

# CONDITION | COMMUNITY

## Helping Improve Communities Through Design

SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE, THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

### CONDITION\_LAB

#### DESIGN, RESEARCH, TEACH THROUGH BUILDING

The Condition\_Lab is a design research laboratory led by Associate Professor Peter W. Ferretto, based within the School of Architecture at CUHK. We believe that design has the power to improve people's lives. By working with real situations, observing, listing and most importantly establishing a process of empathy with the community, we wish to design projects that can enable a better future.

Design/Research/Teaching are all integral to our framework. Our radical position is to help communities through design, for this reason we have set up a fund that provides design knowledge, raises funds and ultimately delivers healthy, sustainable and better environments. To achieve this goal, our focus is the social realm both urban and rural, where by adapting and calibrating design we can condition everyday life.

#### CONDITION | COMMUNITY FUND

Our process starts with a dialogue with those for whom we build in order to discover what to build. The meaning of our projects lies in how they are used, in the hidden order of how we live our everyday life. The CONDITION | COMMUNITY fund is an account set up within The Chinese University of Hong Kong to sponsor communities in need.

Our working method is simple and transparent. We find communities, rural and urban, in China and abroad, in need of help and support. Through dialogue and public engagement, we identify social project that can improve the existing situation. Once selected, working together with students, research assistants, academics, professional architects and engineers we develop an action strategy.

We design, finance and manage the whole operation aiming to eventually build the project with local craftsmen. All donations go directly to the realization of a specific project. Communities need better buildings, but only a selected few can afford to employ architect. We believe this is wrong and detrimental to the profession as a whole, hence through this fund we offer our services pro-bono to both help and generate new research knowledge.

#### CONDITION\_LAB

Condition\_Lab is a new form of Research Design based practice that generates knowledge through built projects. Through applied forms of architecture that merge teaching, research and practice we seek to establish a new way of "design thinking", a philosophy that embeds innovation and experimentation into the design process. We believe research is the tool through which theory is advanced, without theory architecture cannot have a cutting edge.

Founder: Peter W. Ferretto  
Associate Professor  
School of Architecture, The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Research: Liu Ziwei Paula  
Assistants: Lam Man Yan Milly  
Wang Haoran

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## PREVIOUS PROJECTS

### GAOBU BOOK HOUSE



**Location** Gaobu Village, Tongdao County, Hunan Province, China

**Category** Children Library

**Area** 200 sq.m

**Project Year** 2018

**Research Grant**

GRF: "Adapting Villages: An Architectural Framework for Regenerating Dong Minority Settlements"

RGC Ref. No. 4611017 (2018-2020)

**Funding Support**

"One University One Village" Fund  
- HK\$ 480,000

\$200,000

Timber structure

\$90,000

Workmanship  
for carpenters

\$90,000

Shelves

\$60,000

Timber deck

\$40,000

Electricity;  
Glazing; Roof

#### 1 Community

The Gaobu Book House serves the rural community of Gaobu, a Dong minority village of 2,500 people located on the Pingtan River in Tongdao County, Hunan Province. Like many other Chinese villages, Gaobu is challenged by modernization and the so-called "village hollowing" in which the working-age population migrate.

#### 2 Design

The 200m<sup>2</sup> two-story Gaobu Book House adopts the traditional Dong house "Ganlan" typology as the creative starting point, where local timber is used for the framing. Having witnessed how stairs become a key architectural element in Dong daily life, a place which people usually congregate around and where children love to play, stairs become the generating idea of the building. The central staircase acts both as a means of circulation and as the identity for the building. The ground floor is conceived as a covered open space for public gatherings and local exhibitions, while each internal wall of the house above is made up of 12 bookshelves, each dedicated to a specific educational theme.

### MEI FOO BOOK TREE



**Location** Mei Foo, Hong Kong

**Category** Book Crossing Installation

**Area** 25 sq.m

**Project Year** 2018

**Research Grant**

GRF: "Urban Pause: Reclaiming Hong Kong's Residual Urban Spaces" supported and funded by Research Grants Council of Hong Kong under the General Research Fund for 2016/17

(Ref No. T16133916)

**Funding Support**

Peter W. Ferretto - HK\$ 50,000

#### 1 Community

The objective of the project is twofold: to inhabit a lost urban space and simultaneously to create a new type of reading experience for children within the Mei Foo neighbourhood. Due to its high density and unique topography, Hong Kong has a high concentration of residual urban spaces, spaces that are not planned and typically occur by accident. These lost spaces have become invisible to local people who usually dismiss them as mundane background places devoid of purpose.

#### 2 Design

The "Book Tree" occupies 25 m<sup>2</sup>, consisting of a tree structure of bookshelves surrounded by an undulating interactive sitting and reading platform. The tree structure is made of pre-fabricated timber components that is assembled and dismantled by students in 1-2 days, while the platform consists of 50 (600x600 mm) timber boxes of different height. The tree structure is lined with a waterproof fabric, which provides sun and rain protection. It is equipped with LED lighting for reading.



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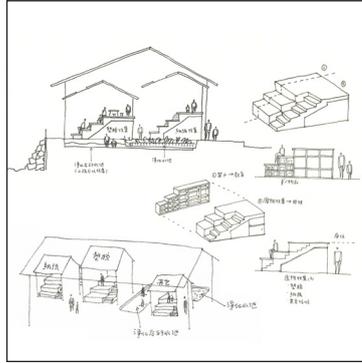
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## UPCOMING PROJECTS

### GAOBU WASTE CENTER



**Location** Gaobu Village, Tongdao County, Hunan Province, China

**Category** Waste Center

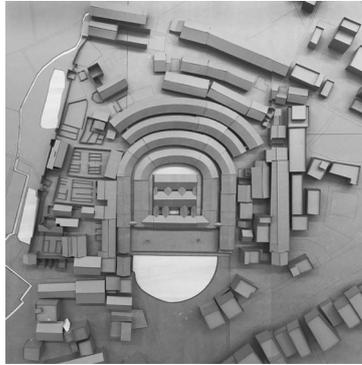
**Area** 50 sq.m

**ESTIMATED BUDGET**

HK\$ 150,000

The Gaobu Waste Center aims to educate the villagers in Gaobu the concept of waste sorting. We have learnt from the villages near Gaobu that they treat all kinds of waste from their place by throwing down the mountains at the edge between Hunan and Guangxi Province. Therefore, we came up with an idea of a waste sorting center, to prevent such situation in Gaobu. Construction will start in late May 2019, with incorporation between CUHK students and local carpenters.

### HE XIN WU COMMUNITY CENTER



**Location** Hexinwu, He Yuan, Guangdong Province, China

**Category** Community Center

**Area** 300 sq.m

**ESTIMATED BUDGET**

HK\$ 380,000

He Xin Wu is a traditional Hakka village at He Yuan, which is currently empty. The villagers have moved out from the village and are living in the new houses surrounding it due to its poor living condition. Mud is an important element to He Xin Wu, which the villagers depended on mud to farm to support their own living and as building material. Therefore, we have proposed a community center, building in mud, where the villagers could spend time while living outside.

### YANLAN COMMUNITY CENTER



**Location** Yanlan Village, Tongdao County, Hunan Province, China

**Category** Community Center

**Area** 250 sq.m

**ESTIMATED BUDGET**

HK\$ 420,000

When the new village community office was built in another site at Yanlan, the old building was abandoned. With the success of Book House at Gaobu, we were invited to design and renovate the abandoned village office into a community center cum kindergarten, where children and women in the village could spend their time in there together. This is an adaptive reuse project that makes use of the existing structure to create a new active definition.

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### DONATION FORM

I would like to make a donation to support "Condition | Community" of the School of Architecture.

#### Donation Amount

I would like to make a donation of

- HK\$ 500  
 HK\$ 1,000  
 HK\$ 5,000  
 HK\$ 10,000  
 Others \_\_\_\_\_

Tax deductible receipts will be issued for donation over HK\$100.

#### Donor Particulars

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#### For CUHK Alumni

Graduation Year \_\_\_\_\_

Major \_\_\_\_\_

College / Graduate School

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 Morningside College       S.H. Ho College  
 C.W. Chu College       Wu Yee Sun College  
 Lee Woo Sing College       Graduate School

- I wish to remain 'anonymous' for the donation.

#### Donation Methods

By crossed cheque (payable to "The Chinese University of Hong Kong" or "香港中文大學")

Cheque no. \_\_\_\_\_

(Please write down "CONDITION | COMMUNITY, The Chinese University of Hong Kong" at the back of the cheque.)

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Signature

Date

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# CONDITION | COMMUNITY

以設計助社區改善計劃

香港中文大學建築學院

## 已完成項目

### 高步書屋



**項目位置** 中國湖南省通道侗族自治縣高步村  
**類別** 兒童圖書館  
**建築面積** 200 平方米  
**項目年份** 2018  
**研究經費**  
GRF: "Adapting Villages: An Architectural Framework for Regenerating Dong Minority Settlements"  
RGC Ref. No. 4611017 (2018-2020)  
**資金支持**  
「一專一村」 - 港幣\$ 480,000

\$200,000

結構木材

\$90,000

聘請木匠

\$90,000

書架

\$60,000

木地板

\$40,000

照明; 膠板; 屋頂

#### 1 社區

對於近年來中國鄉村人口移居城鎮的大趨勢，我們無法逆轉，故而以保存侗族社會原有的價值來促進日後的發展為目標，通過為當地的孩子們建造一座圖書館來開啟村落活化的行動。這座小型圖書館，我們稱它為高步書屋，是一個寓教於樂的場所。希望高步村裏這群熱愛自由又充滿好奇心的孩子們能在書屋裏玩耍、學習。

#### 2 設計

高步書屋面積約二百平方米，主要由木屋架組成。底層中心處貫通整座書屋的樓梯，是它的標志性元素。書屋底層的開放空間讓村民可以休息，或者舉辦展覽和其他活動；二層和三層則由不同主題的圖書書架構成外牆，樓梯的設計緊貼著由半透明陽光板構成的書屋立面。這座書屋不只是圖書館，而是一個讓村民互動的公共建築，也給孩子們一個機會放下時下流行的各種電子設備，透過書籍觸碰到他們的夢想與未來。

### 美孚書樹



**項目位置** 香港美孚  
**類別** 漂書裝置  
**建築面積** 25 平方米  
**項目年份** 2018  
**研究經費**  
GRF: "Urban Pause: Reclaiming Hong Kong's Residual Urban Spaces" supported and funded by Research Grants Council of Hong Kong under the General Research Fund for 2016/17 (Ref No. T16133916)  
**資金支持**  
Peter W. Ferretto - 港幣\$ 50,000

#### 1 社區

香港這座城市在高密度的城市規劃與獨山地形地形的雙重作用下產生了大量獨特的剩餘城市空間。這些空間大多處於偶然產生，無論政府還是當地居民大多對這些空間習以為常，忽略了這些空間的特色和進一步開發的潛力。我們的研究希望通過設計激活這些城市公共空間，讓他們變成一些可供都市居民休憩娛樂的場所。我們不希望設計總是給人一種高高在上遠離大眾的印象，設計應該成為一種解決人居問題的工具。正如在這個項目中，我們希望借助設計的力量將這處位於高架橋下被忽視的角落變成一處真正意義上的開放的社區公共空間。

#### 2 設計

「書樹」占地25平方米，由一個作為書架的樹形結構和一個高低錯落的閱讀休憩平台組成。「書樹」全部採用預制木材構件並由六位香港中文大學建築系學生在兩天內完成組裝。閱讀平台由五十個 (600 x 600毫米) 不同高度的木箱組成。書樹的屋頂有防水織物，可以遮光擋雨。同時，書樹配有閱讀燈方便人們在晚上看書。

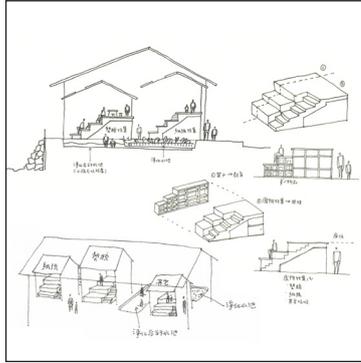
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香港中文大學建築學院

## 未來項目

### 高步廢物分類收集站



**項目位置** 中國湖南省通道侗族自治縣高步村

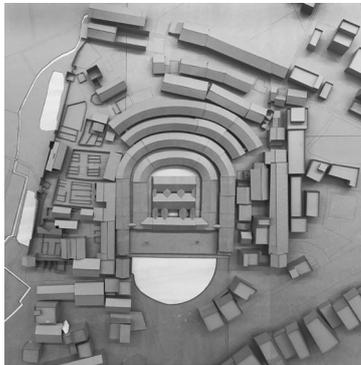
**類別** 廢物分類收集

**建築面積** 50 平方米

**預算**  
港幣\$ 150,000

基於我們幾年來對高步村的研究，我們發現高步村及周邊的村落對垃圾的處理並不恰當。各個村把所有垃圾運到湖南和廣西交界處的山裏倒掉，一段時間後統一進行焚燒，長此以往對環境會造成很大的破壞。為了改善這種情況，我們希望在高步村建一座垃圾分類收集站，讓村民意識到垃圾分類的重要性。今年五月，我們會帶著香港中文大學的學生們到村裏建造這座垃圾分類收集站。

### 何新屋社區中心



**項目位置** 中國廣東省河源市何新屋

**類別** 社區中心

**建築面積** 300 平方米

**預算**  
港幣\$ 380,000

何新屋村位於廣東省河源市，是一個傳統的客家村寨。由於何新屋村內的建築老化，村民的都搬到周圍的新房子居住，何新屋村的建築群就此廢棄。從前泥土對何新屋來說有十分重要的意義：土壤孕育稻田，是村民生活的基本；夯土是主要的建築材料，村民們生活在夯土創造的空間中。而現在村民們居住在鋼筋混凝土的新房子裏，他們中的大多數不再種植莊稼。所以我們希望在何新屋村裏用夯土建造一座社區中心，讓即使居住在村外的村民閒暇時能回到村裏活動、消遣，同時也記起泥土於何新屋的意義。

### 陽爛村社區中心



**項目位置** 中國湖南省通道侗族自治縣坪坦村

**類別** 社區中心

**建築面積** 250 平方米

**預算**  
港幣\$ 420,000

陽爛村是坪坦河流域除高步、坪坦外的幾個村子之一。由於村裏建了新的村部樓，舊村部已被閒置。因為高步書屋的成功，陽爛村村委會邀請我們對這個舊村部樓進行改造。村部底層為幼兒園，那麼以後婦女和兒童就能有聚集和玩耍的場地。這個項目非常有意思，我們能利用現有的建築結構去創造比原來更有趣的空間，對這塊場地進行活化。

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## 捐款表格

本人願意捐贈支持建築學院CONDITION | COMMUNITY以設計助社區改善計劃。

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簽署

日期

### 如有任何查詢，歡迎聯絡我們

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傳真	(852) 3942 0982		香港中文大學綜合教學大樓
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