

## A Global Celebration of Craft, Innovation and Materiality: Design Shanghai Features 2026

*Asia's Leading international design event reveals 2026 Features programme highlights*



Above: Beyond Craft, Design Shanghai 2025 Edition

**January 2026** - Asia's leading international design event, **Design Shanghai**, brings together the world's leading brands and professionals for a vibrant showcase of creativity, innovation and culture. After six years, the show will return to its birthplace, the historic **Shanghai Exhibition Centre**, where it will debut an enhanced programme, with curated indoor and outdoor special projects, and an elevated visitor experience showcasing the most innovative and cutting-edge design emerging from Asia.

This edition's **Features** programme presents specially curated exhibitions and installations that spotlight the widest spectrum of contemporary design - from emerging talent and traditional craft to material innovation and collectible art.

*"We're committed to elevating the visitor experience by weaving immersive and thoughtful feature programmes into every corner of Design Shanghai. Returning to the Shanghai Exhibition Centre - our original home and a landmark at the heart of the city - deepens that experience, allowing us to harness the unique character of the venue's historic architecture and vibrant setting. This new chapter gives us the space and context to showcase curated design stories, from emerging TALENTS and traditional craftsmanship to interactive*

*materials labs and cross-disciplinary art, in ways that feel more connected, meaningful and inspiring. It's an evolution of how we invite every attendee to engage with design and be part of a broader dialogue that resonates with both local culture and global creativity.” - Zhuo Tan, Show Director, Design Shanghai*



Above: Design Shanghai, TALENTS' exhibitor YIN DAHUA

Design Shanghai's **TALENTS** is a vibrant showcase of rising global designers. This platform spotlights new voices shaping the future of design and celebrates creativity and experimentation from designers under the age of 35. Curated by renowned designer **Frank Chou**, the sixth edition of TALENTS presents the theme "**About Time**". Design Shanghai has invited ten emerging designers, Chinese and International, to explore the multidimensional meaning of "time". Among the highlights is **Yilu Studio**, presenting a new parachute-shaped lighting system. Crafted from innovative PVC materials, these lamps embody the studio's exploration of weightlessness and light diffusion. Designer **Yin Dahua** introduces a striking copper and oak coffee table. The piece juxtaposes the organic grain of oak with the smooth, reflective allure of copper, resulting in a captivating centrepiece that bridges tradition and contemporary design language. Adding a fresh, nature-inspired perspective, young designer **Yuya Zhou** unveils her collection of table lamps made from bio-plastic, LED light bulbs, and optic fiber. Together, these works exemplify TALENT's commitment to fostering new voices in design: voices that celebrate material innovation, environmental consciousness, and cultural imagination through form and function.

For 2026, the TALENTS mentor system continues with global industry veterans - **Aldo Cibic**, **Chi Wing Lo**, **Lina Kanafani**, **Shen Baohong**, and **Zhu Hui** - offering guidance to the designers. The 4th TALENTS AWARD will honour emerging designers across business, art and conceptual categories.



Left: Design Shanghai, TALENTS' exhibitor Trigram, Right: YILU Studio

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*"Product designers have long played a key role in shaping cultural consensus. From early environmental discussions to critiques of consumerism, many ideas originated within design discourse itself. TALENTS therefore seeks to spark broader cultural reflection. "Time" refers not only to chronology, but also to an era, personal experience, and macro narratives. We hope to view time as an important yet often overlooked design material - one that speaks to how design records its era and the meaning and value it carries across time."* **Frank Chou, Curator of TALENTS**

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**Made in JDZ** is a curated feature programme by designer Ryan Ran, bringing together a rich blend of crafts including ceramics, metalwork, and lacquer art to explore the dynamic intersection of design and traditional craftsmanship. Celebrating the spirit of Jingdezhen's historic craft heritage, this year's **Made in JDZ** reimagines traditional techniques through a bold and contemporary lens. Following the 2025 theme "Craft Kaleidoscope," which allowed visitors to hear craft's resonance in our era, the 2026 exhibition will explore **"Craft Without Borders"**. Centered on the core concept of **"On the Stage"** this year's zone emphasises craft stepping out of the "exhibition hall" and onto the vast stage of fashion and life, moving beyond traditional contexts. Made in JDZ highlights the unprecedented attention craft is now receiving and echoing its revival and renewal within contemporary youth culture. Curator of Made in JDZ, Ran Xiangfei, is not attempting to define what craft should be, but rather how it can continue to function in the present.

Participating studios include **NEARBY, Handiceramics, XISHANGTAOSHE, QIU Atelier, Tanchur, Sheenyard, Friendless, Qiaogongliqi** and **Wanglong** - each operating within Jingdezhen's long-established porcelain ecosystem while developing distinct approaches to form, material research and making. Collectively, they reflect the diversity of today's Chinese ceramic landscape, spanning functional objects, sculptural works and design-led production

rooted in local knowledge and workshop-based practice.

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Above: QIUAtelier | NEARBY ceramic art studio [Made in JDZ 2026 exhibitors]

*“Traditional craft exhibitions often emphasize the technical height of craft itself, whereas Made in JDZ focuses more on an attitude—how craft can sustain itself, revive, and enter everyday life. We aim to present contemporary expressions by Chinese designers, artisans, and brands rooted in traditional craft. It sounds simple, but it is extremely difficult to calibrate.*

*Craft, as a new entry point, gains powerful visibility through Design Shanghai, allowing the public to quickly realize how close craft actually is to everyday life. It also provides a broader stage for artisans, designers, and craft brands to connect with the market and commerce.” -*  
**Ran Xiangfei, Curator of Made in JDZ**

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Highlights of Craftsmanship [Beyond Craft 2026 exhibitors]

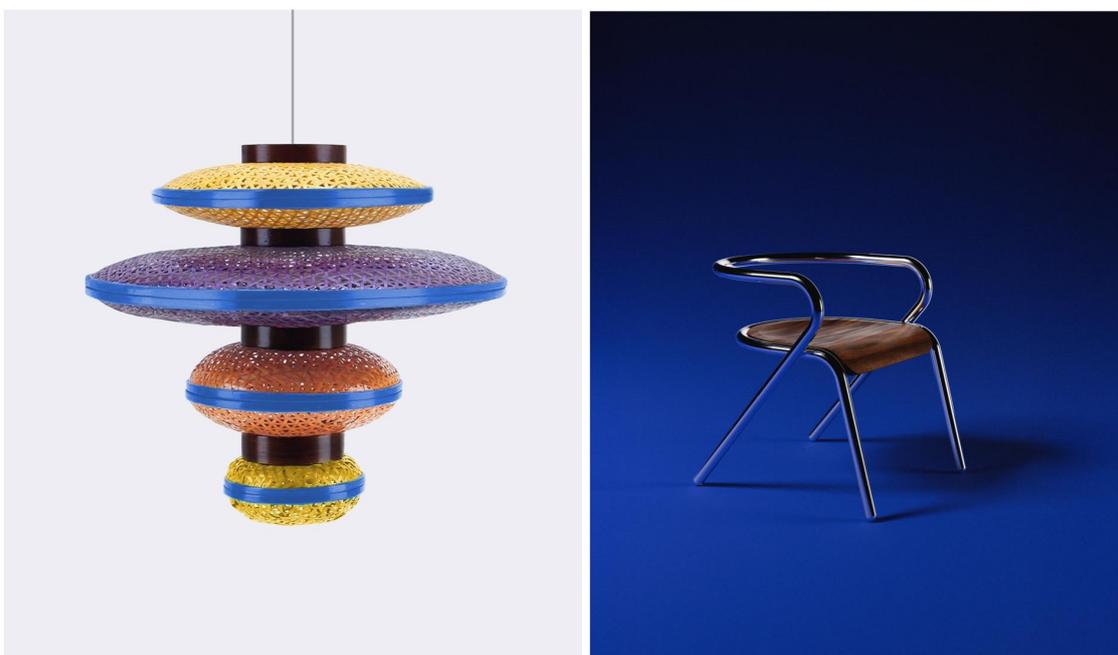
**Beyond Craft** (launched in 2024) explores the beauty of Asia through materials and craft and emphasises the contemporary value of traditional craftsmanship. Beyond Craft illustrates how heritage techniques can evolve and thrive in today's design landscape. The 2026 exhibit will feature creations from over ten brands spanning jewellery, objects, furniture, precision components and optical devices. These works encompass traditional handmade techniques like Nishijin-ori weaving, gold leaf application, lacquer art, washi paper, braided cords, ceramics, glass engraving, and metal inlay. From material selection and structural conception to surface treatment, the hands of artisans and artists vividly interpret the continuity and renewal of traditional crafts in a contemporary context for the Beyond Craft 2026 edition.

Participating this year are leading Japanese and Asian design and material research studios, including **Kyoraku Kougei** and **Lucent**, alongside key reference publications and studios such as the **Yamato Asia Colour Trend Book** and **Kubo Paper Studio**, expertists in colour forecasting, material innovation and paper craftsmanship.

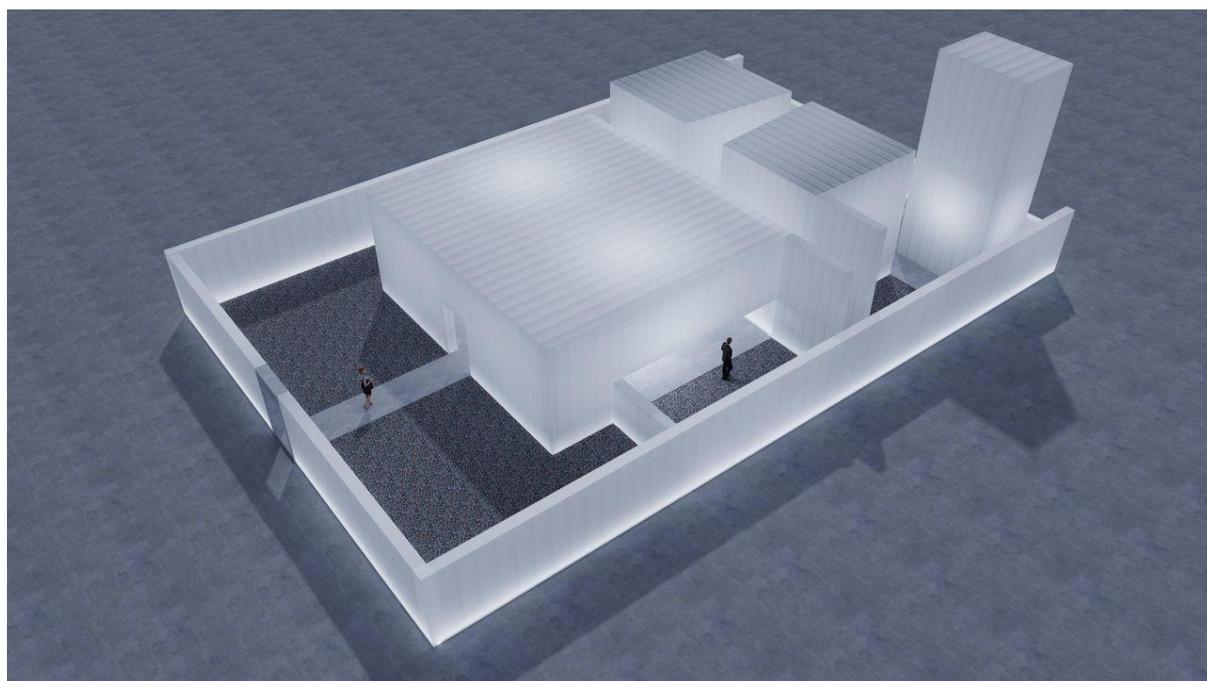


Above: Kyoraku Kougei | Asia Color Trend Book, and Yamato [Beyond Craft, 2026 show]

**Collectible Design & Art** brings together a curated selection of limited-edition artworks and designs from across the globe, spanning diverse categories such as painting, sculpture, installation art, and photography, offering audiences a rich array of artistic forms and styles. Dedicated to fostering diverse cross-disciplinary dialogue and collaboration, this section continues to drive the vibrant growth of the creative industry ecosystem. This year, it will collaborate with galleries, artists, and designers such as **Hugo Design** (UK), **CHENGYAN Gallery** (China), **MINGYU XU STUDIO** (China), **EsArt Society** (Russia) and **BRIGS** (Russia).



Left Mingyu Xu; Right Hugo Design, [Collectible Design & Art 2025 show]



*Above: A Courtyard in the City Feature*

Brand new for 2026, **A Courtyard in the City**, is a special feature presented by Design Shanghai in collaboration with **Sanqingshan Cuiwei Hotel**. The project brings a contemporary Eastern way of living into the heart of the city through a large-scale, immersive outdoor installation. Designed by **Shen Baohong, Co-founder and Design Director of U+**, the installation takes “a courtyard belonging to the Chinese way of life” as its point of departure. Set within the historic architectural context of the Shanghai Exhibition Centre - where Russian neoclassicism meets Baroque influences - the project reinterprets the traditional siheyuan as a contemporary spatial typology. The installation allows fleeting experiences to converse with enduring memory, reintroducing the Chinese courtyard within a predominantly Western urban setting. More than an installation, this Special Feature is a reflection and proposition on contemporary Eastern living aesthetics, inviting visitors to reconsider how tradition, place and modern life may coexist today. The outdoor setting features furniture provided by renowned Italian outdoor brand **Ethimo**, connecting nature, architecture and contemporary living. Indoors, the space integrates furniture and decorative works from Chinese furniture brand **U+** and others, articulating a modern interpretation of life within the courtyard.

In 2026, materials expert **Chris Lefteri** will once again create the **"Materials First"** interactive materials lab. Within three thoughtfully curated interactive sections – "Digital Speckles," "Colour Distortion," and "Pattern twist" – visitors can freely overlay interactive materials like lenticular films and colour filters onto various textured base materials. Through the immediate changes in visual and tactile perception, they will personally explore the infinite possibilities of material evolution and re-creation.

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**Notes to Editors**

- For further information, hi-res imagery, and coverage opportunities, please contact [design@bacchus.agency](mailto:design@bacchus.agency)
- **Exhibition time:** 19–22 March 2026
- **Exhibition location:** Shanghai Exhibition Centre
- **Official website:** <https://www.designshanghai.com/>
- **Tickets:** <https://ticket.designshanghai.cn/?f=WebCN&lang=en>