

## **MANDARIN ORIENTAL WANGFUJING, BEIJING'S SIGNATURE FAN DESIGNED BY OSCAR WINNING ART DIRECTOR, TIM YIP**

[Mandarin Oriental Wangfujing, Beijing](#)'s signature fan that hangs in the lobby of the hotel was designed by the Oscar winning art director and “New Orientalism” visual artist pioneer, Tim Yip.

World-renowned Yip won an Academy Award for ‘Best Art Direction’ for his work on the 2000 martial arts film *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, and also received a BAFTA award for the film's costume design. Since then, he has continued to explore and communicate his aesthetic concept “New Orientalism”, which is his interpretation of ancient culture as a means to inspire the future.

Commissioning a hotel signature fan for each new Mandarin Oriental hotel is a long-established tradition. Yip's inspiration for the design of this fan, was Beijing and Chinese culture, but with a more subtle approach, avoiding direct and obvious symbolism. The result is a fan design that portrays elements of the capital city, Chinese culture in general and the beauty of Spring.

“Beijing has become more influential, but I didn't want to show that directly. I didn't want a golden fan, for example. Chinese have yin and yang and I wanted to take the yin approach. I wanted to open peoples' eyes to seeing Beijing again, like a moment in time, something that overlaps wind, light, shadow and water,” he said.

The result of Yip's carefully-crafted object d'art is seen as guests enter the hotel lobby area. The light beams on the fan shift subtly, constantly changing the appearance and mood while three small jewels add subtle sparkle to the muted colours.

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Making the silk-and paper fan itself was a complex operation, which involved visiting traditional fan-makers in both China and Japan. To emphasise the connection with nature, Yip embedded dried plant leaves and grass into the fabric, a tricky and time-consuming process, which involved making two identical fan shapes and then merging them together.

The result is a visual delight. To emphasise the ethereal, and translucent, nature of the fan, silicon was used for the blades, rather than the more traditional bamboo or wood, with an elegant, pure-silk tassel trailing from the base. The thread in the upper part of the fan symbolises Chinese calligraphy – black ink breaking through the silence of space.

“It is more like theatre than a window display,” says Yip. “Something that is not fixed in the present time, everyone can see it in a different way and take away a different perspective. The whole fan space is a narrative, open to different interpretations. I have seen many fans and I wanted to find a new way, a different aesthetic. I had to think carefully about the dimensions, if it was too big, it would be too overwhelming but if too small, not so easy to be seen. It was a really positive experience, and I think it is truly beautiful.”

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