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Best of Year: Cafe

By Deborah Wilk -- *Interior Design*, December 1, 2010



Project: Kubrick Cafe

Firm: One Plus Partnership

Location: Beijing

For anyone with Stanley Kubrick's love of history and obsessive research—think *Spartacus*, *Barry Lyndon*, and *Full Metal Jacket*—this particular story starts in Hong Kong, with the original Kubrick Bookshop. Principals Ajax Law Ling Kit and Virginia Lung maintained its laid-back charm in Beijing when designing not only a satellite location but also a spin-off, the book-centric Kubrick Café. Both are at Steven Holl Architects's massive mixed-used Linked Hybrid complex. Its eight towers, connected by sky bridges, inspired the architectural quality of the 37,000-square-foot café's display fixtures, variously sized steel boxes powder-coated green in honor of the leafy trees that eventually become paper for books. Another Beijing reference, the power lines looping through the streets, inspired the skeins of lamp cord terminating with extra-large incandescent bulbs. Above the café tables, illumination spills from an army of oversize black swing-arm task lamps bolted to the ceiling or a teak feature wall.

Merit Winners:



Project: Cielito Querido Café

Firm: Cadena Asociados and Esrawe Studio

Location: Mexico City

Standout: Bold colors and graphic patterns contrast with dark timber, giving Latin American café culture a neo-retro spin.



Project: Green Grind

Firm: HOK

Location: Toronto

Standout: Vintage furnishings bring a laid-back vibe to this eco-friendly coffee shop near the University of Toronto—ditto for the bicycle wheels on the wall.



Project: Uptown Cafeteria and Support Group

Firm: Moschella + Roberts

Location: Minneapolis

Standout: Riffing on the mid-century diner, hundreds of plastic lunch trays surface a corridor, while wood-grain plastic laminate frames the vinyl-covered booths.

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