

FEATURE

the Garden



Seattle Chinese Garden *is a vibrant landmark to inspire new perspectives*

Seattle will soon be home to one of the most unique gardens and cultural centers in the country. Seattle Chinese Garden will provide a place for community celebrations and personal tranquility through a beautiful and ancient Chinese experience. The garden will also feature 12 buildings, including an education

miniature but complete universe where all the forces of nature were present. The principles of yin and yang played out in complex arrangements of water, rock, plants and architecture. Since gardens often were small they achieved an impression of size and complexity by means of suggestion and surprise: the waterfall springing from a secret source, the winding path leading into a hidden courtyard. Chinese gardens are distinctive in their symbolic use of water, stone, plants, and architecture to create a place of beauty, vibrant with flowing qi, the universal energy. These four elements manifest the opposing principles of yin (earth/receptive/dark) and yang (heaven/creative/bright). Chinese philosophy views yin and yang as the interactive, cycling forces that drive the rhythms of life. In the Chinese garden we thus experience a

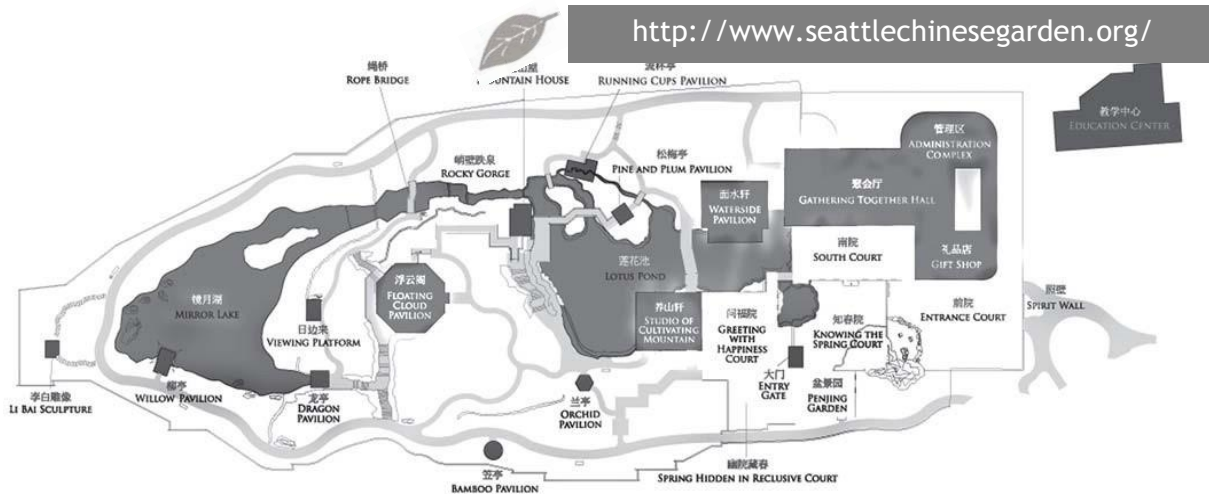


center and a banquet hall with special event seating for up to 200 people. The 85-foot Floating Clouds Pavilion will soar over the Garden, placed on an axis with the Space Needle. As a major destination and cultural institution, the Seattle Chinese Garden will inspire new perspectives on world affairs and illuminate China and her cultural and economic influence on the Pacific Northwest. From ancient times Chinese city planning has been characterized by symmetry and control. Chinese gardens, meanwhile, appear natural and unregulated. Whereas cities were Confucian, gardens were liberated and Daoist: one promoted social order and hierarchy, while the other encouraged personal fulfillment. The garden was understood as a microcosm, a



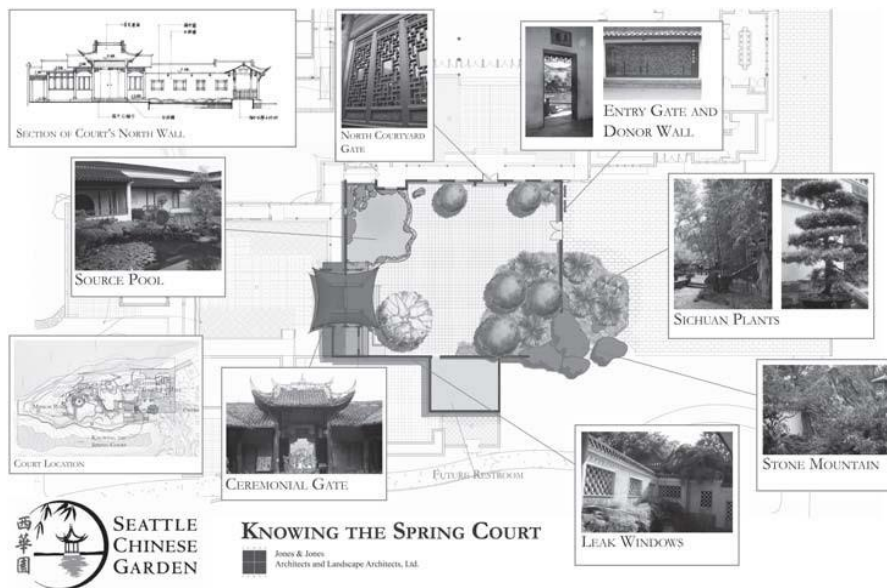
Song Mei August 2010

microcosm of the universe and an inspiring convergence of nature and culture.



Seattle Chinese Garden, also known as Xi Huan Yuan, is located on 4.6 acres at the north end of the South Seattle Community College campus at 6000 16th Avenue SW, in West Seattle. The site features a panoramic view of downtown Seattle, Washington, Elliott Bay and the Cascade Mountains, including Mt. Baker and Mt. Rainier.

Though the grand opening is not scheduled until mid May, the South Seattle Community College Chinese Garden opened the gates to **Knowing the Spring Courtyard** to the public on the first Sunday after the Chinese New Yea. More than 300 people streamed



into the courtyard on February 6 2011. Visitors can view slide presentations of the construction process as part of docent-guided tours. Tours are free and could last 90 minutes. When completed, it will be one of the largest Chinese gardens outside of China. Designed and built in conjunction with architects and artisans from Seattle and its sister city, Chongqing, the garden will be the first in the United States to authentically represent the Sichuan style.

The Garden will feature Sichuan horticulture and the massive rock formations inspired by China's Yangtze River gorges.



