Design Stories



lead8

Architecture | Interiors | Masterplanning | Placemaking | Wayfinding | Branding



Suzhou MixC World

Street-led Retail Placemaking for a Historic District P.14

Set within the bustling Shilu district, this project introduces a street-led model that embeds retail within a porous, city-like network of streets, courtyards and public spaces.

SKYLAND DISCOVERY

A Cultural Dining Precinct that Reimagines the Silk Road Legacy

Transforming an underutilised food court into a dynamic dining destination. P.70



Central Yards



A Global Harbourfront Icon for Hong Kong

An ambitious and sustainable mixed-use development, poised to become a global harbourfront icon for Hong Kong. P.34

Hongqiao Qianwan Incity MEGA



P.44

A New Urban Retail Resort Integrating Wellness, Nature and Community

Nature-led retail designed for the community in Shanghai's growing Hongqiao International Central Business District.

K11 ELYSEA

The Future Heart of Shanghai's Cultural District

Located within the prime Huaihai Road Commercial Circle, this destination has been designed as a cultural experience in nature with living gardens surrounded by history, retail, dining, and art.

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Design Thinking —— **Commercial Interiors**

Spaces That Stay With You
Where Interiors Become Destinations

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Interview with
Maciej Setniewski | Marco Fastidio | Felix Cheung | Jojo Wang

Azure Bay

Project Highlights —— 01



A Light-Filled Design Connecting Vision and Place P.122

Conceived as a gateway to a mixed-use project, this pavillion offers visitors an immersive introduction to the vision and design ambition of the bayfront destination.

Daji Xiang

Project Highlights —— 02



Renewing Beijing's Historic Core P.130

A landmark urban renewal project that reflects the careful balance between preserving cultural heritage and meeting modern urban needs.

Project Highlights —— 03

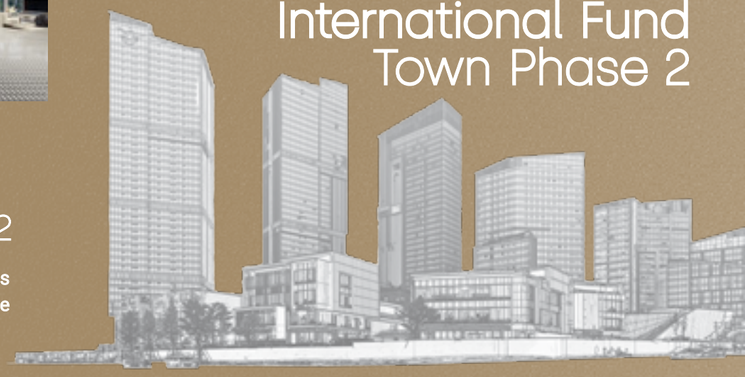
RIMBA: Kuala Lumpur International Airport



A Green Sanctuary for Malaysia's Airport Rejuvenation P.138

This project rejuvenates an existing space, turning it into a calm respite that enhances the passenger journey within the terminal.

Luxehills Tianfu International Fund Town Phase 2



A Multi-Tower Business and Innovation Superblock P.142

Taking Shape in Chengdu, this development highlights Lead8's expertise in large-scale, mixed-use design and the creation of integrated, people-focused urban environments.

Design Thinking —— **Placemaking**

Beyond Placemaking
The Human Side of Urban Placeshaping

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Zhengdong MixC
An "Urban Resort" Vision
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Design Thinking —— **Super Connectors**

The City, Connected
How Super Connectors Reshape Urban Life
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Christopher Slater | Wesley Louie
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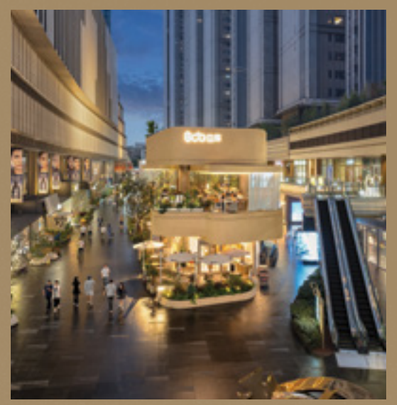
Shangri-La Fuzhou Centre
A Mixed-use Transformation
of a Luxury Hotel



Hangzhou Asiad MixC World
A New Community Hub for
Hangzhou's Asian Games Village



Parade at One Bangkok
Urban Green Retail in the
Heart of Bangkok



MixC Wuhan Lifestyle Street
A Refined Approach to
Outdoor Street Precincts

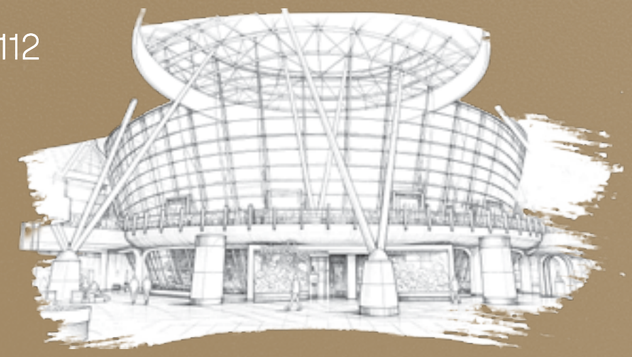


Paragon Club Lounge
Repositioning Retail Through a
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Work in Progress —— **Coming Soon** P150

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A Reason to Return
The Future of Asset Transformation
Interview with Emily Wong | Wisely Suen | Eddy Sun | Richard Lee

Our Studio —— **We are Lead8** P.152

A glimpse inside our studios: see our teams at work, on site, and in the spotlight – celebrating the culture behind Lead8's designs in cities around the world.









Why Design Stories Matter

Design is often judged by what can be seen: a skyline reshaped, an interior transformed, a destination brought to life. Yet the most resonant projects begin long before the finished image. They begin with a question, a context and a story — one that connects people, place and possibility.

Text by David Buffonge | Simon Chua



For Lead8, design is about possibility. It is about understanding how cities evolve, how communities gather, how brands are experienced and how environments can adapt over time. Across architecture, interiors, masterplanning and placemaking, every project is an opportunity to create something meaningful, not only for our clients, but for the wider public realm.

This publication has been conceived in that spirit. These are the ideas behind design, the voices shaping it and the ambitions carrying it forward. It is a collection of projects, certainly, but more importantly, it is a collection of perspectives.

Where stories begin

Every project starts with a brief, but the most successful ones go further. They uncover the character of a place, the aspirations of a client and the patterns of life that will ultimately define how a space is used. Design stories give those forces shape. They help transform technical responses into experiences that feel intuitive, memorable and lasting.

At Lead8, storytelling is not added at the end. It is embedded from the outset — in the questions asked, the relationships built and the possibilities imagined. It shapes how projects are framed, how challenges are interpreted and how new opportunities are revealed.

A practice shaped by people and place

Working across more than 105 cities from our studios in Hong Kong, Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, London, Shenzhen, Vancouver and Dubai, Lead8 has built an international practice grounded in local understanding. That balance — global outlook, local insight — informs the way each project is approached, whether it is a major mixed-use destination, a hospitality environment, a transport hub or a carefully considered renovation.

Design, in this context, becomes both strategic and human. It must respond to commercial realities while also creating environments that people want to return to, explore and remember.

The process behind the work

Behind every project lies a deeper story of collaboration, testing, iteration, and conviction. The work in these pages reflects that journey — from large-scale urban connectors and cultural destinations to intimate interiors and adaptive transformations.

What links this body of work is a way of thinking: a belief that design should be meaningful, adaptive, and resilient; that it should create value over time; and that it should contribute something generous to the experience of the city.

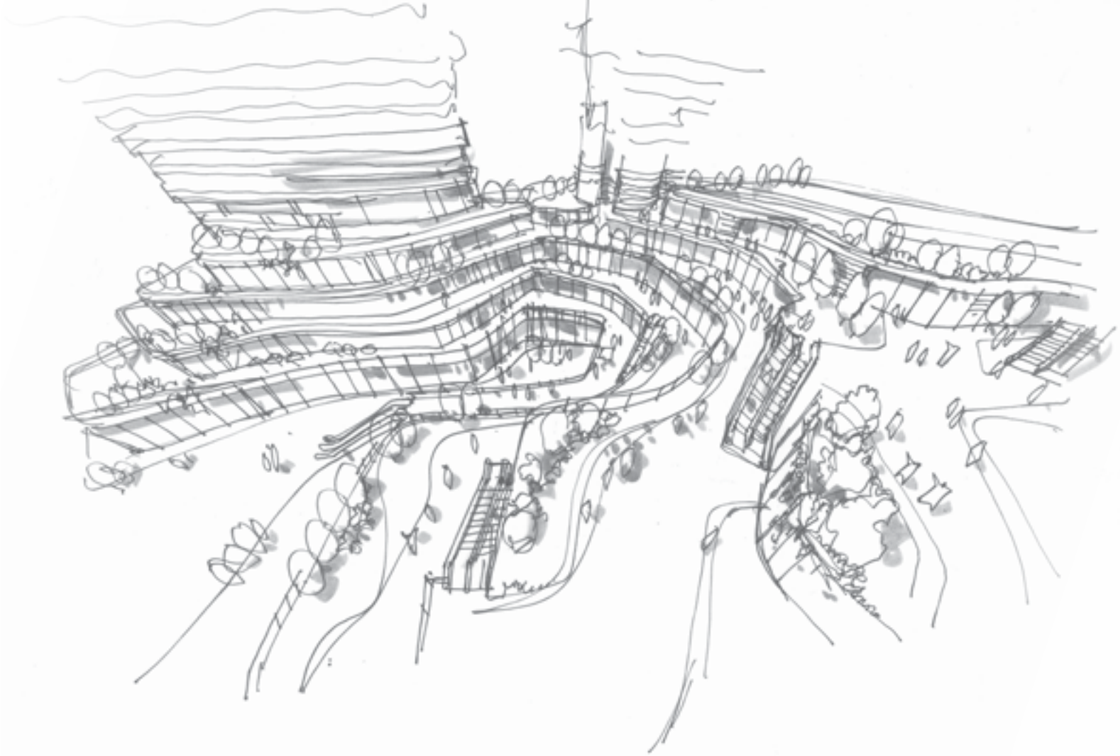
A new format for a growing studio

This book marks a shift in how Lead8 presents its work. It is less catalogue, more conversation; less archive, more point of view. Through project narratives, designer interviews and opinion pieces, it reflects the breadth of our studio's thinking as much as the scale of our output.

The following pages show our practice in motion — expanding internationally, working across sectors and continuing to shape places that connect people, commerce and culture. They are the stories of our designs.

The strongest projects are never only about what is built. They are about the story a place can tell, and the life it can support long after completion.

David Buffonge & Simon Chua



Beyond Borders: Lead8's International Journey

Lead8's expansion is not simply a story of footprint. It is a story of relevance: where the studio can contribute, how it can collaborate and which emerging markets are ready for a more integrated, human-centred approach to design.

Text by Claude Touikan | Christine Hau



Designing on a new scale

As cities around the world continue to reinvent themselves, the questions facing designers have become more complex and more connected. Growth, mobility, heritage, sustainability, hospitality and experience are no longer separate conversations. They increasingly converge within the same projects, and often within the same places.

This changing landscape has shaped Lead8's next chapter. From Asia, our practice has steadily evolved into a broader international presence — one able to translate regional expertise into new contexts while remaining responsive to local identities and market conditions.

Our studios, wider reach

Lead8's studios now span Hong Kong, Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, London, Shenzhen, Vancouver and Dubai, reflecting both the maturity of the practice and the strategic importance of key global gateways. The opening of Vancouver and Dubai strengthens our ability to work more closely with partners across North America and the Middle East, while extending our capacity to support clients with international ambitions.

This physical growth is matched by a wider geographic outlook. Alongside our established presence in Asia-Pacific, Lead8 is actively pursuing opportunities in Europe, North America, Africa and the Middle East — markets where urban growth, tourism, infrastructure investment and mixed-use development are creating demand for integrated design thinking.

A model built on transfer

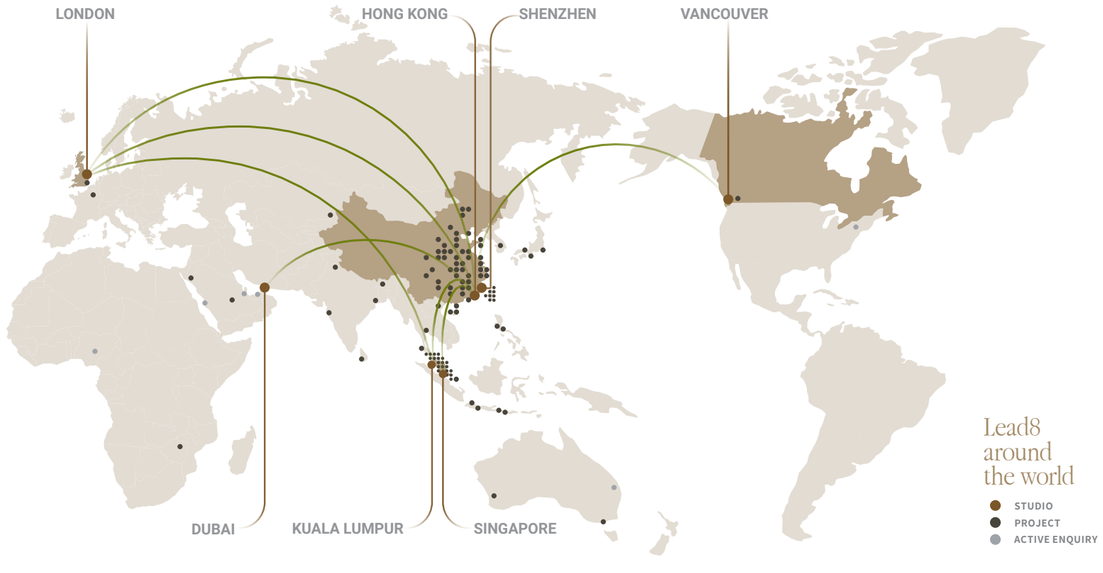
International expansion, for us, means carrying forward a set of values — creativity, integrity, excellence and adaptability — while responding to the distinct character of each place. What works in Hong Kong may need to be reinterpreted in Vancouver; what succeeds in Singapore may take a different form in Dubai.

Lead8's strength lies in this ability to transfer knowledge without repeating outcomes. Expertise in retail, hospitality, transport, placemaking and large-scale mixed-use environments becomes a foundation for new work, but never a template. Each market demands attentive listening, engaged partnerships and a fresh point of view.

Looking outward

Lead8's international growth is underpinned by the same principle that defines our design approach: meaningful connection. Expansion is valuable not simply because it adds locations to a map, but because it creates new opportunities to exchange ideas, broaden perspective and shape places of lasting value.

For Lead8, the future is outward-looking yet carefully grounded — built on collaboration, cultural fluency and the belief that the best international practices are those that remain deeply attentive to context. As we move into new regions and sectors, the ambition is clear: to bring thoughtful, resilient and experience-led design to a wider world.



Expansion is not about being everywhere. It is about being in the right places, with the right partners, where design can make a genuine difference.

Claude Touikan & Christine Hau

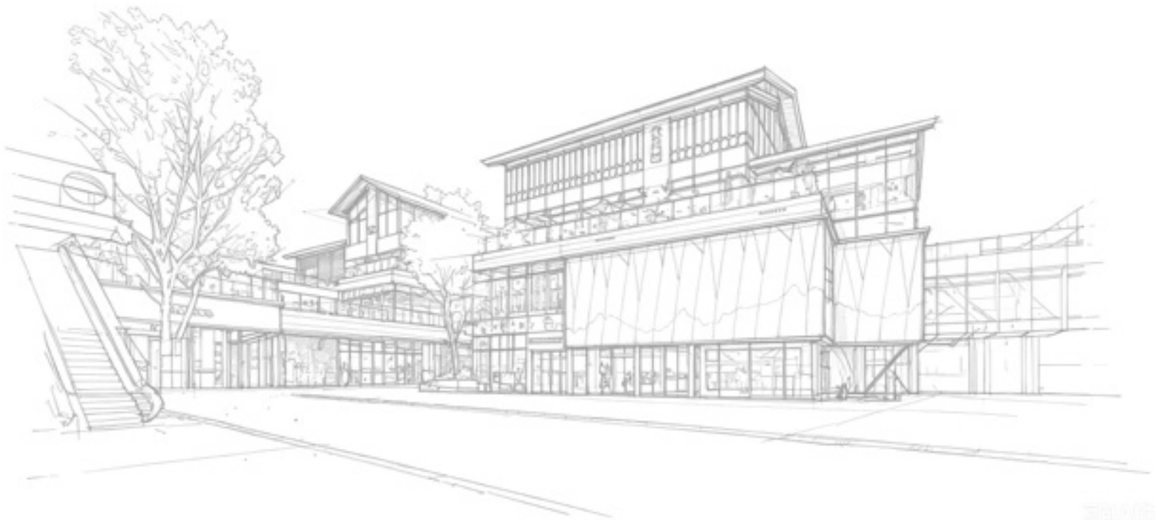


False Creek Mass Timber Community Concept – Vancouver, Canada



Park City – Harare, Zimbabwe

Retail Street Placemaking in the Historic Shilu District



Location Suzhou, China | **Service** Retail Planning, Façade Architecture, Interior Design
Client China Resources Land, CR Mixc Lifestyle, Huamao Group | **Size** 140,000 sqm



In Suzhou's historic Shilu district, this new urban retail destination brings to life a design language shaped by the city's grain, movement and memory.

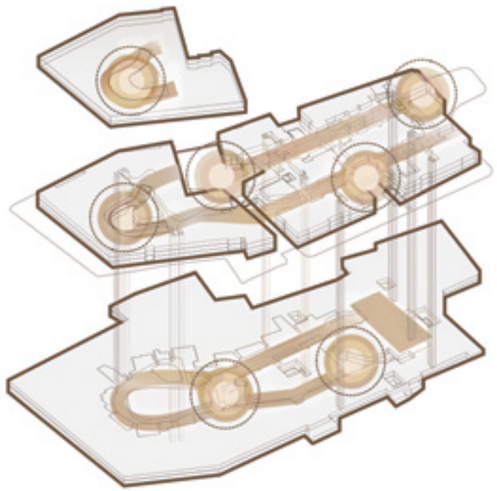
Spread across 140,000 square metres, Suzhou MixC World has been designed to reinterpret the experience of traditional streets and alleyways for a contemporary audience. Part of the wider Suzhou China Central Place alongside a Ritz-Carlton hotel, Grade-A offices, international apartments and the H+ Art Museum, the project was repositioned as a contemporary, street-led destination that reconnects with the life and character of the surrounding city.

Rather than relying on a single enclosed retail gesture, the development is purposefully organised around a sequence of routes, thresholds and gathering moments that feel porous, walkable and alive.

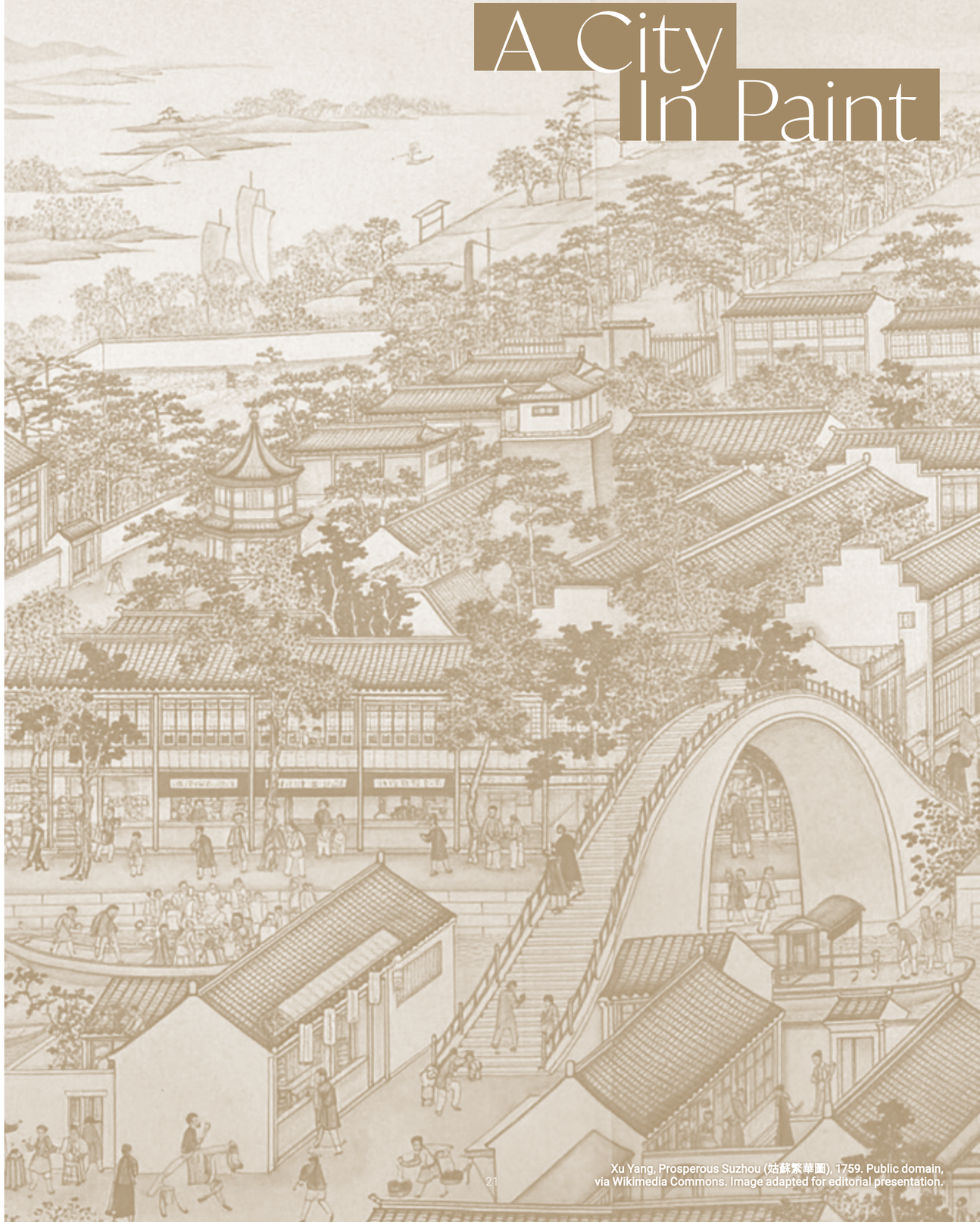


"Our concept of 'strings of urban alleyways' gives the design both its spatial structure and its identity, creating a more layered and localised sense of discovery."

Eddy Sun
Senior Associate Director – Architecture



A City In Paint



Xu Yang, Prosperous Suzhou (姑蘇繁華圖), 1759. Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons. Image adapted for editorial presentation.









Spatial Storytelling

Like a classical garden, the project unfolds as a sequence of experiences — framed views, layered thresholds and spaces that reveal themselves gradually, drawing from Suzhou's gardens, water towns, craft traditions and the narrative of the Gusu Prosperity Scroll.

At a finer scale, the focus is on tactility and human interaction. The team studied local materials and craft — from traditional geometries to the glazing of porcelain tiles — and reinterpreted them into contemporary details that people can see and touch.

The result is a place that feels authentic — recognisably new, yet unmistakably Suzhou, where people don't just pass through, but stay, connect and return.





Shaping Layered Experiences

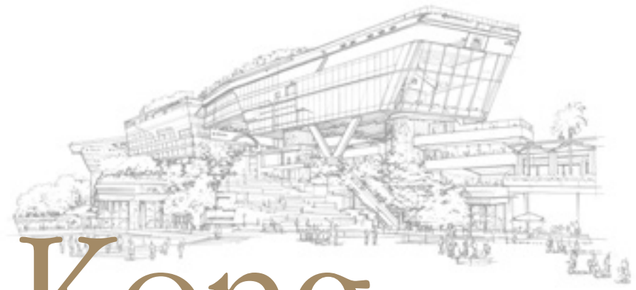




"We used everyday touchpoints to bring a sense of craft into daily use, building a more personal connection between people and place."

Felix Cheung
Senior Associate Director – Interior

A Bold Urban Transformation for Hong Kong





Location Hong Kong, China **| Service** Design Architect
Client Henderson Land Development Company Limited **| Size** 1.6 million sqft

Images courtesy of Henderson Land Development Company Limited.
For reference only and subject to further design development.



Images courtesy of Henderson Land Development Company Limited.
For reference only and subject to further design development.



Images courtesy of Henderson Land Development Company Limited.
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Images courtesy of Henderson Land Development Company Limited.
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More than a place, Central Yards offers a vibrant new heartbeat of Hong Kong — a bold reimagination and renewal of the iconic Central Harbourfront as a new urban district where business, leisure, and culture converge.

Centred on a powerful concept of “The Bridge”, Central Yards is an iconic groundscraper spanning approximately 400 meters along Victoria Harbour, forming Central’s longest architecture and a new horizontal skyline. The development was designed to act as a unifying spine that connects Central's diverse neighbourhoods with the harbourfront.

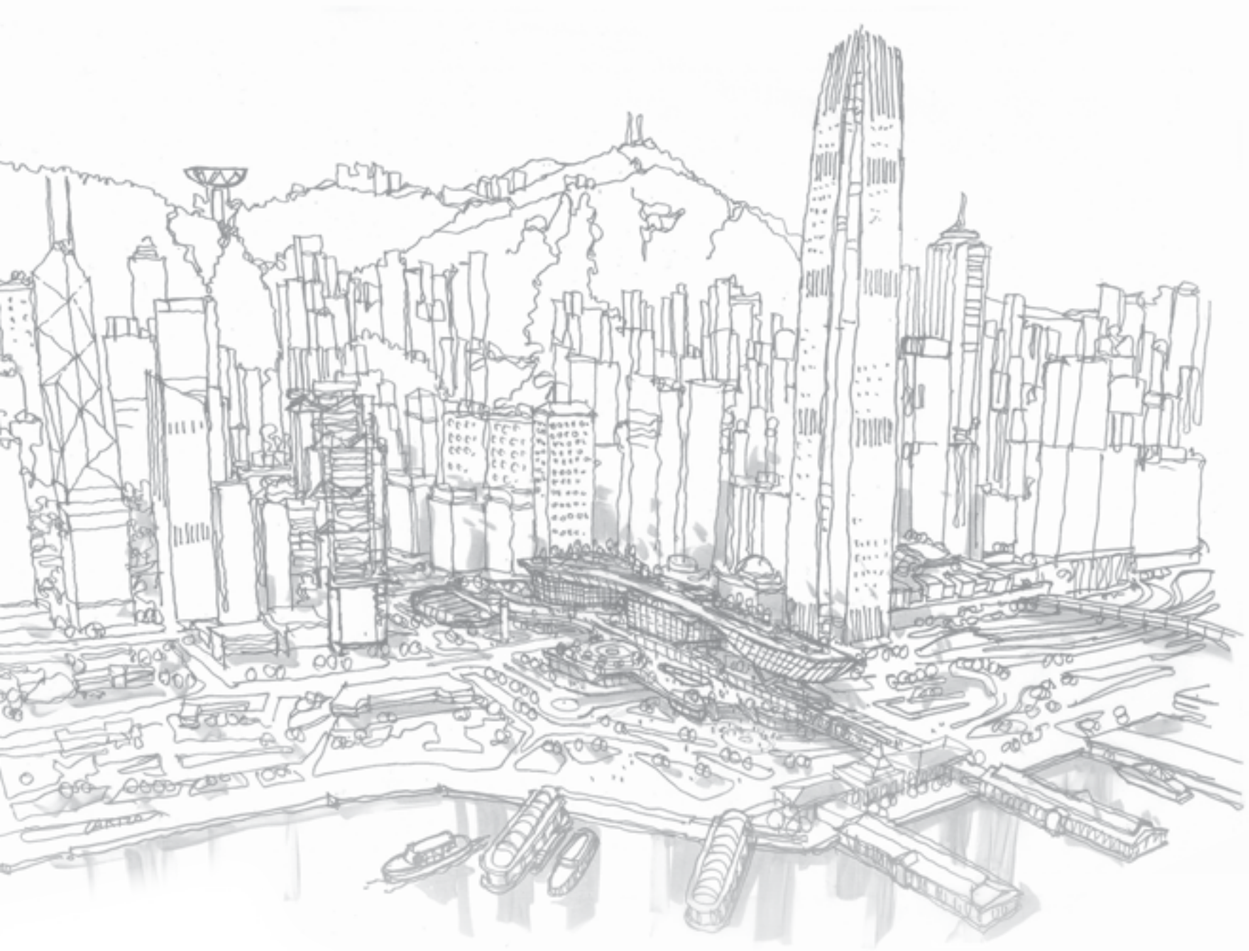
Currently under construction, Phase 1 of this ambitious and sustainable development is set to unfold in 2027, followed by Phase 2 in 2032. As the Design Architect, Lead8 forms part of the international collective of renowned design and architectural studios collaborating with developer Henderson Land to deliver Central Yards.

Images courtesy of Henderson Land Development Company Limited.
For reference only and subject to further design development.

This is a place designed to inspire and give back. By fusing urban biodiversity enhancement, design innovations and placemaking principles, Central Yards aspires to redefine and become a sustainable, people-centric district on Hong Kong's harbourfront.

Defined by its unprecedented scale of open space, Central Yards integrates a biophilic urban design in Hong Kong's dense urban fabric. At its heart is Central's largest sky garden rich in urban biodiversity — an approximately 300-metre elevated landscape of over 160,000 square feet that offers a lush, immersive experience above the city and creates a balanced environment for people and habitats.

Over 300,000 square feet of multi-level open green space, integrated with innovative design features, including a series of "Urban Windows", optimises the city's microclimate by channelling fresh air and daylight through the development. Planted with more than 400 trees and 280 plant species, Central Yards offers a unique place for public gathering, events and everyday enjoyment.



Images courtesy of Henderson Land Development Company Limited.
For reference only and subject to further design development.

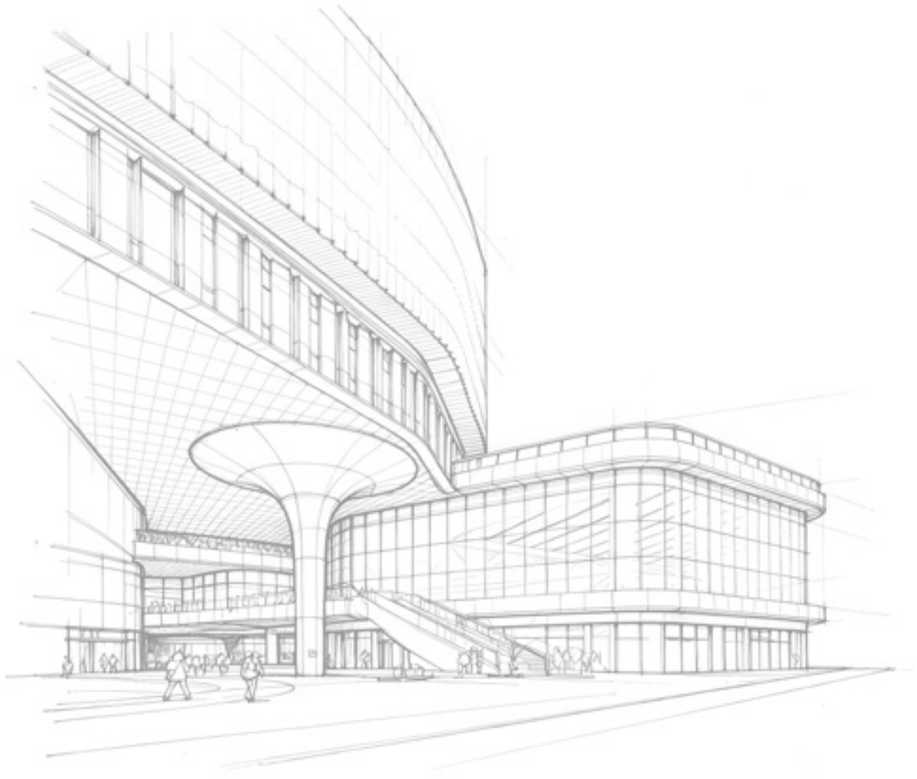


"This is Hong Kong's first 'groundscraper' - designed to bridge city, people and nature."

Claude Touikan – Co Founder & Executive Director

Images courtesy of Henderson Land Development Company Limited.
For reference only and subject to further design development.

An Urban Retail Resort Embedded in Nature



Location Shanghai, China **| Service** Architecture – Retail, Interior Design – Retail
Client SCPG **| Size** ~256,000 sqm





In Shanghai's Qianwan district, Hongqiao Qianwan Incity MEGA redefines retail as an expansive, nature-immersed destination for the contemporary city.

Located along the historic Suzhou Creek within Shanghai's emerging Hongqiao International Central Business District, the development is conceived with a resort-led design approach that brings together commerce, culture, leisure and wellbeing in one expansive destination.

Lead8's design responds to the brief with an outside-in approach, rethinking the retail experience as something more open, social and connected to its surroundings. Rather than operating as a conventional enclosed mall, the development is shaped by flowing lines, organic forms and a sequence of indoor and outdoor spaces that create clarity within a complex programme.



An Open-Air Green Oasis







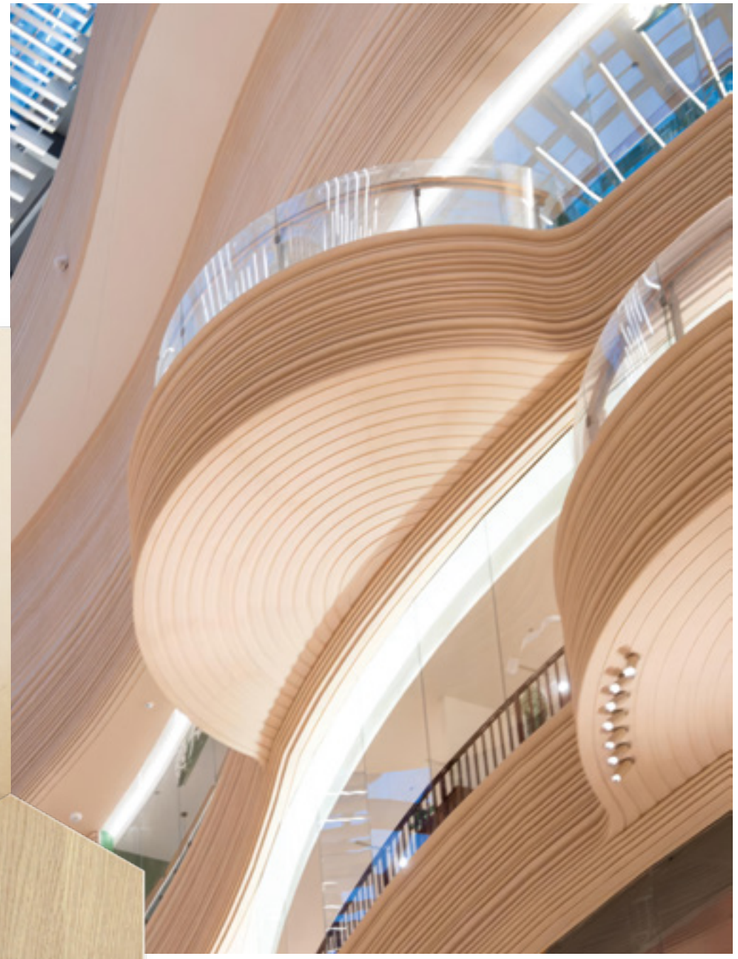

SHAKE SHACK
hey tea


美珍香
BEE CHENG HIANG

1. Glass-Reinforced Gypsum with Texture Paint
2. White Oak Wood Grain Aluminium Panel
3. Champagne Gold Aluminium Panel
4. Ultra-Clear Laminated Glass



Material images shown are representative only and may differ from the actual finishes used on site.



The architecture extends into the interiors through biophilic principles, using nature-led environments to calm, comfort and bring a strong sense of place.

The resort-inspired interiors combine warm, tactile materials and natural tones to enhance the project's relationship with nature. Canyon-inspired forms shape the main atrium into a dramatic central volume defined by light, movement and vertical connection, while daylight is drawn deep into the building to enhance comfort, orientation and visual continuity across levels.



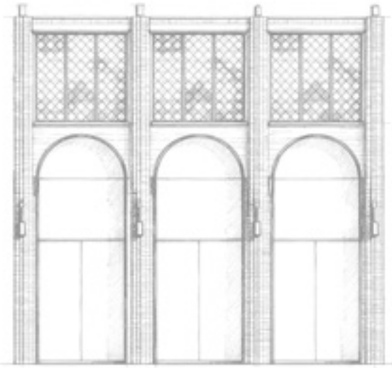
The development reflects an ambition to create urban places that restore and connect; challenging traditional retail typologies with an outside-in experience that elevates the entire destination.

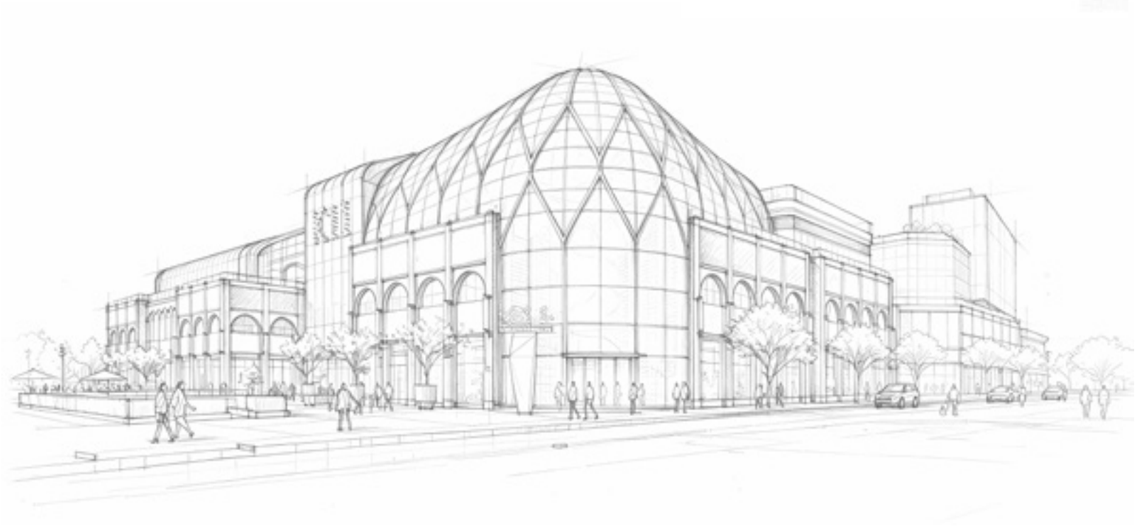
Drawing on Jiangnan's cultural landscape and fluid waterways, the project balances movement and stillness, density and relief. Its mix of retail, dining, leisure and lifestyle shapes an active, family-oriented destination, where pet-friendly zones, landscaped public areas, art installations and green terraces invite visitors to linger and connect.

Nature is more than decoration here. Dry creek systems and extensive planting shape shaded, comfortable and resilient outdoor environments, supporting rainwater reuse and a healthier urban microclimate, underpinning the project's LEED Gold Certification. With over 300 brands, Hongqiao Qianwan Incity MEGA shows how large-scale retail can be commercially robust and environmentally considered — a social anchor for a fast-growing district, designed to bring people together.



Retail with Memory: A Destination Enriched by the Past





Location Shanghai, China | **Service** Architecture – Retail, Retail Planning
Client New World China Land Limited | **Size** 128,600 Sqm



At K11 ELYSEA, architecture moves beyond spectacle to create a deeper sense of place; responding with a design approach that honours a historically rich site while projecting a distinctly contemporary identity.





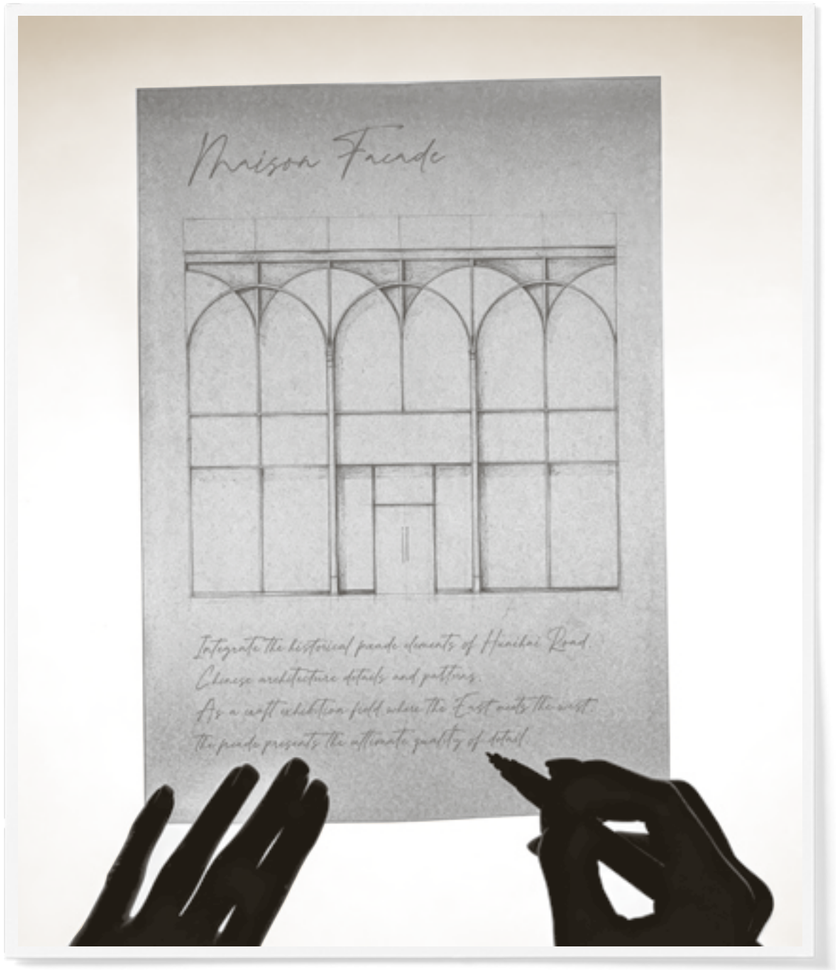


The development is set to become the future heart of Shanghai's cultural district – a celebration of history, artistry and modernity in the city.

Lead8's architectural design is an ode to the spirit of place, paying homage to the site's layered history, which features a collection of buildings and laneways dating back to the 1900s, creating a retail environment that feels culturally anchored rather than placeless.

At its core, the project is about continuity: the way architectural character, materiality and urban memory can inform a new destination. The design respects the layered history of the site, weaving references to the past into a contemporary retail experience that feels both elevated and grounded. The development incorporates preserved heritage elements alongside new architecture, creating a dialogue between old and new.

Maison Architecture



Fusing Eastern and Western architectural influences, the design blends traditional Shanghai elements with contemporary retail conventions.

A series of maisons with open terraces and duplex concepts elevates the brand experience, offering distinctive spaces that stand apart from conventional retail formats. These architectural gestures create moments of pause and discovery within the broader shopping experience.





1 Bead Blasted Brownish Bronze Aluminum

2 Brownish Bronze Aluminum Façade

3 Grey Tone Natural Stone

4 Sparkling Bronze Aluminum

5 Bead Blasted Dark Bronze Gold Stainless Steel

6 Timeworn Light Red Brick

Material images shown are representative only and may differ from the actual finishes used on site.



"Luxury today is about meaning — creating environments with texture, memory and a sense of belonging."

Karel Feng, Associate Director — Architecture

This sense of place gives K11 ELYSEA its strength. It aligns with a wider shift in premium retail design, where atmosphere, authenticity and cultural resonance increasingly shape value alongside tenant mix and commercial performance.

The result is a project that feels both elevated and grounded: a luxury environment with narrative depth, and a contemporary destination enriched by its relationship to the past.


K11
K11
K11

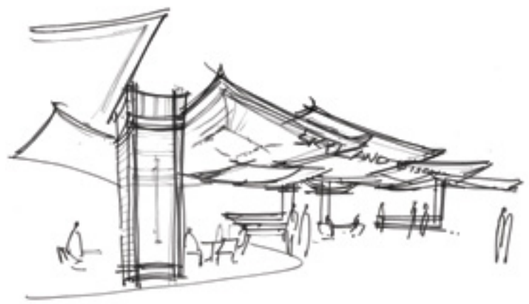
Where Cultural Storytelling Meets Contemporary Dining



Location Xi'an, China | **Service** Interior Design | **Client** SKYLAND | **Size** 1,950 sqm



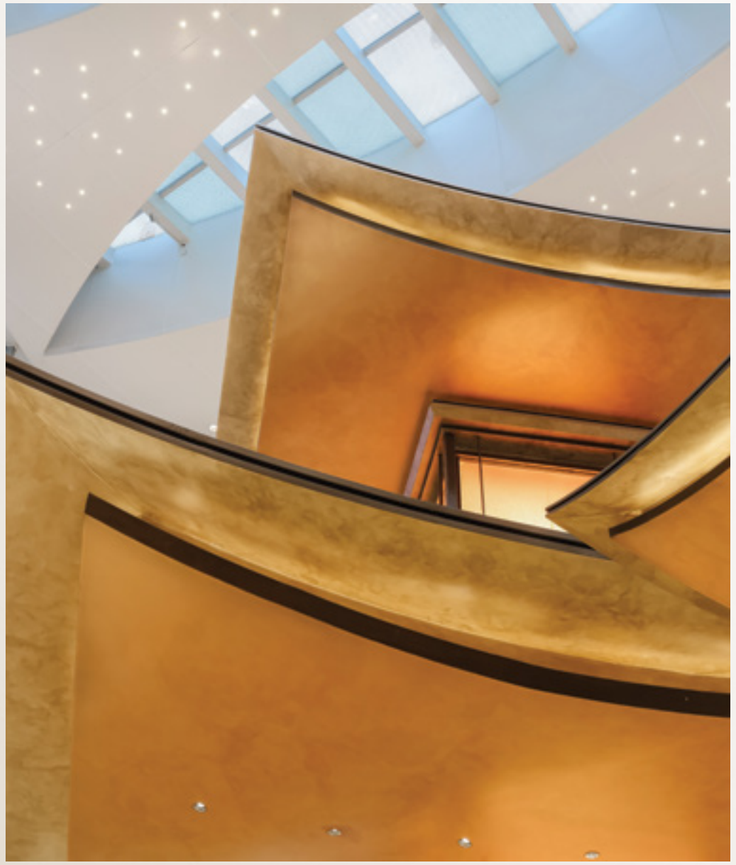
Every design starts with a story - this one begins along the Silk Road.



Xi'an's identity as a gateway city goes back centuries, to its role as the eastern starting point of the Silk Road — a place where traders, travellers and ideas once converged. It is this spirit of exchange that inspired SKYLAND DISCOVERY, a 1,950-square-metre dining precinct that reimagines an underused food court as a completely new destination through strategic design, renewed identity and a sharper sense of experience.







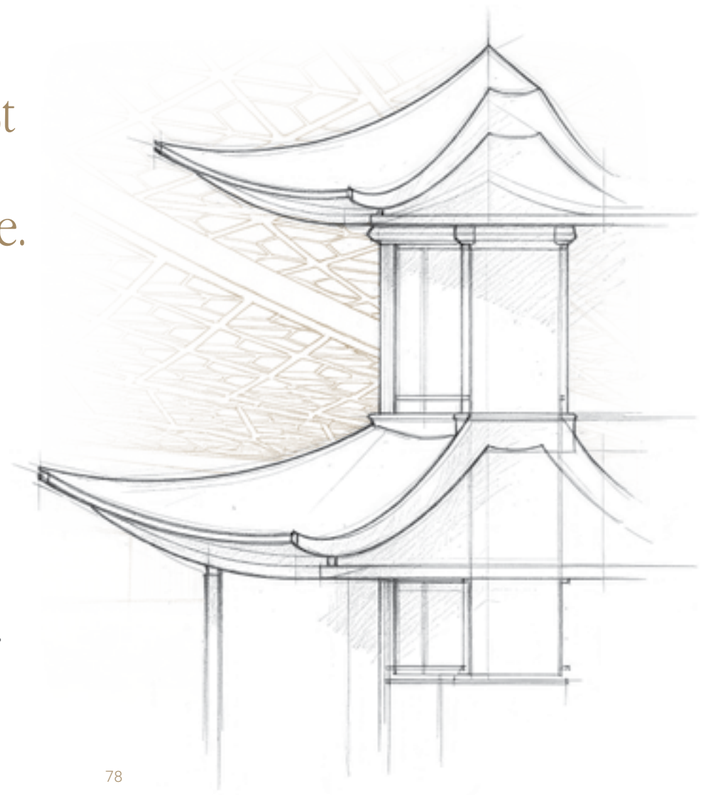
Rather than treating renovation as a cosmetic exercise, the project approaches it as a re-editing of space. Circulation, atmosphere, visual rhythm and customer engagement are all reconsidered, allowing the dining environment to shift from functional amenity to social anchor. The design fuses Xi'an's Silk Road heritage with contemporary design, telling the story of the city through its spaces.

Curved walkways lead visitors through spaces inspired by the city's historic streets, while layered ceilings echo the rhythm of Tang Dynasty rooftops. At the centre, a sculptural pavilion draws the eye and brings people together — a new social heart for the project.









"This project was not just about creating a dining space, but an experience. We wanted visitors to feel the layered history and culture of Xi'an within a modern, curated environment."

Marco Fastidio
Senior Associate Director – Interior





This thoughtful adaptation creates a place where heritage and modernity coexist — where visitors can trace the city's past through architectural gestures while enjoying a contemporary dining experience.



The layered spatial narrative invites exploration and pause, turning a simple meal into a cultural journey. For Xi'an, the result is a more dynamic dining destination — one that feels contemporary, welcoming and calibrated to the expectations of a new generation of visitors. It's about creating a place that enriches community life through culture and interaction.



The Ring

Spaces That Stay With You

Where Interiors Become Destinations

Commercial interiors are no longer just about function — they're about experience. As retail becomes effortless online, physical spaces must offer something a screen never can: atmosphere, interaction, and moments worth experiencing in person. In turn, a new kind of retail destination is taking shape — one where the place itself is the product.

How is experiential thinking shaping the way designers approach commercial interiors?

Interview with Maciej Setniewski | Marco Fastidio | Felix Cheung | Jojo Wang

Why is experiential design now essential, not optional, in retail developments?

"The online world has provided so much convenience that experience is now the activating factor. Commercial developments compete in an experience economy where users – tenants, shoppers, employees – choose places that deliver emotional resonance, purposeful engagement beyond other typically measurable factors. It's no surprise that we're seeing commercial interiors that feel more like rainforests than a typical retail environment."



Parade at One Bangkok



> "Commercial environments are becoming more restorative rather than purely transactional."

"This is a shift we've been shaping through our 'Fifth Season' approach, where commercial environments are informed by biophilic principles. The Ring in Chongqing was pioneering in this sense, designing a six-storey botanical garden within the development, so stepping inside feels less like entering a mall and more like entering a sanctuary."

Maciej Setniewski | Interior Design Director







How do you decide what story a space should tell?

"I typically begin with research and conversations with people who know the place well — its history, culture, and what locals take pride in. From there, I work to transform those elements into something more meaningful and impactful. Take SKYLAND DISCOVERY in Xi'an: we translated the journey of the Silk Road into a spatial narrative, crafting a gathering place that enriches community life through culture and interaction. We took a similar approach with Daji Xiang in Beijing, drawing on the texture of the city's traditional hutong life rather than imposing something foreign."

> "Design becomes far more powerful when it feels like it belongs."

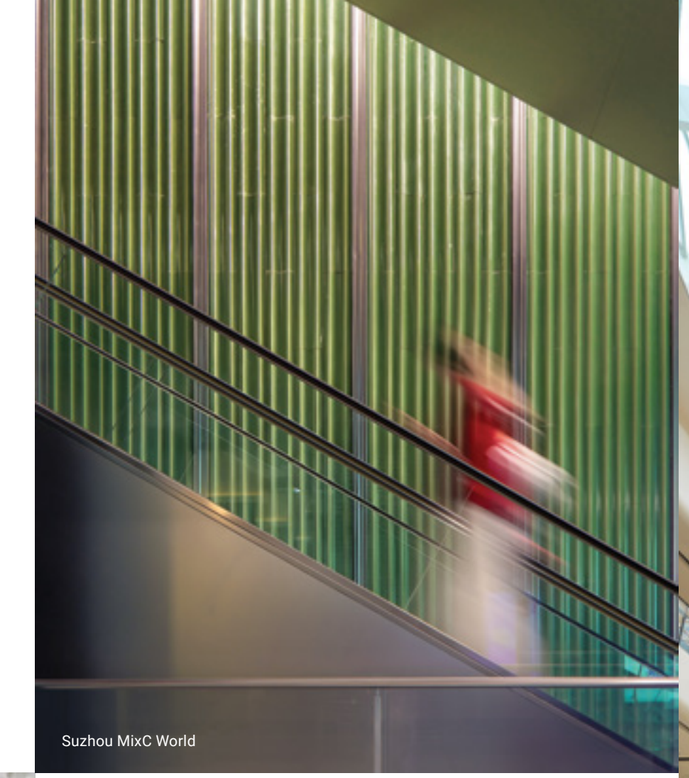
"Places should feel like they were always meant to be there. We look to amplify the cues that make people feel something familiar and new at once."

Marco Fastidio | Senior Associate Director – Interior



How do you rethink the traditional retail format to create something more experiential?

"The most memorable retail spaces feel less like a controlled journey and more like a city street unfolding. On Suzhou MixC World, we treated architecture, interiors and landscape as one unified story, so each zone evokes an emotional response through material shifts, lighting and proximity to nature."



Suzhou MixC World



> When a space behaves like somewhere people already know how to explore, they stay longer without realising why.

"Rather than applying a theme, we drew from the city's own soft geometries and craft traditions — water-ripple textures, grained timber balustrades — to create a network of lanes and courtyards that feels unmistakably local. We also designed for different moods within one place: quiet nooks for conversation, open stages for groups, relaxed retreats for solo visitors."

Felix Cheung | Senior Associate Director – Interior



Suzhou MixC World



Parade at One Bangkok



Parade at One Bangkok

How is technology changing the way you design for engagement?

"Technology gives us permission to stop guessing. We used to design a space once and hope it aged well; now we build in flexibility to respond to how people actually behave inside it. On Parade at One Bangkok, you can see how our team treated digital layers — LED screens, content programming, immersive lighting — as another material to design with, shaping arrival moments that feel alive rather than static. In other projects, we're harnessing AR and VR to turn interiors into interactive visual theatres, enriching narratives and enhancing engagement."

> Digital integration ensures clients' investments stay relevant in a fast-moving and highly responseive market.

"Importantly, technology complements nature and experience-led design — it doesn't replace it. As expectations evolve, so do the tools we use to create spaces that feel alive, adaptable and deeply connected to the people who use them."

Jojo Wang | Associate Director – Interior





MixC Nanjing

Beyond Placemaking

The Human Side of Urban Placeshaping

Urban life is becoming more layered and diverse, and with it, traditional placemaking is evolving into something more holistic — "placeshaping" — blending cultural identity, history, social infrastructure and landscape into precincts that feel genuinely inclusive.

How does this inform the design of places where people feel they belong, not just visit?

Interview with Randy Carizo | Kenji Wong | Heeri Song | Karel Feng

How does Lead8's placeshaping differ from traditional placemaking?

"Placeshaping starts with listening, not imposing. Before we sketch anything, we spend time understanding the local context — climate, cultural norms, what a community actually aspires to — because a solution that works in one city can feel completely wrong in another. On projects like Parade at One Bangkok, that meant treating landscape as a core part of the urban experience, not an afterthought, so the place reads as a living extension of the city rather than a standalone development."



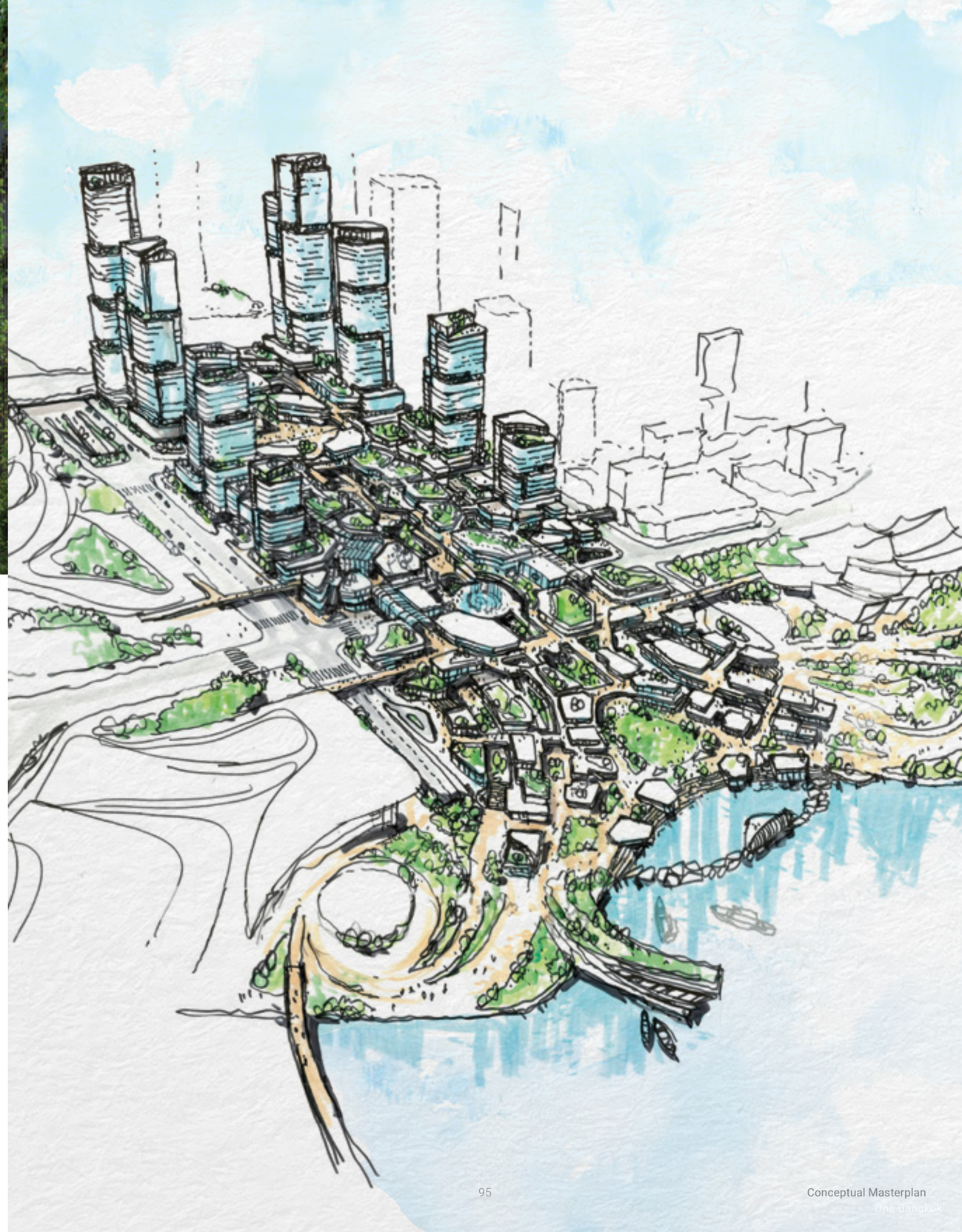
Parade at One Bangkok



> The same principle applies across our portfolio: breaking down a large site into smaller, human-scaled moments.

"This allows people to move through it at their own pace, discovering places to gather and pause. The goal isn't to impose an idea of what a place should be, but to shape something that already feels like it belongs there."

Randy Carizo | Senior Associate Director – Architecture



Conceptual Masterplan
One Bangkok





Wuhan Binjiang Paradise Walk



Wuhan Binjiang Paradise Walk

What makes a large-scale urban project feel like it serves its community, rather than just occupying a site?

"Scale can be the enemy of intimacy, so the first challenge on any large urban project is finding where human moments can still exist within it. I look for ways to introduce smaller, walkable moments, so a development is experienced as a series of places. Binjiang Paradise Walk along Wuhan's Yangtze riverfront shows this well — a network of open-air streets, leisure spaces, parks, landscaped stairways and pocket gardens lets the project feel embedded, like a natural extension of the city's waterfront."

> "To achieve this, placemaking needs to be a cross-boundary idea."

"It should move fluidly from architecture to interior design, from landscape to lighting, down to the loose furniture and materials people actually touch. Our team leads with that holistic thinking because belonging ultimately comes down to human sensation. That's why we place so much emphasis on tactility and materiality, collaborating with suppliers to innovate sustainable materials with project-specific stories, connecting the user's experience to the context of the place — sometimes carrying the history and memories of the public it serves."

Kenji Wong | Project Director – Architecture

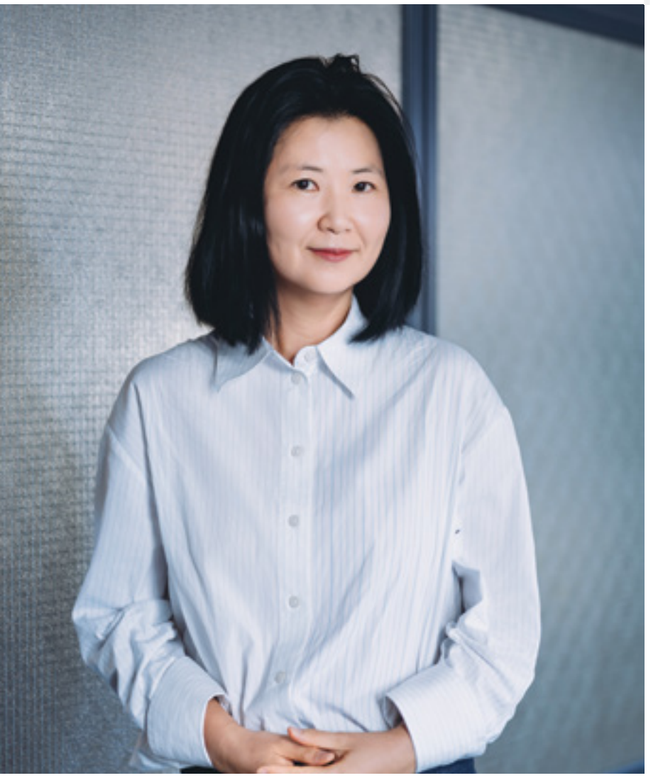


How do you draw on regional architectural heritage without simply replicating the past?

"At Fuzhou Shangri-La Center, the surrounding region's Tulou architecture — those circular, fortress-like earthen dwellings built around a shared communal courtyard — gave us a powerful reference point, not for how a building should look, but for how it should behave. Tulou were designed around collective life at their centre, and we carried that same logic through in how we shaped gathering spaces within the development. Heritage becomes meaningful when it informs the way people move and gather, not just the silhouette of a roofline."



Conceptual Sketch



> Heritage should be treated as a living reference, rather than a stylistic template.

"It can shape everything from spatial sequences to material choices in ways that feel contemporary yet deeply connected to place. This approach is about translation, not imitation."

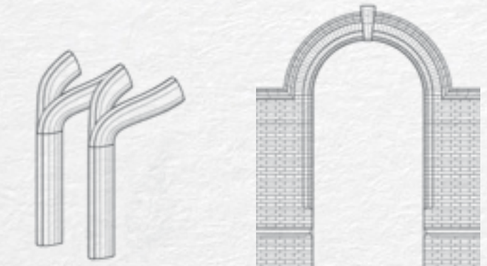
Heeri Song | Senior Associate Director – Architecture





Fuzhou Shangri-La Centre





K11 ELYSEA Architectural Influences

How do you design a landmark that feels rooted in its place rather than imposed onto it?

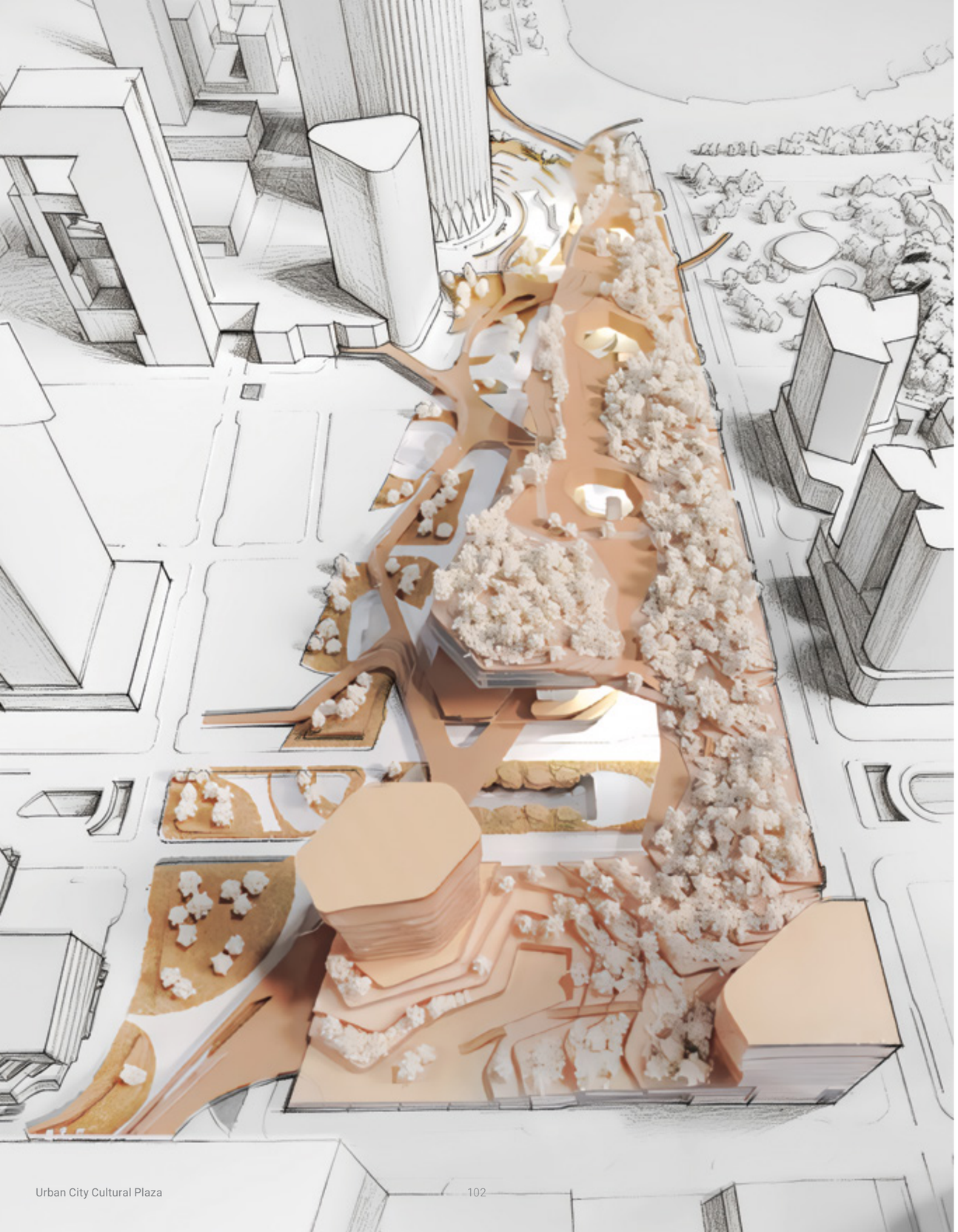
"A landmark only earns its status if it responds to something real about where it stands — the light, the street life, the way people already move through a neighbourhood. On K11 ELYSEA, that meant engaging directly with the history of Huaihai Middle Road, a street that has defined Shanghai's fashion and culture for nearly a century. The site carries layers of memory: 1940s modernist architecture, French red-brick structures, traditional housing and early civic buildings."

> The most memorable landmarks aren't the loudest ones; they're the ones that feel like they grew from their site.

"Rather than erasing these traces, we treated them as the foundation for the new development. The design preserves and reintegrates heritage elements — from classical details to traditional Shanghainese arches and brickwork — so the building reads as an extension of the street's identity rather than an interruption."

Karel Feng | Associate Director – Architecture





Urban City Cultural Plaza

The City, Connected

How Super Connectors Reshape Urban Life

Cities thrive on movement, but the most successful new developments are no longer defined by how efficiently people pass through them — they're defined by how well they turn movement into place.

From transit hubs to mixed-use precincts, how can "super connectors" reshape urban developments and create civic value beyond their site boundaries?

Interview with Christopher Slater | Wesley Louie | David Yu | Maggie Shen

What does “super connector” mean to you, and how has this broadened beyond traditional transit infrastructure?

“At its core, a super connector reshapes how people and places relate. We once thought providing integrated transport was sufficient; now we recognise its true value lies in drawing people in, encouraging people to linger, and energising the wider area. At its core, it’s about designing developments as civic assets from the outset.”



Central Yards Under Construction



> “Well-connected projects outperform isolated ones in footfall and resilience.”

“At Central Yards in Hong Kong, that meant treating a 400-metre-long ‘groundscraper’ as a continuous public realm that links inland neighbourhoods directly to Victoria Harbour, literally stitching the city together rather than sitting as a standalone object. Rising land values and borrowing costs are pushing developers toward higher-density, multi-functional schemes. Connection is now a brand promise for developers and a key expectation for visitors.”

Christopher Slater | Associate Director – Architecture



Central Yards



SJCC & SJ7 Masterplans



Parade at One Bangkok Concept

How do you design for multiple scales of connection simultaneously?

"The challenge is making it work at every scale — from the citywide network down to the intimate moment where someone chooses to pause and stay. We start with the big picture: primary pedestrian streams, transit links and district landmarks. Then we zoom in to design the human-scale experiences that make people want to return — thoughtful detailing, comfortable proportions, places to sit, intuitive signage, choreographed sightlines, and so on."

> When both scales work together, the development feels cohesive from above and welcoming from the ground - strengthening the city around it.

"Within One Bangkok, one of Thailand's largest integrated developments, we used the connection to Lumphini Park and landscape to drive the journey through Parade, creating a continuous series of semi-open spaces alive with abundant nature that invite people to explore a new experience. On the SJCC and SJ7 masterplans in Subang Jaya, Malaysia, over 60 acres combined, connections to local identity and layered programming will create those moments throughout the masterplan."

Wesley Louie | Director – Architecture, Singapore



How can tall buildings become vertical super connectors instead of isolated monuments?

“Vertical buildings need to be designed with multiple layers of connection that draw people in and keep them engaged as they move up.

That means carefully shaping massing, sightlines and ground-level access so people are drawn through the site, not around it. At Azure Bay in Sanya, we designed the podium as a series of terraces, plazas and activated edges that turn the tower's base into a place to gather, look out and move along — a connector between urban life and the coastline.”



Azure Bay



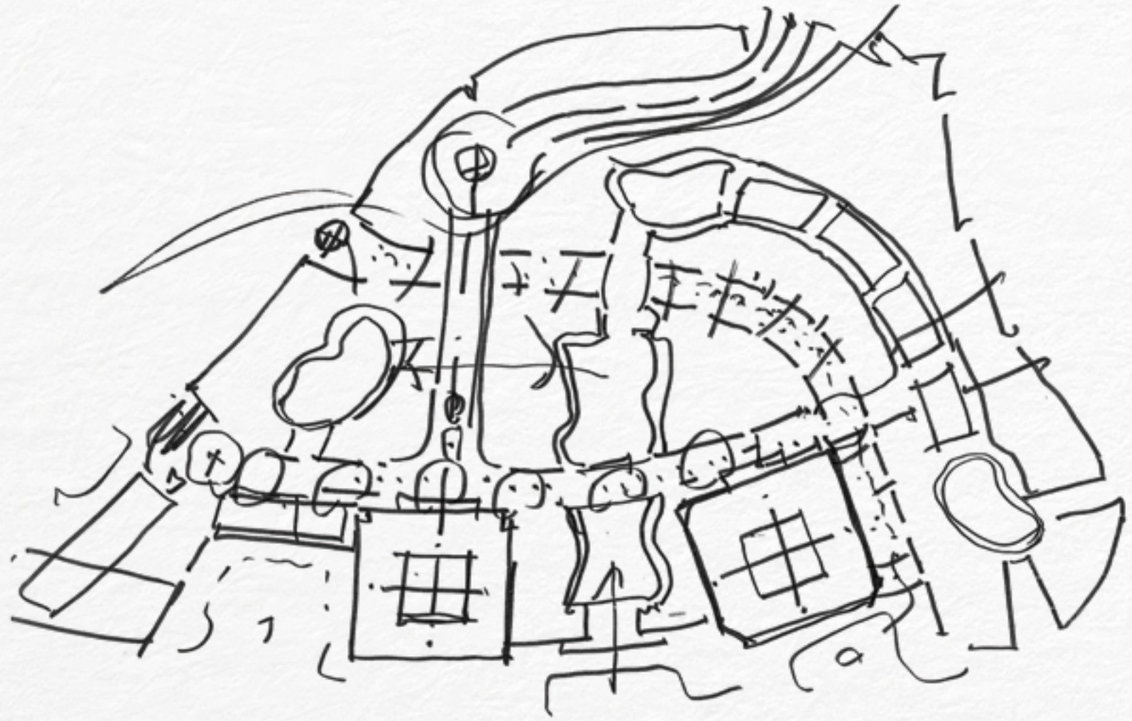
Azure Bay



> The most successful towers don't just rise above the street – they extend it.

“A similar approach guided our work at ITC Shanghai in the busy Xujiahui district. A series of elevated footbridges connects the development to major commercial buildings and heritage sites nearby, creating a calm pedestrian plane. From ground level, new streets, open plazas and terraced spaces provide areas for community events and socialising, blending indoor and outdoor experiences to encourage public interaction.”

David Yu | Director – Architecture

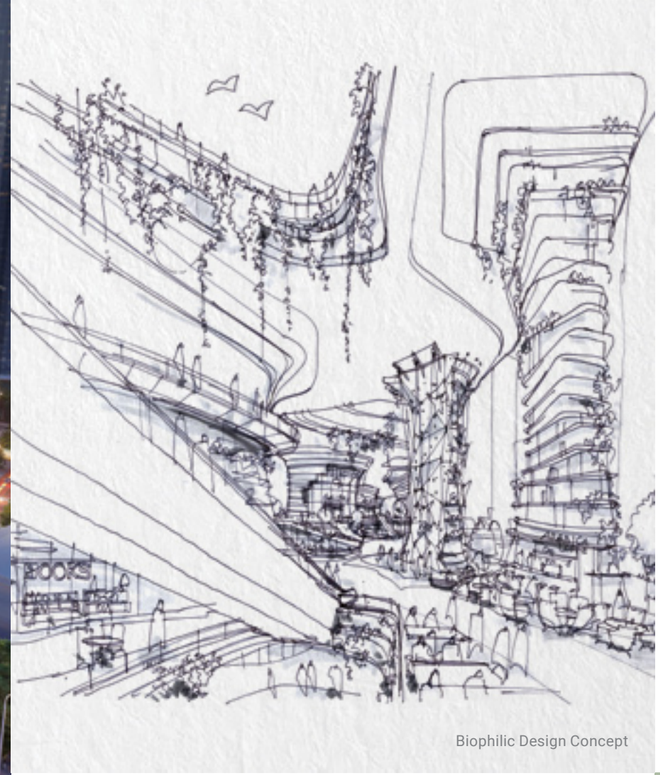


ITC Shanghai Conceptual Planning





Hubei Coordination Urban Renewal Scheme



Biophilic Design Concept

What emerging forces and innovations will shape the future of super connectors?

"I think the most exciting shift is using advanced technology to bring us back to fundamentals that make cities feel human. Mapping and data tools now let us see a city's hidden desire lines with real precision, so we can reconnect streets, plots and communities once separated by highways or rail corridors — restoring walking and cycling routes that bring life back to the everyday journey."

> "Biophilic design has advanced enough to bring nature back to our cities at a genuinely large scale."

"Living landscapes can be woven through open-air precincts, terraced levels and façades, so a development feels like a thriving ecosystem rather than a single building. In Shenzhen's Hubei Coordination Urban Renewal Scheme, that's the opportunity: enhancing connectivity to the site, its surroundings, culture and everyday lifestyle, while celebrating what's already there — because true connection isn't just about movement, it's about a building's roots in its locale and community."

Maggie Shen | Associate Director – Architecture





Suzhou MixC World

A Reason to Return

The Future of Asset Transformation

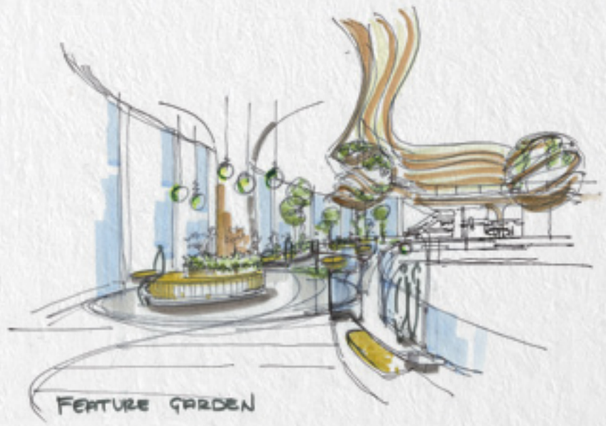
A new wave of developments is undergoing creative renewal as developers, owners and operators seek refreshed approaches to keep their assets relevant for new generations. From retail to mixed-use and transit-oriented developments, the focus is shifting from simple refurbishment to meaningful reinvention.

How are designers rethinking transformation as they reimagine what a place can become?

Interview with Emily Wong | Wisely Suen | Eddy Sun | Richard Lee

What separates a genuine transformation from a simple refresh?

"While design excellence is always essential, a successful transformation is ultimately about balancing client aspirations, commercial objectives, and site realities. Our role is to align these factors and create destinations that are both commercially resilient and memorable through distinctive spatial experiences."



Conceptual Sketch



> A refresh changes finishes; a genuine transformation redefines purpose.

"At SKYLAND UNIVERSAL, we saw the site constraints not as limitations, but as opportunities to create a unique identity. When design is driven by a clear vision and supported by sound commercial thinking, an asset becomes more than a place people visit. It becomes a destination people choose to return to."

Emily Wong | Director – Interior Design





Megabangna





Megabangna

How do you approach architectural transformation when a building already has an established presence?

“We’re currently working on major transformations in Shanghai and Bangkok where the buildings already have a place in people's mental map of the city, so the question wasn't how to reinvent them from zero but how to give them a reason to matter again. We look at the existing structure not as a limitation but as raw material — working with what was already there rather than erasing it and finding the moments where a bold architectural gesture could shift the entire perception of the place.”

> “The key is knowing when to intervene and when to let the existing character speak for itself.”

"In Bangkok's Megabangna, introducing an expansive social dining precinct and weaving in outdoor environments creates new experiential layers. A well-placed opening, a reimagined façade or a new public threshold can change how a building reads from the street without losing the qualities that made it memorable.”

Wisely Suen | Director – Architecture



How do you create a distinct identity when transforming multiple assets for the same client or district?

"Across projects like Suzhou MixC World, the temptation is to repeat a successful formula. Instead, we treat each site's context — its streets, scale and history — as the real design brief, so every transformation earns its own identity. In Suzhou, this meant reimagining the development as a street-led urban district, drawing on the city's garden heritage and craft traditions to shape laneways and courtyards that feel like a natural extension of the historic Shilu district."



Mixc Wuhan Lifestyle Street



> The moment a place feels designed specifically for where it stands, people stop comparing it to the place next door.

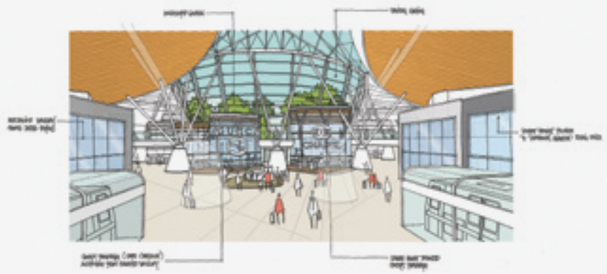
"At MixC Wuhan, the approach was different again: by animating underutilised spaces, introducing vivid landscaping and humanising the scale of the street, we enhanced the way visitors move through and engage with the development as a destination. That's how we create a destination rather than an option."

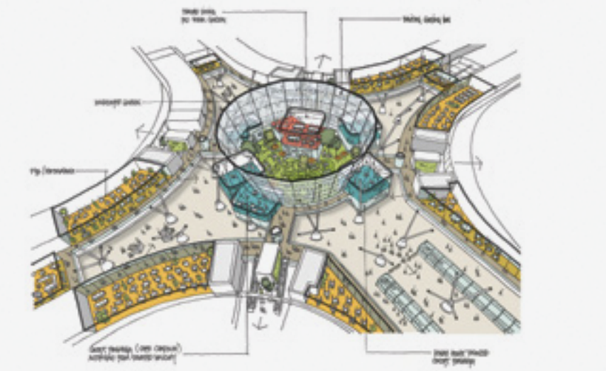
Eddy Sun | Senior Associate Director – Architecture

Suzhou MixC World



RIMBA - Kuala Lumpur International Airport Terminal 1





RIMBA - Kuala Lumpur International Airport Terminal 1

How are changing expectations across sectors shaping the way you approach transformation?

"The bar has shifted across all our built environments: people no longer judge a place by how efficiently it moves them through, but by how it makes them feel. In airports, this is especially clear. Travellers now prioritise calm, intuitive environments and a genuine sense of place over pure speed — they want spaces that reduce stress, offer moments of pause and connect them to their destination."

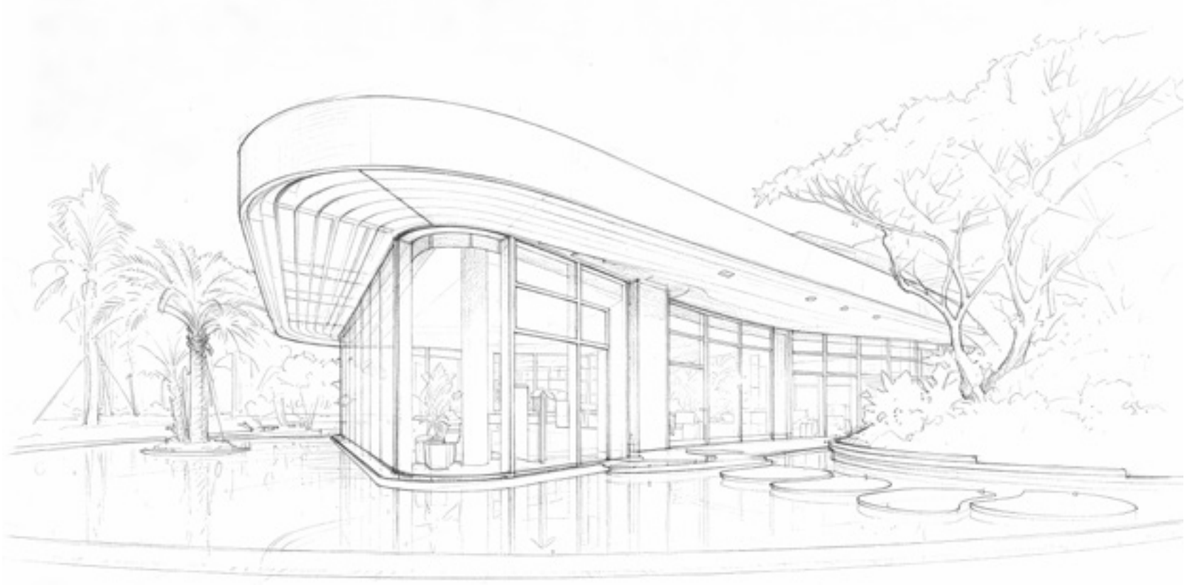
> "The measure of a good space is what it gives back to the people in it."

"At Kuala Lumpur International Airport Terminal 1, we reimagined the Satellite Centre Court as a place people want to spend time in, not just pass through. The transformation of RIMBA has turned an existing area into a place of respite that enhances the passenger journey. The goal is to transform the terminal from a functional necessity into a welcoming gateway — a place that sets the tone for the trip before it even begins."

Richard Lee | Director – Architecture, Malaysia



Azure Bay Experience Pavillion



Location Sanya, Hainan, China **| Service** Architecture, Interior Design **| Client** CTS Properties **| Size** 340 sqm



This is destination-making at its most considered — a place where visitors arrive, explore and begin to envision the wider Azure Bay experience.

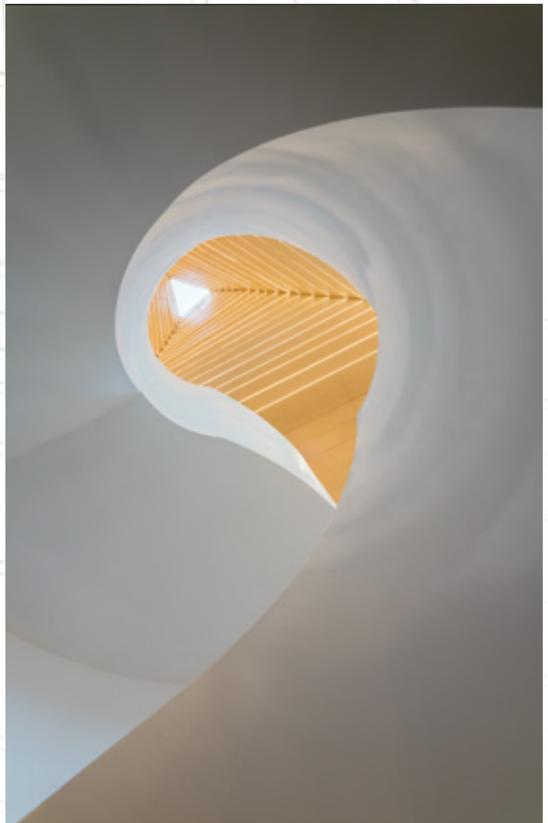
An Immersive Gateway to a Coastal Destination

Azure Bay's Experience Pavillion introduces the first completed component of a wider coastal development in Sanya, Hainan. Set within 7,500 square metres of landscaped gardens, the project is designed as an immersive first encounter with the destination — architecture and landscape working together to shape anticipation, atmosphere and view.

Its strength lies in its restraint. Rather than overwhelming the setting, the design choreographs movement through greenery, openness and framed connections to the coastline, creating an experience that feels both curated and relaxed. The pavillion serves as a gateway to the broader development, also being designed by Lead8, which includes hotel, office and retail components.







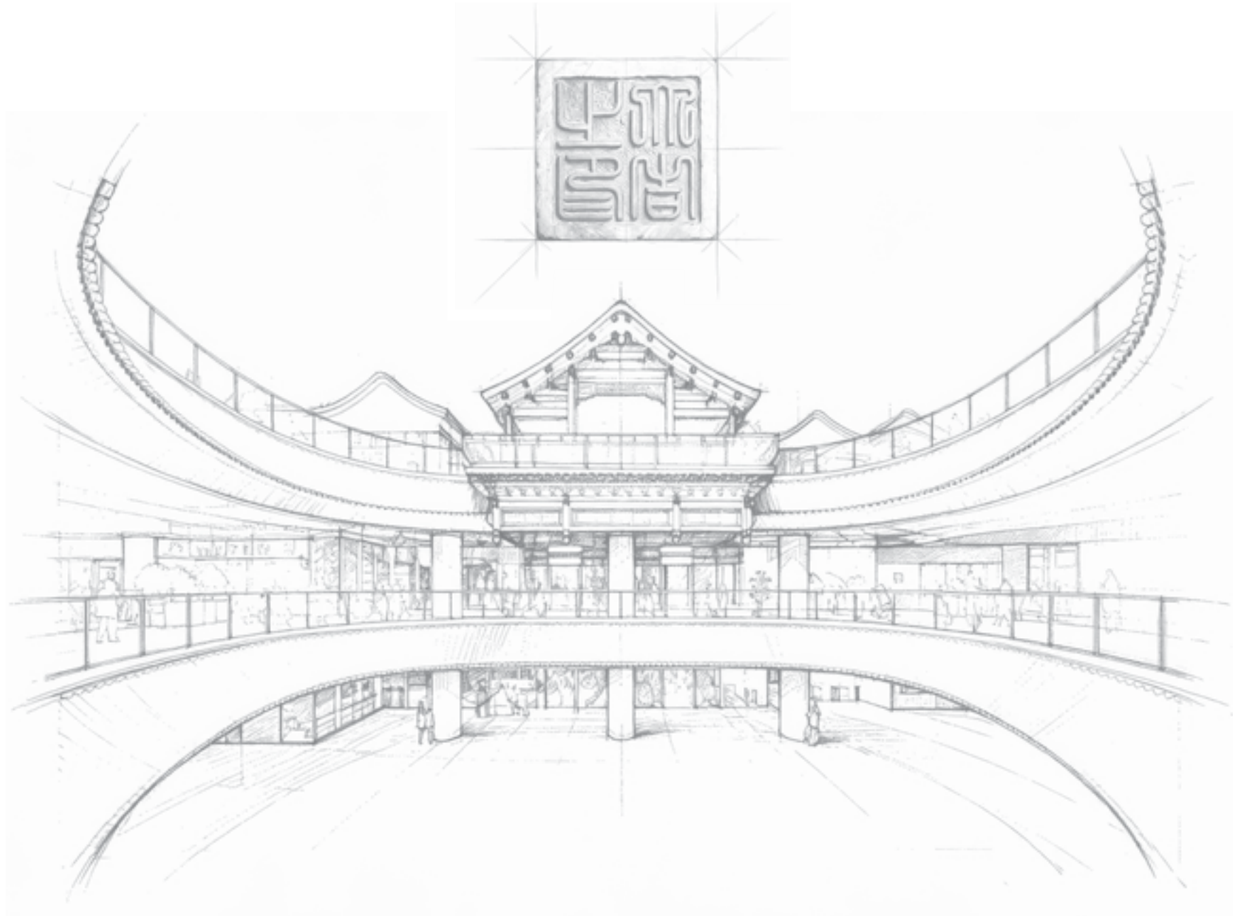


The architecture integrates seamlessly with its coastal context, using natural light, open planning and landscape as integral design elements. The design works in harmony with Sanya's natural setting, allowing the building to respond to the coastal environment while maintaining a light, welcoming presence that complements rather than competes with its surroundings.





Daji Xiang



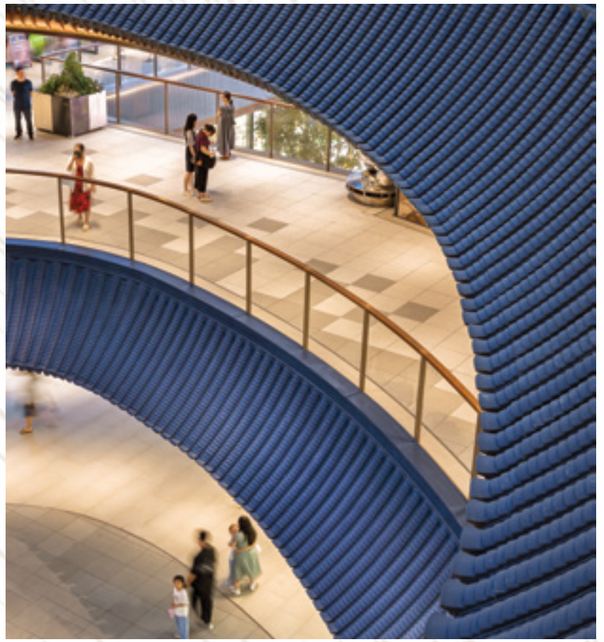
Location Beijing, China **|** **Service** Retail Planning, Interior Architecture Design **|** **Client** China Overseas **|** **Size** 50,000 sqm



Daji Xiang sits in the heart of Beijing's historic core along the Central Axis — a landmark urban renewal project that sets a new standard for how heritage and modernity can coexist.

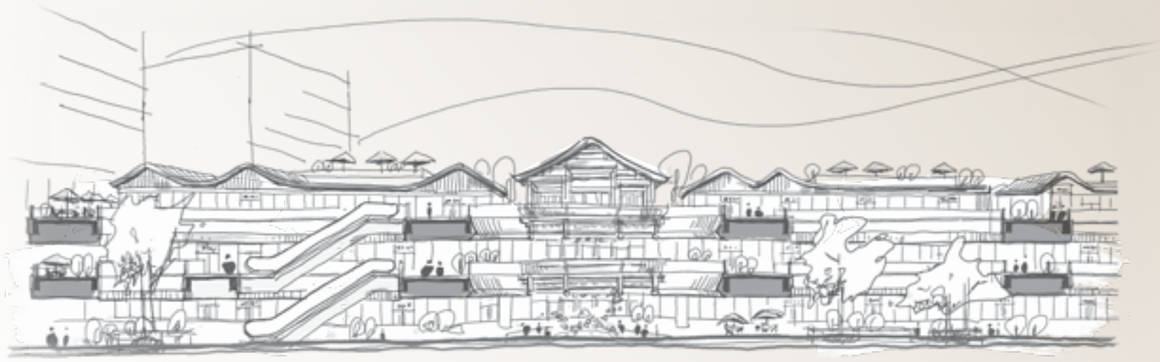






Respecting Tradition Through Design

Occupying a rare and valuable urban space, the site was once home to the famous Chinese scholar Kang Youwei. The development blends 50,000 square metres of commercial space with 12,000 square metres of green areas, thoughtfully integrated within the dense urban fabric of the Second Ring Road.



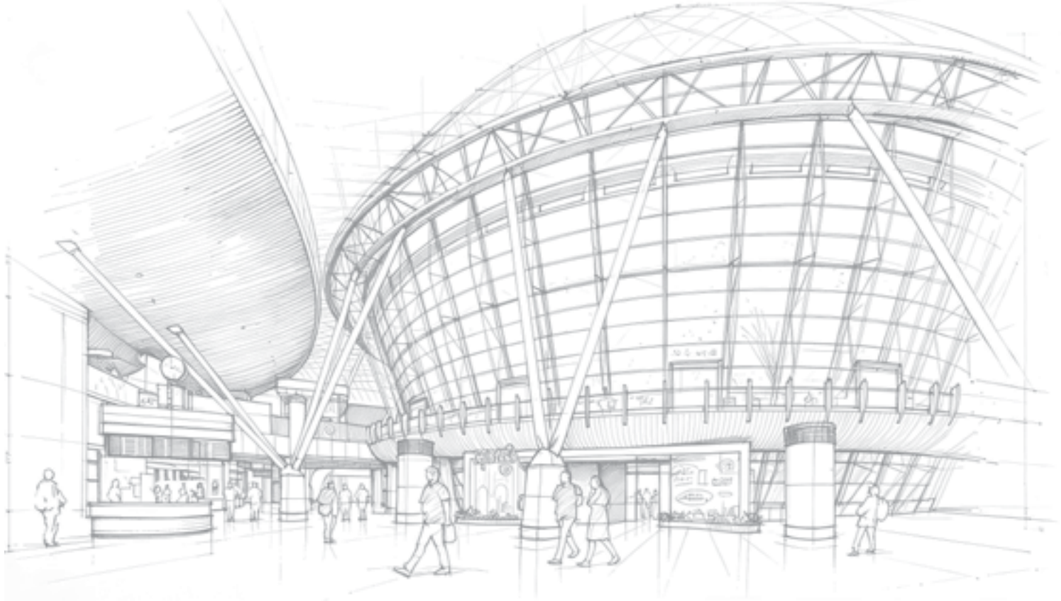


Lead8's design team drew from Beijing's traditional courtyard layouts, organising the commercial complex into a series of interconnected streets, squares and pocket parks. The flowing curves of roof eaves, traditional brickwork and delicate craftsmanship create subtle, engaging details throughout the development. These are not references applied as decoration, but spatial ideas that reveal themselves gradually, inviting visitors to discover and engage more deeply with their surroundings.

The result is a layered experience where visitors move seamlessly through shifting atmospheres. Rich in subtle and surprising details, Daji Xiang connects people to Beijing's history within a lively, modern setting — a thoughtful response to a culturally rich context.


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LUXURY COLLECTION STORE
LUXURY COLLECTION STORE
COACH
MCM
MICHAEL KORS
ParTee House

RIMBA – Kuala Lumpur International Airport Terminal 1



Location Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia | **Service** Design Consultant | **Client** Malaysia Airports Holdings Berhad | **Size** 970 sqm



At KLIA Terminal 1, RIMBA transforms a central space into a green sanctuary inspired by Malaysia's rainforest heritage.

Officially opened in 2026, the project brings nature, culture and wellbeing into the intensity of the airport environment, offering travellers a more restorative pause within the journey.







"In today's airports, travellers want more than efficiency — they want a place to pause, breathe and reconnect. RIMBA brings that calm into the heart of transit."

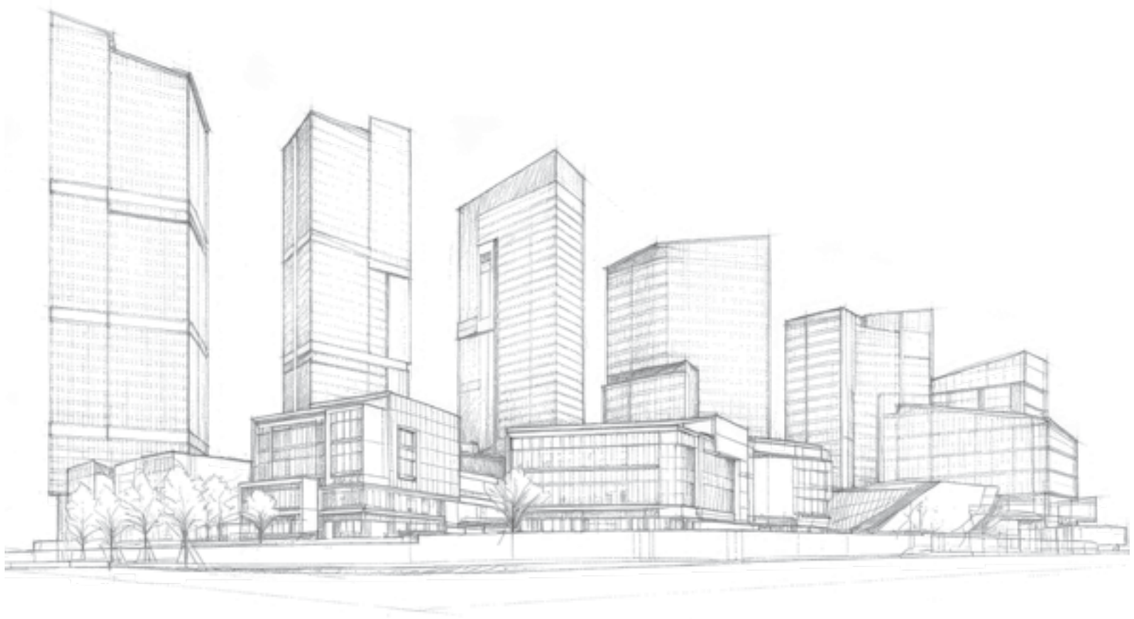
Richard Lee
Director – Architecture, Malaysia

A Calmer Type of Transit

RIMBA is designed as part of Malaysia's "Airport in the Forest, Forest in the Airport" vision. In an era of high-volume aviation where efficiency alone is no longer enough, the design responds with multi-sensory respite: preserved trees from three decades past intertwined with indigenous flora, elevated timber walkways, and sculptural art by Nizam Sculpture.

Enhancing both the capacity and ambience of Terminal 1's Satellite Centre Court, RIMBA offers a contemporary showcase of Malaysia's cultural and ecological identity.

Luxehills Tianfu International Fund Town Phase 2



Location Chengdu, China | **Service** Masterplanning, Architecture | **Client** Wide Horizon Group | **Size** 440,000 sqm



Rising in Chengdu's Tianfu New Area, this six-tower superblock combines corporate offices, retail and conference and exhibition venues within a connected, pedestrianised and landscaped environment.

A Vertical Community in the Making

The six towers reach between 180 and 60 metres, anchored by a multifunctional art and convention centre and a cluster of street precincts. The design balances verticality, transparency and amenity-rich public realms.

Still under construction, the project reflects Lead8's ability to shape density through elegance, programme mix and a strong relationship between tower form and public realm. Together, the towers form a cohesive urban composition that strengthens the district's evolving identity as a centre for business and retail excellence.





"The towers celebrate density through rhythm and proportion, balancing impressive scale with amenity-rich spaces that invite people in."

Kenji Wong
Project Director – Architecture



Zhengdong MixC

An Innovative "Urban Resort" Vision in Central China

Zhengdong MixC is a landmark mixed-use development in Zhengzhou's Central Business District close to major high-speed rail hubs. Designed by Lead8 as an "urban resort", the project blends community, commerce, and culture into a sustainable urban ecosystem.



Location Zhengzhou, China **Service** Architecture – Retail **Client** China Resources Land **Size** 241,000 sqm

Hangzhou Asiad MixC World



A New Community Hub for Hangzhou's Asian Games Village

As part of Hangzhou's ongoing urban evolution, Hangzhou Asiad MixC World introduces a lively new community hub to the city's Asian Games Village – where architecture, nature, and social activity converge within a human-centred retail environment.

Location Hangzhou, China
Service Architecture – Retail
Client China Resources Land
Size 100,000 sqm



Jinling Place

Innovative Design Meets Commercial Vision in Nanjing

Jinling Place is a flagship retail destination nestled in Nanjing's vibrant Hexi city centre. Developed by Alibaba Group and operated by CR Mixc Lifestyle, the development stands as a showcase of innovative design and commercial vision. Through an immersive interior design approach, the project redefines urban retail by blending technological integration, environmental sensitivity, and human-centric spatial planning.

Location Nanjing, China **Service** Interior Design
Client Alibaba Group **Size** Retail - 130,000 sqm

Parade at One Bangkok

Urban Green in the Heart of Bangkok

One Bangkok is a transformative, 17-hectare urban superblock elevating Thailand's retail, business, tourism, and arts. The world-class hub features three retail precincts, including Parade, which draws inspiration from the neighbouring Lumphini Park to weave living gardens and vivid landscaping into the very fabric of the building, immersing visitors in nature.

Location Bangkok, Thailand
Service Parade: Architecture, Interior Design, Retail Planning ; The Storeys: Interior Design, Retail Planning
Client TCC Assets (Thailand) Co., Ltd. and Frasers Property Holdings (Thailand) Co., Ltd.
Size 120,000 sqm



MixC Wuhan Lifestyle Street

A Refined Approach to Outdoor Retail Precincts

Lead8 has led the design and architectural upgrade of the enhanced retail street experience at MixC Wuhan. The transformation has created an engaging retail environment that balances urban energy with nature and everyday lifestyle.

The renovation introduces new stand-alone retail and dining shop houses, dedicated event spaces, as well as façade and shopfront improvements along the open-air internal street that weaves through the development.



Location Wuhan, China **Service** Architecture, Façade Design **Client** China Resources Land **Size** 14,600 sqm



Fuzhou Shangri-La Centre



A Mixed-use Transformation of a Luxury Hotel

Fuzhou Shangri-La Centre is a landmark redevelopment that reimagines the city's renowned five-star hotel into an urban living room at the heart of Fuzhou. The expansion has transformed the destination into a dynamic mixed-use development – integrating a five-level retail podium and a new 100-metre Grade A office tower. The result is a bold reconfiguration of the site's land use and urban contribution, evolving a single-purpose hotel into a lifestyle hub that connects seamlessly to the city's famed Wuyi Square.

Location Fuzhou, China
Service Architecture, Interior Design - Retail
Client Fuzhou Shangri-La Centre **Size** 120,000 sqm

Paragon Club Lounge

Repositioning Retail Through a Hospitality-Driven Members' Space

Paragon Club Lounge is a refined members' retreat within Paragon along Singapore's famed Orchard Road. The calm space features modern furnishings and versatile layouts for relaxation and socialising; demonstrating how established retail brands can discover new purpose, deepen engagement, and elevate the overall experience within their existing developments.



Location Singapore **Service** Interior Design, Signage **Client** CPI Paragon Trustee Pte Ltd (as trustee of Paragon Trust) **Size** 500 sqm

Megabangna

A Nature-Led Retail Expansion for Bangkok's New Generation

Lead8 is the lead architect and interior designer for Megabangna's landmark second phase expansion, supporting Central Pattana and Ikano Centres in shaping a new nature-led destination for eastern Bangkok.

Location Bangkok, Thailand
Service Megabangna Phase 2 Expansion - Lead Architect, Interior Designer; Megacity Township Masterplan - Lead Architect, Masterplanner
Client SF Development Co. Ltd
Size Megabangna Phase 2 Expansion - 170,000 sqm





SHOWAY CENTER

The Next Chapter for Hongqiao's Retail Heart

SHOWAY CENTER is a flagship project at the core of Shanghai's Hongqiao International Central Business District, strategically positioned beside the National Exhibition and Convention Center (NECC) and the Hongqiao Comprehensive Transport Hub. Lead8 is delivering the architecture renovation — spanning planning, façade and interior design — focused on activating commercial potential through innovative spatial storytelling.

Location Shanghai, China
Service Commercial Planning, Façade Architecture - Commercial, Interior Design - Commercial
Client Luen Mei Group **Size** 210,000 sqm



Park City Masterplan

A New Model of Sustainble Urban Life

Located in Zimbabwe's capital, Park City is a vibrant urban ecosystem planned around a long-term masterplan spanning 930 hectares — connecting residential, enterprise, health and nature. Within it, each district is designed around a specific way of living, working or growing, together forming a complete urban environment at a township scale.

Location Harare, Zimbabwe
Service Masterplanning
Client Hondeh Group
Size 930 ha

GATE M Huazhimen

A Retail and Lifestyle Destination Inspired by Shanghai's Textile Artists

GATE M Huazhimen aspires to create an intelligent, experiential, and world-class TOD complex in Shanghai's Xuhui district, set within a site surrounded by the rich cultural history of the city's cotton textile industry, and also strategically connected by four metro lines.



Location Shanghai, China **Service** Architecture – Retail **Client** HZM Capital **Size** 300,000 sqm

A look into the everyday energy behind our work — from model-making and design sessions to moments beyond the studio: giving back, mentoring, presenting, exploring and celebrating. This is Lead8 — united by our shared passion for design.







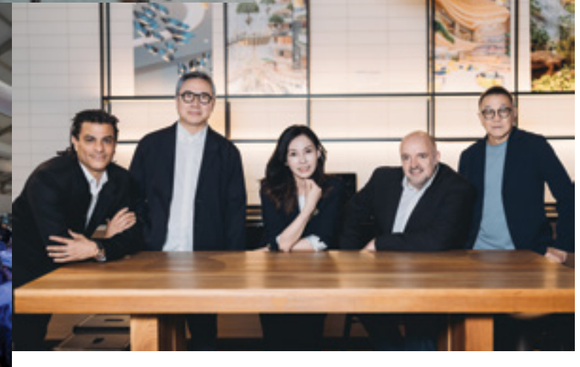










Asia Pacific Property Awards

Parade at One Bangkok
- 5-Star - Best Retail Architecture (Thailand) 2026/27
- Award Winner - Retail Development (Thailand) 2026/27

Daji Xiang
- 5-Star - Best Retail Interior (Beijing, China) 2026/27

World Architecture Festival China Awards

K11 ELYSEA
- Winner - Outstanding Shopping Mall / Retail Design (Future) 2026

Central Yards
- Winner - Outstanding Mixed-use Design (Future) 2026

World Design Awards

K11 ELYSEA
- Silver Award - Architecture, Commercial 2026

Asian Design Awards

K11 ELYSEA
- Gold Award - Architecture, Commercial (International) 2026

Urban Design & Architecture Design Awards

Central Yards
- Gold Award - Mixed-use Architecture (Under Construction) 2026

Build4Asia Awards

Central Yards
- Gold Award - Outstanding Architecture, Commercial (Future Projects) 2026
- Silver Award - Excellence in Sustainability 2026
- #MyFavourite Future Project 2026

Parade at One Bangkok
- Gold Award - Outstanding Architecture, Retail / Shopping (Project Outside of Hong Kong) 2026

Daji Xiang
- Gold Award - Outstanding Interior Design, Commercial (Project Outside of Hong Kong) 2026

K11 ELYSEA
- Silver Award - Outstanding Architecture, Retail / Shopping (Project Outside of Hong Kong) 2026

SKYCITY Transport Terminal
- Silver Award - Outstanding Architecture, Non-commercial / Civic (Hong Kong) 2026

Outstanding Property Award London

SKYLAND UNIVERSAL
- Winner - Interior Design, Redevelopment / Restoration 2025

PropertyGuru Asia Property Awards

Parade at One Bangkok
- Winner - Best Retail Interior Design (Asia) 2025

Hongqiao Qianwan Incity MEGA
- Winner - Best Retail Architectural Design (Asia) 2025
- Winner - Best Retail Architectural Design (Mainland China) 2025

Jinling Place
- Winner - Best Retail Interior Design (Mainland China) 2025

PropertyGuru Thailand Property Awards

Parade at One Bangkok
- Winner - Best Retail Architectural Design (Thailand) 2025
- Winner - Best Retail Interior Design (Thailand) 2025

CTBUH Award of Excellence

False Creek Mass Timber Community
- Future Project Award 2025

Asia Pacific Interior Design Awards

Parade at One Bangkok
- Silver Award - Shopping Space 2025

Daji Xiang
- Bronze Award - Shopping Space 2025

MIPIM Asia Awards

Parade at One Bangkok
- Gold Award - Best Retail Project 2025

A&D Awards

Parade at One Bangkok
- Silver Award - Best Retail Architecture 2025

Daji Xiang
- Certificate of Excellence - Retail Interior Design 2025

CREDAWARD

MixC Changchun
- Silver Award - Comprehensive Commercial Project, Shopping Mall 2025

Hongqiao Qianwan Incity MEGA
- Merit Award - Future Project, Commercial 2025

DFA Design for Asia Awards

Parade at One Bangkok
- Merit Award - Spatial Design, Commercial 2025

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