

RIBA / Explore / Awards / International Aw... / International Aw... / 2026 / x

Beijing Performing Arts Centre

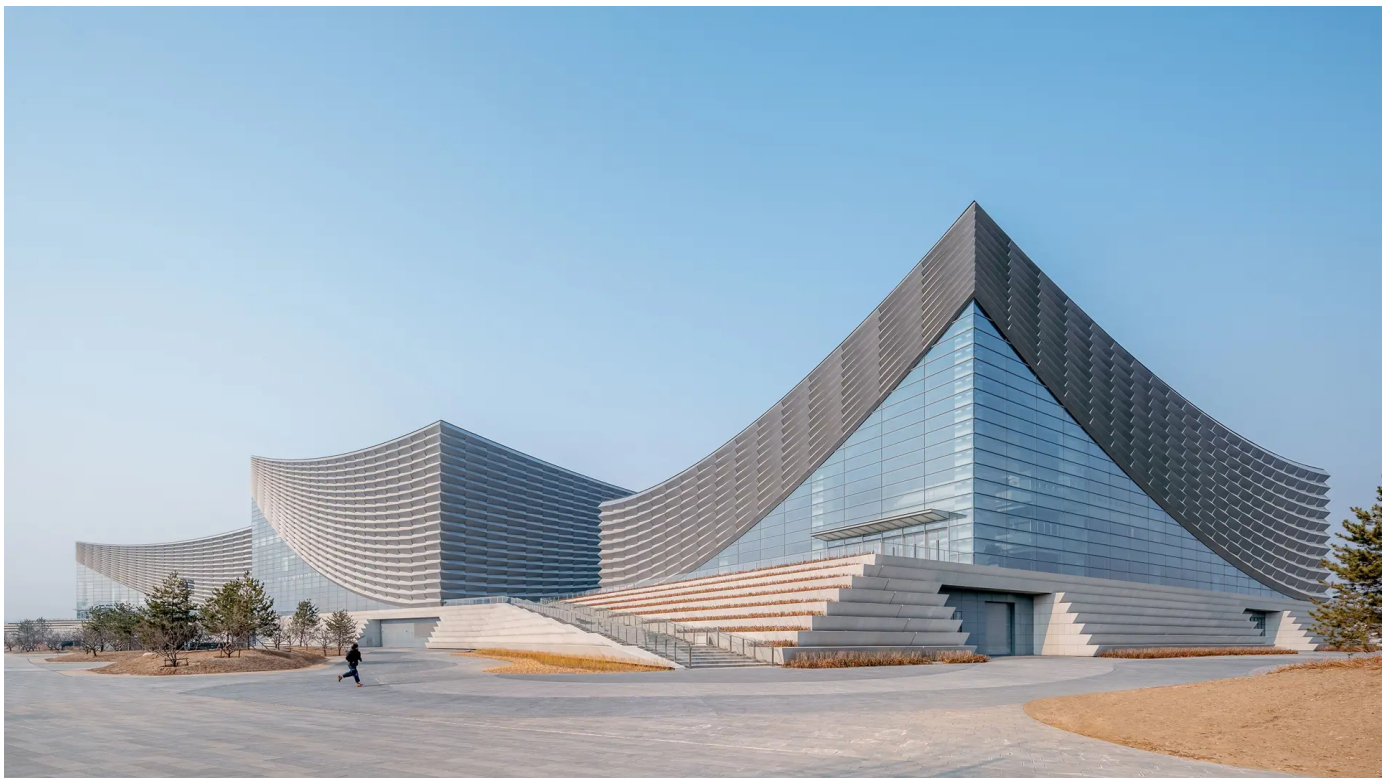
Designed to cultivate community while promoting the health and well-being of visitors and the environment, Beijing, China

by Schmidt Hammer Lassen and Perkins & Will

Client: National Centre of the Performing Arts

Award: International Awards for Excellence 2026

Location: Beijing, China



Beijing Performing Arts Center | Credit: Zhu Yumeng

Summary

This new three-building destination for opera, theatre and music sits along the banks of the UNESCO Heritage listed site in Tongzhou, Beijing. It's creation hopes to revive the bustling waterfront and provide spaces for valuable interactions and world-class performances. The

project weaves the history and cultural tapestry of the site into new forms by sculpting monolithic volumes that resemble historical storehouses that once occupied the banks of the Grand Canal as it leads into the Chinese capital. These are what are known as the centre's 'containers of cultures'.

Beijing Performing Arts Centre

The buildings recall Tongzhou's importance as a commercial shipping and storage hub



The design rekindles the heritage of the UNESCO-listed site; slanting roofs pay homage to the traditional storehouses, while the building's pleated, fan-like exterior resonates with the iconic sails of the original transport boats. The volumes are deliberately expressed as separate elements, each building housing its own performance venue, the buildings connected by a stepped, ramped and landscaped podium creating a new porous viewing platform for the Grand Canal, while simultaneously anchoring the project in its near context and revitalizing the bustling waterfront.

Together with a new library and a museum, the Beijing Performing Arts Centre constitutes the cultural trinity in Tongzhou. Among the world's most ancient cities, Beijing holds a distinguished status as one of the Four Great Ancient Capitals of China. Thus, the city serves as a veritable treasure trove of culture, boasting an abundance of historic sites and landmarks while simultaneously representing China's swift economic ascent as a global

metropolis. This new centre bridges this rich past with the innovative present, embodying Beijing's unique blend of tradition and progress.

Credits

- Beijing Institute of Architectural Design (BIAD): additional practice
- Schlaich Bergermann Partner: structural schematic design

[International Awards for Excellence 2026 winners](#) ↗

Follow us



Contact us

[Get in touch](#)

[My local RIBA](#)

[Our library](#)

[Press office](#)

About us

[About RIBA](#)

[Strategy](#)

[Governance](#)

[Work with us](#)

[News](#)

[Support us](#)

[Equity, diversity and inclusion](#)

Quick links

[RIBApix](#)

[RIBA Books](#)

[RIBAJ](#)

[RIBA Pensions](#)