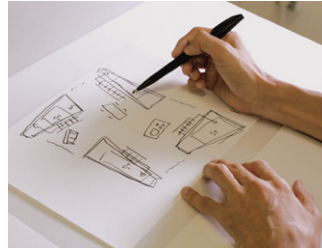


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Visions for Asia's Megacities

Asia's cities are growing at a fast and furious pace. In some regions, within just a few years fishing villages have become megacities with millions of inhabitants. Urban structures have barely had time to evolve in the process: many cities have no center, no appropriate infrastructure, and no discernible identity.

Renowned architects and urban planners are now trying to help shape the growth of Asia's cities. They aim to impose some controls on unbridled development and to come up with new architectural solutions for megacities that are unprecedented in size. First and foremost cities in China – such as Beijing, Chongqing and Shanghai – and Japan – such as Tokyo and Yokosuka – are developing projects that might serve as models for the entire world.

01 The Creative Use of Space VoD HD

In the densely built-up megacities of Asia, living space is scarce and the cost of property astronomically high. In the Japanese capital Tokyo, an entire school of architecture is dedicated to the design of compact residential units. For architects, the art lies in the creative use of available space. They build on the tiniest of plots or stack units one on top of the other. They also seek to counter the increasing isolation of urban dwellers by creating communal spaces, modern village communities within the anonymity of the metropolis.

02 Architecture and Landscape VoD HD

Most of Asia's new megacities have few public squares or green spaces. The high cost of land and the striving for maximum profit often result in a destructive style of architecture that pays no regard to nature, even though the landscape and greenery have a particular spiritual significance in Asia. But architects have again begun to consider the landscape and to integrate their buildings within it. They are trying to bring nature back into the city, with gardens on roofs and in courtyards and with pools and lakes. Sometimes, the architecture itself becomes the landscape, as in the Fake Hills project in the Chinese city of Beihai.

03 Cultural Buildings as City Centers VoD HD

Cities need spaces for people to meet – and that includes the new Asian megacities. Cultural buildings can serve as such spaces. A great number of museums, opera houses and arts centers are currently being built, especially in China. The structures are often spectacular and aim to give the cities a unique face. This approach is giving rise to a great number of bold and distinctive buildings in Asia, setting the architectural tone for the 21st century.

04 New Urban Models VoD HD

Many Asian cities are threatening to implode under their own sheer size. The perpetual influx of people is driving the skyline upwards, and transit systems are struggling to cope. Buildings are erected in every available space. A new kind of urban planning is needed. In the Chinese city of Ningbo, for example, a residential complex of 200 homes has been constructed in layers, to promote the establishment of neighborly relations. New cities are being built today in the hope they will attract millions of people in the future. Public buildings, central squares and residential districts have all been laid out, though no one knows whether these ghost towns will ever evolve into vibrant metropolises.