

AZURE

Elizabeth Pagliacolo Jun 16, 2023

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When I meet Winka Dubbeldam at the lobby of her Venice hotel, her phone is blowing up. Congratulatory texts keep pinging in from friends who have had a chance to view her Strange Objects, New Solids and Massive Things exhibition, with its impressive five-metre-long 3D-printed model, at Palazzo Bembo. Along with the publication of a book of the same title, the show marks a momentous occasion: the home of the Asian Games in Hangzhou, China, one of the major works included in both, is now officially open and complete.

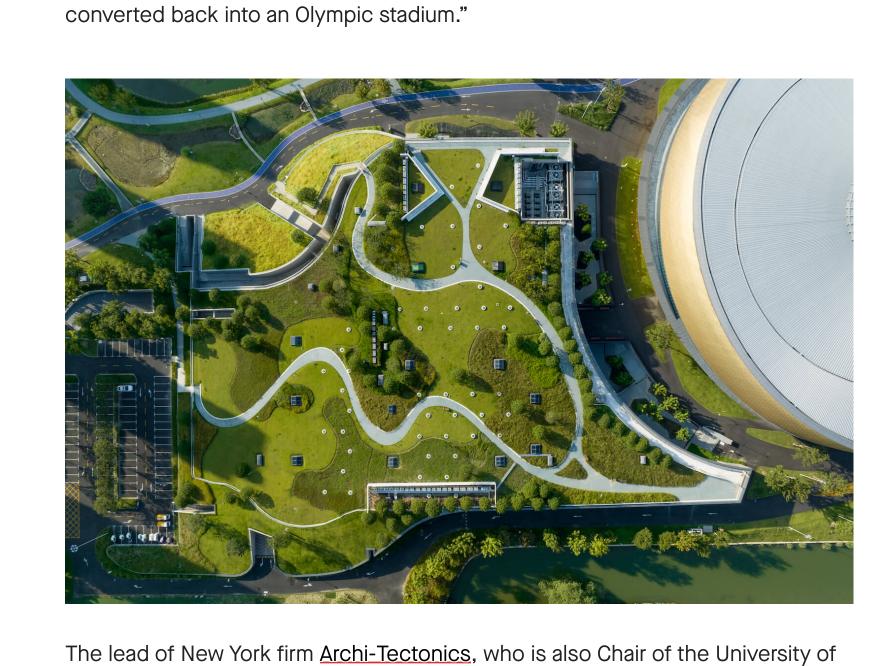
"It was supposed to open last September, but because of COVID it was postponed until now," Dubbeldman explains. "We thought we were building something for the Olympics and then later they can convert it into a concert hall.

But it actually started as a concert hall and shopping centre, and it's now being

Archi-Tectonics' Asian Games Eco-Park is Hybrid by **Nature**

The New York firm Archi-Tectonics has completed the bucolic and transformational setting for the Asian Games in Hangzhou, China.

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Pennsylvania's Weitzman School of Architecture, Dubbeldam had set out early on with her team to create a plan based on hybridity: the sports stadiums - one for table tennis, the other for field hockey – should be able to be seamlessly converted into cultural centres or facilities for other purposes and avoid becoming "white elephants" on a neglected site. So the inversion of the original plan - that the buildings would first host the 2022 Asian Games (also known as XIX Asian) before being transformed for use by the surrounding community delivered proof that these buildings have lasting power. But the project is much more than just a pair of stadiums. It's an idyllic landscape, co-designed with another Dutch-born, New York-based practitioner,

Jerry van Eyck of !Melk, that stretches 116 acres and includes rolling hills, a valley, a river and a series of bridges. It's connected to the surrounding, skyscraper-dense neighbourhood by three subway lines.

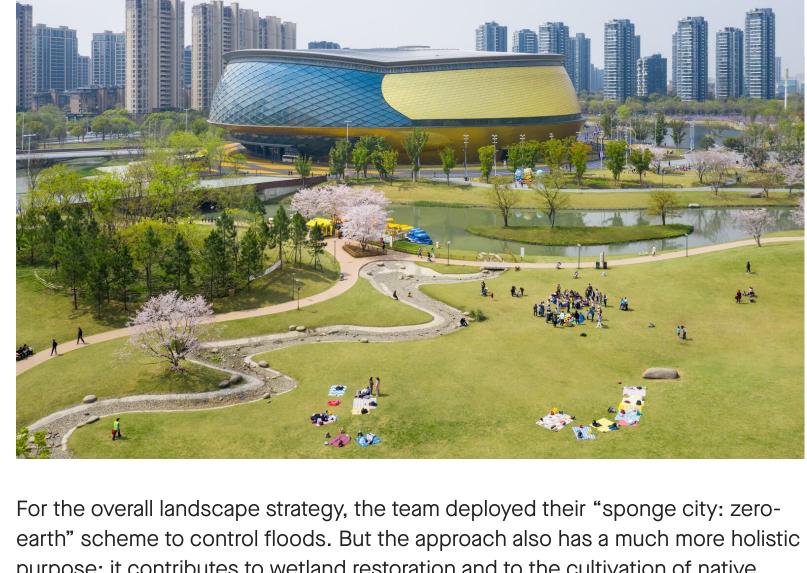


32,500-square-metre tennis stadium, the 5,000-seat field-hockey stadium capped by a wing-like, 125-metre-span parabolic roof and - below this plane, under 20-metre-high rolling hills and nestled into the valley - 60,000 square metres of parking and a 36,000-square-metre shopping mall and fitness and community centres.

"You don't see most of the buildings because we were asked to make it 85 per

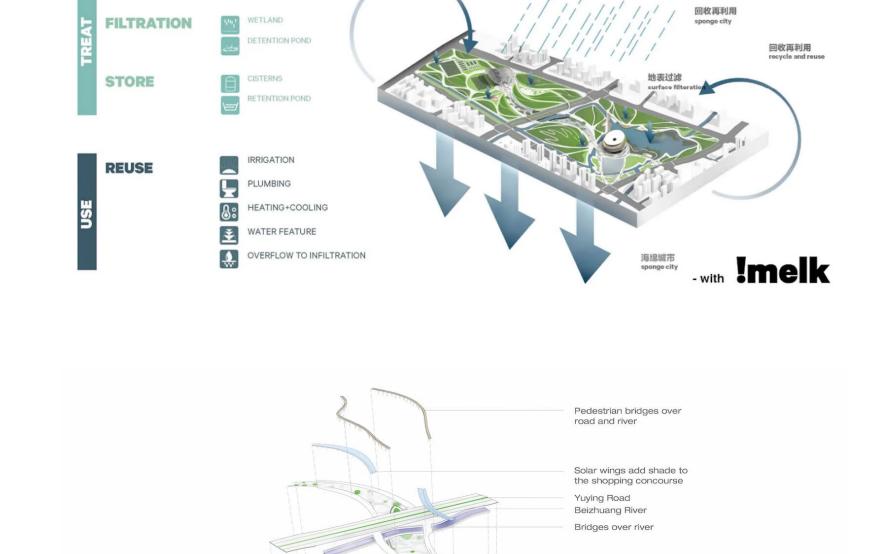
cent park," explains Dubbeldman. "People are full-on camping in it." Altogether,

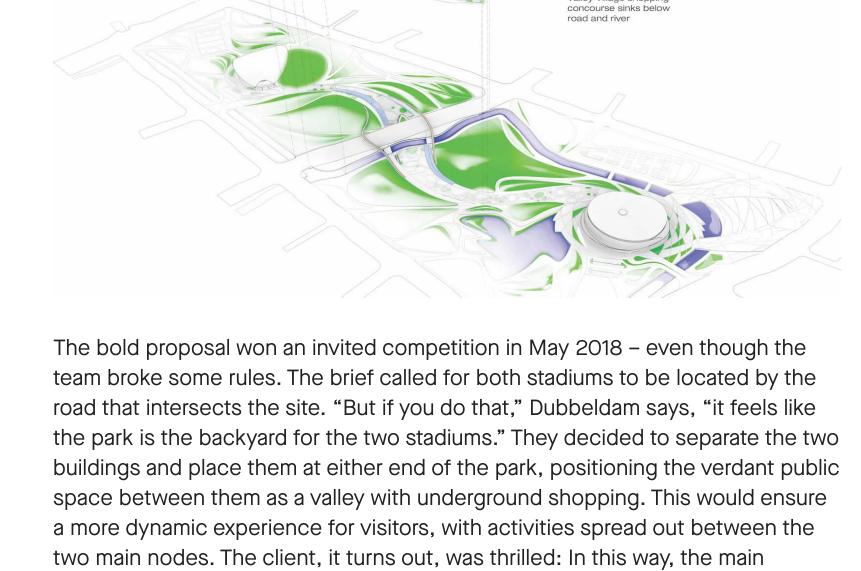
the total construction area is 188,000 square metres, which includes the



purpose: it contributes to wetland restoration and to the cultivation of native plants and an extensive tree canopy. "Zero-earth" refers to the practice of reusing excavated earth to sculpt the site's topography: the soil dug up to create the subterranean mall was re-moulded into the green hills on the surrounding below-level parking garages. All of the valley structures are naturally illuminated via skylights.

DELAY







That stadium is a feat unto itself. Shaped like a spinning top frozen in motion, and

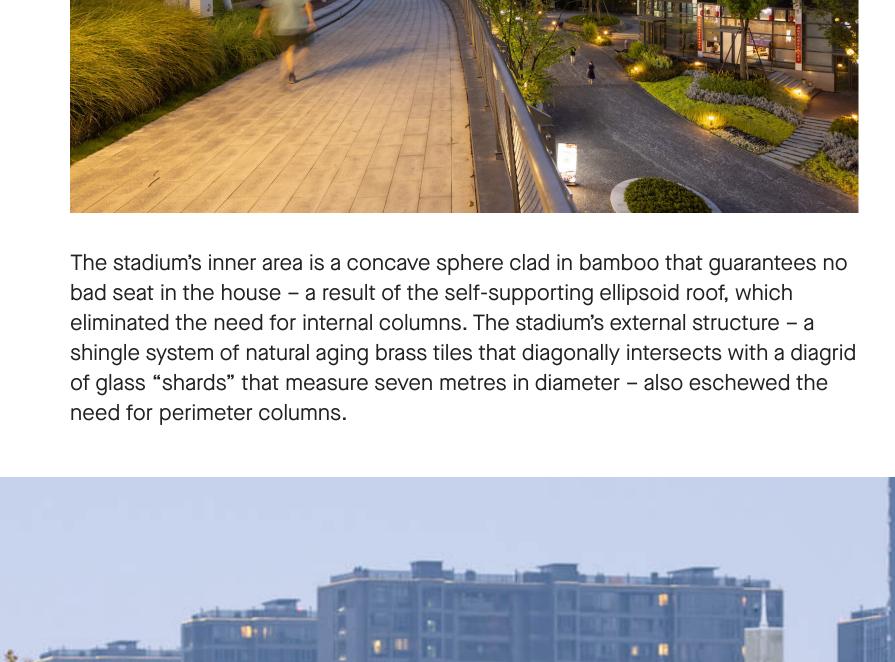
inspired by a jade stone artifact native to the area that combines cubic and

cylindrical volumes, it represents an exploration into how "multiple, non-stable

object" in Archi-Tectonics' exhibition and book titles is derived from these ideas

geometries" can merge into one "smooth object" or "unibody." The "strange

of both hybrid functionality and form-making.





For Archi-tectonics, setbacks morphed into opportunities. The last time the firm

was on site was in 2019. "And the rest we did with drones," says Dubbeldam. The

vantage points, including incredibly close up. "The funny thing is, when you're

there in person, you could never see these buildings from the ground because

local team commandeered robotic devices to capture images from various

they're enormous. But with drones it was really good. So we learned something from Covid, that site visits in that remote way are better than standing there." Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Culture, Landscape, Sport



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