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Auf einen Drink in die Rotunde Museumserweiterung in Xi'an von Neri&Hu

Große Museen sind nicht selten über viele Jahrzehnte hinweg gewachsene Gebilde, denen irgendwann der größere Zusammenhang fehlt. Dann muss eine Neuorganisation her und oft auch ein neues, als einprägsame Adresse

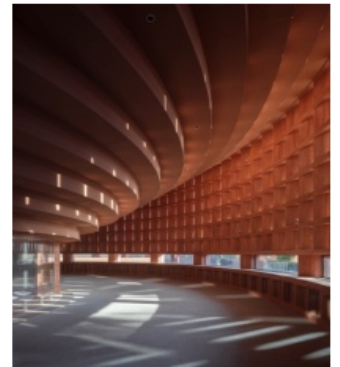
as a memorable address. The most famous project of this type is the Pyramid of the Louvre, created by IM Pei in Paris in the 1980s. A more recent example would be David Chipperfield Architects' [James Simon Gallery](#) in Berlin. After the implementation of the Museum Island master plan, it will serve as the entrance building for not just one, but four museums.

In China, however, with its countless young cultural buildings, such projects are still comparatively rare. Now **Neri&Hu**(Shanghai) in the provincial capital of Xi'an, however, has completed an extension which, in terms of its programme, ties in with such predecessors. At the eastern entrance of the *Qujiang Museum of Fine Arts* they placed an impressively concise rotunda. The extension encroaches more deeply on the existing structure than its three above-ground floors would initially suggest. In total, a gross floor area of around 2,000 square meters was created.

The museum in the eponymous Qujiang New District is in prominent proximity to the 17th-century Big Wild Goose Pagoda, which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site on the Silk Road. It brings together some of the oldest historic murals in the country, as well as jewelry and handicrafts. There are also special exhibitions, some of which are dedicated to western artists. Research and restoration are also part of the museum's fields of activity. What sounds like a public institution is actually a private entity that manages a hotel group.

The architects designed a four-part extension consisting of a sunken base, a sunken ground floor and the rotunda with circulation and amphitheater above. Escalators lead down from the entrance, where the transition to the existing building is located. There are also commercial functions on the lower floors, while a bar awaits visitors in the rotunda upstairs. The glowing color of the red travertine facade is particularly striking in the evening sun. If you like, you can then ponder whether you are in a late echo of Gunnar Asplund's Stockholm City Library. (sb)

Photos: [Zhu Runzi](#), [Studio Fang](#)



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