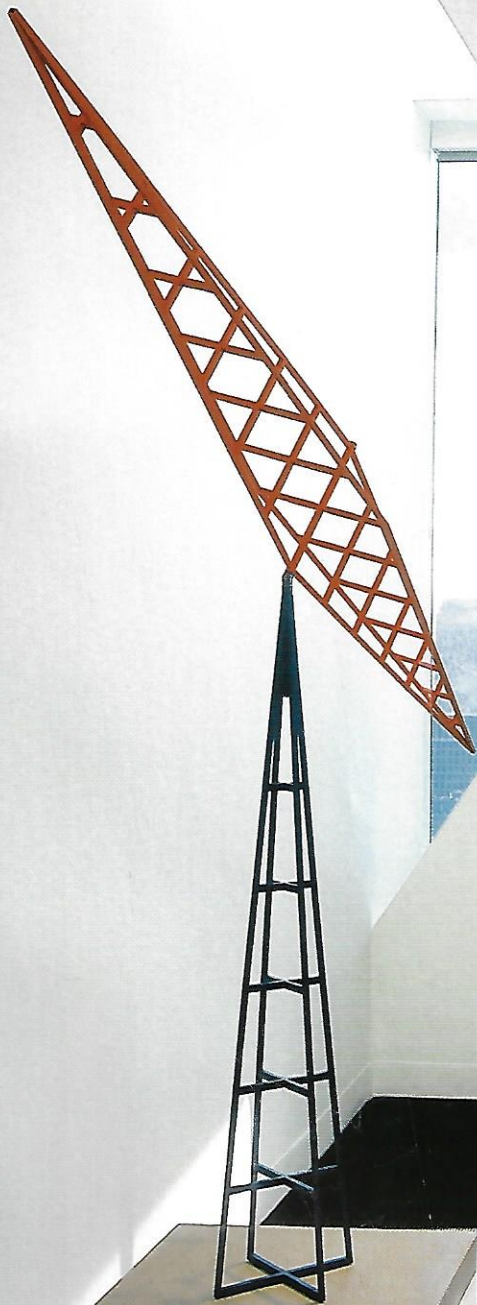


# INTERIOR DESIGN



## Gensler Stands Tall

At 40, the world's most powerful design firm  
is head and shoulders above the rest



TYPE ARCHITECTURE.

CLIENT SHANGHAI PUDONG DEVELOPMENT BANK.

TRADITION

An inner garden with pools and waterfalls recalls Chinese courtyard houses.

INNOVATION

The building's hand-finished, cast-in-place concrete exterior, an unlikely choice in China, is a reminder of the bank's global reach.

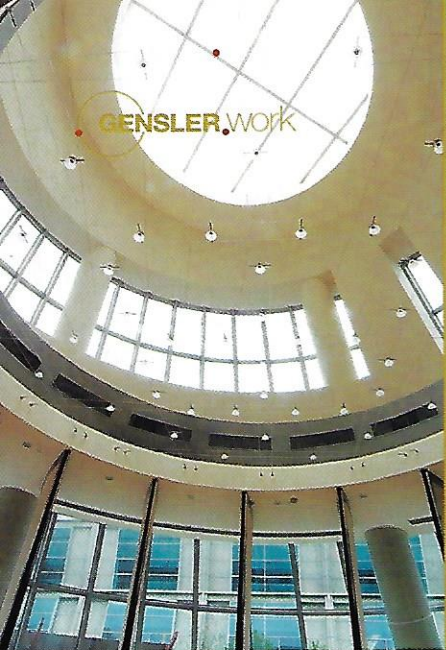
think globally/act locally



*Deep-set windows turn hand-finished cast-in-place concrete sills and mullions into effective shading elements.*

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"DESIGNING A TECHNICALLY ADVANCED SPACE for a highly traditional user involves striking just the right balance in materials, forms, volume, and approach," says principal Jun Xia. With that delicate equilibrium in mind, Xia envisaged the Shanghai Pudong Development Bank's hometown information center as an American-style corporate campus. It would be built on community and environmental-mindedness—and designed to house training and conference facilities, a corporate data center, offices, and a hotel for visitors and trainees. The heart of the project is a courtyard garden, which serves as an additional connector between various parts of the U-shape 50,000-square-foot building. The courtyard also performs its time-honored Chinese architectural role as a gathering place, while plantings and water features reinforce the Chinese idea of the tranquility of the natural world. "This project," Xia says, "melds craftsmanship and environmental sensitivity."

Billed as one of China's first office buildings to feature eco-conscious design throughout, the bank's information center relies on its own architecture to reduce energy use. Thanks

*Clockwise from top left: A skylight saves energy, bathing the private dining room in sunshine. The curtain walls enclosing this atrium are framed in aluminum. The ceiling soars to 48 feet. Operable windows enhance ventilation. Beyond a water feature stands a pergola supported by stainless-steel columns.*







to deep window reveals, the concrete sills and mullions become effective shading elements. Most of the interior is naturally ventilated and cooled: Operable windows line the long north-south elevations to take advantage of the prevailing winds. Office areas, bright with color, open onto atriums and corridors lit by energy-saving skylights. After all, sustainability is critical to an institution that plans to be around for a long time.

—Tina M. Kanagaratnam

*Clockwise from center left: A 330-foot-long connector links the building's four function areas. Ginkgo and camphor trees grow in the garden courtyard. An atrium gives access to the hotel and training center. The skylit private dining room is a freestanding structure completely encircled by glazed bands.*

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