

DESIGN IN CHINA

MAPPING



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Featured Chinese Designers and Scholars

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About Dutch Design Fashion Architecture

Dutch Design Fashion Architecture (DutchDFA) aims to strengthen the international position of the most prominent sectors of the Dutch creative industries – design, fashion and architecture – through a joined-up approach. The four-year strategic meme (2009–2012) involves a selection of focus countries (India, China, Germany and Turkey) and relates to topical issues and local demands. Its aim is to build long-lasting international partnerships while addressing issues facing today's world through design.

www.dutchdfa.com

About MovingCities

MovingCities is a Shanghai-based think-tank investigating the role of architecture and urbanism in shaping the contemporary city. Established in 2007 by Bert de Muynck (BE) and Mónica Carriço (PT), MovingCities operates as embedded architects – publishing, researching, collaborating and interacting. Specialized in bridging China and the world, MovingCities offers urban consultancy in the fields of architecture, design and the creative industries, in the public and cultural institutional sectors. It has conducted research, lectures and workshops in China, Israel, Sweden, the Netherlands, Finland and Indonesia. Amongst others, MovingCities has set up programmes for the Netherlands Architecture Institute (NAI), Dutch Design Fashion Architecture (DutchDFA) and the Finnish Association of Architects (SAFA) in China.

www.movingcities.org

► Introduction

Background to Design in China Mapping Report

This report is the result of an investigation into the design profession and industry in China. Commissioned in 2011 by the Dutch Design Fashion Architecture (DutchDFA) programme, the report's ambition is to broaden the understanding of the dynamic changes within the Chinese creative, academic, institutional and business design communities. In addition, it documents, analyses and identifies potential collaborative and market entry opportunities for Dutch design companies and organizations.

This report seeks to document and interpret the state of affairs of Chinese design through a series of conversations with respected Chinese design professionals in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Shenzhen that, to the best of their abilities, and with various motives, are engaged with a design culture in transition. Operating in the fields of industrial, product, graphic, interactive, interior and communication design, most of these designers work in multidisciplinary environments, where they deal with a broad range of commissions and often provide consultancy services. Many have educational and/or international experience and try, in China, to strike a balance between domestic work and international engagements.

These discussions are elaborated with information gathered from online research and print publications on topics such as intellectual property rights (IPR), universities and design colleges, design awards and fairs, market entries, and the development of the creative industries, as laid out by the 12th Five-Year Plan (2011–2016). As such the report looks beyond personal accounts to arrive at a broader depiction of the conditions influencing the design field in China.

In China, everything is simultaneously immediate and vague. The culture is based on a rich and labyrinthine past, mixed with today's tantalizing quest for future forms of profit. This tension leads to a search to define the

meaning, value and contemporary interpretation of tradition, cultural heritage and memory. Chinese designers are trying to find a balance between modern and traditional lifestyles, between past achievements and unforeseeable futures, between the exploration of craftsmanship and cultural roots. At the same time, they seek ways to combine traditional wisdom with an international orientation. As one designer puts it during the interview: 'we try to mix Chinese life with global design, as for us it is easy to understand what global design means, but it is difficult to find its domestic counterpart.'

China offers a growing design market, for both consumers and producers, not only in major metropolises like Beijing, Shanghai, and Shenzhen, but more importantly, in China's second- and third-tier cities. On a global level, Chinese design is slowly being accepted and even praised, despite frequently reported cases of IPR-infringements and/or the perception of insufficient quality of design and execution. Even though the domestic market is still mainly involved with trading and manufacturing, Chinese designers have a strong will to build up their own brands, thereby capitalizing on their own productions by setting up new types of creative chains. Institutionally, educational reforms and relevant design platforms are the driving forces behind new design networks, modes of production and pilot business models. Lastly, there is hope that a new generation of designers, with a growing concern for design's social and environmental impact, will alter the course of Chinese design in the coming decades.

The essence of a design exchange programme – whether with commercial, educational or artistic motives – is to cultivate relationships among peers. Although pragmatism is highly valued, personal relationships, past experiences, 'being present', a flexible attitude, continuity, and cultural knowledge are key ingredients when dealing with Chinese partners. A profit-driven approach to design is considered more beneficial for business than a critical attitude. Myriad



institutional and personal relationships between Dutch and Chinese designers have been established, and in recent years, the Netherlands has made its presence visible and operational through the Dutch Design Workspace in Shanghai¹ and the Dutch Design Desk in Guangzhou.² It is hoped that the findings in this report will stimulate Dutch designers to rethink their position within the Chinese chain of creativity. Undertaking collaborative projects with individuals and organizations like those identified on the following pages could lead to significant opportunities and new products.

Dominant Themes

This report introduces Chinese designers, institutions and businesses to their potential counterparts and relations in the Dutch design community. The Chinese enterprises selected range from small to large-scale, from commercial to critical, from established to emerging and from domestic to internationally-oriented. This diversity reflects, and aims to represent, the range of current approaches within the design field. These links should enable the dissemination of information to a responsive and critical audience.

Through interviews with Chinese designers it was possible to identify the predominant issues of preoccupation. The following themes are dominant:

- Design is part of the larger discussion about China's position in the world.
- Cultural cooperation should be combined with market-oriented activities.
- There is a need to combine domestic and foreign design talents and for businesses to benefit from both local and international markets.
- From a business perspective, internationalization and integration are key to the Chinese design sector.
- China's second-, third- and even fourth-tier cities are an emerging market for Chinese consumers, small-scale brands, and design products and services.
- China still has only a basic understanding of what branding means.
- Innovation in Chinese design is related to innovation in production and manufacturing, in creating complete creative chains.
- Design, as a social project, should explore innovation and craftsmanship.
- A new generation of designers and consumers is expected to alter daily life.
- 'Design for daily life' is about attitude, product improvement, spatial re-arrangement, minimal living space, creative mobility and consumer culture.

- The growing gap between rich and poor is a serious problem: design can enhance communication between these groups.
- As design education in China continues to fall short, Dutch experience in design education is crucial for future exchange programmes.

Condensing China's Creativity into One Report

The report is set up to provide, in 11 chapters, a general introduction to the development of design and the creative industries in China. Chapter 2 gives an overview of the policy debate on the creative industries in China and the ambition to establish the creative industries as one of the pillars of the Chinese economy in the coming five years. In Chapters 3 and 4 this agenda is investigated by focussing on second- and third-tier cities' development, and by mapping the changes in the educational system. Emphasis is placed on a new generation of producers and consumers of design. In the following sections, two key evolutions in Chinese design are highlighted: on the one hand the creation of brands (Chapter 5), and on the other the notion of craftsmanship as a practice (Chapter 6). Chapter 7 looks at new developments in creating complete creative chains, thereby focussing on integration and innovation; and Chapter 8 provides information regarding Intellectual Property Rights and market entries for foreign companies. In the report's last two chapters, the important trend of establishing creative platforms – both domestically and internationally oriented – is being investigated, and an overview of design awards, fairs, design weeks and Dutch-Chinese points of entry are provided. Finally, Chapter 11 concludes this investigation.

Notes

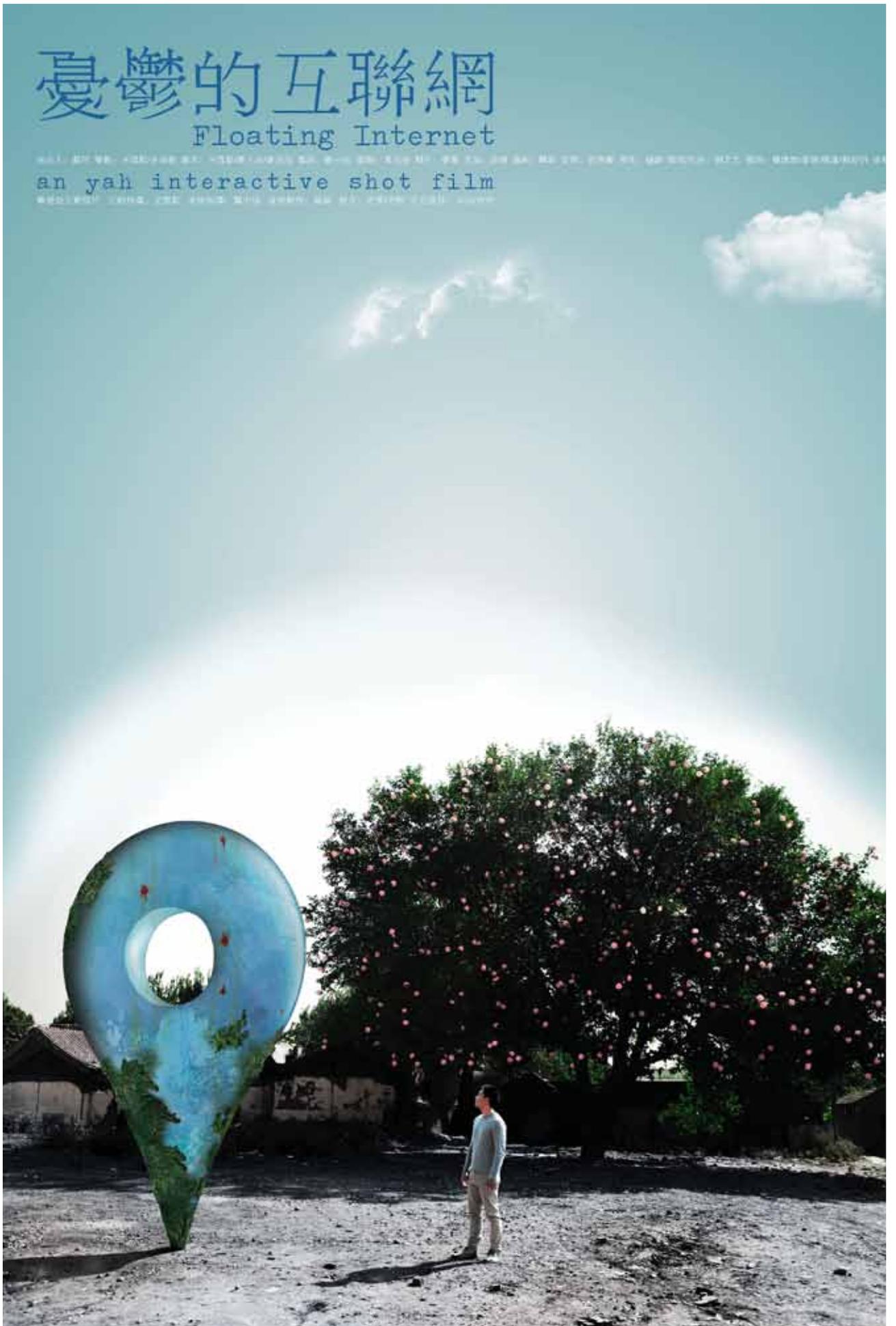
¹ Dutch Design Workspace | www.dutchdesignworkspace.com

² Dutch Design Desk | www.dutchdesigndesk.com

憂鬱的互聯網

Floating Internet

an yah interactive shot film



► Creative Industry Policy

A View of China's Cultural Industries

Introduction

It is estimated that during the past five years, China's cultural industries have grown at an average annual rate of more than 17%, surpassing that of the national economy by over 7%. The cultural industries have emerged as an engine that is poised to drive a substantial part of China's economy in the coming years. In 2009, for the first time, the State Council issued a document designed to promote the cultural industries. Known as the 'Plan to Adjust and Reinvigorate the Cultural Industry', this document confirms the strategic position of the cultural industries at the national level. The '12th Five-Year Plan of the Communist Party of China' (CPC), setting the targets for 2011–2015, states that the cultural industries will be developed into a pillar industry in the next five years.¹ Today, the cultural industries represent less than 2.5% of China's GDP; this number is expected to grow to at least 5% by 2015. Today, there is still some confusion and disagreement on how to define the difference between the 'cultural' and 'creative' industries in China. The cultural industry is commonly seen as 'the one responsible for the production and marketing of cultural products with creative ideas as its core' and 'the concept of the industry [can be seen] as a collection of activities to provide the public with cultural and entertainment products and services'.² The creative industries, on the other hand, are defined more in terms of commercialization, economy and the influence of private initiatives. As Michael Keane, Principal Research Fellow at the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for Creative Industries and Innovation (Queensland University of Technology), observes in his forthcoming book, there is no straight definition: 'The mixing and matching of terminologies (cultural industries, creative industries, cultural creative, creative economy, etc.) in the game of political expediency is doubtless a distraction from the real challenges facing China'.³

A newspaper article in *People's Daily*, titled 'China's Cultural Industry to Ride on High-Speed Rail' provides a blueprint for this development in the coming years.⁴ The key concepts are concentration, commercialization, internationalization, integration and digitalization:

- The cultural industry will gradually become a pillar industry in the regional/ national economy, given its favourable policy and economic status. It will also become a key investment area for the capital market. A batch of flagship public-listed cultural enterprises will appear and the industry will become more concentrated.
- The cultural industry will become further commercialized. Strong demand for cultural products will bring unprecedented prosperity to the industry. Investment will gradually diversify as the share of private and foreign capital increases.
- China's cultural brands and products will compete in the international cultural market. Although China's export of cultural content products will gradually expand, it is still difficult to eliminate China's deficit in cultural trade.
- The cultural industry will further integrate with other industries. The convergence of the cultural, manufacturing and service industries will spur their development.
- Progress in telecommunications networks, digitalization, cable TV networks and the Internet will be crucial, as these will become the core of the cultural industry sector.

The 11th Five-Year Plan

The current state of the Creative Industries in China is the result of planning that started in 2005 when China's State Council released its 11th Five-Year Plan and placed the creative industries on the national agenda.⁵ A couple of months later, in his address to the 17th National Congress, President Hu Jintao stressed the development of the cultural/creative industries as a means to enhance culture as part of China's *soft power*. These programmes are often implemented in urban plans as creative clusters, to attract further real-estate investments in the form of malls, retail and mixed-use developments.

2010 世博会主题活动
荷兰文化馆
Dutch Culture Centre



Visual identity for Dutch Culture Centre, STUDIO DUMBAR China / ZOU ZhengFang 邹政方

To comprehend the transformation of the creative industries during the past five years, it is crucial to understand 'The Outline of the 11th Five-Year Plan for Cultural Development 2006-2010'.⁶ This policy paper provides the outline for developing the cultural/creative industries and is a call to promote 'cultural innovation' and prosperity, to actively boost cultural consumption in urban and rural areas, and to dramatically enhance scientific and technological innovation in the cultural industries.⁷

This policy has had a nationwide effect on urban development by incorporating creative clusters into existing and/or new urban master plans. The most emblematic examples include 798 Art District, DRC Basement of Industry Design, 751 Fashion Designing Square (Beijing); Red Town, Moganshanlu (M50), Bridge 8 (Shanghai); OCT Creative Loft, Tianmian Design City, Luohu Creative Plaza, Nanshan Loft (Shenzhen); Redtory (Guangzhou); Tank Loft (Chongqing).

As Professor **Tong HuiMing**, (Dean / Professor, GAFA School of Industrial Design, Guangzhou) explains, this notion of developing creative clusters is an ongoing phenomenon, which has accelerated during the past few years, but at the time of our interview in 2011, had begun

to pose a problem: 'In the last two years, the local government worked around the slogan "create from the second industry, go into the third industry". Its meaning is: use the old factories, change their functions, and move the manufacturing industry out of the city. In Guangzhou alone we have 32 of these cultural industry parks. Some professors wonder whether it is possible to develop content for all these parks.'

The 11th Five-Year Plan has also set the direction for China's creative designers and large-scale design companies to focus on branding, innovation, business development, communication and internationalization. The article 'China's New Focus On Design', describes this phenomenon: 'Now the central government is developing a design policy to help China move beyond a manufacturing economy and forward in implementing cross-disciplinary education and bridging left- and right-brained thinking. As in other sectors, schools are beginning to train a new wave of design managers "with Chinese characteristics" who can apply design thinking in a context that fits China's commercial and political landscape.'⁸

The 12th Five-Year Plan

The 12th Five-Year Plan addresses the future development of the cultural industries in terms of policies, philosophy and profit. In it one can find a series of key concepts, slogans and ambitions. These make clear that development is largely a work-in-progress targeting an all-encompassing cultural, economic and international vision. The direction of the plan can be understood through its key concepts:

- the creation of an 'open, organized, competitive modern cultural market';
- improved management and organization of state-owned cultural companies;
- provision of appropriate 'cultural entertainment' for residents of the western rural areas of China;
- the stimulation of economic competition among the cultural industries;
- enhancing the scope and sophistication of the creative industries through the support of traditional, small-scale, and emerging industries.⁹

A Critique of the Creative Industries

'The New Map of Chinese Cultural Industries' is an academic study published by Yang Jianfei (Institute for Cultural Industries Communication, University of China), in 2010, based on research in nearly 50 Chinese cities and interviews with people in governments, cultural enterprises and cultural clusters to identify problems arising from the development of cultural industries.¹⁰ From a policy perspective, the report introduces the following two key moments:

- 2006: Following the plenary meeting of 16th CPC Centre Committee, the cultural industry enters a rapid development stage. With a higher growth rate than that of the GDP, it becomes the new growth point of national economy.
- 2007: President Hu Jintao advocates the promotion of 'cultural prosperity and development', later to become a national policy to accelerate economic restructuring and optimization of the industrial structure.

The document identifies the three big obstacles for future development: imbalanced development, lack of a professional cultural creative workforce, and lack of a sense of brand-building.

In his article 'The Creative China Plan Six Years On', Michael Keane looks more closely into social and institutional practices and creative innovation in terms of three levels of activity: planning, market re-adjustment and co-creation.¹¹ These three areas constitute a nascent

creative innovation system as the report explains:

- The recent introduction of the term "creativity" into the Chinese lexicon is a challenge for officials trying to understand its implications, as well as to manage it effectively. While the practice of reform is ultimately conducted by officials, the role of creative thinking is increasingly being outsourced to epistemic communities.
- The second level of the innovation system is the realm of commercial popular culture. In the marketplace we see a great deal of opportunism. In reality, reproduction, rather than origination, is the *modus operandi*.
- The third level in the Chinese creative innovation system is probably the most important – informal grassroots culture. It is typified by creative activity in non-commercial spheres. In online communities, much of the activity is not aimed at profiteering, but functions as informal and amateur incubation. It is both re-creation and recreation.

The report mentions that 'the top level is concerned with creativity but doesn't really understand it'. Keane concludes that this system of innovation has limitations due to an oversimplification of the roles of its three levels.

A Critique of the Creative Clusters

Critique of the development of the creative and cultural industries has been voiced during the past few years. These critics explicitly state that development has been uneasy, and is leading to a depletion of resources. Exemplary is a recent op-ed in *China Daily* by Xiang Yong, the deputy director of the Institute for Cultural Industries from Peking University: 'Despite remarkable progress over the past decades, China's cultural industry has failed to boost its growth through innovation. Instead, the sector's rapid development has largely depended on the exploitation of the country's material cultural resources and the development of its cultural tourism.' The critique targets not only the development of the industry, but also its output – products, objects, etc. – which are described as representing low-end taste: 'The pursuit of fashion, public participation and a pleasant sensation has become dominant, while not enough attention has been paid to the much-needed elevation of aesthetics and mankind's inherent sense of values.'¹²

The development of the creative industries policies in China has been closely analysed by Michael Keane in his book *Created in China: the Great New Leap Forward*.¹³ Keane looks at what he calls the cluster boom and the emergence of hundreds of designated cultural creative

clusters – art centres, animation bases, cultural zones and incubators – most of which have mushroomed from disused urban industrial sites over the past three years: ‘The solution for China was to champion the idea of the creative cluster, banking on the existing success of industrial clusters in China’s manufacturing economy, and typified by the low-cost ‘Made in China’ brand.... Indeed, the term creative industry was taken quite literally. Creativity had become an industry, and as such it had industrial characteristics.’

Indigenous Innovation

China currently pursues the policy of Indigenous Innovation – essentially a certification system. Indigenous Innovation is a national strategy put forward by the Chinese government for the purpose of promoting the development of technological innovation in domestic firms, eventually leading to the ownership of their core IP rights. The central government hopes that Indigenous Innovation will incubate technological developments and generate new products through its National Indigenous Innovation Products (NIIP) programme.¹⁴

‘China’s Drive for “Indigenous Innovation” – A Web of Industrial Policies’ attempts to explain and contextualize these policies, which are not yet fully-formed: ‘Indigenous Innovation is a massive and complicated plan to turn the Chinese economy into a technology powerhouse by 2020 and a global leader by 2050.’¹⁵ The landmark document that launched the campaign carries the bureaucratic title ‘The National Medium- and Long-Term Plan for the Development of Science and Technology (2006–2020)’, now known in the West as the MLP. Bland as the title may sound, the MLP describes itself as the ‘grand blueprint of science and technology development’ poised to bring about the ‘great renaissance of the Chinese nation’. The MLP preamble calls for the Chinese people to ‘seize the opportunities and meet the challenges brought by the new science and technology revolution...’ because ‘despite the size of our economy, our country is not an economic power, primarily because of our weak innovative capacity’.¹⁶

Officially unveiled in 2006, the slogan and broad plans to apply Indigenous Innovation are just now coming to global attention, as supporting regulations pour out of bureaucracies in Beijing and across the country. In Party liturgy, Indigenous Innovation is China’s follow-up blueprint to Deng Xiaoping’s 1978 Reform and Opening. Indeed, the MLP defines it as ‘enhancing original innovation through co-innovation and re-innovation based

on the assimilation of imported technologies’.¹⁷

Also according to the MLP, the megaprojects are the primary vehicles for Indigenous Innovation. They have the capacity to integrate advanced technologies imported from other countries so that China can ‘develop a range of major equipment and key products that possess proprietary intellectual property rights.’ Further on, the plan calls for creating a buy-China policy for government procurement and for expanding the creation of China’s own technology standards in order to escape the burden of paying licensing fees and royalties to foreign companies.

Notes

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HOU ZhengGuang 侯正光 Mooma design / [多少 MoreLess]



●产品使用流程



► Creative Geography

The Era of Second- and Third-Tier Cities

Introduction

China has roughly 1.3 billion people. The Chinese tiered city system is characterized by the city's economy scale and population size, with Shanghai topping China's city population, followed by Beijing and Guangzhou, respectively. These large cities are called first-tier cities and are fuelled primarily by their own domestic demand and consumption. In addition to offering higher living standards and better business opportunities than smaller cities, they are characterized by their international appeal and orientation.

Second-tier cities are often provincial capital cities, attracting an increasing number of tourists as well as investors from home and abroad. China has over 20 cities in this category, which share qualities such as cheaper labour costs, higher-speed development and more favourable local policies than larger first-tier cities. More and more domestic and foreign investors have become attracted to second-tier cities like Chongqing, Hangzhou, Xi'an, Wuhan, Ningbo, Dalian, to name a few. In the coming few years these cities are expected to develop swiftly and to become economic poles securing the next economic growth stage in China. Their development will mark a shift away from the export-oriented economy of the past 30 years, toward a consumer-oriented, demand-driven economy that may bring another 400 million consumers into the global economy.¹ China's so-called third- and fourth-tier cities are those at the county level. The more than 4,000 cities of this scale are expected to be targeted in the future by domestic enterprises, investment agencies and international companies.

Emerging and Existing Markets

China's second-, third- and even fourth-tier cities form an emerging market for Chinese consumers, small-scale brands and design products and services. For product designer **Zhou Yi**¹ (Director, s.point design, Shanghai), whose client list includes Sharp, Siemens, Intel, Motorola

and other large international brands, the differences between China's tier cities are not necessarily related to the differences in size or location but more to brands that are present. Hence, he talks about a distinction between first-, second- and third-brand cities. 'But for product design we do not see a big difference', he says. 'If you limit yourself to one of them, your market will be too small.'

The 2009 McKinsey report 'Preparing for China's Urban Billion' indicates the promise of substantial new markets and investment opportunities in second- and third-tier cities, while acknowledging that the expansion of China's cities, based on current trends, poses a huge challenge for local and national Chinese leaders and government officials: 'In 20 years, China's cities will have added 350 million people – more than the entire population of the United States today. By 2025, China will have 219 cities with more than one million inhabitants, compared with 35 in Europe today, and 24 cities with more than five million people.' These 'one million plus cities' are crucial for understand the emerging Chinese consumer and design culture at the beginning of the 21st century. In the next decade, urban growth combined with the rise of a new, economically powerful and internationally oriented generation of consumers will not only create new markets, but also support the emergence of city-specific design enterprises and endeavours. Today in China, 1.2 billion people live outside of first-tier cities. This group includes 93% of China's total youth population of 200 million.^{3,4}

In November 2011, 'The China Sourcing Blog' published a map illustrating the distributions of certain industries in Chinese cities, thereby identifying locations where concentrations of resources have produced competitive advantages.⁵ Some of the cities included on this map have become famous for their particular industrial clusters. For example, Shantou, in Guangdong Province, is known for its production of bras and ladies underwear; Dongguan, also in Guangdong, for electronic products; Shandong province for its transport equipment; and

Wenzhou, in Zhejiang Province, for its production of lighters. These clusters are located predominantly in the eastern and coastal part of China, but as the distribution of the dots on the map illustrates, many are located in – or moving into – the Western areas.

As specializations develop within China, the world at large is an emerging market for large-scale Chinese companies such as LENOVO (desktop and notebook personal computers, workstations, servers, storage drives and IT management software), Haier (domestic appliances, refrigerators, air conditioners), Huawei (telecommunications equipment supplier) and ReneSola (solar industry). It is expected that in the coming decade, design firms and other creative businesses will expand both locally and internationally, thereby adapting their strategies, design approaches, brand communication and products to the needs and expectations of local and international consumers.

Chongqing–Chengdu Case–Study

China's second- and third-tier cities represent emerging creative markets, leading to potentially strategic investments, new creative platforms, and opportunities for international, cultural exchange programmes. Chongqing has a total population of over 30 million and provides creative locations such as the small-scaled TANK Loft or the Chongqing Industrial Park – China's largest cluster of creative industries for fashion design and interactive leisure software. The nearby city of Chengdu, a UNESCO City of Gastronomy with a population of about 11 million, has the ambition that 'by 2012, the added value in the cultural creative sector... will account for 4.2% of local GDP, making the city "a leader in the cultural creative industry of China"'.⁶ Chengdu organized its first Architecture Biennale in October 2011 and areas such as the Chengdu A4 Contemporary Arts Center are emblematic for the rise of locally developed creative industries.⁷ A large portion of national investment has recently gone into the development of these two cities, supporting the establishment of the Chengdu-Chongqing Economic Zone.⁸

With headquarters in Shenzhen and offices in Hong Kong and Shanghai, RITO Communication Group is one of the leading creative communication groups in China. For its founder **Feng Zhifeng** (Founder & Creative Director, RITO Communication, Shenzhen) the exploration of new markets is a process of both localization and internationalization. He explains: 'In the near future, we will develop our business by setting up new branches in Beijing and Chongqing.' When asked why he chose

Chongqing, Feng describes it as a new type of city, strategically located for access to the Western parts of China: 'The Chinese economy will transfer from 1st-tier to 2nd-tier cities, and places like Tianjin and Chongqing are poised to become the next Beijings or Shenzhens. Because of its location, Chongqing will influence the development of the whole western 'region.'

Companies are probing, testing, and venturing out to the one million cities with a variety of business strategies. It is only a matter of time before bigger breakthroughs, success stories and more exposure will create a better understanding of the creative potential of cities such as Chengdu, Wuhan, Hangzhou, Chongqing, Xiamen or Shenyang. Cities located on the fringe of larger regional developments could, and most likely will, become influential design markets and potentially turn into base camps for designers to explore China's hinterland.

Tom Shi (Director / Founder, Tom Shi Design and Research Studio, Guangzhou) has over 10 years experience in industrial and spatial design and art installation. Although the trends might be set in China's bigger cities, he sees an evolution: 'Chinese clients have a different strategy these days. They first test ideas in secondary cities and then, if it goes well, they bring these ideas to the big cities.'

The interest in China's second- and third-tier cities coincides with the rise of a new generation of design professionals, born in the 1980s and 1990s. Many strive to study and work in the first-tier cities where they have access to better opportunities, but eventually want to return to their hometowns. The question today is how to spread this new generation of talent throughout China. 'Nearly all of our students stay in Beijing after graduation', says **Wang Min**, (Dean / Professor Changjiang Scholarship, CAFA – Central Academy of Fine Arts – School of Design, Beijing). 'I believe they have better chances to make it in other cities, as Beijing already has such a huge population. The question is how to educate our designers so that they spread out and influence China.'

Creative, Consumer and Media Perspectives

Pan JianFeng, (Founding Director, SHTYPE / ALT Design, Shanghai) works in the fields of retail, logo, print and exhibition design and is involved with typography research. At the time that he was interviewed for this report, he was commissioned to re-brand a local furniture company that has the ambition to establish a platform for

like-minded designers in Shanghai. The company is also reaching out to China's second- and third-tier cities. Pan understands this as a long-term ambition combining geographic with generational interest: 'My client says that in the future their main consumers will be the younger generation living and working in third- and fourth-tier cities. They own houses and need furniture; they have knowledge of global design. This is going to be a huge market, and my client is preparing for it.'

Product, industrial, graphic and communication design companies are also reaching out more readily to second- and third-tier cities, where, according to **Jiang Jian**, (Partner & Creative Director, JOYN:VISCUM, Beijing) a new kind of energy, enthusiasm and passion for design is growing. His Beijing-based company JOYN:VISCUM produces a wide range of independent projects, including exhibitions, publications and events for these new consumers: 'We can't just sit and wait for opportunities to come along; that's why we've launched in Hangzhou and Chengdu. The big cities are already saturated.'

Almost all of the magazines in the Modern Media Group – one of mainland China's most successful independent print media companies – have nationwide circulation. **Remy Chen** (Deputy GM – South China, MODERN MEDIA Group, Shenzhen) explains the company's strategy of publishing local magazines such as *City Life* for Chongqing or *Lifestyle Weekend* in cooperation with Hangzhou TV Group: 'Our strength is in developing the content, such as fashion, while our partners have more knowledge of the local environment, the specific city. This is a new approach for our group – publishing locally rather than only nationwide, and working in collaboration, rather than only by ourselves.'

China in the Asian Context

Bruno Porto (Art Director, Bruno Porto Comunicação Visual, Shanghai), co-author of the book *Asian Graphics NOW!*, explains that China's design scene is still immature, despite its powerful economic position: 'During the last 10–15 years, everyone has wanted to do business with the Chinese for economic reasons. But graphic design in China lags behind countries like South-Korea, Singapore, Japan.'⁹

Today it seems that Chinese designers lack both the opportunities and the desire to profile themselves as an independent force within the Asian context. Can China learn from the more developed design cultures in countries like Japan and South Korea? And how does it

want to position itself? **Pan JianFeng** (Founding Director, SHTYPE / ALT Design, Shanghai) explains that in China, visual communication needs to be explicit and loud: 'Our visual culture is similar to that of Japan or South-Korea, but we use it in a different way. They look at details; in China the graphic language is much bigger, bolder; the meaning is more powerful. Sometimes in China, you have to be very noisy, but if you can make a beautiful noise, that's good. Just look at the scale of this country – it is big.'

Notes

- ¹ This colour symbol refers to a short biography and contact details provided at the end of this document.
- ² 'Market Research in China's 2nd-Tier Cities' | 2009 | www.labbrand.com/brand-source/market-research-china's-2nd-tier-cities-and-beyond
- ³ 'Preparing for China's Urban Billion' | 2009 | www.mckinsey.com/Insights/MGI/Research/Urbanization/Preparing_for_urban_billion_in_China
- ⁴ 'Youth Trends 2010' - China Focus | April 2010 | <http://blog.enovatechina.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/04/enovatefashiontrendsreport.pdf>
- ⁵ 'Map: China's Top 100 Industrial Clusters' | November 2011 | www.chinasourcingblog.org/2011/11/chinas-industrial-clusters.html
- ⁶ 'Cultural creative industry Chengdu' | www.chengduinvest.gov.cn/EN/hm/detail.asp?id=10284
- ⁷ Chengdu Biennale | www.chengdubiennale.org/en
- ⁸ 'China unveils plan for Chengdu Chongqing economic zone' | May 2011 | www.steelguru.com/chinese_news/China_unveils_plan_for_Chengdu_Chongqing_economic_zone/203919.html
- ⁹ 'Asian Graphics Now!' TASHEN Books | November 2010 | www.taschen.com/pages/en/catalogue/design/all/04440/facts.asian_graphics_now.htm



Jesus Yeh 叶字轩 / Yehidea

► Design Education and a New Generation

Education, Creativity and Consumption

Introduction

By 2015, China will be home to 500 million people under age 30 – roughly the population of the entire European Union.¹ The 1980s and 1990s generations are likely to be the most promising generations – in terms of consumption, culture and creativity – that China has witnessed in a long time. Growing up after the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution, and during the reform period, these young people are gaining swift access to international trends, social media, and global cultures and opinions. They are poised to change Chinese society.

In China there are over 2,000 universities, along with technical and crafts colleges, that offer design as a major; over 30 of these are in Shanghai alone. Each year the number of applicants to these schools dramatically exceeds their capacity. China's design education is said to be traditional, tempering students' creative aspirations. Nevertheless, improvement is at hand. Cooperation between Chinese design academies, foreign universities and foreign design institutes provides better opportunities, especially for talented students. Today **Tsinghua University** and the **Central Academy of Fine Arts** (CAFA) in Beijing, **Tongji University** in Shanghai, **Hunan University** in Changsha (Hunan University started China's first school of design in 1977) and **Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts** (GAFA) in Guangzhou are considered the top design colleges in China.

In his contribution to this report, Professor **Wang Min** (Dean / Professor Changjiang Scholarship, CAFA – Central Academy of Fine Arts – School of Design, Beijing) of CAFA assesses 30 years of design education in China: 'Thirty years ago, Chinese design was isolated from that of the rest of the world – almost nonexistent. But in a very

short time Chinese designers have refreshed the look of the country. In some cases they've done too much or not enough, but generally speaking their achievements are remarkable. The progress in Chinese design is noticeable everywhere, from book design to information design to exhibition design.'

Wang Min (Dean / Professor Changjiang Scholarship, CAFA – Central Academy of Fine Arts – School of Design, Beijing) estimates that one million students are currently studying design in China. The dramatic increase in the number of design students naturally places enormous pressure on the educational system. When asked whether he sees this one million as an opportunity, a challenge or a threat, he is optimistic: 'There are new possibilities to change people's minds, behaviours, and opinions towards design and art'.

Professor **Lou YongQi** (Vice Dean Deputy Head, TONGJI D&I College of Design & Innovation, Shanghai) has another perspective on this new generation of designers: 'The one-child generation, also known as "little emperors" or the "spoiled generation", is now taking professional responsibility. This group is working around a double opposition: modern versus traditional and East versus West.' These rising designers have learned from their parents, who built up the country from the 1980s onwards. But at the same time, they subtly question the relevance of their inherited values; their parents' education suffered during the country's standstill in the 1960s and 1970s, limiting the transfer of traditional Chinese knowledge. These days, there is a strong need to incorporate an awareness of Chinese culture and history into design education.

Education and Employment

One challenge of Chinese design education is to introduce students to both traditional and contemporary developments in Chinese design and culture, and to relate them to international developments in design education.

Wang Min (Dean / Professor Changjiang Scholarship, CAFA – Central Academy of Fine Arts – School of Design, Beijing) sees CAFA as an environment that connects students to current art movements and progressive thinking. These students are the future leaders of industry, the professor explains: ‘It is important to let them think beyond current changes towards future visions, the long term. What is China going to become? There are plenty of schools that can train professionals; CAFA’s task is to produce thinkers, shakers and leaders.’

In the mind of **Pan JianFeng** (Founding Director, SHTYPE / ALT Design, Shanghai), the current challenge lies in the need to combine Chinese and European design cultures: ‘Growing up in the 1970s, our teachers had little knowledge of where we came from. For me, typography is a medium through which to look back, and to deal with the relationship between European culture and classical Chinese knowledge.’

Education is also linked to opportunities for young designers to be involved, during or after graduation, in studios and design works undertaken by their professors.

Tom Shi (Director / Founder, Tom Shi Design and Research Studio, Guangzhou) Design and Research Studio was established in 2006. The practice provides a multidisciplinary design service from product design development to branding solutions for corporations. The studio’s founder, **Tom Shi**, studied and worked in Guangzhou and later went to London’s Central St. Martins: ‘I completed my undergraduate degree at GAFA in 1998, during one of the booming times for the electronics market in the PRD. Afterwards I joined the studio of Professor **Tong HuiMing** (Dean / Professor, GAFA School of Industrial Design, Guangzhou), where I had opportunities to work with famous brands. This enabled me to understand the development of the whole industry; how the PRD became the manufacturing centre of the world. After that I went to London for two years, and returned to China in 2006.’ His motives to leave China resonate with those of other interviewed designers: ‘Chinese design education is oriented towards getting graduates jobs in the manufacturing industry. The UK is more conceptual; it has more cultural influences.’

An educational system preparing design students for immediate entry into the manufacturing industry obviously influences the more experimental, small-scale design studios. For these studios, it can be difficult to find employees able to engage in more creative or experimental projects. The difficulties are twofold: on the one hand employees are trained for specialization; on the other, the future looks brighter, more lucrative and more stable in large corporate companies. **Tom Shi** (Director / Founder, Tom Shi Design and Research Studio, Guangzhou) explains: ‘Education has gotten even narrower in recent years; some students major in shoe, toilet or tourist souvenir-design. So we have to spend a lot of time re-training them. And we have to compete for the best talent with the big corporate companies.’

Educational Changes

It is not only the long-established and renowned design schools that face the challenge of updating their curricula; in the past decade many new design schools and departments have emerged. When asked about his five-year experience at the Shanghai Raffles Design Institute, **Bruno Porto** (Art Director, Bruno Porto Comunicação Visual, Shanghai) hints at two important points: first, the new generation has more access to foreign cultures than any before it; and second, there is a need for adjustment to the current design industry. Porto now teaches the 1990s generation: ‘When I started teaching, I asked students to redesign a Western brand in Chinese. Back then, students couldn’t grasp an assignment like this, but today’s generation is more accustomed to Western brands, language and international design standards.’

At GAFA, Professor **Tong HuiMing** (Dean / Professor, GAFA School of Industrial Design, Guangzhou) is shaping a new direction for design education by bringing students and business together around a single project. These exchanges are shaped around a one-year course, bridging the client’s brief into the students’ curriculum. He talks about enriching product design by slowing down the process: ‘It is important to make time to do research. This year I took my students to a local bathroom company and asked them to give us a full year to make a good project – not just a market-oriented business project.’

For Professor **Wang Min** (Dean / Professor Changjiang Scholarship, CAFA – Central Academy of Fine Arts – School of Design, Beijing) there is a direct relation between generational and educational changes. He suggests that a new design approach is mandatory – especially because the older generation is stigmatized

as being copycats: 'Today the question is how to educate, how to create progressive designers with respect for Chinese tradition? How to merge Chinese design thinking with innovative approaches? How to work in a society that still does not respect designers, design or intellectual property? These are the challenges we are struggling with.' In Shanghai, the Dutch firm Studio Dumbar is also involved with rethinking design education. Dumbar's research has revealed that Chinese graduate students aren't ready to deliver what the market needs. 'Every year a lot of people graduate, but they simply aren't equipped to work as designers', explains **Zou ZhengFang** (director, Studio Dumbar China, Shanghai). 'When we looked into reasons behind their low performance, we found out they are not educated in the right manner. The output does not correspond to what the market needs; there is a gap and we try to find a way to close it.'

In September 2011, Michel de Boer, formerly of Studio Dumbar, initiated the **Dutch Design College** in China.^{2,3} Working closely with **Wang Min** (Dean / Professor Changjiang Scholarship, CAFA – Central Academy of Fine Arts – School of Design, Beijing), De Boer has developed a plan for a four-year Bachelor programme: during the first two years students will follow courses in China, with both design and intercultural communication taught in English; the second half of the programme will be completed in the Netherlands. The college is planned to start by September 2012.

Analysis of a New Generation

Feng ZhiFeng (CEO of RITO Corporation) distinguishes among three generations. The older generation, from the 1950s, worked in a planned economy; his, from the 1970s, in a market economy; finally, the younger 1990s generation deals with a wider work landscape: 'This "third generation" can revolutionize the design field in the near future, breaking old modes of enterprises.'

Tom Shi (Director / Founder, Tom Shi Design and Research Studio, Guangzhou) believes that many older designers have a confused artistic identity: 'Most older designers are trained as painters or sculptors.... As Chinese society has shifted, they have encountered opportunities to apply their artistic background to other fields. While trying to remain true to their identities as artists, they have also become teachers and businessmen.'

Zhang DaLi (Director, Shenzhen ZHANGDALI Design co ltd, Shenzhen) has a different outlook. He believes that his generation – designers that started their careers during the 1980s and are consequently China's first urban generation – embodies an artistic and creative responsibility towards society as a whole: 'We are concerned with things like how to live in cities. The designers from the 1980s and 1990s are more relaxed and trendy.' As **Zhou Yi** (Director, s.point design, Shanghai) explains, this 'trendy' attitude might pose a danger: 'They seem to change course arbitrarily and have trouble controlling themselves. This could be dangerous to China's development.'

When it comes to understanding the new generations' consumer behaviour, Song Yang (DONGDAO Design, Beijing) believes that this trendy image has a certain appeal for designers, but also poses a challenge. Some information about the needs of the new generation is derived from collaborations with academia: 'It is important to understand consumers' needs; after all, with design we can change their lifestyles. Nowadays young people in China are multitasking and interactive. They are trendsetters. The products they use have to be functional, attractive and design-oriented.'

Working with a 'New New' Generation

As a designer/editor involved with youth culture, **Jiang Jian** (Partner & Creative Director, JOYN:VISCUM, Beijing) runs an independent design magazine – *Plugzine* – serving as both its chief-editor and art director. In 2005, together with Shanghai designer Jiji and Beijing-based curator **Ou Ning** (Director / Chief-Editor Curator, alternative archive / Get It Louder / Shao foundation, Beijing), he curated the pioneering design exhibition 'Get It Louder', showcased in Shenzhen, Guangzhou and Beijing.⁴ At that time, in an interview with *Modern Weekly*, **Ou Ning** introduced the idea of the 'New New Designer': 'The first generation of designers was trained in traditional art schools; all of their designs were hand-made. The second generation came of age when Macintosh computers had become fashionable, and began to absorb digital design trends. The third generation – today's designers – grew up in the Internet era. They are technically proficient and have broad vision and international experience. We call them the "New New Designer."⁵



HOU ZhengGuang 侯正光 Mooma design / [多少 MoreLess]

Universities and Design Colleges

By 2007 China had 20 times more design schools than it had in the 1980s.⁶ Today, many more dot the educational landscape. For the purpose of this report, 18 leading schools and universities with design related programmes were identified. The following descriptions are based mostly on information available on the UK **Design Council** website and through **Cumulus**, the International Association of Universities and Colleges of Art, Design and Media.^{7,8} Founded in 1990, the Cumulus network includes 176 active members from 44 countries.

Hunan University School of Design (HNU)

Founded in 1982 Changsha City, Hunan Province, the school's aim is to build a comprehensive educational platform combining culture, art, science and technology. HNU includes a Department of Industrial Design, Department of Art & Design, Faculty of Industrial Design, and Faculty of Art and Design. HNU is co-organizer of **LOTUS Cup**, an International Industrial Design Innovation Competition. HNU's subject areas for exchange students include product design, graphic design, communication design, design history, design theory, design management, ergonomics and human-centered design. Students: 518 bachelor, 118 master, 6 doctorate. Exchange students: 1 incoming, 8 outgoing, 34 other. Teaching staff: 13 professors, 10 lecturers, 8 other permanent teachers, 3 part-time teachers.

design.hnu.cn/eng

www.cumulusassociation.org/component/members/view/9

Jiangnan University School of Design (SoD)

Founded in 1960, formerly Southern Yangtze University (SYTU), Jiangnan University consists of 18 schools and 63 undergraduate programmes with disciplines including engineering, science, literature, economics, management, law, medicine, agriculture and education. In the last 50 years, SoD has established an academic tradition as a cradle of modern design education in China. SoD has established partnership and collaboration with many famous international design institutions and companies. Nationally, SoD has a strong partnership with industry. Subjects include industrial design; architecture and environmental art design; visual communication; public art; advertising; modelling art; and history and theory of art design.

Students: 1500 bachelor, 300 master, 10 doctorate.

Exchange students: 30 incoming, 20 outgoing. Teaching staff: 34 professors, 40 lecturers, 12 other permanent teachers, 10 part-time teachers.

www.jiangnan.edu.cn/english/schools/sd.html

www.cumulusassociation.org/component/members/view/210

Dalian Polytechnic University (DLPU)

School of Art & Design

Founded in 1958 in Shenyang as the Shenyang Institute of Light Industry, DLPU is the only institution of higher education in northeastern China specializing in light industry, food, textiles and art design. There are about 15,000 students on the 340,000m² campus. Subjects include engineering, science, arts, management and economics. The School of Art & Design's Bachelor Degree Programme includes: Art & Design, Industrial Design, Sculpture and Digital-Media Art. The Master Degree Programme includes Arts and Science of Art & Design. DLPU **School of Art and Design** has 142 faculty and staff members, 2500 undergraduate students and 300 graduate students.

<http://en.dlpu.edu.cn>

<http://ysxy.dep.dlpu.edu.cn/xuexiaojieshao/xuexiaojieshao.html>

Tsinghua Academy of Arts & Design / Product Design

Since its founding in 1956, the Academy of Arts & Design at Tsinghua University has established exchanges with over 20 overseas universities. Each year, of the 16,000 students that apply from all over China, only 240 are accepted. Forty students are accepted annually into the product design classes. Product design is divided into three concentrations: exhibition design, transportation design and product design. There is an emphasis on the development of electronics products such as mp3 players, mobile phones and household electronics. Many graduates are hired by companies like Lenovo or Nokia while others go on to work in design firms owned by teachers. A handful of graduates work freelance or start their own studios after graduation.

The Academy has 10 departments: Arts and History, Textile and Fashion Design, Ceramic Design, Industrial Design, Environmental Art Design, Graphic Design, Information Art and Design, Painting, Sculpture, Arts and Crafts.

Students: 1106 bachelor; 525 master; 94 doctorate.

Teaching staff: 143 professors, 58 lecturers.

www.tsinghua.edu.cn/publish/aden/index.html

www.cumulusassociation.org/component/members/view/188

Tongji University School of Design / College of Design and Innovation (D&I)

In 2007, the **Department of Art and Design** at Tongji University, Shanghai, had about 536 students (396 undergraduates and 140 graduate students, including 12 doctoral students); a total of 31 full-time teachers (11 professors and associate professors, 18 lecturers). In 2009 the **College of Design and Innovation** was developed from the Department of Art and Design, College of Architecture and Urban Planning. D&I cooperates with renowned domestic and international design schools. It publishes the magazine *All Design*, and is part of **Design Network** (DESIS), a network of schools of design and other institutions interested in promoting or supporting design for social innovation and sustainability.
www.tongji-di.org
www.cumulusassociation.org/component/members/view/17

Central Academy of Fine Arts (CAFA) School of Design

Under the umbrella of CAFA, in Beijing, there are six schools and colleges, including the **School of Design**. Founded in 2002, the design school sees itself as a national role model, with an 'artistic, experimental, visionary and international' outlook. Today, it has six majors including Visual Communication, Industrial Design, Digital Media, Photography, Fashion Design and Jewellery Design. Its campus was finished in 2001, with a new building for the design branch that opened at the end of 2006. A total of 5000 students attend the design school, with a foreign student ratio of 5%.
Students: 1162 bachelor, 143 master, 34 doctorate, 1035 other (continuing education, post-experience courses).
Teaching staff: 105 professors, 56 lecturers, 30 part-time teachers.
www.cafa.edu.cn
www.cumulusassociation.org/component/members/view/29

Shenzhen Polytechnic (SZPT) School of Art and Design (SAD)

SAD offers courses in industrial design, environmental art design, fashion design, advertising design, exhibition design, furniture design, among others. In addition to the School of Art and Design, SZPT has schools of media and communication, animation, and architecture. There is also an environmental engineering school that offers courses in communication design and interaction design, and plans to introduce majors such as service design and management design. At present, the school has over 1700 students and more than 90 teachers. In recent years, SAD faculty have made more than 300 scientific

research achievements and have earned over 50 prizes in international and domestic competitions.

<http://english.szpt.edu.cn>

Shanghai University (SHU) College of Digital Arts

Shanghai University offers three design studies: industrial design; art design; and digital art. The School of Digital Art, established in 2005, became the first comprehensive college specialized in digital arts to be approved by the PRC Ministry of Education. With 568 full-time students, the college employs 90 faculty and staff members, many of whom have received their Ph.D. and M.A. degrees from foreign universities or institutes. Departments/courses include: Animation; Television and Film Art; Performance and Compere; Digital Film and Television Art, and Technology; Music; Art Design; Public Art; Industry Formation; Architecture and Environmental Art; Culture and Commerce and Fundamentals.

www.dart.shu.edu.cn/Default.aspx

www.shu.edu.cn/Default.aspx?alias=www.shu.edu.cn/english

Shanghai Jiaotong University (SJTU) School of Media and Design (SMD)

Shanghai Jiaotong University (known as Shanghai Jiao Da or SJTU) is a top public research university known as one of the oldest and most prestigious in China. The 2011 QS World University Rankings placed it at 124th internationally, and 37th worldwide for Engineering and IT. SJTU School of Media and Design (SMD) was founded in 2002. It has several departments: journalism and communication, film and TV, design, beaux-arts, and cultural management. Nowadays, SMD has more than 600 undergraduates, over 200 M.A. candidates, and about 30 Ph.D. candidates and overseas students in various programmes. Almost 80 faculty members work at SMD. Its facilities include some of the nation's most advanced laboratories of broadcasting and television, photography, design, and information effects. It houses the Chengji Art Gallery, the Innovation and Development Research Base of National Cultural Industry, and a media centre.

<http://smd.sjtu.edu.cn>

Zhejiang University (ZJU Hangzhou) Department of Industrial Design

Zhejiang University (also known as ZheDa or ZJU), founded in 1897, is a national university, and one of China's oldest institutions of higher education. In 2011, Zhejiang University became the number one university of China, according to the China University Rankings, surpassing Tsinghua University, which had claimed the

top position for the previous 14 years.

The school's mission is to transform society through product innovation, not only in the design of the product itself, but also of its service and network technology. It offers B.A. and M.A. degrees, with a focus on design and research. Faculties and departments: Department of Industrial Design: B.A. in Industrial Design (four years); M.A. in Design Art (2.5 years). Research activity: product innovation design, computer-aided industrial design, user experience design, and ergonomics in product design. Doctorate level programmes: Digital Art and Design. Students: 220 bachelor, 75 master, 25 doctorate. Exchange students: 15 incoming, 52 outgoing. Teaching staff: 10 professors, 3 lecturers, 3 other permanent teachers, 5 part-time teachers.

www.id.zju.edu.cn

www.cumulusassociation.org/component/members/view/176

Guangdong University of Technology (GDUT) School of Design

Established in 2004, the School of Arts Design GDUT consists of six departments including Industrial Product Design, Fine Arts, Fashion Design and Apparel Engineering, Environmental Arts Design, Visual Arts Design, and Science of Animated Cartoon. It offers both bachelor's and master's degree programmes. Currently, 85 full-time teaching staff members make up the professional teaching team, including one Ph.D. supervisor and 18 professors and associate professors. Occupying an area of over 8,000 m² the GDUT boasts plentiful teaching facilities and research laboratories as well as a 770m² exhibition hall. The school has also set up a provincial institute, the **South China Industrial Design Institute**. Programmes offered: M.E. in Artistic Design, B.E in Industrial Design, B.E. in Apparel Engineering, B.A. in Arts Design (Fashion Design, Image Design and Fashion Show Design, Vision Communication Design, Environmental Artistic Design), B.A. in Science of Animated Cartoon and B.A. in Fine Arts. GDUT also organizes the **Dongguan Cup International Industrial Design Awards**.

<http://english.gdut.edu.cn/Html/Faculties/20080108338.html>

Shandong University of Art and Design (SUAD)

Founded in 1973 in Jinan (Shandong Province) Shandong University of Art and Design has made the art disciplines its first priority, reinforced with a strong emphasis on the liberal and scientific disciplines. SUAD has cultivated an important international position with an active foreign exchange programme. SUAD co-organized the Cumulus

Seminar 2008 and the Icoграда Design Education Manifesto 10-Year Anniversary 2010.⁹ SUAD faculty and students participated in the design of the logo, posters and mascot of the 11th National Games in 2009, and of the Shandong Pavilion of Shanghai Expo 2010. Schools include: Applied Design, Architecture and Landscape Design, Digital Art and Communication, Fashion Design, Industrial Design, Modern Handicraft, School of Visual Communication Design. Research Activity: SUAD has set up the Chinese Folk Art Research Institute, Image Research Institute, Landscape Design Research Institute, Glass Research Institute, Furniture Research Institute, and others.

Students: 6,124 bachelor, 28 master. Exchange students: 20 incoming, 20 outgoing. Teaching staff: 101 professors, 123 lecturers, 82 other permanent teachers, 45 part-time teachers.

www.sdada.edu.cn/wsb

www.cumulusassociation.org/component/members/view/28

Fudan University Shanghai Institute of Visual Art (SIVA)

Founded in 2005, SIVA is an applied institute of visual arts founded by Fudan University. From 2005 to 2010, SIVA co-organized the **Intel Cup** Design Innovation Competition with Intel (China) Co., Ltd. The competition has become the sought-after stage for top students of higher learning. Faculties and Departments: College of Design (founded in 2009 through the merge of the former College of Spatial and Industrial Design and College of Transmission), College of New Media Art, College of Fashion Design, College of Fine Arts, and College of Media Communication and Performing Arts.

Students: 3693 bachelor, 3 master. Exchange students: 3 incoming, 7 outgoing. Teaching staff: 53 professors, 65 lecturers, 50 other permanent teachers, 336 part-time teachers.

www.siva.edu.cn

www.cumulusassociation.org/component/members/view/246

Shantou University Cheung Kong School of Art and Design (CKAD)

Founded in 2004, CKAD runs an exchange programme with Anhalt University of Applied Sciences in Germany, and several design research programmes with Hong Kong City University and Hong Kong Polytechnic University. CKAD is the sole design institution located in the eastern part of Guangdong province, and one of the top institutions in Chinese design education. It collaborates with national design institutions and associations such as



FENG Yu 机构 / DEVE BUILD 深圳大羽营造设计机构

the Academy of Arts and Design Tsinghua University, The Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts, and the China Artists Association.

Departments: Design, Fine Art, Art and Design Philosophy. Bachelor programmes (4 years): Graphic Design, Environmental and Spatial Design, Multimedia Design, Planning and Management of Creative Industry, Product Design, Public Art. Master programmes (3 years): Graphic Design, Design Theory, Design and Chinese Culture, Multimedia Design, Product Design, Chinese Painting, Oil Painting, Arts Theory, Public Art. The main research areas focus on design and Chinese culture, modern teaching methods in design education, local cultural development, and international design education.

Students: 160 bachelor, 17 master. Exchange students: 20 incoming, 10 outgoing. Teaching staff: 22 professors, 13 lecturers, 10 other permanent teachers, 10 part-time teachers.

www.ckad.stu.edu.cn

www.cumulusassociation.org/component/members/view/182

Beihang University (BU) New Media Arts and Design College

Beihang University, previously known as Beijing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics, is one of the highest ranking engineering universities in China. Since 1993, more than 5,000 students from over 80 countries have enrolled. BU is one of the few universities in China to use English as its primary language of instruction for all international master's and doctoral programmes. It also offers many bachelor's degree programmes in English, taught by some of China's most published faculty and international professors.

Founded in October 2006, the School of **New Media Art and Design** is comprised of three departments (Animation Art, Illustration Art, and Network Communication and Art Design), plus a Research Center of Digital Media Art and an Institute of Art Theory. The undergraduate curriculum is divided into two periods: three semesters focus on the basic knowledge of art design; the second period includes specialized courses in three major areas: animation art, illustration art, and network communication and art design.

<http://art.buaa.edu.cn>

Guangzhou Academy of Fine Art (GAFA)

Design College

GAFA is a provincial university based in Guangzhou that offers Fine Arts and Design degrees. Established in 1953, GAFA was one of the first institutions in China to be authorized to award M.F.A degrees. In 1982, the postgraduate M.F.A. degree course was established, and by 1986 the school started to enroll foreign and overseas Chinese students, as well as students from Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan.

For the past five decades, design programmes have been growing vigorously. The Design College is formed by 7 departments, 2 design programmes, 16 specialized paths, and a uniform platform of design foundation – the Foundation Programme. Departments include Architectural and Environmental Art Design; Graphic Design; Industrial Design; Fashion Design; Digital Art Design, Integral Design; and Decoration Design. In recent years, new specialties in architectural design, digital art design, fashion engineering design and furniture design have been initiated.

Since 2002, many world-famous designers have received Honourable or Guest Professorships by GAFA: Shigeo Okamoto (Japan, 2002), Dai Rees (England, 2003), Shigeo Katsuoka (Japan, 2002), Alessandro Mendini (Italy, 2004), Richard Henderson (Australia, 2004), George Teodorescu (Germany, 2005), Axel Thallemer (Germany, 2005).

www.gzarts.edu.cn

Raffles Design Institute (Shanghai, Beijing, Guangzhou)

Raffles Design Institute, **Shanghai**, is a subsidiary of the Singapore-based Raffles Education Corporation, and is operated in association with **Donghua University**. Established in 1994, it is China's first International Design College. Its design and business courses include several two-year advanced diploma programmes with more than 150 faculty members from 28 countries, and over 3,000 students from all over the world. Design courses include Fashion Design, Visual Communication, Multimedia Design, and Interior Design. Business and merchandizing courses include Fashion Marketing, Business Management and Marketing. Raffles Design Institute runs subsidiary design schools in Guangzhou and Beijing, where it collaborates with Raffles College of Design and Commerce (RCDC).

raffles.edu.cn

beijing.raffles.edu.cn

gz.raffles.edu.cn

Notes

- ¹ 'ENOVATE 2010 Chinese Emerging Consumer Trends Report' | March 2010 | <http://www.slideshare.net/enovatechina/enovate-2010-china-emerging-consumer-trends-report>
- ² 'Dutch Design in trek: academies willen bachelor in China' | NRC 29 September 2011 | www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2011/09/29/dutch-design-in-trek-academies-willen-bachelor-in-china
- ³ 'Dutch Design College' | www.dutchdesigncollege.com [under construction]
- ⁴ Get It Louder | www.getitlouder.com
- ⁵ 'Get It Louder - Voice of China's New Design' | April 2005 | www.alternativearchive.com/ouning/article.asp?id=88
- ⁶ 'Working Knowledge - China by numbers' | 2007 | www.designcouncil.org.uk/publications/design-council-magazine-issue-3/working-knowledge
- ⁷ Design Council | www.designcouncil.org.uk
- ⁸ CUMULUS | www.cumulusassociation.org
- ⁹ 'Shandong University of Art and Design' | June 30 2008 | <http://en.visionunion.com/2008/06/30/shandong-university-of-art-and-design.html>



FENG Yu 机构 / DEVE BUILD 深圳大羽营造设计机构

► Brands

Appeal to Domestic and International Markets

Introduction

Chinese enterprises have only recently begun to see the importance of strategically developing their brands. This new awareness comes from both the guidance of government and the practice of day-to-day market competition. As Chinese design markets grow more sophisticated, enterprises are keen to stay ahead of the local market while making inroads to the world market. Some try to advance from **Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEM)** to **Original Design Manufacturers (ODM)** and/or **Original Brand Manufacturers (OBM)**. Many of these businesses seek design firms to revamp their brands for the international market. As such, corporate and brand identity designs are in high demand.

To provide background on branding in China, this chapter starts with an overview of recently published research on the subject. Brand creation in China presents a dual challenge: one needs to reach not only several groups of domestic consumers, but also a global market, which requires an understanding of East-West cultural exchanges.

In addition, designers from small firms describe their branding strategies, the services they offer, and how design is used as a label and a tool for self-promotion. Others explain how the dawn of luxury craftsmanship is ushering in a new type of brand. Designers involved in this task tend to take a long-term, inclusive, international approach; they see branding as a means to add value to products.

Branding in the Chinese Context

Brand development in China is still complicated. The 2006 study 'Brand Culture and Consumption: Chinese Consumers and the Foreign Brands' describes how, within 20 years, China has brought both its brands and its

products to an international market, but at the same time, Chinese consumers remain fascinated with foreign brands.¹ The report concludes with comments on how to attract Chinese consumers:

- one must understand the symbolic values of prestige required by the Chinese;
- highlight differences in terms of product quality and the symbolic value of brands;
- strengthen orientation to Confucianism, modernity and youth linked to consumption in China;
- emphasize the importance of market segmentation;
- stress the differences between categories of products with high symbolic value and low symbolic value;
- and finally, identify new constraints imposed by local competition.

As mentioned, Chinese designers are intensely preoccupied with brand development, management and communication – including trend forecasting and market research. Often, they are commissioned to produce design-related work for foreign brands such as Converse, Nike, Hermès and Mercedes-Benz.

Since 2005 and the launch of a nation-wide cultural industry policy, brand development has been a key element in almost any discussion about the progress of China's creative industries, both from a policy and an academic perspective. Branding is seen as the magic formula with which Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) can differentiate themselves from competitors, and position themselves on the local and global market. During this time, the influences of well-known brands grew and the innovation capability of self-owned brands improved. Haier, Lenovo, and many other self-owned brands have entered the world market. In 2001, not a single Chinese brand was listed in 'World Brand Top 500'; by 2005, four Chinese brands – Haier, Lenovo, CCTV and Changhong – were included. By 2007, the number had grown to 12, and by 2011 to 17. Moreover, companies

such as China Mobile, CCTV and Haier have entered the Top 100 list. Although these numbers are still small, they reflect the growth and development of Chinese brands going global.²

Hundreds of thousands of new brands appear in China every year, but their average life-cycle is no longer than two years. Approximately 99% of companies do not apply patents, and 60% do not have self-owned trademarks. Although China has become a giant in the world trade field, less than 10% of export products possess self-owned brands, and 90% of high-tech export products are produced by foreign-funded companies. In the world market, China's export competence is still regarded as low in four aspects: product level, price, market share, and profitability.³

Brand Creation

With the boom of brands, more and more designers are attentive to product differentiation in terms of lifestyle, philosophy and design approach. A brand combines a personal and professional design philosophy leading to commercial and creative value, competition, connection with the manufacturing industry and exploration of craftsmanship. Nowadays, this thinking influences three groups: the client, the consumer and the designer. 'Chinese designers are shifting their activities from design services to the reinforcement of their own brands, thereby capitalizing on their own productions and creations,' says Wang Shao-Qiang, (Designer & Publisher, Founder & Chief Editor *Design 360°* magazine, Guangzhou). Due to today's economic, cultural and design boom – including clients' higher ambitions to promote their products – there is a growing market for branding services. Thus, the role of design in China, as in most parts of the world, is moving from creating artifacts to implementing design thinking – applying the design process in the context of large-scale business, organizational or cultural problems.

Craftsmanship as a Brand

Shang Xia, the Shanghai-based branch of **Hermès** founded in 2008, profiles itself as a company that is reviving, redesigning and redirecting the notion of craftsmanship.^{5,6} The brand offers a range of housewares including furniture, decorative objects, garments and other accessories. It is conceived as an environment for designers, consumers, craftsmen and others to meet to explore materials such as zitan wood, felt, bamboo, eggshell porcelain, cashmere, jade and agate. Creative Director **Jiang Qiong Er** (Artistic Director & CEO SHANG

XIA [Hermès CHINA], Shanghai) explains the purpose of Shang Xia – meaning 'UpDown': 'We try to find harmony. *Shang* could be tradition, traditional craftsmanship, inspiration, the past; *Xia* is the future, innovation, contemporary design. How can we help the future to inherit the past? This is our mission.' Based on this philosophy, the company is developing a direction for the brand. She explains it as a project with Chinese inspiration, combining commercial and creative value: 'When a country develops economically, its people show interest in their cultural roots. Because this is what belongs to them, consciously or unconsciously. But we will also always dream about what comes from outside. Shang Xia is not created for the Chinese market alone, but also for the international market. It is a project with Chinese inspiration, but it is not a purely Chinese project.'

A similar drive to enter the international market with a culturally developed brand characterizes of **Lv YongZhong** (Founder / Chairman & Design Director, BANMOO / VEP Design, Shanghai) and his **Banmoo** furniture line.⁷ In the high-end and luxury market segment of Chinese design, dedicated to reinventing arts and crafts in a modern way, it is common for creators to take an international, long term approach: 'We have a long plan, exploring craft, brand, material, furniture and the market. My priority will be China, but I also want to spread my brand to European countries or the US. I will produce whole line of products.' Professional focus and determination, Lv notes, are crucial to successful brand-building. Without a clear vision, designers will 'end up following the trend, without knowing their destination, and risk losing themselves'.

Brand Adaptation

As a result of the 2011 WTO entry, foreign companies have gradually accessed the Chinese market. They have determined a framework and reference for domestic brands in terms of brand construction, investment and competition. Since its establishment in 1997, **Zhou Yi's** (Director, s.point design, Shanghai) company has grown into one of China's best-regarded independent product design houses.⁸

For many domestic and foreign companies China is still the world's biggest market. During the past three years, **Zhou Yi** (Director, s.point design, Shanghai) has received an increasing number of questions from clients wanting to understand what sells in China. 'People want to know why the Chinese people buy your product, love your brand and how one can be successful on the Chinese market.' A branch of his company, 'China Insight', provides 'updates



Brand identity Shanghai Buick STUDIO DUMBAR China / Zou Zhengfang 邹政方

on the latest trends in China, defines your business opportunity and leads to your target segment.⁹ Trend- and consumer research are thus important for helping to shape or change a brand. ‘We do basic trend research,’ explains Zou Yi, ‘in materials, markets, Chinese policy and lifestyle.... Innovation is a deep concern, a strategy, not something that remains on the surface of design thinking’.

Wang Shao-Qiang (Designer & Publisher, Founder & Chief Editor *Design 360°* magazine, Guangzhou) has witnessed designers’ roles shifting from service-providers to creators, from executors to brand developers: ‘Designers are moving from design services toward design exploitation. Chinese designers are building up of their own brands, thereby capitalizing on their own productions and creations.’

Notes

- 1 Brand culture and consumption: Chinese consumers and the foreign brands’ | by Chen Li | www.cerdi.org/uploads/sfCmsContent/html/253/LI_Chen.pdf
- 2 ‘A Study on the Strategy of Cultivating China’s Self-Owned Brands’ | by Xiaoshui Yu | June 2008 | www.ccsenet.org/journal/index.php/ijbm/article/download/1479/1420
- 3 ibid.
- 4 Canton Fair - Official Website of China Import and Export Fair | www.cantonfair.org.cn
- 5 ‘Scene Asia - Shang Xia is Both Yin and Yang’ | November 2010 | <http://blogs.wsj.com/scene/2010/11/04/shang-xia-is-both-yin-and-yang>
- 6 ‘Luxury Leaders - Jiang Qiong Er, Shang Xia’s CEO & artistic director’ | January 2011 | www.luxurysociety.com/articles/2011/01/jiang-qiong-er-shang-xias-ceo-artistic-director
- 7 ‘BANMOO’ - Lv Yong Zhong’s zen new furniture design | October 2011 | www.satellitevoices.com/shanghai/art-design/1629/banmoo
- 8 ‘China Design - How the mainland is becoming a global center for hot products’ | November 2005 | www.businessweek.com/magazine/content/05_47/b3960003.htm
- 9 s.point - China Insight | www.spointdesign.com.cn/?checklan=no



字运动 Caracères Sportifs
设计：毕学锋 Designed by: Bi Xuefeng

► Craftsmanship and Daily Life

A Culturally Conscious Choice for Quality

Introduction

China is witnessing a heightened awareness of the development of contemporary craft practices. Critical and avant-garde Chinese designers see craftsmanship as a viable modern design discipline, as it addresses socioeconomic and ecological issues, and offers a vision for more sustainable development. Craftsmanship relates to the advancement of culture and its investigation of philosophical and human values. However, the environment for suitable practices is still experimental. Some designers are exploring the revival of traditional skills and lifestyle philosophies with rigor, passion and personal interpretation. Craftsmanship fulfils a quest to understand one's cultural roots and heritage through engagement with the international world, or as **Hou ZhengGuang** (Founder / Director, MOOMA Design, Shanghai) puts it, through 'combining cultural traditional wisdom and international resources'.

In the past, this topic has been explored in Sino-Dutch exchanges, such as 'Debate on Tour: Craftsmanship – Use of Traditional Techniques in Modern Design, Fashion and Architecture' at Hong Kong 2008 Business of Design Week (BoDW).¹ This dialogue brought designers together to consider 'traditional handicrafts, details, materials, and local traditions' and the role they can play 'in a globalizing world in which almost every city looks the same'.

Craftsmanship can move forward through its close relationship with luxury. China has the world's fastest growing market for luxury products, as pointed out in the 2010 McKinsey report 'Understanding China's Growing Love for Luxury'.² The report states that the growth of the luxury market is a cultural trend not limited only to China's

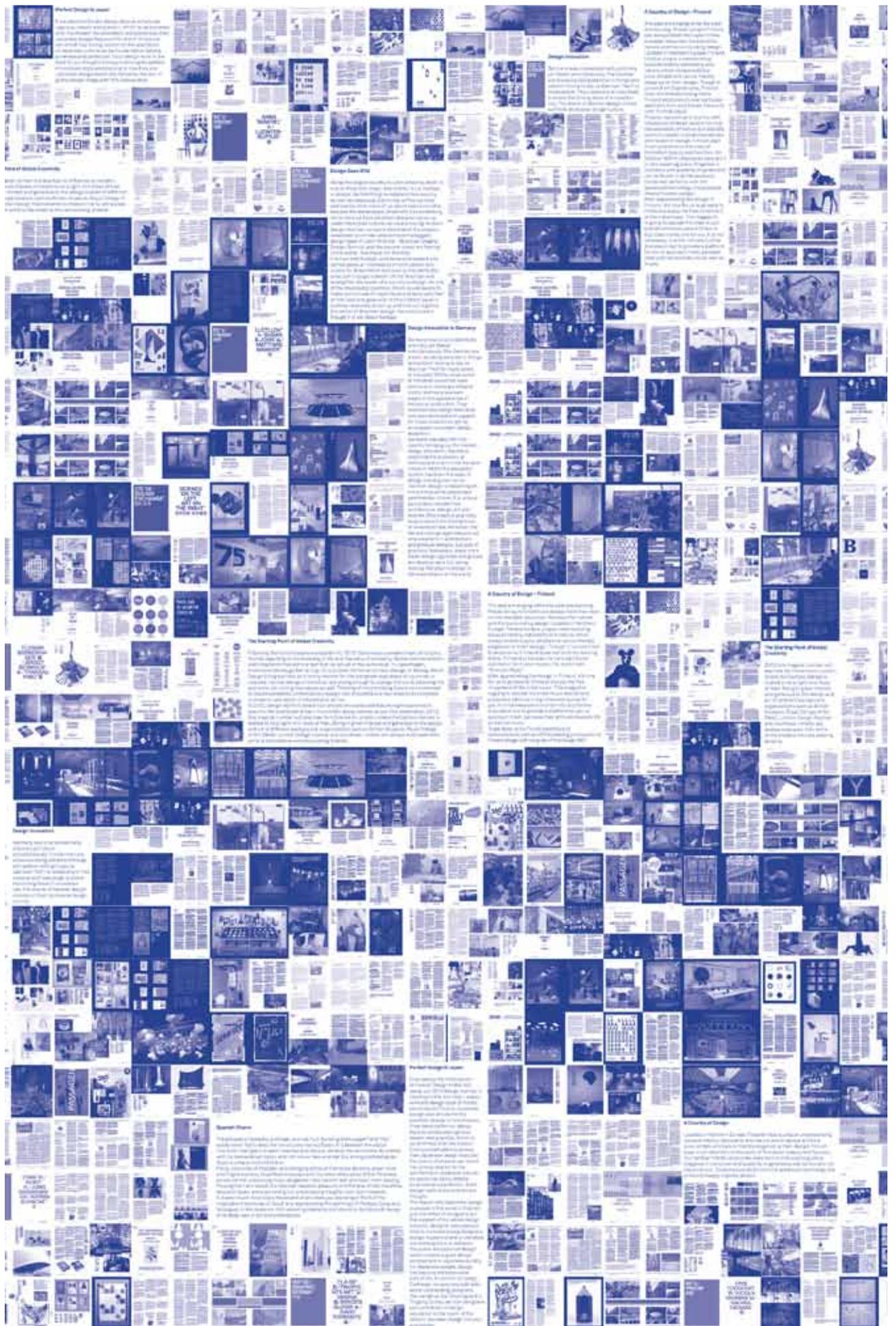
large cities: 'These new luxury consumers, of which a growing number are residents of lower-tier cities, are reshaping the luxury landscape in China.' It goes on to explain that 'nowadays an "internationally well-known brand" has become one of the top buying factors with "superior craftsmanship" continuing to be the most important'.

Cultural Craftsmanship

Chinese designer Robert Kuo has introduced since the 1980s a slew of new furniture and accessory pieces that continue his mission today to marry modern and 21st century design with craftsmanship, reflecting traditional imperial China.³ Raised in the Taiwanese cloisonné studio of his father, he has long worked with two basic materials: copper and glass.⁴ Similar tendencies can be seen in the work of Rick Lee, a San Francisco-based industrial designer who has launched his 35-piece Bamboo Furniture Collection in collaboration with the new, design-driven furniture manufacturer Viken.^{5,6} 'Together, we're pushing the envelope of design, sustainability, and craftsmanship in China, with a focus on international marketing for the design-hungry market.' Inspired by Chinese bamboo forests, the furniture is constructed of Mao bamboo plywood from China's Zhejiang province.⁷

Craft Case-Studies

For **Feng Yu** (Design Director, Shenzhen DEVE BUILD Design Agency, Shenzhen) the exploration of craftsmanship in interior design shows an element of sincerity in furthering Chinese culture. When asked to define his style, the interior architect explains that his work



is based on the role a designer plays in society: 'I believe design is about the recreation of a culture rather than pure aesthetics. When I face a certain space, first I think about an idea I want to express, and later on about the spatial arrangement.' **Feng Yu** considers his approach atypical of the design culture in China, which he says 'has not reached this level of sincerity yet'.

For **Hou ZhengGuang** (Founder Director, MOOMA Design, Shanghai), notions of artistry are closely tied to a growing awareness of the local and global, traditional cultural wisdom and international resources. As such design can be based on an interaction between client and the creator: 'Chinese customers start gradually to think more about their own culture and style. That is why we set up our own brand. Own style reflects the value of old things today.

At the same time, our clients are changing. Nowadays, many people like Western and modern styles and maybe a few people like the original Chinese style. I think that's normal; more and more people will think: why do I need products that I never used before?'

For **Jiang Qiong Er** (Artistic Director & CEO SHANG XIA [Hermès CHINA], Shanghai) **Shang Xia** is about instigating a renaissance of Chinese culture. The artist/designer and CEO talks about the brand in terms of people and emotions. Without those elements, she states, Shang Xia would be like any other trading company. In addition, Shang Xia's relationship with the Hermès Group, draws an immediate link between craftsmanship, luxury and collaborative efforts. But it also creates a market: 'We have to find a new market for craftsmanship. We need to have patience.' With production taking place in Asia, Shang Xia supports local craftsman and integrates technique such as weaving and porcelain-making that are traditional to China.⁸

Craftsmanship as Collaboration

In one of China's fastest developing cities, Shanghai, designer **Lv YongZhong** (Founder / Chairman & Design Director, BANMOO / VEP Design, Shanghai) has created **Banmoo**, a line of original furniture designs of professional quality and craftsmanship.⁹ Taking a minimalist approach to luxury, Lv Yong-Zhong has chosen to take production into his own hands. Experimenting with wood as a basic design material, he has trained a small team of carpenters, opting to explore a contemporary approach to traditional craftsmanship: 'Shanghai needs something to slow it down. Shanghai's native designers do things more carefully than those in Beijing; I think this is a

good quality with which to build a brand.'

As a graduate of the Central Academy of Art and Design, **Liu Feng** (Founder, FUN+ LIVING / PEP art+design, Beijing) has done sculpture, art-research, landscape design, device art and urban research. As the founder of PEP Design, and as one of the establishers of the **China Furnishing Design Brand Alliance (CFDBA)**, he is influential in the sphere of household design in China.¹⁰ **Liu Feng** is currently exploring a series of objects that are composed of recycled materials, or through the adaptation of existing products and furniture. To him, this work is about convenience, not about exploring a certain style. It can be called hacking, re-using, improving, re-thinking or updating. 'It is about making existing designs better', he explains.

Another line explores bone china – a glasslike, non-porous pottery made from bone ash, fine china clay, china stone and kaolin.¹¹ With this material **Liu Feng** (Founder, FUN+ LIVING / PEP art+design, Beijing) is developing a modern design line based on traditional techniques. 'I've found that only a few of these factories still exist,' he tells. 'There is one place that can manufacture bone china, in Tangshan. These old objects seem quite far away from our daily life, so we are trying to use them to generate designs for modern people.' This interest in preserving ancient techniques – such as those of the porcelain capital, Tangshan, or in Changzhi, Shiwan, and other towns – is combined with the fact that they are reserved by China as state's treasures.¹² Today these towns are developing a mixture of more traditional crafts and innovation. **Liu Feng's** (Founder, FUN+ LIVING / PEP art+design, Beijing) experience and network can lead to innovative cultural exchange products: 'We more than welcome a practical approach. Maybe in the near future, Dutch designers can try using traditional Chinese traditional materials in their work.'

Design for Daily Life

The rapid changes within Chinese society make predictions about the future of daily life, and the role, contribution and value of design in it, very difficult. Looking at the evolution of society at large, one can speculate about developments influencing the course of daily life in the near and distant future: a change of political regime, the lessons learned during the reform period, the unique blend of communism with capitalist characteristics, the impact of accelerated urbanization on the psychological mind-set of urban and rural citizens, the one-child policy, the migrant population, the gender imbalance or China's overseas investments in companies,



LV YongZhong 吕永中 / BANMOO 半木

plants and properties. All of these factors influence the role of design, and its position, in China's daily life. Design can alleviate some pressure, while enhancing communication among these groups, as **Pan JianFeng** (Founding Director, SHTYPE / ALT design, Shanghai) explains: 'I look at how design works – if it is good; if it can help people. Good design can help this country and its people to build better communication and understanding'.

Amongst the designers interviewed, there is consensus on two points. First, that the future of daily life is about bridging the gap between economic and cultural development; and second, that the question of how to design for low-income groups needs to be addressed. During the interviews, suggestions for cultural exchange among designers were launched. These dealt with diverse issues such as kitchens, bicycles, public spaces, minimal space design and fake products. Design for daily life is also about democratization and public communication.

For **Hong RongMan** (Artist, DAMMI Group, Guangzhou), daily life is connected with the notion of public space, where it becomes most visible: 'To engage with public space in China is very difficult: there is no discussion with the government. So if you want to work on it, you have to work together with private companies.' His objective, in engagement with public space, is to find the middle ground between an artistic and design approach. In 2007, Hong collaborated with 'Nieuw Brabants Front' to curate a group-exhibition of 12 Dutch and Chinese artists at the University City in Guangzhou.¹³

Design for the Elderly

The problem of aging is acute, as one-child families mainly characterize China's society. The elderly currently have a deep impact on China's socioeconomic development, confirming the saying that 'China is becoming old before it becomes rich'. Nowadays, the parents and grandparents of these 'only children' are becoming frail, and difficult questions loom ahead: how will they support their parents? According to a leading scholar in gerontology, one in every five old people in the world is Chinese: 'By the middle of this century, the number of people aged 60 and over will reach 434 million, or 31% of the population.'¹⁴ Another article, 'Chinese population challenges: fewer girls, more old people' analyses the budgetary dilemma: 'Apart from a small fraction of the urban population who work for state-owned enterprises, old people in China do not receive a pension.'¹⁵ Most of the elderly rely on support from the family, if they are lucky, or must carry on working to maintain their income.... The smaller family size and the lengthening of life expectancy mean that when two people marry, each of them an only child, they must support their four parents and sometimes several surviving grandparents as well.'

One of the few design companies that addressed the issue of the aging population is ShenZhen ARTOP Industrial Design, established by Luo Chen (President / General Manager, ARTOP Industrial Design, Shenzhen) in 1999. ARTOP has become a leading Chinese industrial design company, known for its original, high-quality, high-efficiency, aesthetic, affordable, sustainable designs.

Design4All is this company's concept for making age-related needs (55+) primary considerations for products, services and environments.¹⁶ For the senior market the company provides R&D, design, versioning, market consulting, branding and communication of products and services. Its philosophy is that 'products, services and environments that are well designed for the older are excellent for the younger.'

Recently, products designed for the elderly are gaining increasing attention and are being awarded with design prizes. The 'Elderly Phone', developed by Chengdu Newplan Design, won the Gold Prize, China Red Star Design Award 2011. According to its applicant, 'the phone has a pop-up screen that can solve the contradiction between the large size of the screen and the large buttons. With a price of around RMB 400, it has a good marketing advantage.'¹⁷

For future collaborations on the subject of design for the elderly, it would be advisable to look into contemporary proposals by Dutch designers, such as the 'Foe Ooi Leeuw' apartment – meaning 'house to live in harmony together'.¹⁸ Located in Amsterdam Zuidoost, it houses 54 elderly residents, all originally from China. Recently this community was involved in a unique project. A team of designers, illustrators, interior architects and a photographer took part in a series of exploratory workshops with potential residents and the client. These sessions generated design proposals that 'translate stories and memories of the residents and traditional Chinese symbolism with consideration of the Dutch context of the project into contemporary design.'

Interior Design Resources

The field of interior design in China is still a young profession. Also known as 'indoor' or 'interior' decoration, it emerged in the 1980s in large cities Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Shenzhen.¹⁹ Often, interior design is done by designers with backgrounds in architecture, product design and graphic design. These designers do conceptual development, contractual negotiations and the management and execution of the design itself.

It is not within the scope of this report to tackle the wider topic of interior design in China, however the following resources provide a starting point for further investigation:

- **China – Shanghai: Interior Design**; report 2009 (Consulate General of the Kingdom of the Netherlands)²⁰
- **Building Completion and Interior Design in China**; China Industry Report 2011 (BISWorld)²¹
- **Interior Design Yearbook(s)** (Tianjin University Press)²²

The following organizations and events can provide additional knowledge and resources on the interior design industry sector in China:

Associations

- **Institute of Interior Design of Architectural Society of China**
- **China (National) Interior Decoration Association (CIDA)**
www.cida.org.cn & www.clii.com.cn
- **China Institute of Interior Design (CIID) Shenzhen**
www.ciid.com.cn/special/2010nn/2010nn-index.html
- **Chinese Society of Interior Designers (CSID)**
www.csid.org
- **Shenzhen Association of Interior Designers (SZAID)**
www.szaid.com
- **Interior Decoration Association of Beijing (IDAB)**
www.idab.org.cn
- **China Building Decoration Association (CBDA)**
www.ccd.com.cn &
<http://zhuanti.ccd.com.cn/apsda/en/lsh-cbda.html>
- **Art Display & Decoration Committee of China (ADCC)**
www.cnfa.com.cn
- **China National Furniture Association (CNFA)**
www.adcc.org.cn
- **Asia Interior Design Institute Association (AIDIA)**
www.globalaidia.org
- **International Federation of Interior Architects/Designers (IFI)**
www.ifeworld.org

Upcoming interior design fairs and exhibitions:

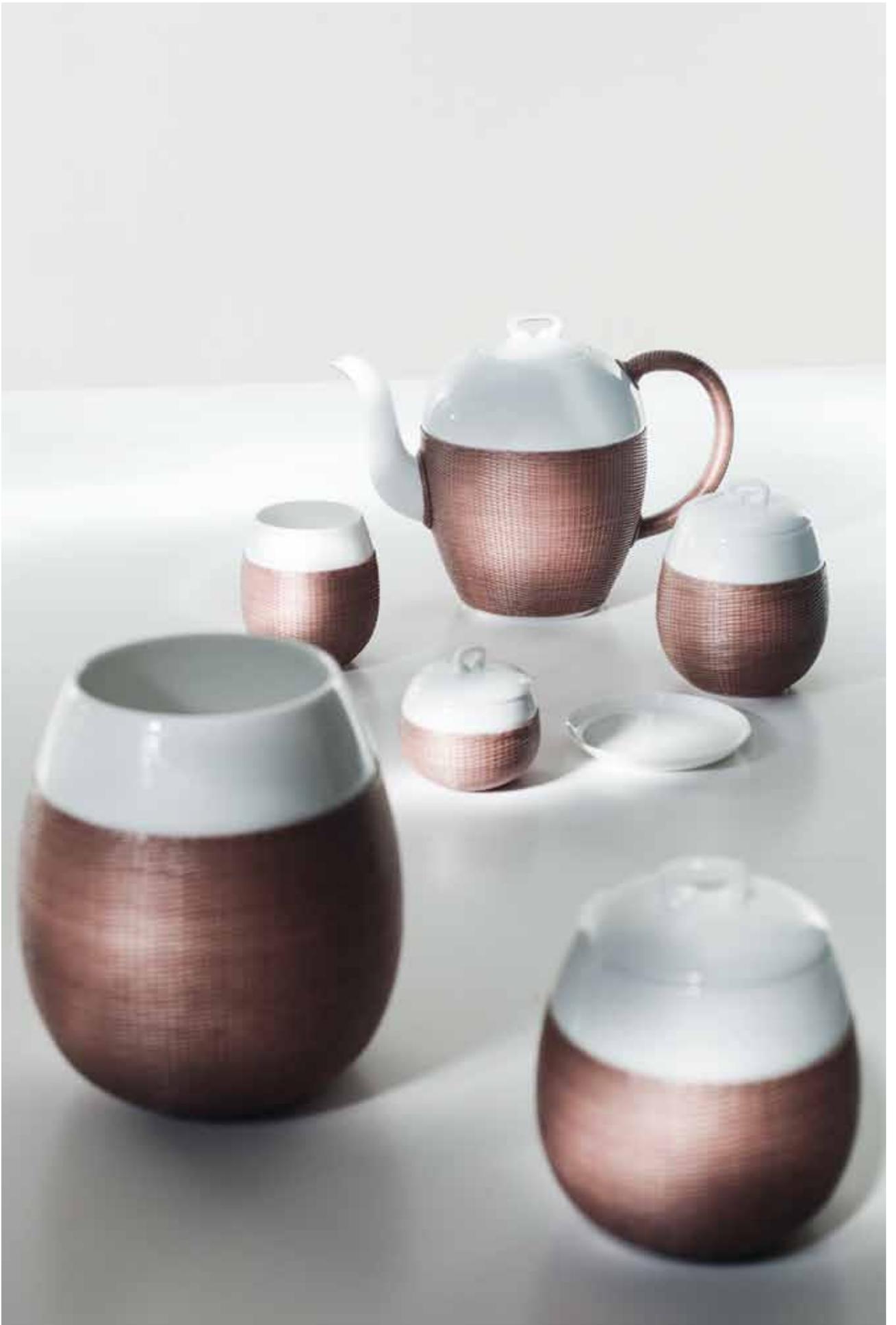
- **Interior Lifestyle China**
17–20 October 2012, Shanghai Exhibition Center (Messe Frankfurt)
www.messefrankfurt.com.hk/fair_homepage.aspx?fair_id=21&exhibition_id=22
- **China International Architectural Decoration & Design Art Fair (CIDF)**
21–23 October 2012, World Trade Centre, Beijing, China (Supported IFI)
www.eduid.com/en/index.html
- **100% Design Shanghai**
1–3 November 2012, Shanghai Exhibition Center (Reed Exhibitions)
www.100percentdesign.com.cn
- **International Home Decor and Design (IHDD)**
1–3 November 2012, Shanghai Exhibition Center (Reed Exhibitions, co-located with 100% Design)
www.home-decor.net

Notes

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- 2 'Understanding China's Growing Love for Luxury' by McKinsey&Company | www.mckinsey.com/locations/greaterchina/InsightsChina_LuxuryGoods.pdf
- 3 Robert Kuo | www.robertkuo.com
- 4 Traditional Chinese Craftsmanship in a Modern Context | <http://robbreport.com/Home-Design/Traditional-Chinese-Craftsmanship-in-a-Modern-Context>
- 5 Rick Lee Design | www.rickleedesign.com
- 6 Viken Furnishing | www.vikenfurnishing.com
- 7 'New East' by Adam Pollock | <http://somamagazine.com/new-east>
- 8 'Hermès Launches Shang Xia In Shanghai' | September 2010 | Jing Daily | www.jingdaily.com/en/luxury/hermes-launches-new-brand-shang-xia-in-shanghai-jing-daily-exclusive-coverage
- 9 'Banmoo -Reinventing home furnishings' | Shanghai UnLike | <http://shanghai.unlike.net/locations/302499-Banmoo>
- 10 'Product Design, 40 under 40, 2010 - Liu Feng' | www.perspectiveglobal.com/40-under-40/2010/product-design/2010?page=2
- 11 'Inspiration > Porcelain | the art of living ' | ChuangYi Life | January 2011 | www.chuangyilife.com/en/features/chinaware
- 12 'Rare peek into best of pottery art' | www.chinapotteryonline.com/page/25?cat=1
- 13 'Inspiration Indecently Exposed vs. None Store -- a Conversation between Dreamers' | November 2007 | www.vitamincreativespace.com/en/project/viewProjectTrack.do?trackId=20025
- 14 'Aging population 'a challenge'' | www.chinadaily.com.cn/language_tips/cdaudio/2007-10/23/content_6199896.htm
- 15 'Chinese population challenges: fewer girls, more old people' | www.ined.fr/en/resources_documentation/publications/pop_soc/bdd/publication/513
- 16 Design4All at ARTOP-website | www.artopcn.com/en/d4a.asp
- 17 'ELDERLY PHONE' - China Red Star Design Award 2011 | www.icsid.org/feature/galleria/galleria515
- 18 'Foe Ooi Leeuw: House of Harmony and Design' | March 2010 | www.design.nl/item/foe_ooi_leeuw_house_of_harmony_and_design
- 19, 20 'China - Shanghai: Interior Design' | 2009 | Consulate General of the Kingdom of the Netherlands [Creative Cities Amsterdam Area (CCAA)] | www.ccaa.nl/download.php?id=24758
- 21 'Building Completion & Interior Design in China' - China Industry Report | December 2011 | www.ibisworld.com.cn/industry/default.aspx?indid=740
- 22 'Interior Design Yearbook'(s) | Tianjin University Press | 2010 | www.chinabookshop.net/international-interior-design-yearbook-2010-hotels-clubs-beauty-paperback-p-9226.html



ZHANG DaLi 张达利 / ELEPHANT DESIGN space & exhibition



SHANG XIA 上下 [PHOTOGRAPHY by Paolo Roversi]

► Know-How and How-To

Going Global and Local

Introduction

China's design industries are growing rapidly, but the geographical fragmentation of administration makes it difficult to obtain accurate numbers. Two kinds of clients most appreciate the value of design: those with the ambition to become global companies (Lenovo, TCL, Midea, Haier etc.), and those that stand out after heavy competition.¹ These private and fast-growing companies are aware of the limits of their own development. Concurrently Sino-foreign collaborations and business enterprises see a reverse trend: many Chinese companies want to create global brands, and are investing their resources in this direction.

There are three ways for foreign-funded design enterprises to enter the market: first, by joining a design business incubator; second, by establishing a Sino-foreign joint venture enterprise; and third, by establishing a sole foreign enterprise. During the interviews, Chinese designers were asked to speculate on how their businesses would evolve in the coming five years. A common denominator was the influence of the transformation of the country and its culture, and the appeal of its internationalization. When it comes to creative development, the integration of design and manufacturing are key to finding the profitable environment where innovation and production meet.

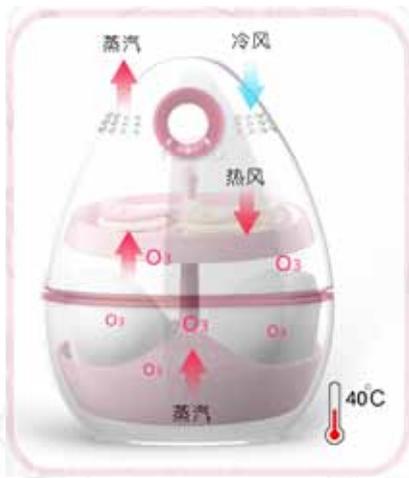
From a business perspective, small-sized design companies in China want to maintain their scale and invest in training their staff. At the same time, they aim to focus on delivering high-quality, innovative products by furthering collaboration with local and international clients. Successful firms have been able to reach these goals by operating in different fields: governmental, cultural and commercial. Large-scale enterprises want to continue expanding, while targeting integration and streamlining of services related to the creation and manufacturing of design products.

A Reversal of the Trend

For Song Yang (DONGDAO Design, Beijing), all design should be practical, problem-solving, and internationally applicable. His firm's work involves cooperation with foreign companies that want to enter the Chinese market. He emphasized the need for foreign entities to have local contacts to help them communicate with and adjust to the local market. In recent years, he and his colleagues have witnessed a reversal of this trend: 'This form of collaboration has emerged over time and it works very well. But nowadays many Chinese companies want to go global and create global brands. So they put more and more resources into this goal, and do not shy away from the costs.' In other words, Chinese companies want to establish their presence abroad more firmly, and therefore create products for international as well as domestic consumers.

In the past decade, Luo Chen's (President / General Manager, ARTOP Industrial Design, Shenzhen) industrial design company has collaborated with large international companies such as Philips, Motorola, Sony, Sharp, Haier, Audi, etc. He believes that collaboration should be based on paying attention to people's lives, valid use and management of resources, and helping domestic enterprises to become international brands. For foreign enterprises wanting to enter the market and collaborate, knowledge and insistence are key: 'One should know the Chinese market, Chinese companies and, most importantly, Chinese culture. Secondly, one should persevere.'

When Zhou Yi (Director, s.point design, Shanghai) talks about exchange, he describes a different experience. In recent years, he has encountered many foreign companies interested in China – and his office – with the motive to sell their goods and services. He prefers collaborations based on respect and complimentary ambitions: 'Cooperation is about experience, exchange,



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细节特写



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respect, and finding a new way. The Netherlands does not have a very strong manufacturing industry, and China is weak in creating trendy and fashionable designs. If they work together, they can be complimentary.'

For Liu Yi (Partner / Visual Design Director, SPARDEC Brand Consulting, Shanghai), the most important changes in the market are the influx of foreign companies, the maturing of the design field and the competition among different agencies. When asked if he would set up a similar company today, he explained that the recent growth of the market had made things harder: 'During the

last five years, the market has seen the rise of domestic brands wanting to become international. A lot of these new brands are confusing the market by offering different design prices, both far below and far above the standard.' These days, foreign companies have the best chance for success when teaming up with local and respected domestic businesses: 'If you are a foreign company, I would suggest you cooperate with local Chinese companies, with strong brands, as they are more familiar with the market, and also have more clients and social resources.'

Liu Lidan (Creative Director CEO, XL+DESIGN, Shanghai) describes her company's double tactic. It assists foreign companies as they enter the market, while helping Chinese clients to get acquainted with design agencies: 'We support the design process and follow up on production and manufacturing. We also help local clients to build up their product strategies. During our first three years, few of our Chinese clients had ever worked with design agencies. Now they have more experience, understand the value of design and want to launch product design as part of their research.'

Bi Xuefeng (Art Director & Founder, Bi Xuefeng Graphic Design Consultant co ltd, Shenzhen),² supports the idea of combining creative forces as a way to enter the market, but also states, from experience, that clients may not understand the importance of this way of working: 'As Chinese companies gain expertise, I believe that we should consider more substantive forms of cooperation – for example, by inviting European designers to take part in our commercial business. In fact, we tried this in 2009, but local clients weren't ready – they didn't understand the importance of design. So the exchange was far from satisfactory.'

Integration and Innovation

Tong HuiMing (Dean / Professor, GAFA School of Industrial Design, Guangzhou) has witnessed a shift in the design practice in the Pearl River Delta during the past few years. In contrast to Beijing or Shanghai, the PRD aims to connect the manufacturing industry with the design field: 'In Guangzhou consumer product manufacturers have set-up a very strong cooperative system, probably the most powerful in China. Some designers wonder: why are we not using good production for our products, why are we only thinking about the brand? This is an important question; the discussion cannot be limited to branding; it should be connected to the manufacturing industry.' This new relationship could have strong implications for products emerging on the domestic market – especially in the PRD, as Chinese foreign trade and export enterprises have encountered unprecedented high pressure amid the global financial crisis. **Tong HuiMing** (Dean / Professor, GAFA School of Industrial Design, Guangzhou) suggests that the rethinking of the relation between design, production and manufacturing could lead to competitive advantages for local agencies by enabling them to keep up with innovation: 'There is a large manufacturing industry in Guangzhou so design firms are more connected with the production of their designs.'

Creative Chains

In China, great emphasis is placed on the creation of more complete creative chains. This is only natural in a country that considers its position advantageous on an industrial level. As Yang Tianfu (Chairman of Harbin Tech Full Electric Company) stated in 2009, 'China's manufacturing advantage is that it can incorporate very long supply chains and systems. In addition to creativity and originality, manufacturers need to have capabilities to acquire and digest information – including market fluctuation, concepts for application, as well as new advances in materials, technologies and processing methods.'³

Another article, published in the *New York Times* in 2011, supports and broadens this idea. In contrast to the message put forth in *Run of the Red Queen*, a new book by Dan Breznitz and Michael Murphree on China's innovation drive, the article argues that China should worry less about coming up with breakthrough technologies, and focus more on what it already does best – making incremental innovations in everything from manufacturing to logistics: 'Rather than trapping China in low-end manufacturing... these capabilities will power the Chinese economy for years to come and eventually allow China to move up the value chain.'⁴

Overall, the thinking about supply chains is now changing the mind-set of Chinese designers. With the objective to create more connections between clients, designers and the manufacturing industry, this evolution seems to stimulate innovation. **Feng ZhiFeng** (CEO of RITO Corporation, Shenzhen) provides an example: 'We need a very complete creative chain to realize our ideas. We are facing a more complex market, more complicated customers, stronger competition, larger-scale problems; our service must be equally comprehensive.'

Eventually, as Luo Chen (President / General Manager, ARTOP Industrial Design, Shenzhen) explains, the growth of domestic design will lead to a re-sorting of design agencies: 'China is still developing quickly, with a blooming decade ahead. At the same time, economic change is slowing down; so we are entering a confusing period for Chinese design. I believe that in each field, only the best will lead.'

Hou ZhengGuang (Founder Director, MOOMA Design, Shanghai) initially wanted to set-up a small design furniture brand in Shanghai, but soon realized the small-scale approach was impractical. 'I wanted to have a small studio focussed on furniture, but that is impossible in this market; our clients have become more sophisticated.'

It's not enough to supply them with a good product. You need to give them a plan, a total design solution, the shop interior, the logo. That is why we have to build up two departments to help to integrate the design. Otherwise, we cannot control the products.' His team now consists of more than 40 designers, technologists, and analysts working across a broad spectrum of industries, including consumer electronics, household appliances, health care design, equipment, and furniture. MOOMA Design works with leading companies, helping them create and sell meaningful products, services, and experiences:

However, the future design landscape might be comprised of more independent and evolved design practices, as well as joint ventures. **Bruno Porto** (Art Director, Bruno Porto Comunicação Visual, Shanghai) believes that some industries will outsource design. 'There is already a presence of international design companies like Studio Dumber and FROG Design, which bring sophistication. Chinese partners are willing to go different ways: they learn, see, absorb... and then say goodbye.'⁵

Matchmaking and Collaboration

Collaborations between foreign and Chinese designers and companies ideally start from a shared interest and are based on a mutual benefit. As such it is important to connect the right people and organizations. Dutch organizations in China, such as the **Dutch Design Workspace** (Shanghai), the **Dutch Design Desk** (Hong Kong/GPRD), and the Benelux Chamber of Commerce, **BenCham** (Beijing, Shanghai & PRD), profile themselves as enablers of this win-win situation.⁶

Ready Zhang is the founder of **Guangzhou Design Week**. He is also a professional matchmaker.⁷ Zhang shares his strategy to connect foreign with local enterprises: 'My approach is not simply to introduce the architects or designers to each other, but also to bring in real-estate developers and bosses of manufacturing industries. As a foreigner, you produce the concept; for the follow-up, sketches, images and plans, you might go to local designers. Then things can happen very fast. There is one exception; if you are famous enough, you can do it on your own. But if you are not famous (yet), go make friends with local designers.'

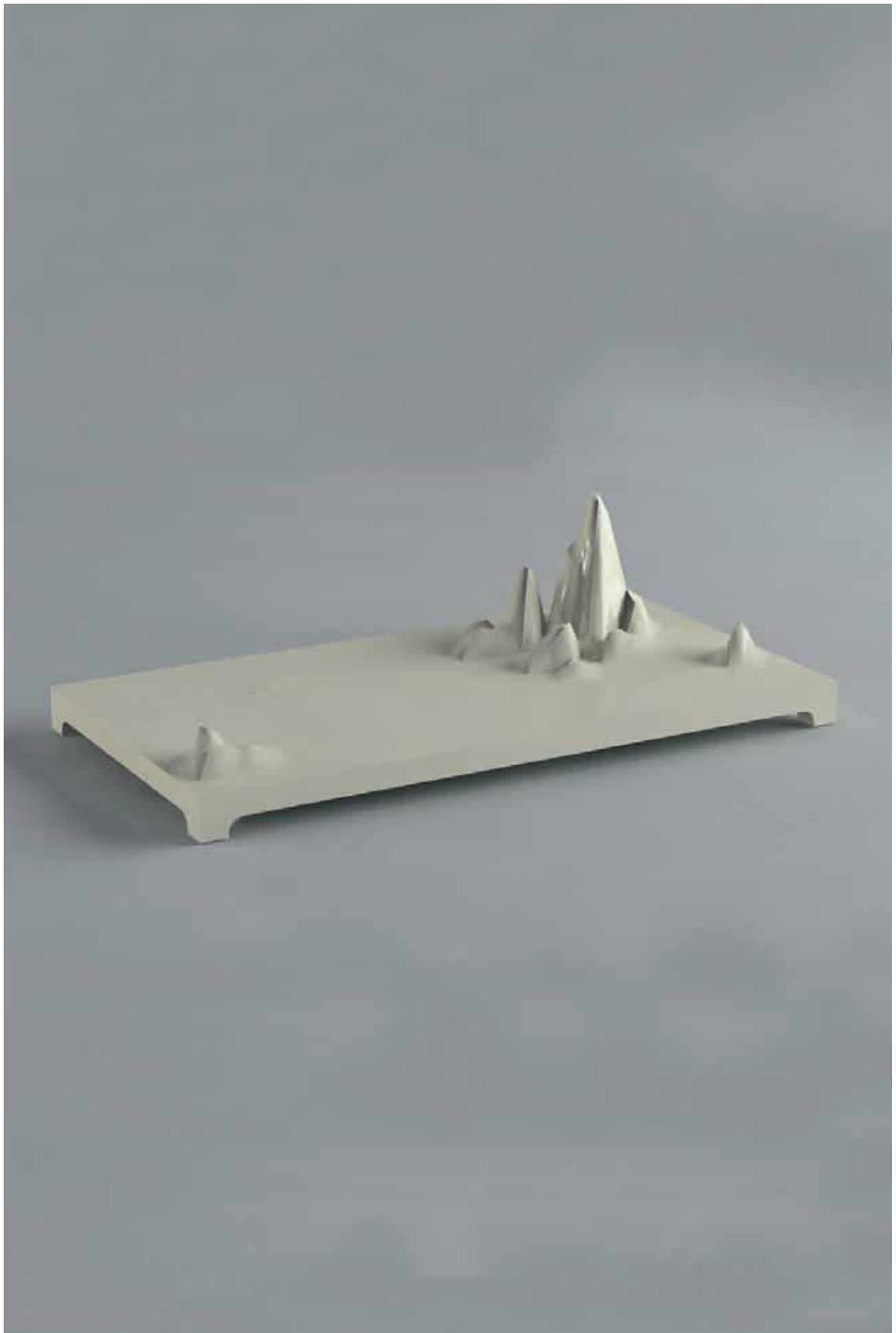
When asked to advise foreign design companies that want to enter the Chinese market, **Zou ZhengFang** (Director, Studio Dumber China, Shanghai) talks about the value of design in Chinese culture: 'An interesting aspect of our work is the scope we are exploring, as our company

operates in different fields: governmental, cultural and business. A lot of offices limit themselves to one field. This approach is not optimal. It is more interesting to combine forces; this creates value.' He later comments that most design agencies are only known in one field of the profession. In order to diversify, and potentially to generate more profit, it is important to work with different types of clients – "inspirational" clients – Zou stresses; as well as to target a niche market.

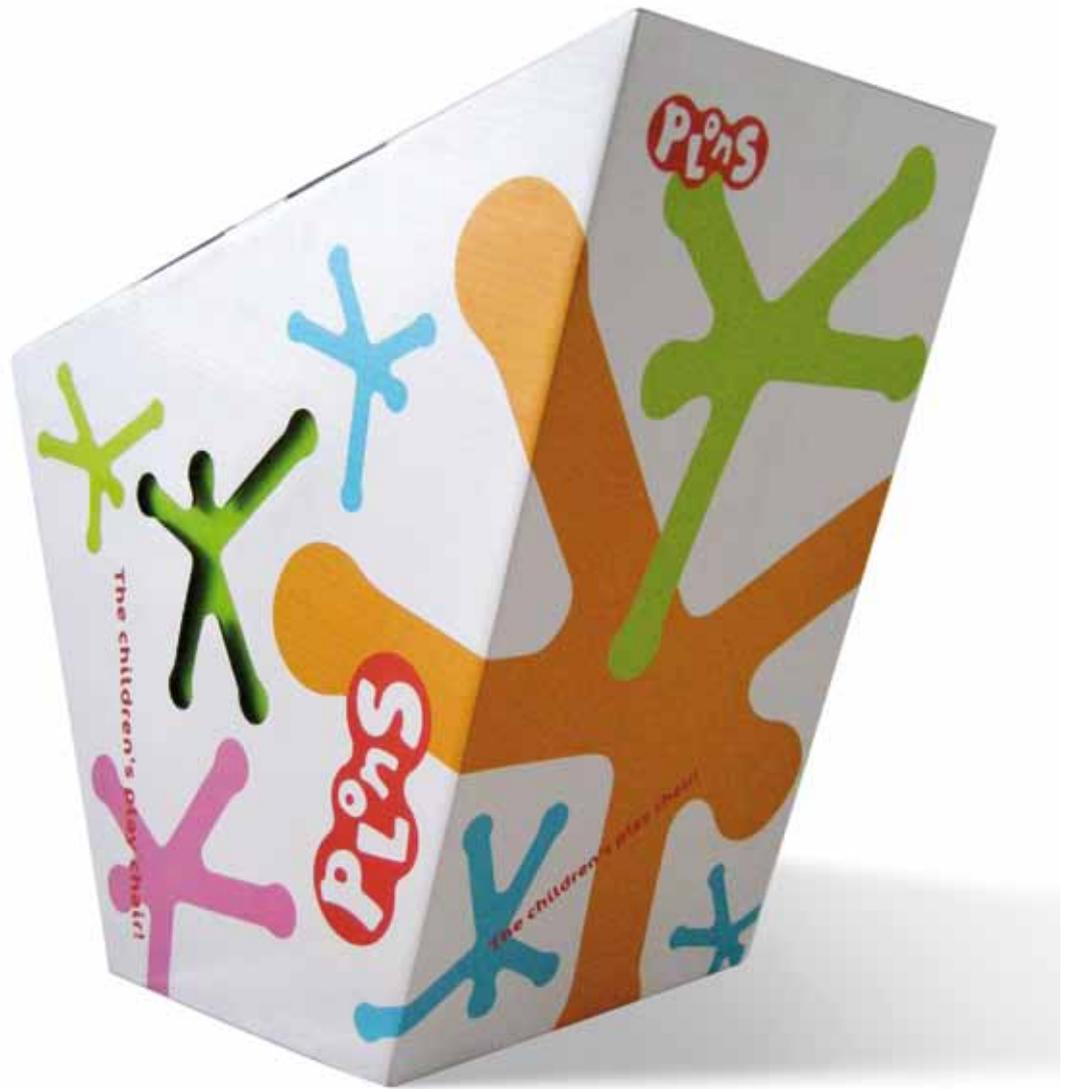
Zou ZhengFang also warns companies not to grow too much: 'If you grow you might lose your identity; it becomes hard to manage. Some big firms start small, become big and lose themselves. There is nothing special about their output. We are looking for niche-markets, for open-minded people that like creative solutions.... So my first advice is not to be driven by impulse; it doesn't always bring success. Countless foreign designers have come to China, and after three days, they felt inspired and thought they could work here! But you need more time to understand the difficulties and complexities. Nowadays I see a different trend: people are in less of a hurry to start up business; they come here, converse – not only about design – and try to understand this society.... Moreover, you need a lot of things besides talent: clients, a context, a good budget and media support.'

Notes

- ¹ LENOVO [desktops and notebook personal computers, workstations, servers, storage drives and IT management software], TCL [multinational electronics company, in 2010 TCL was the world's sixth-largest TV manufacturer], MIDEA [household appliances, now is one of the top 5 biggest manufacturers of the world in the home appliance industry] and HAIER [domestic appliances, refrigerators, air conditioners]
- ² Shenzhen Graphic Designer Association | www.sgda.cc
- ³ 'How should China transform from 'Made in China' into 'Created in China'?' | March 2009 | <http://en.onccc.com/news/10100102/40940.html>
- ⁴ 'Moving China Up the Value Chain' | August 2011 | <http://economix.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/08/04/moving-china-up-the-value-chain/?partner=rssnyt&emc=rss>
- ⁵ 'Frog Design And Design Innovation in China' | April 2011 | www.forbes.com/forbes/2011/0509/technology-frog-design-jan-chipchase-ethnographer-birth-cool.html
- ⁶ BENELUX Chamber of Commerce - BenCham | www.bencham.org
- ⁷ Guangzhou Design Week | www.gzdesignweek.com



HOU ZhengGuang 侯正光 Mooma design / [多少 MoreLess]



Package design for Plons, STUDIO DUMBAR China / ZOU ZhengFang 邹政方

► Market Entries and Intellectual Property Rights

Introduction

The Chinese market is notorious for its risks: insufficient intellectual property protection, the lack of reliable market data and the impact of disruptive technologies. The keys to success are knowing the right people and identifying an effective entry method. China's design industry is comprised of three types of design institutions. First, there are the *state-owned design institutes* and *medium-size design enterprises*, which have a long history of valuable market and consumer experience. Second are the *cooperative design companies*; directed by leading Chinese designers, these companies are joint-ventures with foreign design companies or have been formed through the mergers of small and medium-sized design companies. Third, the *small and medium-sized companies* manage to secure their market share amidst intense competition by cooperating with universities and/or relying on their resources.

In the past few years, the Netherlands has set up an infrastructure in cities such as Shanghai and Guangzhou that act as design business agents for Dutch designers wanting to enter, or gain knowledge about, the Chinese market – its key players, institutes, events and designers.¹

² Both the **Dutch Design Workspace** and the **Dutch Design Desk** are instruments that can help to identify Chinese collaborators, project partners and/or business opportunities.

Market Entry Methods for Foreign Designers

Foreign companies entering the Chinese market take one of the following two forms:

- Registered wholly foreign-owned design companies: these companies take about six months to register and are required to practice independent accounting.

- Through partnership with a Chinese agent/design studio: the foreign company only needs to sign an agency contract with a domestic design company for a period of about two years.³

Difficulties facing foreign design enterprises in the sector might include:

- Design piracy, mostly when the product is being produced on the mainland.
- Miscommunication with Chinese clients, in terms of language, culture or management concepts.
- Lack of solid knowledge on domestic contractual law by clients and representatives. Differences in tax and foreign exchange systems; sector often encounters problems in transaction and operation.

Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)

China sees the protection of intellectual property as crucial for the development of its cultural and creative industries. Nonetheless, the need for clearer standards of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) is widely acknowledged. In China, there are only three IPR-related laws: copyright law, label law and exclusive law. These laws are incomplete, and, along with the development of the design industry and the new problems it generates, they are frequently being updated and/or amended.

Since joining the World Trade Organization in 2001, China has strengthened its legal framework and amended its IPR laws and regulations to comply with the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS). Despite stronger statutory protection, China continues to be a haven for counterfeiters and pirates. According to one copyright

industry association, the piracy rate, over 90%, remains one of the highest in the world.⁴

In 1998, China established the **State Intellectual Property Office** (SIPO)⁵ with the vision that it would 'coordinate China's IP enforcement efforts by merging the patent, trademark and copyright offices under one authority'. However, this aim has yet to be realized. Some provinces and municipalities in China have established IPR organizations to coordinate public awareness campaigns and, to a more limited extent, enforcement. A local IPR office is generally a good source for companies seeking information on local or regional enforcement mechanisms.

Design firms are often discouraged from working in China due to fears that their intellectual property will be appropriated. The **China IPR SME Helpdesk** supports European Union small- and medium-sized enterprises to both protect and enforce their rights in or relating to China.⁶ The Helpdesk is a 'free service providing practical, objective and factual information aimed to help European companies to understand business tools for developing IPR value and managing risk'.

Other agencies, such as the **China Copyright Agency** (CCA) – a British and Irish representative office of the Copyright Protection Centre of China – deal directly with the National Copyright Administration of China (NCAC).⁷ The CCA profiles itself as 'a one-stop-shop for British and other European cultural and creative practitioners for copyright registration, copyright legal services, and arranging partnerships for copyright exchange in China.'

The **Copyright Protection Center of China** (CPCC) is an institution directly under General Administration of Press and Publication / NCAC, set up by the state to provide copyright public services. It plays important roles in enforcing copyright laws, implementing the copyright administrative system, executing the national copyright strategy, developing and improving China's copyright public service system and many other objectives.

The **Intellectual Property Office** (IPO) offers background to European companies keen to enter the Chinese market and develop long-term partnerships in China. It asserts that 'in order to achieve this, they are often willing to transfer their latest technology to Chinese subsidiaries of European firms and joint-venture partners. Such technology transfer may unwillingly result in a loss of competitiveness and market share in the mid- to long term.'⁸

Notes

- ¹ Dutch Design Workspace | www.dutchdesignworkspace.com
- ² Dutch Design Desk | www.dutchdesigndesk.com
- ³ Market Survey Beijing - Creative Industry Development' | by CIRC / EVD / Dutch Embassy in Beijing [June 2008] www.creativeindustry.org.cn/en/ArtShow.asp?BQ_id=29
- ⁴ IPR Toolkit [Embassy of the United States in China] | http://beijing.usembassy-china.org.cn/protecting_ipr.html
- ⁵ State Intellectual Property Office | www.sipo.gov.cn
- ⁶ China IPR SME Helpdesk | www.china-iprhelpdesk.eu
- ⁷ China Copyright Agency | <http://cca.chinacopyright.co.uk>
- ⁸ Intellectual Property Office | www.ipo.gov.uk



RITO communication 朗图创作 / FENG ZhiFeng 冯志锋



SHANG XIA 上下 [PHOTOGRAPHY by Paolo Roversi]

► Platforms

Policy, Networks, Production and Proliferation

Introduction

The heightened professional and social interaction among designers is one of the main characteristics of the transformation from a 'made in China' to a 'created in China' design culture. As investments in the creative industries have risen during the past five years, a huge amount physical space has been created to accommodate foreign companies, galleries, museums, shops and other venues. The next step is the reorganization of the major creative and professional forces in the field through the establishment of associations, platforms, shops or agencies.

'What local designers need most is a commercialized chain; they would find it very difficult to survive without a good selling platform,' says **Hong Huang**, (Chief Executive / Publisher *iLook* magazine, BRAND NEW CHINA (BNC), Beijing).¹ 'I am trying to make Brand New China into a shop that sells original Chinese design with modern Chinese sense.' Located in Beijing's upscale shopping centre, Sanlintun Village, BNC's products are all by Chinese designers, most of whom were born in the 1970s and 1980s.²

During the interviews for this report, several design professionals mentioned the word "platform". A platform is understood as a means to bring together design talent around a communal approach and new creative opportunities. It suggests an ambitious, forward-thinking design philosophy, and is used to explore innovative ideas in creation, production, and distribution of design products in order to further international and local exchanges. From a business viewpoint the rise of the creative and cultural industries in China has stimulated the emergence of SMEs.

For **David Wang** (Deputy Director, Shanghai CREATIVE INDUSTRIES Demonstration & Service Platform, Shanghai), there is a link between this pattern and the need for platforms: 'The trend nowadays is that most of

the creative industries are made by small or mid-size companies and designer brands. In order to survive and grow they need different kinds of platforms, for both commercial and for non-commercial purposes.' Platforms can be formed based on complementary professional aspirations, geography, age groups, or proximity to urban centres and networks. They can also result from a political framework, a design approach, or even a particular selling strategy.

In terms of culture and business, gaining access to a creative platform may prove the best strategy for connecting with professionals in multiple cities and sectors. Beyond academic networks, being part of a professional platform means staying in touch with the day-to-day reality of Chinese design, as well with a wide-ranging view of ongoing creative developments.

Policy Platforms

According to its website, the **Shanghai Creative Industries Demonstration and Service Platform** is a 'public service platform... equipped with the functions of exhibition and demonstration, training, public events, information services, intellectual property protection, and transaction.'³ Its main objectives are the integration of the creative clusters in Shanghai and the organization of events targeting the advance of the industry. It sets up activities, in all design fields, to encourage the development of local brands and to create connections with international agencies. **David Wang** (Deputy Director, Shanghai CREATIVE INDUSTRIES Demonstration & Service Platform, Shanghai) explains that the prevalence of small- or mid-sized companies in the creative industries has caused these platforms to proliferate: 'They need different kinds of platforms, for both commercial and non-commercial purposes. We help them find opportunities. We are trying to push the development of the Chinese creative industry'.

The **Beijing Industrial Design Center (BIDC)**, established in 1995, is committed to 'establishing the "Designed in China" brand on a global scale.⁴ Its strategic priorities include: establishing a design resource cooperation system including government, industry, academia, and research centres; promoting the competitiveness of design enterprises; and furthering the development of the design innovation industry. In 2000, the BIDC organized the first 'Incubator for Design Companies' in China, supporting more than 30 design companies and agencies, and by 2006 it launched the **China Red Star Design Award**, a major design award for industrial design.

For Professor **Tong HuiMing** (Dean / Professor, GAFA School of Industrial Design, Guangzhou) the creation of a platform is closely linked to the development and relationships between the three main cities in the PRD – Guangzhou, Shenzhen and Hong Kong – and events such as the **Guangzhou Design Week**, the **China International Original Design Fair** in Shenzhen and the Hong Kong **Business of Design Week**.^{5,6} **Tong HuiMing** (Dean / Professor, GAFA School of Industrial Design, Guangzhou) sees opportunities to combine the different design weeks held in these cities: 'Why do Hong Kong, Guangzhou and Shenzhen all have design weeks every year? Why not cooperate to create the biggest design platform? We could call it the **South of China Design Week!**'

In the meantime, **Tong HuiMing** (Dean / Professor, GAFA School of Industrial Design, Guangzhou) is working out a new type of platform and physical space – the upcoming **Product Design Center**: 'Through this centre, the government can organize some big design events such as the Canton Industry Design Week, or the Canton Government Design Competition.'

Bi Xuefeng (Art Director & Founder, Bi Xuefeng Graphic Design Consultant co ltd, Shenzhen) is the chairman of **Shenzhen Graphic Designer Association** and explains the association's role as a means to further design knowledge amongst professionals and the public at large: 'The association helps people to better understand what design is, and to improve the design environment. It also aims to cooperate with international agencies so we can take advantage of modern technologies and ideas and share this knowledge with governments and design firms.'⁷

International Platforms and Networks

The **UNESCO Creative Cities Network** includes cities such as Shenzhen (City of Design), Shanghai (City of Design) and Chengdu (City of Gastronomy).^{8,9,10} UNESCO established this network at the end of 2004 to support socioeconomic and cultural development. Shenzhen was designated as an UNESCO City of Design in November 2008; Shanghai's nomination came in February 2010. These cities use the network to promote their local creative scenes, share their experiences with a wider audience, and create new opportunities – especially in collaboration with other member cities – to drive joint development for their creative industries. Clearly, the development of partnerships between public and private sectors is a key feature of the network.

Shenzhen's design industry has a comparatively high marketing level and close connections with other industries, which makes the city a major design-hub and one of the leading developed cities in China. In terms of graphic design, industrial design, interior design, packaging, fashion and architecture, Shenzhen is a leading force in the country.¹¹ Moreover, the city is known for its sophistication in the design of light industrial products, including watches and clocks, medical instruments, telecommunications products, electronics, toys and furniture. In 2009, Shenzhen had more than 6,000 design firms, ranking as the most attractive city for young designers.

David Wang (Deputy Director, Shanghai CREATIVE INDUSTRIES Demonstration & Service Platform, Shanghai) explains the difference between Shenzhen and Shanghai based on its historical development and focus on manufacturing industry: 'Shenzhen is listed as the design city; it is a young city, with many factories nearby, so it is strong in industrial design. But Shanghai is the industrial foundation of the country, with more than 200 years of history. Its strengths are in automobile, biological development, high-tech steel, etc. ...'

In 2010, as part of its application to become a City of Design, Beijing approved a plan to rapidly develop its design industry.¹² The plan states that the capital city will cultivate 50 top national designing enterprises, build three to five cluster regions of the design industry, increase the revenue of design industry to more than 130 billion yuan, and promote the city as a leading design centre in the next three years. Programmes such as the 2011 **Beijing Design Week** and the **Beijing International Design Triennial (BIDT)**, the latter of which aims to become the most influential annual design event in China, were set-up to implement this vision.^{13,14} Attracting up to a half million



PlugZine by JOYN:VISCUM / JIANG Jian 姜剑

Chinese and foreign visitors, the BJDW and BIDT worked to 'highlight the importance of innovation, accelerate the development of local creative industries and ultimately reinforce Beijing's status as the nation's design capital'.¹⁵

Design Shops as Platforms

All of China's platform-oriented design shops can be traced back to Shanghai's **Design Republic**.¹⁶ Founded by **Lyndon Neri & Rossana Hu** (Founders Directors, NHDRO neri & hu design and research office, Shanghai) in 2005, Design Republic opened its Shanghai flagship store on the Bund one year later. The founders' firm, NHDRO – Neri & Hu Design and Research Office – is a multi-disciplinary international architectural design practice based in Shanghai. Their store offers a unique collection of products created by the world's best design talents, many of which had never before been available to consumers in China. Through the shop, boutique exhibitions, an in-house magazine, catalogues, lectures and other activities, Design Republic has aimed to raise design consciousness through the rhetoric of the 'everyday'. It explores the relationships between people and everyday objects. Design Republic also runs a members-only **Join Design Society**, which was created to offer a professional social platform for dedicated designers and special patrons within the architecture/

design community. The society sponsors various activities to facilitate professional exchange and bring design awareness to a wider audience. Exhibitions, book discussions and dialogues with influential designers – past events have involved Tom Dixon, Marcel Wanders, and Ross Lovegrove – are part of its programme.¹⁷

With an appealing international outlook, Design Republic's concept is now being challenged by a series of shops opening in Beijing and Shanghai, aiming to sell a more 'created and designed in China' collection. One example is **Brand New China** (BNC) a 540m² shop showcasing a variety of contemporary Chinese design, from modern brands (NLGX, Plastered T-shirts, mkrt) to high fashion (Vega Zaishi Wang, Uma Wang, Wei Ming Hui, Non Season, He Yan).^{18,19}

In a recent interview called 'As long as the Chinese have spending power, they'll be interested in domestic designers', **Hong Huang** (Chief Executive / Publisher *iLook* magazine, BRAND NEW CHINA (BNC), Beijing) explains the inadequacies Chinese designers might have, hinting at production and quality: 'Since a lot of local designers have their products made in workshops, they lack production experience.²⁰ Some designers weren't up to snuff for BNC, not because of the aesthetic quality of their items but because of production quality.'

Hong Huang (Chief Executive / Publisher *iLook* magazine, BRAND NEW CHINA (BNC), Beijing) sees her store/platform as a place where pioneering designers can bring their work to the public: 'Local designers and brands have been fighting an uphill battle against Western imports, which have long dominated the Chinese market. BNC is a platform for young designers who share our culture – pioneers with their own ideas.'²¹

Almost as a reaction to this analysis, **Nouveau Riche***, a popup store, opened in Beijing's Sanlitun Village in January 2011.²² The store is a collaboration by Shumeng Ye, a Chinese Finnish designer, and a group of her friends from China and abroad, including local brand, TheThing.²³ Nouveau Riche* featured an 'affordable mini-collection of unique items created exclusively for the pop-up and available only for the limited period that the store was open. Products are inspired by local elements of everyday living that are often overlooked and range from clothing and accessories to toys and tea.'

The **Original Design Circle** is a design store set up by **Ma Jia** (Standing Vice-chairman / Planning Director / Curator, BODA- Beijing Original Design Promotion Association, Beijing) in Beijing's Sanlitun Village Orange Building.²⁴ The store features the creations of more than 50 Chinese designers tapped by **Beijing Original Design Promotion Association** (BODA), which was established in late 2008 to promote original designs from both home and abroad, and to unite artistic design talent. **Ma Jia** explains the purpose of this platform: 'Chinese domestic designers, especially those from the 1970s and 1980s generation, are still on their way to success. Most feel confused, so we try to create a model for them, and help them to communicate with international firms. At the same time, we need them to learn more about Chinese traditional culture if their objective is to become renowned international Chinese designers.'

The **Liang Dian Design Center** (LDDC)²⁵, which translates to "Spotlight", is located in the centre of Beijing and advertises itself as 'Beijing's very first center dedicated entirely to design'. It acts as a bridge to connect cultural, creative and philosophical communities to science, business and economy. LDDC was founded by Ms. Ding Ping in 2011 with the mission 'to promote Chinese creativity and design through organising exhibitions, workshops and events, and to generate an increased awareness and appreciation of Chinese design across both local and international audiences'. Further, it aspires to become a platform for different industries to exchange ideas, and a stage for international creative communication.

A People's Platform

Since co-curating the pioneering design exhibition '**Get it Louder!**', **Jiang Jian** (Partner & Creative Director, JOYN:VISCUM, Beijing) has been exploring visual communication through creative, local and international collaborations: 'With the economic boom in China, everybody is busy with several projects at the same time. We don't limit ourselves. I want to develop a platform – a new hybrid design communication agency in China. Our company is half commercial, half creative design.' In the past, he has worked for big international and commercial clients such as Nike and Mercedes-Benz, but has also developed independent artistic and creative publications for the younger generation: 'This platform gathers young creative minds, bringing their resources to clients. I want to push the youth culture in China; I travel to a lot of countries and can feel the energy and passion among young people, in China even when economical development goes fast. The creatives should catch up with that.'

In Shanghai, **Liu Yi** (Partner / Visual Design Director, SPARDEC Brand Consulting, Shanghai) is creating a platform for designers in all fields through exhibitions and publications such as *Design Power of Shanghai*.²⁶ For him, a platform is a means to gather domestic resources and present these as a package to a client. **Liu Yi** explains the idea of collecting, communicating and stimulating awareness of design: 'In China, there is little communication among designers and design disciplines. Therefore we created an exhibition with the work of 20 top local designers in eight fields, including interior, architecture, fashion, production, package, graphic, cartoon and web.'²⁷

Notes

- 1 'Hong Huang Opens Upscale Made-In-China Boutique, 'Brand New China' | August 2010 | www.jingdaily.com/en/luxury/hung-huang-opens-upscale-made-in-china-boutique-brand-new-china-bnc
- 2 'Putting the Chinese in 'Made in China' | November 2010 | BNC logo designed by Liu Zhizhi [former co director of MEWE Design Alliance] www.nytimes.com/2010/11/15/arts/15iht-design15.html
- 3 Shanghai Creative Industries Demonstration and Service Platform | www.creativecity.sh.cn
- 4 Beijing Industrial Design Center | www.bidcchina.com | www.icsid.org/members/listing/member_list150.htm
- 5 Guangzhou Design Week | www.gzdesignweek.com
- 6 China Shenzhen International Original Design Fair (IODF) | www.iodfcn.com
- 7 Shenzhen Graphic Designer Association | www.sgda.cc
- 8 Shanghai - UNESCO City of Design | www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/creativity/creative-industries/creative-cities-network/design/shenzhen
- 9 Shenzhen - UNESCO City of Design | www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/creativity/creative-industries/creative-cities-network/design/shanghai
- 10 Chengdu - UNESCO City of Gastronomy | www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/creativity/creative-industries/creative-cities-network/gastronomy/chengdu
- 11 China Packaging Design Network | www.chndesign.com
- 12 'Beijing aspires to be "World's Design Capital" | June 2010 | <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90001/90782/90872/7012111.html>
- 13 Beijing Design Week | www.bjdw.org
- 14 Beijing International Design Triennial | <http://en.bidt.org>
- 15 '2011 Beijing Design Week & the First Beijing International Design Triennial Come on Stage Today' | September 2011 | www.tinyurl.com/cafa-art-news-110926
- 16 Design Republic | www.thedesignrepublic.com
- 17 'DFA Best Design from Greater China 2007 - 'Design Republic' Flagship Store' | www.dfaaward.com/2011/lib/pdf/winners/2007/Design%20Republic%20Flagship.pdf
- 18 'The Godmother of Chinese Designers' | August 2010 | http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703960004575426852614702026.html?mod=googlenews_wsj
- 19 'Interview with Plastered T-Shirts' Dominic Johnson-Hill' | April 2011 | www.maosuit.com/interviews/interview-with-plastered-t-shirts-dominic-johnson-hill
- 20 'Hong Huang: 'As Long As The Chinese Have Spending Power, They'll Be Interested in Domestic Designers'' | December 2010 | <http://tinyurl.com/jingdaily-com-hong-huang>
- 21 'Tag: Brand New China' - JingDaily | www.jingdaily.com/en/tag/brand-new-china
- 22 Nouveau Riche* | www.nr-shop.com
- 23 Shumeng Ye | <http://shumengye.com>
- 24 'Spotlight on new creations: Workshop at The Village showcases original Chinese designs' | October 2009 | www.beijingtoday.com.cn/shopping/spotlight-on-new-creations-workshop-at-the-village-showcases-original-chinese-designs/4
- 25 Liang Dian Design Center (LDDC) | www.lddc.com.cn
- 26 SPARDEC | design power of Shanghai | www.spardec.com/news.asp?action=news&id=29
- 27 VISION China | www.visionchina.cn or www.youthvision.cn or www.visionunion.com



BODA- Beijing Original Design Promotion Association



Shanghai Designer' Club

上海工社设计师组织

Carl Liu 刘昊



设计说明
该椅子设计旨在提供一种既舒适又具有现代感的坐具。它采用了人体工学原理，结合轻质材料，确保长时间使用仍能保持舒适。红色的椅面与黑色的框架形成鲜明对比，赋予其强烈的视觉冲击力。椅子的结构简洁而有力，体现了工业设计的精髓。



Shanghai Designer' Club

上海工社设计师机构

Song Fei He 何飞



设计说明
这两款手机设计体现了对便携性和功能性的追求。它们采用了超薄机身设计，方便携带。屏幕清晰，操作流畅。此外，还特别注重了手机的耐用性和防水性能，使其在各种环境下都能正常使用。整体设计简洁大方，符合现代人的审美需求。



Shanghai Designer' Club

上海工社设计师机构

Ryan Wang 王恩



设计说明
这款灯具设计旨在为现代家居提供柔和而均匀的照明。它采用了先进的LED光源，节能环保。独特的造型设计使其成为家居装饰的亮点。无论是安装在客厅还是卧室，都能营造出温馨舒适的氛围。其简洁的线条和材质选择，完美地融合了功能性与艺术性。

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► Design Weeks, Awards, Fairs and Points of Entry

A Booming Business

Introduction

During the past decade, the value of and awareness of Chinese design has been intensely promoted through a culture of design awards. These awards are a stimulus and a means for brands and design firms to access and bridge local and international markets. Nonetheless, the designers interviewed express a fatigue with this culture of acclaim and its overload of award-winning products. Reasons are manifold: sheer saturation, doubts about the motives of the organizers, and concern regarding the selection and application procedures. While recognition reinforces brands' self-promotion, the question remains as to whether awards support the development of creative and critical products, or are merely intended as marketing tools.

Amongst designers, the critique is related to the abundance of products to judge, the many ceremonies to attend, and the lack of quality. 'On the mainland, the awards are not intended to recognize excellent pieces of work,' says **Zou ZhengFang** (Director, Studio Dumbbar China, Shanghai). Commercial objectives, doubts about the selection criteria and uncertainty about international value of these awards contribute to a culture of celebratory confusion. On the other hand, it can be argued that these awards are an effective way to access new developments, and to stay up-to-date with new evolution and products.

A wide array of design products is awarded each year. For example, winners of the **China Red Star Design Award 2011** edition include products such as: an air-conditioner with a frameless design; a high-efficiency heat dissipation subsystem; sports shoes with three separate interlocked parts; a bullet-train; and a pressure cooker with single-hand-operated-cover.^{1,2}

Dutch companies and designers in China have been fairly successful in gaining recognition.³ In 2011, Philips Design received 31 **iF design awards** and significant recognition of Philips' product, material and packaging design.⁴ The jury of China's Most Successful Design Awards 2011 honoured Philips with nine awards for its successful designs for the Chinese market.⁵ Philips also won 17 Red Dot Design Awards for product designs in that year.⁶ In 2011, two Dutch design firm were honoured with China's Most Successful Design Awards: NorthernLight, a specialist in exhibition and museum design, and Studio Roosegaarde with Dune, an interactive public art piece that reacts to human motion.^{7,8} Both design studios are Dutch Design Workspace participants.

Overview

The **China Red Star Design Award** demonstrates the increase in the number of companies entering submissions for design awards. Initiated in 2006, this prize aims to help build a creative country, promote the development of its design industry, encourage independent innovation, enhance the international competitiveness of products, improve the living standards of Chinese people and propel the internationalization of Chinese design. Its Committee is comprised of the **China Industrial Design Association, Beijing Industrial Design Center** and *New Economy Weekly*.^{9,10} Since the first prize was awarded, the selected enterprises and products have increased five times and 12 times, respectively. By 2010, no less than 5,132 products from 1,072 applicant enterprises were included in the selection procedure; the latter represented 14 countries as well as 26 provinces, cities and regions of China. This growth in



zitype workshop 字态工作室 / [Imagine Wong] 黄立光 HUANG LiGuang

interest also has influenced the types of companies that participate; today more global brands take part. During the three-months prior to the award ceremony, **Red Star** holds travelling exhibitions showcasing award-winning products from previous years. The awarded items are exhibited beyond the common triangle of Beijing, Shanghai, PRD, as the show also tours Nanjing, Tianjin, Chengdu, Wuhan, Xi'an and Hangzhou.

By 2003, the International Forum Design launched the **iF design award** China to recognize good design combined with entrepreneurial courage, economic thinking and a responsible attitude.¹¹ The iF design award invites all manufacturers, designers and architects from Greater China (or with branch offices) to submit their products. Moreover the 2010 iF design award 'Best 9', with participants from over 40 countries, serves as a tool to highlight good design developed by local universities. Work by students at the **Zhejiang University** Department of Industrial Design won four seats of the nine with 'Transformable Mat', 'Bamboo O-pen', 'Acid-Umbrella' and 'UTape'.¹² Zhejiang University has won most iF awards in China, earning it third place in the global ranking.¹³

Hosted by the Hunan government, the **Lotus Prize International Industrial Design & Innovation Competition** also aims to promote industrial design development; to enhance the innovative ability of new industrialized processes; and to bind the abilities of culture and tourism, as well the information, entertainment and communication industry.^{14,15} Eligibility is based on criteria including innovation, practicality, economical efficiency and environmental conservation. Following the prize's inaugural edition in 2009, the 2010 edition was themed with 'Wise life, harmonious innovation', with the competition divided into an open group and an enterprise group.

Established in 2006, **Guangzhou Design Week** is an annual international event that promotes independent innovation and original design.¹⁶ Awards include the **KAPOK Prize**, co-sponsored by the China Industry Design Association, an annual inventory of 'Design in China'. In the past five years it has attracted over 3,000 entries from more than 30 cities and regions including Hong Kong, Macao and Chinese Taiwan. The 2011 KAPOK public award was themed 'Happiness Design'. The **Jintang Prize** China low-carbon life design award





SHANG XIA 上下 [PHOTOGRAPHY by Paolo Roversi]

aims to promote low-carbon lifestyle to a wider audience, while the Jintang Prize China interior design award is jointly organized by real estate developers and well-known interior design media. The 2011 prize held its opening ceremony in Beijing.

China's Most Successful Design Awards, organized by Shanghai Industrial Design Association (SIDA) and Shanghai Creative Industry Center, honours top international designers and enterprises for their most successful designs for the domestic market.^{17,18,19} Judges evaluate designs based on an overall examination, from their conception through their commercial outcome.

The **Dongguan Cup International Industrial Design Awards** is organized under the auspices of Dongguan Municipality, China Industrial Design Association, the China Patent Protection Association and Guangdong University of Technology.²⁰ Held annually, it debuted in 2005. The 2009 call for entries for this Icsid-endorsed event brought in 2,214 submissions.²¹

Graphic Design in China (GDC) is the first global comprehensive design competition in China, held every two years.²² Founded in 1992 by the Shenzhen Graphic Design Association (SDGA), GDC aims to become the most influential and comprehensive Design Biennale in Asia-Pacific Region.²³ It includes competitions, forums, lectures, an awards ceremony and a series of exhibitions. Competition categories cover graphic, advertising, interactive, product, environmental and hybrid design.

Inaugurated in 1999 in Ningbo, a seaport city in the northeast of Zhejiang province, the **International Poster Biennial (IGDB)** has become one of the symbols of China's international graphic design. The sixth, and most recent edition, IGDB6 2010, themed 'Critical Graphic Design', was organized by Ningbo Museum of Art and **Ningbo Graphic Designers Association (NGDA)**. The Biennial now focusses on cross-media and inter-related disciplines.^{24,25}

Held yearly by the **Hong Kong Design Centre (HKDC)**, the **Design for Asia Award (DFA)** is considered one of the most important design programmes in the Asia Pacific.^{26,27} Other HKDC prizes include the **Design For Asia Student Award** showcasing 'Asia's Design Future – for students who understand that creative and cross-disciplinary collaboration are essential to innovation'. In its 2011 edition, HKDC awarded DFA prizes to 10 designs that represent significant contributions to sustainability in Asia.²⁸

Critique on Awards and Prizes

The design award trend in China shows no signs of slowing down. As design awareness increases in second- and third-tier cities, more and more local governments, companies and media will turn to design weeks, forums and prizes to position themselves in the design market.

Liu Lidan (Creative Director CEO, XL+DESIGN, Shanghai) has witnessed a sudden inflation of the reputation of awards: 'The design awards are not as important as they were five years ago. An award no longer means "you're great"; these days, it only means "you're okay".' **Lv YongZhong** (Founder / Chairman & Design Director, BANMOO / VEP Design, Shanghai) is concerned about this devaluation of design prizes. As a jury member for the iF design award China, he questions its value: 'Nearly half of the 300 entries got a prize. Its value is purely commercial; companies promote sales by labelling their products as iF-China prize-winners. Fewer designers care about Chinese awards; international prizes have more value.'

Zou ZhengFang (Director, Studio Dumber China, Shanghai) confirms that Chinese design awards are losing their reputation in comparison to more critical Asian initiatives: 'We have to differentiate between two types of awards. The first, Chinese awards, are losing their value. The second category is that of Asia – Japan, Hong Kong, Korea, Taiwan and Singapore. These awards are still competitive. The criteria for selecting the jury determines the quality of the award. In Hong Kong there is an international standard.'

The proliferation of awards also changes relationships among creative designers, clients and consumers. **Tom Shi** (Director / Founder, Tom Shi Design and Research Studio, Guangzhou) describes how awards have become part of the brand communication process: 'You can see it in any shopping mall: products are tagged with iF and Red Dot stickers. Some of our clients demand that we design products that can apply for Red Dot. But how many people buy these products because of the award label?'

Design Weeks

Design weeks are excellent opportunities for individual designers, design firms and national cultural industries to show their work in the form of exhibitions, lectures, and networking events aimed at both domestic and international audiences. With growing interest in the creative industries in China, design weeks have risen to prominence in each of the major cities – Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Hong Kong. Most focus on a single topic, targeting avant-garde and independent designers.



LIU Feng 刘峰 / FUN+ LIVING / PEP Art+Design

Beijing Design Week

Beijing Design Week is a relatively new, but high-profile event. The first, modest edition took place in October 2009 in tandem with the ICOGRADA World Design Congress 2009 Beijing.²⁹ It was co-organized by CAFA, National Center for the Performing Arts, BIAD, and Beijing Gehua Cultural Development. In 2011, a much larger edition of **Beijing Design Week** and the **1st Beijing International Design Triennial** were held from 26 September through 3 October. Over 130 activities were launched, with more than 30 international events and over 90 Chinese exhibitions. The Netherlands presented 'Smart Cities, Healthy Cities', three floors of exhibitions, lectures and seminars in the 'Dutch Design Generator' in the 751 area.

www.bjdw.org/en

Shanghai International Creative Industry Week

Considered one of the highlights of the domestic and international creative scenes, this annual event is organized by the **Shanghai Creative Industry Centre**.³⁰ Since its first edition in 2005, SICIW has become the premier location for exhibition and exchange in the field of design, architecture and fashion. With a huge opening party, themed exhibitions, and an international forum, the event has attracted visitors from more than 30 countries. It is now regarded as one of the most international and professionally oriented exhibitions in creative industry.³¹

Guangzhou Design Week Established in 2006 and organized by Guangzhou Municipal People's Government, GZDW is an annual international event for promoting innovation and design. It has become the most influential and popular promotional event in the Chinese design industry. Its programme include four major activities: Design & Brands Fair, the International Industrial Design Expo, The Design Tour, and the Design Week Awards. The theme of GZDW 2011 was 'Design is Value'.

www.gzdesignweek.com

www.siciw.com

www.kreativechina.com

Business of Design Week, Hong Kong Business of Design Week (BODW) is Asia's leading design event on innovation, design and branding, attracting the leading figures of the global design world to Hong Kong. More than 50,000 participants and over 100 of the world's most iconic designers, business leaders and educators attend BODW to share their success stories, exchange ideas, and network. The goal of BODW is to encourage businesses focus on the vital relationship between design and commerce.

www.bodw.com

Dragon Design Festival (DDF)

Held yearly since 2005, DDF is a gathering of world designers, experts and enterprises for exchange and cooperation. It is hosted jointly by Dalian People's Government and the **Dragon Design Foundation**, a non-profit group that helps aid development of science and technology in China.³² Dragon Design Festival spans various provinces in and recognizes the 'Top Ten Chinese Designers'.³³

www.ddfchina.com/

Design Organizations

On an institutional level, a diverse set of organizations represents designers of all stamps. The following listing provides an overview of relevant Chinese design organizations and related networks.

China Industrial Design Association (CIDA) was authorized by the State Council of the People's Republic of China and registered in the Ministry of Civil Affairs in 1979. It is a national academic and non-profit organization for the industrial design profession in China. CIDA's objective is to unite enterprises, organizations and professionals in the design profession to support the development of industrial design in China; to improve market competitiveness of enterprises and products; and to enhance economic development and social progress.

www.chinadesign.cn/ CIDA

Shenzhen Industrial Design Profession Association

(SZIDA) SZIDA is a non-profit social corporation, established in 2007 by and group of international brand manufacturers and industrial design firms. SZIDA is dedicated to 'leading the local design industry to the world'. It aims to integrate resources in the design industry to strengthen its relationship to industrial manufacturing. In 2011, SZIDA led a delegation of 50 representatives from the fields of design, innovation, art, culture and branding promotion to join **Shenzhen-Hong Kong Cultural Creative Forum**.³⁴ It also led a delegation of 20 companies to attend the **100% Design** exhibition in London. It was the first time for Shenzhen design to show in an international design driven stage.³⁵

www.szida.org

Beijing Industrial Design Center (BIDC)

Established in 1995, BIDC promotes the development of the cultural and creative industries by highlighting design. It is set-up to improve independent innovation. BIDC's main responsibilities include: researching design industry policies; realizing plans of the design industry; organizing

design projects; consulting; communicating design industry information; developing international design cooperation. It supports design enterprises by organizing design forums, exhibitions, training, as well as the **China Red Star Design Award**.³⁶

www.bidcchina.com

International Design Association (IDA) is an international non-profit organization boasting the world's most powerful and representative design groups and individuals. IDA covers a wide range of design disciplines such as architecture, interior design, industrial design, landscape design, vision design, animation design, costume & image design and jewelry design. IDA is committed to setting up an international platform for design industries; organizing international summits and technical exchange seminars; researching, developing, and releasing new products; stimulating cross-border cooperations; and promoting interactive marketing of international brands. By means of organizing international academic conferences and forums, design exhibitions, and overseas study tours, IDA can support the development design art and culture worldwide. It has branches in Hong Kong, Shenzhen, Shandong, Beijing (the future central office), and plans to open a branch in Shanghai.

www.ida.hk

Canton Fair Product Design and Trade Promotion Center (PDC) was set up to meet the demands of Chinese enterprises. It is part of the China Foreign Trade Centre, an organization affiliated with China's Ministry of Commerce. Based on the partnership network developed by Canton Fair in past decades, PDC deals with overseas design promotion, design associations, famous design firms and independent designers. PDC creates a direct and efficient platform for communication and cooperation between Chinese enterprises and overseas designers by organizing activities such as design shows and forums, matchmaking, competitions, publications, training, etc. PDC will continue to develop its membership among Chinese enterprises and overseas designers.

<http://pdc.cantonfair.org.cn/en/index.aspx>

Shanghai Creative Industries Demonstration and Service Platform

The Shanghai Creative Industries Demonstration and Service Platform is a public service organization established in 2009 under the guidance of **Shanghai Municipal Commission of Economy and Informatization**. It supports exhibitions and demonstrations, public events, training, information

services, international cooperation and exchange. It also provides public services for the creative industry clustering parks, related creative enterprises, designers, government departments, institutions and individuals who are interested in the creative industries.

www.creativecity.sh.cn

China Professional Design Committee of CCPIT The **China Council for the Promotion of International Trade** is a governmental trade body founded in 1952. In addition to publishing design books, it organizes the **China International Design & Art Fair**, the **China International Creative Design Week**, the **Designnova Awards**.^{37,38} CCPIT Design is composed of architectural designers, decorative design companies, institutions, universities and colleges, public organizations and individuals.

www.ccpit.org.cn

Fairs

The website of the **Messe Frankfurt in China** is a crucial resource for design professionals where exhibitors, visitors, and media can find complete information on fairs in Hong Kong, China, Taiwan, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam, as well as links to events in other parts of the world.³⁹ A subsidiary of one of Europe's oldest and largest trade fair organizers, it focusses on the core industry sectors of automotive technology, building technology and lighting, consumer goods, textiles, and communications and leisure.

Below is a selection of recent design-related fairs on the mainland:

China Import and Export Fair (Canton Fair)

Held biannually in Guangzhou every spring and autumn, Canton is China's oldest fair, dating back to 1957. It has the largest scale, the most diverse exhibits, the broadest distribution of overseas buyers and the greatest business turnover in China. Its venue, the China Import and Export Complex at Pazhou Island, is a huge complex featuring three separate buildings spanning over one million square meters.⁴⁰ Fair sections include: 1) Electronics and Household Electrical Appliances, Hardware & Tools, Machinery, Vehicles and Spare Parts, Building Materials, Lighting Equipment, Chemical Products. 2) Consumer Goods, Gifts, Home Decorations. 3) Textiles and Garments; Shoes; Office Supplies, Cases and Bags, Recreation Products; Medicines, Medical Devices, Health Products; Food.

www.cantonfair.org.cn

China International Furniture Fair Guangzhou (CIFF)

Organized by China Foreign Trade Centre, CIFF will hold its 26th edition in 2012. The 2011 fair occupied an area of 540,000m² and hosted 3,132 domestic and overseas exhibitors while gathering 153,503 buyers – making it Asia's largest furniture sourcing centre. CIFF2012 will be held at China Import & Export Fair Pazhou Complex with 620,000m².

www.ciff-gz.com

Guangzhou International Die and Mold Exhibition (ASIAMOLD)

ASIAMOLD is an exhibition for tool- and mold-making, injection molding and rapid product development. In 2011, of roughly 15,000 fair visitors, 12% came from abroad. The exhibition area covers two halls with a total area of 20,000m² and presents the entire process chain from design to prototyping to series production.

www.asiamold-china.com

International Original Design Fair, Shenzhen (IODF)

In 2011, IODF held its 4th edition, with sections for creative products, fresh brands, dynamic design, etc. It held a series of seminars and forums, such as the **China-ASEN Youth Innovation Competition** Final in 'Business Practice', 'Product Design', and 'Market Planning'. It also hosted the Awards Ceremony of 2010 **Shenzhen Creative and Design Competition**, and the **Window of China Design Series**, master lecture.

www.iodfcn.com

Shanghai International Nonwovens Exhibition (SINCE)

The fair for technical textiles and advanced materials is held every two years and targets manufacturers, suppliers and end-users of tech-textiles and nonwoven materials. Currently China is the world's largest non-woven materials production base and consumer market. In 2009, over 350 companies from 25 countries and regions participated. Total trade visitors reached 14,000 (including 3,000 overseas visitors). **Global Nonwovens Industrial Summit** (GNS), held in conjunction with the exhibition, included products and technological innovation special reports.

www.since11.com

World Industrial Design Fair, Ningbo (WIDfair)

Also known as the **Ningbo International Industry Design Fair**, WIDfair is held at Ningbo International Convention and Exhibition Centre and features household appliances, IT electronics, telecommunications and digital products from 26 industries. Exhibitions cover product, graphic, and interior design. In 2010 participants included universities, design organizations, companies and interior designers from 50 countries.

www.widfair.com

China Yiwu Stationery and Arts Trade Fair (SSOFair)

Yiwu Cultural Products Trade Fair is the world's largest small items market. It fills seven exhibition halls and 1,500 booths, accommodating more than 5,600 foreign participants from 118 countries. Products range from stationery and cultural office supplies, sports and recreation products, handicrafts and arts, to curios and collections, and original design and products.

www.ssofair.com/en/about

China Wuxi International Industrial Design Expo (CIID)

With 11 successful editions, CIID is one of the largest-scale and highest-level industrial design events promoting the development of Chinese creative design industry. Since 2006, the Expo has worked closely with CCTV to forge a large-scale platform for innovation and design in the Wuxi region.⁴¹ In 2007, it hosted a China-UK Creative Industries Forum.⁴² Alongside the expo, a summit and investment fair takes place every year.

<http://en.wuxi.gov.cn/sitePages/>

[subPages/1300350001336072.html?sourceChannelId=23361&did=337645](http://en.wuxi.gov.cn/sitePages/subPages/1300350001336072.html?sourceChannelId=23361&did=337645)



Shenzhen Artop Industrial Design co ltd 深圳浪尖设计

Dutch-Chinese Points of Entry

The Shanghai **Dutch Design Workspace** (DDWS) helps Dutch creative industry companies to succeed in China. Enterprises working within the fields of design, fashion and architecture are offered support through the Incubator Programme as they take their first steps in this challenging new environment. The programme assists participants with issues such as local marketing and promotion, communication with the Chinese government, relationship management, and practical tasks like company registration. The DDWS accommodates participants such as MVRDV, KCAP Architects & Planners, Studio Roosegaarde, NorthernLight and many other design and architecture firms. In addition, its programme welcomes Chinese designers who are interested in developing a closer relationship with the Netherlands. In 2011, the DDWS published the **Dutch Design in China Yearbook**⁴³ providing an overview of Dutch design agencies with a permanent base or completed projects in China. More than 40 different designs and recent Chinese projects are documented in this first edition.⁴⁴

www.dutchdesignworkspace.com

The **Dutch Design Desk** operating from Hong Kong is a service desk for Dutch designers who wish to start or expand their businesses in the south of China – Pearl River Delta, Macau and Hong Kong. The Desk provides market insight, matchmaking services, and general support to design professionals that wish to enter the Chinese market.⁴⁵

www.dutchdesigndesk.com

The **Benelux Chamber of Commerce in China** (BenCham) was initiated in 2001, when the Dutch Business Association and the Belgian-Luxembourg Business Association merged.⁴⁶ It represents the interests of Benelux companies and professionals and provides an experienced network of China-based executives. Currently operating from Beijing, Shanghai and the PRD-Guangzhou, BenCham's members include leading Benelux companies in China, as well as many non-Benelux companies – from SMEs to large enterprises, from factories to sourcing companies and service providers, from starters to long-time China-based entrepreneurs. BenCham provides focussed exposure by organizing content-driven seminars and conferences, social gatherings and cultural activities.

www.bencham.org

Notes

- 1 China Red Star Design Award | <http://en.redstaraward.org>
- 2 icsid - Red Star Design Award gallery | www.icsid.org/feature/galleria/galleria512.htm
- 3 Philips Design | www.design.philips.com/about/design/imagebank/index.page
- 4 iF design awards | www.ifdesign.de/awards_index_e
- 5 China's Most Successful Design Awards | www.designsuccess.cn
- 6 Red Dot Design Award | www.red-dot.de en <http://en.red-dot.org>
- 7 NorthernLight | www.northernlight.nl/chinese-close-collaboration
- 8 Studio Roosegaarde | www.studio Roosegaarde.net/stories/shanghai
- 9 China Industrial Design Association | www.chinadesign.cn
- 10 Beijing Industrial Design Center | www.bidcchina.com
www.icsid.org/members/listing/member_list150.htm
- 11 iF design award china 2011 | 100715 | www.studentcompetitions.com/competitions/if-design-award-china-2011
- 12 'Design Works Developed by Students at Department of Industrial Design Won Germany iF Material Awards' | March 2010 | www.zju.edu.cn/english/redir.php?catalog_id=267977&object_id=1023202
- 13 'iF Ranking University' | May 2011 | www.ifdesign.de/talents_universities_e
- 14 LotusPrize | www.lotusprize.com
- 15 'LotusPrize International Industrial Design and Innovation Competition' | 100901-101220 | www.icsid.org/events/events/calendar658.htm
- 16 'icsid - Guanzhou Design Week' | www.icsid.org/events/events/calendar790.htm
www.gzdesignweek.com
- 17 China's Most Successful Design Awards | www.designsuccess.cn/en/index.aspx
- 18 Shanghai Industrial Design Association | www.sida.org.cn
- 19 Shanghai Creative Industry Center | www.scic.gov.cn [CN only]
- 20 Dongguan Cup International Industrial Design Awards | www.dgawards.com
- 21 icsid - 2009 Dongguan Cup International Industrial Design Awards | www.icsid.org/events/events/calendar459.htm
- 22 GDC Awards | www.sgda.cc/gdc
- 23 SDGA - Shenzhen Graphic Design Association | www.sgda.cc
- 24 'IGDB6 International Graphic Design Biennial, Ningbo 2010' | 30 December 2010 - 16 January 2011 | www.igdb-ningbo.com/igdb6/en
- 25 'IGBD5 Call for Entries : Ningbo International Poster Biennial 2008' | August 28, 2008 | <http://en.visionunion.com/2008/08/28/ningbo-international-poster-biennial.html>
- 26 Hong Kong Design Centre | www.hkdesigncentre.org
- 27 HKDC Design for Asia Award & HKDC Design for Asia Student Award | www.dfaaward.com & www.dfaaward.com/student/pages_en/index
- 28 HKDC design for asia award ceremony | 9 December 2011
www.designboom.com/weblog/cat/8/view/18066/hkdc-design-for-asia-award-ceremony.html
- 29 ICOGRADA World Design Congress 2009 - Beijing Programme Review | November 2009 | www.beijing2009.org/index-eng.htm
- 30 Shanghai Creative Industry Centre | www.021ci.com
www.021ci.com/others/special_2008_siciw_eng1.htm
- 31 2009 Shanghai International Creative Industry Week | www.siciw.com
- 32 Dragon Design Foundation [aka China Guanghua Science & Technology Foundation (GHF) or Beijing Guanghua Design Development Foundation 北京光华设计发展基金会] | www.ddfdf.org
- 33 'Chartered Society of Designers (CSD) develops membership in China' | July 2011 | www.csd.org.uk/news.aspx?id=68
- 34 'The second SZ-HK Cultural Creative Forum' | www.szida.org/a/news/2011/0916/1344.html
- 35 'The 100% design exhibition in London' | October 2011 | www.szida.org/a/news/2011/1009/1409.html
- 36 Beijing Industrial Design Center (BIDC) | www.bidcchina.com
www.icsid.org/members/listing/member_list150.htm
- 37 China International Design & Art Fair | www.eduid.com
- 38 DesignNova Awards | www.designnova.org/en/award
- 39 Messe Frankfurt in China | www.messefrankfurt.com.hk
- 40 Canton Fair 2010 | <http://welcometochina.com.au/back-to-guangzhou-for-the-canton-fair-659.html>
- 41 'CIID 2007 Event archive - British European Design Group Pavilion' | November 2011 | www.bedg.org/event-archive.html?month=200711
- 42 'Wuxi International Industrial Design Expo' | August 2007 | www.designer.com/news/11698#ixzz1ignaVsnu
- 43 Dutch Design in China Yearbook | www.dutchdesigninchina.com
- 44 Dutch Design Workspace | www.dutchdesignworkspace.com
- 45 Dutch Design Desk | www.dutchdesigndesk.com
- 46 BenCham: Stronger together | <http://enterprisechina.net/node/388>



LV YongZhong 吕永中 / BANMOO 半木



PAN JianFeng 潘剑锋 / SHTYPE 字研所



► Conclusion

Summarizing the Design in China Mapping Report

The interviews with Chinese design professionals and research for this report generated insight into the shifting agenda of design in China on three levels: policy, production and professionalism. On the policy level there is an ambition to turn the cultural industries into a pillar industry for the Chinese economy in the coming five years. The objective is for the cultural industries to grow to at least 5% of China's GDP by 2015. This ambition in turn influences the need to find new domestic markets in China's second and third tier cities. Second, on the production level, there is the challenge of a new generation of producers and consumers, the ambition to invest in overseas markets and expansion and to create innovative creative chains by bringing research, design and manufacturing closer together. Third, there is the professional level, where one can observe investments in new types of universities and design colleges, the ambition to put branding high on the agenda and finally the emergence of different types of platforms that can bring producers, professionals and policy-makers together.

This report suggests that future collaborations between Dutch and Chinese design professionals can make a difference, both on a small and large scale, in China and in the Netherlands. Such programmes can influence the way the Netherlands positions or re-positions itself – in terms of production, discourse, education – as an active force in the international design world.

The promotion of Dutch design is well underway in China, through publications, exhibitions, workshops, and other types of cultural and business exchanges. Dutch designers are acclaimed for their fresh way of looking at their own country, society and culture, and their ability to relate their national design identity to global developments by maintaining a distinct design approach in multiple disciplines. The Dutch Design Workspace in Shanghai, and the Dutch Design Desk in Guangzhou have created

increased visibility and awareness of Dutch design. They are perceived as pro-active partners to further cultural and business interests of Dutch designers in China.^{1,2}

Today, Chinese designers express a fatigue with exchange programmes that focus exclusively on exhibiting the work of foreign designers for an audience of colleagues. Although the display of new design ideas is necessary, it is equally important for designers to engage directly with creative counterparts, to start working on projects and topics that can directly influence society. Next to academic, biennale or design week contexts, programmes that can further the professional development of Chinese designers are crucial. These programmes need to engage topics that touch upon the transformation of the role of China in the world – the transformation from the 'shown to China' image to a 'developed with China' attitude.

Expected Changes Influencing Chinese Creativity

It is first necessary to make a distinction between the ambitions of small- and large-scale design companies in China. Smaller-scale agencies want to maintain their size, and invest more in training their staff so to deliver quality and innovation in design. Large-scale companies want to continue expanding, while integrating and streamlining different services related to the creation and manufacture of design products.

In addition, there is a great opportunity to collaborate with Chinese designers and businesses on innovative models of cooperation. Sino-foreign collaborations and businesses will see a reverse trend from that of past decades, when Chinese enterprises were mainly interested in applying and adapting foreign knowledge for their domestic markets. Nowadays many Chinese companies want to go global and create global brands.

Lastly, it is important to engage with a new generation of Chinese consumers – to understand the desires, dreams, cultural background and interests of these trendsetters.

With more second- and third-tier cities rising to prominence, a new crop of designers and users – the 1980s and 1990s generation – is becoming active. Several designers are busy creating platforms from which to tap into the creative potential of these cities and their young populations.

Cooperation

While conducting interviews, one crucial objective was to understand the views of Chinese designers regarding past, present and future Sino-Dutch collaborations.

Wang Shao-qiang (Designer & Publisher, Founder & Chief Editor *Design 360°* magazine, Guangzhou) hopes for more support in bridging the design cultures of China and the Netherlands: 'When I visited the Netherlands two years ago, I met up with Studio Dumber.... We made a proposal for a project with the Netherlands. I hope that DutchDFA can bridge the two countries.' Feng Yu (Design Director, Shenzhen DEVE BUILD Design Agency, Shenzhen) shares this interest: 'I hope DutchDFA can offer us a platform, helping China and other countries to build an exhibition and an academic cooperation together'. For Liu Feng (Founder, FUN+ LIVING / PEP art+design, Beijing), international collaboration has not yet had the desired creative impact. Most dialogues, in his opinion, remain superficial and too theoretical. He believes that instead, a more practical and cultural approach, centred on craftsmanship, is key, and can benefit both cultures.

For Bi Xuefeng (Art Director & Founder, Bi Xuefeng Graphic Design Consultant co ltd, Shenzhen), the target of cultural exchange is to mediate different cultural connotations of graphic design: 'Dutch graphic design's fresh visual culture, humour and logic have a huge influence in China. But we also must have our traditions, and find a new method to express them.' Zhou ZhengFang (Director, Studio Dumber China, Shanghai) stresses the importance of understanding the strengths of Dutch designers as conceptual thinkers, but goes on to warn that people in China want solutions, not only concepts: 'Most clients look for more mature solutions. They will see it is a great idea, but will eventually ask how you can develop it? Dutch designers may not pay enough attention to the follow-up part of the design process.'

For Wang Min (Dean / Professor Changjiang Scholarship, CAFA – Central Academy of Fine Arts – School of Design, Beijing), cultural cooperation should start as soon as possible. He sums up his impression of the value of Dutch designers: 'Dutch culture is characterized by openness

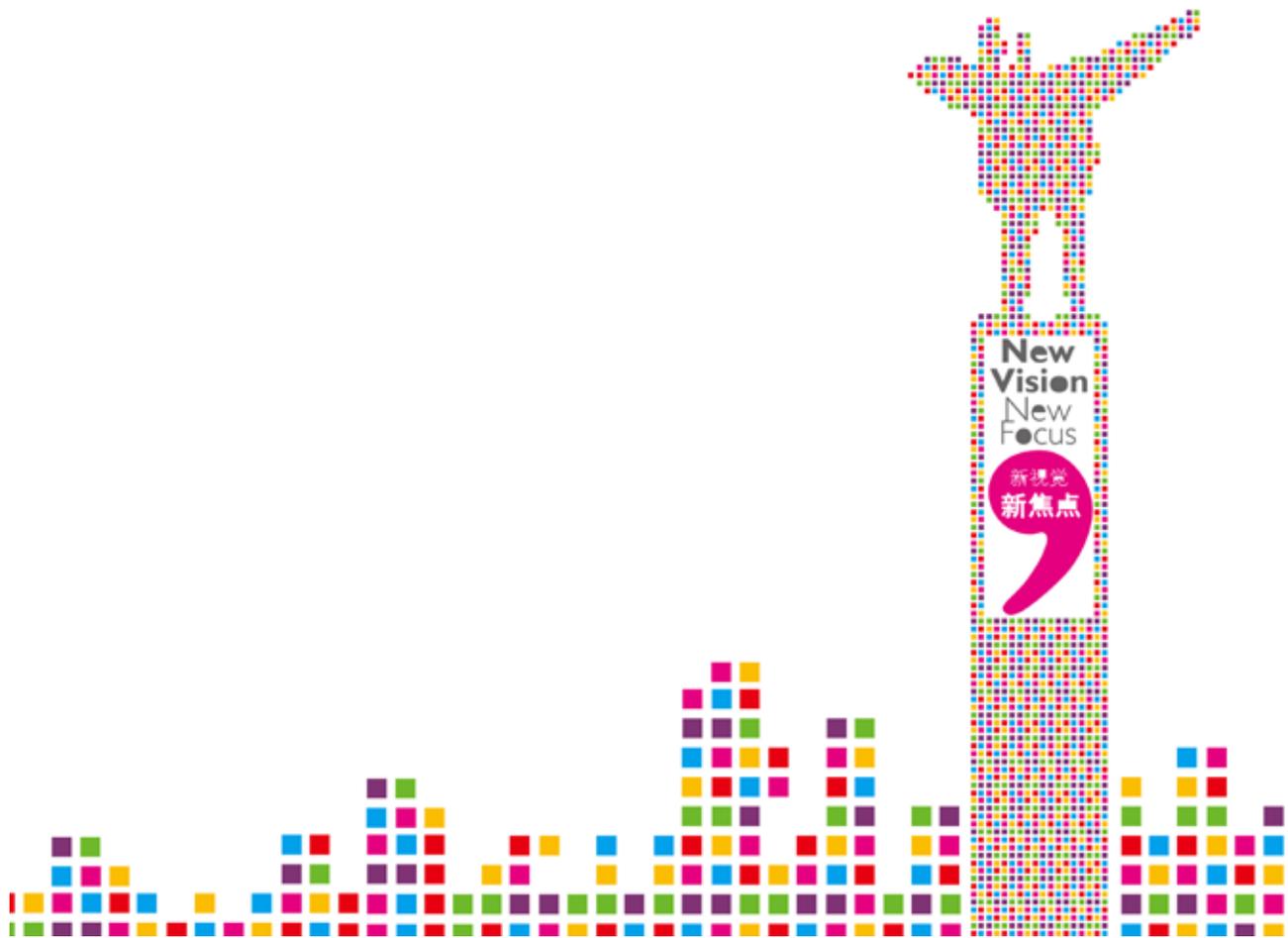
and a free thinking spirit that makes critical design possible'. Bringing students together around a common subject might be the first step to consolidate long-term future relationships between the Dutch and Chinese design cultures. He explains: 'It is good for our students to learn from their Dutch counterparts. They might become friends, and that will be good for Dutch designers who want to work in China later'. Tong HuiMing's (Dean / Professor, GAFA School of Industrial Design, Guangzhou) interest in a Netherlands-China exchange is directly related to his visit to the Design Academy Eindhoven. This opportunity to get a closer look at DAE's approach helped him to imagine the kinds of educational exchange programmes that could be set-up: 'The DAE is centred on a human approach. At GAFA, in the past 20 years, our design education has been mostly connected with the manufacturing industry. This can train some designers but it cannot teach young people to develop a feeling for beauty and social change.'

Concluding Thoughts

China has demonstrated during the past decades an ability and flexibility to react upon sometimes unpredictable changes in its cultural, social and economical development. Future developments will be decided upon by Five-Year Plans and will focus on large infrastructural investments and acquisition of foreign knowledge, expertise, and innovation. Today, its creative and cultural development is high on the political agenda, but also part of the discussion amongst professionals of all stamps. It is clear that Chinese designers have the ambition to be part of a global design culture while maintaining and promoting their own cultural context.

Throughout the development of this report, a diverse set of possible agendas for future programmes became visible: ranging from institutional to informal approaches, from educational to experimental collaborations, from profit-driven to personal motives.

The objective of any Sino-Dutch cultural exchange programme in the design field should be to introduce an original approach to the set of problems design is facing on both small and large scales, and to challenge Dutch and Chinese designers to find innovative ways for practical collaboration. The next step is to link the problems, opportunities, and developments presented in this report with the objectives of the DutchDFA programme and its institutional partners in China.



LIU Yi 刘义 /SPARDEC brand consulting 斯巴迪克(上海)品牌研究中心

Based on this research, the following set of ambitions and actions became prominent:

- Create innovative Dutch-Chinese business models with high-quality design.
- Approach a topic (youth, healthcare, design for the elderly) from different angles (education, business, media, exhibition) to make collaborative design visible and accessible to both professionals and the public at large.
- Devise a strategy through which to enter second- and third-tier cities.
- Invest in dialogues and exchange programmes with Chinese designers: Dutch design is known for its image and performance, but rarely for the methods and visions behind it.
- Stimulate collaborative projects between designers and businesses. Exhibitions and dialogues enhance public communication and awareness, but there is a need for professional and business-oriented critical programmes.
- Get involved in educational programmes, maintaining a long-term vision. Workshops, exhibitions and lectures are valuable, but Chinese universities and academies also have strong relationships with local businesses and design practices.
- Be selective in identifying partners, and precise in the types of partnerships you develop.

Notes

- ¹ Dutch Design Workspace - DDW Shanghai | www.dutchdesignworkspace.com & www.dutchdfa.com/china/dutch-design-workspace
- ² Dutch Design Desk - Guangzhou | www.dutchdesigndesk.com



► Appendix

Contact Details & Bios

BI XueFeng 毕学锋

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Bi Xuefeng is founder and art director of BI XUEFENG Graphic Design Consultant and Shenzhen IMAGRAM Graphic Design Company (since 1997). He is Chairman of Shenzhen Graphic Designer Association and member of Alliance Graphique Internationale (AGI).

Aric CHEN 陈伯康 [CHEN BoKang]

Creative director / Writer / Curator

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Based in Beijing and New York, Aric Chen is an independent writer and curator specializing in design, architecture and art. In 2008 and 2009, was founding co-creative director of 100% Design Shanghai, and in 2011 Creative Director of Beijing Design Week.

Remy CHEN 陈知明 [CHEN ZhiMing]

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Remy Chen is the Southern China Deputy General Manager of Modern Media Group.

MODERN MEDIA GROUP - is a leading media company, engaged in the publishing of City Magazine (Hong Kong) and Modern Weekly; as well of U+ Weekly, The Outlook Magazine, INTERSECTION, LOHAS, Life Magazine, NUMERO and LEAP.

FENG Yu 机构

Design Director

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Graduated from the Tianjin Academy of Fine Arts, designer Feng Yu founded Deve Build Design in 2005 - acting as designs inspector general. He is the recipient of the Young Designers honour and curator of the 5th China (Shenzhen) International Interior Design Cultural Festival [2010].

FENG ZhiFeng 冯志锋 [Franci FENG]

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Feng ZhiFeng is CEO of RITO Communication, Creative Director of RUA DESIGN, as well a magazine publisher, guest instructor at Shenzhen University, and SGDA Vice-president. Established in 1999, as a brand identity design firm, RITO is now a communication group with over 80 employees and four branches: RITO Integrated Branding, Lemon Media, RITO Real Estate Advertising and RITO United Architecture (RUA).

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Hong Huang (1961, Beijing) is the chief executive of China Interactive Media Group and publisher of 'iLook' Magazine (founded in 1998). She is a famous Chinese publisher and blogger and since 2010 the owner of Brand New China (BNC) in Beijing. BNC is a leading boutique for indie designer items that promotes China's original design.

JIANG Jian 姜剑

Partner & Creative Director

JOYN:VISCUM - Design Studio & Communication Consultancy
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Jiang Jian (1975) graduated in graphic design from BICT (Beijing), and in Visual Communication in Sydney. He is the founder of the experimental collective JOYN: VISCUM, an independent, multidisciplinary design studio and communication consultancy based in Beijing. In 2005, Jiang Jian was co-curator of Get it Louder. He runs an independent design magazine - Plugzine - as both chief-editor and art director.

JIANG Qiong Er 蒋琼尔

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Having gained her degree in Art and Design at Tongji University, Jiang Qiong Er, studied furniture and interior design at the Decorative Arts School in Paris. She is the artistic director and CEO of Shang Xia – the Chinese luxury brand she established after collaborating with Hermès. SHANG XIA is a 21st century brand combining the best of traditional Chinese and other Asian craftsmanship and design.

HONG RongMan 洪荣满

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Hong RongMan, artist curator, studied at Xiamen University, Department of Fine Arts, and graduated in 2005 at Dutch Art Institute, Enschede. Since 2006 he is an associate teacher and lecturer at GAFA College of Design Digital. Recently together with lighting designer Pei Yuezhou founded DAMMI Group in Guangzhou.

HOU ZhengGuang 侯正光

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Hou ZhengGuang (1972, Xian) is a senior graphic and furniture designer, founder of Shanghai Mooma design agency and MoreLess [多少] design brand, in 2003. Hou is the Vice secretary of Furniture Design Committee of China, and secretary of Standing Committee of Furniture Design of Shanghai Industrial Design Association.

LIU Feng 刘峰 [Nathan LIU]

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Nathan Liu Feng graduated from the Central Academy of Art and Design, majoring in sculpture design. He is the founder and director of FUN+LIVING Design & Consulting, (PEP art+design) and one of the founders of the China Furnishing Design Brand Alliance. Liu received a "40 under 40" Asian Designer Award in 2010, as well as various other honours, including the 2011 Case da Abitare Original Design Excellent Award.

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Since 2005, industrial designer Liu Lidan is the founder and design director of XLPLUS Design. Liu Lidan is also a lecturer at D&I Tongji University College of Design and Innovation and a managing director at designaffairs GmbH. XL+DESIGN brings together industrial designers, design research specialists, communication designers.

LIU Yi 刘义

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Liu Yi (1976, Anhui) is a graphic designer and senior partner of SPARDEC Design, established in 2004 in Shanghai, now with coalition offices in the Netherlands and South Korea. A member of Shanghai Graphic Designers Association and ICOGRADA, he is the executive director of Capital Corporation Image Institution and vice executive editor of Design.cn as well as a Committee Member of the Created in China Industrial Institution.

LOU YongQi 娄永琪

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LOU YongQi, PhD, is associate professor and deputy head of Art & Design Department, Tongji University CAUP. Focusing on interdisciplinary sustainable design education, research and practice, he is coordinator of DESIS-China Network, and executive board member at Cumulus. Founder and creative director of Tektao Urban Design he is a co-founder of ETOPIA Building Development and a certificated PRC urban designer.

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Luo Cheng, GM and chief designer of Shenzhen Artop Industrial Design, is the chairman of Dongguan Hitop Mold Industrial Department, the executive director of the Guangdong Industrial Design Association and vice-chairman of Shenzhen Industrial Design Association. Since 1999 ARTOP is a major industrial design and product research company cooperating with renowned ventures such as Motorola, Sony, Haier, and Audi.

LV YongZhong 吕永中

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LV YongZhong (1968) is the chairman design director of VEP DESIGN and founder of BANMOO, since 1997. Lv is also the deputy director of Shanghai Furniture Design Committee and chairman and design director of Sino-French joint venture. Graduated from Tongji University in 1990, where he stayed as a teacher for 18 years, his focus is on interior and furniture design, architecture and exhibition design.

Lyndon NERI & Rossana NU 郭锡恩 & 胡如珊

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Architects Lyndon Neri and Rossana Hu are Founding Partners of NHDRO (neri & hu design and research office), a multidisciplinary international architectural design practice established in Shanghai, in 2003. Also Founding Partners of Design Republic, a Shanghai-based retail concept store, and the creators of the neri&hu product line.

MA Jia 马嘉

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Ma Jia is standing vice-chairman general secretary of Beijing Original Design Promotion Association (BODA), planning director of Original Design Circle, president of C&S Brand Consulting and curator of 'spin coin' 798 international industrial design exhibition.

OU Ning 欧宁

Director / Chief-Editor Curator / Designer / Film maker
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Ou Ning (1969, Guangdong) is a multidisciplinary artist, curator and publisher. Founder of U-thèque, initiator of the exhibition Get It Louder (2005, 2007, 2010), Ou was chief curator of 2009 Shenzhen & Hong Kong Bi-city Biennale of Urbanism and Architecture. Based in Beijing, he is the director of not-for-profit Shao Foundation (Modern Media Group) and recently founded literary bi-monthly magazine Chutzpah!.

PAN JianFeng 潘剑锋

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SHTYPE founding director Pan JianFeng is a visual artist, as well typeface creator. Pan graduated in Visual Communication at China Academy of Art and at the University of Central England. As design strategist and artistic director with solid experience in branding communication and typography, Pan works in a variety of media forms, from painting, porcelain, and design to video installations and animation.

Bruno PORTO

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Bruno Porto is a Brazilian visual communication designer, illustrator, art director, and curator as well a design teacher. Between 2006 and 2010 Porto was Senior Lecturer at the Visual Communication Department, Raffles Design Institute in Shanghai. Owner and creative director at Bruno Porto Comunicação Visual, he is back to Brazil where he is now the executive coordinator at Tipos Latinos Biennial of Latin American Typography.

Tom SHI 石川 [SHI Chuan] & Zen 郑铮 [ZHENG Zheng]

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Tom Shi (1974) is a multidisciplinary designer based in Guangzhou, and founder and director of Leaping Creative and Tom Shi Design and Research Studio, since 2006. Graduated from GAFA and Central Saint Martins College of Art & Design (master degree in industrial design), he works in the field of product design, spatial design and art installation.

& Zen (1982) is co-founder and operational director of Leaping Creative Ltd.co – specialized in product branding consultancy and design management. Graduated with MBA Hons on Product Design at London's Central Saint Martin College of Art & Design, he is a member of UK's Chartered Society of Designers.

TONG HuiMing 童慧明

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Professor Tong HuiMing (1955, Zibo, Shandong), dean and professor of School of Industrial Design, Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts, received his BA at Beijing's Central Academy of Arts and Design (1983); and his Master in Art & Design at GAFA (1986). Tong HuiMing is standing director of China Industrial Design Association (CIDA); vice-chairman of Guangdong Industrial Design Association (GIDA); and chairman of Industrial Design Education Committee, Guangdong.

David WANG 王乐毅 [WANG LeYi]

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Wang LeYi is the Shanghai Creative Industries Demonstration and Service Platform management centre deputy director. Established in 2010 under the guidance of Shanghai Municipal Commission of Economy and Informatization, the platform organizes exhibitions, public events, training, information services, international cooperation and exchange. Since 2011 it also publishes Grand Design, a magazine on creativity and design.

WANG Min 王敏

Dean / Professor Changjiang Scholarship

CAFA - Central Academy of Fine Arts - School of Design
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SQUARE TWO DESIGN

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Wang Min is the dean of School of Design and professor of Graphic Design at CAFA, and member of AGI (Alliance Graphique Internationale). He was the Design Director for Beijing 2008 Olympic Games Committee, and between 2007-09 the vice-president of ICOGRADA and organizer of its World Design Congress 2009 in Beijing. Wang Min received his BA (1982) in Graphic Art from China National Academy of Fine Arts and MFA (1988) from Yale University School of Art. Since 1998, he has been the design director of Square Two Design.

WANG ShaoQiang 王绍强

Designer & Publisher, Founder & Chief Editor

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Wang ShaoQiang is a designer and publisher, founder and chief editor of Design 360°, a bimonthly magazine published by SANDU Publishing (with over 30,000 readers in Singapore, Australia, India, Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan, South Korea, China...). Wang is also the vice president of GAFA Visual Art and Media Design College.

WANG XueSong 王雪松 & HUANG YiHan 黄驿寒

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Yah lab, founded in Beijing by Wang XueSong and Huang YiHan is a creative studio, compromising digital and multimedia art. Specializing in both commercial, and social projects, Yah lab provides a 360-degree Internet marketing strategy and creative implementation, as well as emphasis on interactive design of network events and branding. Wang XueSong is the national creative director of Hylink Advertising.

WANG Yun 汪芸

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Wang Yun is an art historian; design writer, translator and curator based in Beijing; and since 2006 a contributing editor to Trends Home magazine. With an MA in Contemporary Chinese Video Art (2002-05) and a BA in Art History (1998-02), from the Academy of Arts and Design, Tsinghua University, Wang Yun operates in the fields of art and design media and exhibition coordination.

'Imagine WONG' 黄立光 [HUANG LiGuang]

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Imagine Wong (1982) is founder and creative director of zitype workshop - a platform for design, publication, exhibition, art and fonts. He attended the College of Art and Design at Shenzhen University (2001-2005) and worked for Alternative Archive (2005-06). He did visual identity for the 2009 SZHK Bi-city Biennale and 2010 Get It Louder. He is the executive director of Shenzhen Bay International Fringe Festival.

XIE JianJun 解建军

Founder, President
DONGDAO Design

BEIJING -- 110302 interview BEIJING* --

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XIE JianJun (1973, Qingdao) obtained a master degree at Cafa and founded Dongdao Design in 1997. He is deputy secretary of the Beijing Industrial Design Promotion Organization and ICOGRADA member. Dongdao Design is a renowned design company specialising in Corporate Identity, Signage and New Media Design, with clients from different sectors: Governmental Institutions, Sport Events, IT, Telecommunications, Financial services, Aviation, Real Estate, Chemicals Industry, Tobacco Industry, etc.

Jesus Yeh 叶宇轩 [YE YuChuan]

Designer / Creative Director
Yehidea

BEIJING -- Text featuring his work_ DEFINITIONS OF DESIGN
- by_ WANG YUN / TRENDS HOME --
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Originally from Taiwan, designer Jesus Yeh was an award-winning executive creative director of advertising, before creating Yehidea brand in 2006. His designs range from Bone China, lamps to chairs and the home design team of Yehidea integrates new strengths of design, blending Asian and European influences.

ZHANG DaLi 张达利

Director

Shenzhen ZHANGDALI Design co ltd
/ Creative Director

ELEPHANT DESIGN Space & Exhibition
SHENZHEN -- 110318 interview SHENZHEN --
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Zhang DaLi (b. 1960 Xi'an) graduated from Fine Arts Department, Xi'an Art College in 1987, and in 1995 established ZhangDaLi Design in Shenzhen. His poster designs have been award several major prizes and are featured in international collections. Besides, Zhang DaLi also set foot in modern art, environmental art and space show design, leading to the establishment of Elephant Space.

Ready ZHANG 张宏毅 [ZHANG HongYi]

Event Director

Guangzhou DESIGN WEEK
/ Managing Director

Guangzhou Citiexpo Limited
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Ready Zhang (1965, Shanghai) graduated from Shanghai Maritime University in 1986, major in international shipping management. He has an international background in trade, finance and media. Back in China in 2000 Zhang became an independent consultant on brand image design and promotion; and in 2005 he joined the leadership of CITIEXPO as general manager as well event director of the Guangzhou Design Week.

ZHOU Yi 周佚

President, GM & Founder
s.point design

SHANGHAI -- 110225 interview SHANGHAI --
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Zhou Yi (1968, WuXi) is a Gafa design graduate and founder, president and GM of the industrial design consultancy s.point design. Established in 1997, s.point design has extensive experience in industrial manufacturing and creative consultancy. He is executive member of Shanghai Industrial Design Association (SIDA) and committee member of China Industrial Design Association (CIDA), and of Shanghai Creative Industry Association (SCIA).

ZOU ZhengFang 邹政方

Managing Director / Partner
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SHANGHAI -- 110228 interview SHANGHAI --
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Zou ZhengFang (1970) graduated from the Academy of Economics and Management, Tsinghua University in Beijing and China Europe International Business School (2006). Zou ZhengFang became managing director of Studio Dumbar China in 2005. Currently Studio Dumbar China works with global clients like Nike, Randstad, TNT, Dutch Design Association, COEX as well local clients as Bright Dairy and Shanghai General Motors.



LIU Feng 刘峰 / FUN+ LIVING / PEP Art+Design



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SHANGHAI. June 2012

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DESIGN IN CHINA MAPPING

This report, commissioned by Dutch Design Fashion Architecture, presents an analysis of the design field in China. Researched and written in 2011 by MovingCities, and updated throughout 2012, it highlights the people and processes that will influence future design agendas in China and throughout the world. It is based on 30 interviews held in 2011 with acclaimed Chinese designers and scholars, as well as on additional desk research.

dutch ► design ► fashion ► architecture