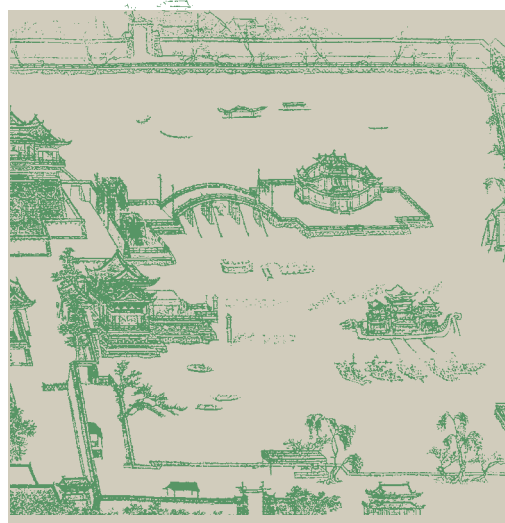


flourishing of poetry and painting depicting scenery, together with its creative methods, exerted an important influence on the designing and building of gardens of that period. To take the Wangchuan Garden Residence built near Chang'an by the famous poet and painter Wang Wei as an example—he built this garden in a natural valley endowed with hills, forests and lakes. This garden has 20 scenic spots. The scenery is extremely picturesque, and inspired a good number of his better-known poems. Although this garden is no longer in existence, people of later times still continue to sing its praises. Emperor Qianlong of the Qing Dynasty (reign from 1736 to 1795) even built a “Beiyuan Mountain Village” scenic spot in the Yuanmingyuan Garden in imitation of Wang Wei’s Wangchuan Garden Residence.

The literati of prosperous times seemed to possess especially high spirits. The famous poet Bai Juyi personally designed and constructed a garden residence in Luoyang City, and frequently would invite his friends in the literary circle to come there for drinking, singing, conversing on literature and poetry and enjoying themselves in general. Every autumn when the weather became cool and pleasant, he would come to the garden to drink and play musical instruments. After he got drunk, he would have young boys construe to play music for him in the pavilions on the pond, and the sound of the music would mingle with the mist of the lake. This poet, also built a so-called “Lushan Mountain Grass House” on the north of the Xianglu (Incense Burner) Peak of Lushan Mountain in Jiangxi Province. The walls were made of mud, and the window frames of wood, with paper for window panes, and hanging bamboo shades and curtains. No paint at all was used, giving it a natural and simple style. Inside the garden could be found tall ancient pines and cool bamboo forests. The mountain rocks were ingeniously arranged, and the pleasant sound of the waterfall could be heard at all times.

Gardens built by men of letters reflected their general



Royal gardens in Bianjing portrayed  
in the Song Dynasty painting *Jinming*  
*Pond Contest*

400 square meters in size, so one can imagine how hard it is to build a garden environment of superb design under such circumstances. In terms of the overall design of the entire garden, the east side of the garden is the residential area, divided into the inner residence and the outer residence. From the entrance to the garden through the residential gate, the halls are lined on the central axis in the order of the gate hall, the sedan hall, the main hall and the tower hall, all open and spacious in structure and tasteful in decoration. Courtyard clusters are formed with buildings utilizing artificial hills, corridors and windowed walls, which not only do not seem cramped, but rather give off a sense of tranquility and simple elegance. Located at north of the pond is the Pine-Watching and Reading Hall, with one artificial hill and two ancient pines closing into a courtyard. North of the Dianchunyi Garden at the northeastern side of the pond, lake stones are dotted round and about, forming a bamboo and stone scene complimented with plum trees, bamboos and banana trees. Through the framed oblong windows, bamboos tall and straight fill the eye with green, and plum flowers blossom from artificial hills, as if in a classic Chinese painting. The architectural groups are each unique with their individual styles, independent yet interconnected with corridors and stone paths, avoiding the possible clutter of too many buildings.

The pond sits at the center of the western part of the garden. 20 meters long on the four sides and not large in total area, it is surrounded on all sides by buildings, which are meticulous in design and location. On the east side of the pond an octagonal-shaped Arriving Moon and Wind Pavilion protrudes over the bank, forming the major scene of the pond. On the western side the Duck Shooting Corridor connects with the walls of the residential area. Entering the pavilion from the residential area, you will be greeted with a refreshing scenery with pond under foot and the Arriving Moon and Wind Pavilion across the river; or looking across from the Arriving Moon and Wind Pavilion, you will face an entirely different scene. Lake stones and artificial hills sit below the Duck Shooting Corridor at half the height of the residential wall, hovering above the pond water, while the upper half of the residential walls are decorated with artificial windows. Pavilions with upturned eaves, stones and hills with rugged edges, artificial windows on the walls, bushes in between rocks and ancient pines in front of

## Construction Technology of Private Gardens

Private gardens, regardless whether from the north or the south, whether built by scholars, officials, aristocrats or rich merchants, all have one thing in common – they all try to re-create an environment close to nature in an area with limited space. Looking through the building practices of classic private gardens, we can derive the following experiences and techniques which have become the guiding principles and rules and passed down from generation to generation.

The Grand View Garden (partial) painted by Qing painter based on the Chinese classic novel *The Dream of Red Mansion*. The painting shows the flourishing scene in noble families.





the North Sea. Water between these two “seas” was called the Middle Sea. A new layout with the North, the Middle and the South Sea was formed on the site of former Tai Ye Pond. Since then, the West Gardens had become the most important imperial gardens inside the Ming Imperial City.

After the Qing military troops crossed the Great Wall borderline and entered into Beijing City, their rulers took the Forbidden City as their dwelling place. Original imperial gardens inside the Forbidden City were kept, and structures scattered in gardens around the three seas (the North, Middle and South Sea) were built, rebuilt or enlarged. Examples were the White Pagoda, several Buddhist buildings on the north bank of the North Sea, the Jing Qing Meditating Room inside the north yard, the natural



Overlooking the Round City and the Middle and South Sea from the North Sea Lake.



Chun Garden and the Garden of Perfect Splendor, the Garden of Clear Ripples had to meet emperors' needs of holding court, so an imperial court area was located right after entering the main gate. Located on the northeast part of the garden and at the southeast foot of the Longevity Hill, this area is facing the lake and near the main gate – East Palace Gate. The reason to choose here on one hand is because that this place is close to the Garden of Perfect Splendor, and it would be convenient for emperors to travel between the two gardens; and on the other hand is because that this layout – lying against the Longevity Hill on the north and facing the Kunming Lake on the east and adjacent to the scenic area – conforms to the convention of “court in front and residence or garden in the rear”.

The East Palace Gate, located right in front of the imperial area, together with the square, screen walls, decorated archways display a manner of magnificence typical of the imperial architecture. Entering the gate, one immediately faces the architectural group of Hall of Benevolence and Longevity. This hall was the place where emperors held court.

Surrounding the Hall of Benevolence and Longevity, there are several groups of quadrangle courtyards – the Yi Yun House, Yu Lan Hall and the Happiness and Longevity Hall. These are the imperial living quarters that belong to the “back residence” in the convention of imperial court.

### The Scenic Area in Front of the Hill

As the main scenic area occupying 88% of the garden, this area consists of the area south of the Longevity Hill and the complete Kunming Lake area. It can be divided into two parts – the front hill and the front lake.

The Longevity Hill faces south and is adjacent to the Kunming Lake. Because of the vast field of vision in front of the hill, the main scenic structures in the garden are concentrated around here. The most significant structure, the Great Gratitude and



The boat scene of the Qing Yan Boat in the Summer Palace which imitated the shape of western steamboat