

# Discovering three architectural pearls of the 12-piece Yuanxiang Cultural Loop

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The Yuanxiang Cultural Loop has been unveiled in the central activity zone of Jiading New City.

It integrates the old and the new, tradition and fashion, and creates new space for residents to relax, exercise, read, visit exhibitions and engage in artistic exchanges.

In 2023, Jiading launched the plan to build the “2+10” cultural space of the Yuanxiang Cultural Loop, aiming to create a landmark cultural demonstration project that highlights Jiading’s scenery, local charm and a sense of the future.

The “2” refers to the Shanghai Poly Grand Theater and the Jiading Library (Cultural Center), while the “10” refers to 10 architectural pieces around Yuanxiang Lake, linked together like pearls on a string.

Currently, seven of the 10 architectural projects have opened to the public, including the Jiangnan Bookstore and the Johnson Fitness and Cultural Center.

Construction of the remaining three is expected to be completed by the year’s end.

After years of development, the zone has already grown into a central area that integrates various functions such as scientific and technological innovation and research, office and retail, residential living and public services.

Here, we introduce three of the architectural pieces to you.

## Shanghai Poly Grand Theater

Designed by renowned Japanese architect Tadao Ando, the theater is a masterpiece of innovative design.

Its cylindrical shapes, curves and geometric transformations create a unique aesthetic effect.

The theater’s “heart” comprises a 1,466-seat grand auditorium and a 400-seat small one, catering to various performances like symphony concerts and operas.

The stage can be lifted, rotated and transformed, allowing for countless configurations.

Since its opening in September 2014, the theater has staged about



Jiading Library

300-400 annual events, developing a unique cultural operation system.

In addition to the indoor auditoriums, it features China’s first outdoor water theater, a “slope cylinder” with steps for nearly 300 spectators to enjoy shows and nature. The water theater now hosts a popular light show every Friday and Saturday.

Also, the second Sunday of each month is citizens’ open day, with free visits and diverse activities to enrich cultural life.

**Address:** 159 Baiyin Road

## Jiading Library

The Jiading Library adopts a traditional Jiangnan (regions to the south of the lower reaches of the Yangtze River) courtyard layout. Its roof lines resemble open books, and its layered design seems flipped by lake breezes.

The combination of gray-tiled walls and glass curtains retains simplicity and shows modern vitality, reflecting Jiading New City’s blend of old and new.

With 300,000 open-access books and about 600 newspapers and periodicals, the library buys tens of thousands of new books annually and has a special-collection literature reading room.

This room hosts local literature



Jingxiuhui

exhibitions, and offers database searches, themed shelves and unique collection access. Besides paper books, there are digital reading and multimedia lending areas.

It also regularly holds activities such as “Jiading reading month” and “Jiading library lectures,” and events including “weekend story time” and “music afternoon tea.”

**Address:** 1288 Yumin Rd S.

## Jingxiuhui Ceramics Cultural Hall

The museum is adjacent to Jiading Library, with a construction area of approximately 760 square meters.

It houses various exhibition areas, including daily tableware, state banquet porcelain, customized porcelain, as well as pottery studios and experience zones.

About 2,000 exhibits are displayed on site. Among them, the crown jewel of the state banquet porcelain exhibition area is a porcelain piece created for the 60th-anniversary National Day celebration at Tian’anmen Square in Beijing.

It features vibrant and auspicious colors, symbolizing the prosperity of the motherland.



Photos by Yu Chao and Li Qi

1. “Romance Car Peninsula” Auto-themed Cultural Museum
2. Jiangnan Bookstore • Eye of Liucheng
3. Tai Art Gallery
4. Wojia Cultural Museum Future Hall
5. Empty Space — Jiading New Performing Arts Space
6. Johnson Fitness and Cultural Center
7. Hunzhi Bookstore
8. Yuanxiang Cultural Source Station
9. Jingxiuhui Ceramics Cultural Hall
10. Youdianyisi Wax Museum
11. Jiading Library (Cultural Center)
12. Shanghai Poly Grand Theater

The museum also features a pottery experience space that combines handmade creation and cultural heritage. Visitors can try their hand at shaping bowls, cups and vessels, or create unique ornaments using coiling and hand modeling techniques. Additionally, the museum offers themed courses on parent-child interaction, corporate team building, and intangible cultural heritage skills, guided by professional potters. Even beginners can easily participate and get a tangible feel for porcelain culture.

**Address:** 75 Taxi Rd