

Project: Yangzheng Library

Design Team: SAKO Architects

Size: 772 m²

Location: Tianshui, China



Feature:

Project - Japanese architect Keiichiro Sako and his Tokyo-based firm SAKO Architects have crafted an exceptional public library that stands as China's first carbon-neutral reading facility. Situated in the rural village of Panjizhai in Gansu Province, the Yangzheng Library embodies Sako's thoughtful approach to seamlessly integrating architecture with its natural surroundings. Occupying the site of a former century-old residence, the 800-square-meter library is envisioned as a vibrant community hub catering to diverse programs, from family gatherings to educational workshops. Sako's design deftly navigates the building's "eclectic" context, minimizing windows along the perimeter to ensure acoustic privacy while opening the central courtyard to the sky above with frameless glazing.

The library's square-based plan and elevation, inspired by the mandala, create a serene and ordered spatial experience. Framed views of the ever-changing sky, with light, clouds, and rain continuously transforming the courtyard, instill a meditative quality throughout the reading spaces. The modular bookshelves further echo this geometric language, effortlessly integrating with the building's façade. Complementing the project's thoughtful passive design strategies – including robust insulation, on-site solar and wind power generation, and geothermal heating – the Yangzheng Library stands as a pioneering model for sustainable rural revitalization in China, enriching the local community while serving as a green landmark for the region.

Design Team - Founded in 2004, SAKO Architects has emerged as a leading architectural design firm, distinguished by its founder Keiichiro Sako's transformative approach to creating thoughtful, sustainable spaces. Since establishing its first office in Beijing, the practice has expanded to Tokyo and Fukuoka, completing over 160 projects across China,

Japan, Korea, Mongolia, and Spain.

Sako's versatile design language is shaped by his extensive experience, having worked under renowned architect Riken Yamamoto prior to founding his own studio. This diverse background enables SAKO Architects to tackle a wide range of project types, from private residences and retail stores to senior living facilities and public libraries. Underpinning each commission is a commitment to crafting holistic solutions that seamlessly integrate architecture, interiors, and urban planning.

The firm's accolades are a testament to its design excellence, including honors such as the Good Design Award and JCD Design Award in Japan, the Vanceva World of Color Awards in the United States, and being named one of the "10 Most Influential Architects in China." Beyond conventional practice, Sako has also served as the first president of the World Association of Overseas Japanese Entrepreneurs, demonstrating his visionary leadership.

As SAKO Architects continues to shape innovative environments that enrich communities, the studio's enduring legacy is its ability to transform dreams into thoughtfully crafted realities.