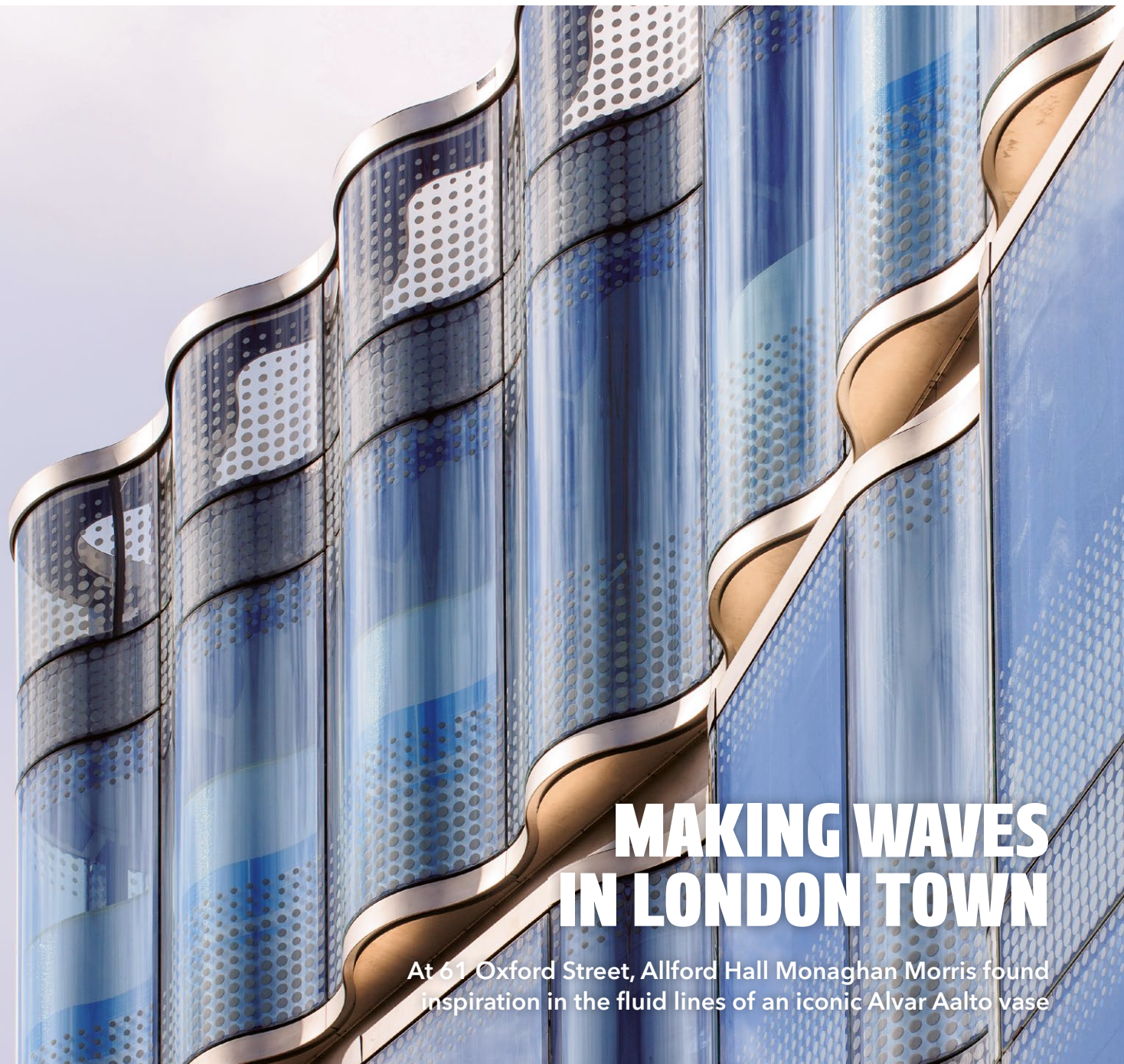


perspective

November 2016

INSPIRING ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

www.perspectiveglobal.com



MAKING WAVES IN LONDON TOWN

At 61 Oxford Street, Allford Hall Monaghan Morris found inspiration in the fluid lines of an iconic Alvar Aalto vase

+ THE GREEN AGE OF ASIA

A look at rapid urbanisation and industrialisation in Asia at ACA17

Earls Court & Lillie Square, London
—p.20

Haveli Dharampura, Delhi
—p.23

Port House Antwerp by ZHA
—p.26

Metta @ California Tower, Hong Kong
—p.32

XL-MUSE's Hangzhou Zhongshuge
—p.36

Marriott Nanshan by Cheng Chung Design
—p.40

White Futura Cinema, Shanghai
—p.58

96 McDonnell Road, Hong Kong
—p.68

The Smile @ London Design Festival
—p.70



HKS48
US\$18
€15



The future of curves

Alexander Wong Architects is known for its unique and compelling design projects that often find inspiration in the worlds of literature, film and philosophy. The Hong Kong-based practice has recently unveiled a cinema in Shanghai that employs sweeping curves and pure materials to create a space to take movie-goers to another dimension

TEXT:
Sophie Cullen
PHOTOGRAPHY:
Courtesy of Alexander Wong Architects

Freshly completed in the Shanghai Hopson International Plaza, Wujiaochang, White Futura is the second cinema of a pair that Alexander Wong Architects has created for China Film Cinema in 2016.

Earlier in the year in Wuhan, the practice revealed *Beyond Future*, the first of the duo, a project that was mostly completed in black, representing the 'dark matter' of the universe. Where *Beyond Future* is layered with rigid angles and floating ceilings, this most recent project is very much the opposite. "White Futura is unique in every way – it's all about curves, exploded as well as folded elements, all giant in size," explains Alexander Wong, director of Alexander Wong Architects.

Left from top
The custom-made furniture inside the lobby area also features curved edges and lines. Elegant curves weave throughout the space, not only working with the theme, but also acting as natural wayfinding devices

Facing page
Pure materials free from pattern and texture such as fibreglass, marble and mirror was used throughout the project

The cinema was inspired by the iconic flower and symbol of Shanghai, the white magnolia. Replicating the delicately curved petals of the flower, giant white sculptures hang from the ceiling, abstracted, deconstructed and then morphed into an exploded spacecraft. This key design element then posits the question: "What is natural versus what is artificial?"

Fibreglass was adopted for the giant white magnolias in the cinema's entrance, with white

marble, Corian, golden metal, glass, stainless steel and mirror also being used throughout the spaces. The firm wanted to work exclusively with very pure materials devoid of textures or patterns to heighten the impact of the design and increase the atmospheric pull between nature and science fiction.

Not only taking inspiration from the form of the flower, the concept was also partially inspired by the 2004 Olympic Games opening ceremony in Athens, where an ancient Greek Minoan sculpture exploded into a series of abstracted spatial islands. Through this transformation, more refined artefacts were exposed from within, this explaining the origin and evolution of western civilisation in a stunningly beautiful dreamscape.



From top
Signage for each cinema
is unique and features
curvilinear elements •
Oversized white
sculptures hang from the
ceiling in the entrance of
the cinema, inspired by
white magnolia blooms

This extrapolated and transformative idea can be seen through a variety of details in the space, such as the bespoke furniture in the box office. One-of-a-kind curvilinear signage also lines the corridors as guests move towards each cinema through a corridor of bright white light.

“Curves or straight edges can be equally powerful and profoundly evocative when purposefully applied and correctly exploited,” Wong muses. “Here, we are not only using curves and double curves as lines or edges, but inventing distorted spheres and bubble-like spatial caverns

(or negative entities) constantly in tension creating a dynamic space that is taut with drama, and powerfully futuristic.”

By creating a highly dynamic and futuristic space, the firm tried to dig deeper and question the origin of life as more than merely another *Eyes Wide Shut* story that masks the true purpose of Genesis on planet Earth. “The fluidity of these curves generating distorted and magma-like spaces erupts perfectly with the darkest fairytale in a blazing white light,” concludes Wong. ●