

10th Anniversary – Ben Yeung & Associates Ltd

Attitude changes life

Interview with

Mr Ben S K Yeung, Founder, Ben Yeung & Associates

In 2002, Mr Ben K S Yeung established his own architectural firm Ben Yeung & Associates Ltd (BYAL) in Hong Kong and Guangzhou. With the belief of ‘attitude changes life’ and emphasis on continuous upgrading of design capability, the firm has grown over the last ten years to become one of the more successful design studios in the China region.

Today, BYAL has offices in Hong Kong, Guangzhou and Shanghai. With a combined workforce of over 100 people, the company is capable to provide full-fledged and dedicated professional design service for various types of building projects, interior design, town planning and landscape design, etc. The firm also plays a major role in project planning and management for investors and real estate developers in the region.

Please tell us about your background and experience in the early days.

After graduated from the Department of Architecture, the University of Hong Kong in 1991, I worked in a local architectural practice and later joined Michael Chiang & Associates as a partner. In 1992, I became a member of the Hong Kong Institute of Architects and in 1993 attained the Authorized Person status. In 2002, Ben Yeung & Associates was founded in Hong Kong and in the same year, a branch office was set up in Guangzhou.

Back in the 90s, I had accumulated enormous



Shimei Bay Yacht Club

experience by working on a number of notable projects, including Hanxin Garden, a residential project in Wuhan developed by New World Development Group; a prime residential development in Clearwater Bay and APM in Kwun Tong, developed by Sun Hung Kai Properties.

What are the objectives behind the founding of Ben Yeung & Associates?

I had a very different view on the future of the Hong Kong and Mainland China real estate market with my previous partners back in those days. I insisted that the Mainland China market should be pursued at the same time and not neglected. I predicted that the real estate market in the Mainland would become strong. The fast expanding property market in the Mainland, today, speaks for itself.

What were the challenges in the beginning?

The year 2002 was definitely not a favorable time to start a business. The SARS struck the region and followed by economic depression. Everybody was taking a ‘wait and see’ attitude. Most of the developments were either stopped or shelved. To me, the old Chinese saying is always true – Crisis brings Opportunities. I started from scratches and took small jobs, projects that most Hong Kong-based architectural firms would not take due to low profit margin and high overhead in Hong Kong.

Gradually, my effort was rewarded with a number of small to medium size projects, including building and interior design work, master planning, landscape design and project management in the Hong Kong and China region.

In the beginning, we did not have a lot of staff. I used to be personally responsible for the bulk of the work, including client servicing, design briefing, actual design work and on-site supervision, etc. Later on, I realized that this experience is invaluable to me for my expansion which came much sooner than I expected.



From your experience, tell us some major difference in fulfillment between projects in Hong Kong and the Mainland.

Design creativity is more flexible in the Mainland because building regulations are not rigid and there is a lot of room to accommodate new ideas. On the other hand, Mainland clients are generally less professional and ready to accept ideas which they presume new or trendy. In recent years, they are more exposed to international projects and have gradually raised their appreciation level of innovative architecture and tend to voice their opinion with more subtle considerations.

I particularly emphasized on design capability. My experience in the early days of establishment told me that it is important to know your clients, their motives and feeling. The end product has to be humanized and functional. To achieve this, we are very focus on design work which covers the smallest detail in every aspect of planning, design, construction, interior contracting and building services.

Tell us some of your major projects in the region.

In the past decade, we have successfully completed more than 100 projects of various nature and development scale. We also worked closely with international renowned architectural practices to provide dedicated design service for special projects such as hospitals, technology and institutional projects.

In recent years, due to market demand, we have been engaged to do design work and renovation for many shopping malls, hotels and resorts. We have developed a special project team to provide one-stop service from design to completion, which greatly increases project execution efficiency.

Some of our major projects include: Le Meridian Shimei Bay Beach Resort & Spa Hotel, Hainan, developed by China Resources Group; Howard Johnson Lingding Resort, Zhuhai, developed by Zhuhai Gree Real Estate; Guiyang Shangri-la Hotel; SOGO Department

Store, Shenyang; Channel One Shopping Mall, Shanghai, developed by Black Stone Group; Global 188 Shopping Centre, Suzhou; Popark Shopping Mall, Guangzhou; China Southern Airline Sanya Building; A Mall and Vertical City in Guangzhou, etc.

What are your future plans?

Today, Ben Yeung & Associates has a combined workforce of over 100 people with offices in Hong Kong, Guangzhou and Shanghai. The majority of our staffs are professionally trained architects, designers and engineers. Our new office premises in Guangzhou occupies more than 1,000 square meters and is designed to accommodate the company's expansion into the next decade. We will continue to hire more young and energetic design talents and provide professional training to them to ensure that they will, one day, become valuable asset of the company.

I foresee the Hong Kong and Mainland China real estate market will continue to grow, although the pace may slow down a bit in the future. Just like many developers and architectural firms in Hong Kong, the Mainland market is large enough for all of us who have the will and capability to explore and create.

Finally, I would like to say again, Ben Yeung & Associates is predominantly a design studio with a devotion to serve the best interest of its clients.



Guomen Spring City, Ruili, Yunnan

Hotels

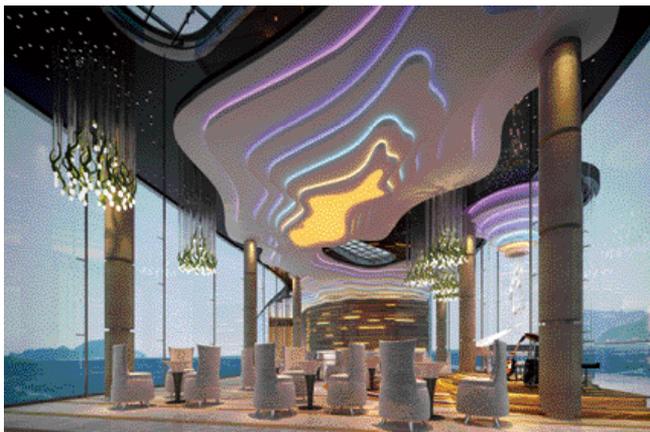
Le Meridian Shimei Bay Beach Resort & Spa Hotel

Developer: China Resources Shimei Bay Tourism Development (Hainan) Ltd



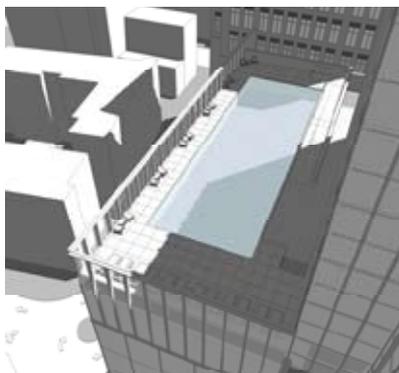
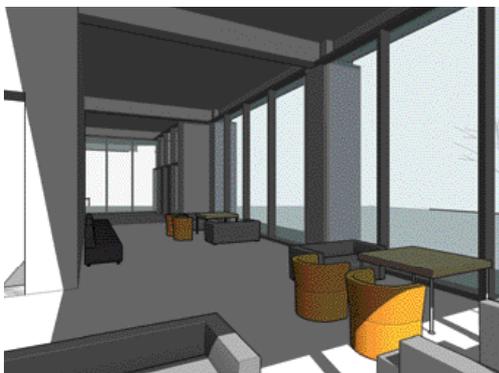
Howard Johnson Lingding Resort Zhuhai

Developer: Zhuhai Gree Real Estate Co Ltd



Guiyang Shangri-la Hotel

Guiyang, Guizhou



Shopping malls

SOGO Shenyang

Developer: Lifestyle International Holdings Ltd



Channel One Shopping Mall

Developer: The Black Stone Group



Global 188 Shopping Centre

Developer: Suzhou Runjian Property Development Co Ltd



Popark Shopping Mall

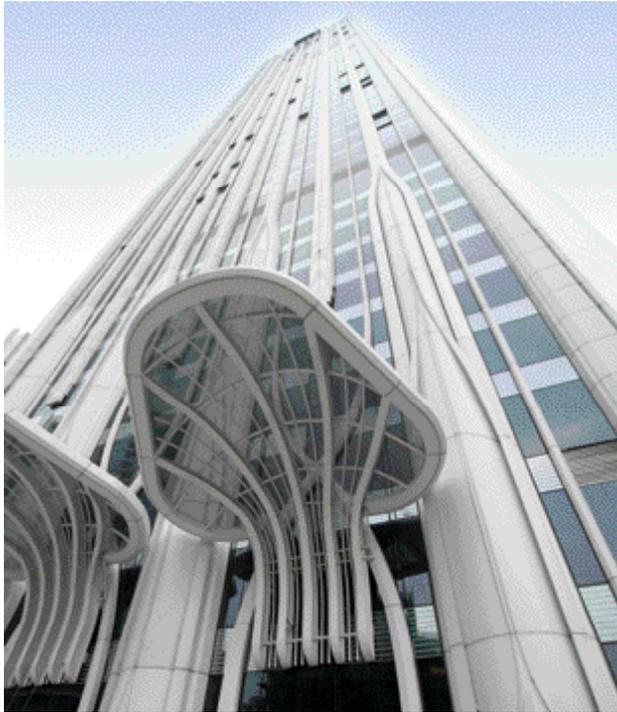
Developer: Yuexiu Property Company Limited, Guangzhou City Construction & Development Corporation, Waykon Development Co Ltd, Guangzhou East Railway Station Sky Metro City Co Ltd



Commercial buildings

Vertical City

Developer: Guangzhou Jiangnan Property Co Ltd



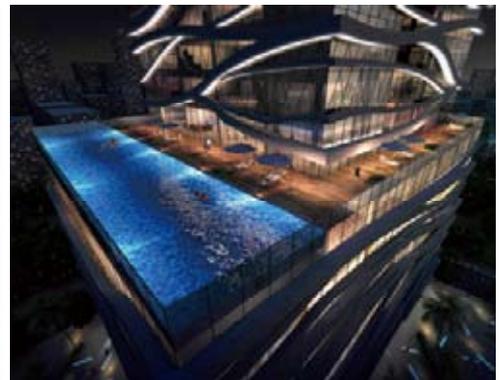
A Mall

Developer: Guangzhou Jixiang Real Estate Development Co Ltd



China Southern Airline Sanya Building, Sanya

Developer: Sanya China Southern Airline Real Estate Development Co Ltd



Interiors

Ben Yeung & Associates Ltd

Guangzhou office



Shimei Bay Resort Residence

Developer: China Resources Shimei Bay
Tourism Development (Hainan) Ltd



Shimei Bay Palace

Developer: China Resources Shimei Bay
Tourism Development (Hainan) Ltd



Top Mansion, Zhengzhou

Developer: China Resources Land Co Ltd (Zhengzhou)



Master planning & Architectural design

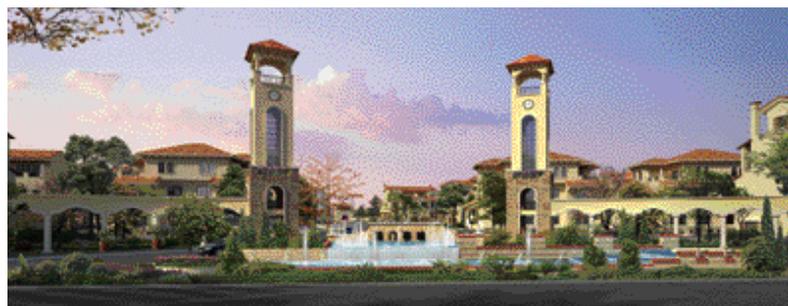
Fujian Cheng Gong International Exhibition & Convention Centre

Developer: China Wallink Holding Group Co Ltd / Nanan Government



Guomen Spring City, Ruili, Yunnan

Developer: Yun Nan Rui Li Hua Fu Real Estate Development Co Ltd



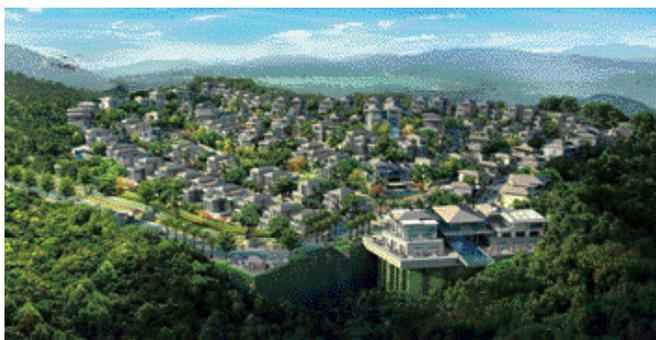
Shimei Bay Yacht Club

Developer: China Resources Shimei Bay
Tourism Development (Hainan) Ltd



Mountain Villas & Spa Hotel

Developer: Guangzhou Pulian Real Estate
Development Co Ltd



Congratulations

10th Anniversary

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