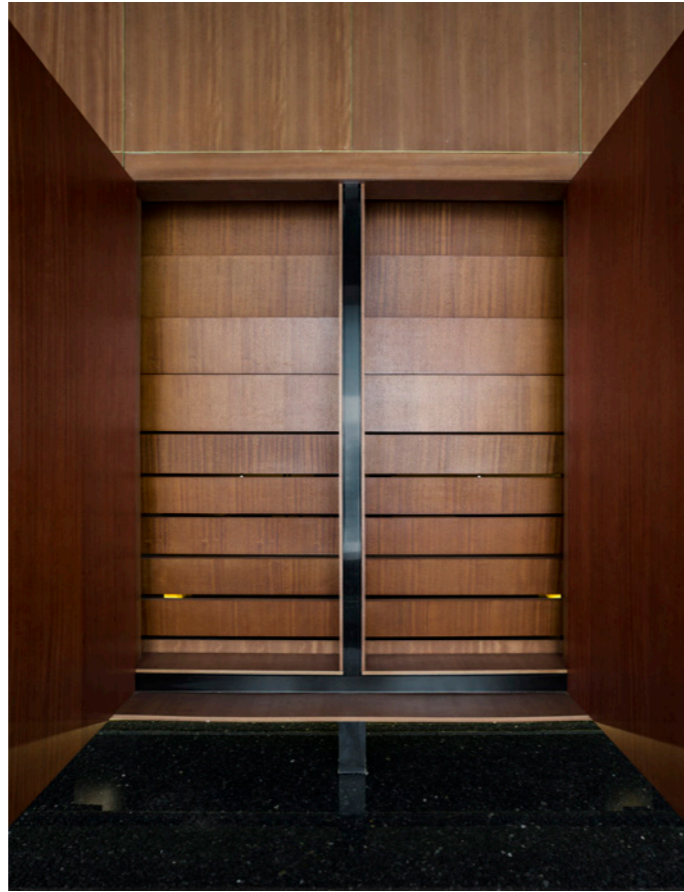


An Urban Meditation Sanctuary

MEDITATION HALL
HUANGHUA, CHINA



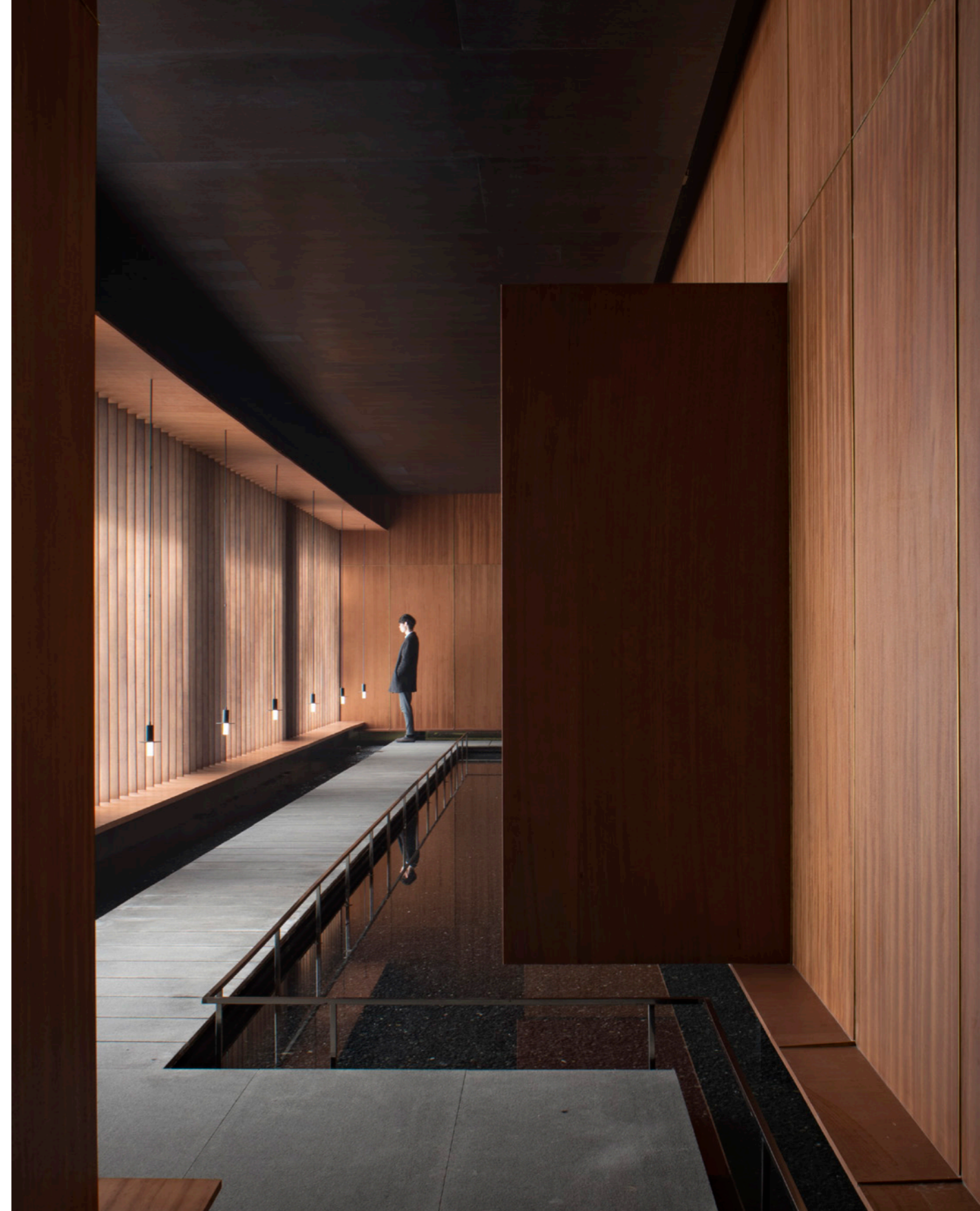
The most challenging part about meditation is often tuning out your surroundings. The opposite is true in the Meditation Hall, a space that layers spiritual thinking into the design—from gravity-centering ceiling lamps to grounding stonework—to prompt inner reflection.

Tucked away in the residential suburbs of Huanghua, south of Beijing, the Meditation Hall is meant to be a modern shelter from the hectic pace of daily life, a place where locals can unplug and take a break with meditative activities. Yet the structure, which was completed in 2019, sits on a busy commercial street—a location that is not exactly calming or conducive to deep thinking. To overcome this obstacle, the Shenzhen-based firm HIL Architects evoked a nurturing space by looking to nature—specifically the vast expanse of wetlands, situated across the street.

Drawing on Zen principles, the team embedded natural materials, including pebbles, wood, and indoor plant beds, to create an interior that subconsciously transports you to another place, far from

the blaring sounds of traffic. Difused sunlight, for example, provides a form of enlightenment, both literal and imagined. Hung lamps, meanwhile, define the center of gravity, a fitting metaphor for inner balance. Everything is meant to “generate a spiritual resonance,” says Yu, an architect with HIL.

Beyond the main hall, there is a series of smaller rooms, which house workshops on a range of wellness topics inspired by ancient rituals. Locals can partake in everything from Japanese tea ceremonies to kōdō—the classic art of incense—to Ikebana floral arranging to yoga. But simply standing in the Meditation Hall is often enough to stir quiet contemplation. “It’s an immersive and introspective space,” says Dao Yu, a place where you can “witness your inner universe.”



↑ Located in Huanghua, south of Beijing, the space is geared toward meditation and workshops on everything from kōdō (the art of incense) to Ikebana to yoga.