



CERAMIC TOPOGRAPHIES: A MUSEUM FOR YIXING'S CLAY CULTURE

Posted on May 13, 2025 by Dima Fadel



Categories: [Energy and sustainability](#), [expanding design practices](#), [Kengo Kuma](#), [Middle Density](#), [Project](#), [Technology and fabrication](#), [xavi gonzalez](#)

Tags: [Adaptive reuse](#), [artisanal collaboration](#), [ceramic architecture](#), [Chinese ceramics](#), [contemporary Chinese architecture](#), [cultural heritage](#), [Museum Design](#), [purple clay](#), [traditional craftsmanship](#), [Yixing pottery](#)

The UCCA Clay Museum is conceived as a new cultural landmark in Yixing, a city renowned as the “ceramic capital” of China, famous for its distinctive purple clay pottery. Situated on a site historically central to the region's ceramic production—with numerous former ateliers and factories—the project is part of a broader masterplan aimed at revitalizing the area as a contemporary hub for ceramic arts. The museum integrates exhibition spaces, active workshops, and artist studios, while thoughtfully preserving the industrial heritage of the site.

Architecturally, the building's massing is inspired by Shushan Mountain, a nearby natural formation celebrated by Northern Song dynasty poet Su Dongpo, and by the ancient form of the dragon kiln—an elongated, sloped kiln used for over six centuries. The resulting mountain-like volume establishes a strong sculptural presence, pierced at key points to align with the axis of a former pottery factory and an adjacent canal, thereby weaving the new structure into the existing spatial and cultural fabric.

urbanNext Lexicon

Ceramic Topographies: A Museum for Yixing's Clay Culture
<https://urbannext.net/ceramic-topographies-a-museum-for-yixings-clay-culture/>



ISSN : 2575-5374

urbanNext Lexicon

Ceramic Topographies: A Museum for Yixing's Clay Culture

<https://urbannext.net/ceramic-topographies-a-museum-for-yixings-clay-culture/>

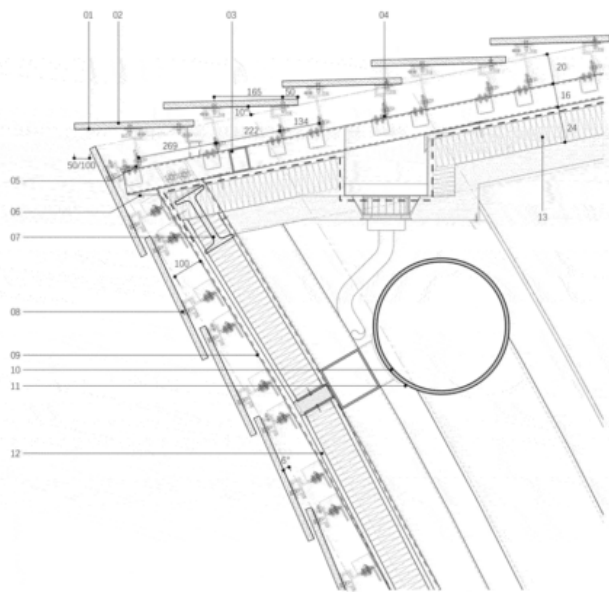


ISSN : 2575-5374

urbanNext Lexicon

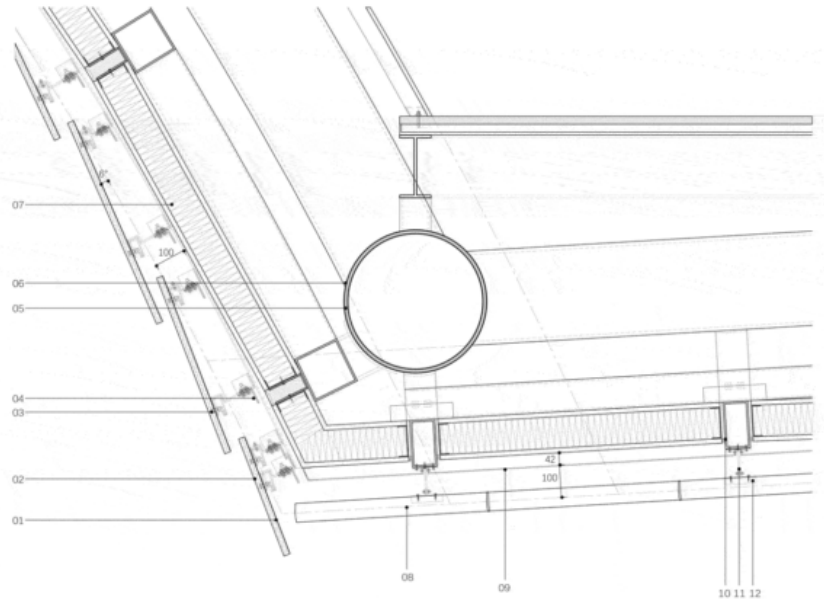
Ceramic Topographies: A Museum for Yixing's Clay Culture

<https://urbannext.net/ceramic-topographies-a-museum-for-yixings-clay-culture/>



- 01 20mm thick clay panel
- 02 1.5mm thick fiberglass mesh
- 03 80×40×4 rectangular steel tube main keel
- 04 50×50mm angle steel secondary keel
- 05 163×63×6 galvanized angle steel
- 06 aluminum fascia board, forming a T-shaped drip edge
- 07 Main steel structure
- 08 M6 screw-in stainless steel back bolt hanger
- 09 Steel column
- 10 Main steel structure beams
- 11 Thick fireproof coating
- 12 130mm thick cement fiberboard with foam ceramic insulation (100mm) as the core, forming a composite exterior wall panel
- 13 100mm thick extruded polystyrene (XPS) board

DETAIL
1:10@A3
0 100 200 400 600 1000 (mm)



- 01 20mm thick clay panel
- 02 1.5mm thick fiberglass mesh
- 03 M6 screw-in stainless steel back bolt hanger
- 04 50×50mm angle steel secondary keel
- 05 Main steel structure beams
- 06 Thick fireproof coating
- 07 130mm thick cement fiberboard with foam ceramic insulation (100mm) as the core, forming a composite exterior wall panel
- 08 Bamboo, 8-10mm
- 09 Metal expanded mesh, riveted with a backing frame and T-shaped adapter
- 10 150×80×4 rectangular steel tube
- 11 Stainless steel round-head screw set
- 12 Aluminum alloy column fixing bracket

DETAIL
1:10@A3
0 100 200 400 600 1000 (mm)

The roof—an inverted shell structure shaped by the imprint of virtual spheres—is supported by four layers of interwoven wooden lattice beams. This construction not only provides structural strength but also lends the interior a sense of lightness and fluidity, guiding visual and physical movement deeper into the museum.

The façade, developed in close collaboration with local artisans, draws from the tactile and thermal qualities of handcrafted ceramics. Clad in ceramic panels with irregular surfaces and gradient glazes, the exterior shifts in appearance with changes in light and season. Warm and subtly textured like traditional Chinese teaware, the materiality of the envelope embodies the millennia-old heritage of ceramic craftsmanship in Yixing.

ISSN : 2575-5374

urbanNext Lexicon

Ceramic Topographies: A Museum for Yixing's Clay Culture

<https://urbannext.net/ceramic-topographies-a-museum-for-yixings-clay-culture/>



ISSN : 2575-5374

urbanNext Lexicon

Ceramic Topographies: A Museum for Yixing's Clay Culture

<https://urbannext.net/ceramic-topographies-a-museum-for-yixings-clay-culture/>



ISSN : 2575-5374

