

“FEATURED ARCHITECT: NERI&HU”

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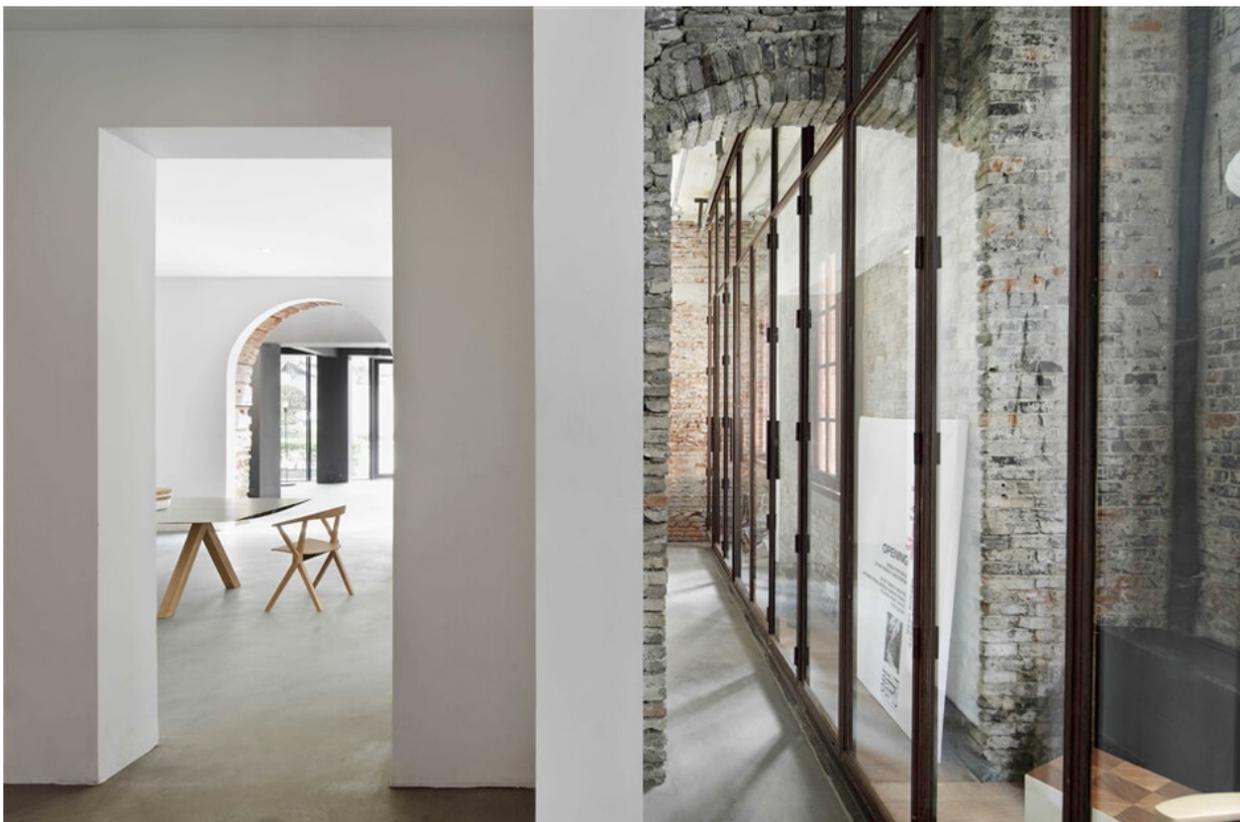
ARCHITECTURE | AUGUST 26, 2020 |



Lyndon Neri & Rossana Hu | Image courtesy of Jiayi Yang & Zhu Zhe

Featured Architect Neri&Hu

Founded in **2004** by partners **Lyndon Neri** and **Rossana Hu**, Neri&Hu Design and Research Office is an interdisciplinary architectural design practice based in **Shanghai**, China. **Neri&Hu** works internationally providing **architecture, interior, master planning, graphic, and product design** services. Currently working on projects in many countries, Neri&Hu is composed of multi-cultural staff who speak over 30 different languages. The diversity of the team reinforces a core vision for the practice: to respond to a **global** worldview incorporating overlapping design disciplines for a new paradigm in architecture. Neri&Hu’s location is purposeful. With shanghai considered a new global frontier, Neri&Hu is in the center of this contemporary chaos. The city’s cultural, urban, and historic contexts function as a point of departure for the **architectural explorations** involved in every project. Because new sets of contemporary problems relating to buildings now extend beyond traditional architecture, the practice challenges traditional boundaries of architecture to include other complementary disciplines. **Neri&Hu** believes strongly in **research** as a design tool, as each project bears its unique set of contextual issues. A critical probing into the specificities of program, site, function, and history is essential to the creation of rigorous design work. Based on research, **Neri&Hu** desires to anchor its work on the dynamic interaction of experience, detail, material, form, and light rather than conforming to a formulaic style. The ultimate significance behind each project comes from how the built forms create meaning through their **physical representations**.



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Situated within the historic relic of the **Police Headquarters** built by the British in the 1910s, the project takes a surgical approach to renovation. First, gently removing the decaying wood and plaster, then carefully **restoring** the still vibrant red brick work, while grafting on skin, joints, and organs onto parts that needed reconstruction. And finally with the attachment of a brand new appendage which, like a prosthetic, enables the existing building to perform **new functions**, the nearly abandoned building begins its life again.



Design Republic Design Commune | Image courtesy of Pedro Pegenaute

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Alila Bangsar

Located between **Brickfields**, a former colonial neighborhood, and Bangsar, an up-and-coming area of **Kuala Lumpur**, the project is situated at the junction between these two districts, old and new, a conceptual linkage between the past and the present. The **hotel** occupies the ground floor and the top eight floors of a new tower, with five levels of guest rooms and three levels of public areas, with **Neri&Hu** responsible for both **architecture** and **interior design**. A rigid structural grid defines the project from outside to inside, signaling its presence on the façade, while acting as a framework within which each function of the hotel is contained.



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On the **ground floor** the guest is guided along the building and into the lower lobby through the regular intervals of the structural grid which form the entry doors as well as a protective canopy. Upon entering, the **concept** of an “urban oasis” is immediately present through the lush tree plantings throughout the interiors. Arriving at the upper lobby on level 42 the guest is welcomed into a double height space, a lantern open to the surrounding city which allows the maximum **natural light**. Adjacent to this is the swimming pool, connected by a theatrical grand staircase, which becomes a stage to see and be seen. In this moment the boundary between interior and exterior blur, while the structural grid breaks open to form a courtyard, around which all activities within the hotel are centered.



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Junshan Cultural Center

Junshan Cultural Center is located just outside of **Beijing** in the midst of the undulating mountain ranges and meandering rivers near the **Miyun Reservoir**. Originally just a typical two-story sales building on the outskirts of Beijing, **Neri&Hu** was asked to transform this donut-shaped building into an iconic clubhouse and sales center. Neri&Hu took advantage of the existing courtyard typology by crafting two sequences of interlocking journeys, one for clubhouse member, and one for sales center guest. All programmed spaces are designed such that they are in proximity to **nature**. The layering of the primary courtyard and smaller gardens allow the architecture to merge harmoniously with nature.



Junshan Cultural Center | Image courtesy of Pedro Pegenaute

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Drawing inspiration from its context, the **architecture** combines traditional northern architecture with contemporary architectural language and transforms into a new interpretation of architectural expression. The building quietly rises out of the water as a brick mass with carved out spaces for programs interlocked with gardens that **blur the boundary** between inside and outside. On the façade, warm-toned wood pattern aluminum panels form a veil that softens the heaviness of the brick facade. Moments of the screen **connects** with each **interior space**, creating a façade that is spontaneous and different on every face. In terms of materiality, traditional gold brick tiles form the foundation of the building mass, extending from exterior landscape into the interior “in-between” spaces. With **brick** and **wood** panels as the primary backdrop for the interior, a common theme throughout the interior is the sculpted ceiling. Each **space** comes alive with the many different geometric cuts carved out to interact with the sky and daylight such that each space is ever-changing when light is reflected off of the rich texture of **Venetian plaster**. The layering of customized furniture, refined brass metal detail, natural veins of stone accents, softness of fabric, and delicate lighting elements work together to compose a sense of understated **luxury**.

more. www.neriandhu.com

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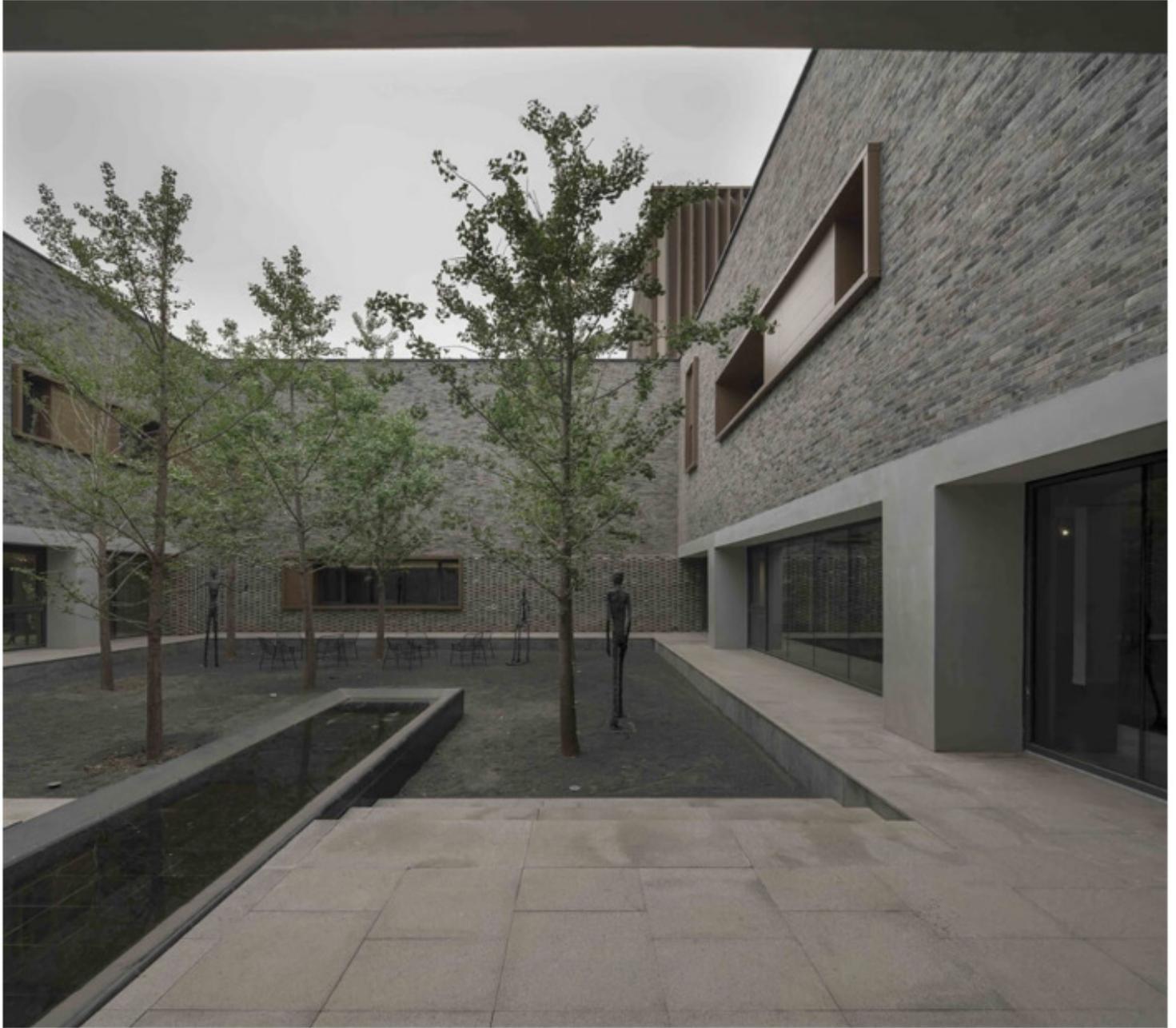
Junshan Cultural Center | Image courtesy of Pedro Pegenaute

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Alila Kuala Lumpur | Image courtesy of Pedro Pegenaute

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