

RETAIL

## 05 — LIGHT DOUBLES as a material

Mur Mur Lab makes light work of a petite Shanghai store.



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**SHANGHAI** — Far from the skyscrapers of Lujiazui and the beaux-arts buildings of the Bund, just west of the elevated highway that circles Shanghai's inner city, a store called Xiao Chun Ri He stands apart from its neighbours. Surrounded by shops offering manicures and discounted sweaters, the Mur Mur Lab-designed space displays an array of imported goods.

The moon-shaped entrance is an unfinished circle: a brush stroke starting at five o'clock swirls counterclockwise until it reaches the hour of seven. Inside the 30-m<sup>2</sup> space, fluidity continues with a floor of chrome, representing a river, that connects crescent islands of wire-suspended shelving. According to Samoon, founder of Mur Mur Lab, the curves were inspired by the 'romance' of a client who gave up an IT

job in America to open the store with his girlfriend. Running the length of the interior, backlit acrylic shelves hold imported beauty products from Japan and South Korea, the two countries that provide Chinese women with most of their cosmetic and skincare tips.

Early images of Xiao Chun Ri He are of a store illuminated at night, with polished floors and a minimal white aesthetic enlivened by greenery. On a grey Shanghai day, however, when the plants have disappeared and the chrome river shows signs of foot traffic, the impact wanes. Shallow shelves make for a repetition of identical products — a less-than-effective use of display space. — SG

