

FRAME

THE GREAT INDOORS

N°118 SEP — OCT 2017

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confronts the
colour industry

The CHINESE
CINEMA revolution

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UBER's flying cars

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GROWN
HOTELS
Taking local
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HOSPITALITY

Singapore studio MINISTRY OF DESIGN puts its not-so-outsider spin on a hotel in Beijing



BEIJING – At the edge of picturesque Houhai Lake, surrounded by historical *hutong* dwellings – most of which have been owned by the same Chinese families for generations – Vue Beijing combines old and new in a ‘major adaptive-reuse exercise’ that involves a number of existing *hutong*-style buildings erected in the 1950s. The flagship of Chinese boutique-hotel chain Vue, the project was realized by Singapore studio Ministry of Design (MOD).

Conceptualizing and lending form to the venue’s various China-centric attributes – such as the cracked ice-ray latticework found throughout the 10,000-m² space, a pattern inspired by the time-honoured motif featured on Chinese windows and doors – was easier than might be expected for an outsider, says Colin Seah, MOD’s founder and director. ‘Most of our work is abroad, so we constantly deal with different cultures and traditions. »

Projects based in Beijing or elsewhere in China are less challenging, however, because Singaporean-Chinese people share many values and traits with people living in mainland China.'

Seah says that Vue is the culmination of the firm's recent move into brand guardianship, the beginnings of which emerged at Macalister Mansion in Penang, Malaysia – a finalist for Frame's 2013 Great Indoors Award in the 'Relax and Consume' category. 'We move upstream to start at the brand-creation

level before moving downstream to design all aspects of the brand: architecture, interiors, landscape, branding, website and uniform art direction.'

The hoteliers behind Vue hope to fill a void in Beijing between ostentatious Chinese luxury and generic international five-star establishments. Future expansion of the same model is planned for other key Chinese cities. – CW

modonline.com

A nod to traditional Chinese ice-ray lattice, angular forms appear in various guises at Vue Beijing.



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