

# An analysis of the art of gardening in Dongguan's Ke Garden and its inspiration

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**Abstract:** Dongguan gives many people the impression that it is a manufacturing kingdom with factories all over the city. In fact, Dongguan is not a cultural desert in the eyes of many people; it is also an ancient city with a deep literary and artistic heritage and accumulation. Especially in the heart of the city lies a small but exquisitely designed garden of the Qing Dynasty, the Ke Garden. It can be described as a unique artisanal and Auxiliary side. The four famous gardens of Guangdong (Qinghui Garden in Shunde, Liang Yuan in Foshan, Ke Yuan in Dongguan and Yu Yin Shan Fang in Panyu) are representative of the gardens of the Lingnan region. Although it is a Lingnan garden, it has all the commonalities of a Chinese garden, with its corridors and windows, rockery and fish ponds, and its twists and turns. Therefore, the author has chosen to cut through Dongguan's Ke Garden to see the big picture in a small way. In turn, the characteristics of Lingnan gardens and their inspiration for modern gardens are analysed.

**Keywords:** Landscape gardening; Dongguan; Ke Yuan; Lingnan Garden.

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## 1. The past and present life of Kakuen

### 1.1. The former life of Kagwon

It was built in 1850 by Zhang Jingxiu, a native of Guancheng, as a private residence for a large family in the old days. Zhang Jingxiu (1823-1864) was a descendant of Zhang Jiugao, a disciple of the famous Tang dynasty minister Zhang Jiuling. He was a man who loved writing and ink, and although he had joined the army, he loved art at heart, and was not a "showman". It is said that he was proficient in all aspects of the Chinese qin, chess, calligraphy and painting, and that he was a well-travelled man who invited a wide range of literati to gather. He was a "literary salon". For ten years, Jiu Chao and Jiu Lian lived in Ke Yuan, where they created the method of painting birds and flowers with water and powder, thus making it one of the fountains of the Lingnan school of painting (these two were once Zhang's staff when he was an official. (He was a great friend of his and played a great role in the creation and design of Ke Yuan). He was also a military genius who gave up literature to serve his country, but unfortunately, God was jealous of his talent and he died at an early age. In his short life, he built a fortress in the turbulent times of the late Qing Dynasty, fought against the British and suppressed the Taiping Rebellion, and finally After his death, he was appointed to the post of Minister of Justice in Jiangxi, and later built a garden in his hometown because of the Wu language. This Ke Garden was a sight to behold when it was unveiled.

### 1.2. The present life of Kaguen

The garden covers an area of 2,200 square metres, with a triangular outer edge. Inside the garden are a building, six pavilions, five pavilions, six terraces, five pools, three bridges, 19 halls and 15 rooms, whose names are mostly based on the word "Ke", such as Ke Lou, Ke Xuan, Ke Tang and Ke Zhou ..... The buildings are the buildings are simple and elegant, with a water-rubbed green brick structure. [1] The garden is a place to enjoy. What is a garden? The word "Koyuan" has different meanings. The garden is a common

feature, however, in that it is a garden that can be enjoyed. The beautiful garden of Koyuan The gardens are still linked to the architecture and landscape of the Qing Dynasty. It still has the flavour and the smell of books. Many locals like to stroll and sit here. The beauty of the garden lies in its smallness and elegance. A warm home. The pavilions and pavilions, the carved beams and painted buildings, the shade of the trees, the light of the lake and the water. It's a beautiful sight to behold.

Today, Ke Yuan belongs to the national key cultural relic's protection unit, in 1997, additional Ke Yuan Museum, Ke Yuan scenic area from the original 5.5 acres expanded to 30 acres, but the new garden and the former garden style is very different, is clearly distinguishable.

## 2. The artistic charm of the Khoen

Although small in size, the garden is beautifully designed, combining rooms, living rooms, villas, courtyards, flower gardens and study halls in an artistic way. In the three acres of land, there are halls and courtyards, pavilions and pavilions, mountains and bridges. Although the layout is of wood and stone and brick, the construction is exceptionally elaborate, with carved windows, balustrades, and caddies leaning against the floor, resulting in a distinctive style.

The rooms, chambers, pavilions and corridors of the whole garden are organically linked and self-contained, with more than 130 doors of different shapes and sizes and corridors and walkways, which are beautifully designed, with a strange and unusual layout. The keynote is that there are scenes in the empty space, not in the sparse place, small in the large, dense but not forced, quiet in the comical, quiet but fragrant. Together with the fresh and elegant placement, the water is planted with flowers, which is extremely rich in southern characteristics and is a treasure of Guangdong gardens. Moreover, the interior is beautifully lit and the space is transparent, without the restrained feeling of wetness and dullness and desolation of individual old houses.

### 2.1. Masterplan

The garden gate area was the hub for receiving guests and

accessing the home. In front of the garden gate is a lotus pond, which was a feng shui pond in the old days of the Lingnan mansions, and by the side of the pond is the Servant's Stone (lost) and the place where the horses were tied and the sedan chairs stopped. The word 'Ke Yuan' written above the main gate of the garden is in the handwriting of the owner, Zhang Jingxiu, in a strong script. The couplet at the front gate was written by Luo Tongjian: "The Garden is an enviable place on earth; the Garden boasts a heavenly palace. The original front couplet was written for the owner of the garden by Jane Shiliang, a scholar at the time: Before the yellow chrysanthemum path is deserted; the garden is rightfully made into a red pine village. The upper couplet uses the allusion to Tao Yuanming's "Picking chrysanthemums in the east and seeing the southern mountains at ease", while the lower couplet uses the story of Zhang Liang, who helped Liu Bang to level the world and establish the Han Dynasty, and knowing that Liu Bang could only share the hardships but not the blessings, he retreated into the void and called himself "Red Pine". The story of Zhang Jingxiu, the master of the Ke Yuan, who is not only retired, but also wants to return to the world.

The entrance hall is in the middle, and there is a room and a floor to the left and right, the room is "Cao Cao Cao Tang", because Zhang Jingxiu said he was in the army: "occasionally hungry, all meals in a haphazard way; occasionally tired, into a haphazard sleep; morning and get up, haphazard wash. When he had finished washing, he would hastily perform his acts on the road. However, he believed that "meals are also haphazard, accommodation is also haphazard, but being a human being cannot be haphazard", so he gave himself the name of the three halls of grass to remind himself of this at all times. The couplet of the three cottages reads, "The grass grassland is not grass; the hall dares to be called a hall". The hall now displays the life of Zhang Jingxiu. There is also a pavilion inside, called Xiang Guangge, which was set up because Zhang Jingxiu liked to copy the works of Dong Qichang and collect his paintings. This shows that the owner of the garden was very precise in his orientation and firm in his beliefs, rather like what people often say nowadays, "you can be confused about small things, but not about big things".

As you enter the garden, you will see the famous Huan Bi Corridor. The promenade encircles the entire garden, and the view of the whole garden can be seen from one week around the promenade. It is said that it was surrounded by flowers and plants, and that the greenery of the garden was a welcome sight. The beginning of the Corridor is located in the "Little Red Salve". It is a peculiar building between a pavilion, a house and a terrace, and the word 'broken red' means peeled lychee, so it is where the owner invited his literary friends to taste lychee. The first place of interest after the red-breaking pavilion is the Laurel Hall, the restaurant in the garden, which is distinguished by its clear water fish pond and 'artificial air conditioning'.

As you walk around the corridor, you can see the Moon Pavilion, the Yao Xian Cave, the Orchid Pavilion, the Curved Pond and the Arch Bridge, as well as the Book Collection, the Fishing Terrace, the Curved Bridge and the small pavilion, so you can say that there are scenes everywhere and different scenes. Walking along the corridor, you can reach the Double Clear Room and the Small Courtyard of Flowers. The double-clear room is another of the most beautiful sights in the garden, and its structure is fantastic: the building, the floor, the ceiling and the windows are all made of the word 'Yah', which is said to be a word of good luck. The windows are inlaid with red,

green, blue and yellow coloured glass, adding colour to the interior and exterior scenes. The Shuangqing Room was used by the owner of the garden to recite the wind and the moon, and was named 'Shuangqing' after the view of the Zhanming Bridge in front of the hall and the curved pond reflecting the moon. "The small courtyard of flowers is a place for the owner to enjoy the flowers. When you step out of the courtyard, you will come to a vast space with a garden full of flowers and fruit beds, known as the "Heaven in a Pot". "There are no buildings in the garden, it is a separate space formed by leaning against the buildings on all sides, a small world where the garden owner plays chess and drinks tea. From the back of the garden, the vast Lake Kho is revealed, which is very relaxing to the mind and body.

There are so many weeping willows and banyan trees along the water's edge of Kehu, and the lake and mountains are a delightful mix of light and colour. Here, you can see the beauty and elegance of the black swans, and you can also see a rare peacock opening its screen, a proud peacock that shakes its spirit in order to attract the opposite sex, but now it can keep company with the opposite sex. Looking at the pair of peacocks in the cage, the beauty is already there, so there is no need to think of presenting the best side of oneself to the other party, to think of attracting each other all the time. This is so like human emotions.

## 2.2. Plants

The role of plants in the garden is not only to provide shade and beautify the environment. Plants are not only emotional carriers, but also cultural symbols and symbols of good fortune. [2] Plants are alive and spiritual. As mentioned in the Yang House Huixin Collection, "People inside the house breathe with the trees outside the house; the trees have the same qi, so do people; the trees have the same shape, so do people." Plants can play a role in adjusting the ecological function of the garden, such as the thermometer of the ventilation and water field: "If the trees are prosperous, the house will be prosperous; if the trees are defeated, the house will be depleted" As an important ecological element of the Lingnan courtyard, plants not only express the natural ecological significance, but also express the social and cultural ecological significance; they can express both the spatial function and the practical connotations. As Lingnan is located in the subtropics, the geographical and climatic conditions are very suitable for the growth of plants, and there are often green trees and red flowers everywhere throughout the year. So, there is a wide variety of plants to choose from, and Dongguan Garden gives priority to local native species in the selection of plants, not only following the growth habits of the plants themselves, but also reflecting the regional characteristics of Lingnan well. For example, the Flying Banyan, with its strange shape and soaring feel, fixes the banyan tree and the stone in one piece, which has a very peculiar sense of beauty. The sheep's foot nail, as the name suggests, has leaves that really resemble a sheep's foot and is somewhat similar to the Bauhinia. Jade Kirin, a rather precious name, has thick, watery fleshy leaves and a trunk that is similar to the cactus family. Taiwan grass, also known as velvet grass or fine-leaved knotweed, is very warming and a great vegetative green grass. There are also, the scattered anemone, which resembles bamboo, the large-flowered violet, which resembles zinnia, the amazing variegated wood with its many colours of green, yellow and red leaves, the dragon's blood tree, along-step grass, asparagus, ninebark, Fujian tea,

lohan pine, gardenia, tea plum and camellia, and other common and uncommon plants. The owner of the garden, Zhang Jingxiu, who loved gardening, claimed that he loved orchids, painted them and planted them. It is said that the Zishu Terrace in front of the right side of the Quchi was the Terrace where he planted orchids back then.

### 2.3. Architecture

The Khao Yai Garden applies the design principle of 'let nature take its course and improve it', creating a number of sun-proof and airy design techniques. [3] This was done to adapt to the hot and humid climate of Lingnan all year round. The building's bird's nest, arch, latticed door, window, lintel and flying hood contain a dazzling variety of stone, brick, wood, bamboo and pillar carvings. The geometric curved pond before the double-clear room, the bridge across the curved pond named Zhanming Bridge, the bridge was originally made of hemp stone stacked, unstable with a sense of sway, as if a small boat sailing on the sea, there are "on the bridge such as wild navigation" said, here to watch the fish to enjoy the lotus, have some literati style and elegant interest. The bridge is very similar to the one at Yu Yin Shan Fang and Qing Hui Yuan. If you want to sing, you can enjoy the Green Qi Building, which was named after the famous "Green Qi Terrace Qin". "The building was built on the ancient system of "Shaanxi and Xiuqu", and is one of the four oldest guqin in Lingnan, made during the Tang Dynasty. At the end of the Ming Dynasty, it was purchased by Kuang Zhanruo, a native of Nanhai, and later fell into the garden, where Zhang Jingxiu built this building to treasure it. In 1944, a typhoon destroyed his home, leaving him with only four walls and a lifetime's collection of rare books.

The most striking building is the Ke Hall. The hall is the main building of the garden and the stateliest, with a curved pond in front of the building and a four-storey high hall on the ground floor called the Ke Xuan. The hall is also known as the Hall of Laurel Flowers, named after the floor and floor coverings that are decorated with a pattern of laurel flowers. The floor is made of slate and bricks, polished and smooth, so that no pins can be inserted. A copper pipe is installed in the middle of the floor of the hall, connecting to the small room next door, where the wind blows in the servants' room and the hall is cooled by a gust of wind [4]. It turns out that this is the place where Zhang Jingxiu used to support his elderly mother. There are stone stairs on the side of the building, which can lead to the second and third floors of the building. The fourth floor is the Inviting Mountain Pavilion, 17.5 metres high, the highest building in the garden, with the idea of 'inviting mountains and rivers into the pavilion'. The pavilion can be climbed to overlook the scenery in the garden. The pavilion is shaped like a watchtower, with a water-rubbed green brick structure, paved with brown and red brick steps, decorated with flower terraces, flower paths and rockeries, and the light and elegant style of the garden appears to be in harmony.

You can't help but wander around in the reverie of the past and the present, sighing at "how many buildings in the smoke and rain", how much time has passed, and how the garden is still glowing and new today, which is really too rare. It is really too rare.

For many years now, Dongguaners have been fond of this Chinese garden with its pavilions, pavilions, qin, chess, calligraphy and painting, and "No. 32 Keyuan Road" is a symbol of affection in everyone's heart. It is because the garden, which incorporates Sun Tzu's Art of War in its

architecture, is well connected to all directions, and its strong flavour of poetry, painting and elegant style is wonderfully tranquil and pleasing to the eye.

## 3. The inspiration of Ke Yuan gardening to modern gardening in Dongguan

Thinking across time and space, from the traditional to the modern, the courtyard landscape of Ke Yuan is a masterpiece of the classical garden master Ji Cheng's "Garden Ye", which is a masterpiece of "skillfulness in borrowing, refinement in the body of the appropriate", and an excellent example of the "two views and three natures" of the ancient people of Lingnan.[5] As Dongguan is creating a better living environment with "blue sky, green land and clear water", and building a higher level of garden city to forest city, the succession and innovation of Ke Yuan's gardening ideas will be an important inspiration for modern gardening in Dongguan and even in China as the study of Ke Yuan continues.

### 3.1. Inspiration from holistic thinking

The first is to learn from the gardening philosophy of the garden to "a stone's throw from the mountains" approach to cohesion of homes and gardens in one, urban land in Dongguan is increasingly tight, change the past purely to build houses and reinforced concrete structures, the construction of urban squares and large areas of hard material paving, urban greening but it is always difficult to arrange the land index of thinking. Thus, innovative thinking, with a holistic view of the idea, co-ordinated urban planning, co-ordinated urban infrastructure, co-ordinated urban landscaping together to achieve a colourful, common desire to achieve a beautiful garden to play an important role in inspiration.

### 3.2. Inspiration to pass on the culture of history and capture the pulse of the zeitgeist thinking

The building materials have been inherited from the past, absorbing the poetic and pictorial mood of the classical Chinese gardens in the south of the Yangtze River, as well as the overflowing colours of the Western glass streams, and its highly refined skills have been blended to an artistic height that is difficult to reach in modern gardening.

### 3.3. Territoriality and the inspiration of a sustainable development perspective

Regionalism is not narrow localism, but gardeners should first understand the topography, landscape and climate of the people, conceptualize the landscape according to regional characteristics, layout pavilions and pavilions, dredge mountains and water bodies, configure fruits and flowers, and form an idyllic landscape that is rich in people and goods, satisfying the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability to meet the needs of future generations, and without jeopardizing the interests of the left and right neighbors. [6]

The concept of territoriality and sustainability is embedded in the science of development. In analyzing the morphological composition of the Park, one can see separation, intersection, overlap, overlay and fusion in a variety of forms, we see fusion more often than not when we

go to study it. The fusion of the buildings of the Park is firstly reflected in the overall layout of the courtyard style around the four perimeters. This layout helps to reduce the influence of the outside of the courtyard and to maintain the privacy of the house; yet the garden can also be integrated with the surrounding landscape and fields by 'borrowing' the landscape. The architectural format of the garden is integrated with the pavilions and pavilions by means of the Corridor and the Path of Flowers, while the Kexuan and the Shuangqing Room, the Green House and the Ketang are integrated from the flat to the three-dimensional by means of the Shibang and the Steps. This fusion of planes overcomes the disadvantage of the wet summer rainfall in Dongguan, while the triangular sloping roofs and the fusion of double and even four-storey buildings on the façade create a small environment that is warm in winter and cool in summer.

This fully reflects the regional and holistic character of the garden. This scientific approach, which is centred on the integration of morphological design, combining separation, overlap, intersection and fusion, the scientific consideration of flowerbeds and flower bases, the complete adoption of natural ventilation, and the gaps in the garden paths to give the earth breath and to remove rainwater and reduce surface temperatures, is an important inspiration for contemporary energy conservation and consumption reduction. This scientific concept of sustainable development is different from today's preference for a large number of hard paved permeable concrete structures underneath which is an impermeable reinforced concrete structure forming a large amount of surface runoff and causing a heat island effect, and is well worth further research and study.

It has been proven that the Phoenix Tea House in Dongguan People's Park is a simulation of the Green House, and the Garden within a Garden in the Shuilian Forest Park has been integrated into the layout of the Ke Yuan, making it a popular attraction for visitors. Therefore, the inheritance of the excellent gardens of Dongguan, including the Nanshe Ancient Architectural Complex and the Huangqi Ancient Temple, represented by the Ke Yuan, has profound implications for the construction of modern outstanding gardens of affluence without losing the idyllic scenery, and is worthy of in-depth study and learning by those who care about and are engaged in garden construction. Regarding gardeners, as Zhang Wenying said, a modern landscape gardener is far from being a skilled craftsman with artistic talent, but should be a combination of technology, art and business [7]." According to the concept of "two views and three natures" to guide the work of modern gardening, the integration of ancient and modern Chinese and foreign, poetic and picturesque gardens will be a dream come true.

## 4. Conclusion

Jiangnan architecture in general is ethereal and small, exquisite and meticulous, emanating a gentle temperament everywhere; northern royal gardens are solemn and calm, and in order to adapt to the cold and bitter winter and windy summer climate in the north, a sense of closed and heavy architecture is created, a sense of rigidity that is different from that of Jiangnan gardens; and Lingnan gardens are mainly life-like in their architecture, using less of the Jiangnan such as pavilions and pavilions in the garden courtyard [8]The architecture of the Lingnan gardens is mainly life-like, with less Jiangnan garden architecture such as pavilions and pavilions used in the garden courtyards. As one of the most important representatives of the classical gardens of Lingnan, the garden maker is not bound by dogma and is flexible in the construction of hills, water, rocks, architecture, choice of flowers and trees, and decorative furniture according to regional and functional configurations. It is not only an expression of traditional Lingnan culture, but also contains the unique aesthetic and different aesthetic needs of the people of Lingnan. What Dongguan Ke Garden leaves us is a brick-built, visible history. The rediscovery and interpretation of this traditional artistic beauty of landscape gardening is also the root and source of the innovative development of landscape garden aesthetics, the inheritance and innovation of traditional art, and the starting point of our march towards modern art.

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