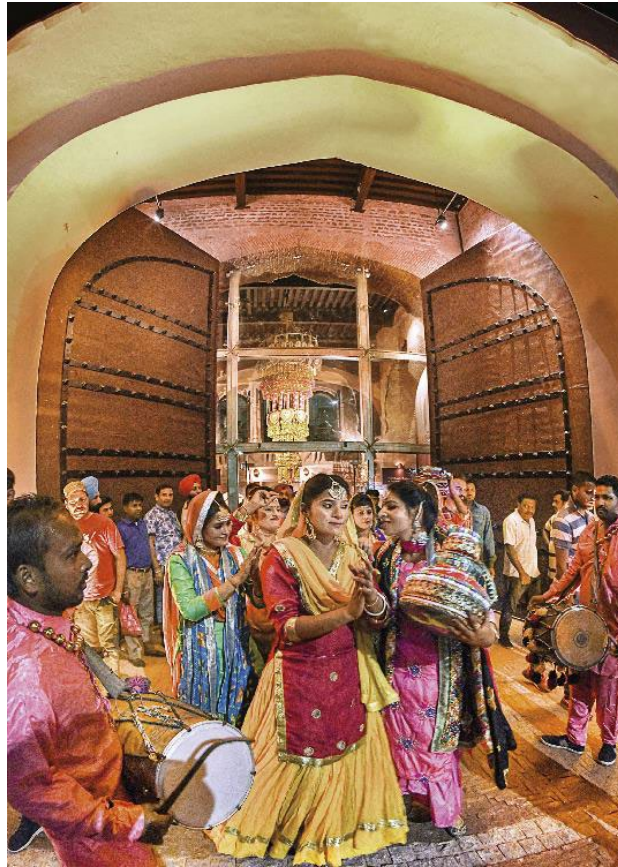


UNESCO  
Asia-Pacific Awards for  
*Cultural Heritage  
Conservation*

– 2023 –

**Winners Citations**

### Award of Excellence

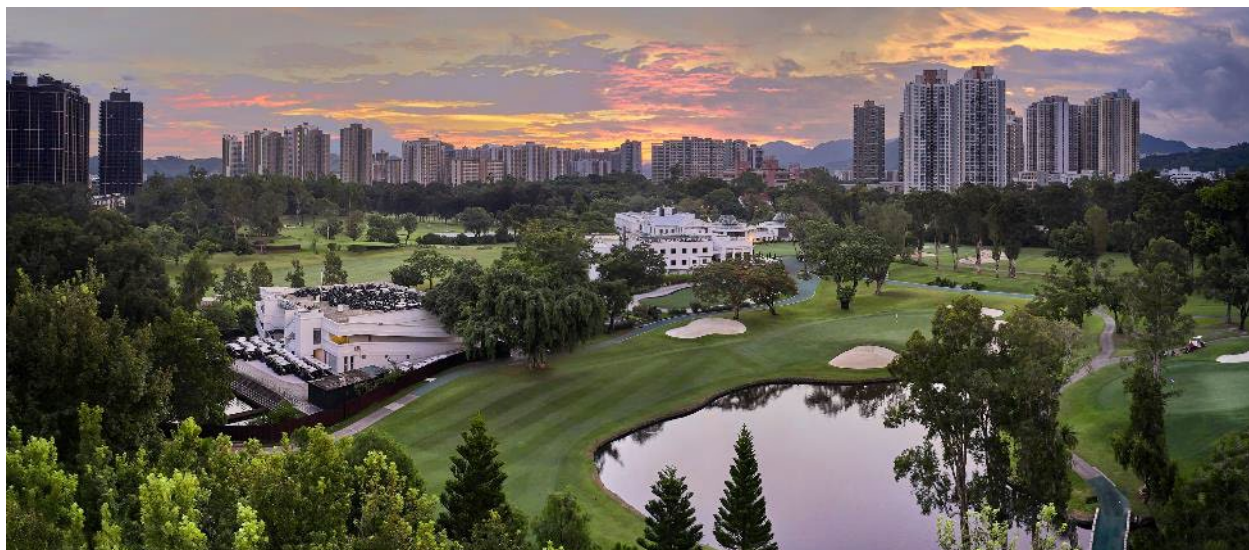


#### **Project Name: Rambagh Gate and Ramparts**

Location: Punjab, India

With people, heritage and creativity at its core, the Rambagh Gate and Ramparts project demonstrates an exceptional model for an inclusive and resilient urban revitalization. Strategically located at the intersection of the Maharaja Ranjit Singh's nineteenth-century city wall and the new city of Amritsar, the three-storied structure was competently restored for its continued use by the historical gate community as a traditional market, a government school, and a municipal printing press. The project reversed centuries-old deterioration and revived the original form and materiality by employing traditional building techniques and locally produced materials, such as the characteristic *Nanakshahi* bricks set in lime mortar. Beyond structural restoration and social infrastructure upgrades for improved working and learning environments within the gate and the surrounding locality, active public engagement has established a sense of pride and collective identity to the community, thereby reinstating the historical property as a major platform for cultural exchange. Driven by an exemplary people-centered approach for conservation, this project has not only reconnected the local authorities and the diverse host communities—including marginalized groups—but has also paved the way for fostering a vibrant and uniquely localized cultural experience of the historical city through contemporary interpretations using arts, media and other creative approaches.

## Award of Distinction



### **Project Name: Fanling Golf Course**

Location: Hong Kong SAR, China

The multi-disciplinary effort of the Fanling Golf Course project has strengthened the socio-ecological commitment and 'people-nature-culture' relationship of Greater China's oldest championship golf course, establishing a welcome precedent for conserving a unique typology of landscape heritage, one located amid increasingly urbanized surroundings and subject to larger developmental pressures. Epitomizing a commendable undertaking for environmental stewardship, the landscape conservation management plan entailed numerous technical studies which strategically incorporated strengthened ecological values and biodiversity preservation measures, while enhancing heritage interpretation and community outreach components for attaining a holistic management of the site. The project brought together diverse living and non-living, tangible and intangible, attributes of the heritage property with the *zeitgeist* of the site's origin and historic role within the Hong Kong community, allowing the continuation of local ancestral worship practices on-site. Moreover, this project created a narrative and a range of activities for a wide public, inclusive of golfers and non-golfers alike, and regardless of age and membership standing. The Fanling Golf Course project thus represents a major advancement in the promotion of an inclusive conservation management approach for cultural landscapes in both Hong Kong and the larger region.



### Award of Distinction



**Project Name: Dongguan Garden Residences**

Location: Yangzhou, China

The Dongguan Garden Residences project, a series of restorations of historic gardens along Dongguan Street, has successfully catalysed a revival of Yangzhou's time-honoured garden-making tradition which reflects a period of the city's historical development during the Ming and Qing dynasties. The project showcases a sensitive consolidation of traditional craftsmanship and contemporary landscape architectural design for the restoration of gardens of various scale, and in association with different building typologies, thereby setting a standard for technical excellence in classical Chinese garden conservation. The establishment of associations led by garden historians and enthusiasts, along with administrative support and financial incentives provided by the local government, have fueled a community-driven revival of the Chinese residential garden tradition for private courtyard houses in Yangzhou. The multiplicity of the revived gardens reflects the project's impactful methodology which galvanizes community participation and contributes to broader socio-economic objectives, driving the revitalization of a town's environmental setting and historic cultural landscape.

Special Recognition for Sustainable Development

Award of Distinction



**Project Name: Karnikara Mandapam, Kunnamangalam Bhagawati Temple**

Location: Kerala, India

The revival of Karnikara Mandapam, a semi-open, wooden-pillared prayer hall at the heart of the Kunnamangalam Bhagawati Temple complex in Kerala, stands as a testament to the unwavering commitment of the local community to ensure the temple's continuity as a place of worship and gathering. Overcoming challenges such as a lack of legal protection, as well as financial constraints, the project enabled the repair of the timber structure while preserving its original form and spatial quality, and while reinforcing its traditional character, function, spirit, and feeling. The restoration was adroitly carried out to coincide with the temple's annual festival calendar, adhering to a rigorous conservation approach based on the ancient Hindu architectural system of *Vastushastra*. The project has upheld the spiritual significance of a sacred temple and supported the livelihoods of local craftspeople. In this regard, this modest project has inspired the community to become ardent custodians of all structures within the larger temple complex, which together contribute to the holistic religious setting. The restored sanctuary establishes an admirable grassroots model for transmitting the cultural legacy of Karnikara Mandapam and other living religious sites across India and beyond.



### Award of Merit



**Project Name: Yan Nan Yuan, Peking University**

Location: Beijing, China

The restoration of Yan Nan Yuan, a historical compound of housing and gardens nestled in the bustling campus of Peking University, has deftly encapsulated the spirit of the university's humble origins from which it has grown into one of China's premier educational institutions. Through a restrained and academically-informed approach, the spatial, architectural and ecological integrity of the buildings and landscape was sensitively articulated without excessive interventions. The effort to rededicate the site as a space for university students and faculty to remember and honour the heritage of their teachers and academic pioneers was led by a commendable participatory process. A tripartite team of school departments engaged with various members of the campus community to identify Yan Nan Yuan's unique character, and to preserve its historical essence amidst the university's rapidly developing and modernizing site. With stakeholder engagement at its core, this project inspires members of the university community to value collective memory and to be committed to conserving Yan Nan Yuan and other campus buildings which represent the institution's illustrious history of scholarship, as well as the enduring legacy of its founding.

### Award of Merit



**Project Name: Pan Family Residence**

Location: Suzhou, China

The conservation and revitalization of the Pan Family Residence into a mixed-use cultural venue make for an exemplary model in Suzhou, where numerous historic garden residences grapple with finding a relevant contemporary function which respects the cultural identity of the site. Since the 1950s, a series of inappropriate uses and lack of maintenance had caused the Qing dynasty Pan Family Residence to fall into disrepair. While closely adhering to the traditional *Xiangshan Group* wood-frame craftsmanship for the structural restoration, the project improved the livability and energy efficiency of the residence by introducing innovative technological solutions. The project's thoughtful repurposing of the historical buildings, gardens and courtyards into a boutique hotel, a heritage interpretation center for the public, and a conservation studio, positions the site as a living testament to Suzhou's traditional way of life. The project underscores the viable potential of these historic garden mansions, thus serving as a beacon for the preservation of Suzhou's rich nineteenth-century heritage.

### Award of Merit



**Project Name: Church of Epiphany**

Location: Haryana, India

Initiated by the Church Committee with support from its Parish, the bottom-up restoration of the Church of Epiphany carefully retained the authenticity and functionality of a historic asset of distinct local significance. The project team adeptly introduced a values-based heritage management system, applying non-invasive interventions to counter the deterioration of the church due to age and weathering. It is notable that all decision-making was guided by a meticulous conditions assessment and documentation process, as well as by multiple stakeholder consultations, which ensured a high level of collaboration between the various user groups and technical experts. As an integral part of the project, local craftspeople were trained in traditional building materials and techniques essential for working on sites featuring this distinctive typology. Located in the historic part of Gurugram, the refurbished church is a model conservation project that is expected to catalyse a multiplier effect in the area.



### Award of Merit



#### **Project Name: David Sassoon Library and Reading Room**

Location: Mumbai, India

The careful restoration of the David Sassoon Library and Reading Room has revived the Victorian aesthetic of a nineteenth-century Gothic architectural gem in the heritage heart of Mumbai. One of the oldest institutions in the city, the library had suffered from prolonged water leakage and timber deterioration which left its collection of rare, archival books vulnerable to damage. Based on historical documentation, the project confidently reversed past inappropriate interventions and reintroduced the original high-pitched roof, thus reinforcing the visual, structural, and spatial integrity of the stately building. The refurbishment of interior fittings and furnishings contributed to bringing back the distinctive character of the Reading Room to its former grandeur. Accomplished through an array of partnerships encompassing corporations, citizen groups, local associations, and a consulate, this collective effort ensures that the celebrated David Sassoon Library will continue to serve its educational and cultural purposes for the entire Mumbai community.

## Award of Merit



### **Project Name: Bikaner House**

Location: New Delhi, India

The revitalization of Bikaner House, spearheaded by an alliance of local government entities, private corporations, and the creative sector, has saved the palace from disrepair and lent it new life as a cultural hub along the historic axis of New Delhi. Constructed in the 1930s, Bikaner House had undergone a series of insensitive adaptations for it to serve as a bus terminal, a tourism office, and subsequently as government offices. Consulting archival photographs, the project team reversed layers of inappropriate additions and reinstated the original form of the building with sound technical competence entailing the use of like-for-like materials and traditional artisanal techniques. The interior space and facilities were upgraded to accommodate the venue's new function as a platform to showcase Indian arts and culture, particularly Rajasthani crafts. The project is commendable for providing a viable case for repurposing early twentieth-century architecture in a prime setting as a vibrant cultural landmark.

## Special Recognition for Sustainable Development



### **Project Name: Pipal Haveli**

Location: Punjab, India

Situated inside a historic 'haveli', or gated precinct, Pipal Haveli is a contemporary community-centered, multi-use educational building rooted in time-honoured principles of sustainability. This new building, located in rural Punjab, emphasizes ecological and traditional building methods, as well as construction techniques that utilize locally-sourced materials and vernacular architectural language. The villagers' rich traditions of building and craft production, including earthen construction, carpentry, weaving, and embroidery, were mapped by the project team, and have been integrated into the design and functionality of the new haveli. As a hub for the sharing of knowledge across generations, Pipal Haveli supports the empowerment of women in the village through initiatives such as the BaRi Collective, which offers programmes for artists and creatives to learn and work together within the Pipal Haveli complex to strengthen women's livelihood opportunities through environmentally conscious craft practices. This project serves as an example of how the strength of nature and culture together may be a resilient, transformative force for community enrichment and economic prosperity.



### Special Recognition for Sustainable Development



**Project Name: Sikami Chhen**  
Location: Kathmandu, Nepal

The heroic reconstruction of the Sikami Chhen, built on the premises of a 200-year-old residence within the Kathmandu Valley World Heritage town of Bhaktapur, stands as an inventive and culturally authentic response to the devastating impact of the 2015 Gorkha earthquake. Following the demolition of the original building due to irreparable structural instability, the owner-artisans adroitly adapted age-old building techniques, using their traditional knowledge of brick and timber-frame architecture, to design a new house that meets the stringent safety regulations now governing the construction of new private residences in Nepal. Integrating modern craftsmanship such as steel-reinforced brick masonry into the vernacular architectural vocabulary, the newly-built Sikami Chhen prioritizes seismic protection while preserving the unique character of Bhaktapur's historic architecture. The family of woodcarvers continues to perform and showcase the transformative practice of Bhaktapur's woodcarving tradition at the in-situ workshop. The project has enhanced the overall well-being of the community, creating a safer, more resilient, and culturally enriched addition to the town's built environment, and providing a viable example for a heritage-based approach to modern construction at other earthquake-affected historic districts in the region.

## Award for New Design in Heritage Contexts



**Project Name: Erlitou Site Museum of the Xia Capital**

Location: Luoyang, China

The ambitious Erlitou Site Museum has elegantly tackled the daunting conservation and interpretive challenges implied in designing an archaeological site museum at an expansive heritage site without visible in-situ structural remains or any distinctive above-ground feature. Through a well-considered understanding of the formidable conservation imperatives of a buried archaeological site, the museum is situated a short 500 meters southwest of the excavated remains of the former capital of China's Xia dynasty. Inspired by important archaeological discoveries including the earliest bronze workshop in China, and many earth-built palaces found on site, the museum was constructed using age-old building materials such as rammed earth, and was adorned with bright copper and bronze fittings. In addition, the spatial display of artefacts embedded within the walls of the museum attempts to provide a true immersive and educational experience for visitors. The Erlitou Site Museum sets a benchmark for integrating museological functions into the overall archaeological site preservation plan through an interplay of creative concepts that enhances the holistic comprehension of the site's significance, while contributing to a paradigm for rural development in surrounding village settlements.