Panjiayuan Market in Beijing

The name of our project is Reclaiming Panjiayuan. We named it this not only to show an appreciation for the reclaiming of antiques throughout multiple generations but we also want to allow the community to reclaim the space—because they are the ones who have daily interactions with it.

We came to this name through an exploration of the market and its surroundings. Because as we know, nothing exists on its own without having influence on the space around it.

As can be seen from the map, Panjiayuan is located in central Beijing. Located in close proximity to the Temple of Heaven and not far from the Forbidden City, it is directly adjacent to the 3rd Ring Road, a major thoroughfare in Beijing.

As can be seen in the axon, it is located in a dense neighborhood. The site is currently towered by tall apartment complexes on the southern edge.
Surrounding Community

Because there are so many residents living within close proximity to the market we are making sure that their concerns are being addressed. We are using a survey conducted by Tsinghua University to guide our design. This survey was of 100 community members whose opinions revealed a lot about their interactions with the market. The biggest conclusion is that there is a lack of participation in the market. Community members claim the market takes up public space and lacks community benefits. The cited traffic, especially that caused by tricycles as one of the largest nuisances of the market.

We want to change these opinions, while keeping the market one of the top tourist attractions in Beijing and maintaining the vitality of antiques in the region.

Survey Results of Surrounding Community

Existing Conditions
Public Space

This dense neighborhood is sprinkled with a variety of parks and open space. Within half a mile there are 7 public spaces. Many of these have exercise equipment and playgrounds and are used heavily by community members throughout the year. In fact, when we visited Beijing these were the types of places that stuck out most in our minds. People of all generations came together to play mahjong, play, and do group exercise activities.

As we looked further at this neighborhood 6 of the 7 public spaces were gated off from people not living within the block. As seen in NOLLI map, these spaces are covered from much of the community. Black areas are completely blocked through a series of gates, while the grey layers have less severe blockades but still give a feeling of not having access.

This is in line with the history of public spaces in Beijing. After traditional architecture was overruled by super-blocks, this sectioning off made everything more isolated. Worker's parks were created to allow for people to exercise, but as time has passed many of these areas have become privatized. This is what we're seeing in the surrounding communities. These spaces are only accessible for those living in adjacent developments. Only recently have large public plazas taken place in Beijing. Tiananmen Square the Olympic park are examples of lively they do not act as community centers. Many times people travel long distances to reach them.
Transportation

The other large thing we want to focus on based on the feedback in the survey was the traffic surrounding the market. As can be seen by this current infrastructure map, there is a lack of bicycle connection on the E + S side. Also from the images it can be seen that bikes, scooters, and tricycles crowd the sidewalks—something that might lead to neighbor’s discomfort with the market. We believe that these alternate modes of transportation deserve dedicated parking located strategically throughout the site.

Also looking at how public transportation interacts with the site. The bus stop to the north is located at the central axis of the site, allowing passengers to choose their own experience. Also, we are taking the northern subway station, closing the road to cars that blocks it with the site, and creating a plaza to integrate the two.
Redevelopment Goals

GOALS
In order to do this we are adding a variety of new programming, including educational services, food, and public space.
Currently the market sprawls over the site in a series of one and two story buildings. This does not fit in well with the surrounding community, nor is it conducive to creating the open public space that is common in China. We have to build up. We are doing this by pulling up one end and carving out the market allowing for as much public space as possible.

**Vertical Growth**

**Treating Architecture as Landscape**
In keeping with the idea to treat the entire site as landscape architecture, we decided to look at Chinese landscape or "shan shui" (literally "mountains and water") painting. We determined the market would be symbolized by the mightiness of the mountain, while the public space would be symbolized by the tranquil water. The juxtaposition of the two elements heightens and highlights the importance of each one.

Furthermore, the way shan shui paintings are read—in scenes, rolling and unrolling the scroll as the viewer looks across the image—mimic the sense of exploration we wanted to provide to visitors on the site.

The Mountain

Mountain Diagram
While we wanted to apply our existing diagrams to the site as thoroughly as possible, we also wanted to create a sense of cohesion throughout the site, ensuring that each section felt like an essential part of the whole. No matter where you are on the site, you feel like you are sharing a larger, overarching experience.

Furthermore, the U-shape of the building embraces the grand open space and the surrounding neighborhood, centering the focus on the community.
At the same time, we wanted to ensure that we stayed true to the gradient of conditions we were trying to achieve. Thusly, we created a perimeter of activity (characterized by retail, game rooms, cafes and a night market), an intermediate recharge zone (which provides both physical restoration to the environment with rain gardens and mental restoration to visitors with meandering paths), and, lastly, a center (which holds the "hearts" of the two sides, the gathering amphitheatre and the bustling market stalls).
The market “mountain” is laid out according to the Chinese idea of the crescendo, with the most important and respected element at the top. Because of this, we positioned a community center at the “peak” of the mountain, combined with market administration. The fourth floor houses artist studios, where people can both create and sell their work. Below that, fine goods and furniture are kept, while more common retail occupies the first and second floors, where they are most readily accessible. The iconic market stalls remain in their original place in the “heart” of the mountain.

The massing of each floor is broken up to create smaller terraces, alcoves, and balconies. This brings the scale back down to the level of the individual, making the huge site much more comfortable and personable.

Lastly, celebration of movement throughout the site was essential to the market’s success, so we provided three forms of circulation. Primarily, the landscape ramps that wrap around the roofs of the buildings and directly link the community center and the public space. Secondarily, a spiral of ramps lines the interior of the mountain, providing an ease of circulation without breaking visual connection to the rest of the market. Finally, stairs are located at each terrace, while stairs and elevator corridors are at each corner on the eastern edge.
Experiential Qualities

Overall, we wanted to unify the site and integrate the market into the site and its surroundings. Although the massing creates a protective barrier against the ring road, it also focuses the experience inward and connects the two sides of the site.
Entrance from subway and market
Proposal provides open space for the community, with shaded trees, game rooms, cafes and space for group activity.
Shan Shui paintings, literally meaning “mountain water painting”, always contain a heart in which all elements lead to. It is this heart that defines the meaning of the painting. The heart of our project is community, therefore we focused on providing a space for community activities. The entire site was treated as landscape. We have applied the concept of a mountain to our design using the idea of exploration, human connection to natural systems, and an understanding of Chinese culture.

The image on the left shows the connection to community by linking to surrounding public areas. Bicycle routes and large crosswalks provide safe access to the market. The landscape was designed to have outdoor “rooms”. Examples of such rooms include game rooms, eating areas next to the cafes, and a “sculptural” poplar tree room.

Water Features:
Water is another important element to our project. Similar to the way in which water flows down a mountain and carves out certain shapes, we have carved out the site and made the lowest point for water collection. Beijing receives an average of 22” of rain per year. Therefore, a calculated 400,000,000 gallons of water falls on the site per year. Our proposal would enable 60,000 gallons of water to be captured and stored in cisterns on site. These cisterns would supply water to the ice skating rink in the winter, and provide enough water for the plants on site during the dry times of the year.

Water collection diagram: 3 sources of water collection: rooftop rain harvesting, ramp runoff, and hardscape surface runoff
A Gradient of Activity

As discovered through the site analysis, there is a severe lack of public space. Through our travels of Beijing, we noticed that it is a very lively city and people enjoy watching street demonstrations. It is common for people to gather in an open area and dance together as a form of exercise. Water calligraphy is a popular form of temporary graffiti where artists create words and phrases using water. This public space would allow a number of street demonstrations and other group activities to occur on a daily basis.

Show in the section below, the landscape ramp is a crucial linking element between ground and building. The ramp provides easy access from the neighborhood to the top of the “mountain” which is where the community center is located. Various activities occur next to and under the ramp such as game rooms and artist demonstrations.

Left: Water calligraphy with onlookers. Middle: popular Mahjong game. Right: People enjoying exercise equipment in small plaza.

Section A: Longitudinal Section showing connection between the street to the ramp, eventually leading to the commu-
Maintaining Traditions:
Keeping Traditional Chinese Art Alive

The ramp measures 15 meters across, therefore because the ramp is so large, there needs to be as much activity underneath as there is on top of the ramp. There is a space designated for artist demonstration as shown in the bottom section. Currently, the main visitors to the market are older men. Implementing workshops for children and young adults would expand the age groups at the market. Furthermore, this strengthens the connection between people and local artists, and also creates an appreciation for the market.

The materials chosen are durable, meant to withstand a high volume of people, something that the market already receives. Concrete plazas and walkways are included in the design as they are consistent with the durable materials commonly used throughout Beijing. Vertical planting elements were used rather than on the ground to allow full access throughout the site.

Section B: Latitudinal Section showing amphitheater space and night market
Landscape ramps and artist workshops
Visions for Panjiayuan

Landscape Ramp Perspective:
The ramp is a crucial linking element to the building as it provides easy access to the community center at the top. Artist workshops under the ramp would provide benefits to community through appreciation and understanding of Chinese traditional art. This would also link to the public space in front of the hospital across the street. Sculptures and other public art made by local artists could be displayed along paths. Small plazas would allow art shows or demonstrations to occur.

Subway Entrance Perspective:
The subway is one of the most common ways for visitors to reach the market. There is a large plaza which gives way to the market located inside the structure. The image shows the designated bicycle lanes and a vegetated median to act as a buffer from vehicles. Sculptures are showcased next to the sidewalk making them easily visible from the street.

Public Space Perspective:
This image shows the range of activities we expect to happen in the public space on any given day. We noticed in Beijing that it is common for people to gather in an open area and dance as a form of exercise. Water calligraphy is a popular form of street performance that draws in spectators. The public space also offers places to sit along stairs. People could purchase food at the night market and sit on the stairs while people watching.

In conclusion, we have applied the concept of a mountain to our design using the idea of exploration, human connection to natural systems, and education and understanding of culture. Instead of the community viewing the market as something they would look down upon, our design provides benefits to community and the greater Beijing.

Public space activities: dancing for exercise, children playing, night market, water calligraphy, Tai chi, running