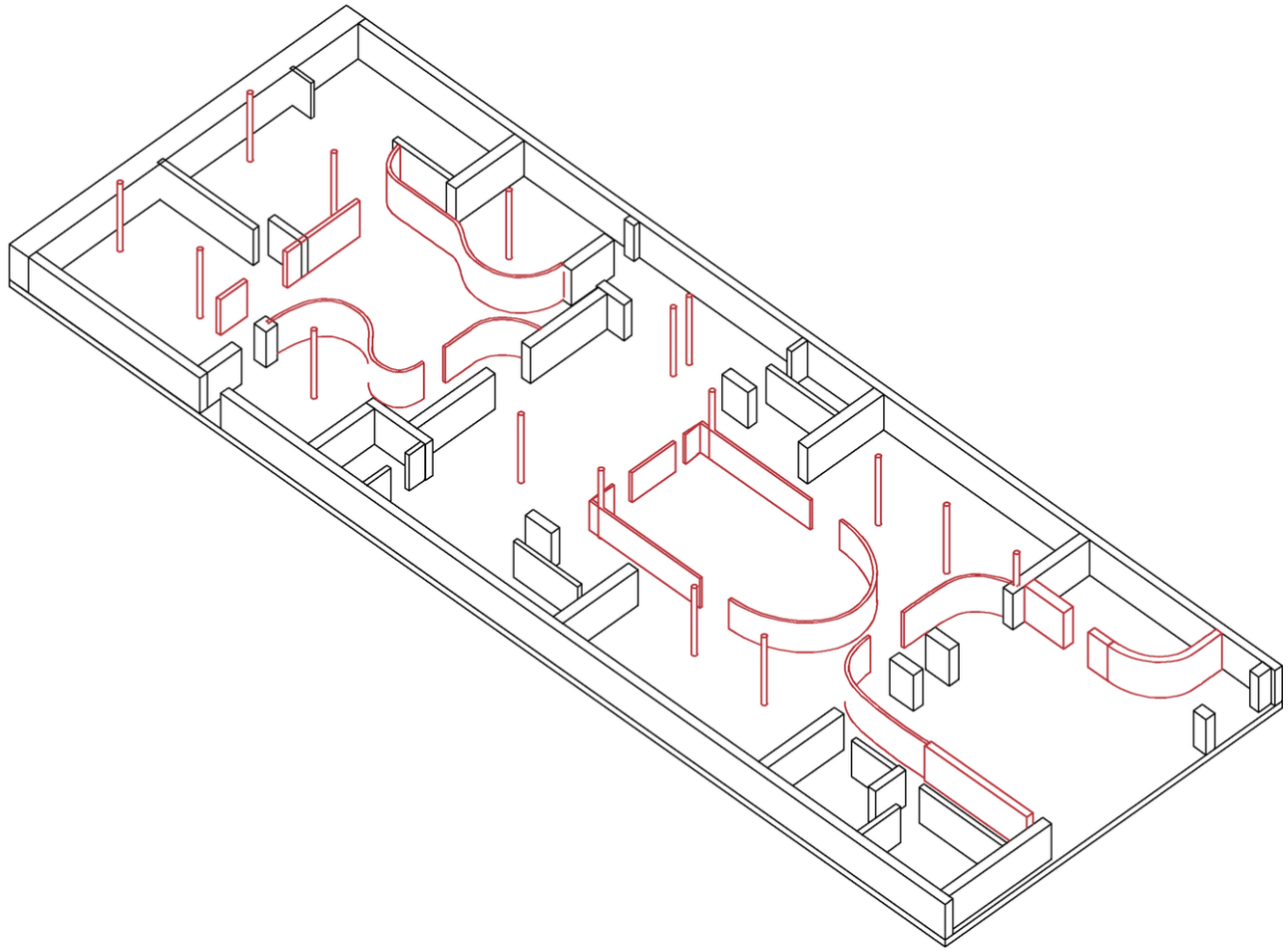


After renovation

The veranda runs along the three courts, from the entrance to the rear rooms.

Yanzhi Yang, simplified plan after ARCHSTUDIO's renovation drawing for Qishe Courtyard, *ArchDaily* (January 6, 2020).

The veranda and courtyard edges



Three successive courts

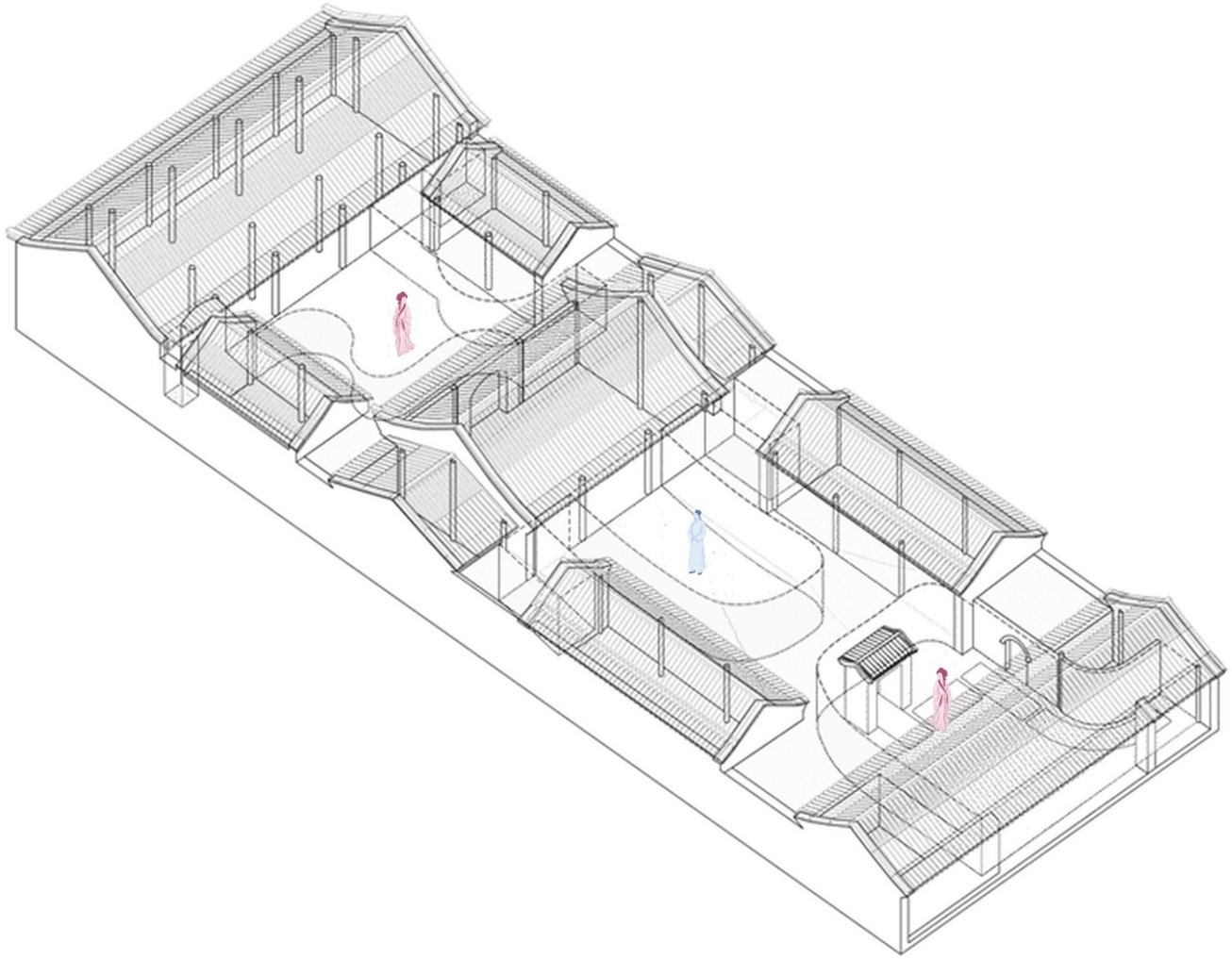
Curved wall
Columns
Gardens

Approx.
0 3 6 m

N

Yanzhi Yang, cutaway study after ARCHSTUDIO's renovation plan and project axonometric.

A veranda links seven houses



Three successive courts

The new veranda changes shape at each courtyard.

Approx.
0 3 6 m

N

ARCHSTUDIO, project generation diagram, frame showing the veranda. Published in *gooood* (2020).

From a garden fragment to a building rule

Mountain Villa Guesthouse

The bridge turns a path
along the water into a crossing.

Riverside Passage

One wall gives the two walks
different views.

Qishe Courtyard

The veranda links three courts
and keeps each distinct.

The wall becomes a threshold when it gives us another way
to encounter the same place.

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Thank you !

A Stroll in the Garden, a Dream Interrupted
Suzhou garden performance. Stylish Vie, March 11, 2019.