

DESIGN EVENTS

Reimagining roots: highlights from Design Shanghai 2025

The 12th edition of Design Shanghai reflected the evolution of Chinese creativity despite challenges to the sector, with participants exploring the intersection of tradition and innovation

The 12th edition of [Design Shanghai](#) (4-7 June 2025), the final one held at the site of the 2010 [Shanghai](#) World Expo before the event's anticipated return to the socialist-classicism of the Shanghai Exhibition Centre in 2026, brought together a diverse range of brands and designers, reflecting how creativity continues to evolve amid economic headwinds. While [China's](#) design and creative sectors remain resilient and show steady growth, participants are navigating a more challenging market shaped by slower economic expansion and shifting consumer priorities. Against this backdrop, the fair highlighted how tradition and innovation intersect, with exhibitors exploring new narratives in materiality, [sustainability](#) and cultural identity.

The wood flooring brand [Ugan Concept](#) collaborated with [Neri & Hu](#) Design and Research Office on the 'Primordial' installation. Inspired by the Waban House in southwestern China, where split wooden shingles are traditionally used as roof tiles, the project reclaims this vernacular form amid widespread demolition. Neri & Hu's design assembles six roof structures into an abstract village, using a minimal steel framework to explore material reuse, spatial flexibility and craftsmanship within a contemporary architectural language.



Ugan Concept and Neri&Hu
(Image credit: Respective Studios)