



MUSEUM OF HANDCRAFT PAPER

Gaoligong, Yunnan, China

Paper was one of the great inventions of the ancient Chinese, dating back to more than 2000 years ago. As its name suggests, the Museum of Handcraft Paper displays the history and processes of paper-making, along with practical demonstrations and workshops. It exhibits, preserves and develops the art of local paper-making and promotes academic research and cultural exchange. To these ends, it also offers accommodation for visitors and artists' residencies and has a tea room that acts as the meeting place for the local village. It can be seen as part of a recent trend in China for small-scale specialised museums dedicated to documenting and making known the country's regional history and culture.

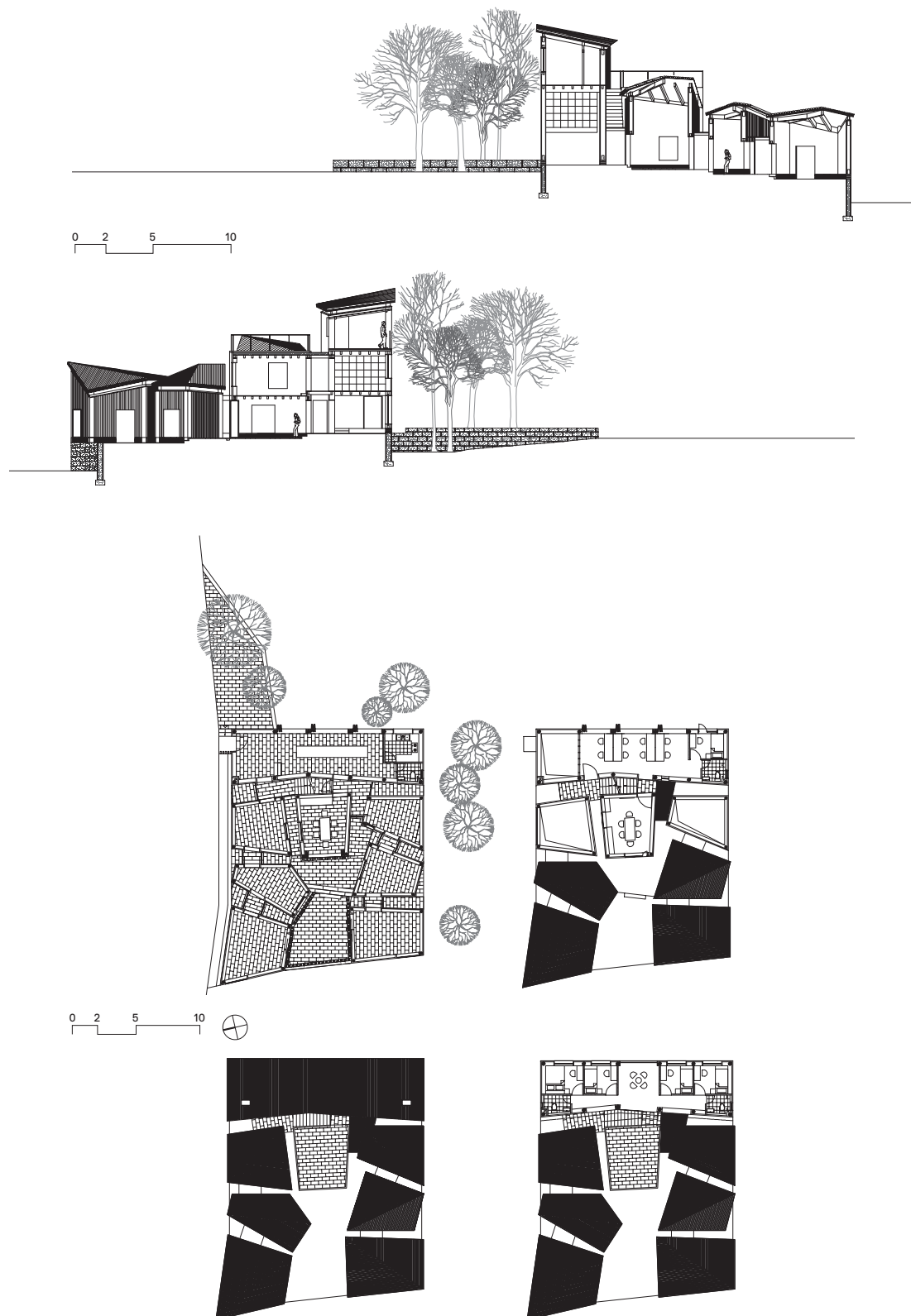
The Museum is located on one side of the road leading to Xingzhuang village, in Yunnan province, surrounded by rapeseed fields and with views to the Gaoligong Mountains in the distance. The timber building is massed in eight irregularly shaped blocks of different heights linked by glazed corridors, creating varied views of the landscape from within and an interesting orchestration of volumes from without: the layout evokes the typical clustering of family houses in the village beyond.

On the ground floor, the largest block houses the main hall and shop and six single-storey exhibition galleries extend out from this on both sides of the central two-storey tea room and terrace outside. A large work area and meeting room topped by accommodation and outdoor terraces complete the upper floors of the three-storey entrance block. The building stands on a base of local volcanic stone that is punctuated with gaps to ensure good cross ventilation throughout. Locally sourced wood was used for the superstructure (made with traditional mortise and tenon joints), for the timber plank finishes on the facades and interior walls (creating cavity walls to aid insulation and temperature control), and for the flooring, windows and doors, all executed by local workmen. Bamboo was laid above timber beams and waterproofed planks to finish the roofing, further enriching the distinctive design of the irregular roof planes. Inside, tilted planes of folded ceilings match up with the non-rectangular walls of the individual galleries, which are sometimes also lined with paper. Paper also covers a number of window openings, letting translucent light into the galleries.









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CLIENTS

Long Zhanxian, local paper-making master and museum director, head of Longshang tribe

Long Wen, academic, researcher and scholar, Beijing, China

Wang Yan, product and graphic designer, investor and manager of client, Beijing, China,

ARCHITECT

Trace Architecture Office, Beijing, China:

Hua Li, principal

Huang Tianju, Li Guofa, Jiang Nan, Sun Yuanxia,

XuYinjun, Yang Hefeng, design team

LEADER OF LOCAL BUILDERS

Long Zhanwen, Xinzhuang Village, Tengchong City, China

PROJECT DATA

Site area: 300 m²

Total built area: 361 m²

Cost: 80,820 USD

Commission: April 2008

Design: April 2008–May 2009

Construction: May 2009–December 2010

Completion: December 2010

TAO (TRACE ARCHITECTURE OFFICE)

Founded by Hua Li in 2009, TAO (Trace Architecture Office) is a Beijing-based design studio committed to architecture and urban and landscape design. Being critical of contemporary architecture as obsessed with fancy forms and becoming simply a fashion or dogma in the context of media-driven globalised consumerism, TAO envisions architecture and its environment as an inseparable whole, so that architecture is always part of its surroundings rather than an isolated object. TAO is interested in the specific relationship between the building and its place. With most of their projects located in particular cultural and natural settings in China, TAO aims to make architecture deeply rooted in its social and environmental context. The sense of place, response to climate, efficient use of local resources, appropriate material and construction techniques, such essential issues are always explored in every TAO project, responding to its specific situation.

TAO has focused on institutional and cultural projects, such as museums, schools, hospital buildings and so on. It has realised several award-winning projects, including the Museum of Handcraft Paper in Yunnan and the Xiao Quan Elementary School in Sichuan, whereas other important architectural awards include the Architectural Record "Good Design is Good Business" Award, Chinese Architecture Media Award and WA Award. TAO's works have been recognised and published widely, both in China and internationally: for example, it was selected for "Design Vanguard 2012" by New York's *Architectural Record* magazine. Its works have been exhibited in Beijing, Chengdu, Shenzhen, Mannheim, Vienna and at the MoMA in New York.

WEBSITE

www.t-a-o.cn