

Zhangjiang Science Hall

Architect: Christian de Portzamparc | Address: 1393 Haike Road

The newly opened venue draws and enralls both tech and art fans with its design, offering a subtle blend of technological charm and an artistic atmosphere.

The steel-framed structure adopts a hollow-carved design, with more than 30,000 triangle porcelain plates in 10 changing colors from blackish-green to light-gray paving the facade. The effect creates a unique “world of light and shadow.”

During the day, cracks of light filter through the irregularly-shaped

glass plates, giving visitors the feeling of walking under a draped canopy of trees. As the venue is illuminated at night, the lights shine through the glass plates and gleam on the nearby Chuanyang River.

Yes, natural elements like sunlight, air and water are keywords for the design. Notably, on the rooftop there’s a garden planted with roses and grapes.

It’s an innovative landmark showcasing new technological achievements, while

holding international summits and temporary exhibitions. Opened on September 2, there is clearly much to look forward to.

Small facts: The hall took on a metaverse feel during the World Artificial Intelligence Conference 2022 that ended earlier this month. At the site, visitors were encouraged to take a metaverse tour around the hall, relying on AI technology to draw their ideal spouse and even create their own virtual avatars, their digital representative in the metaverse.



Shanghai Poly Grand Theater

Architect: Tadao Ando | Address: 159 Baiyin Road

A minimalist box built of concrete and glass, the Shanghai Poly Grand Theater in Jiading District looks much more exciting than it sounds, thanks to the magical use of shadow and light from Japanese architect Tadao Ando.

The main structure of the theater is surrounded by a transparent curtain wall that forms a double-skin facade system. When the sunlight shines through, an almost holy atmosphere is formed in the interior of the theater by the light and shadow.

If one is fascinated by Ando’s “Church of the Light” in Japan, he will surely fall in love with the lakeside theater.

Small facts: It is said that Ando hailed the theater as the best embodiment of his work in China.



Tian An 1000 Trees

Architect: Thomas Heatherwick | Address: 600 Moganshan Road

A reminder of the ancient Hanging Gardens of Babylon, Tian An 1000 Trees was designed by British designer and architect Thomas Heatherwick. It emerges like a pair of forest-capped mountains from the waterfront of Suzhou Creek.

The mixed-use development contains shops, cafes, restaurants, new public spaces and promenades, and integrates an existing park and heritage structure.

It’s as if green shoots sprout up through the building to bloom on the skyline. The planters contain a bio-diverse mixture of shrubs, hanging plants and deciduous, evergreen, fruit and flowering trees, so that like a mountain slope, its appearance will change with the seasons.

Small facts: Heatherwick was the architect behind the United Kingdom Pavilion at World Expo Shanghai in 2010 and the London 2012 Olympic Cauldron. Though it looks quite like the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, the design is said to come from China’s Yellow Mountain.

Sky SOHO

Architect: Zaha Hadid | Address: 968 Jinzhong Road

Like all of Zaha Hadid’s (1950-2016) structures, Sky SOHO provides a strong visual impact. Set near the Hongqiao transport hub, the 12 buildings in the complex all feature her iconic curves and are connected by 16 overhead corridors, forming a net-shaped space.

The post-modern industrial park is not only home to the headquarters of more than 800 companies, but is also a popular filming location because of its unique appearance.

Sky SOHO is the only legacy the late British-Iraqi architect left in Shanghai. With the other two SOHO complexes in Beijing, “the queen of curves” brought her best to the country.

Small facts: Viewed from above, it looks like four high-speed trains, echoing with the Hongqiao Railway Station, which is about a 30-minute drive.

