

West Bund Art Museum

Shanghai, China 2013-

The West Bund Art Museum is a major new art gallery on the Shanghai Corniche, an 8.5 kilometre frontage on the northern bank of the Huangpu River. The promenade connects the Xuhui district to the historic Bund and forms a key part of the West Bund Masterplan, which envisages a new cultural district over nine square kilometres of former industrial land.

The museum occupies a triangular plot at the northernmost tip of a new public park, at the point where Longteng Avenue and the river converge. A raised public esplanade above the flood plain surrounds the building, offering views to the river. The edge of the esplanade on the east side is delineated by a continuous series of steps with landing stages leading to the riverbank. The site offered the opportunity to create a completely freestanding structure and its location allowed for improved access to both the river and the park.

The building consists of three main gallery volumes placed in a pin-wheel formation around a central lobby with a triple-height atrium. This configuration allows for different components of the museum to operate independently. The lobby itself is accessed from Longteng Avenue to the west and from the riverside to the east. The latter offers two entrance options: the visitor can either descend into a sunken courtyard at a lower level or climb a set of stairs from the esplanade to arrive in the central lobby at a higher level. Both of these levels give access to the main gallery spaces. The museum shop and café can be found at an intermediate level directly connected to Longteng Avenue.

The three main volumes are 18 metres high. Each consists of two floors with a top-lit upper gallery. The lower spaces vary in function, housing an independent gallery space, a multipurpose hall and the museum shop. Both the gallery and the hall are sunk down to the lower level and are lit by clerestory windows. A low pavilion housing the café sits at the river's edge at the level of the esplanade. Its elongated form is intended to maximise river views while its roof serves as a generous terrace fronting the upper entrance. The roof of the atrium remains below the roofline of the major volumes and cantilevers far out beyond the building towards the river and the road. At either end, the roof is supported by a colossal tapering column that draws attention to the entrances. The roof and the base of the building are made of fair-faced concrete while the three dominant volumes are made of recycled glass. The use of glass and recycled glass lends the complex an opaline quality that is iridescent during the day and prismatic at night. The pin-wheel configuration of the galleries is reinforced with large windows at their outer ends offering panoramic views over the park, the river and the city.

The Pompidou Centre in Paris has signed a protocol with the publicly owned West Bund Group and intends to show a number of exhibitions in the new museum as part of a cultural collaboration between France and China.

Project start	2013
Completion due	2019
Gross floor area	22,000 m ²
Client	Shanghai West Bund Development Group Co., Ltd.
Architect	David Chipperfield Architects Berlin, Shanghai
Partners	Alexander Schwarz, Martin Reichert, Mark Randel, Libin Chen
Project architects	Diana Schaffranek, Chuxiao Li, Haishan Li
Contact architect	Shanghai Urban Architectural Design Co., Ltd.
Landscape architect	Levin Monsigny Gesellschaft von Landschaftsarchitekten (schematic design)
Structural consultant	Arup
Structural engineer	Shanghai Urban Architectural Design Co., Ltd.
Façade consultant	Drees & Sommer Engineering Consulting (Shanghai) Co., Ltd.
Services consultant	WSP Parsons Brinckerhoff Engineering Services
Services engineer	Shanghai Urban Architectural Design Co., Ltd.



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