CURRICULUM VITAE · NOVEMBER 2026

Jonathan Choe

Founding Director, Archigardener

Architecture and master planning for the tropics, all over the world.



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Profile

Born in the United States, Jonathan Choe studied architecture at the Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago and Paris. He then spent more than a decade at WOHA Architects in Singapore, latterly as an Associate: competitions, master plans and buildings that brought nature back into the city. In July 2021 he founded Archigardener, which designs buildings, landscapes and master plans that keep the habitat a site already has, and build new habitat into the structure: on the ground, on the roof and up the walls. He draws and paints the places he travels to.

Experience

July 2021 – present

Archigardener · Founding Director

Pre-feasibility studies, master planning and urban design, architecture, landscape and inside-outside spaces, and design consultations. Archigardener leads the design and works with a local architect of record and local engineers for permits and sign-off. Most projects start online.

Under construction
since July 2025

Essential Oil Research Centre · West Sumatra, Indonesia

Design consultant: concept to construction drawings and site support. Partner: PT Mitra Ayu.

A research centre that becomes a hill: three storeys of planted terraces, and a light steel canopy that lets the rain fall through the building into a stepwell.

Completed
July 2023 – February 2026

Canine Community Club · Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia

Client: Fable, beside BarkPark. About 235 m².

A greenhouse turned inside out: native climbers on a steel frame shade an 18 × 9.8 m glasshouse, a cool shared space for dogs and their people.

Completed
2023

Pool Terrace for Dogs & Humans · Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia

Client: BarkPark Borneo.

A terraced pool where dogs climb, leap and swim, with seat-height steps and a small amphitheatre for events.

Completed
January 2024

Ngapuh Nest · Sarawak, Borneo, Malaysia

Design and build. Around 8 m².

A forest shelter on ground screws, with a nest-like roof shaped like the canopy. The forest floor stays as it was.

Under construction
2024 – present

Boutique Heritage Hotel · Padang, West Sumatra, Indonesia

A small hotel covered in plants in the ruins of the annex of a Dutch bank of 1908. Old walls, local earth and reclaimed timber come first.

Concept
2025

Car-free Permaculture Forest City · Costa Rica

Renders in collaboration with AIMIR CG.

A car-free hilltop community above the coast: homes cluster close together around a permaculture farm, so the forest stays.

EARLIER, AT WOHA

August 2012 – June 2021

WOHA Architects, Singapore

Associate, January 2018 – June 2021
Architectural Project Manager, July 2014 – December 2017
Architectural Designer, August 2012 – June 2014

2016 – 2019

Design Orchard · Orchard Road, Singapore
Design team, as Associate at WOHA.
A home for local designers: a design shop and incubation spaces under a sloped, stepped roof that works as a public hilltop park.
Singapore Good Design Award, Special Mention, 2019. ArchDaily Building of the Year 2020 finalist, commercial category.

2014 – 2018
Master plan completed

Punggol Digital District & SIT master plans · Punggol, Singapore
Designer, master planner and manager.
A university campus and a business park side by side, round an existing secondary rainforest kept as a park at the heart of the district.

2015 – 2016

Rooftop Urban Farm · Singapore
Core design team; head of the WOHA gardening club.
Nearly 200 m² of farm on the roof of WOHA's office, with over 100 species of edible plants and an aquaponics pond.

2014

Guggenheim Museum Helsinki · Finland
Competition. Project manager and design lead.

2014

Self-Sufficient City · Indonesia
Master planning competition. Project manager and design lead.

2013 – 2014

Forest Courtyard Museum · Bintan Island, Indonesia
Detailed design completed, unbuilt. Architectural designer.

2013

Punggol Town Hub · Singapore
Competition. Project manager and design lead.

All projects in this section are by WOHA Architects, Singapore. Jonathan Choe's role is shown for each.

Education

May 2012

Bachelor of Science in Architecture (professional degree)

Illinois Institute of Technology, College of Architecture, Chicago, USA. Study abroad semester in Paris, France, autumn 2010.

How we design: from the ground up

Every design works the same way at every scale, from one room to a district, and always in the same order:

First, the ground
Disturb as little as possible.

Then, the building
Let the plants shelter it.

Then, materials and people
Start with what is already there.

Then, the whole place
Keep the forest; grow more.

Soil, water, plants, buildings and people work as one system, so each part of a design is tested against the whole: where the rain goes, what gives shade, what feeds whom, how people move.

Keep what lives there, and grow more.

Projects, the Journal and the portfolio:
archigardener.com