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# Y20

HANGZHOU, ZHEJIANG, CHINA

WJ DESIGN

Photography by Qiang Shen

Slightly expanding the normal definition of 'office space' – or perhaps merely following it into current territory – the client for this project, which is located within a wetland zone outside of Hangzhou that is home to startups, investment firms and the like, wanted a place for work, conferences, presentations and exhibitions. Its site played a big role in defining the character of the scheme, as it is set upon a lovely small lake amid lush greenery. The plan of the building was already unusual: a semi-organic creature sprouting branches or arms from an L-shaped base that wraps one corner of the lake.

The main entrance is a giant glazed window framed in white concrete, facing onto a small forecourt space that is well used by staff and visitors. This has been sunken in section to excite the relationship with the water level of the adjacent lake, making it feel almost nautical, and setting the general mood of the project. Inside, plenty of wood in light tones was introduced to 'soften' the heavy concrete structure that existed. Together with minimally detailed glass enclosures, stepped levels and many built-in furniture arrangements, a new world has taken over. Good indirect lighting was crucial to the mood of the spaces, which are vaguely assigned functions according to their position along the snaking plan layout. The narrow cross-section of the wings helped deliver natural light to most areas of the office, and even more openings were cut into perimeter walls to enhance this, offering pleasing views to the gardens. High-quality modern furnishings accent the nooks and corners of the plan, and as you move through the spaces, each section appears almost as its own mini-project. But it all holds together through materials, colours and lighting.

There is no question Y20 is a calm place to work in; there are no 'back office' halls of packed desks and bright lights. It is consistent from end to end. With outfits such as WeWork presenting attractive alternatives to traditional office design, private companies such as Y20 in a sense need to justify their own spaces, and using interior design as one of the methods is obvious. WJ Design has produced a place that you want to be in, whether to work hard or otherwise.



