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## SHANGHAI, THE CITY DRAPED IN RED

与北京截然不同,上海城市中缺少了红墙壁瓦所刻画出的凝重倒影及历史沧桑。在上海,红色作为一种元素贯穿于生活的每个角落,或许它也跃然墙上为人们的家居增色添彩,或许只是一束灯光为城市照亮璀璨的夜空,或是老房子中几件红木家具向人诉说着昔日的奢华。上海的红是多变无常的,时而它激情四射吸引着人们的视线,时而又精致端庄展现出东方人的含蓄与矜持。

By contrast with Beijing, Shanghai does not have red walls but it is filled with reds of various shades. In Shanghai, red is a garment, wallpaper, light, furniture, flag or painting. Red in Shanghai is volatile and moveable. It celebrates beauty and catches the eye. It expresses power, distinction, glamour and refinement.



## Red Vestiges

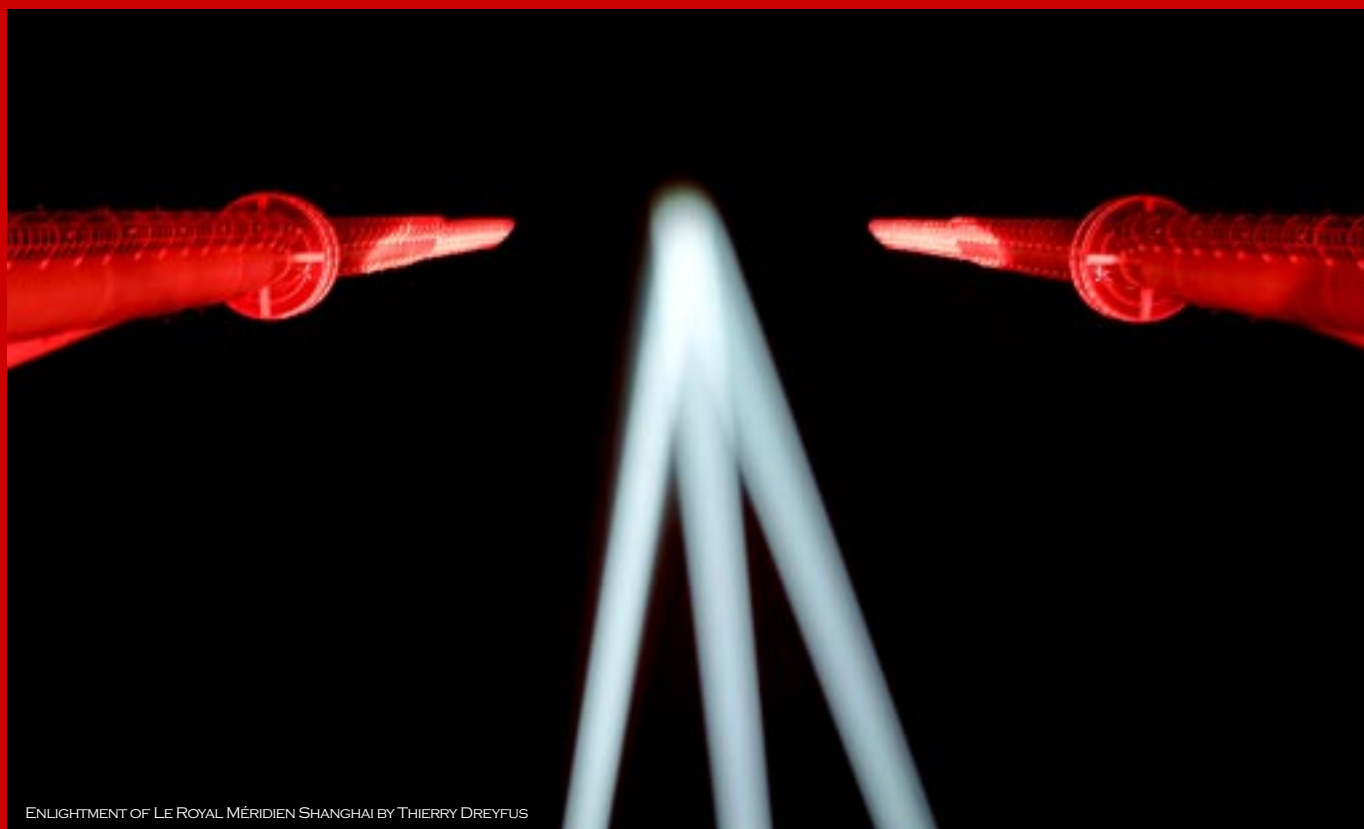
Before the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Shanghai was not regarded as a major city, which is why, by comparison with many major Chinese cities today, it has few ancient Chinese landmarks. Traces of the past include some remains dating back to the Three Kingdoms period of Chinese history, when present-day Shanghai belonged to the Kingdom of Wu (222-280). Shanghai lacks the pomp of a former imperial city, which is why it has few traditional-style red buildings. The Huxingting Pavilion in

Huxingting is said to be the model for the pavilion on Willow pattern tableware. It was built as a trading house for tea merchants, and is now a restaurant and teahouse.

The Jade Buddha Temple is Shanghai's most famous Buddhist temple. Located in the western part of the city, it houses the six-foot tall seated Jade Buddha, brought from Burma to Shanghai in 1882 by a monk named Hui Gen. The Jade Buddha is carved from a single piece of perfect, lustrous white jade. But the temple itself is filled with red

edited at one time. This is also where he created the China Freedom Movement Alliance and the Leftists Alliance. The display in the house includes writing tools and other articles once used by the writer.

The first modern manifestation of red in Shanghai might have been on Nanjing Lu. During the Qianlong era of the Qing Dynasty, Shanghai became an important regional port for the Yangtze and Huangpu rivers. It also became a major seaport for nearby Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces, although overseas



ENLIGHTENMENT OF LE ROYAL MÉRIDIEN SHANGHAI BY THIERRY DREYFUS

the Yu Yuan Garden, the Jade Buddha Temple and the former residence of Chinese writer Lu Xun are among the few places where you see some traces of the traditional use of red.

The Yu Yuan is a Suzhou-style garden built 400 years ago during the Ming Dynasty, and these days it is one of the must-sees of old Shanghai. Before you reach the entrance, you pass the Huxingting Pavilion, a really over-the-top red structure. Built in 1784, this two-storey building is five-sided, topped with an extravagantly curved roof. The

in the garments of the monks, the ancient carvings, paintings and Buddhist cultural relics that are also housed in the temple. The pavilions and halls are built in traditional Song dynasty style. It has four halls: Hall of the Heavenly Kings, Grand Hall, Reclining Buddha Hall and Jade Buddha Chamber. The one-metre long Reclining Buddha statue is half-lying on a couch made of red wood.

The former residence of Chinese writer Lu Xun is located on Shanyin Lu. This three-storey red brick house is where Lu Xun wrote, translated and

commerce was still forbidden at that time. In 1842 when the Europeans gained trading concessions in Shanghai following the Treaty of Nanking (Nanjing), the city was already a thriving port.

European-style buildings lord it over the eastern end of Nanjing Lu, named after the Treaty. Nanjing Lu was Shanghai's earliest major shopping street. Starting from the Bund in the east and ending at the junction of Jing An Temple and Yan' An Xi Lu in the west, the 5.5-kilometre-long street passes through the

centre of Shanghai city, crossing 26 busy streets. As early as the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a wide variety of merchants gradually established hundreds of stores on both sides of the road. Some of them obtained nationwide fame shortly afterwards. By the end of the 1920s, Nanjing Lu was flourishing and blazing with colourful red neon lights, celebrating "The Paris of the East".

## New Red Signal Light

Look around while you stroll along the pedestrianised section of Nanjing Lu, which runs over 1200 metres: today's sidewalks are as colourful as ever; stores, neon signs and crowds catch your eye. Red is overwhelming in this modern metropolitan landscape.

In the world's most electric and vibrant city, everything goes vertically. And in this forest of skyscrapers, a new red signal has emerged. Located in the heart of the city as the tallest building in Shanghai Puxi, Le Royal Méridien Shanghai stands between Nanjing Lu and the greenery of People's Square. On December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2006, the hotel inaugurated a permanent contemporary light installation that now enriches Shanghai's electric skyline. The internationally acclaimed artist Thierry Dreyfus re-imagined the Shanghai cityscape. Every night five powerful "light cannons" beam red light vertically into the sky where they pulse gently, creating their own rhythm. Inside the hotel at 789 Nanjing Lu Bar, located on the top 64<sup>th</sup>, 65<sup>th</sup> and 66<sup>th</sup> floors of the hotel, guests literally see Shanghai in a new light through the application of a unique one-of-a-kind art installation of multi-coloured filters on the expansive windows, providing a new perspective onto the city of Shanghai.

Le Méridien Brand appointed Jérôme Sans, curator of The Baltic gallery, Gateshead (UK) and co-founder of Paris' acclaimed Palais de Tokyo museum, as the brand's Cultural Curator. He is responsible for curating relevant relationships with artists, museums and galleries worldwide. "We are proud to engage artists of this calibre to

strengthen Le Méridien. Through their contributions, we will stimulate our guests' passion for art and culture by providing artistic experiences that stimulate them. To do so in the most forward-looking and modern city of Shanghai makes this event even more unique," said Eva Ziegler, senior vice president, Le Méridien Brand.

Thierry Dreyfus started working in stage lighting in the late 1980s for the Strasbourg Opera. His lighting installations and designs have gained worldwide recognition and imprinted the identity of the most prestigious fashion catwalks (Christian Dior, Louis Vuitton, Calvin Klein, Marni, Jil Sander), music stages (Sonic Youth, Phoenix, Liquid Architecture, Placebo), Operas (Paris, Istanbul) and monumental buildings (François Mitterrand National Library in Paris). He created world headlines in 2005 when he won an international competition to create the artistic design for the highly-anticipated re-opening of Paris's Grand Palais. This celebration attracted 500,000 visitors to experience Thierry Dreyfus' strikingly innovative lighting of the building's magnificent glass and steel cupola.

Thierry Dreyfus tells stories with lights. He turns this intangible skin into a form of inspiration and desire, a vibrant body that becomes a mirror onto which you can project yourself, a volume, a space on its own. Each of his installations is thought to create a specific perception of a place and its environment. He sets up interactive playgrounds where light becomes a medium for dialogue between the architecture and the viewer.

Thierry Dreyfus creates fields of experience or visual landmarks as guides to drive your eyes and enlighten vision. "It was clear that I should work on an installation in China", Thierry Dreyfus told LifeStyle. "For Le Royal Méridien Shanghai, I have thought about red, not only for the symbolism of that colour in China, but also in relation to the concept of a beating heart on the top of the tower. Thus, this pulse, like a breath, hanging over the whole old city, is 'bothered' by the greetings of each of

the crossing beams. They greet the new city, the old city, then the sky: five light beams in total; Five, the number of the Power".

## Shanghai Multiple Shades of Red

As an attractive and powerful colour, red takes the lead in Shanghai's restaurant, nightlife and cultural scene. While a range of restaurants, bars and galleries have chosen an evocative name, linked to red (Red Room, Red Wall, Red Dot, Red Pub, Red Station, Hong Fang Zi, Bar Rouge, La Villa Rouge, Studio Rouge), many more have touches of red in their decor.

"The important thing about red is the spirit of the colour itself, what one cannot see but only feel. Red can express so many emotions and contain so many shades", explains painter and designer Jiang Qiong Er. "Red can take many nuances, from ochre to pink. What is amazing in Shanghai is the diversity of the red. Here you can find many different reds; and even the same tint can change using different materials: wood, silk, stone or glass."

Born in Shanghai, Jiang Qiong Er grew up in a family of artist-creators. Her grandfather Jiang Xuan Yi, who later worked abroad, belonged to a generation of Chinese painters born in the century when European and American artists were undertaking the "Journey to Orient". He was himself inspired by western techniques and influences. Her father, Xing Tong He, is the architect of the Shanghai Museum. Jiang Qiong Er was introduced to traditional painting when she was two years old and later she became a student of two of the greatest Chinese masters of calligraphy and painting: Cheng Shi Fa and Han Tian Hong. She then joined the prestigious Tongji University to study design. Truly open to the outside world and looking forward to enriching her style with new influences, she chose France and the Decorative Arts School of Paris to make her first steps as an artist. This choice completely changed her life.