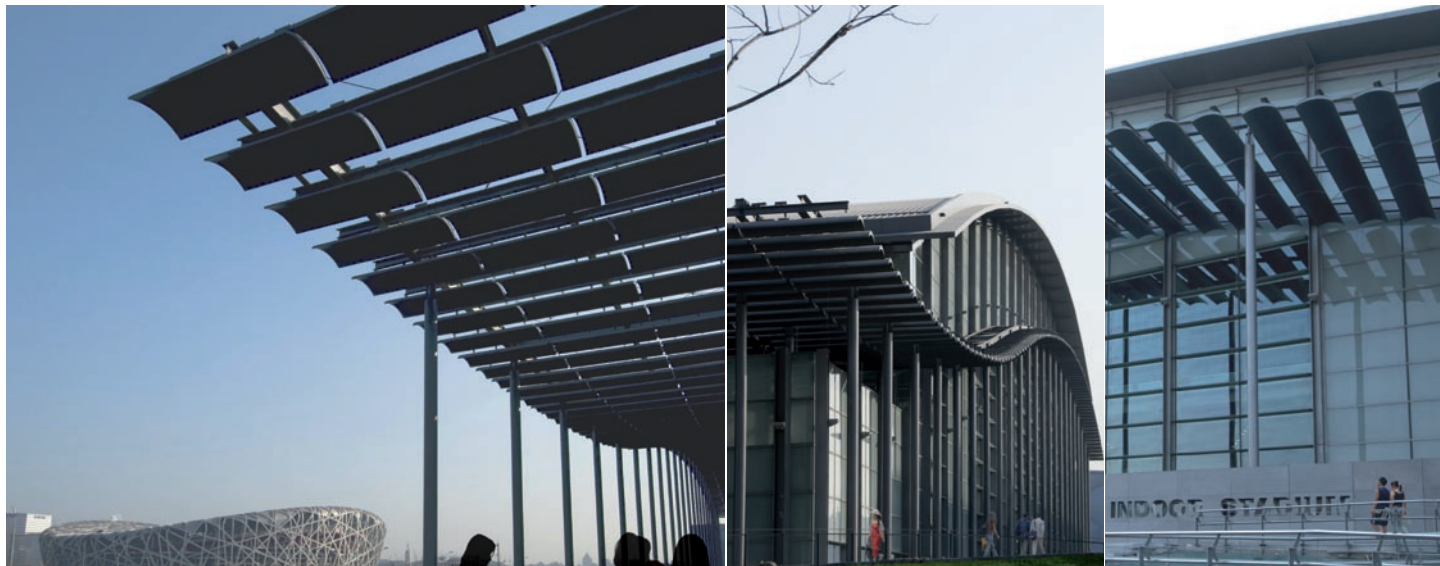


# Beijing National Indoor Stadium China

New construction of a multi-functional arena for gymnastic competition in the 2008 Olympics



New construction of a covered stadium with two arenas is being carried out on the Olympic Green site in northern Beijing for the 2008 Olympic Games. Situated on the main axis of this campus, the stadium structure forms an almost perfect equilateral triangle with the swimming arena and the Olympic Stadium on the other two corners. By virtue of their functions and space creating effect, these three structures represent the most striking and important works of architecture in the entire Olympic complex. And, representing as they do, the degree of importance accorded to sport in the city of Beijing and in China as a whole, they will serve a broad spectrum of use in the post Olympic era.

All the functions of the National Indoor Stadium, the large circular main arena and the smaller circular arena adjoining it, will be incorporated together under one large roof. The dynamic of the sports activities taking place in the arenas is thus seemingly mirrored in the rhythmic swing of the roof landscape which lies with the playful lightness of a gentle wave over the stadium's functional units. This airy light rhythm of athletic movement re-appears as the motif in the large arcade area. Free-formed supporting struts, approaching dance like grace set off the main entrance on the east side of the building.

The visitor reaches the gallery sector of the main arena by means of generous open stairways. The arena circle itself is seen to hang like an oval solitaire within the building's structure which is entirely glass-enclosed. And, even the cauldron formed round about the spectator area mirrors the rhythm, dynamic and momentum of gymnastic competition. This interior is spatially bounded and set off from external disturbance. Thanks to the steepness of the grandstand and

the intimacy thus created the spectators and competitors can interrelate in a unique fashion. Both the spatial separation from the outside world and this sense of intimacy serve to allow for complete concentration on the events taking place.

The external perception of the various functional areas is totally comprehensive insofar as the entire structure is enclosed in glass. In fact, the adherence to the substantiality of building materials seems an ever decreasing compulsion as the structure reaches toward the heavens. The wing form roof resting on a sweeping matrix structure reinforces the image of transition from earth to heaven and supports the aesthetic perception of dynamic motion. So it is that the choice of building materials and the architectural realisation of the stadium structure take China's reverence for symbolic meaning, affinity for the works of nature and the importance of heavenly direction to Asian culture particularly into account.

## Facts and figures

Contractor: Beijing Urban Construction Investment & Development GmbH

Competition/Process: Architect competition and investor competition  
1<sup>st</sup> Prize

Planning/Completion: 2003 – 2007

Total area: 81,150 m<sup>2</sup>