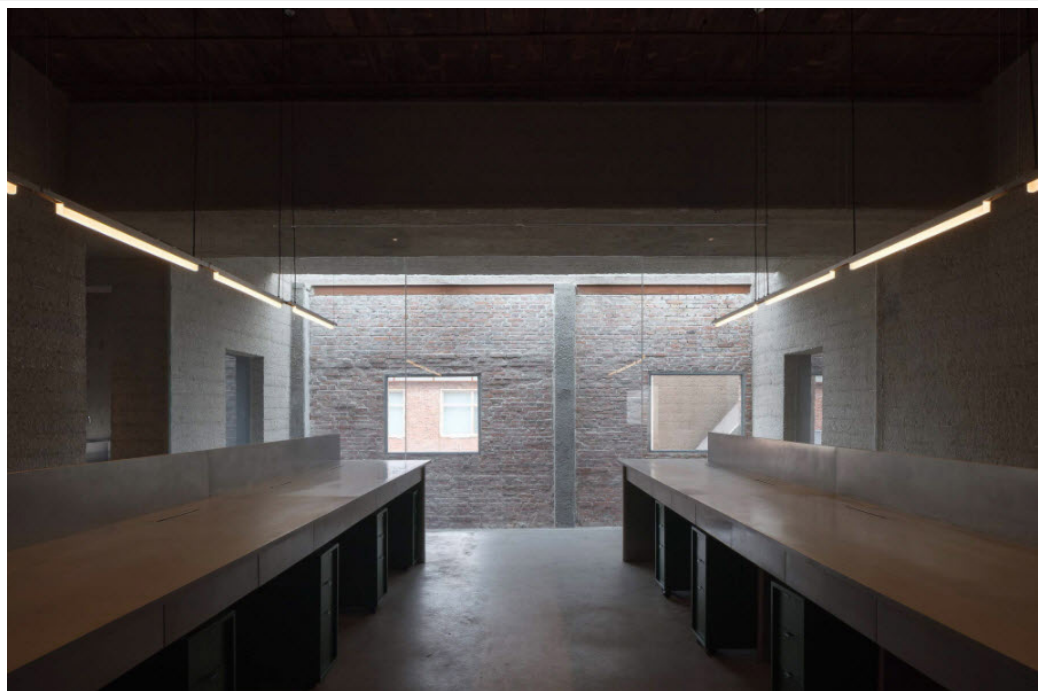


For the Lao Ding Feng baked-goods brand, which was established in Beijing in 1911, Neri&Hu have redesigned an old warehouse formerly devoted to the production of cotton textiles. The brick shell of the existing structure contrasts with the seeming softness of the newly added poured concrete.

Restoration

The original brick complex comprises a main warehouse, three ancillary structures and a garden in an inner courtyard. As is their wont, Neri&Hu subjected the existing buildings to intense examination in order to determine which parts to preserve and restore. For the design concept, Rossana Hu and Lyndon Neri were inspired by their client's principal product: traditional Chinese baked goods made by being poured into decorative moulds. At the same time, behind the old brick shell they have set a second volume of poured concrete whose various openings and negative spaces form the most important areas for retail sales, a gallery and offices. The new building components create a fascinating contrast of old and new.



Surface textures

Once the concrete had been poured and had cured, the surface was worked with a bush hammer. The regular hammering of the concrete surface produced a rough, more or less clear grid pattern in the surface texture. In some spots, the poured concrete comes through the existing facade to fill hollow spaces or mark access points. The spaces between the new structure and the old building will become flexible areas for a café and a multipurpose hall. The ground floor is home to the exhibition area, the flagship store and a garden. The company's headquarters are located on the second upper level.

The possibility of walking through the building and experiencing various time periods will give visitors a feeling of connection between past, present and future. The intriguing redesign by Neri&Hu has given the venerable Lao Ding Feng brand a new home for our time.