

“A CONCEPT GUESTHOUSE OF REFLECTIVE NOSTALGIA”

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ARCHITECTURE + INTERIOR

A Concept Guesthouse of Reflective Nostalgia

Neri & Hu's Nantou City guesthouse is a play between past and the present

MARCH 26, 2022 | By CARISA MAGNO

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There's a phenomenon in China where specks of the old settlement are still seen despite being replaced by fast urbanization, they call it *cheng-zhong-cun*. Simply put – villages in the city. Architecture and design firm Neri & Hu's guesthouse is anchored on this concept. Strategically nestled in Shenzhen specifically Nantou City is where one can find the building. It is an old town that evolved into its own bustling interior city. All around the neighborhood are tight alleys and dead ends where merchants, visitors, and residents prowl.

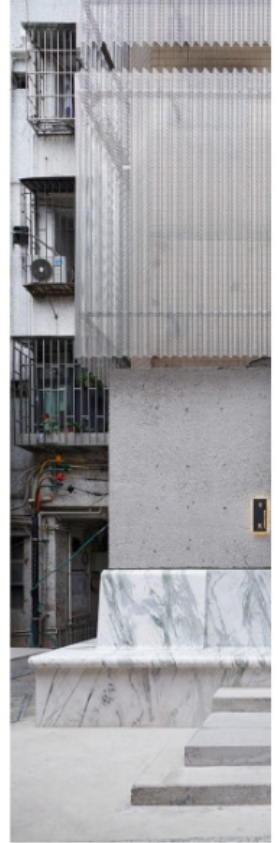
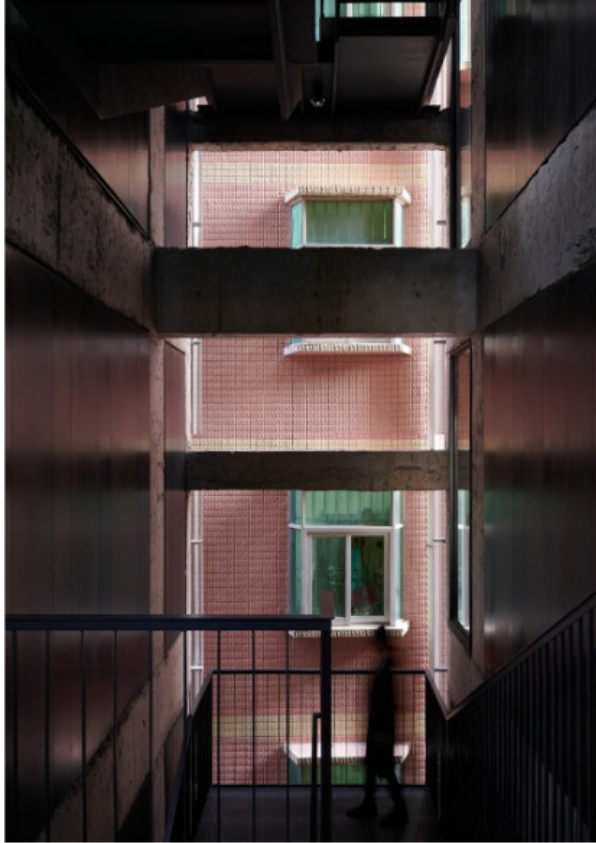


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Influenced by Svetlana Boym's writings on "reflective nostalgia", its well-thought-out concept and design is a play of contradictions. The marriage between the cultural heritage of the structures in Nantou and the reflection of modern-day living was their goal for the project.

“The contrast and tension between old and new, past and present are very much part of the spacial and sectional experience of the project.”

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Lyndon Neri, founding partner of Neri & Hu

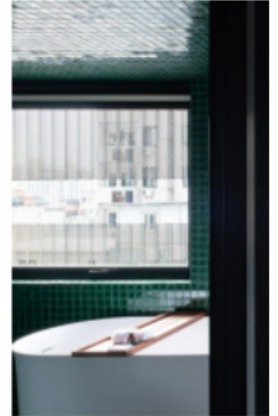
The 9 Storey structure with 11 rooms is a standout in its urban neighborhood with its mesh-covered façade. Some of the elements inside were stripped off, revealing its bare structure to their guests, an attempt to preserve the culture behind the building. Combined with other modern design materials like steel cladding and glass, the building creates a character of its own.

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Each room has its own identity. It's a private space that opens up to the scene outside the building. One can watch the hustle and bustle of the neighborhood through their glass window. An experience in line with the designers' vision for the guesthouse.



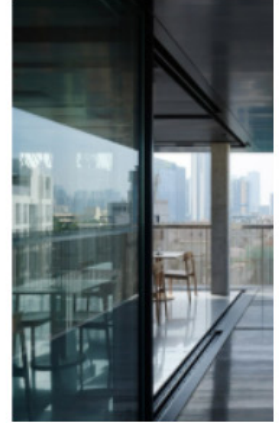
A torn-down stairwell converted into a metal one gave way to a vertical courtyard. Going up the stairs, the guest will pass thru the rooms on the mid floors until they reach the rooftop. This is where the dining space and rooftop terrace are situated. It has a framed panoramic view of the city, again invoking the feeling of being one with the locality.

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Like a fortress of modernist simplicity, the guesthouse is topped with two metallic monoliths. It made the structure an entity of its own in its thriving neighborhood.

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