

One Plus Partnership

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The **Andrew Martin** International Design Awards will descend on Shanghai this weekend, in town to celebrate first-time winners, **One Plus Partnership**. Ahead of their turn on the red carpet, CreativeHunt met up with the Hong Kong duo behind the agency, Ajax Law and Virginia Lung to talk about what it means to pick up the Interior Designer of the Year Award, future projects, and how their home city shapes their works...



First up, some background: founded by Martin Waller, **Andrew Martin** is a British furniture brand, established in London way back in 1978. Soon after, the brand launched their International Interior Designer of the Year Award, an event and accolade that over the years has become a pretty big deal, with previous winners including the likes of Kelly Hoppen, Martyn Lawrence-Bullard and Jamie Drake.

Alongside all of that, the company has opened up almost 20 showrooms internationally, including a Beijing flagship, and launched just this week, Shanghai. That's just off interiors-central, Yishan Lu and shares a space with Sino-Italian brand, **Boloni**. All imported, all very tasteful, and all predictably pricey, its British credentials will doubtless stand it in good stead and it's well worth a look.

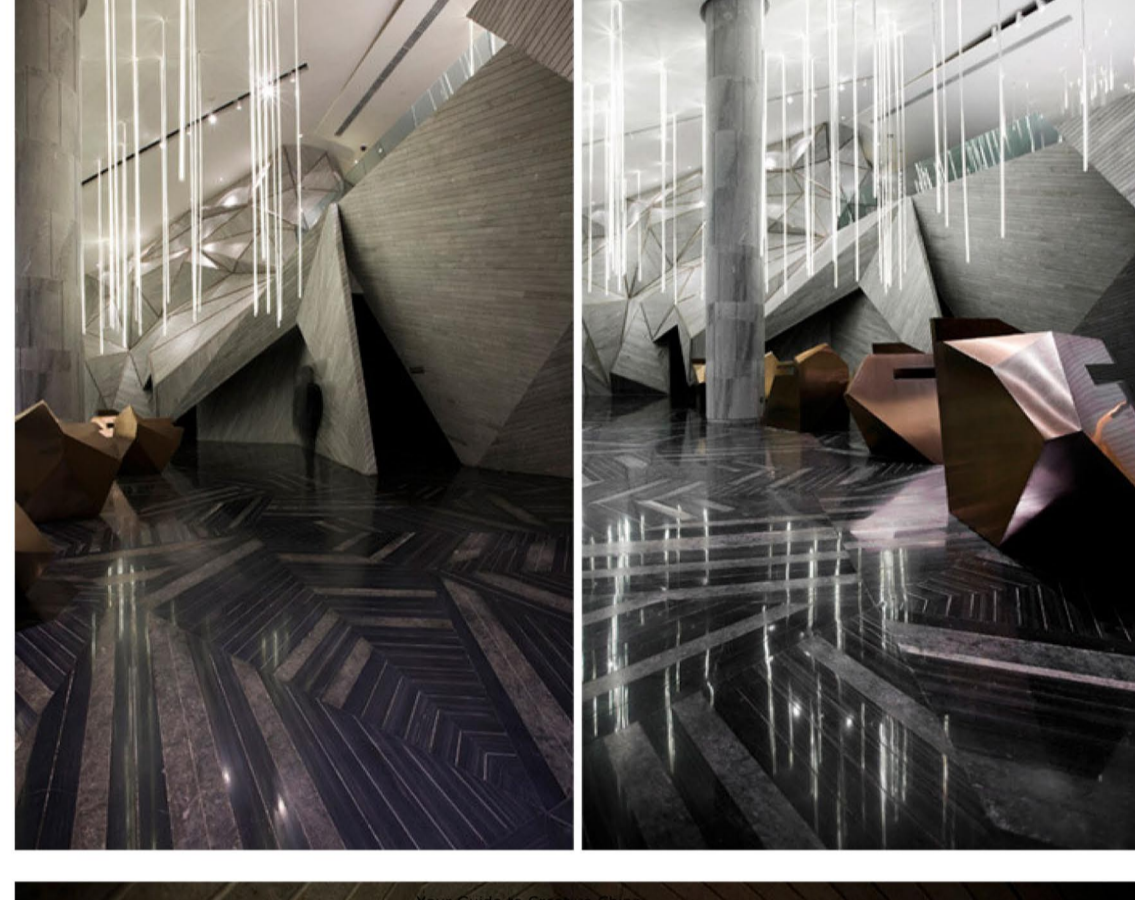


YOHO Midtown Residential Clubhouse, Hong Kong

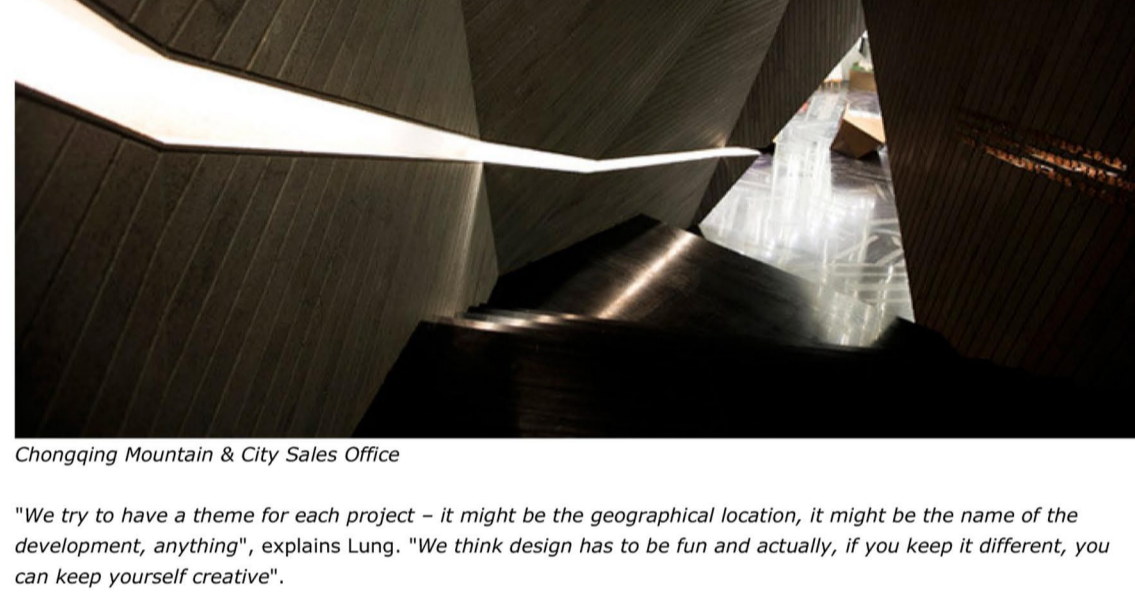
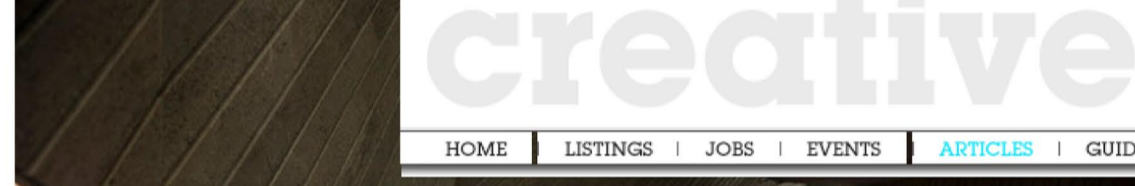
To celebrate the opening of the Shanghai store, the Design Awards are heading East, with the event making its first ever foray into China this weekend. That's not the only first, however, with this year's winners, **One Plus Partnership**, representing the award's first ever Asian recipients. Beating some 90 hopefuls to the prestigious title, they're rightly thrilled:

"It's unbelievable for us - when Martin told me I actually thought he was joking at first!", laughs Lung.

The Andrew James award joins a long list of accolades picked up by the couple in recent years, and recognizes their innovative interiors executed internationally. Earlier this year, One Plus Partnership unveiled their stunning creation for **Chongqing Mountain and City Sales office** - a sculpted, jagged interior meticulously crafted from grey marble. Evoking the building's location and purpose, it's typical of the playful, creative hand of Lung and Law.



Chongqing Mountain & City Sales Office



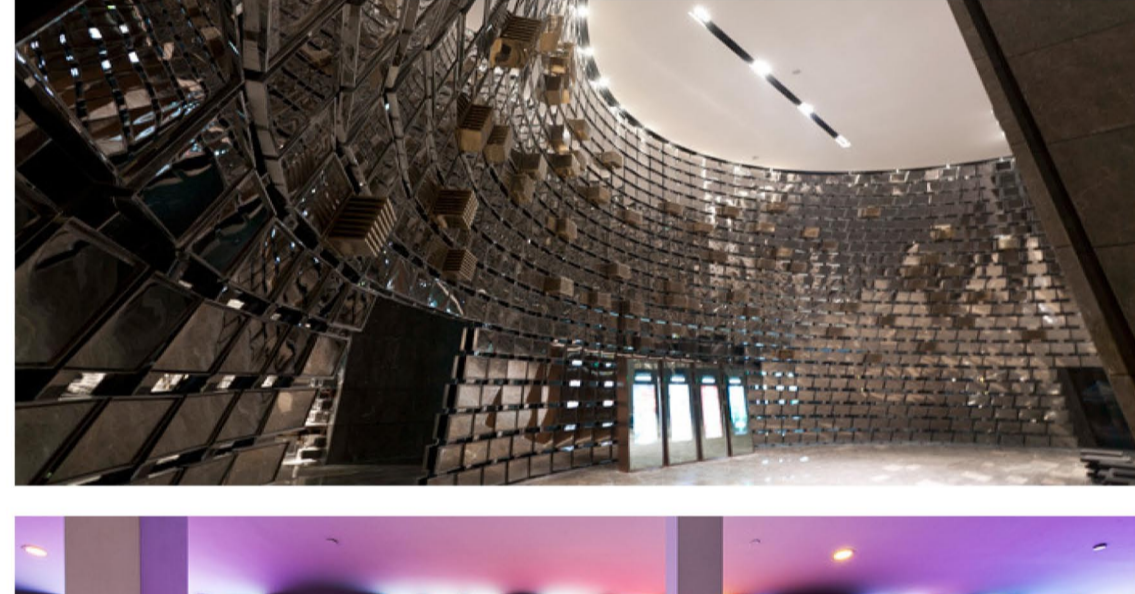
Chongqing Mountain & City Sales Office

"We try to have a theme for each project - it might be the geographical location, it might be the name of the development, anything", explains Lung. *"We think design has to be fun and actually, if you keep it different, you can keep yourself creative".*

Likewise, their **Pixel Box Cinema** for Wuhan references the venue's function to stunning effect. Taking images' very building blocks - pixels - as a starting point, the space features boxes at different heights throughout. Most impressive of all is a vast, enveloping installation created from over 6000 reflective stainless steel panels, creating a striking - and disorienting - interior that challenges viewer's sense of space, distance and vision in much the same way as watching a movie...



Pixel Box Cinema, Wuhan



Pixel Box Cinema, Wuhan

Cinemas are something of a strength of One Plus Partnership, and here in Shanghai, their input is palpable in the 'cloud themed' IFC Mall Palace Cinema. Further afield, the pair are currently working on a cinema exclusively for children in Tianjin, due to open by the end of the year.

"The theme comes from the client, actually. It's in a shopping mall, and the whole cinema is for kids - we've never seen one just for children before. It's quite different, very interesting and quite a challenge. Building a cinema in China, you have to pay attention to lots of regulations - materials all have to be A and B grade, all hard finishes, it's not straightforward".

Buoyed by China's building boom, we'll likely see much more from One Plus Partnership in the mainland in coming years, with Lung citing the incredible and varied opportunities Chinese cities present:

"From the very beginning eight years ago when we started the company we did a lot of Chinese projects. After I graduated from the US and came back to Hong Kong, there was a lot of opportunities here - many more than in HK, just in terms of space".



Kubrick Bookshop and Café, Beijing

"Hong Kong gives us a free environment, a very global perspective. But for design, lots of clients there want to use Western designers rather than local ones for their very important projects. In China, though, lots of Chinese like to use Hong Kong designers".

With the Andrew Martin award comes yet more international exposure for the pair. Future plans include expanding architectural design, and of course, putting the finishing touches to that Tianjin children's project.



Aix Arome Café, Shenzhen

For now, though, One Plus Partnership is celebrating. To learn more about what they're up to, keep an eye on their website [here](#).

Andrew Martin is at 2588 Kaixuan Lu, near Yishan Lu and for more details check their [website](#).