

ART MUSEUMS IN CHINA'S URBAN REGENERATION

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*Dedicated to My Father, Lin Zixiong,
and Mother Wu Ximei, with Love and Thanks.*

ABSTRACT

In China, the proliferation of private art museums has been closely tied to real estate development led by extensive urban regeneration. Cities have experienced rapid and extensive urbanisation since the Reform and Opening-up (*gaige kaifang*) initiated in 1978, and the ambitious cities have been transforming themselves into cultural capitals by setting up private art museums. In China, art museums built by real estate developers constitute a vital part of the private art museum boom in terms of quantity, effectiveness and sustainability. This type of art museum has played an essential role in the development of China's contemporary art scene. As the main participants, property developers regard art museums as an art sponsorship strategy able to face the emerging cultural demands of customers.

This kind of art museum has very distinctive Chinese characteristics; it is a specific cultural outcome of the guidance sustaining China's current economic status and political policy while the country's urbanisation is directed by real estate development. First, all of the museums discussed are led by entrepreneurs rather than bureaucrats and are more liberal, adventurous and efficient than bureaucracies in moving towards globalisation. Second, as an outcome of urban regeneration, this type of art museum began under China's social background, which has brought about a unique operational mechanism that is significantly different from those of other counties.

This research examines the creation and operation of private art museums established by real estate development in the process of culture-led urban regeneration from 2002 onwards. Not only does the research focus on the institutional characteristics of the symbiosis between real estate and private art museums within four case studies, examining how they operate in a variety of ways, it also explores the interactive logic and impact of their operation in the context of urban regeneration. In contrast to existing work on private art museums in China based on insufficient research into the Chinese

context, this research concentrates on a specific type of art museums rather than on a general discussion of private art museums.

This thesis suggests that tapping into an intimate view of the boom in real estate development art museums requires a deeper understanding of the context of China's urban regeneration. Furthermore, the culture-led urban regeneration strategy found in the research has outlined the concept of real estate developers co-creating art museums with the Chinese government for developing and reviving the regional economy. This thesis recommends a new way of art sponsorship between real estate businesses and art museums. Real estate-driven art museums that have been established, operated and sustained encompass architecture innovation, knowledge production, education and social engagement for a broader audience.

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ABBREVIATIONS

CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
GDMOA	Guangdong Museum of Art
CMCA	Chinese Ministry of Civil Affairs
MOMA	Museum of Modern Art
OCAAT	OCT Contemporary Art Terminal
OCT	Overseas Chinese Towns
PPP	Public-private Partnership
PRC	People Republic of China
PRD	Pearl River Delta
SACH	State Administration of Cultural Heritage
TACB	Times Art Centre Berlin
WBCSD	World Business Council for Sustainable Development

PREFACE

There were many factors that motivated me to carry out my PhD research on real estate-driven art museums in the context of urban China and its effects on contemporary art. Perhaps the most motivating factor arose from my personal experience. I was born in China and came to England to study for my PhD in August 2016. Having studied art before I came to England, I loved exploring art museums in China. I found that when I wanted to see a well-curated art exhibition or public engagement activity by domestic and international artists, my goal was no longer limited to state-run art museums. China has witnessed a boom in its number of private art museum opening their doors to the public, starting in developed cities and cultural hubs such as Beijing, Shanghai or Guangzhou. Meanwhile, in recent years, this trend has expanded to cities where economic developments have prompted investments into the arts and culture, such as Xi'an and Chengdu. Unfortunately, I also found that some of these private institutions were not operationally sustainable due to a variety of operational issues. This motivated me to conduct this research and to see the institutional characteristics of real estate and private art museums, examining the various ways in which they operate. During my undergraduate studies, I was working as a media manager at the 3rd International Performance Art Festival Guangzhou Live. In addition, as a resident of China, I have greater access at different levels including language, cultural setting and social norms. These experiences have provided me with opportunities to observe and record artistic production and disseminations and to become engaged with the ongoing cultural development of urban China. Meanwhile, I was motivated to question why real estate-driven art museums have emerged and why they appear to act so differently in terms of operational forms in response to extensive urban regeneration in China. This permanent interest has allowed me to engage with more contemporary art projects and to provide my curiosity with answers with regard to the operational characteristics and artistic practices within different kinds of real estate-driven art museums in China. I envisaged investigating this emerging topic for doctoral research in England.

This research spawns from my strong desire to inform art museum practitioners, art professionals, art investors sponsors and cultural policy-makers about the significance of emerging art museum developments in China and will them to achieve commercial and social goals by creating a balance between art and business. It was very satisfying to see myself conducting this research in England. As this started off as a personal question that arose from my own experiences, it has been very rewarding to see myself carry out such research with incessant passion. In particular, I look forward to more institutions and individuals taking advantage of such opportunities.

INTRODUCTION

Research background

As a branch of the museum system, private art museums are important places for promoting the development of urban public culture, which in turn can enhance the public's aesthetic cognitive level both locally and globally. To take a worldwide perspective on private art museums, Europe is home to the largest number of private museums in the world, with 45% of the global total; Asia takes second place with 33%; and United States of America (USA) is third with 15%. Regions with the fewest private museums include Latin America (4%), the Middle East and Africa (2%) and Australia (1%) (Larry's List Ltd and AMMA, 2016). Since the time of the Medicis in the fifteenth century, private art museums in Europe have played a vital role in the development of art, and have a time-honoured tradition of patronage. The well-known North American institutions, such as the Guggenheim Museum and the Museum of Modern Art, both in New York City, were successfully established in the twentieth century due to the USA's comprehensive system of tax policy and art foundations, which constructed a stable mechanism for the sustainable operation of private art museums. Currently, the Middle East is experiencing a high-speed establishment of new art museums alongside its emerging economy; through cooperation with renowned institutions, new branches are being established, such as Guggenheim Abu Dhabi, creating a world-class cultural

destination for its residents and visitors. The evidence is that the presence of these new museums brings dramatic changes to the ecosystem of art within these areas. However, the most dramatic phenomenon we can currently witness is now occurring in China.

Evans (2005, p.968) defined culture-led regeneration as ‘culture as catalyst and engine of regeneration’. Referenced by developments in Britain during the 1990s, cultural facilities ‘could be either a preliminary to, or an integral part of, a broader urban regeneration project, usually in the form of a development and reconstruction of part of a city centre’ (Vickery, 2007, p.19). From this point of view, it could be observed that private art museums have been driven by real estate business as a key element for urban regeneration. The aggressive proliferation of art museum establishments, including art galleries, museums and cultural districts, is associated with rapid urbanisation in China, intended to create a cultural infrastructure which meets the same standards as China’s international counterparts (Johnson and Florence, 2013). The People’s Republic of China (PRC) had just 25 museums when the Communist Party took control in 1949; according to the data collected by the State Administration of Cultural Heritage (2017), the total number of museums grew to 4630 by 2015. Chinese private art museums were established in the late 1990s and have shown a dramatic rise over the past decade, hatching one new museum every day, although it is an extremely short development process. The Ministry of Culture of the PRC reported that in 2016 China’s private art museums accounted for one-third of the total number of art museums.

This dramatic phenomenon is also reflected in the construction context of these art museums. The investor background of private art museums is diverse; the industries involved include finance, medicine, culture and art industry investment, and real estate, amongst others. However, art museums established by property entrepreneurs account for the vast majority (Wang, 2017) – it is this type of museum that is the focus of my research. I argue that these kinds of private art museums, sponsored by real estate developers, have very distinctive Chinese characteristics; they are a specific cultural

outcome of the guidance provided by China's current economic status and political policy, whilst their urbanisation is directed by real estate development.

The rapid rise of private art museums in this country is a product of the economic system, cultural policy, the growth of collectors and the developing art market (Larry's List Ltd and AMMA, 2016, pp.59-60). Within these factors, the influence of the Reform and Opening movement, under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping, combined with the adjustment of the economic structure by the current government, constituted the economic background for the establishment of private art museums on a large scale. The rapid accumulation of assets by the businessmen, in the Reform and Opening movement, became the main force in this museum boom. Not only did they have capital strength, in order to build their art collections, but also close contact and communication with the government – advantages which allowed them to establish personal art museums. According to Li Zhonghui, the Manager of the West Bund Development Group, 'China is quite rich now, but still not noble. We need to upgrade by culture' (Sing Tao Daily, 2014). He refers to the fact that the Chinese economy has experienced a rapid development in recent years, and its economic status is now on a level with other developed countries; he suggests that cultural development should be the focus of the next stage. The Chinese government recognises the need for the simultaneous development of the economy and culture, and local governments have been actively engaged in promoting built 'business cards' and iconic cultural buildings in cities, and focussing on city planning as a whole. For example, the West Bund Cultural Corridor, created by Shanghai Xuhui District in 2012, is a preferential policy development intended to attract the nouveau rich, like Liu Yiqian and Wang Wei who founded the Long Museum, and Budi Tek who founded Yuz Museum. Additionally, the government enacted the cultural policy to encourage private art museums under a favourable economic backdrop.

Moreover, the art market underwent tremendous changes in 2010, experiencing nearly 1000 times volume expansion, providing more collections and opportunities for some

private collectors (AMMA, 2012). Unsurprisingly, private art museums have entered into a high-speed construction period due to the tripartite cooperation of economy, government and market forces.

It is noticeable that the establishment of privately-owned museums has become a new trend for the rich of China. An increasing number of prosperous philanthropists and patrons, whose wealth rapidly accumulated as a result of economic reform policies, have chosen to collect and not hide their large number of collections, housing them in museums which are open to the public. This is now becoming a trend and a large number of investors in private art museums are involved in the real estate business. More interesting, however, was the investment by the Antaeus Group to establish the Today Art Museum, where the community is reported by the media as the most humane care real estate in Peking CBD. Not only has this development won real estate innovation and cultural housing awards, but also the value of the residential and retail properties has increased (Zhang, 2009, p.28). Similarly, the Times Community, which was invested in and constructed by Times Property in Guangzhou and which includes the Times Museum, has branded itself as a 'living artist' and has put forward the slogan 'everyday living in the Museum of Art', which has greatly boosted real estate sales prices (Wang, 2017, p.180). A cross-border background where art and real estate investment are included simultaneously, constitutes a common sight in the growth of Chinese private art museums. It also plays an important role in the Chinese government's policy of emphasising cultural revival and the building up of a culturally powerful country. 'Buy art, build a museum, put your name on it, let people in for free. That is as close as you can get to immortality,' British artist Damien Hirst once famously said. However, the motivations of building a private museum in China are more complicated.

Sponsorship has become a more diversified trend, following the sprouting awareness of art sponsorship by entrepreneurs. From the art collections of real estate businessmen to the establishment of a private art museum, entrepreneurs have intervened in art at

many different levels, both directly and indirectly promoting the development of art. O'Hagan and Harvey (2000) looked at corporate sponsorship and emphasised that this corporate behaviour did not reveal a pure dichotomy between altruistic charitable efforts and marketing strategy. Early research on art sponsorship was particularly concerned with the discussion of the interactive relationship between the businesses and the art institutions. According to Kirchberg (1995),

‘arts institutions take business support for granted, as the arts contribute to local economy both directly and indirectly. The direct contribution is the monetary income the institutions generate to be of use for the local business. The indirect effect is the importance of the arts institutions for tourism, infrastructure, the future growth of the region. The arts attract investments in the local industry. This implies that business not only contributes to arts, but also gets a lot in return’ (Khakee, 1994) (as cited in Lidström, 2003).

Art sponsorship benefits both parties by encouraging a mutual exchange of knowledge. The experience of art sponsorship activities in the United Kingdom (UK) and Ireland indicates that businesses improve the efficiency of arts agencies, encourage new management modes and make enterprises more creative (Association for Business Sponsorship of the Arts, 1993; The Arts Council, 1998). Benedict (1991) also looked at this issue, with special emphasis on sponsorship activities as a way to operate the institution. These authors offer useful perspectives on the mutual relations and win-win benefits brought about by art sponsorship.

Corporate sponsorship of art has changed. The large number of real estate entrepreneurs establishing a private art museum constitutes a Chinese-style art patronage scene. However, research into real estate entrepreneurs' private art museums is relatively scarce; this is because the investment by real estate enterprises into the establishment of art museums is a new form of art sponsorship in China. I must make clear the distinction between corporate sponsorship and those art museums which are owned by

real estate entrepreneurs. I appreciate they are not the same, but the work done on corporate sponsorship has the potential to provide valuable insight into real estate entrepreneurs' art museums in a sponsorship context. Qiu (2009) looked at corporate sponsorship and found that, through coordination and cooperation, business and art could develop a number of innovative artistic activities to achieve a win-win result. As a result, her research approach – utilising the art marketing concept – provides a perspective for reference in the research. However, she researched the enterprise with a broad view and took art management to be a medium for discussion, and her study done over a decade ago, whilst it can be a completely different world of art museum in China now; whereas I am aiming to provide insight into this phenomenon, to zoom in on the interactive relationship between the real estate businessmen and the art museums. Kolter and Scheff (1997) argued that art institutions could achieve their organisation target through utilising creative marketing tactics, including sponsorship methods. In addition, the work of Martorella (1966) looked at how corporate support of the arts has an active effect on regional economies (ACA, 1976; CWI, 1977; NEA, 1993; Scanlon, 1993; Shefter, 1993), promoting the development of audiences (Blau 1986; Kirchberg 1993), and – most relevant to this research – that utilising art sponsorship could increase real estate values, through cooperating with government in urban re-development activities (Zukin, 1991). It is also important to consider these opinions of corporate sponsorship when looking at the mutual benefits for real estate firms and private art museums. Because study of the phenomenon of real estate entrepreneur-operated art museums is still in its initial stage, it is useful to sort out the motivations and methods of real estate enterprises involved in art sponsorship, and research into the opinions surrounding corporate sponsorship and win-win cooperation provide a valuable reference to this study.

Also, according to Yao (2018, p.128), 'Artistic practices shrink, swell and morph according to the spaces they inhabit and since all land in China is ostensibly owned by the state, all space is intertwined with the political, leaving few opportunities for art to be divested from its spatial politics'. In this research, I will examine the 'spatial politics'

of private art museums that are interwoven with the real estate business, and investigate how they have played a role in the development of contemporary Chinese art. Also requiring further interrogation, are the operating characteristics of the art museums which are sponsored by real estate entrepreneurs, including investigation into exhibitions, research, education, and the potential influence of this phenomenon.

Above all, this research only focusses on private art museums established by real estate enterprise since 2002, for three reasons. Firstly, in China, art museums built by the real estate developers constitute a vital part of the private art museum boom, in terms of quantity, efficiency and sustainability. Privately-run art museums have a corporate background and are often part of a large investment strategy (Wu, 2013); most of them are governed by entrepreneurs rather than bureaucrats, and are more liberal, adventurous and efficient in moving towards globalisation which I will discuss and evidence with case studies in the following research. Secondly, as a cultural outcome of urban regeneration, this type of art museum originates from a specific social background in China, which brings about a unique operational mechanism that is significantly different from that of other countries. Therefore, these art museums are interesting in themselves in terms of research. Thirdly, during the key period of this research – from 2002 onward – the first art museum, the Today Art Museum, was set up by a property developer in 2002, and is still in sustainable operation today. Since then, China has experienced a private art museum boom, a second-wave of construction, which has built up a great number of represented museums side by side.

Defining the real estate-driven art museum

Evans (2001) discusses art as a cultural institution in a wider socio-economic background:

‘The places where collective and public cultural activity occurs have an important and lasting influence—aesthetic, social, economic and symbolic—on the form and

function of towns and cities. At their most integrated, the arts have played a central role in the life of different societies and in models of urban design, from various classical, renaissance, industrial and post-industrial eras the world over’.

The Ptolemaic Mouseion at Alexandria, dating from around 280 BC, is considered to be the original museum; it was, first and foremost, a study collection with a library attached. During the European Renaissance, collectors established private museums, not only to serve as a display of their wealth, power or privilege, but also to set up a place for study (Peter, 1989). It is these collections that are the foundation of the art museum. Significantly, private art museums also took the role of offering education to the public. In the sixteenth century, the cabinet of curiosities emerged in Europe, although more rudimentary collections served to reflect these particular curiosities. In addition to representing the socioeconomic status and upholding the position of aristocrats and the merchant class, these cabinets also served to support the idea of ‘learned entertainment’ (Costa, 2009). Peter goes on to state that the dual function of collections as places of study and places of display was inherited. This was later overlaid with the more recent sense of an obligation that museums should not merely display their treasures to the curious and make their collections accessible to those desirous of knowledge, but also actively engage in mass education (Peter, 1989). As I understand it, collections and public engagement constitute the vital parts of the operation of private art museums, as understood by Peter, otherwise, these places would only be the wonderland of the wealthy.

Here, it is essential to state what I understand comprises a private art museum of property development. In my view, a definition of Chinese private art museums must take into account that, although museums today are broadly viewed as educational institutions, it is important to situate them in their larger political, economic and cultural context. Firstly, I must provide a working definition of ‘museum’, to be used in this research. Numerous countries have already constructed clear definitions of museums created by organisations or regional private museum associations. The most regularly

recognised definition is that of the International Council of Museums (ICOM), 'A museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment' (Status et al, 2007). As a branch of the museum, this definition also applies to the art museum; this was officially confirmed in the Chinese Provisional Regulations on the Work of Art Museums in 1986. According to this government document, promoted by the Ministry of Culture of the PRC, the art museum in China is the art institution in the service of aesthetic education, research and international cultural exchange. This institution also includes the functions of collection, custody, research, exhibition, art exchange and social services (The Ministry of Civil Affairs of the PRC, 1986). Until recently, the concept of private art museums was still vague in China, therefore, I will extend the concept of the museum, and the assessment criteria from the Chinese Ministry of Civil Affairs (CMCA), to define the concepts of Chinese private art museums in this research.

In China, the CMCA takes responsibility for identifying the nature of private art museums. Private art museums that meet the requirements will be registered as 'People-Run Non-Enterprise Units'. According to the Interim Measures for the Examination and Administration of Registration of Cultural Private Non-Enterprise Units file, 'Private Non-Enterprise cultural institutions' refers to social organisations engaged in non-profit cultural service activities organised by enterprises, public institutions, social organisations and other social forces, as well as to individual citizens using non-state-owned assets. In addition, private art museums should be the institutions which focus on collection, exhibition and communication of the artwork (The Ministry of Culture of the People's Republic of China and Ministry of Civil Affairs of the People's Republic of China, 2000). This definition of the private non-enterprise art institution has been perceived to imply a legal identity that is commonly accepted in China. It is worth noting that museums, art museums and private art museums all place emphasis on the non-profit identity. Salamon (2010) states that the non-profit nature should follow three

principles: firstly, operation is not for the purpose of profit; secondly, the income of the organisation cannot be used for profit to be distributed; thirdly, institutional assets cannot be transformed into private assets. Non-profit does not mean ‘not to be involved in profit-making activities’, but that any profit made must be ploughed back into the art museums.

In this research project, the concepts of private non-enterprise and non-profit museum defined by the CMCA will be applied in the conceptual definition of the museum set-up by the real estate entrepreneur. These museums should have the basic functions, including collection, research, education and social services; they should emphasise the not-for-profit attribute, pursuing social benefits rather than the realisation of economic profit; and should be registered as People-Run Non-Enterprise Units, operating separately from the parent enterprise.

Above all, my research focus is on those art museums in which the ownership belongs to companies involved with real estate as their core business. The four case studies selected are: the branches of OCAT Contemporary Art Terminal (*Huaqiaocheng dangdaiyishu zhongxin guanqun*), founded by the corporate Overseas Chinese Town Enterprises (*Huaqiaocheng jituan*) in cities around China in 2005; Times Museum (*Shidai meishuguan*), built by enterprise Times China (*Shidai zhongguo*) in Guangzhou in 2010; Rockbund Art Museum (*Waitan meishuguan*), set up by Rockbund, which opened in Shanghai 2010; and the Chi Art Museum funded by New World Development in Shanghai in 2013.

Research Questions and Aims

A preliminary investigation into the current, pre-existing research into the operating status of Chinese private art museums, before deconstructing the current context in use, reveals the following.

Existing research, focussing on the operation of Chinese private art museums, began to appear in 2007, and described the emergence of the private museum in China, as well as providing an overview of the state of these museums. Zhang (2009) was the first to carry out a detailed case study of private art museums. As the former director¹ of Today Art Museum, he expounded the knowledge production and distribution, capital chain and operational management of Today Art Museum (*Jinri meishuguan*) with perspectives from his own experience:

In the early stage of the development of private art museum, it is suggested that we should start with the definition of ‘museum’ that should be accurately defined and make clear. Also, the current developing status of institutional norms have not yet been fully established, therefore, we should respond by relaxing requirements for non-profit museums. Moreover, we should call off the registration of the ‘art museum company’ which operates for the only purpose of profit making.

Therefore, the discussion of the construction of private art museums is still at the exploratory stages, as can be seen in Zhang’s research. Similarly, research into Chinese private art museums is also in its early stages.

Previous research has included a macro overview of current operating states and the strategies for survival of the difficult positions that Chinese private art museums encounter. Zhu (2003) briefly reviewed the origin of Chinese private art museums, social conditions for their rise, their operating situations and relevant problems. Moreover, research on how to categorise the nature of private art museums was also discussed (Wang, 2004; He, 2012; Liu, 2012). They reveal that private art museums lack sustainability, in that their sources of funding have become the biggest problem. Private art museums cannot operate independently and therefore rely mainly on direct

¹ Director of private art museum in the research refers to the person who supervises all aspects of a private art museum’s administrative tasks and daily operation.

subsidies from enterprises, and their survival is influenced by the financial situation of investors. In addition, Chen (2007), Chen (2009) and Gong (2012) briefly introduced the operating situation of Chinese private art museums; they found that the establishment of private art museums in China is closely related to the health of the national economy, the majority being built by real estate businessmen, who use corporate assets as the main source of funds. However, this type of private art museum was not included in the in-depth survey of previous research, despite this kind of museum accounting for the majority.

A particular line of research concentrates analysis on the development situation and operating problems of private art museums in Shanghai and Chengdu (Qian, 2014; Zhang and Chen, 2011; Liu, Chen, and Zhou, 2014). In this analysis, the development history of Shanghai's art museums is combed through in some detail; however, the existing studies lack regional-level reflection on operating difficulties and strategies, except in some brief descriptions. Moreover, some articles were written a several years ago and mostly discuss development situations in Shanghai and Chengdu; and, of course, in the last five years, the number of Chinese private art museums has grown remarkably, and the development situation of private art museums has begun to present increasingly diverse and complicated characteristics.

By considering gaps in the above research, I will critically examine the connected themes: urban regeneration, art sponsorship, and art museum studies. I approach the endogenous factors to explain China's private art museum development through the lenses of urban regeneration and art sponsorship. As the external environment, urban regeneration was promoted by the Reform and Opening-up policy; this economic and cultural context helps me to clarify the role played by art museums, and to describe the rationality of the emergence of such museums. Private art museums – established by property developers as the cultural outcome hatched by the urban regeneration process – can be seen as a new form of art patronage. I will evaluate the interactive relationship between entrepreneur and art museum, to see the ways in which the powerful funds of

the real estate entrepreneurs have helped to constitute a private art museum boom in China today. Seen from within, the operation status – including knowledge production, public educations and financial support – is taken into account. Through these, I will build an understanding of the framework from an external ecosystem to an internal operation in use, to assess and analyse the hypotheses I put forward.

The purpose of this research is to answer the following questions:

1. How have the private museums been established, operated and sustained alongside property development in the context of extensive urbanisation in China?
2. What is the role of the growth of private art museums during China's rapid economic, cultural and urban regeneration?
3. What is the interactive relationship between the enterprises operated by real estate developers and the private art museums they have constructed?
4. What is the impact of this mode of art museum development in the rise of Chinese contemporary art?

The research aims are to:

1. Develop a selective survey of private art museums set up by property entrepreneurs in the context of rapid urban regeneration in China.
2. Provide a contextual framework for understanding private art museums, especially in understanding their roles and responsibilities, by analysing aspects of economic and cultural policy and their relationship with public art museums.

3. Examine whether private art museums sponsored by real estate developers have their own rationality. If so, what are the characteristics of the public engagement activities in these art museums?
4. To provide a new cutting-edge analysis for future research within the field of private art museums, focussing on the phenomenon of the unique ‘enterprise operating’ art museums in a particular social context. Especially in understanding and evaluating the interactive logic in it.

Prior to this study, there has not been any research considering the context of economy, culture and urbanisation, from the standpoint of the property developers, especially from 2002 onwards.

Because of the lack of critical and in-depth literature on this aspect, there is a huge gap in understanding of this type of art museum during this period. Therefore, this research will have theoretical value by discussing and evaluating whether this development path is feasible in the exploration stage for the construction of private art museums; it will offer a new research perspective for researchers and operators who conduct research into Chinese private art museums; and, more profoundly, will promote attention to the fact that museums created by property developers constitute a significant part of the art museum boom in China. In addition, the mission and objectives at this stage will be clarified by scrutinising the role of real estate-driven art museums. Also, the focus on the interactive relationship between enterprises and private art museums, and their continuous development, will provide a richer context for discussing the impact on urban culture and publicly engaged art. It will provide a new path to understanding private art museum development.

Thesis Structure and Methodology

This thesis consists of five chapters, utilising a systematic approach structured to address the research objectives:

- To clarify the role of private art museums in China, I am using the Literature Review method to discover the relationship between institutions, economic behaviour and policy context.

- To reveal the operating status and development characteristics of Chinese art museums, I will utilise the multi-method approach, including semi-structured interviews and observation methods.
- In addition, data collection and data analysis will be applied for processing information from the case studies research.
- The case studies will be subject to the entire research process in order to reveal the interactive relationship between enterprises and museums, and provide assessment of the possibility that the sustainable operation² of private art museums could eventually be accompanied through the profit objectives achieved by enterprises.

In this research project, qualitative research methods are identified as the appropriate approach applicable to the field of private art museums in China. The reason being that qualitative research is concerned with a rounded and contextual understanding undertaken by analysing, explaining and building arguments. This is a broadly ‘interpretivist’ method applied with clarification of how the social world is interpreted, understood, experienced, produced or constituted (Mason, 2002, pp.3-4). Compared with the quantitative approach, qualitative research is used to employ the researcher as the instrument for data collection (Brannen, 1992), rather than using statistical, mathematical or computational techniques (Given, 2008). As my research is mainly focussed on the operational mechanisms and practices of private art museums, qualitative research is an irreplaceable approach during the research process, in order to interpret, understand and build arguments which involve understandings of complexity, detail and context relating to real estate development in urban regeneration in China. In this research, a nexus of four distinct interlinking qualitative research methods are introduced together with their applications: namely (1) literature review, (2) case studies, (3) semi-structured interviews and (4) observation, each informing the

² Sustainable operation in this research means art museums work within available resources in all their long-term exhibitions, research, education and other practices, fully financed or partially funded by their parent companies.

other dialectically. I am using multiple methods because a series of research questions will be explored, and clearly, only one or two methods could not offer sufficient support in resolving all the issues in my research.

To briefly summarise, a literature review was conducted before the initial period of fieldwork in China. Prior to the fieldwork, I selected more than ten cases for consideration. However, as a single method, case studies can be perplexing, misleading, and counterproductive (Anthony and Jack, 2009; Boblin, Ireland, Kirkpatrick and Robertson, 2013; Flyvbjerg, 2011). Therefore, a multi-methodological approach has been used: case examples based on the selection criteria were selected after the literature review; concurrently, semi-structured interviews and observations were undertaken in order to collect materials.

Literature review

Ongoing throughout the whole research process, the literature review was divided into four steps: 1) identify the main concepts of the research topic – for the topic ‘Art in Urban Regeneration: Real-estate Driven Art Museum in China From 2002 Onwards’, the keywords³ are ‘private art museum in China’, ‘urban regeneration’, ‘art sponsorship’ and ‘museum studies’; 2) the relevant literature was extracted from both the Chinese and English languages in succession, this comprised a comprehensive review of literature in the field; 3) collation, and 4) in-depth analysis of, relevant bibliographic references were carried out simultaneously, in accordance with investigating the research questions.

However, as mentioned previously, limited studies have been undertaken to investigate private art museums in China, especially in terms of in the context of real estate development. Thus, for establishing the research context and constructing arguments throughout the thesis, this research critically analysed trend reviews, opinion pieces,

³ To ensure that I do not miss out any relevant information, key words are also considering synonyms or phrases that might also be used to described the main concepts of the research topic.

critical discourses, official policy documents and published intellectual works relevant to private art museums in the context of urban regeneration in contemporary China, whether they were primary documents or secondary documents. For example, in order to understand the real estate development context of private art museums in China, the literature being analysed included government publications, archives and news, especially cultural and economic policy documents. Particular emphasis was placed on documents relating to the economic and cultural policies issued by the Chinese government, especially those that promoted the construction of art museums. The historical scope of the documents selected ranged from 2010 to the present day. Policy documents that provided guidance for China's future also had analytical value, as they helped to predict the Chinese government's policy for the development of private art museums.

The main literature analysed in this research included library databases, government publications, academic journals associated with urban regeneration, art museum theory, museology, creative industry and culture, conference papers, institutional reports, newspaper articles, art museum websites, and additional visual resources, such as exhibitions and catalogues. Beyond that, it is worth mentioning that there are three publications that contributed lots of effective data and second-hand materials, these are *Private Art Museum Report*, *Museums* and *Snapshot: Independent Investigative Interviews on Chinese Contemporary 'Private Museums'*, which were cited in several places within the research.

The literature review that has underpinned the research across several sessions is categorised as follow:

- Private art museums in China

The first step of the research was to review literature around the topic of private art museums in China. In addition to identifying the research gap, the purpose of reviewing the literature surrounding this area was to understand the whole picture of the

development of private art museums in China, and to also investigate their operational status, the dilemmas they are facing and how these institutions have contributed to the art ecology, including the realm of knowledge production and public engagement, which plays a crucial role in understanding the existing research.

- Urban regeneration

There are many critical publications discussing urban regeneration theory and practices. A review of relevant literature was conducted, starting with the beginnings of urban regeneration in China. According to Couch (1990), the definition of urban regeneration is ‘reuse, renovation and reinvestment in the physical structure of existing urban areas. We are talking about investment where it has declined, of increasing employment where it has declined, increasing consumer expenditure and increasing population; in essence we are talking about economic growth’. This term owns wide spread use that largely engage with urban planning, social initiatives, and de-industrialised urban regeneration process. In this specific context of art museum development, the research had been more focussed on the concept of culture-led regeneration. The real estate-driven art museum in the research is fully integrated into an area development strategy, where arts and cultural activity is indissoluble from a way of living, using and occupying public space. The concept was defined as ‘culture as catalyst and engine of regeneration’ (Evan, 2005).

It must be noted that this new form of art sponsorship becomes a cultural phenomenon whilst cities are in transition, it is also a part of a culture-oriented urban regeneration strategy. As I understand it, within urban regeneration, private art museums have potentially played an important role in the building of urban culture. The studies of culture-led regeneration mostly focus upon the more developed countries, however, the construction of these art museums is happening at a different stage of urban development in China. Therefore, the influence of urban regeneration on real estate-driven art museums in China, and the role of this kind of art museum in culture-led regeneration, should go through a detailed assessment.

- Art sponsorship between art museum and the enterprise

In this research project, art sponsorship is defined as a strategic partnership model – a two-way interactive sponsorship mode between art and business, through strategic planning to construction. It has to be understood that, from its inception, art sponsorship led by real estate business has created the private art museum boom in China. The motivations, interactivities and mutual impacts of sponsorship were examined by critical reviewing the innovations and methods of art sponsorship. The rise of art sponsorship, as an interactive relationship, found its way into Chinese art museum development – which informs the understanding of the rationality and sustainability in China’s extensive urban regeneration.

- New museology

The new museology lays the theoretical structure of this study, enabling discussion about audience-centred models in order to construct a discourse around the social and political roles of art museums, as opposed to collections-centred museum models (Mairesse and Desvallées, 2010). To explore art museum practice, I formulated a theoretical framework of operational characteristics, including investigations of curating, public programming and education, for each hypothesis assessment.

Case study

Given the in-depth, multi-sided nature of the case study and its advantages in clarifying and addressing contemporary phenomena, I selected the case study method that provides a comprehensive overview of the case study process from an objective perspective, emphasising aspects of human thinking, phenomenon and behaviours that would be otherwise impractical to study. The case study method has identified four typical cases for data collection and analysis within the private art museum arena, and this evidence will be helpful in answering questions put forward prior to the start of the research. As core methods of qualitative research, Hartley (1994) stated that case study methods are widely used in organisational studies within social sciences in order to provide an analysis of the study’s context and the processes involved in the studied

phenomena. Yin (1984, p.23) added that the case study method is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, in which multiple sources of evidence are used. It is helpful to explore and describe the data in a real-life environment, but also helpful to explain the complexities of a real-life situation.

However, there are limitations to the generalisability of using only one particular case study for illustrative purposes (Meyer, 2001). This implies that there is a need for cases to be looked at in a principled way with selected criteria. Johansson (2003) also suggests that, 'One major feature of case study methodology is that different methods are combined with the purpose of illuminating a case from different angles: to triangulate by combining methodologies'. I aim to address this limitation by using multiple methods to collect and analyse materials, including interviews, direct observations, the analysis of exhibitions, reading documents and using visual materials or personal experiences.

In order to provide a better understanding of causal processes, case examples are selected to focus on a particular issue or aspect of behaviour, with the aim of refining knowledge in a particular field, leading into explanatory evaluation (Hakim, 1987). The study explores cases in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Shenzhen and Xi'an, cities ranging from 'first-tier' to 'second-tier' in their size and status. These cases are intentionally chosen because of their varying sizes, locations and historical, cultural and institutional conditions for art production and dissemination, which I believe well represent major types of real-estate driven art museums.

The following four selected case studies in this research are representative of art museums that emerged from the second wave of the Chinese private art museum boom:

- Chi K11 Art Museum

Due to the booming development of the museum-retail concept within the real estate business in China, numerous private art museums were consecutively

constructed and operated alongside luxury retail outlets. The K11 Shanghai was the first shopping mall set up in mainland China, and noticeably, even today, shows distinctive operation characteristics and interaction logics. The creation of the K11 art mall was based on the idea of integrating contemporary art into luxury retail spaces, putting art at the centre of the shopping experience, and was quickly copied by other developers to varying levels of success. Clearly, this placement of art museum inhabits in shopping malls was regarded as strategic art sponsorship in order to attract visitors for the purpose of advertising retail.

The Chi K11 Art Museum was founded in Shanghai in 2013 and made its initial splash with Claude Monet's exhibition in 2014, which drew large crowds. However, the visitors were not simply there for the exhibition itself, and this is only the beginning of the K11 story. A detailed discussion in Chapter Two considers the interactive relationship between art and business; how contemporary art exhibitions and public engagement practices have been driven by business in luxury shopping malls in China; and the curatorial strategy when art meets with real estate business. The discussion of K11 plays an indispensable role in clarifying the role of private art museums in the city in the context of urban regeneration in China, while also examining the effectiveness of public engagement.

- OCT Contemporary Art Terminal

OCT Contemporary Art Terminal (OCAT), established in 2005 in Shenzhen, was selected as a case example in Chapter Three in order to explore the knowledge production practice of a private art museum China. OCAT was the first art museum chain model⁴ in mainland China, and as such, this research conducts a critical study of its independent identity and of 'independent' research practices in the real estate development context. As the representative of the museums group with an independent identity in China, the case study of OCAT discusses the issue of redistributing knowledge and practice in the OCAT Museums, and

⁴ Chain model of OCAT refers to five art museums across different sites in China which form the OCAT Museums, which began with OCAT Shenzhen in 2005. This group of contemporary art museums also includes OCAT Art and Design Gallery in Shenzhen, OCAT in Shanghai, OCAT in Xi'an, and OCAT Institute in Beijing.

how OCAT sets up operational mechanisms and practices when facing a diverse set of audiences and art ecologies in different cities.

- Rockbund Art Museum

The Rockbund Art Museum (RAM) was founded in Shanghai in 2010, and operates alongside the comprehensive development of the Rockbund real estate project. Education is the widely recognised strength of this art museum, whilst numerous other private art museums are still struggling with being a Kunsthalle⁵ or simply an art museum. As the core mission of the RAM, its education program offers lectures, workshops and other wide-ranging content and activities based on its highly acclaimed exhibitions, enabling the move from elitism to a mass cultural model of education with public engagement. As a real estate-supported art museum, there are close and direct relationships between the real estate project and urban residents nearby, meaning that methods of public engagement are more diverse. Chapter Four focusses on an examination of the RAM's educational practices and public engagement from a new museology perspective. It clarifies the RAM's educational strategy with real estate investments, in order to highlight knowledge dissemination inside and outside the RAM, and investigates how this deepens the impact of art engagement on citizens' lives. Consideration is given to art museums' strategies when public engagement is dependent upon culture-led urban regeneration in China; and whether the real estate investment background of art museums is becoming the resistance or the alternative strength for public involvement.

- Times Museum and Times Art Centre Berlin

Times Museum, set up in 2010 in Guangzhou, is a private art museum operated alongside a residential development, and is one of the case studies discussed in Chapter Five. Research into this example was conducted through literature review and two in-depth interviews with the executive director, Zhao Qie. Following the 'bringing in' and 'going global' slogan put forward by the Chinese central government, Times Museum inaugurated the Times Art Centre Berlin (referred to as TACB) in Germany in 2018. As the first parallel-institution –

⁵ An artistic place devoted to temporary exhibitions without basic functions such as research and education.

essentially a China-based private art museum functioning outside its original location – TACB pioneered initiating dialogues from the perspectives of contemporary art across China and Europe. Due to their distinct architectural designs, geographic locations and operational strategies, these two examples serve essential roles in the discussion and evaluation of private art museums' overseas strategies and institutional production. Moreover, these parallel institutions were selected for the purpose of providing a more diverse research scope and comprehensive context in terms of geographical location and social context.

Semi-structured interviews

In this study, semi-structured interviews were employed in order to obtain data through the opinions put forward by practitioners and scholars. The research focusses on revealing the operational realities of the museum and, as such, the face-to-face interviews with the executive director were used to more directly reveal the situation, as opposed to getting information only from the literature. According to Perkeyla and Ruusuvaori (2011), 'by using interviews, the researcher can reach areas of reality that would otherwise remain inaccessible such as people's subjective experiences and attitudes.' This method allows me to have first-hand insights surrounding the particular topic of study through a generative dialogue process.

Throughout the three periods of fieldwork carried out in China, a total of 19 interviews were conducted amongst a group of key figures, including art museum directors, critics, artists, curators, real estate operators and scholars (a full list of interviewees has been listed at the end of the thesis). The interviewees' selection criteria were generally based on the participants' career practices and/or personal experiences in the field of art museums, where they have strong correlations with the research topic. More precisely, the selection of interviewees was determined by their known insight within the field – as director, artists, curators – each deeply involved with selected case studies, not forgetting their experiences as pioneers and witnesses who participated in the Chinese private art museum boom. In addition, through interviews with personnel from a variety

of museums with differing forms and operational statuses – including the Today Art Museum (the earliest established private art museum), the chain model of OCT Contemporary Art Terminal, Times Museum, Chi K11 Art Museum and the emerging Powerlong Museums, amongst others – this study will be built on substantial first-hand materials, it is hoped that the study will be more comprehensive and objective.

In contrast to the limitations of standardised approaches, this method is helpful not only because it raises new questions for further discussion with open-ended questions during the interview, but also because it aims to formulate targeted and manageable information for in-depth analysis. It was essential that the semi-structured interviews should have flexibility, therefore I wrote the interview outlines and set up the core issues, according to the research questions and aims, in advance and then carried out flexible adjustments during the interview process according to the actual situation. The interview questions focussed on what operational problems art museums are currently facing, the challenges to their operations, how they strike the balance between the enterprise and museums, and so on. Moreover, depending on their responses, I used different forms of discussion, including natural, informal or formal (Rapley, 2004).

As well as strengthening understanding of the incomplete picture of Chinese private art museums, material collected from interviews has been integrated into each chapter. These findings were combined with those of the other three research methods, and provided evidence for, and influence on, the final research findings.

Unstructured direct observation

As a qualitative research method, observation is used in two ways – structured and unstructured (Pretzlik, 1994). In contrast to the structured direct observations which result in quantitative data, unstructured direct observation looks at natural occurrences and provides qualitative data to understand and interpret cultural behaviour (Mulhall, 2003). Other limitations will apply to the in-depth interview method, such as the quality of the interview being affected by the status of the interviewee, or the interview setting. Therefore, I aim to address these limitations by adding the observation method.

Marshall and Rossman (1989, p.79) define the observation method as ‘the systematic description of events, behaviours, and artefacts in the social setting chosen for study’. Discoveries from this method have been incorporated into the findings of semi-structured interviews in the selected case examples, documenting of exhibitions, public engagement practices, audience reactions, and offer the visual and recorded text materials of selective art museums included in Chapters Two to Five. Cohen and Benjamin (2006) comment, ‘Observation fosters an in depth and rich understanding of a phenomenon, situation and/or setting and the behaviour of the participants in that setting’.

Compared with exhibition catalogues and other public engagement programs, exhibition preparations in the selected case examples have been a crucial source of in-depth observation, along with the critical observations of art museum visitors. Bryman (2015) argues that this research method lets the researcher devote a period of time to the institution, collecting data by observing behaviour, focussing on what is said between people, and putting forward questions.

The research process includes details of exhibition preparations, aspects of exhibition delivery, collection strategy, operation details by approach of participation, investigation and recording, finally formulating the intuitive recognition of the research issues. This research process is also helpful in the further assessment and evaluation of feasibility for the development of the particular types of private art museums which were built by real estate entrepreneurs.

The core parts of this research process are data collection and analysis. The processes utilised for data collection include interviews, observations and documentary analysis. The research data comes from the archives⁶, documents and the interview recordings that were collected in the case study through the in-depth interview and observation methods. Because of the nature of qualitative research, content analysis be used for

⁶ Archives referenced in the research are primary source documents which came from the accumulation over the course of art museums’ lifetimes, and are kept to record functions and activities of these selected cases.

identifying and labelling data after data collection. The content analysis process actually is a procedure for verbal and behavioural data categorisation, for classification, summarisation and tabulation (Hancock, Ockleford and Windridge, 2007). Through this research, the content analysis materials include the interviewees' responses; intimation, even inference, will be analysed in a more interpretive way. The content analysis process is divided into five steps:

- To organise the interview transcripts of interviews, as well as the observations, and take notes about what is relevant and of interest to the research questions.
- To clarify whether different categories can/can't be linked, and classify them as primary and secondary topics.
- To repeat the steps of classification and association until all transcripts are organised. Then consider the relation between them and link them with the research issues, and clearly sort out all the primary and secondary categories.
- To review the original recordings and confirm whether the remaining material should be added to the results.

The thesis consists of five chapters in total, which are structured around two lines of enquiry: 1) the context of private art museums' boom in Chinese urban regeneration; and 2) using four case studies of distinctly different art museums to investigate internal operations to external engagement, from birth to maturity, from 'bringing in' to 'going global' – each case representing a different context and type of art museum in order of the interactive relationship, knowledge production, art education with public engagement and the future trends. Therefore, it is important to look first at the socio-political contexts, and how the wave of social transition has motivated the rise of private art museums in China. Chapter One presents a review of the extensive urbanisation in China following the Reform and Opening-up and outlines specific policies of government intervention in launching the collaboration with private capital. This will help to locate my research in the practical and specific concerns of the Chinese situation from 2002 onwards. Mapping the property enterprises' addition to contemporary art, it

will discuss the reasons for the private art museum construction fever created by real estate enterprises from the late 1990s; and how developers gradually transformed into the establishment force of art museums. At the same time, classification for private art museums, based on my fieldwork in China, will be critically discussed in order to understand the impetus and catalyst of the art museum boom, which has relevance for the whole research.

In Chapter Two, focus is on the analysis and examination of the interactive relationships between art and real estate business in the context of art patronage. It uses the case study of Chi K11 Art Museum Shanghai to discuss the driving force, interactive paths and impacts of sponsorship. Through reviewing these interactive relationships, Chapter Three will further examine sustainable knowledge production and practice alongside the culture-led urban regeneration across different cities in China, taking into consideration the case study of OCT Contemporary Art Terminal. It will discuss the independent identity of the art museum, operational mechanisms for knowledge production, and the art museum chain. Together they will form a general framework to examine the local OCAT strategies used in the exhibitions and research projects in different cities. Moving from internal operation to external engagement, in Chapter Four, I investigate the Rockbund Art Museum (RAM) as a case study of art education – to explore the relationship between art education and publicly engaged art. In this chapter, public programs of different forms, both inside and outside of the institution, are discussed, with the aim of answering the following questions: what are the roles of art education and public engagement in the private art museums of real estate developments? And what is RAM's educational strategy with real estate investments? At this point, the concept of 'symbiotic space' for art education practice will be introduced through RAM's educational strategy, which has been used in various public programs, but more specifically through those programs which have taken place in the RAM exhibition hall. The chapter also reflects on the educational 'turn' in RAM, known as the art museum-school partnership, contextualised through the examination of educational practices inside and outside the art museum in collaboration with schools under the leadership of the state. Finally, for Chapter Five, Times Museum and Times Art Centre Berlin were selected for the discussion of 'local practice', 'global dialogue' and the future trends, as they use geography as a key idea in presenting and criticising

artistic practice. This chapter presents the southern characteristics of knowledge production, in response to rapid urban regeneration in South China. It also considers architecture as an experimental part of urbanisation; this will be critiqued through the concept of ‘symbiotic space’, alongside Rem Koolhaas’s architectural design concept of ‘space with exacerbated difference’. Furthermore, from ‘local’ to ‘global’, the overseas strategy of the Times Art Centre Berlin in relation to its cultural production and distribution will also be explored. Even though the Centre is the first parallel-institution in China, it has been determined that they have different degrees of impact on contemporary art in China, which will be clarified in Chapter Five. All four case-study chapters work together to demonstrate that China’s private art museums have been created and operate in a multitude of ways via a variety of real estate development projects.

Ethical Consideration

The case study is the main research method of my project, which means that my research involves real people as subjects of the research. The interviews with the practitioners within the field – the directors of art museums, real estate developers and art historians – are extremely important in gathering the primary literature. Due to the methodology of this research, face-to-face interviewing and participant-observations have been applied during the case study process. Consent was sought from each interviewee prior to their interview, and all interviews and observations were recorded with their permission. Whilst undertaking participant-observations, information was collected which related to the operational status of art museums – within this data collection process, it is possible that personally identifiable information about individuals would be included. Therefore, I have obtained the consent of the individuals for the use of images and written records. Great care has been given to ensure that Birmingham City University’s ethical requirements and Practice Policy Statement have been followed.

Secondly, throughout this study, I aim to undertake the research without prejudices and presumptions. My position in this study can be defined as an insider of the Chinese context, which decides how I would analyse the materials for the following interpretations and the findings. Compare with the outsider, I am more familiar with the research setting of China. Also, as a bilingual researcher, I act as a cultural native allow to recruit interviewees efficiently and also enable myself to benefit from the sense of identity and same language. However, as an insider, there is possibility to have limitation in analysing the materials from a cultural native perspective. Therefore, all the collected materials from the field works and online interviews are all recorded without language and cultural barriers. Finally, all the materials from the interviews was originally collected in Chinese Mandarin. To ensure the information clearly delivered and understood by readers, the translations were undertaken by myself and the translations were copy-edited by English native speakers. I tried to make the meaning accuracy and clear for the purpose of delivering the translation to readers.

CHAPTER ONE
**THE BIRTH OF REAL ESTATE-DRIVEN
ART MUSEUMS IN CHINA**

CHAPTER ONE

Private art museums are art zones born from the process of urban regeneration, and exist closely alongside the citizens they serve. Rather than providing a simple snapshot, this chapter introduces and discusses private art museums within the context of Chinese urbanisation. In order to explore the operational mechanisms, knowledge production and distribution of real estate private art museums, it is first necessary to clarify the background against which these institutions were established. Discussion will then take into consideration urban regeneration and the subsequent development of contemporary art which resulted from the explosive economy, and how real-estate private art museums emerged from the multi-force environment following the Reform and Opening-up.

In order to clarify the social context, this chapter begins by revealing the capital and political resources behind the contemporary art collections that were the rapidly accumulated assets of China's economic reform. The second section then goes on to clarify the evolution of real estate-driven private art museums alongside urbanisation. Through the process of urban regeneration, the government's policy of promoting the development of cultural industries has not only led to the renewal of old industrial regions, but the promotion of culture-led regeneration policies can also be directly linked to the construction of private art museums. Additionally, the Urbanisation Development Policy has encouraged real estate developers to carry out comprehensive development; and for this purpose, art museums are operated as infrastructures for

urban and economic development. In this section I will also consider the ways in which the cultural estate meets the growth of cultural needs and changing values during the social transformation. In the third section, the reasons behind the collection and dissemination of contemporary art by real estate businessmen will be discussed. In the fourth section, I will chronologically outline three types of real estate art museums, supported by specific cases from my fieldwork. As representative examples, the history of these establishments and their operational characteristics will be presented.

Generally, my thesis focusses mainly on the private art museums which are the investments of property developers in a specific period in China – i.e. real estate private art museums which are the fruit of the specific economic and cultural policies evolved from the Reform and Opening-up since the 1980s. Thus, in this chapter I clarify the discussion context of urban regeneration; and take a critical look at the evolution of real estate-driven art museums over a 20 years span, dividing them into different types based on the commercial activity of the real estate enterprise. This discussion will provide a picture of the complex economic and cultural background of the time, against which the impetus and catalyst of establishment of real estate-driven art museums can be explored in the following chapters.

1.1 Social transition after the Reform and Opening-up: social context

A major turning point for the PRC as the death of Mao Zedong in 1976. Since then, the Communist Party of China (CPC) has been in power with a central symbolic leader, up until Deng Xiaoping came to the helm. From the time of Mao, through to Deng, economic systems and social structures have undergone significant changes. Naughton (2008, pp.91-135) points out: ‘there was a wide agreement among China’s political elite about the need for economic change, without any clear sense of reform direction’. Under such circumstances, reformists within the CPC, led by Deng Xiaoping, initiated the Reform and Opening-up in December 1978.



Figure 1.1: Changes in the city of Shenzhen before and after the Reform and Opening-up policy. (Courtesy of Li Changyong and Mao Siqian, 2018.)

China's post-1978 economic reforms were mainly Socialist in nature, however they had distinct Chinese characteristics. The transition of the market economy was undertaken in different stages: in the first stage of reform, the *nouveau riche* rapidly accumulated wealth as a direct benefit of the 30 years of economic reforms; and from the late 1970s to the early 1980s, the state gave permission for the self-employed to operate businesses, despite that fact that most industries were state-owned. During the second stage of reform, from the late 1980s to the 1990s, the private sector saw extraordinary growth, accounting for as much as 70% of China's gross domestic product by 2005 (Engardio, 2015). According to Brandt and Rawski's studies (2008), emphasis on (or omission of) praise for 'small and medium enterprises' or 'enterprise restructuring' was interpreted as high-level encouragement of (or caution against) policies favouring private business or accelerated privatisation of state-owned enterprises. Meanwhile, in similar fashion, Deng Xiaoping put forward the famous slogan 'let some people get rich first', as the

country struggled to get rid of the shackles of Maoist egalitarianism. During these 30 years, the country experienced industrial restrictions, market expansion and improvement of living standards. As a result, the overall performance of national economy experienced rapid development, especially in individuals' wealth. Compared to the period before the Reform and Opening-up, from 1978 to 2005 total productivity grew at an annual rate of 3.8%, and accounted for 40% of overall growth during this period (Perkins and Rawski, 2008). The economic transition of China clearly boosted overall economic growth, and this economic expansion was accompanied by the appearance of the newly wealthy. More relevantly, the economic policy actively promoted individual wealth, which led to private art museum construction fever; whether operating as individuals or enterprises, abundant capital was poured into art collections and art museums. Thus, it can be seen that private art museums are a direct cultural outcome which emerged from the Reform and Opening-up. The flourishing phenomenon of private art museums continues to conform with the PRC's economic status, and the prosperity of private art museums – especially those that are real estate-driven – has a close relationship with the macroeconomic trends in China.

Following the Reform and Opening-up, the picture of urban construction in China changed dramatically, with notable urbanisation and development. Since 1978, urbanisation has experienced a sharp rise of 0.93% per year, and continues to steadily speed up (Fang, 2009). As a result of the rapid urbanisation which followed the economic reforms, Chinese social structure underwent large-scale reconstruction. The largest human migration ever to take place occurred in China, with people relocating from rural areas to the cities. Urban living rapidly became preferential, and it is estimated that the overall urban population of China will reach 1.2 billion by the mid-twenty-first century. Additionally, the redistribution of workers led to increased employment, better salaries and improved living standards – all of which are regarded as achievements of the economic transition. It has been demonstrated by the World Bank that, between 1980 and 2004, China moved from the leading ranks of the low-income group to the middle or even upper echelon of the middle-income group (Heston

and Sicular, 2008). It is this wave of social transition that offered potential audiences for private art museums, and made it possible for their construction and operation within China's cities.

However, the inescapable phenomenon that followed this explosive urbanisation was unbalanced supply and demand – to such an extent that there was a major bottleneck which caused serious delays to the development of infrastructure and public services, and even restrictions to urbanisation itself. Generally, at an international level, infrastructure construction is undertaken by the government and the market working together, with finance from diverse channels. The average percentage of infrastructure construction undertaken by local governments in developed countries is 35%, dropping to an average of 13% in developing countries; however, in China, the government undertook more than half of city construction, with the result that private capital was excluded from infrastructure construction (National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2012). According to the Central Bank, from 2002 to 2011, the social financing in China increased from £224 billion to £1.4 trillion. Although the general trend appears to have increased, private capital has failed to invest effectively in infrastructure. Therefore, there is an important issue in that the government offers a wide range of infrastructure financing channels for the purpose of meeting the increased funding needs of urban development.

As the World Bank Group (2015) reports, urban infrastructure – including schools, hospitals, art museums, etc. – have, until recently, been treated as social welfare services which require long-term investment by the government of the PRC. Most certainly, infrastructure and social welfare rely upon central capital support, which poses a serious challenge for the state within the context of explosive urbanisation: with the rapidly urbanised population, the government can no longer provide sole support for urban infrastructure development.

Therefore, the introduction of a market-based approach into the urban construction was required in order to meet the urgent needs of social welfare. As a result, public-private partnerships (PPP) began to be accepted, alongside various approaches towards infrastructure construction, with the purpose of attracting state capital – and the strong operational capabilities associated with it – in order to accelerate infrastructure development. President Xi Jinping stipulates that the government should make full use of the abundant private capital in Zhejiang Province, and widely attract funds for the purpose of diversifying investment in infrastructure construction. In the long run, it is not sufficient for urban development to be solely dependent on government investment; therefore, a multi-pronged approach must be taken in order to maintain sustained, rapid and sound economic growth. One of the most important aspects is to fully mobilise the enthusiasm of private investors, expand the private investment scale and create an endogenous mechanism of economic growth.

After the state advocated the PPP, various approaches provided viable solutions to the rapid population growth in urban China. All kinds of enterprises, including large-scale trans-national corporations, state-owned companies and locally-based companies, mobilised their own financial capabilities, technologies and expertise, for the purpose of improving the citizens' welfare. It is worth mentioning that the private sector organisations involved in these win-win partnerships were only granted management rights, they did not retain ownership. In terms of private art museum development – with the exception of the fully real estate-driven art museums – developers prefer to use the PPP mode as a part of urban infrastructure provided for citizens. After taking over half a century to achieve the medium stage of urbanisation, China's urban development is expected to continue into the mature stage (Fang, 2009); more certainly, urbanisation will continue in China in the near future. The trend contains two aspects relevant to this research: firstly, the PPP have become the main approach towards urban infrastructure construction in China; secondly, as an important part of urban cultural infrastructure, greater numbers of private art museums will be established and operate as PPP during the culture-led regeneration process. Furthermore, most of their investors

are real estate developers, for instance, the Powerlong Museum Shanghai is the first PPP project to be undertaken by a real estate-orientated company – the Powerlong Group – in order to boost the cultural construction of Shanghai. However, despite the £22 million funding provided by the company, ownership of the museum is attributed to the local government, alongside temporary management rights which will belong to Powerlong Group for just twenty years.

Li Jing, the former Operation Director of the Powerlong Museum, explained:

Geographically, Powerlong Museum is just across the street from Qibao Powerlong Mall. As a business strategy, Powerlong Museum was invested as a part of cultural and commercial real estate development purpose. The mall can be seen as an art-related shopping mall. As for Minhang District Government, the aim is to enhance the artistic and cultural environment and the living quality of the region.⁷



Figure 1.2: Aerial view of the Powerlong Museum and Qibao Powerlong Mall. (Courtesy of the Paper, 2017.)

As Li Jing noted, despite the fact that the Powerlong Group invested funds as well as human resources into the PPP program, the company was only given the operation

⁷ Interview with Li Jing, 17 May 2017, Shanghai.

rights for a limited period of time, and without overall ownership. Arguably, above all, I would agree that those enterprises who participated in urban infrastructure construction did so not only in a spirit of corporate social responsibility but also in order to maintain their long-term relationships with local government. This two-way cooperation was also reflected in rising land prices – a topic will be discussed in further detail in the following chapters.

Inevitably, a rapidly increasing urban population demands a greater number of residential properties. As more and more people migrated to cities, the housing supply was unable to keep up with the urbanisation process, causing a serious shortage of housing in many urban areas. Before the Reform and Opening-up, urban housing was mainly invested in and constructed by the government. In 1949 the per capita living space in urban areas was 6,912 square inches, by 1978 this had dropped to 5,616 square inches; 8.69 million people were without housing, accounting for 47.5% of the total urban population at that time (Chai, 2008) – clearly, there was an urgent need for additional housing in urban China. Promoted by the state, China's Urban Housing Revolution and Land Use Reforms revitalised the real estate industry, and the housing market experienced explosive development in the 20 years following the Reform and Opening-up. According to the Report Outline of National Construction in 1980, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China implemented housing commercialisation policies to allow the construction and sale of private domestic properties; not only were newly-built residences available for sale but existing housing was also purchasable. The theme of 13th Party Congress in October 1987 centred around propositions to set up the property market, and in the following year (March 1988) the Report on the Work of the Government brought forward a clear direction for real estate development that encouraged compensated transfer of land-use rights. This indicated that the state had clarified the position and the role of the real estate market, and had positively promoted the development of the real estate market. Under these favourable central government policies, real estate enterprises became the main participant in the enormous urbanisation movement in China.

In order to solve the significant problems emerging from the urbanisation process, the CPC and the State Council – the country’s Cabinet – promulgated the China Urbanisation Plan for 2014-2020 in 2013⁸, proposing a number of options to further promote the new urbanisation policy. Among them, were various strategies for optimising the urban function and layout, including how to upgrade and strengthen cultural facilities. An additional aim of the Chinese government was to accelerate the development of small and medium-sized cities with competitive advantages, such as leisure travel and cultural heritage, so as to continue pushing forward industry transformation and to improve low-quality urbanisation. Real estate enterprises were encouraged to join in the process of urbanisation as a key element, whilst the government generated financial revenue from property companies through land transfer and mortgages. In this way, the development and construction of urban infrastructure was accelerated and strengthened, and the land prices were subsequent driven up. Enterprises also received enormous social benefits from this land movement, however, these were not only in the form of income. Zheng et al. (2014) positively discuss the Chinese land management model, suggesting that ‘making money by land, raise land by money’ is a core characteristic of the investment and financing system in China’s urban and economic development. They suggest that the main source of infrastructure construction funding in many cities was provided by ‘land financing’ through the combination of ‘land sale revenue’ and ‘land mortgage’. Infrastructure investments have not only improved urban environments and, subsequently, quality of life for their many residents, but these actions also continue to push up land prices – a factor which will ultimately benefit local government in the future as they continue to receive increased land sale revenues. This kind of ‘self-reinforcing positive feedback relationship’ is an inevitable choice for local governments at a time when they are

⁸ China’s State Council released the New Urbanization Policy 2014–2020, which details a coordinated, top-down effort to address issues concerning the quality of life of urban residents. The policy has made significant changes and has influenced the course of urbanisation in China.

struggling with financial revenue and is a reflection of how the culture-led regeneration strategy works in the Chinese context.

Arguably, the vast majority of real estate enterprises are formulating corporate strategies which have a close relationship with the new national urbanisation policy. The new urbanisation policy encourages real estate developers to carry out comprehensive development; and it can be seen that, within this ongoing engagement, art museums are vital to infrastructure expansion, especially given their connection to the urban cultural environment and an enhanced quality of life. As part of the trend where business and residential property developments are combined with the operation of art museums, they have also become indispensable cultural elements within commercial developments; it is foreseeable that if the new urbanisation policy continues to be promoted, this model will become a real estate development trend in China. As one of the represented study cases in this research, the OCT Contemporary Art Terminal (OCAT), sponsored by the OCT Group, is a direct outcome of this policy. Currently, the OCAT is laying foundations for a group of contemporary art museums across China – combining real estate development with art museums across several cities. Through analysis of this project, it can be seen that the OCT Group is creating a large number of cultural real estate ventures that integrate residential real estate with art museums. The OCT Group strategy has closely followed that of the new urbanisation policy, which proposes the collaborative model between culture, tourism and urban development – which has become a mature model for the majority of property developers to follow in establishing comprehensive PPP developments within the PRC.

1.2 Urban regeneration background of real estate-driven art museum development

The post-industrial society has witnessed widespread deindustrialisation and a growing knowledge economy, as the service sector became the predominant industry. In this

section, I will mainly focus upon the urban regeneration background of real estate-driven art museums which were constructed in the post-industrial era. The culture-led urban regeneration strategies developed by businessmen – as the investors in real estate-driven art museums – will be also clarified in this section.

As pointed out in *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society*, by the American sociologist Daniel Bell (1976), the focus of economic development in the post-industrial society shifted from the manufacturing sector to the service sector. This stage of societal development followed distinctive characteristics, including economic transition and movement from the production of goods to the provision of services. Knowledge became one of the key elements of valued capital; scientists, information technology (IT) professionals and designers grew in status, in contrast to the declining importance of manual labour.

As seen in Section 1.1, in the 30 years following the Reform and Opening-up of 1978, some individuals accumulated great wealth and were able to establish a solid capital foundation for the collection of art assets. More recently, China has experienced a deceleration of economic development after the ‘double-digit growth’ fever of previous years, symbolising a move to a post-industrial society. According to the statistics, in 2006 the added value of the industrial sector began to steady decline after fifty years of sustained growth; by 2016, the economy witnessed a GDP growth of just 6.7%, the weakest since 1990. The industrial added value in the GDP dropped from a peak of 41.8% in 2006 to 33.8% in 2015, with an average annual decrease of 1.45% (Notional Bureau of Statistics of China, 2016). In contrast to this trend, the added value of the service sector in the GDP of 2005 was 41.4%, increasing to 50.5% in 2015, with an average annual increase of 1.26%; it is estimated that by 2020 it will account for 56% of the GDP. Additionally, total employment within the service sector rose from 263 million in 2010 to 328 million by 2015, averaging an annual increase of 13 million (Notional Bureau of Statistics of China, 2016). The rise of China’s post-industrial society came after the deceleration of industrialisation, and the added value and

employment rate of the service sector quickly overwhelmed the manufacturing sector. It is also arguable that China is experiencing industrial transformation, alongside a shift from the manufacturing sector to the service sector – the service industry has now become the main driving force of China's economic growth as it enters the post-industrial era (Hu, 2017; Wen, 2010; Li, 2013; Chi, 2014; Xia and Ni, 2016).

However, the post-industrial era has meant that large former industrial areas within cities have been effectively turned into wasteland. Alongside the socioeconomic transformation, the ongoing deindustrialisation has initiated various levels of culture-led regeneration within Chinese cities; transitions of industrial heritage have taken place and evolved into a modern pattern. Indeed, the readjustment of the economic structure will continue to lead to changes in social structure, urban hardware and software facilities, all of which are guaranteed by construction or reconstruction. Although post-industrial cities have created economic burdens and urban safety issues for the Chinese central government, they also provide redevelopment opportunities for urban developers. It is through urban regeneration and the move towards the knowledge economy that the need for various types of living, working and casual spaces is created. Against the background of the growing knowledge economy – instead of the demise of industrial heritage – the abandoned factories are converted into forms of value, directed by the cultural-led urban regeneration strategy.

As discussed in the introduction chapter, urban regeneration can be defined as a strategy where the state or local community seeks to bring back investment and consumption and enhance the quality of life within an urban area (Couch, 1990). Following urban regeneration, culture has been used as a development strategy for activating regional economies, effectively acting as a means to attract investment (Keating and Frantz, 2004). Crucially, the important driving force for regeneration through culture has been the development of a post-industrial economy (Jones and Evans, 2013). As defined in this research, culture-led regeneration – which has embraced the post-industrial era and the knowledge economy – means that art museums are fully integrated into an area

regeneration strategy; where art museums are a tool to collaborate with real estate development, and are indissoluble from a way of living, shopping and using social space. Culture-led regeneration is increasingly seen as the strategy for achieving economically competitive urban revival, especially in the Chinese context.

The key driver for knowledge economy prosperity is the ability to attract individuals working in key growth industries such as IT, design and arts, etc. Florida (2002) noted that only those places able to attract what he calls ‘the creative class’ will prosper in the knowledge economy. In this context, this emergent class refers to individuals who are employed in ‘science and engineering, architecture and design, education, arts, music and entertainment’ – those who are educated and with high aspirations. Florida suggested that, in stark contrast to the manufacturing sector workers, ‘the creative class’ are seeking an ‘experiential lifestyle’, with emphasis on non-corporate individuality, self-expression and an openness to differences. Thus, the main focus of culture-led urban regeneration is to offer these kinds of working and living environments in order to attract these individuals. Florida (2002) further developed the idea of the knowledge economy development, and argued that it is not only landmarks and cultural resources that are required but also the formation of cultural clusters, which play a significant role in the lives of creative individuals. Culture clusters in the post-industrial city offer a creative environment in which the creative class can live and work, and are, therefore, extremely important in contributing to the knowledge economy. Myerscough (1988) explained in *The Economic Importance of the Arts in Britain* that: ‘a strong arts infrastructure is a business asset for a region’ as the footloose managerial-professionals required by big business were ‘heavy consumers of the arts’, rating it second only to ‘pleasant countryside’ as a factor which would make them want to live and work in a region’. As Jones and Evans (2013) noted:

cluster in urban areas that provide cultural consumption destinations when the urban primary industry mainly dominance by the service industries: within the new economy a range of attributes are desirable. In order to

attract business and visitor, cities seek to establish cultural pursuits such as theatres and arts, shopping facilities, sports and conference facilities and an attractive living environment.

The key driving forces of cultural clustering strategies are twofold: 1) internal motivation – for meeting the needs of ‘the creative class’ with particular working and living environments, whilst also gradually transitioning industries into the service sector in the post-industrial era; 2) external motivation – the government acknowledges the importance of promoting creative industries within the process of urban regeneration. The Mapping Document of Creative Industries Task Force in 1998 in the UK promoted integrated creative strategies in the United Kingdom (UK) in order to develop cultural industries and to support creative entrepreneurship in an urban process (Jarvis et al., 2009). Recently, the central government have begun to take on board the idea of a creative industry promoted by the urban regeneration process.

To illustrate internal motivation, an example of cultural clustering can be found in the strategies of the OCT Group in the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone. As part of urban regeneration strategies led by government in the late 1990s, the industrial park reconstruction project was developed during the urban transformation of Shenzhen in order to revitalise the industrial areas of the city. OCT-LOFT is a park located east of Shenzhen’s original industrial zone and covers an area of about 230,400,000 square inches. In the late 1980s, this area was predominantly made up of industrial and manufacturing enterprises, however, by the late 1990s, these businesses had gradually moved away from the OCT park as Shenzhen underwent a transition of its industrial structure. Karen Smith, Director of OCAT Contemporary Art Museum Xi’an, explained:

The industrial park got environmental pollution of factories that required to relocated from the original industries. In addition, the property prices of the OCT Group in the surrounding areas had risen already at that time;

they were unwilling to own the property nearby the factories. Whilst, creative industry began to promote when it was still a punch-drunk idea, yet we have been witnessed the industrial area revival after lots of artists moved into abandoned factories in the United States and the United Kingdom. It was apparent that the Chinese government would like to catch up with the opportunities of creative industry, therefore the government assigned political mission for OCT Group that transformation of the old industrial area. Instead of becoming obsolete, performance in the leading role, the OCAT Shenzhen Museum adventure of the industrial park. After that, cultural activities, design festival and the activities relevant to the creative industry arrived this park continuously.⁹

Whilst OCT-LOFT has been formulated under the policy guidance of Shenzhen government, capital investment has been provided by enterprises with real estate investment backgrounds. So far, the OCT park has brought together over 150 creative businesses, including art and design studios, galleries and concept restaurants, and has become a place full of vigour and opportunity. Li Yusha, director of the executive department in OCAT, commented that, currently, the rents in the OCT park are consistent with those of high-grade office buildings in the city centre.¹⁰ With its city centre location, the park has not only provided a solid foundation for a creative industry hub but has also attracted ‘the creative class’, with the result that it has become a highly centralised cultural and creative gathering in Shenzhen. The regeneration of the OCT park can be seen as a fruitful partnership between urban redevelopment and artistic and cultural activities.

In analysing the transition of the OCT park, it can be seen that during the process of culture-led urban regeneration, the creative industry was held in high esteem by Chinese central government as it directly promoted the renewal of old industrial regions.

⁹ Interview with Karen Smith, 18 May 2017, Shanghai.

¹⁰ Interview with Li Yusha, 16 August 2017, Shenzhen.

Private art museums have proved indispensable within cultural infrastructure construction, as they offer a place for cultural consumption by ‘the creative class’. Over the last 20 years, this kind of regeneration has become increasingly common in China; for example, the 798 Art District in Beijing, and Redtory in Guangzhou, have transitioned from abandoned factories to cultural hubs under the guidance of culture-led regeneration policies.

Urban regeneration was promoted by the Reform and Opening-up policy and, acting as an external motivator, constituted the Chinese characteristic of art museums being set-up by property entrepreneurs. Cities in China experienced rapid and extensive urbanisation. ‘Property marketers, acting as key players in urban regeneration, provided the emergence of new instruments in terms of land and property market, urban design, urban policies and economics in the planning agenda’ (Tasan-Kok and Beaten, 2011). Real estate developers called themselves businessman of urban management (*Chengshi yunying shang*). *Chengshi yunying* was a version of urban entrepreneurialism, with a clear purpose to ‘create value in the city’. Here, ‘value’ particularly related to property value, and the way to create property value was to follow the logic of the real-estate market (Hsing, 2010). In terms of Chinese urban development, Zhang (2004) states that the majority of cities experienced a comprehensive improvement in housing quality, with the Land and Housing Reforms promoted by the rapid economic development at the end of the twentieth century. Profitable land contract deals were arrangements between local government and property enterprises, and, under the guidance put forward by the Chinese central government to promote rapid construction, an increasing number of real-estate driven art museums were set up within regenerating cities. Clearly, within this ‘Chinese museum fever’, the relationships between local governments and enterprises were close and developed into long-term partnerships: yet, this only tells part of the story.

The win-win benefits for the property enterprise are clear: some businessmen obtained land-use rights in the name of art museum development, and, in a sense, this situation

created a property craze for entrepreneurs and business men to build their own personal museums. What's more, land prices rose due to the investment in real estate relevant to culture and art, which then subsequently promoted an increase in the value of surrounding areas. An example of this can be seen in West Bund Shanghai – it was positioned as comprehensive development program featuring art museums, fine art storage, and a zone for cultural and art pilot schemes, all of which were highly attractive to the increasing number of wealthy citizens addicted to cultural consumption. Subsequent to development, house prices in the Xuhui district rose sharply to an average of £1,100 per square foot.

For the government, profitable constructions provided revenue directly from the residents and visitors created by urban regeneration, whilst the actual need to upgrade cultural infrastructure was met by lucrative investment. The property developments behind private art museum fever were closely tied to the central government's strong desire to upgrade China's cultural soft power¹¹. As such, the joint initiatives between real estate and art museums were a required condition for culture-led regeneration.

As the main participants, property developers regarded art museum operation as an art patronage strategy to face the emerging cultural demand of customers. Communities were built with additional facilities – the location of the art museum always being in close proximity. The Today Art Museum, Sifang Art Museum and the OCAT are all within a stone's throw of the enterprise-owned real estate property; there are also art museums living in the heart of real estate projects, such as K11 and the Times Museum.

Generally, developments which included art museum operation alongside the property construction were created in one of three styles. The first type – a wave of garden-like residential communities, often known as 'civilised community' (*wenming shequ*) – was

¹¹ According to Qin (2004), the Chinese governments at various levels has worked hard to set up cultural infrastructure, such as art museums and exhibition halls to shift its focus from economic reform to pursuing cultural cosmopolitanism since the 1980s.

developed to meet citizens' rising needs and desires for cultural and artistic consumption to be offered near to their living areas. Thus, art museums became one of the natural outcomes in the urban regeneration process led by *chengshi yunying shang*. Secondly, art museums based were within a comprehensive development – as a mixed-used area – bringing together different cultural and commercial elements such as art museums, artist studios, art hotels and condominiums; this could be either a creative park or skyscraper, depending on the project's location. Thirdly, art museum 'hides' – usually located on a single floor of the shopping mall as part of a collaborative project with commercial tenants, where pieces of public art or display windows were set up according to the retail business type.

In China, the evolution of real estate driven-art museums was generated in two ways: firstly, the PPP programs operating between the government and real estate enterprises, as previously mentioned. Not only did these partnerships have capital strength – allowing them to build their art collections – but they also had close contact and communication with the government; advantages which allowed them to establish personal art museums. The second method of investment that gave rise to art museums was pioneered by the property developers, who invested in and operated museums and property projects solely by themselves. It should be noted that the growth of art museums which have received investment from real estate businesses has followed the development of property projects over a number of different cities. As Li Jing said, the location and gross floor area of the art museum depends on the property project they are closely tied up with, as can be seen in the business of the Times Group and the OCT Group.¹² Thus, the positioning and operational targets of the property project are of considerable referential importance when looking at the distribution rule and development trend of art museums, as they are somewhat interwoven.

¹² Interview with Li Jing, 17 May 2017, Shanghai.

In terms of the distribution of art museums invested in by real estate developers: major Chinese cities such as Beijing, Guangzhou and Shanghai hold 73% of the country's private art museums (Larry's List Ltd and AMMA, 2016, p.35). Shanghai's private art museum boom was brought about by the local government's policies of cultural promotion. In the Thirteen Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development in Shanghai, the local government listed the cultural and arts industry as the main direction for immediate development in order to support the construction of private art museums, such as the Shanghai West Bund Cultural Corridor (Shanghai Metropolitan Government, 2016). The local government also offered the use of land free of charge to the Long Museum and the Yuz Museum. Gradually, the West Bund region of the city became the cultural hub for artists, collectors and visitors.

As we can see, the preferential policies on art museum construction should not be ignored, as they played an important role in creating these museums in China. As discussed in Section 1.1, new urbanisation policies were put forward by the Chinese central government – many property enterprises then generated strategies in reference to this policy. It is predicted that art museums – as cultural facilities sponsored by private capital – are desirous in meeting the emerging functional demands of small and medium-sized cities. This tendency indicates that in the future, art museums will not only be established in the cosmopolitan cities, but also will show up alongside property project developments in an increasing number of small and medium-sized cities. For my research, this stresses the rationality that art museums established by property developers are a cultural outcome directed by the culture-led urban regeneration process.

1.3 Property enterprises' development of contemporary art

China has a venerable tradition of collecting history (He, 2000). Since the earliest dynastic periods, government officials and elites had already amassed collections (Tong,

1995); Imperial emperors were addicted to art collections since the 1st century AD. It has been suggested that the imperial art collections have played a crucial role in constituting the main body of collecting history in China, and they have a prominent cultural and political function. The possession of the early palace treasures legitimised political rule in the empire, a function inherited by the later art collections (Lothar, 1978). To the emperor, the imperial collection was one of ways that guaranteed the legitimacy of the imperial rule, rather than merely for the purpose of collecting, as it were. In this sense, objects in the imperial art collections became the performance of power. Arguably, the imperial collection of artworks – which was believed to show the taste of emperor – was a symbol of rights and social class that kept the ruling elite apart from the public.

In 1949, the CCP occupied the territories of modern China, and the central government of China began to set up the first public art museum, the National Art Museum of China, which was established in 1958. Up until the end of the 20th century, public art museums and private art museums were jointly developed in China; however, public art museums under the control of the central government took the leading role and, to some extent, became a mouthpiece for propaganda. The collection and exhibition of art in China – from the feudal society of imperial China to the contemporary era – gradually became politicised and contemporary art was driven out of official exhibition spaces. Artworks in public art institutions were selected to evoke Communist values, and most of the collections and exhibitions upheld and promoted Communist ideology. With the forceful increase of Communism and Marxist ideology, artistic expression gradually became subordinate to political ideals following the establishment of the PRC (Varutti, 2014). Wu Hung (2012) also argues that there was no distinction between art, life and politics in the Maoist aesthetic. Galikowski (1998) states that ‘After 1949, the Chinese Communist Party became the exclusive arbiter of cultural policy throughout the country’. Contemporary art in China was played out against an extensively politicised background. Remarkably, in 1979, after receiving a rejection for the use of public art space, the Star Art Exhibition, curated by the Stars Art Group, exhibited without

permission on the railings of the National Art Museum of China. The China/Avant-Garde exhibition of 1989 is generally considered as a ground-breaking moment in contemporary Chinese art history, it was also the first time that contemporary art appeared at the National Art Museum of China. The artist Xiao Lu shot her own work, *Dialogue*, with a pellet gun and the exhibition only lasted for two hours (Lu, 2010). Due to the ideology directed by the ruling party, there have since been few public cultural institutions that have presented contemporary artwork. Wu (2000) described the China/Avant-Garde exhibition as ‘a grand but temporary event--another triumphant moment of “take over” a primary official art institution’. The 1989 exhibition was one of the few shown in an official art institution within 30 years of the Reform and Opening-up. Because the ruling party established the art standards for maintaining political ideology, it meant that the art ecosystem could not support contemporary art and help artists to develop and grow; thus, during this period, in which Chinese public art museums acted as a propaganda mouthpiece of the ruling party, contemporary art seldom appeared.

However, Lu (2000) clarified that contemporary art collections owned by private collectors acted as important social resources for the new world of art museums in China. After private property was protected and added to the Constitution of the PRC, it became an inevitable trend that part of these collections would be converted into private collections under the socialist market economy. As a result of the liberalisation of the economic system, fuelled by the Reform and Opening-up, contemporary China underwent a revival of private collections. The private collectors make a transition from ‘collect’ to ‘collect but not hide’. Flath (2002) argues that ‘the state is still seeking to divest itself of both the ideological and economic complexities of public history by turning management over to the private sector’. Therefore, in the modern-day trend, private collections have become a popular phenomenon, increasingly promoted by a widening group of wealthy private entrepreneurs (Song, 2008). Varutti (2014) mentioned that ‘Notional legislation on cultural relics (notably the Law of 2002) not only allows private individuals to collect cultural relics but also encourages private

initiative in the domain of trade in cultural relics'. More recently, contemporary collections have been making a big push due to the revival of the private sector and the legislation released by the government.

The Private Art Museum Report (2016), which discussed art collectors and their role versus responsibility, regarded them as key players in the art market; promoting contemporary art and public engagement through their strong capital abilities and social resources (Larry's List Ltd and AMMA, 2016). In terms of motivation behind art collecting: most collectors were businessmen who wished to improve their social responsibilities by converting their fortunes in a tasteful and philanthropic way (Varutti, 2014). However, compared to those who collected art pieces only, collectors who self-invested in art museums applied to contemporary art were able to deliver greater benefits. The report concludes that 'owning a private museum also helps collectors to gain better access to world-class works from artists in demand and blue-chip artists' (Larry's List Ltd and AMMA, 2016). For example, a Belgian art collector Walter Vanhaerents, who set up the Vanhaerents Art Collection, argues that operation of a private art museum offers great opportunities for accessing high quality artworks though making collections public. Vanhaerents was given the opportunity to collect various Matthew Day Jackson's artworks because the collector and the artist shared similar views on how the collection should be run (Larry's List Ltd and AMMA, 2016). This private collecting fever did not immediately translate into a rapid increase in private art museum construction, but rather it began to gain momentum in the late 1990s.

Following the economic reform and the promulgation of the regulations alongside art collection fever, the art market underwent tremendous changes in 2010. It experienced nearly 1,000 times the volume expansion, providing more collections and opportunities for some private collectors (AMMA, 2012). An increasing number of prosperous philanthropists and patrons – whose wealth rapidly accumulated as a result of economic reform policies – have chosen to 'collect and not hide', housing a large number of collections in art museums which are open to the public: something which is now

becoming a trend, although it should be noted that art collectors have different ways of transferring collections into the public sphere. Undoubtedly, Uli Sigg and his unrivalled art collections are the best demonstration of one method of art patronage.¹³ With the most comprehensive assemblage of Chinese contemporary art from the late 1970s to present, Uli Sigg is considered to have the largest systematic art collection, including paintings, sculptures, installations, photography, videos and paper cuttings. From the early 1990s, it was systematically organised into art museum-level collections, fully demonstrating the development of Chinese contemporary art. Unexpectedly, however, rather than setting up a private art museum, Sigg donated his 1,463 items to Hong Kong's M+ Museum as a permanent collection in 2012; these donations now form the main part of the art museum's collection.

In comparison with the way in which donations were previously made to public art museums, from the late 1990s, the construction of self-operated art museums can be seen as the method of mainstream art patronage in China. As the top Chinese art collectors, the auction record-breaking couple, Liu Yiqian and Wang Wei announced the establishment of three Long Museums (as shown in Figures 1.3 and 1.4) which opened in Shanghai and Chengdu within a four year period, and which boast China's largest private art collections. Liu Yiqian is a billionaire investor, who made his fortune by investing in the real estate business, stock trading and pharmaceuticals. With multiple world record-breaking auctions, Liu Yiqian and Wang Wei are full of ambition and plan to set up a Chinese version of the Guggenheim Museum. They have amassed a wealth of collections which cover Chinese traditional and modern art, as well as Asian and European contemporary art. Among these, are the 'red classics' collections which are not even available in the National Museum of China (as shown in Figure 1.4). Rather than simply housing them in the museum, Wang Wei paid great attention to promoting the collections and endorsed detailed research, such as *The Revolutionary Era*, edited by Chen Lusheng, deputy director of the National Museum of China.

¹³ Also, it should be noted that the White Rabbit Collection is one of the largest private collections of Chinese contemporary art in the world.



Figure 1.3: The building of the Shanghai Long Museum (West Bund). (Courtesy of Shengliang Su, 2014.)

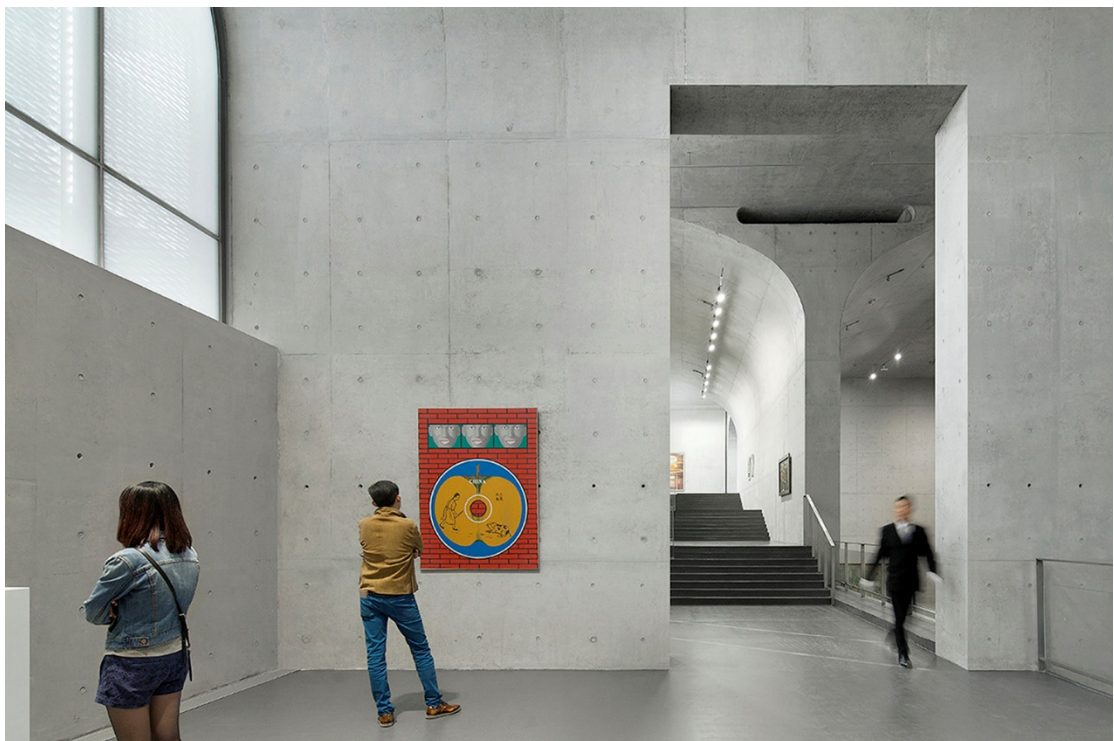


Figure 1.4: Exhibition hall of the Shanghai Long Museum (West Bund). (Courtesy of Xia Zhi, 2014.)

Liu and Wang are not the only special case, riding on the wave of the Reform and Opening-up, other entrepreneurs, who built their fortunes through real estate property, devoted their art collections to contemporary art. The large dividends collected from real estate property offer enterprises and entrepreneurs the capital ability to collect artwork. Businessmen within urban management offered a variety of contemporary art sponsorships through real estate development projects in the process of urban regeneration. As the economy shifted from basic industry to consumer industry in 1992 – alongside the cessation of the distribution of free residential assets by legislation in 1998 – real estate enterprises were able to accumulate capital during this social transition, enabling them to providing sponsorship to contemporary art by means of significant financial contributions. An explicit example of the evolution of Chinese contemporary art collections funded by real estate enterprises can be first found in the Shenzhen Donghui Co. Ltd. Creating the earliest contemporary art collection collated by real estate enterprise in 1992, Donghui Co. Ltd. collected 27 oil paintings from the 1990 Biennial Art Fair, including works by Wang Guangyi, Zhang Xiaogang, and Ye Yongqing, for £110,000 (Lu, 2014). The enterprise was a great boost for art collections, and a series of arts sponsorships of various kinds then followed this model.

Investors and curators utilised real estate funds or took advantage of the creativity of contemporary art for different purposes, and exhibitions of contemporary art became the norm in the early 21st century (Lu, 2014). In *Contemporary Art in 21st Century China 2000-2010*, Lu Peng discussed how contemporary art and real estate were closely interwoven from 1995 to 2005. I would argue that real estate investment and intervention in contemporary art occurred according to various methods of interaction. Firstly, as discussed above, real estate developers were engaged in the contemporary art investment in the early stage. This phenomenon could be seen in the leading real estate companies, such as the China Poly Group Corporation and the Wanda Group, who were frequent buyers at various auctions. For instance, in 2007, real estate investors bought over 80% of the pieces in the auction of artwork created by Chinese contemporary artist Leng Bingchuan. Subsequently, it became commonplace to set up

an installation of the artworks within the property development after they had been collected. For example, as shown in Figure 1.5, the SOHO New Town in Beijing exhibited contemporary artworks within their property portfolio, which comprised office buildings, housing and retail stores. Secondly, contemporary art served as a focal point for real estate marketing activities. Contemporary artists created artworks and architecture based on particular themes within the real estate project, and cooperated not only with real estate investors but also with construction labourers in creating the works of art. For instance, in 2001 the SOHO China, which holds high-profile branded commercial properties, invited artist Ai Weiwei to create artworks especially for the first large-scale project of the SOHO real estate development, as shown in Figures 1.6 and 1.7. Moreover, the art estate marketing of Sifang Parkland and HOPELAND have invited contemporary artists to work as architects, and as a result have greatly boosted numerous types of building designs. Thirdly, high profile critics were invited by real estate enterprises to curate exhibitions with contemporary art concepts. For example, in 1999 Huang Zhuan curated the exhibition *Living Changes China (juzhu gaibian zhongguo)* created by the well-known real estate developers Chen Jiagang and Pan Shiyi. As a result, this model – real estate building a bridge with art exhibition – has now matured and evolved with independent curators collaborating with various real estate companies. Fourthly, real estate enterprise created and published a magazine devoted to the promotion of contemporary art. In 2001, Bison Capital and Sichuan Pictorial co-sponsored the *Next Wave (xinchao)* which focussed on contemporary art and which was edited by Li Xianting, Wu Wenguang, Qiu Zhijie, amongst others, however it only last for one year. Finally, public art museums cooperated with real estate enterprises to set up branch art museums. For example, in early 2008, the private art museum Times Museum Guangzhou was established as a branch of the public art museum Guangdong Museum of Art. As a consequence, within a dozen years, a wave of Chinese contemporary artists was nurtured through real estate companies' sponsorship of contemporary art. These methods undoubtedly helped in driving Chinese audiences towards a new understanding of contemporary art, and cultivated

the ecosystem in contemporary art, which ultimately converted a great number of real estate investors into the construction force of art museums in China.



Figure 1.5: Cast bronze sculpture *Thief* by artist Lin Yilin in SOHO New Town. (Courtesy of SOHO China, 2001.)



Figure 1.6: The massive sculpture *Concrete* surrounded by six twenty-eight-story buildings. (Courtesy of SOHO China, 2001.)



Figure 1.7: The cylindrical form of *Concrete* seen from within. (Courtesy of SOHO China, 2001.)

Since 2002, investment in private art museums is the most popular method selected by Chinese real estate enterprises, which is the central concern of this thesis. A continuous stream of profit or non-profit organisations were set up by real estate enterprises, including auction companies, galleries and art museums, and by 2010, the establishment of enterprise-owned art museums had reached fever pitch amongst Chinese real estate enterprises.

As discussed above, rather than an immediate transformation, the promotion of contemporary art gradually converted into an established force of real estate driven-art museums supported by a variety of art patronage methods. Furthermore, the social responsibilities and roles of art collectors made them the most important promoters in the art market. Their extensive capital expanded audiences' ever-widening views of contemporary art, and launched a new version of art production and dissemination at a time when public art institutions could not totally express freedom. By investing their personal capital and social resources, and sharing experiences, they created more opportunities for the public to experience contemporary art. The majority of private art museums not only take on the responsibility for displaying artwork but also offer selfless support to city constructions and local art developments. Private art museums can do numerous things that public museums cannot because of their identity; in other

words, private art museums are the alternative force for driving the development of arts in China, which I will discuss further with case studies. In this endeavour, entrepreneurs, such as Liu Yiqian and Budi Tek, who hold high-quality collections of contemporary Chinese art, and who are constantly buying artworks from around the world, are likely to place Chinese art in a globalised vision.

1.4 Private art museum boom in an urban regeneration China

1.4.1 Art museum based on the residential real estate development

Driven by property enterprises, the first wave of private art museum construction fever started in 1998 and established art museums, such as the Shanghe Art Museum, the Taida Contemporary Art Museum and the Dongyu Art museum, in medium-size cities across China. In contrast to the second wave of construction, due to the collapse of direct funds from the original enterprises and without independent operation or the ability to make an income, these art museums were not operationally sustainable.

The first private art museum funded by real estate developers – the Shanghe Art Museum – was constructed in the residential community in Chengdu. At that time, art museums produced by property enterprises were a novel concept. Initially, the operation of the Shanghe art museum and the development of the Shanghe residential community developed symbiotically. According to Xia and Yin (2006), for the real estate developer, ‘the same type of apartment in the community was for sale for just £22 per square foot, yet for an apartment opposite a river reached double the price, the average price for the apartment in the Shanghe residential community being £53 per square foot’. Clearly, the Shanghe residential developer claimed economic benefits by creating an art facility within the community. Leading artists in Chinese contemporary art, including Zhou Chunya, Fang Lijun and Zhang Xiaogang, were sponsored by the Shanghe Art Museum to a certain extent in their early careers. Moreover, the art museum successively held several contemporary art exhibitions, and the investor Chen

Jiagang collected the works of Chinese contemporary artists, such as Wang Guangyi, Liu Xiaodong and Fang Lijun, in the name of Shanghe Art Museum. Within two years of operation, the Shanghe Art Museum had contributed great strength to the art ecosystem, and also set up a potential reference model for future art museums to follow: that real estate enterprise could be the driving force for art museum construction.

Nevertheless, the experience of the Shanghe Art Museum stresses the importance of private art museums' own haematopoietic system for sustainable operation. As stated by art critic Lu Peng (2014), due to economic changes, key investors did not have sufficient funds for enterprise management as their main businesses collapsed, with the result that the operation of art museums was not a priority. Private art museums appearing in the first wave were unable to escape the fate of unsustainability owing to the loosening capital chain or the changing direction of investments. In contrast, private art museums appearing in later years appeared to be relatively cautious as founders became aware that the systematic mechanism for supporting sustained operation was the key to victory.

Rapid economic development and urbanisation have also happened in the PRD of southern China. Guangzhou is one of the cities that has inherited the characteristics of sharp urbanisation. Compared with other hubs of Chinese contemporary art, Guangzhou has just one public art museum devoted to contemporary art – the Guangdong Museum of Art (GDMOA) – as well as a few private institutions, such as the Vitamin Creative Space and the Libreria Borges Institute for Contemporary Art, which fall far behind the modernisation and urbanisation in this area. In order to support the ecosystem of contemporary art, it is essential for additional institutions and projects to be involved.

In Guangzhou, there is one private art museum – the Times Museum – which was set up in 2003 under Times China's direct investment in the second wave of the private art museum boom and which is still in sustained operation today. The Times Museum is a

community art museum integrated with a residential project (as shown in Figure 1.9). Initially, the Times Museum was based on the second floor of Time Rose Garden's sales office and was in operation while the developer was selling houses. This became a common occurrence within residential projects, whereby, during the early stages of their development and without a building or a specific space of their own, art museums set up home in a spare sales office.



Figure 1.8: The Times Museum inhabits the top floor of the residential building. (Courtesy of Times Museum, 2009.)

By 2005, the Time Rose Garden properties were all sold, and the Times Museum continued to operate according to the needs of the enterprise's business strategy. Because it had initially operated as a branch of the GDMOA, they continued to take responsibility for the running of the project, with funds provided by Times China; however, in 2010, after seven years' collaborative operation alongside a public art museum, the Times Museum registered as a non-profit organisation and was reopened.

The sale of all residential buildings owned by Times Rose Garden happened simultaneously with preparations for the second edition of the Guangzhou Triennial. Wang Huangsheng, the former director of the GDMOA from 2000 to 2009, provided a detailed explanation of the formulation process of the newly built Times Museum, and

commented that it was necessary for the GDMOA to look for enterprise cooperation, because holding the Triennial created an urgent need of sufficient funds. Because of the long-term partnership, the Times Museum became the first choice for GDMOA's collaboration.¹⁴ The 2015 Triennial, curated by Hou Hanru, provided a platform for artists to discuss topics about modernisation and globalisation issues; one of the invited participants was Rem Koolhaas.

The Dutch architect, architectural theorist Rem Koolhaas put forward a concept called 'city with exacerbated difference' after his research on the rapid urbanisation of Chinese cities (Chung, Inaba, Koolhaas and Leong, 2002). As an obvious outcome of the Reform and Opening-up, Chinese urbanisation exacerbated the gap between the poor and the rich, between the urban fringe and the city centre, and also intensified the contrast between art and economy. Gentrification was also emerging, driving out those who were unable to pay the rising costs of urban living. Given this context, Koolhaas proposed the design concept 'space with exacerbated difference' in relation to the Times Museum: where the art museum acted as a space which converged urban living, art consumption and social communication. Instead of setting up the art museum in the Times Rose Garden's open space, Koolhaas proposed the design concept of museum spaces distributed across different floors of the residential building – the Times Museum's peculiar characteristic of art space intimately interwoven with existing living space, intervened with urban daily living. The reception, exhibition hall, art store and other functional spaces were scattered across three floors of the building; the exhibition spaces were located separately on the first floor, like a shop window facing the main street – a total area of 86,000 square feet with a 472 inches ceiling on the nineteenth floor.

¹⁴ Interview with Wang Huangsheng, 21 April 2017, Beijing.



Figure 1.9: Part of the exhibition spaces are the ceiling on the top floor. (Courtesy of Times Museum, 2018.)

The Times Museum was a result of the partnership between the GDMOA, Times China and the Triennial project. As the sponsor of the second edition of Guangzhou Triennial, it not only had the opportunity to be designed by a world-class architect without the big design bill – Koolhaas's involvement did require funding, but the Times Museum were able to meet these demands – but it also created a good reputation within the real estate industry through advertising and media reports of the event. Additionally, Koolhaas's involvement in the Triennial brought great social attention to the event from both audiences and the media; as Wang Huangsheng said, it was apparent to all that the world-class architect's participation in the second Guangzhou Triennial's selected project particularly benefitted the event.¹⁵

Although the Times Museum has been unable to achieve independent operation until fairly recently, and Times China are still moving towards brighter prospects for commercial performance, they are still actively dedicated to exploring the possibility of self-operation by generating revenues from new initiatives, such as the art cafe, art

¹⁵ Interview with Wang Huangsheng, 21th April 2017, Beijing.

bookshop, art flower and art gift based in the top floor of the art museum. As suggested by Hsieh, Park and Hitchcock (2015), in order to meet the needs of long-stay visitors, museum operators are encouraged to offer well-chosen and high-quality museum products and services. Given the fact that the art museums constructed in the first wave all closed down one after the other, operators of museums have been forced to explore effective ways in which they can diversify sources of funds, allowing them to then gradually separate from the original real estate enterprise and operate the art museum independently.

1.4.2 Art museum based on the commercial real estate development

The second type of real estate-driven art museum are those that inhabit commercial real estate projects. The operational characteristics of these art museum show a growing tendency for art entering into everyday life: an aestheticisation of the ordinary and day-to-day. In the late twenty century, Postmodernism placed great emphasis on the blurring of boundaries between art and everyday life, signalling the collapse of the distinction between high art and mass/popular culture (Baudrillard, 1983; Featherstone 1990). As underlined by Lash (1990), Postmodernism involves a dissolving of the boundaries, dedifferentiation and mutual convergence, not only between high and low cultures but also between different cultural forms.

Previously, people come for the art and stayed for the shopping, but now the convergence of space which has emerged within urban regeneration means they are visiting the art and doing shopping simultaneously. Inala (2001, cited in McClellan, 2008) said: ‘We have reached a moment when culture and retailing can no longer be separated’. Art museums comprehensively developed the self-contained retail division for achievement of function. Zhao Qie, the Times Museum’s director, argued that making art museums multi-functional spaces, by including cafes, book shops and florist

shops, enables visitors to stay much longer in the art museum.¹⁶ Thus, there are art stores, coffee shops and dining rooms continuously starting new businesses in the art museums, which is especially popular with urban residents who are addicted to cultural consumption. As a part of the regular urban routine, shopping has become such an integral part of art museum visiting that it has become the impetus for many shopping malls to collaborate with art museums.

Compared to the art museum, the shopping mall is increasingly inclined to communicate with clients in visual and creative ways; this can be seen as the starting point of artistic intervention in the shopping mall. McClellan (2008) discussed the profit strategy of the shopping mall and stated that: ‘motivated by profit, store managers exploited novel advertising and retail strategies, including seductive shop window displays, to seize the public’s imagination and rival the museum as a source of visual delight and instruction’. Shopping malls display items in ways that closely resemble an art museum, despite the fact that they may be structuring the space for different purposes, i.e. for profit rather than non-profit. More specifically, art museums and shopping malls overlap when peoples’ behaviour occurs simultaneously.

The term ‘gentrification’ was first used by the sociologist Ruth Glass (1964) to describe a social space development phenomenon that occurred in the regeneration of residential areas of twenty-first century London. The notable characteristic of the gentrification movement of urban regeneration – the urban spatial revolution – was that the process by which the upper classes occupied the city centre by means of squeezing out the poor to the suburbs.

In order to attract middle class residents back to the city centre, mixed-use centres – normally called urban commercial complexes – emerged in western countries, blending commerce, culture and entertainment both physically and functionally. Through the

¹⁶ Interview with Zhao Qie, 10th April 2017, Guangzhou.

process of extensive urbanisation, the gentrification phenomenon can be seen in both western countries and in China: La Defense, in Paris, was the first mixed-use centre in the world, followed successively by Roppongi Hills Tokyo (as shown in Figure 1.10), Sony Centre Berlin and the K11 Art Mall in China.



Figure 1.10: The sculpture by Louise Bourgeois Looms large over Roppongi Hills, a complex including offices, a shopping mall and the Mori Art Museum. (Courtesy of Mori Art Museum, and Flickr/IQRemix.)

Since the art museums are based within commercial real estate developments, joint ventures have sprung up between art museums and shopping malls. A space incorporating art intervention with the art museum retail concept is known as a synthesis development model, whereby art and commerce are adopted by real estate enterprises in post-industrial cities. These mall museums share common characteristics include spaces, facilities and functions. In terms of the space, art museums may be based on single layer inside the mall, however, public art installations can be set up in combination with the retail concepts of various stores on different layers. In relation to shared facilities, these include temperature and humidity control, lighting systems, security equipment and flexible spaces of varying heights, which resemble other

professional organisations. Additionally, exhibitions, collections and educational programs all take place in the mall museum, although they are undertaken according to the retail enterprise's missions.



Figure 1.11: View of the K11 Art Mall. (Courtesy of the K11 Art Foundation, 2018.)

The K11 Art Mall is the first artistic shopping mall in China. One of the pillars of K11's success is to have art as an active key element integrated with retail. The K11 enjoys a good reputation for not only the outstanding sales performance of the K11 Art Mall, but also the sustainable operation of the Chi K11 Art Museum. The K11 is typical of numerous convergence projects in China, linking shopping centres and art with real estate developments, with the art museums' main role being to enhance the commercial value of the development. The K11 project was founded in 2008 by entrepreneur and arts patron Adrien Cheng, joint general manager and executive vice-chairman of New

World Development – a real-estate company listed on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange. According to K11's official website, the flagship K11 sites in Hong Kong and Shanghai were launched in December 2009 and June 2013 respectively. In 2010, Cheng then founded the K11 Art Foundation – a registered not-for-profit organisation which supports the development of Chinese contemporary art. Based in China, it providing an innovative platform that nurtures artistic talent and brings it to the global stage. The foundation has also built two art villages¹⁷ in Wuhan that serve as an incubating springboard to mentor young emerging contemporary Chinese artists, as well as educating the public about art and creativity. By returning profits from the retail business back into the K11 Art Foundation, they have been able to set up numerous projects, such as the K11 Art Space Workshops, the K11 Art Village, the K11 Artist-in-Residence Program, the K11 Artist Klub, and the K11 Collection. The foundation also collaborates with leading global institutions, such as Palais De Tokyo (Paris), Centre Georges Pompidou (Paris) and the Institute of Contemporary Arts (London). Cheng believes that art is for the masses and has successfully merged this with commerce to create the sustainable 'art x commerce' K11 business model, creating art malls, offices and residences in China. He is keen to further develop this innovative concept with 20 more projects in nine cities across China, including Wuhan, Shanghai, Shenyang, Beijing, Guangzhou, Tianjin and Ningbo (K11, 2017).

The Shanghai K11 Art Mall – one of the chosen case studies for this research – was established in Huaihai Road, a central location surrounded by numerous luxury shopping malls. Covering a total area of 400,000 square feet, including six ground floors and three underground, it houses the Chi K11 Art Museum, the K11 Art Store, the K11 Design Store, the K11 Select Store, restaurants and an office building. Holding a core brand value of intrinsically blending art, people and nature, the Shanghai K11 Art Mall strives to cultivate China's biggest interactive art venue, providing the most theatrical shopping experience and incorporating the chic and modern trends stemming

¹⁷ For the purpose of nurturing young art practitioners, K11 art village is a two-floors building located in the city of Wuhan, which encompassed artist studios, art exhibition hall and a multi-functional space. It

from multiple cultural communities (K11, 2017). The Chi K11 Art Museum, which is registered as private art museum, is located on Level B3 with a total floor area of 32,000 square feet. Each floor of the Shanghai K11 contains artwork; the mall not only displays permanent collections but also temporary artworks in various multi-dimensional spaces for customers who appreciate wish to artwork during their shopping and leisure time.

The first Claude Monet exhibition ever to come to China – named *Master of Impressionism – Claude Monet* – was exhibited in the K11 Shanghai in 2014. Regardless of the operation mode or exhibition venue, it was a ground-breaking show in the high-end exhibition industry (Bu, 2015). It also clarified the principle that art exhibitions should be hosted more frequently in mall art museums and, most importantly, that exhibition spaces available within the shopping mall should be utilised free of charge instead of paying exorbitant rental expenses. In contrast to other organisations in Shanghai, K11 offered exhibition space for Claude Monet exhibition without any rental fees. Convenient transport links and the multi-functional facilities of the mall proved to be more attractive to the targeted audiences than a traditional art museum, and *The Master of Impressionism* exhibition attracted over 6,000 visitors a day (around 400,000 visitors in three months) (Bu, 2015). The increased footfall also meant that there was a significant increase in K11's retail sales of 20%. Additionally, because it was privately operated, there were no limitations on the admission price; although entrance to exhibitions in K11 is generally free, on this occasion a ticket for the Monet exhibition cost £11 (which went towards paying off shipping, security and other expenses). This is in stark contrast to the policies of 2008, which prohibited public institutions from charging more than £2 for an entry ticket.

Such exhibitions, which generally only took place in public art museums, now often appear in mall art museums. More specifically, mall museums have abilities and advantages that allow them to bridge the gap between art and the public, for example, by presenting various types of exhibits. However, it should be noted that the selection

of specific exhibitions highlights the differences between mall museums and public art museums because of their different targeted consumers, profits objectives and facilities.



Figure 1.12: Hundreds of people waiting outside the exhibition hall to see the Claude Monet exhibition at K11. (Courtesy of Zhang Xinyan, 2014.)

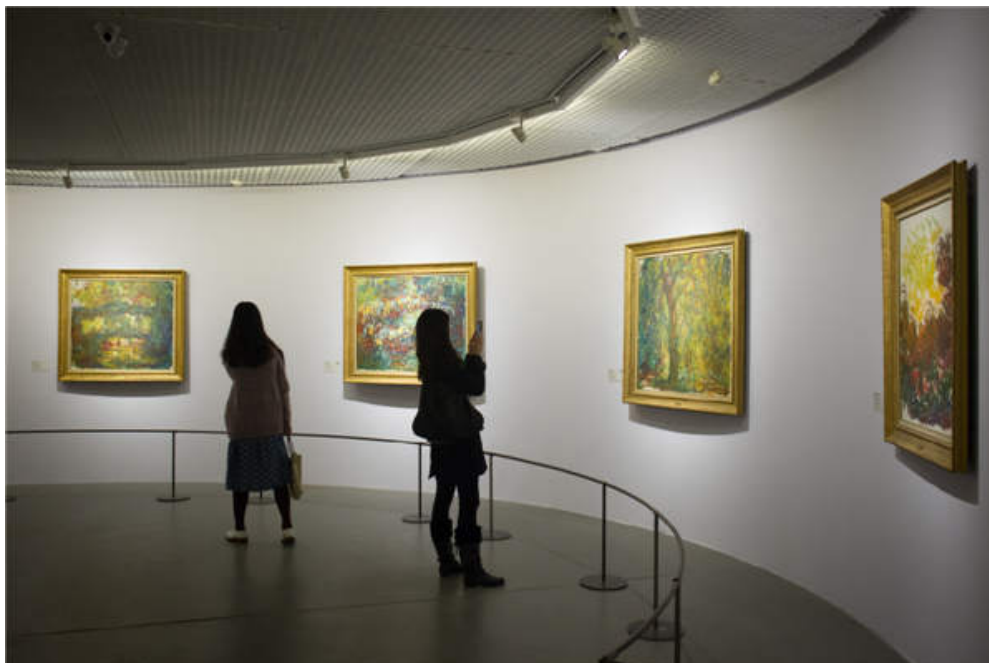


Figure 1.13: Exhibits from the Claude Monet exhibition in the basement of the K11 Art Mall. (Courtesy of K11 Art Foundation, 2014.)

1.4.3 Art museum based on the comprehensive development

In any discussion of the art museum-city relationship in China, people invariably point to the OCAT Museum Group, which was built by the real estate enterprise OCT in 2005, as being representative of urban regeneration. As part of the strategy of creative industry development, the first OCAT headquarters was established in Shenzhen in 2004. OCT set up the enterprise-owned art museum as a part of a culture-led regeneration strategy with the purpose of comprehensively developing the old industrial area. OCAT Shenzhen is a key element for attracting both cultural and design institutions to the revived area:

OCAT laying the foundation for its group of contemporary art museums across China. The museum group comprises OCAT Shenzhen, OCT Art & Design Gallery (Shenzhen), OCAT Shanghai, OCAT Xi'an, and OCAT Institute (Beijing). Satellite exhibition sites exhibition spaces which are based on project collaborations. OCAT aims to promote cross-platform exchanges between domestic and global contemporary art communities, and become a non-governmental art institution with international standards and impact developed through exhibitions, research projects, intellectual exchanges, public education, publications, and international art residencies (OCT Contemporary Art Terminal, 2017).

Despite the fact that the OCAT Shenzhen functions as an independent research institution, the comprehensive development mode of OCT has been widely accepted and OCAT acts as an important infrastructure for creating culture immersion. In an attempt to implement a comprehensive format and formulate a stable funding chain, the enterprise focusses on three aspects: the operation of the art museum as an instrument of marketing and promoting; the close relationship between art museum and surrounding properties, and the establishment of art museums in the chain.



Figure 1.14: The aerial view of the OCT-LOFT prior to the culture-led urban regenerated process. (Courtesy of Urbanus, 2012.)



Figure 1.15: The aerial view of the OCT-LOFT outdoor landscape after the culture-led urban regenerated process. (Courtesy of Urbanus, 2012.)

In contrast to residential development, comprehensive developments, such as the OCT model, place emphasis on the accessibility and interactivity between projects based in the same city. OCAT Shenzhen's headquarters, located in the OCT-LOFT north area, were based in a former tape and disk factory which had been built in the early 20th century (as shown in Figure 1.14), a single building with three storeys of 12,710,016 square feet. Following the reconstruction of the old factory, its transformation was completed by adding exhibition and research spaces, communication and education facilities, and offices for the daily operation of the art museum. Additional properties – including a theme park, the Shenzhen Splendid China Folk Culture Village, the LOFT residential community, and the InterContinental Shenzhen hotel, were then centred around the OCT-LOFT, upgrading OCT Shenzhen into a comprehensive development.

OCAAT branch museums were subsequently created in Shanghai, Beijing, Xian and Wuhan, and, despite being spread across a wide area, these chain museums all retain specific characteristics of OCT real estate projects and properties. Li Yusha, the director of the administrative department in the OCAAT Museum Group, explained:

OCT investment strategy actually followed by the Urbanisation Development Policy. Therefore, the enterprise not entirely invests projects of real estate-based, which could be a comprehensive concept such as a featured town or a community. At present, the central government strongly support this investment mode that investment in a diverse community with a variety of functions, which cooperates with the local government for a joint development.¹⁸

¹⁸ Interview with Li Yusha, 16 August 2017, Shenzhen.



Figure 1.16 View of OCAT Shenzhen located in the OCT-LOFT. (Courtesy of Urbanus, 2012.)

Despite the success of some high-profile cases, such as the OCAT Museum Group, a lack of funds from the original enterprises or fickle investors have directly led to the closure of an increasing number of art museums. Therefore, given potential dilemmas and unsustainable sources of funds, investors have become increasingly cautious in establishing art museums. To achieve continuous operation, comprehensive developments, such as the OCT model, need to be designed in line with enterprises' profit strategies. In comparison to the simple relationship between art museums and residential buildings, the combination of art museum, theme park, hotel and office building are under simultaneous development and merge together to reach stable funding chains.

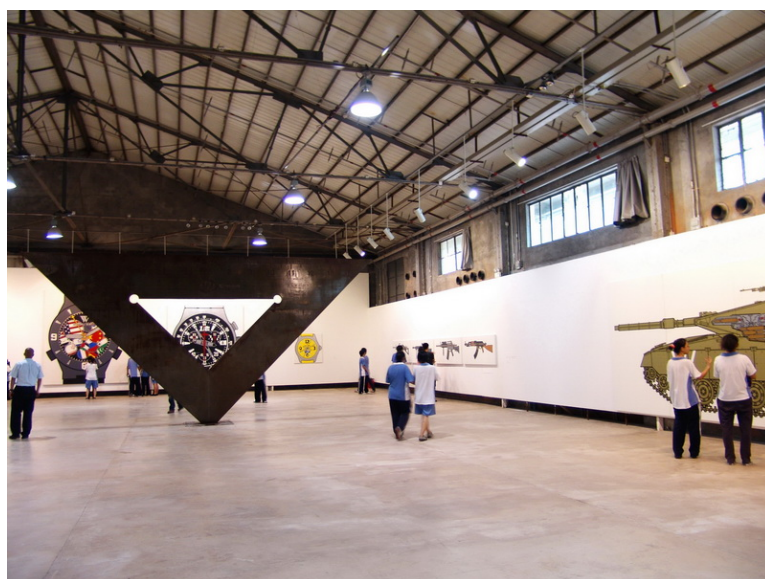


Figure 1.17: Exhibition hall of the OCAT Shenzhen. (Courtesy of Urbanus, 2012.)

This chapter has described the birth of the real estate-driven art museum in order to examine a research gap in the art museum boom in the Chinese context. The analysis of economic and social transitions following the Reform and Opening-up aims to understand how these art museums were established alongside real estate development within the urbanisation trend. A consideration of the urban regeneration background of art museums constructed in the post-industrial era, as outlined in Chapter One, along with clarification of the culture-led regeneration strategy which resulted from the explosive economy, will provide context for the discussion of the role of the growth of real estate driven-art museum during China's rapid economic, cultural and urban regeneration. This chapter suggests a thorough understanding and consideration of real estate businessmen's additions to contemporary art is a prerequisite for the Chinese real estate-driven art museum boom. The existing real estate driven-art museums have been classified and discussed into three types, based on different real estate projects in urban China. Taking into consideration the evolutionary context of real estate driven-art museums, as outlined in Chapter One, the next chapter will explore the highly interactive relationship between real estate business and art museums.

CHAPTER TWO
**REAL ESTATE BUSINESS AND
PRIVATE ART MUSEUM ALLIANCE:
CHI K11 ART MUSEUM SHANGHAI**

CHAPTER TWO

In China, private art museums belonging to real estate developments are distinctive in the extent to which they patronise the arts sphere. As examined in Chapter One, within the context of rapid urbanisation, the act of establishing private art museums in China has become closely linked with real estate development, and many property giants have founded art museums in order to garner interest in their real estate developments. As demonstrated in Chapter One, an ever-expanding number of real estate-driven art museums are thriving in China due to the policies of urban regeneration and social transition which developed after the Reform and Opening-up. In order to further understand the Chinese real estate-driven art museum boom, this chapter examines the ways in which developers propose and employ approaches of art sponsorship as part of the culture-led regeneration strategies. This chapter presents the Chi K11 Art Museum as a case study to examine the interactive relationship between the enterprises operated by real estate developers and the private art museums that they have constructed. Behrman (1952) believes that ‘the art patrons of the Renaissance had themselves painted into the pictures they commissioned; because their American counterparts lived too late to have this service performed for them, they had to gain their immortality by buying collections.’ Although lagging behind Western patronage, Chinese real estate enterprises and individuals set up art museums through the trend of

‘Museumification’.¹⁹ Not only does art intervene in urban development, as a symbol of aesthetics of the everyday²⁰, it is also one of the contemporary methods that incorporates patronage of the arts into the Chinese economic and political context.

In English, ‘patron’ quickly acquired the meaning of ‘one who takes under his favour and protection, or lends his influential support to advance the interests of, some person, cause, institution, art or undertaking’ (Garber, 2008, p.2). Why did the Vatican commission Michelangelo? Why did patrons commission so much art? Why did the Chinese real estate businessmen commission art museum construction? Was it the philanthropy or was it a practice of marketing strategy?

Garber (2008) believes that the patronage – which had previously been entirely the privilege of emperors, nobles and gentlemen – has recently been taken on board, and subsequently almost engrossed, by a wealthy and intelligent class, primarily individuals enriched by commerce and trade. There are huge differences between China and the West in relation to the driving forces of corporate patronage. In-depth research into the characteristics of China’s current corporate patronage of art museums, as a new form of art sponsorship, will be discussed in this chapter. Are there distinctive driving forces and paths in the Chinese approach to corporate patronage that makes it different from a historical and socioeconomic perspective? I argue that this form of art patronage has its own rationality and regularity of interactive relationships, which will be the focus of this chapter.

¹⁹ According to Jeffrey Johnson (2013), Director of Columbia University’s China Megacities Lab, museumification refers to the “aggressive proliferation of institutions, i.e. the ‘museumification’ of China. It is an aggressive plan to fast-forward the development of the cultural sphere. China plans to elevate the per-capita number of museums to equal international levels. The short-term goal is to have one museum per 250,000 people”.

²⁰ The theory aesthetic of everyday life was originally developed by Henri Lefebvre and other Modernist theorists. It refers to the blurring of the boundary between art and everyday life, the collapse of the distinction between high art and mass/popular culture (Baudrillard, 1983; Featherstone 1990). As underlined by Lash (1990), Postmodernism involves a dissolving of the boundaries de-differentiation and the mutual convergence, not only between high and low cultures, but also between different culture forms. The effacement of the boundary between art and shopping signals as cultural elements.

The aim of this chapter is to analyse and examine the interactive relationship between real estate businesses and real estate driven-art museums in the context of corporate sponsorships. In order to identify the features of this art patronage method, this chapter will explore its driving forces, interactive paths and impacts. It is hoped that the findings may also help art museums to become more competitive in searching for corporate sponsorship.

In this research, I am going to answer two main research questions:

- What is the interactive relationship between the enterprises operated by real estate businessmen and the private art museums they construct?
- Is there a paradox between the profit objectives of the enterprise and the simultaneous sustainable operation of art museums?

Based on the research of Chapter One, it can be concluded that the real estate-driven art museum boom in China emerged from the urban regeneration process, during which art served a prominent role as a catalyst, enabling Chinese shopping malls to entice more citizens through their doors. As the main type of corporate art patronage, art museums within shopping malls – called urban commercial complexes²¹ – were the convergence space which emerged in the process of culture-led regeneration. This type of art-led urban commercial complex is a close and highly involved collaboration between art and business, regardless of physical form, interactive model or commercial return. In order to investigate this phenomenon, and explore how art and business interact together to promote art, the Chi K11 Art Museum has been selected as a case example. Methodologically, this chapter is mainly developed from a literature review

²¹ As the art museums are based on commercial real estate developments, joint ventures between art museums and shopping malls appeared. A space for art intervention, with an art museum retail concept, is a synthesis development model of art and commerce adopted by real estate enterprises in post-industrial cities. These mall museums share common characteristics including spaces, facilities and functions. In order to attract the middle class back to the city centre, mixed-use centres (normally called urban commercial complexes) emerged in western China, blending commercial, cultural and entertainment functions, physically and functionally. La Defense in Paris was the first mixed-use centre in the world, followed successively by Roppongi Tokyo, the Sony Centre Berlin and the K11 Shanghai.

of the secondary source material, including the definition of terms, details of past exhibitions, and financial earnings for the company. The Chi K11 Art Museum is an ambitious country-wide chain art museum based in several commercial complexes and has extensive contacts with art and business. As a representative art-led shopping mall in China, it is necessary to investigate the culture-sponsoring commitment put forward by the sponsor of Chi K11 Art Museum. Based on the Chi K11 Art Museum case example, the examined elements will include: the relationship between art and business, and its effectiveness to promote both aspects; the motivations of real estate corporate sponsors; and the effect of sponsorship on art museums and corporate investors. Additionally, the question of whether artistic intervention in the urban commercial complex resulted in an increased commercialisation of art will also be examined in the research.

2.1 New players and new strategies

Traditional art patrons were individuals who collected artworks themselves and who often ran museums. More recently, the sources of funding for the arts have been derived from a wider range of sources (Diaggio, 1986a), among them, corporate sponsors. Corporations consider cultural philanthropy as a good way to improve their reputations – essentially, a highbrow form of advertising. Corporations aim to achieve this goal by sponsoring exhibitions which attract large, middle class audiences. In the contemporary business world, particularly in the luxury sector, an increasing number of brands are actively involved with the arts; and, as concluded in Chapter One, art museums operating within shopping malls are seen as an important alliance between art and business.

In order to understand the role of corporate sponsorship for both partners, as well as the effects of the relationship, it is essential to understand that the definition of sponsorship and the motivations behind it are extremely different from philanthropy. According to

the Financial Accounting Standards Board (1993, p.6), philanthropy is defined as ‘an unconditional transfer of cash or other assets to an entity or a settlement or cancellation of its liabilities in a voluntary nonreciprocal transfer by another entity acting other than as an owner’. In terms of motivation, the expectation of a direct return for their gift distinguishes philanthropy from sponsorship, whilst philanthropy is done without any expectation of return. In fact, ‘the non-reciprocity condition is the acid test of philanthropic activity’ (Gautier and Pache, 2013, p.347; Godfrey, 2005, p.778), it distinguishes cultural sponsorship from corporate philanthropy. Sponsorship is commonly referred to as the purchase (in cash or kind) of a collaboration with an event, team or activity, in exchange for the ‘exploitable commercial potential linked to that activity’. The definition of cultural-sponsored activities includes exhibitions and art museums (Meenaghan, 1991, p. 36).

Therefore, sponsorship serves as a commercial activity which aims at achieving marketing communication objectives through developing the association between both partners (Walliser, 2003). According to the clarification above, I suggest that there is a symbiotic space emerging from the sponsorship led by real estate developers, rather than philanthropy without profitability. Corporate sponsors expect returns from a reciprocal symbiotic relationship – as I will explain further in the later section.

The context and methods of cultural-sponsorship in China and the West are very different (Dai, 2009). This research considers how China’s socio-political circumstances have shaped sponsorship directed at the arts, and explores the reasons behind the sponsorship of real estate driven-art museums in China by analysing primary sources and secondary materials.

In countries such as the USA and the UK, the operation of non-profit organisations is based on donations and tax-free policies.²² However, in China, there is no tax exemption policy and the government has yet to offer real support to non-profit organisations. The survey conducted by the Private Art Museum Report finds that 85% of private art museums in China argue that their developments are restricted by the deficiency of relevant policies on sponsorship, and 70% feel restricted by a lack of relevant taxation policies (Larry's List Ltd and AMMA, 2016, p.40). In addition to the undeveloped sponsorship and tax exemption systems which limit private art museums' development, a tax payment is required from an individual or corporate sponsor on top of their sponsorship – needless to say, this rather dampens their enthusiasm. A lack of capital for private art museums is partly the result of the corporates being unwilling to work in partnership with the art museums, and foreign foundations unable to evolve in the system (Larry's List Ltd and AMMA, 2016, p.40; Zhou, 2013; Dai, 2009; Zhao, 2013). The environment in which Chinese companies sponsor art is different from that in the West, Chinese companies still maintain a wait-and-see attitude towards the art sponsorship. Additionally, because public support is in its infancy, there is inadequate support for art sponsorship; as a result, current sponsors are mostly foreign brands (Zhou, 2011, pp.144-145). In a broad sense, I contend that the symbiotic relationship is a sponsorship relationship that responds to the particular policies, support systems, and corporate and public awareness in the Chinese context.

²² In the USA, art museums are eligible to trade tax-free and apply for various government and non-government funds if they register as a non-profit organisation under the relevant policies (Qiu Huijun, 2009, p.38). In 1971, the United States Congress implemented a federal tax law, under which tax applied to sponsors is deducted as long as donations are made to non-profit organisations. In 1995, in order to encourage the sponsorship in art museums, the *Personal Income Tax Handbook* issued by the United States Department Taxation suggested that a sponsor can purchase the actual price of the collection from the art museum without value added tax and transaction tax (Zhou, 2013). In UK, the Proposal on Stimulating Enterprises Sponsorship in Art was introduced in 1984 to encourage private corporates active engagement with art sponsorship, stating that sponsorship should be treated as an investment strategy within successful corporate management. Additionally, for the promotion of corporate sponsorship, the Art Business Association set up in 1967, with aims to bridge gap between business and art (Qiu Huijun, 2009, p.39).

The role, nature and design of art museums, as well as the art museum visitors themselves, have changed over recent decades (Hamnett and Shoval, 2003, p.222). Art in the shopping mall was generated from the trend of aestheticisation of everyday life (Baudrillard, 1983; Featherstone 1990), making art-viewing part of the shopping experience, with some malls devoting themselves equally to organising exhibitions and activities in their art museum. Leading new players, such as the K11 Art Mall Shanghai, introduced new strategies by housing an art museum in the heart of a luxury shopping centre, and sought to engage the rapidly growing number of billionaires in China's cities, blurring the lines between art and commerce.

When faced with the threat of online shopping, real estate developers were forced to reinvent the shopping mall. In response to this, the idea behind K11 was to integrate contemporary art into luxury retail spaces. As introduced in Section 1.4.2, the K11 Shanghai – an art mall housed in a skyscraper with six floors of retail, entertainment and live events, covering approximately 300,000-square-feet – opened in 2013. K11 describes itself as an 'art playground, where ideas, trends and lifestyles collide to form new ideas and new inspiration'. In this section, the motivation and logic of the new strategies are the main focus, followed by discussion of the case study (the K11 Art Mall Shanghai) in Section 1.4.2.

In the field of cultural sponsorship, there are partnerships between sponsors and partners that form co-operative, long-term and mutually beneficial business relationships (Olkkonen, 1999, 2001, 2002; Olkkonen et al., 2000a). In China, businesses – especially the large real estate corporations, whether residential real estate or comprehensive development – have adopted the sponsorship approach as a means of increasing their visibility or reaching their target clients. The OCT Group claims that the establishment of its art museums group model reflects the corporation's culture of social responsibility. On the official website of Times China, the operation of the Times Museum is categorised as a part of public cultural welfare. Similarly, Adrian Cheng, the founder of K11, says the ambition behind the K11 Art Mall 'is nothing less than to

create a contemporary Chinese culture' (Forbes, 2018). In this sense, the aim of setting up an art museum is to pave the way for being a good enterprise citizen concerned with corporate social responsibility (CSR)²³. In my opinion, based on the definition and motivations of cultural sponsorship above, when a corporation claims to undertake CSR, what they really mean is that they sponsor art museum with the expectation of both tangible and intangible benefits. As a central issue in this research, I argue that real estate-driven art museums are acting as the new strategy of corporate sponsorship, rather than corporate philanthropy.

One might inquire why real estate developers established art museums when there were so many public facilities that needed to be established during the urbanisation of China. While each owner of an art museum had their own rationales, perhaps some of the following motivations may have contributed to their decision to set up an art museum alongside the property development. A wide range of motivations for corporate sponsorships have been progressive (O'Han and Harvey, 2000). During his interview, Wang Shang, the author of *Snapshot: Independent Investigate Interviews on Chinese Contemporary 'Private Museum'*²⁴, drew some conclusions in relation to cultural investment incentives:

While many founders use museums for art-related matters, some founders created museums or art centres in order to bring benefits to their enterprises. Museum founders, with banking, real estate, hotel industry, and entertainment industry backgrounds, aim towards more practical reasons. The founders capitalise the cultural influence of museums to further enhance their company's reputation, expand profits, and enhance person reputation. (Wang, 2017)

²³ 'Corporate Social Responsibility' (CSR) was mainly an ethical business event originated by Oliver Sheldon in 1924. It referred to responsibility of a company to improve the interests of the community while pursuing its own revenue.

²⁴ The first published book in the field of private art museums in China provides an in-depth account of interviews with directors and practitioners within institutions, which is a useful reference source in this research for information and records.

Whilst I strongly agree with the argument by Wang Shang in relation to the motivations behind corporate sponsorship, I will undertake more targeted investigations of the motives manifested by real estate developments. Why are real estate developers devoted to private art museum sponsorship? Why are luxury shopping malls, such as the K11, obsessed with involvement of art and art museums? According to the focus-group research, companies' public images could be enhanced through different sponsorship categories (Meenaghan and Shipley, 1999). Further qualitative research outcomes suggest that involvement in the arts may contribute to specific image dimensions such as 'elite' or 'sophisticated' (Schwaiger, Sarstedt and Taylor, 2010). Cultural enterprises cater to extremely different markets, depending on which artistic sector in which they function in. Real estate developers, such as the New World Development²⁵, believe that art adds value to luxury brands, therefore, in the pursuit of a perfect shopping world, art has to have a role.

Central in the global luxury market are the wealthy Chinese shoppers, whose purchases represent almost a third of the world's total for the sector (Bu, Durand-Servoingt, Kim and Yamakawa, 2017). Adrian Cheng Chi Kong, an executive director of New World Development²⁶, commented that shoppers in Mainland China are uninterested in shopping malls that only display and sell luxury items, stating that 'shoppers in China want to get a taste of culture at shopping centres' and 'they are more concerned about the shopping environment and their own position' (Forbes, 2018). Therefore, the K11 shopping malls opened in China with the strategy of 'art museum retail' in order to differentiate themselves from others and gain a competitive edge. The high visitor numbers and sound financial turnover of the K11 Shanghai correspond with Adrian Cheng Chi Kong statement, that 'they have embraced with enthusiasm the concept of infusing culture and art into the shopping experience' (Forbes, 2018). This led me to

²⁵ The parent company of the K11 Art Museum, New World Development, is a Hong Kong-based real estate group. The main business areas of the New World Development include real estate development, infrastructure and services, retail, hotels and serviced apartments, boasting operations in Mainland China and numerous major cities.

the conclusion that real estate developers are flocking to the model of lucrative co-dependency between luxury retail and contemporary art that now embodies the necessary shopping experience in China. Therefore, it is predictable that an increasing number of art museums will appear in shopping malls as developers follow the trend of Chinese shopping malls expanding into ‘art museum retail’. As shown in Figures 2.1 and 2.2, art and retail departments under one roof have taken on different forms in a variety of art malls, and are thriving by seamlessly blending into different cities in China.



Figure 2.1: Art Mall Parkview Green in Beijing. (Courtesy of the Zcool, date unknown.)



Figure 2.2: Art Mall MIXC World in Shenzhen. (Courtesy of the Soho, 2016.)

Codignola and Rancati (2016) argue that association with contemporary art makes customer perceptions of a luxury brand more positive, attracting a wider audience group without diminishing the brand's aura. For luxury retailers, such as Louis Vuitton, Chanel and Gucci, the frontiers between art and commerce become even more blurred, and for worthy reason. I disagree with the idea put forward by the study *Consumer Perceptions of How Luxury Brand Stores Become Art Institutions* (Joy, 2014), which argued that consumers are complicit in the construction of their own (art) experiences because luxury stores have become contemporary art institutions. From my point of view, as a marketing strategy and branding tool, art sponsorship in this way evokes desire from the consumer and, led by art savvy retailers, enhances customer experiences. It stresses the collaborative effort between art and business with an expectation of mutual success. In this context, I suggest that this act contributes to the realm of art sponsorship, rather than philanthropy which never expect returns. Therefore, exhibition position and curatorial strategy are currently influenced and constantly adapted by the 'art museum retail' concept.

In the K11 Art Mall Shanghai, the luxury retail offerings displayed alongside actual art render both equal in value. Employees in the mall sometimes function as curators, offering guidance and knowledge for both retail goods and artwork. Projects like the K11 Art Mall are happening in China as a result of the new strategies of art sponsorship, whereby capital is donated by real estate developers. Due to the symbolic nature of art – both the intangible aspects and the financial value (Codignola and Rancati, 2016) – the art world has always acted as a focus for desire and wealth, which in return feeds the retail sector in this interactive business relationship.

Potentially, public awareness of a business/developer is increased by corporate sponsorship; there may also be a boost to intangible assets, such as positive corporate image (Meenaghan, 1991; Kushner, 1996). As a result, sponsors wishing to achieve favourable publicity bridge the connection between the arts and other cultural activities. In order to create exposure for the product and services, and to develop and promote brand awareness, sponsorship has the potential to contribute to product awareness in a variety of ways (Aaker and Joachimstahler, 2000; Drennan and Cornwell, 2004; Keller, 2003; Roy and Cornwell, 1999). When the customer assumes that the product or service is reliable and honest, and is representative of high quality, brands/companies can ask for a premium price for the products or services they offer (Micwilliams and Donald, 2001).

However, the purpose of sponsorship is not only to aggressively sell a product or company, it also has the subtle objective of projecting an image of good corporate citizenship (Colbert, d'Astous and Parmentier, 2005). In this case, the creation of positive corporate images is reflected in the shouldering of CSR by corporations. More specifically, as previous mentioned, CSR was defined by the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) as 'the commitment of business to contribute to sustainable economic development, working with employees, their families and the local communities' (WBCSD, 2001). As a strategy of reputation building (Fombrun and Shanley, 1990; Weigelt and Camerer, 1988), real estate developers offer positive

corporate images of residential properties, creative parks and art-led urban-complexes to the consumer as a means of achieving CSR. However, the motivations of corporate art sponsorship don't stop there.

Due to the insufficient government subsidies, private art museums in China rely on private funding to make ends meet. As described in Chapter One, private funders collaborate with the government to construct the public cultural infrastructure. The central government desires development of the cultural industries; as such, it is a mandatory requirement that particular areas of land within real estate developments are used as cultural industry facilities. Therefore, numerous developers bring art museums into their property complex developments, with the result that they can acquire surrounding land at a cheaper price. 'Constructing a museum is only a real estate strategy in disguised form' (Li, 2005; Wang, 2017). Although the argument put forward here is an overgeneralisation, this model – by which land prices rise in response to investment in both art and real estate – is visible in the case studies featured in this research, including the OCAT Museums and the Times Museum.

I believe that the two-way advantages for new sponsors strategies are clear. The sponsor is rewarded with intangible values, including good corporate image, lucrative land contracts, and financial benefits from the revenues drawn from new visitors and tenants. Likewise, the sponsored art museum benefits from full funding, a symbiotic space and more easily accessible public engagement. It can be noted that such 'symbiotic spaces' help to shape an affluent and vibrant urban life, and interact and sustain each partner in terms of their logic of style and exclusivity.

2.2 A blockbuster-centric curatorial strategy

The first exhibition in Mainland China devoted to the works of the iconic French Impressionist Claude Monet was a strange contradiction, with priceless artworks located in the basement of a downtown shopping centre. The exhibition *Monet: Master*

of Impressionism was shown at the K11 Art Mall Shanghai in 2014, and included 40 original Monet artworks – the largest ever show of the Impressionist’s works in the country. During its three-month run, it attracted 400,000 visitors (Jia, 2015, p. 129) and thousands of people lined up every day to purchase tickets costing 100 renminbi (about £11). After leaving the show, visitors were able to purchase Monet themed ephemera, such as framed posters of *Water Lilies*, at the gift shop.

It is worth mentioning that, in 2014, the Notice of the Ministry of Culture, the State Administration of Cultural Heritage on the Free Opening of Public Facilities to Minors and other Social Groups identified by the Ministry of Culture and National Cultural Heritage Administration set cheap entrance prices to public cultural facilities with interference from the government. Reducing ticket prices has considerable effects on the ability to hold exhibitions in public art museums. Following the promulgation of this specific cultural policy, contractors may no longer be able to recover from the cost of holding an art exhibition in a public art museum. Therefore, private art museums have become the perfect environment for exhibitions, especially retail-exhibitions mixing art and business. For this exhibition, the K11 shopping mall provided a venue (on the B3 floor) free of charge and took no share of any revenue. Instead, its benefits came mainly from the conversion of exhibition audiences into shopping mall customers. During this exhibition, the turnover of the K11 Art Mall Shanghai increased by 20% (Jia, 2015, p.142) and commercial rents were raised by 70%, generating an income of approximately £4 million. Clearly, K11 found that bringing such artistic marvels to the public sphere rendering shopping more enchanting.



Figure 2.3: Claude Monet Exhibition in K11 Art Mall. (Courtesy of the K11 Art Foundation, 2014.)



Figure 2.4: Exhibition art space in the basement of the K11. (Courtesy of the K11 Art Foundation, 2014.)

The Monet masterpieces on loan from the Paris Marmottan Monet Museum²⁷ included the iconic *Water Lily* and *Wisteria* paintings, plus 15 works by other masters, such as

²⁷ Paris Marmottan Monet Museum has a collection of over 300 Impressionist and Post-Impressionist paintings by the artist Claude Monet – the largest collection of Monet’s work in the world.

Pierre-Auguste Renoir. Instead of being an exhibition full of obscure research and scholarship, it featured a number of works relevant to everyday life, which K11 made easily accessible by relating them to five key words ‘friends’, ‘cartoons’, ‘travel’, ‘garden’ and ‘old age’. Claude Monet makes a regular appearance in the top ten of the most popular artists of all time, and the exhibition was undoubtedly a massive success, attracting a huge number of visitors. Specifically, blockbuster-curatorial centric strategy can be defined as using people’s undiluted enthusiasm for influential and highly popular artists and professionals in art history.

The solution for the curators it is to find the midway point between the artist and the public. It is in this way that an exhibition becomes a cutting-point, not only between art museum and visitors but also between art and the real estate business that will turn the site and exhibition into a living entity. Clearly, staging blockbuster exhibitions with entry fees is one of the most successful ways for institutions to supplement their funding and generate revenue. Only those art exhibitions which inhabit a commercial space are able to fulfil the dual mission of being profitable and acting as an ambassador for the institution.

When tasked with art dissemination in a commercially charged or complex site, how should curators react to their surroundings? How should one stage an exhibition in such a place, while retaining an accessible connection to a larger audience group conversation? When there are gaps between curatorial responsibilities and general demands – locale, knowledge production and finance – it becomes the duty of the curator to find a balance. The curator of a shopping mall, such as K11, must rely on a range of avant-garde or world-class artists to realise an exhibition, particularly when a show is destined to be staged on a particular site or meant to fulfil targets with multiple goals.

Following the Monet blockbuster of 2014, the curatorial team landed an exhibition featuring works of the iconic Spanish Surrealist artist Salvador Dalí in 2015. The Surrealist exhibition *Media-Dalí* featured 240 original artworks, media works and some

of the artist's private belongings, and was co-curated and co-produced by K11 and the Gala-Salvador Dalí Foundation. Central to the exhibition were pieces linking Dalí's media work with his signature visual language, including elephants, melting clocks and egg-shaped forms, which were positioned both inside and outside the mall.

The melting clocks, as depicted in *The Persistence of Memory* (1931), became not only one of the most characteristic and original images of Dalí's visual world but also one of the most recognisable, popular and historically important pieces of modern art in the world (Rothman, 2012, p. 9). Rothman (2012, p. 1) said of Salvador Dalí, 'his love of little things, on the other hand—of things that exist at the boundary of perception and on the edge of cognition—was a love Dalí never abandoned'. The exhibition at the K11 Shanghai responded to the concept that the Dalinian clocks function in radically different ways, linking a wide range of contradictory orientations and perspectives. Dalí expressed his contempt and fondness for the aesthetics of soft and hard objects by employing the melting clock (Figure 2.5). As shown in Figure 2.6, a giant melting clock was set up in the main entrance on Huaihai Road in the downtown area. Similarly, the main plaza was dominated by sculptural elephants (Figure 2.7) – a recurring theme in Dalí's works *The Temptation of Saint Anthony* and *Swans Reflecting Elephants*. Whether the artworks or the venue, the contradictory of them became one of themes that echoed throughout the exhibition, from the public square through to the art museum space. As such, the artwork performs dual 'responsibilities': both aestheticised and isolated from their original function.



Figure 2.5: Salvador Dalí's *The Persistence of Memory*. (Courtesy of the MoMA, 2015.)



Figure 2.6: Sculptures in the outside space. (Courtesy of the K11 Art Foundation, 2015.)



Figure 2.7: Sculptures at the *Media-Dali Surrealist Exhibition*. (Courtesy of the K11 Art Foundation, 2015.)

Salvador Dalí, a master of self-promotion, was unflinchingly committed to commercial endeavours, something which was echoed in the exhibition's venue. As explained by the exhibition curator, Montse Aguer:

Dalí was very intelligent. He defined himself as a thinking machine and gave us this image of 'showman', but that's not real. He arrived in the US in the '40s, while a World War was happening in Europe, thinking this was the centre of the world – 'I need to self-promote, I need to help audiences approach my art.' (Arnold, 2015)

In this way, the K11 established a model which commercialised the art museum visiting experience, and embraced the belief that what is commercial is democratic and reaches a mass audience. From the operational experience of the K11 Art Mall, there are some artists which are guaranteed box office winners – such as Monet and Dalí. However, curating a successful mall-based exhibition is not just about filling spaces, it is a close alliance between art and business. Above all, it is emblematic of a new era in art

museums: that of the blockbuster-centric curatorial strategy, whose aim – driven by financial need and the search for innovative revenue sources – is to target multitudes of ticket buyers as a means to the lucrative cultural economy of the shopping mall. Therefore, based on past experience, the K11 has continued to build exhibitions around top international artists in order to maximise public engagement. To draw large crowds, it is necessary to exhibit work from the headline stars of the art world – but is the blockbuster-centric curatorial strategy only applicable to world-class masterpieces?

While the majority of art museums in Mainland China use social media to promote their exhibitions, the way in which they curate and plan exhibitions appears to be readily and increasingly influenced by social media, in particular WeChat²⁸. Directors and curators put emphasis on WeChat Moments, taking into careful consideration the social feed when designing the audience experience. With a billion monthly users, it was inevitable that WeChat would shake up the art world in China – it is changing the way we experience and share our visits to exhibition, and how we perceive art.

Katharina Grosse, the acclaimed German artist, uses a spray gun as her primary painting tool, and featured in five site-specific installations, entitled *Mumbling Mud*, in November 2018. Grosse attracts a strong WeChat fanbase to her exhibitions and the show included WeChat-friendly displays to enable the audience to immerse themselves into a 1, 600 square feet immersive space. The dissensual order of reality offered photo opportunities to a hungry market, and a great number of fans creatively immersed themselves in Grosse's works and posted the images on WeChat. In this sense, the social media platform WeChat offered visitors authority and agency in sharing their aesthetic experiences.

²⁸ WeChat is China's most popular social media, and has more than a billion monthly users. It offers more than just messaging. WeChat Moments serves as a social-networking function on the app, allowing its users to share pictures and videos with all of the user's friends (similar to Facebook and Instagram). At the same time, users can 'like' and 'comment' on friends' posts. Today, WeChat Moments functions as the common access to information for Chinese people.

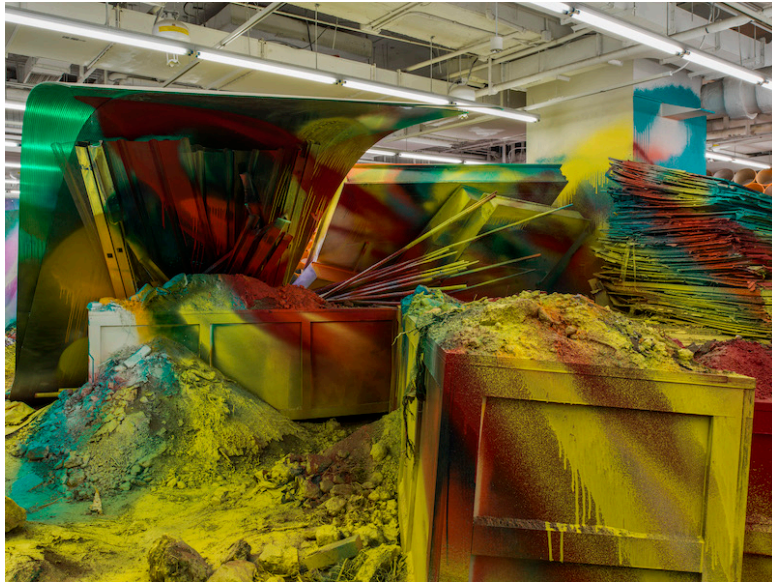


Figure 2.8: Installation view of Katharina Grosse's *Mumbling Mud*. (Courtesy of JJYPhoto, 2018.)

With emphasises the criticality of material in relation to the city and the space, Grosse took piles of dirt, soil, crates, wires, ladders and building materials from the local market in Shanghai and reassembled them within a texturally earthy and raw ‘mud’ installation, which was then covered with colourful paint. The work was subdivided into a five-part installation, curated in a maze of primordial chaos that illuminated a kind of surreal creative wonderland, inviting visitors to discover new aspects of the site at each turn. Integral to the surrealism and reality with affirming coherence and beauty, is site specificity, both physically and conceptually.

Showroom, one of the large-scale installations produced on-site in the exhibition, featured coloured swathes of paint that passed across a sofa, bed, book shelf, tree trunks and variously arranged domestic objects. The intention of the piece was to reconnect the exhibition site to the recreation of a familiar daily scene with the artist’s signature aesthetic by the use of the spray gun. Amidst the domestic objects, the everyday commonality attached to commodity and the position of art in everyday life became the fundamental ambiguity, that is, the edge of art and the daily life are blurred. The unresolved clash between the world of painting and the world of lifestyle objects posed urgent questions about the position of art in everyday life.



Figure 2.9: Installation view of Katharina Grosse's *Showroom*. (Courtesy of the JJYPhoto, 2018.)

Grosse (2018) insisted on her ideology in the exhibition and commented: 'a painting can land anywhere: on an egg, in the crook of the arm, along a train platform, in snow and ice, or on the beach.' The title *Mumbling Mud* alluded to this fundamental ambiguity: 'mumbling' lies at the middle area of quietness, and the blatant 'mud' implies somewhere between the fluid and the solid – the intermediate zone. Ultimately, the boundary of site attributes and objects reset the rationality of spatial order through the painterly precipitation performed by the artist. Not only did Grosse create an experience of immersing the familiar in novel ways, but also reworked the established functions and attributes of the shopping mall in which the exhibition spaces were located. The works functioned as a response to the divisions that cut across the art and business worlds.



Figure 2.10: Installation view of Katharina Grosse's *Stomach*. (Courtesy of the JJYPhoto, 2018.)

Stomach, another labyrinthine installation in a tactile chasm of colour – performed by over 100 meters amorphous coarse cloths twisted hanging from the ceiling – offered an overwhelming sense of audience's perception. Based in a heavily frequented shopping mall in downtown, the work was aesthetically appealing and inherently immersive, and enabled visitors to digest an artistic encounter with their bodies and physical feelings. Obviously, the significance of physical experience was further expanded by the artist, with the work enveloping audiences in various structures. It is noticeable, however, that amongst the rising popularity of virtual forms of digital media, human tactility became the neglected part in the art viewing experience. The installation *Stomach* invited and immersed audiences, enabling them to wander, physically touch and observe throughout the labyrinthine passage. Through WeChat Moments, audiences were invited to participate in this immersive experience both virtually online and physically on-site.

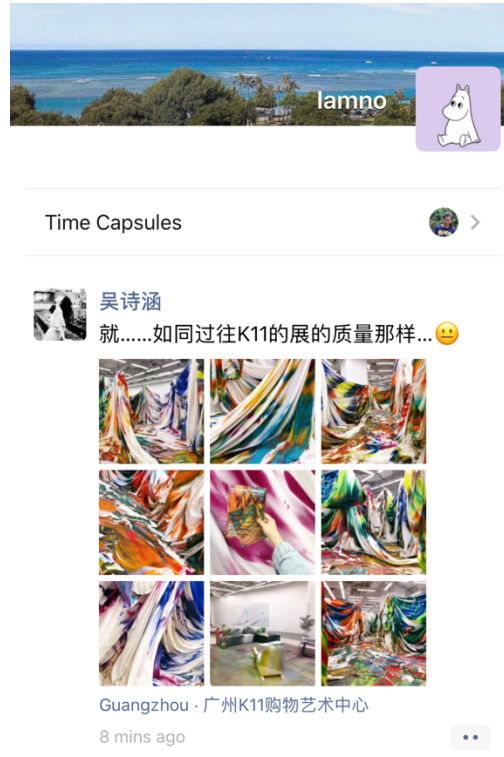


Figure 2.11: A screen shot of the WeChat Moment audience sharing the Katharina Grosse Exhibition. (Photographed by the author, 2019.)

The dual role of the exhibition space, i.e. having an engaging, immersive, experiential, viewer-centric exhibition, is critical to what the business entity strives to achieve. *The National Online Research Study* (2017) found that when participants engage in cultural events, such as exhibitions, they prefer to be entertained and able to socially interact rather than be educated or quietly reflective (LaPlaca Cohen, 2017). In the Chinese context, the use of WeChat Moments reinforces the necessity of the audience's presence. It brings together a blockbuster exhibition, co-curated by the curator and the artist, with social media to fuel engagement with new audiences. Bourriaud (1998) stated 'We can no longer treated contemporary work as a space for experience, but a time of experience, like an opening for unlimited discussion'. In this research, therefore, I define the blockbuster-centric curatorial strategy applied to K11 as a 'WeChat-friendly' exhibition, in which audiences take their relationship with WeChat to a new level and curate an exhibit through 'likes' on their social feeds.

Cultural elitism can be seen as the gap between the art museums and the masses, and expressed a view that art can only be appreciated in an orthodox manner. K11 have the potential to bring a new dimension to the relationship between artist, curator and visitor. In the emerging commercial mix-used spaces, such as K11, curators are making use of WeChat to inform how they plan their exhibitions. It is undeniable that this curatorial strategy can help build new audiences and strengthen connections with existing visitors, even with something as simple as providing audiences with opportunities for a good selfie backdrop. Curators strongly believe that the blockbuster strategy combined with the creative marriage of art and marketing are an effective means for real estate businesses to build deeper connections with their consumers and visitors.

Through intervention, the values of art become those of commerce, meaning that real estate developers have more knowledge of how to create bridges between people and the business world. Adrian Cheng stress that the private art museum investors should consider how it can make money or receive tax extensions in the Chinese context (Wang, 2017, p.168). Furthermore, Adrian Cheng added that:

An audience's appreciation is always very important. Even though the new generation wants to appreciate art, how can you appreciate art when there is no tradition of going to museums or galleries? Integrate a proper program inside of what we think that will achieve the purposes, right? Expose your democratised art in places where people go. (Wang, 2017, p. 167)

I strongly believe that the act of purchasing consumer goods in K11 is sublimated by art, and art makes shopping more enchanting. From this point of view, art museum and commerce are conjoined. In contrast to the opinion that 'exhibitions have become the medium through which most art becomes known' (Ferguson, Greenberg and Nairne, 1996, p.2), there is no discussion in this research about whether blockbuster exhibition is good or bad. As the safest option under the specific context, the formula of the blockbuster exhibition located within a shopping mall can exclude experimentation and

knowledge production. When shopping malls are trying to make an exhibition attractive to the public and, of course, drive box office sales, it is much more preferable to choose striking exhibitions with world-class artists who have a wide-ranging audience. The exhibition based on the blockbuster-centric strategy attracts the dual ‘audience’, enabling the shopping mall to entice different types of people so that they become either audience or consumer. In terms of revenue, the box office is essential to the investor in order to cover the enormous investments sunk into the exhibition, including insurance, shipping and security costs. This is not about the division between art for the elite and the masses – it is a curatorial strategy about letting more people in and converting those visitors to customers to enable investors to recoup their investments.

2.3 A ‘persuasive space’ in the mall

As events and shows that displayed a crossover between luxury brands and art have emerged and evolved, K11 has broken some of the fundamental rules and traditional ideas of what an art museum is supposed to be. Previously, it was commonly accepted that an art museum was an art-led space which included retail outlets to assist with sustainable operation, such as an art store, a coffee shop or canteen. In contrast, the K11 Art Mall acts as a ‘persuasive space’, in which the curators and artists are invited to create projects in relation to the luxury brands based in the mall. Thereby, its role and responsibility has shifted from a space where artworks are exhibited, to a space where they are an advocate for luxury brands on sale in the mall. In the new museology, the social range of material culture that art museum exhibit has also been expanded, with the aim of showcasing popular culture and the histories of the non-elite social classes, as opposed to the world views of elite culture (Ross, 2004, pp. 84-85). To increase coverage, art museums must knock down the cultural barriers and pay greater attention to community- and visitor-focussed activities (Lawley, 1992, p. 38). In this way, artists and artworks will take new forms in the persuasive space.

As an iconic British fashion brand, Vivienne Westwood is known for designing its very own genre, strengthened by a reputation as an outspoken, quintessentially British style, with a strong set of values. Even though it has now become a global brand, its iconic style and identity have remained firmly rooted in its British heritage. The Vivienne Westwood store in the K11 Art Mall Shanghai opened in 2013, and at the time was the brand's largest flagship store in the world – with over 6,000 square feet of pure Westwood – before a further two stores were established in Paris and London. Two years later, the world's first Vivienne Westwood café opened in K11. In terms of business performance, Vivien Westwood made serious inroads into a receptive Chinese market, with 8-10% of the brand's worldwide sales happening in Mainland China (Rapp, 2016). Then, in 2016, the Vivienne Westwood brand and the K11 Art Foundation co-curated an exhibition entitled *Get A Life!* to raise awareness about climate change (which will be discussed in further detail below). The exhibition became a discursive and visual weapon for persuading visitors, and, with an eye to the future, the brand regarded the store and café in K11 Shanghai as the embedded market strategy.

The exhibition at K11 also made an essential statement – that in the future this kind of visitor-as-consumer exhibition, fusing art appreciation and consumption, would become the new normal. When interviewed, the art museum manager, Huang Shengzhi, commented that the role of the art museum – and that of its staff – was becoming challenging, especially when faced with the concept of the visitor as a consumer. Professionals in the field of art museum operation have had to deviate from their previous roles as educators of the public in order to react to emerging demands from both the market and the state (Ross, 2004). In the new museology context, art museums not only function as a public educational space; increasingly, attention is drawn to the transformation from a collection-centred ethos to one that is visitor-centred, creating a multi-element space featuring different cultural landscapes throughout urban regeneration.

As a result of the rapid and extensive urbanisation in China, art spaces – as internal inhabitants of the urban complex – inevitably showcase their visibility. I argue that no longer immured, this persuasive strategy will transform into a regional cultural practice with a visible urban impact. Furthermore, exhibitions provide helpful footnotes to consumers’ conceptualisation; they can perhaps see the assembly as a mode of ‘persuasive art museum’.



Figure 2.12: Vivienne Westwood store in K11 Shanghai. (Courtesy of the Glamshops, 2014.)



Figure 2.13: Vivienne Westwood store in K11 Shanghai. (Courtesy of the Glamshops, 2014.)

However, before engaging with the Chinese market, ‘negotiation’ with the government in the name of building trust is a compulsory course for international brands to take. ‘Negotiation’ in China is viewed as an ongoing and dynamic process that takes into account localisation and political contexts. When adapting to Chinese-style ‘negotiations’, an international brand should be localised. As a general understanding, marketing localisation implies knowledge of cultural and social norms, language, habits, preferences and especially the prevailing taboos of the target market. Adherence to the party line is one of, if not the key component in making an international brand successful in China. This can be incredibly important in guiding marketing strategies and informing the brand of what not to include in their marketing campaigns. From a Chinese perspective, this means that all content produced within the country should be censored. Therefore, international brands should actively develop adaption strategies to deal with China’s particular political environment.

It is interesting to note that the websites of international fashion brands, such as the English brand Vivienne Westwood, display different content in China and outside of China. When entering the Chinese market digitally, it is important to fully grasp the concept of ‘ideological security’²⁹ that is put forward by the CCP. This is recognised as the first step in which international fashion and lifestyle brands negotiate their navigation through the Chinese political context.

Also, Vivienne Westwood has teamed up with Chinese contemporary artists for environmental topic. As briefly introduced earlier, the 2016 exhibition *Get A Life!* is one example of a project based on the idea of ‘persuasive art’. The exhibition – co-curated by Alex Krenn, the head designer of the Westwood fashion house, and the K11 Art Foundation – sought to raise awareness about climate change through six themes,

²⁹ Tang (2019) argued that ideological security refers to ‘the situation wherein the state’s dominant ideology is relatively secure and free from internal and external threats as well as to the ability to ensure a continuous state of security’.

from cutting edge fashion to environmental advocacy. In a joint response to the theme, Vivienne Westwood teamed up with seven contemporary Chinese artists and an artist group to simultaneously create a vision within the same space. The exhibition Monument of the Peach Blossom Valley, which included work by Wu Junyong, Zhang Ruyi, Yu Honglei, Wang Congyi, Nathan Zhou and Zhu Xi, showcased an array of paintings, video works, sculptures and installations. The ‘get a life’ statement of this eco-activist exhibition appealed to people to raise environmental consciousness about the deterioration of their living conditions, and went on to call for action to ensure a good life for the next generation whilst pressing environmental concerns in China. As a manufacturing superpower, China has the highest global carbon emissions (Gardiner, 2017); intense pollution and excessive carbon dioxide emissions are a result of the glaring conflict between economy and living environment. K11 founder Adrian Cheng stated: ‘Chinese consumers and Chinese stakeholders are very into sustainability, green issues, and how to conserve the world’. On the Vivienne Westwood exhibition, Cheng (2017) commented: ‘That’s a big paradigm shift, and we are using art and Vivienne’s voice to create that message’. In fact, there was a massive ready audience of luxury fashion-hungry Chinese shoppers waiting to consume the vast array of eco-conscious projects and products available at the K11 Art Mall.

In her usual unswerving manner, the designer lent her outspoken voice to the climate change manifesto by means of handwritten notes to visitors, which are featured in the exhibition. These striking poster-sized, black crayon-scrawled, handwritten messages feature questions and statements, such as ‘Who Are Our Rulers?’, ‘climate revolution’ and ‘hazardous fracking’ alongside images of doves and graphic signs to form the silent scream of her Climate Revolution Charter. One of the photography exhibits, on the theme of ‘Who Are Our Rulers?’, captured Vivien Westwood driving a tank to the home of the British Prime Minister, David Cameron, in an anti-fracking protest on 9th September 2015. Westwood was demonstrating against the fact that the British government had offered licenses for fracking (the controversial method of extracting gas from deep beneath the ground, which is associated with serious water pollution and

a cause of minor earthquakes in the UK). This portrait of her – as the pioneer environmental activist – created an influential and persuasive artistic persona whose cause people wanted to join. The numerous ironies of *Get A Life!* revealed and encouraged the activist trends that have since been adopted by commercialism and pop activism; and the effective expression of empathy in relation to a topical subject in a country so affected by pollution has helped to stir a mass audience in China.



Figure 1 Figure 2.14: Vivienne Westwood: *Get A Life!* installation views. (Courtesy of the K11 Shanghai, 2016.)

By targeting the specific Chinese context and employing this in the campaign, Westwood used political and environmental declarations as a medium through which she could make bold statements to bridge the gap between activism and individual consumption, affinity and compassion. As the ultimate face of the brand, Westwood explored the persona of an eco-friendly activist to build on the desire to make a statement. As shown in Figure 2.15, Westwood states, in a loosely handwritten paragraph on the wall of the exhibition's entrance:

I have spent my life trying to understand the world – by following not just my deep interest but also through compassion ... My point of view is

heretical. My enemy is the status quo. At the moment the status quo is: A few control 7bn. The few are killing us. They do this by means of the Rotten Financial System. The solution is to switch to Green Energy.

Environmental and health issues are recurring topics in China, along with the deterioration of the environment, as the negative result of the country's rapid economic development. Environmental problems, including poor air quality, water shortages and pollution, climate change, and desertification, have become more noticeable and continue to pose significant health risks and challenges to Chinese residents during ongoing extensive urban regeneration. To reflect the fact that China is one of the countries most subject to climate change (Kan, 2009), Westwood's identity focusses on and reacts to a push for regional climate change.

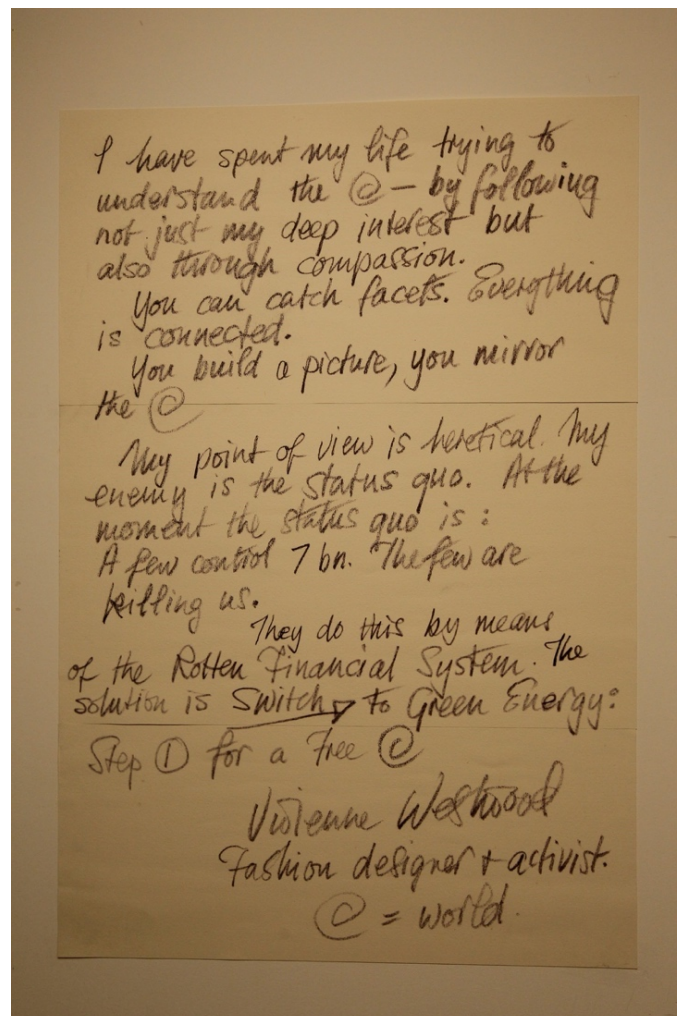


Figure 2.15: Vivienne Westwood's handwritten message. (Courtesy of the K11 Shanghai, 2016.)

The curator materialises the other side of the designer's voice, as another art museum experience and a 'persuasive process'. By the use of simplified slogans such as 'Live the Arctic' and 'Climate Revolution', Westwood momentarily steps back from her leading role in the punk revolution of the 1970s, to become an ecological activist, creating a loose discursive style but in a materialist way to deliver her fashion aesthetics.



Figure 2.16: Vivienne Westwood: *Get A Life!* costume design. (Courtesy of the K11 Shanghai, 2016.)

Noticeably, the 'Buy Less Choose Well' slogan occurs here, as a reaction to the brand's reduced clothing line, in order to persuade her fashion followers to buy quality rather than quantity. The *Get A Life!* theme was a clear attempt to stir a mass audience in the name of environmentalism. An implication of this is the possibility that the activist intention of the discursive and materialism form from the knowledge that K11 equips with Vivienne Westwood's flagship store and coffee shop, nor separate the radical conflict between economy development and serious environmental problem of looking at Westwood's inspiring journeys in design, art and activism. In this context, 'What's good for the planet is good for the economy' became a paradox and the persuasive philosophy of the brand.

The constant controversy surrounding Westwood may be part of what makes her fashion brand so appealing. In the luxury urban complex of the K11 Art Mall, visitors to the exhibition were defined as potential consumers, and this dual identity poses questions and prompt debates: did the Vivienne Westwood brand act as a vehicle that conflated art museum visitors and fashion consumers with eco-consciousness? Although the connection between the green movement and consumption remains tenuous, environmental awareness is deemed as an effective marketing discourse when faced with youth culture in global conversations (Landbrecht, 2017). However, while Chinese consumers still have a way to go before they are in a position to make purchasing decisions that reflect eco-consciousness, the Vivienne Westwood brand humbly used an aestheticised vision of environmental consciousness as a platform to build affinity among the its followers. *Get A Life!* promoted discussions about eco-conscious practices and campaigns, whilst activism possesses new buying power that contributes to the brand and commercial growth.

Within the same gallery, further exhibitions have gathered contemporary Chinese artists to respond to the considerations of nature, humanity and climate change – as reflected in Westwood’s fashion-as-activism – in order to foster locally engaged and cross-cultural dialogue. The exhibition not only had K11 presented works by Vivienne Westwood, but contemporary Shanghai artists, Zhang Ruyi and Nathan Zhou were also invited. The artworks by Zhang and Zhou initiated dialogue with Vivienne Westwood’s ‘Get A Life!’ environmental ideas by using environmentally friendly materials, visual metaphorical symbols and imaginative meaning.

Zhang Ruyi reviewed the connection between intangible and tangible objects by bridging them to create the sculpture work *Flow Away*. As a reference to modern society, electrical sockets and plugs linked together to illustrate the functioning of the real world. The artist used environmental-friendly materials, second-hand electric plugs and cement to create dozens of old-fashioned sockets. These sockets were lined up on the wall, with some plugs connected in pairs and others hanging free. In my point of

view, Zhang's artwork, based on industrial reality, captures the co-evolution fragment of the visible and invisible part – creating an instant 'pause' of emotion. In an intangible way, the electricity delivered by the plugs and sockets constitutes how people are reliant on the living environment. In comparison, not only is an intangible message voiced by Vivienne Westwood in a discursive way, but also the material work and activist action are stated in a materialist approach. In a direct link with Westwood's environmental actions, Zhang suspended electricity as a manifestation of her ambitions to prompt dialogue with Vivienne Westwood's *Get A Life!* environmental materialism and beyond.

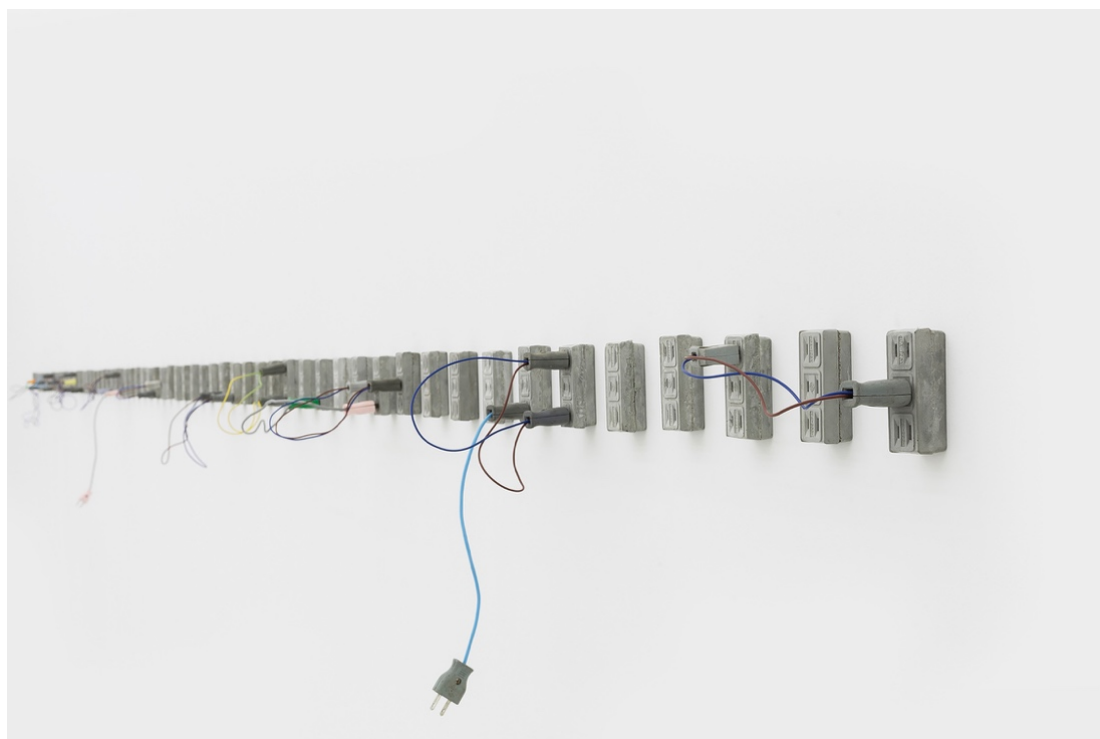


Figure 2.17 Zhang Ruyi's *Flow Away*. (Courtesy of the Zhangruiyi.com, 2016).

The exhibition also featured another artwork, *A Clown without a Past*, presented by the young Chinese artist Nathan Zhou, who is known for graffiti-esque visuals. Renowned for his impactful colour and intuitive style, the artist layered a number of metaphorical visual symbols, taken from his life experiences, onto the canvas, to depict a space imbued with imaginative meaning. Zhou's instinctive methodology points to an individual world, where reality and illusion are united as a painting language by a semiotic category that describes the different levels of interpretation of a message by

the audience. Graffiti, images, numbers and his unique language are interwoven into a code that needs to be deciphered. This entwined graffiti and collage technique, which originated from subcultures and underground movements, brims with painting language – echoing the hand-drawn graphics and ecological philosophies featured in Westwood’s *Get A Life!* exhibition.



Figure 2.18: Nathan Zhou’s *A Clown without a Past*. (Courtesy of the K11 Shanghai, 2016.)

Ambitious to get in touch with a mass audience, and convinced of the strength of art, the K11 Art Mall tries to commercialise the art museum experience. In this context, consumers of the shopping mall are equal to the audiences of the art museum. Inevitably, artistic intervention in an urban commercial complex has the potential to result in the increased commercialisation of art. The traditional characteristics of the non-profit organisations, and the roles they have played in society, have been totally changed over the past decade (Ross, 2004) as they have experienced a ‘commercial transformation’ (Weisbrod, 1998). K11’s founder, Adrian Cheng, believes that by filling a commercial space with art, customer consumption is enhanced by art engagement. Art is made more accessible to those who are unfamiliar with it, and, in this case, the main characteristics

of the art museum space are gradually transformed into the persuasive function in the rapid urban regeneration. Neumann (1932) stated:

Genius is able to produce its best when working for money. Working for money is a privilege implying that the purchaser values the work sufficiently to be willing to give for it praises more solid than the most enthusiastic critic. Some of the greatest artistic works were produced in periods of very highly developed commercialization. At these times the greatest artists were at once business men and the heads of organized functioning places of business.

It can thus be suggested that commercialisation of the art world occurs alongside the commercialisation of art. In a commercial space which has ambitions to persuade, exhibitions, activities and artworks are open to market forces in order to target ‘niche’ markets. I identify with the argument put forward by Ross (2004, p. 100), that the market domination of culture replies to their ‘customers’ need for cultural diversity, and strives to reduce elitism and exclusivity. In turn, the ‘persuasive space’ embodies the medium of art commercialisation and collapses certain barriers between art and the masses.

The highly interactive relationship between real estate businesses and art museums has been explored in this chapter. As stated throughout the case study examinations, art museums invested in and operated by real estate developers act as a new model of corporate sponsorship via a strategy of reciprocal symbiosis rather than philanthropy without profitability. By reviewing this collaborative effort between art and business, as well as the policies, support systems, and corporate and public awareness in China, the concept of ‘art museum retail’ has been formulated. This chapter suggests that exhibitions with a blockbuster-centric strategy are an effective means for real estate developers to not only evoke desire from consumers but to also enhance customer experiences provided by art savvy retailers. As exhibition locations and curatorial strategies are currently influenced and constantly adapted by ‘art museum retail’, the development of the persuasive space therefore has potential to exclude experimentation

and knowledge production. Following this discussion of the interactive relationship between art and real estate business, the next chapter will examine the knowledge production and practices within the real estate-driven art museums.

CHAPTER THREE
REDISTRIBUTING KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE
IN THE REAL ESTATE DRIVEN-ART MUSEUM:
OCT CONTEMPORARY ART TERMINAL

CHAPTER THREE

Chapter Two defined the interactive relationships between real estate enterprises and the art museums which they have constructed as a new way of art sponsorship led by developers in China. In order to clarify the rationality of the collaboration between arts and real estate business, Chapter Two demonstrated that the creation of art museums by real estate developers was regarded as a new strategy of art sponsorship. The concept of a 'persuasive space' in the mall was also formulated, and there was a discussion on the arrival of commercialisation of art in the art museum. However, the question remains as to whether the block-buster strategy is the only curatorial strategy used in the real estate-driven art museums. Chapter Three will build upon knowledge production and dissemination within the OCAT Museum Group to examine the impact of this mode of art museum development in the rise of Chinese contemporary art.

In the twentieth century, contemporary art in China underwent many changes and became more active than ever. Instead of communicating underground, contemporary art gained public access and also developed in the international context, especially after the Shanghai Biennale in 1996. The ecosystem of contemporary art began to show more changes, as numerous public and private art institutions sprang up across the country. The majority of these were created as for-profit institutions, despite the fact that, generally, art museums are non-profit organisations, whether they are public or

privately owned. According to the International Council of Museums (ICOM) Statutes (ICOM, 2017), a museum operates as a non-profit, permanent institution. Nevertheless, on an administrative level, most private museums actually are registered as a business (Movius, 2011). Chinese art museums, established as non-profit organisations, are mostly integrated with real estate business, which explores the possibility that non-profit art museums functioning in a for-profit world, are blazing new trails in promoting the development of contemporary Chinese art.

The following sections will investigate the OCT Contemporary Art Terminal (referred to as OCAT), which may provide significant insight based on its sustainable knowledge production and practice. OCAT was established in 2005 and has been operating in a non-profit and sustainable manner – something which the majority of real estate-driven art museums in China have been unable to emulate. It is a contemporary art museum group sponsored by the enterprise that evolved with real estate business. OCAT became a registered independent non-profit organisation in April 2012. Headquartered in Shenzhen, it has already laid the foundations for its group across China, branches are already scattered across Beijing, Shanghai, Xian, Wuhan, and Nanjing. This case study has been adopted as a methodology to research the OCAT Museum Group's knowledge production and practice, alongside the real estate development of the OCT Group across China. It offers representative and revelatory opportunities through the following selection criteria: 1) the case reflects the characteristics of knowledge production within the institution, to identify the procedure of obtaining the legal identity with a real estate background; 2) the case presents operational mechanisms which were identified in the research; and 3) this case also promotes and represents the redistribution characteristics of knowledge production and practice in art museums of real estate developments in China. It is therefore important to investigate why and how OCAT operates as a non-profit institution within the broad ecology of contemporary art, whilst retaining close ties with real estate business. Additionally, a variety of research projects and practices had been carried out since 2012, making it possible to discover art museum operation methods in the light of real estate development.



Figure 3.1: OCAT Shenzhen and the view of residential building developed by the OCT Group. (Courtesy of Adrian McGregor, 2019.)

I am going to argue that independent identity and scholarly mechanisms are the key elements which maintain the standards of knowledge production of OCAT. Research, exhibition and public education, represent a significant case for the emergence of art museums driven by real estate comprehensive development in urban regeneration. This chapter will discuss how the scholarly characteristics and mechanisms of OCAT, as a research-oriented institution, have developed since the end of the last century. Furthermore, I will investigate how the institution carries out scholarly practices of contemporary art in China, given the collusion of arts and real estate business. The progression of the OCAT identity – the legal identity – is introduced in the first section in order to clarify the notion of art museum identity in the Chinese context, as well as to establish the framework that was set for its operation.

Secondly, based on my in-depth interviews and participant observations in OCAT, I will discuss the systems involved in knowledge production. Three operational mechanisms were involved in the development of OCAT: the OCAT Council, the OCAT Academic Committee, and its office for the group of contemporary art museums across China (which acts as a research-oriented centre). The parallel operation between the OCAT Council and the Academic Committee is a commonly used mechanism, not only for OCAT but also for the operation of other art museums in China. However, when OCAT set up an office for art museum group management and its research institute (OCAT Beijing), they nevertheless derived from the operating model from the OCT real estate business. The OCAT Institute is the research-oriented centre, initiated by Huang Zhuan in 2015, which aims to establish research archives and facilitate dialogue and exchange between China and other countries – this will be discussed in the third section of this chapter. In the fourth section, I will focus on the locality of the OCAT Xi'an – as part of the OCAT Museum Group – and consider how the art museum operates within the local art ecology. Through an analysis of operating practices lead by OCAT, I will examine the hypothesis put forward as a result of semi-structured interviews, participant observations and literature analysis.

3.1 Independent identity of the 'headquarter museum' as a precondition

In January 2005, OCT became an independent agency isolated from the Hexiangning OCT Contemporary Art Centre, which had formerly been created by the corporate sponsor for the purpose of becoming an international standard of contemporary art in Chinese folk-art institutions.³⁰ I argue that the independence of OCAT put emphasis on

³⁰ OCT Contemporary Art Terminal (referred to as OCAT) aimed to launch international interaction. The words 'Terminal' and 'airport' have a similar meaning, which strengthens international art exchanges, to the world outstanding Chinese contemporary art for the purpose of the introduction of international best Chinese contemporary art.

two associated elements: 1) the independence of identity,³¹ which is a process that is developed gradually, and 2) the ambition to chase independent knowledge production and practice.

In relation to independent identity, as the primary precondition of independent identity, private art museums in China should be confirmed as ‘People-Run Non-Enterprise Units’ by the Ministry of Civil Affairs. According to the *Interim Regulations on Registration Administration of Private Non-enterprise Units* (1998) promulgated by the State Council, the People-Run Non-Enterprise Units are defined as social organisations set up by enterprises, institutions, associations or other civic entities, as well as individual citizens, using non-state assets and conduct not-for-profit social service activities (The State Council of the People’s Republic of China, 1998). Yet, private art museums in China, with their investment background in bank and securities, media, or real estate, remain to some degree business oriented; they are for-profit institutions and the majority are registered as cultural companies. Despite the regulations, art museums invested in by real estate enterprises were, in most cases, required to register as a cultural branch company under the headquarters of the real estate business.

Art museums in China can be grouped into four categories in relation to the founder and sources of funds. Firstly, public art museums which were set up and directly funded by the government, such as the National Art Museum of China, the Guangdong Museum of Art, and the Shanghai Museum of Art. Here, however, the source of funding means that these art museums must adhere to the official ideology. Secondly, private art museums which are run by individual citizens but subsidized by the state, for instance, the He Xiangning Art Museum and the Yan Huang Art Museum; they belong to China’s ‘Institutions Unit’ and staff salaries are paid by the government. Before it

³¹ Identity includes two meaning in this research. The first refers to the type of legal identity of the private art museum responsible for the activity and is obtained by taking the People-Run Non-Enterprise Units, which legitimised its identity in the Chinese context. Secondly, the independent identity of private art museums refers to the knowledge production within institutions which keeps a distance from the ideological and political missions. The notion of identity will be explored through the independent progression of the OCAT headquarters, as examined in this section.

became an independent art museum group, the activities and administrative affairs of OCAT all needed to be approved by the He Xiangning Art Museum. In such cases, knowledge production and practice of contemporary art in the national museum system were usually limited. Arguably, when OCAT registered as a People-Run Non-Enterprise Units, it left the government-regulated He Xiangning Art Museum, a move which constituted an impetus for independent knowledge production and practice. Huang Zhuan commented that OCAT parted from the He Xiangning Art Museum in 2003 in order to become a more independent art organisation, separate from the national museum system, at a time when the real estate enterprise was preparing a new space for the art museum in OCT-LOFT (OCAT, 2015, p. 4). Thirdly, although private art museums may operate as vehicles for the personal ideals of founders or form part of an enterprise strategy, this type of art museum is fully funded by the enterprise but registered as a ‘People-Run Non-Enterprise Unit’ and independent from its headquarters – OCAT is an example of this type of art museum and forms the central concern in this chapter. The fourth type of private art museum in China acts more like a *Kunsthalle*: a space dedicated to temporary exhibitions but without permanent collections.



Figure 3.2: The opening ceremony of He Xiangning Art Museum in 1997. (Courtesy of the Artnet, 2015.)

There are numerous private art museums registered as cultural enterprises and operating for profit in cities around China. In terms of independent identity, Zhang Zikang, the first director of the Today Art Museum – China’s first private art museum owned by a non-profit organisation identity and which operates on a continuous sustainable basis – explained that capital will always be dominant, therefore, it is essential that art museums do not become the subordinate of their headquarters. Private art museums funded by enterprise should preserve their independence from the sponsor, otherwise their independent research and operation will be restricted by capital (2009, p. 32).

As a result of vague legislation (including tax incentives), a number of private art museums have undergone a process of transformation; firstly, registering as cultural enterprises, and then transforming into a ‘People-Run Non-Enterprise Units’ after a period of time of operation. More importantly, the government will never confer non-corporate preferential policies to art museums if they belong to a corporate group, which allows the developers to benefit from double profits. Furthermore, social donative funding³² does not tend to contribute to cultural enterprises which are operating as art museums (Zhang, 2009, p. 32). As I have discussed above, private art museums have to make clear choices about their identities as a precondition for setting up their operational direction.

Two sets of regulations were issued by the Ministry of Civil Affairs: firstly, all revenues from non-profit institutions must only be used for their own operation; and, secondly, collections are entirely owned by the art museum, not the enterprise (in the case where an art museum is no longer able to operate, then these collections will transfer to the public). Whilst these regulations could potentially constrain art museums to a certain extent, they prevent the headquarters from conducting profitable transactions, such as

³² An organisation that relies on social donative funding must generally be organised as a non-profit. The social donative funding for non-profit organisation sometimes serves as a means for supporting the private production of public goods (Henry, 1980; Burton, 1975).

trading artworks in the name of the art museum. Clearly, OCAT is building its independent knowledge production and practice on the premise that it has legitimised its identity in the Chinese context.

However, the identity and operation of art museums in China is troubled by power politics. In comparison to the earliest art museums set up by Western missionaries for religious and political power purposes, the origin and development of art museums in China differs significantly. As suggested by Denton (2014, p. 3), ‘museums and memorial sites in China are implicated in a highly politicised process of remembering and representing the past and are subject to multiple ideological forces, among which are Maoist, liberal, and neoliberal’. Initially, the role of art museums in the modern Chinese state was never about enjoyment and leisure (Lu, 2014). When the PRC was established by the CPC in 1949, all art museum activities were centrally controlled and regulated by the government. According to Lu’s (2014, p. 112) understanding,

The most unique characteristic of museum management in the Chinese context after 1949 has been the CCP’s monopolistic yet comprehensive control of not only public but also private art museums, not only administration but also exhibition and research, not only political and ideological but also intellectual issues. This control is obvious in some aspects and subtle in others, but it has always been there.

In some cases, knowledge production and practice were ideological rather than intellectual. As part of the CPC’s ideology and political control, from 1949 to the present, museums (including art museums) fronted the party’s propaganda and served the state’s economic, ideological and political needs. Without exception, art museums in China were considered as ‘culture’ businesses, directly controlled by the state, and the CPC, as the arm of the state, worked to plan everything (Lu, 2014). The mission of museums was to carry out revolutionary patriotic education, as clearly stated in an official document of the Ministry of Culture in 1951 (SACH, 2002). This official guiding

ideology of *Wenhua Shiye* – ‘Public Cultural Undertakings’³³ – is still maintained even today. According to the Law on the Protection of Cultural Relics included in the 2007 version, the state’s governance and planning of museums is defined as follows: organisations ought to use their collections for exhibition, research and other activities in order to enhance propaganda and education regarding the excellent historic culture and revolutionary tradition of China (SACH, 2007). Clearly these documents repeatedly emphasised that art museums in China should operate as public cultural undertakings and their purpose is to serve the economic and social propaganda of the state. No matter what, collections, exhibitions and other art museums activities are defined as a means to implement political ideology. As stakeholders in the system, curators of art museums must comply with instructions from superior bureaucratic departments, not only in terms of political and ideological matters but also academic issues (Lu, 2014). Accordingly, we can see that knowledge production and practice, including exhibitions, research, educational activities and public engagement, are not the only missions of public art museums operating within the Chinese context.

Before I further describe real estate-driven art museums in the Chinese context, it is important to look at the regulatory system of both public and private art museums. Accordingly, this clarifies how differently they have been centralised and regulated by national and local government: public art museums have totally emerged from the central government, while private art museums are usually set up spontaneously by corporations or individuals (Wang, 2017). Nevertheless, the vague and uncertain legislation issued to private art museums by the Chinese government, was unable to offer temporary social support and to work as an impetus to develop ways to achieve art museum operation.

³³ Public Cultural Undertakings (*wenhua shiye*) is a unique term in China. It refers to the collective nouns of cultural non-profit organisations engaged in research, spiritual production and cultural public service formulated by the Chinese political and economic system. In this sense, private art museums attribute to the undertakings. The priority development of public cultural undertakings was pushed forward by the cultural development plan presented in August 2006. Gradually, this government policy began to relax (Li, 2016).

The Ministry of Culture of the PRC was set up in 1949. Its role was not only to regulate the art museums directed by the government, but also to strategically plan the creation of central and local art museums in cities across China. Simultaneously, the Ministry of Propaganda of the Central Committee of the CPC held responsibility for the museums' establishment and their management for the nation (SACH 1992, 2002; Wang Y.Q. 1997; Lu, 2014). The establishment of the State Administration of Cultural Heritage (SACH) in 1949 played a leading role in organising the administration and development of public art museums across the country under the governance of the Ministry of Culture of the PRC (SACH, 2002). As funding was received from the corresponding local governments, public art museums were directed by the Department of Culture and local government. This also meant that a CPC secretary was embedded in every art museum and was responsible for reporting on its work to a superior CPC officer and administrative section. Because the art museums were fully funded by the local government, their operation and management, including the appointment of the director and the CPC secretary, were all determined by the Bureau or Department of Culture within the local government, and in some cases, approved by the Personnel Department of the CPC and the local government. According to Lu's studies (2014), public art museums were supervised by the local government, but also received advice from the SACH and occasionally from the Ministry of Propaganda of the Central Committee of the CPC. It could be argued that this undermined art museums' independent knowledge production, because the core factor of autonomy is to maintain mutual independence between sources of funds and operations without mutual interference. Subsequently, art museums in receipt of private funds attempted to achieve their independence by operating outside the control and funding of the government. To counter this, several legislative measures were taken by the Chinese government.

The problem of public art museum management in China is ongoing, given that administrative power overrides professional knowledge (Lu, 2014). However, the PRC's Department of Art Museum Management still insists on the promotion of diversity of the art museum ecology outside public art museums. Notably, key

legislation and regulations, which encouraged construction of private art museums in China, enriched the public cultural undertakings, enabling them to operate as a kind of platform for different discourses. There are two kinds of public cultural undertakings, including: 1) private, non-profit-making organisations; and 2) institutions, including private art museums, referred to in the guideline entitled ‘Registration of Private Non-business Institutes’ issued by the State Council in 1998 (Lin. 2011). The establishment of private museums was encouraged by a regulation on museum management promulgated in 2005 by the Ministry of Culture of the PRC (SACH 2005) – the Management Methodology in Museums – which announced that ‘the nation will aid and develop the museum business and will encourage personal, legal and other organisations to set up art museums’ (Song, 2008, pp. 42-46). In contrast to the management of public art museums, the central government offered more flexible mechanisms for the development of private art museums. From recognising their identity, to encouraging the building of private art museums, it can be seen that the government of the PRC has vigorously promoted the possibility of multiple discourse platforms outside public art museums by the promulgation of legislation and regulations.

According to my interview with Karen Smith, director of the OCAT Xi’an, the curation of exhibitions at the OCAT is flexible, as there is no need to make an application with the local government if no special case occurs. The good relationship between the government and OCAT can be attributed to the social contributions of the enterprise which have supported the establishment of art museums.³⁴ In terms of the management of private art museums, the director is normally appointed by the investor and the enterprise, while the direction of exhibitions and collections are decided by the Academic Committee within the art museum. On the whole, staff based in the art museum are not employed by the government, which makes them focussed on knowledge production rather than achieving political goals. I argue that the independent identity of the OCAT refers to the OCAT became an independent museum group when

34 Interview with Karen Smith on 18th May 2017, Shanghai.

it left the former He Xiangning Art Museum. This independence keeps OCAT a relatively safe distance away from centralised power, allowing it to conduct contemporary art practice and engage with the public, however, it is still regulated by the government.

Let us consider two of the world's leading museums: the Louvre, which played a role in glorifying the Republic and French citizens (McClellan, 1999); and the British Museum, which was built to inspire the British (Anderson, 2003). In contrast, public art museums in China have been given much greater ideological and political missions (Lu, 2013), and, as discussed above, political objectives still remain in operation. Taking into account this cultural environment, the occurrence of real estate-driven art museums is an important cultural phenomenon in modern China. It reflects the legalisation of private art museums, and delivers a more tolerant attitude and flexible management towards discourse that deviates from that officially authorised by the central government. It is not that the knowledge production of private art museums opposes governmental ideology, but rather independent cultural sites encourage diversity discourse, involving a wide range of individuals with various diversity perspectives. Thus, real estate-driven art museums might suggest a more viable option and map a new ground for the operation of art museums in China. They provide an alternative resolution in a certain way in the 'museumification' of China, as I will go on to argue later.

3.2 Exploring operational mechanisms for knowledge production and dissemination

As discussed in the last section, OCAT became an independent identity in the Chinese cultural and political context. This section will be divided into three parts to examine the hypothesis of OCAT's operational mechanisms of knowledge production and

practice which I put forward according to evidence I collected during the semi-structured interviews and participant observations.

Before I describe the knowledge production and practice of the institution, it is important to look at three mechanisms which maintain the daily management and the standard of knowledge production. Firstly, I will focus on the Academic Committee of OCAT, in particular its way of executing the parallel operations between the OCAT Academic Committee and the OCAT Board of Trustees. In the second part of this section, I will interpret the layout of OCAT, and the headquarter office set up for the management of the OCAT Museums. In the final part of the section, the research-oriented centre OCAT Beijing will be discussed.

Institution	Real Estate Business	Academic Committee	Board of Trustees	Headquarter Office	Research-oriented Centre
OCT Contemporary Art Terminal	√	√	√	√	√
Times Museum	√	√	√	×	×
Chi K11 Art Museum	√	√	√	×	×
Rockbund Art Museum	√	√	√	×	×
How Art Museum	×	√	√	×	×
Si Shang Art Museum	×	√	√	×	×
Shanghai Himalayas Museum	×	√	√	×	×
Yuz Museum Shanghai	×	√	√	×	×

Table 3.1: List of operational mechanisms. 2017³⁵

³⁵ In the research, all the tables and figures are made by author, unless otherwise stated.

For the purposes of my thesis, three elements are identified as key operational mechanisms, operating predominantly in the regulating and evaluating of art museums invested in by real estate enterprises. Eight private art museums are listed in Table 3.1, along with their operational mechanisms, where known. While the first four institutions are run by real estate businesses, the other art museums listed are sponsored by a variety of capital backgrounds other than real estate. To clarify the generality and the individuality of operational characteristics, a comparative analysis of different types of private art museums is listed here. As can be seen from Table 3.1, the establishment of an academic committee and a board of trustees is mandatory according to the international rules for managing and regulating art museums, whether real estate-driven or non-real estate-driven. Where real estate-driven museums are spread throughout the country, a headquarter office is considered to be key. The table above shows that a headquarter office is a mechanism of the real estate-driven art museums established by the OCT Group – a factor which is derived from the business operation of the real estate enterprise mode. Another concept originated by the OCAT Museum Group, is the establishment of a research-oriented centre, which was fuelled by the promotion of contemporary art research as an element of knowledge production.



Figure 3.3: Main Exhibition Hall of OCAT in Shenzhen. (Courtesy of the OCAT, 2016.)

In terms of the OCAT Academic Committee, the purpose of this mechanism is to give suggestions and resolution on governance and development to the OCAT Museum Group, including advice on operational direction, curatorial theme and the budget constraint throughout the yearly operation. It is comprised of local and international individuals who have a specialist knowledge of contemporary art theory and/or a broad knowledge of art collections and contemporary art production (artwork, exhibition, and/or art criticism). However, employees of the OCT group, particularly employees of the real estate business, are not included on the committee because the intervention of capital could potentially arise. The members of the Academic Committee were selected in 2012, and it is comprised of historians, critics, curators, artists, and executive directors of each branch of the OCAT Museum Group.

The OCAT Board of Trustees governs the macroscopic planning process for the development of OCAT Museums. It takes responsibility for the day-to-day running of operations, tracks the cash flow and deals with the decision-making for other aspects of art museum operation. All directors and executive directors of the OCAT Museum Group are all appointed by the OCAT Board of Trustees. Directors are assisted by the executive group in conducting intellectual programs and routine matters for OCAT Museums. Members of the OCAT Board of Trustees include the senior management of the real estate enterprise, including the chairman, the real estate general manager and the chief financial officer.

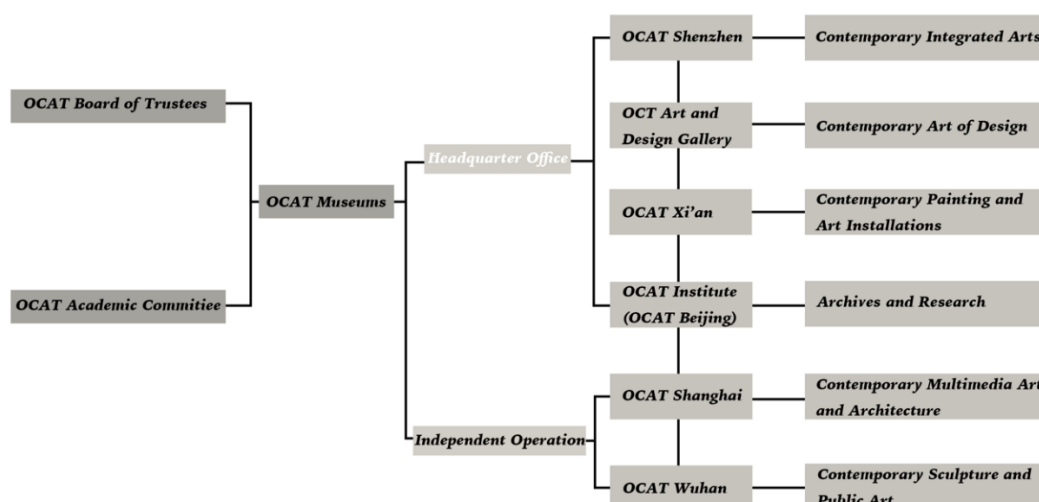


Table 3.2: Headquarter office of OCAT Museums. 2017.

As shown in Table 3.2, the OCAT Museum Group is simultaneously governed by the Board of Trustees and the Academic Committee, although they conduct parallel operations without disturbing each other. As a member of the Board of Trustees, Karen Smith described their annual discussion:

Directors of OCAT museums need to do the annual report on operations, and discuss exhibition programme and to schedule activity content, activity form and overall budgets for the next year during the annual conference. OCAT Museums could not set up an exhibition without permission of the Academic Committee ... I would have said that this mechanism works well, although it has a fundamental problem that is the selection of members for the Academic Committee yet.³⁶

Zhang Peili, a member of the Academic Committee and the executive director of the OCAT Shanghai, mentioned that, taking into consideration the different professional orientations of the OCAT Museums, OCAT Shanghai was looking forward to having an independent academic committee separate from the OCAT Academic Committee (Peng, 2018). OCAT Museums expect to be directed by experts in the specific fields,

³⁶ Interview with Karen Smith on 3rd March 2018, Xian.

especially when the particular problems arise during daily operation. In terms of the knowledge production standard, it would be better to have an academic committee which is devoted to the field of art museum operational direction. For example, the OCAT-Pierre Huber Art Prize – hosted by the OCAT Shanghai in 2014, and which aimed to provide a platform and grants for young artists in the field of media art – would have benefitted from more professional advice during the art program selection process if they had an academic committee dedicated to media art.³⁷

Above all, the OCAT Museums' Academic Committee and Board of Trustees are both set up in accordance with the international rules for art museum management, alongside annual discussion and planning for OCAT Museums. However, timely guidance from the Academic Committee is needed for daily operation because each OCAT Museum is set up with a different professional orientation, rather than operating in the same direction. It is essential that the Academic Committee is dedicated to offering professional recommendations and suggestions for specific projects in this type of art museum. For example, within the OCAT Academic Committee, Zhang Peili is the only professional involved in contemporary multimedia media and architecture – an area which the OCAT Shanghai concentrates on. At this point, a rationalised arrangement of the Academic Committee is the main concern, which affects the subsequent orientation and independence of the art museum. As Zhao Qie discussed, the mutual independent operation of the Academic Committee and the Board of Trustees plays an important role for maintaining intellectual independence. However, socialisation of the Board must be done rather than simply setting up the mechanism. Otherwise capital of the enterprise will overwhelm the knowledge production³⁸ I argue that these real estate-driven art museums are jointly developed with the real estate projects led by the headquarter office. As a result, they position art museums in combination with the local art ecology, particularly when projects are operating in different cities, and especially when the model includes the operation of a 'chain' of art museums. Therefore, the

³⁷ Interview with Li Yusha on 28th February 2018, Shenzhen.

³⁸ Interview with Zhao Qie in April 2017, Guangzhou.

routine mechanism of the operation needs to be adjusted accordingly to adapt to this circumstance.

As Huang Zhuan commented, the OCAT Museums not only feature contemporary art but also give consideration to different arts ecosystems within different cities. As a result, the OCT Group has set up different professional orientations for the OCAT Museums around China. The establishment of the headquarters office is an operational mechanism which contributes to the effective communication and administration between the museums and the parent company, as shown in Table 3.2. Not only does it manage the unified layout of the OCAT Shenzhen, the OCT Art and Design Gallery, the OCAT Xi'an and the OCAT Beijing, but it also assists communication between the Academic Committee and the Board of Trustees. Therefore, it is possible to hypothesise that the headquarter office is likely to be one of the mechanisms which operates for the intellectual independence of the OCAT Museums.

SWOT analysis aims to identify the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats, which provide a summary of the marketing audit, from both the internal and external environment. Strengths and weaknesses are commonly internally related, while opportunities and threats mainly focus on the external environment of an organisation (Hannagan, 1992, pp.88-93). In the field of museums and heritage attractions, the SWOT approach is generally used to analyse and understand the environment. It offers organisations information and opinions about pressures and opportunities from their external situation, and indicates what kind of strengths and weaknesses exist within their own organisation (Runyard and French, 1999, p. 6). In this research, I applied a SWOT analysis in order to clarify the internal and external environments of the headquarter office as a key mechanism. The headquarter office was regarded as one unit for further analysis (for a summary, see Table 3.3 below).

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Unified management 2. Intellectual independence 3. Efficient decision-making 4. Professional system 5. Organisational structure 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The lack of institutionalisation and standardisation 2. The lack of timeliness of response
Opportunities	Threats
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Emerging audiences of contemporary art 2. Acceptance of the art museum system 3. Support available from Shenzhen government. 4. Independent operation of the OCAT museums 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Competition 2. Incomplete government policy

Table 3.3: SWOT analysis of the headquarter office. 2017.

(1) Strengths:

1. Unified management: The headquarter office focusses on the utilisation of funds and administrative matters for the purpose of releasing the operational pressure on each branch. The daily operation and management are in line with the general uniform rules and regulations set up by the office. Compared with the independent management of each OCAT, this mechanism allows the art museum itself to pay more attention to operation, communication and implementation. As Li Yusha said, compared to its previous situation, the OCAT Beijing operates successfully because the headquarter office functions as a supportive hub for the OCAT Museum Group. It also takes responsibility for daily administration, including funds management and project approval.³⁹

³⁹ Interview with Li Yusha on 28th February 2018, Shenzhen.

2. Intellectual independence: The mechanism has taken over the cross-functional communications between various project companies and OCAT Museums. The headquarter office assumes overall responsibility for the day-to-day administration of art museums from each project company around the country. It also keeps a distance between the intellectual and capital elements, which benefits the intellectual independence of OCAT Museums. According to Li Yusha, the headquarter office advocates a profound renewal of the interactive relationship between the Academic Committee and the Board of Trustees. The independent operational issues at OCAT, such as cash flow, project settings and exhibition direction are discussed in annual meetings between the Academic Committee and the Board of Trustees, and the office acts as the secretariat to initiate collaboration between them to exchange professional opinions and suggestions.⁴⁰

3. Efficient decision-making: It plays an important role in the daily management, especially in the decision-making process. In the case of the headquarters office, the management layer has been reduced. Compared with the top-down leadership of public art museums, the overall efficiency of OCAT Museums has been greatly improved by the headquarters office. The mechanism can lower operational costs of running OCAT Museums more effectively than independent operation directed by each OCAT museum and local development companies. Karen Smith stated that there is no need to employ staff to take care of finance at the OCAT Xi'an; instead staff are distributed from the headquarters office. Therefore, the operating costs of the OCAT Xi'an are reduced by this mechanism.⁴¹ It contributes significantly to the decision-making and performance of the art museum.

4. Professional system: Instead of an enterprise administration system adopted by most art museums, the OCAT Museum Group uses an art museum system as their

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Interview with Karen Smith on 3rd March 2018, Xi'an.

administration approach. As Li Yusha put it, when an enterprise administration system is employed, private art museums usually register as a subsidiary or subordinate department of a holding company, with project applications and operations coupled together with regulations and management requirements. Due to these regulations and procedures, the day-to-day running of an art museum can become a protracted process and, according to the experience of the OCAT Shanghai, the rigid system can impact on the efficient execution of art projects.⁴²

5. Organisational structure: The mechanism employed by the headquarters operates under the organisational structure – the Academic Committee and the Board of Trustees – and plays a key role in sustainable administration. As a medium in regulating and operating, the headquarters office offers operators advantages in being able to reach art museums scattered in different city.

(2) Weaknesses:

1. The lack of institutionalisation and standardisation: OCAT Museums emerging from the real estate business, with characteristics of the chain business model, will be directed by the headquarters office. This is a new mechanism for art museum operation in China, where art museums are popping up in different cities. Therefore, as a new breed of operation, the absence of operational experience results in a lack of institutionalisation and standardisation in the OCAT Museums' operation.

2. The lack of timeliness of response: The OCT found that the branching out of art museums increased the developer's visibility and accessibility. The general headquarters of the OCAT Museums are based in Shenzhen, however, the creation of OCAT subsidiaries has posed a serious challenge to the administration. The OCAT Museums are scattered across southern, central and northern China, which has a certain influence on the administration of the headquarters. Management in a

⁴² Interview with Li Yusha on 28th February 2018, Shenzhen.

timely manner is very relevant, not only because of the number of art museums but also because of their geographic location.

(3) Opportunities:

1.Emerging audiences of contemporary art: The OCAT Museum Group has established branch art museums in order to broaden public access to contemporary art across a number of sites. In particular, the OCAT Museums have exported modern culture to regions and cities where contemporary art had been absent for a long time. For example, the OCAT Xi'an, which delivers exhibitions, research, public engagement and intellectual practices to emerging audiences who previously only had access to traditional art.

2.Acceptance of the art museum system: The running of art museums by the headquarters office raises attention and receives acceptance and support from the project partners. In order to set up professional standards for project cooperation and implementation, the OCAT Museum Group adopts art museum system as an administration method, instead of using an enterprise system.

3.Support available from the Shenzhen government: The legal identity of the OCAT Shenzhen is made possible because it is registered as a private non-enterprise unit. This identity, authorised by the Shenzhen government, has given the OCAT Shenzhen an opportunity to benefit from related policies, have legal rights and get increased funding. The sustainability of the OCAT Shenzhen lies in the effective support from the Shenzhen government; it provides a positive policy environment for the art museum.

4.Independent operation of OCAT Museums: The continued financial support of the OCT Group has provided OCAT Museums with opportunities for independent operation. As further pointed out by Li Yusha, OCAT registered in the Shenzhen Municipal Civil Affairs Bureau so it could be authorised as an independent legal

identity, which allows it to set up the art museums' operational system. This distinguishes them from most of the other art museums owned by enterprise with a real estate background. This system is beneficial for running a non-government investments driven-art museum.⁴³

(4) Threats:

1.Competition: Since 2002, the total number of private art museums in China has grown by 154.2% (Kiowski, 2017). This means that the OCAT Museums have had to consider how to be more effective at communicating with audiences. Therefore, for the sustainable ecology of the art system, one of the key tasks of the OCAT Museums is to build a bridge to connect the headquarters office and the other art museums.

2.Incomplete government policy: Local governments' responses to the OCAT Museums are not especially positive or proactive. Some of the museums are still struggling to get their legal identity confirmed by the government. In this case, the legal identity confirmed by the local government plays a decisive role in receiving grants and subsidies. Moreover, supports like tax exemptions, sponsorship and funding are necessary for the long-term operation of the OCAT Museums.

The research institution is considered as the third mechanism in this research, it operates for the institutional independence of knowledge production and practice. One such example is the OCAT Institute (OCAT Beijing) which opened in 2015: it not only presents exhibitions but is also establishing a research archive, and is launching national and international dialogues and exchanges.

SWOT analysis of the OCAT Institute: As a hypothesis, this research also regards the OCAT Institute as a single unit for SWOT analysis because this type of non-

⁴³ Interview with Li Yusha on 28th February 2018, Shenzhen.

government research institution is not common in the Chinese art museum system. By using the SWOT analysis, I will identify the internal and external factors that are favourable and unfavourable to achieving intellectual independence by this mechanism, for the purpose of verifying the hypothesis previously proposed.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. High-quality of research 2. A complete system of knowledge production 3. Historical perspective 4. Research-driven centre 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The lack of reference standard 2. Understaffed
Opportunities	Threats
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demand of the research 2. Positioning strategy 3. City with vibrant intellectual atmosphere 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The lack of government support 2. Withdrawal of enterprise support

Table 3.4: SWOT analysis of the research institution. 2017.

(1) Strengths:

1. High-quality of research: A museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, and is open to the public. It acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment (ICOM, 2017). The OCAT Beijing is a non-profit research centre dedicated to art history and its related discourses (OCAT, 2015, p. 118). Research is one of the main areas of activity within the OCAT Beijing, which aims to produce high-quality research of art from antiquity, modern and contemporary art.

2. A complete system of knowledge production: Publications, archives, and exhibitions are three main areas of activity of the OCAT Beijing (OCAT, 2015, p. 118). Its particularly focus is on research practices, and the symbiotic relationship of exhibitions, seminars and publications, in order to formulate a system which gives great impetus to knowledge production.

3. Historical perspective: Through an interdisciplinary approach that bridges contemporary art research, critical theory and the history of ideas and culture, it promotes an integrated methodology that seeks to cultivate an open spirit of research (OCAT, 2015, p. 118). Wu Hung and Guo Weiqi, are both professionals in the field of art history and have authority over the operation of the OCAT Beijing. Therefore, it made sense to initiate a series of contemporary art research projects by means of historical studies.⁴⁴

(2) Weakness:

1. The lack of reference standard: Historically, scholars and specialists generally conducted research in colleges and universities. The OCAT Beijing became the first non-government research institution in China, however, opportunities also brought challenges.

2. Understaffed: The OCAT Beijing has six or seven staff who are responsible for daily operation and activities including exhibitions, lectures, seminars, archives and publications. Nevertheless, large-scale projects, such as publications, create a heavy workload for the employees.⁴⁵

(3) Opportunities:

1. Demands of the research: Due to the current status of research in China, the large majority of research activities are conducted on campus, which means that the

⁴⁴ Interview with Li Yusha on 28th February 2018, Shenzhen.

⁴⁵ Interview with Guo Weiqi on 3rd March 2018, Guangzhou.

country undergoes - demand of research platform off campus - and highlights the expansion of the target group aims to make up for a lack of effective institutional support of research. It is important to note that there is need to create an interactive platform and rich resources for supporting contemporary art-based research, as well as in artistic practice. This need not only comes from within colleges and universities but also from platforms and projects being offered externally.⁴⁶

2.City with vibrant intellectual atmosphere: Beijing is the cultural and political centre of China, and is a hotspot for international art production and trade. It also has the highest number of private art museums in China, with 35% of the national total. It is a challenge to define orientation in the operation of this large number of private art museums, but also an opportunity. Furthermore, the city distinguishes itself with a mature art industry chain, including multiple creative and educational hubs, colleges and universities, artists, museums, art galleries, picture galleries, art districts, antique cities, and auction houses. Additionally, it has a thriving cultural atmosphere formulated by an aggregation effect, with numerous experts and local collectors in the art field gathering here. There were 1,054 picture galleries, 1,264 antique shops and 248 auction houses counted in Beijing by the end of September 2015 (Larry's List Ltd and AMMA, 2016, p. 68). There is no doubt that Beijing is rich in art resources for offering a solid foundation for the development of research.

3.Positioning strategy: As discussed above, Beijing has a vigorous and unique art circle, with numerous art museums and institutions. Hence, the OCAT Beijing has made its core mission to develop a dialogue platform for the fields of contemporary art and other subjects, rather than simply being an art museum that exhibits.⁴⁷ In this endeavour, the OCAT Beijing plays a leading role as a model institution, mapping new ground in the field of research.

⁴⁶ Interview with Guo Weiqi on 3rd March 2018, Guangzhou.

⁴⁷ Interview with Guo Weiqi on 3rd March 2018, Guangzhou.

(4) Threats:

1. The lack of government support: According to the statistics, 85% of private art museums believe that the main restriction to their development is that the lack of relevant policy support from the government. There is an incomplete taxation policy which especially discourages enthusiastic patrons. This absence of policy support is relevant to the undeveloped art foundation and sponsorship systems (Larry's List Ltd and AMMA, 2016, p. 76). The lack of government support has the potential to have a negative impact on the OCAT Beijing's operation. For example, most of its projects require sponsorship beyond the headquarter office, and these sponsors are still required to pay tax on any investment. This is also a threat to the majority of the private art museum in China who receive funding from sponsors.

2. Withdrawal of enterprise support: 60% of private art museums find that the limitation of development is the reason for the lack of capital (Larry's List Ltd and AMMA, 2016, pp. 75-76). As the OCAT Beijing is a non-government institution fully funded by the OCT Group, its operating revenue comes through one single income stream, which makes the OCAT Beijing totally dependent on the OCT. Therefore, diversification of capital sources contributes to the sustainable operation of the institution.

3.3 The art museum research institute outside the official system

The OCAT Museum Group established its Beijing branch in 2015, and an inaugural lecture was delivered by the French art historian and philosopher, Georges Didi-Huberman (a complete unfamiliar scholar in China prior to his first appearance in the OCAT, but who is renowned in Europe). Different from the OCAT Shenzhen and other branches, the space in Beijing is a non-profit research centre dedicated to publication, archives, art exhibitions and research on art history. As the former executive director of the OCAT Institute, Huang Zhuan emphasised that exhibitions, auctions and art museums are only the tip of the art world iceberg; beneath these is research, which

constitutes the main body. This underlines that the central role of research, as a presence, is created through lecture-based practices, including lectures, seminars, exhibitions and publications. These serve as the premise for researcher and public involvement, as well as discussion and creation about new knowledge in the field of visual arts. However, to the contrary, as a method of knowledge production, research in the field of visual arts, especially the non-governmental research, is still absent in the artistic ecology. In a way, this signals the potential of greater recognition and further development of the OCAT Institute. In this section, I investigate research characteristics of the OCAT Institute by analysing the particular knowledge production methods within the institution.

In his introduction of *The Constitution of Liberty*, Friedrich Hayek, the economist and philosopher best known for his defence of classical liberalism, thus specified the research issue within the field of non-profit organisation:

It is important to note that freedom of research institute, which can be defined as a research institute gathered a group of talented researchers who have been proven to be able to enhance their knowledge development and concentrate on their own research, research questions can be identified by themselves, furthermore, they could unambiguously articulate and discuss the conclusions that have been reached, regardless of whether they meet with the limitations and expectations from the employers and the public. Furthermore, research funding should be self-raised because the research capital source will pose the real threat to the scientific progress. Therefore, as the non-profit organisation, institution independence, self-oriented research and self-funded operation are essential conditions for achievements of academic freedom. (Hayek, 1960).

According to Salamon and Anheier's (1955) cross-national global research of non-profit organisations from 13 countries, there are three essential characteristics which define this sector, and what it contains, which are relevant to this research. Firstly, non-

profit organisations are characterised by non-governmental nature. Secondly, non-profit oriented operation means that the organisation cannot seek profit on behalf of the owner or investor. Thirdly, they marked out non-profit organisations as institutions with autonomy characteristics, who are able manage their own practices. As defined by the above concept, the OCAT Institute receives funding solely from the OCT Group, and is an independent research institution functioning completely outside of the government's system. Yet, the autonomy of a real estate-driven art museum is a relative concept. Compared with the public art museums, the OCAT Institute is not a top-down institution directed by the government; however, under the background of real estate business, the Institute has been developed as a strategy for the improvement of corporation culture and brand value. In this case, I argue that it has great value and significance to operate under the current state of contemporary visual arts research. Moreover, I posit that both positive and negative impacts on the visual arts research in China.

In China, there is an absence of contemporary arts in visual arts research and, more generally, literature and archival practice. Archives exist in line with constant interaction when they become the legitimate source for the construction of meaning (Taylor, 2003, pp. 21-25). In this regard, the importance of archives in the field of knowledge production has taken on an intellectual respectability and has become more outstanding. It is common for research to have only been carried out in the universities, which are funded directly by the government – rather than being undertaken in non-governmental institutions – and it is conceivable that this source of funding may have an effect on research liberty. In such cases, the OCAT Institute offers an alternative knowledge production solution: to establish a civil intellectual institution dedicated to art history and its related discourses. It encompasses the investigation of artists, artworks, school of art production, exhibitions and art discourses, as well as art institutions, publications and other aspects of art's overall ecology (OCAT, 2016). As a newly established organisation, the OCAT Institute is worth examining as it constitutes a considerable change in the general art museum environment, with unique

operational characteristics and research methods that make it very different from other institutions.

In terms of its operational features, an administrative department, an exhibition department and a public project department have been set up in accordance with the organisation's own orientation and operational needs. Such departments can be found in several new museums across different countries. For example, in the United Kingdom (UK), the Tate Museum Group (which is comprised of four art galleries – Tate Modern, Tate Britain, Tate Liverpool and Tate St Ives) functions as an executive non-departmental public institution, and the director is responsible for various department groups, including collections care, exhibition and displays, national and international partnerships, exhibitions and programmes, finance and estates, audiences, communications, development, human resources, technology, collections care, Tate Enterprises and Tate Catering. It can be seen in the Tate, that a sophisticated and well-divided governance system has come into being. In the USA, in both private and public art museums, it generally follows that under the leadership of the foundation and the legal head, the director of the art museum has the overall responsibility for the organisation (Zhang, 2009, p. 249). The main departments of art museums in the USA are mainly divided into exhibition, administrative, legal counsel and other staff (Cao, 2007, pp. 73-74). In the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York, departments fall into six categories: curatorial affairs, education and research support, exhibition and collection support, external affairs, administrative departments, and retail departments. Furthermore, every department of the MoMA is divided into different sub-sections according to various professional directions. For example, curatorial affairs is divided into architecture and design, drawings and prints, film, media and performance art, painting and sculpture, photography, publications and video.

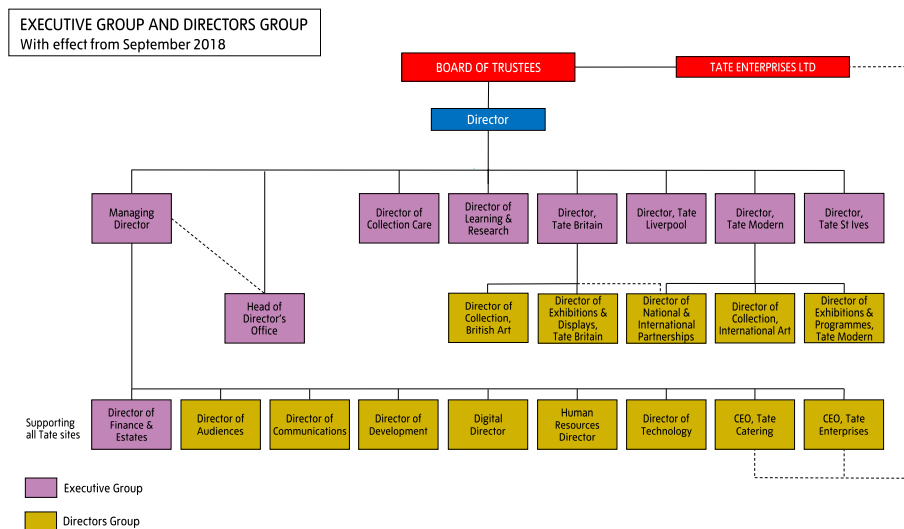


Figure 3.4: Executive Group and Directors Group. (Courtesy of the MoMA, 2018.)

In China, public and private art museums have different organisational structures. For example, within the National Art Museum of China, the operation team consists of: the Director's Office, the Party Affair Office, the financial department, the personnel department, the exhibition department and the collection department, the intellectual department, the public education department, the public relations department, the security office, the business management department, the services centre and the infrastructure office (Zhang, 2006, pp. 251-259). Because public art museums coexist with the state, the Party Affair Office serves as a top-down enforcement of cultural affairs, and can be seen as a common characteristic in the organisational structure of public art museums in China. However, this structure does not exist in Chinese private art museums, therefore, non-governmental art museums retain a relative level of research freedom and independence.

From the perspective of the organisational structure, with the exception of the Party Affair Office, as discussed above, there are only slight variations in departmental setup between public and private art museums in China. Similar to other art museums attached to the OCAT Museum Group, the departments at the OCAT Institute include an administrative department, the public department, and the exhibition department. Additionally, however, the OCAT Institute also has a literature and archive department,

and a publication department, both of which relate to two of the core research functions of the OCAT Institute. As well as serving as an exhibition platform in Beijing, the OCAT Institute has established research archives and continues to facilitate dialogue and exchange practices between China and the international art community.

Lu (2015, p. 38) argues that the role of curator – as the common structural method in the exhibition practice of art museums in China – is to consolidate the art production process in designing, organising or scheduling. Artists commonly play the role of an element and become a resource for exhibitions, seminars and publications; their practice is continuously activated and expanded during the knowledge production process. This traditional art production structure is characterised in accordance with the order of exhibition, discussion, publication, and can be visualised to portray production and artistic practice. It was recognised as a symbiotic structure actually as knowledge system of art production (see Figure 3.5). But, as shown in Figure 3.6, the Beijing-based OCAT Institute has an annual scholar who explores a research topic through lectures, seminars, exhibitions and the publication of books.



Figure 3.5: 2016 OCAT Institute Annual Lectures. (Courtesy of the University of Chicago Centre in Beijing, 2016.)

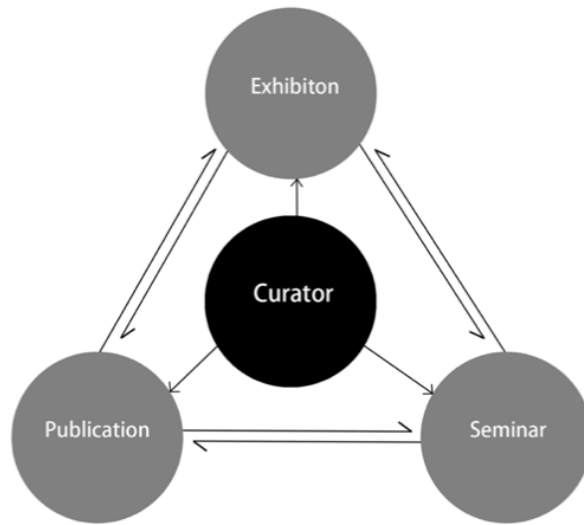


Figure 3.6: Traditional art production structure. (Figure created by author, 2017.)

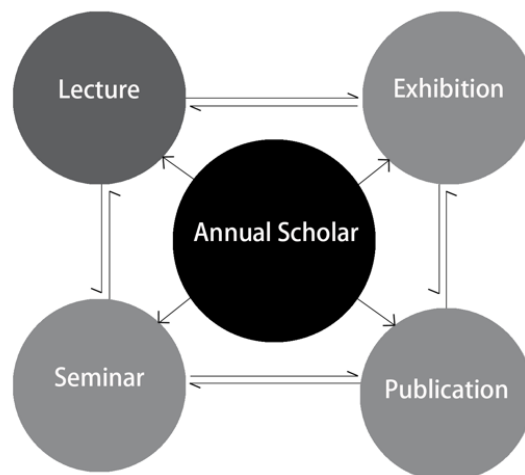


Figure 3.7: Art production structure of OCAT Institute. (Figure created by author, 2017.)

According to its academic director, Guo Weiqi, the OCAT Institute does not to initiative a research exhibition, so, rather than undertaking research of the exhibition after it has closed, it instead produces knowledge in a non-traditional way.⁴⁸ In other words, based on Lu's argument, the role of artists has not been altered during the new production structure.

⁴⁸ Interview with Guo Weiqi on 3rd March 2018, Guangzhou.

As core parts of the Institute's practice, exhibitions and lectures delivered by scholars constitute the main parts of the knowledge production. For example, the 2015 OCAT Institute Annual Lecture, as Guo mentioned in the interview. The OCAT Institute usually invites Western art historians to deliver the annual lecture; these are individuals with international influence and outstanding research results which are unknown in China.⁴⁹ The inaugural speaker at the Institute (23 to 25 June 2015) was the renowned French philosopher and art historian, Georges Didi-Huberman, who presented three lectures showcasing his latest research results, entitled *History and Poem*, *Image-Cut and the Vertigo of Proximity*, and *Image-Milieu and Vertigo of Distance*.



Figure 3.8: Georges Didi-Huberman launches Beijing branch. (Courtesy of the China Daily, 2015.)

Guo further stated that, following the pattern operated by international universities, foundations and art museums, the Institute adopts the latest research conducted by scholars.⁵⁰ Additionally, before and during each annual lecture period, a series of seminars are organised, and this creates a stimulating atmosphere that encourages successful research off campus. For example, from October 2014 to June 2015, as part of the annual programme, a series of public forums were held alongside a three-part research seminar by Georges Didi-Huber which comprised three distinct topics: *The*

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Interview with Guo Weiqi on 3rd March 2018, Guangzhou.

Legacy of Aby Warburg, Montage and the Unconscious Archives, and *Image, History, Poetry* (OCAT Institute, 2016). The exhibition *Memory Burns*, curated by Georges Didi-Huberman, was also arranged alongside the research seminar.

Annual Scholar	Annual Lecture Series	Seminar	Exhibition	Publication
Georges Didi-Huberman 2015	1. History and Poem 2. Image-Cut and the Vertigo of Proximity 3. Image-Milieu and the Vertigo of Distance	1. The Legacy of Aby Warburg 2. Montage and the Unconscious Archive 3. Image, History, Poetry	Memory Burns	<i>Memory Burns</i>
Wu Hung 2016	1. Space and Image 2. Space and Objects 3. Space and Total Art	1. From Monuments to Ruins 2. Art History Under Reconstruction 3. Art History and Visual Archaeology	An Exhibition about Exhibitions: Displaying Contemporary Art in the 1990s	<i>Space in Art History</i>
Jas Elsner 2017	1. Art History: Disciplinary Reception of a European Tradition 2. Panofsky's Circle: History and the Object of Art Historical Enquiry 3. Eurocentric and Beyond	1. Beyond Kunstwollen 2. Towards a Self-Aware Description 3. Comparativism in Relief	Sites and Images: Two Research Projects of Oxford University and the University of Chicago	<i>Sites and Images</i>
W. J. T. Mitchell 2018	1. Iconology 3.0: Image Theory in Our Time 2. About Face 3. Sculpting Infinity	1. Word and Image 2. Media • Technology • Memory	Metapictures	

Table 3.5: OCAT annual programs, 2017.

Subsequently, a publication under the same name – *Memory Burns* – made extensive research about Georges Didi-Huberman and various artists' works. The publication documents scholarly research and also provides visual presentation of the artworks in the exhibition, many of which were published for the first time. With a historical approach, the OCAT Institute Exhibition and Archival Research Series continue to present publications that concentrate on specific contemporary research areas and art histories. The relationship between contemporary art and the histories of human spirit, ideas, ideology and visual culture are explored in the OCAT Institute (OCAT Institute, 2016). I argue that the new knowledge production method used by the OCAT Institute breaks out of the conventional method discussed above. It has a positive impact that offers an alternative possibility for art production, meaning that it contributes to the archives of contemporary art, especially those archives committed to the filling the theoretical research gap in the realm of contemporary art research in China.

For a variety of reasons, the conflicts between real estate business and private art museum developed into a more serious tension; there is both cooperation and resistance with typical characteristics which closely relate to their different needs, says Guo

Wei qi.⁵¹ As the funding of the OCAT Institute originates from numerous sources, compared to the state-funded public institutes, it has a distinctive research independence and freedom within the Chinese context. However, to a certain degree, sources of funding have influenced the intellectual direction and operational status of the Institution. So, although it is not directly subject to governmental demands, it still bears some pressure from the real estate enterprise. Guo Wei qi further explained that the Institute receives long-term funding guaranteed by OCAT Museums, and will set up an annual program in accordance with how much funds they receive. Outside of that arrangement, any additional funding must be sourced from sponsors outside the Institution.



Figure 3.9: Main Building of OCAT Institute. (Courtesy of the OCAT Institute, 2016.)

Apart from dealing with limited budgets, managing the physical space of real estate-driven art museums is sometimes also a challenge. In the case of the OCAT Institute, the space is inherited from the sales office of the OCT Beijing. The OCAT Institute is based in the first floor of the building, despite the fact that they asked for the second floor, which could have been used for a larger lecture hall and library. As a result, many activities of the OCAT Institute happen off-site. Moreover, the OCT Beijing has asked

⁵¹ Ibid.

to engage with real estate business in the exhibition space of the OCAT Institute.⁵² Even today, the relationship between the real estate business and the Institute is still fraught with tension.

3.4 The museum chain and the local art ecology

The Shanghe Art Museum, built in Chengdu in 1998, was the first art museum funded by real estate investment. In the years that followed, numerous other art museums sponsored by real estate developers were established in many second-tier Chinese cities as they began to cultivate contemporary art scenes. As discussed in Chapter One, the main trend of art museum development in China, saw art museums located on residential real estate developments being widely adopted by numerous enterprises (such as the OCT) and developed in cities and districts which had insufficient cultural infrastructure. As one of the historical capital cities in China, Xi'an was no exception, and the opening of the first contemporary art museum – the OCAT Xi'an – took place in November 2013. Like the other OCAT Museums, the OCAT Xi'an is based in the former sales office of its associated real estate developer (OCT Xi'an). Located in a high-end housing project called 108 Town (*108 Fang*) – the most expensive residential area in Xi'an – the art museum has transformed the space previously dominated by real estate sales and now occupies three floors, two exhibition areas and one activity centre. The location of the art museum was sited in Qujiang New District (*qujiang xinqu*) which is home to tourist attractions as well as high-margin real estate projects. They are keeping their distance away from the public due to the absence of public transportation system which needs urgent upgrading.

⁵² Interview with Guo Weiqi on 3rd March 2018, Guangzhou.



Figure 3.10: Main entrance of 108 Town (*108 Fang*). (Photography by the author, 2018.)



Figure 3.11: Main Entrance of OCAT Xi'an. (Photographed by the author, 2018.)

From 206 BCE to 25 CE, Xi'an was the ancient capital of China during the Western Han and Tang dynasties. After the founding of the Han dynasty, the city became a main trading centre at the Chinese end of the Silk Road and traded goods as far as imperial Rome (Mackerras, 2001, p. 230). As the eastern starting point of the Silk Road, Xi'an was a major hub situated between East Asia, the Middle East and Europe, and as a result is steeped in rich history and tradition, and complex cultural heritage.



Figure 3.12: Historical heritage in Xi'an. (Photography taken by author, 2018.)

Due to the cultural resources and infrastructure potential of this ancient capital, museum construction started in Xi'an in 2010. The Xi'an government initiated the 'Implementation Opinions on the Development of the Museum Industry' with the aim of constructing a so-called 'City of Museums' – the plan being to build 100 museums in the city within three years. As stated on the online data published by Shaanxi Provincial Cultural Relics Bureau, by the end of April 2018 the number of museums in Xi'an had grown to 302. Increasingly museums across China functioned as magnets for cultural tourism and residential consumption; however, in this respect, arts weren't a novel concept in Xi'an given the numerous precious cultural relics and historic sites

scattered throughout this historic city. Nevertheless, as I will show in more detail, contemporary art was a completely foreign concept due to the peculiarity of Xi'an's historical environment which had been formulated over 6,000 years.



Figure 3.13: The Xi'an Art Museum. (Photographed by the author, 2018.)



Figure 3.14: Main exhibition hall of the Xi'an Art Museum. (Photographed by the author, 2018.)



Figure 3.15: Cultural Heritage Terracotta Army (*bingmayong*) in Xi'an. (Photographed by the author, 2018.)

The non-profit organisation exists for the achievement of the mission of the institution. (Drucker, 1995, p.55). As for a non-profit organisation devoted to contemporary art along the historic Silk Road, the OCAT Xi'an defined its mission as a contemporary contribution to the grand cultural traditions of Xi'an. The official definition of the OCAT described:

‘Our program is guided by a contemporary focus on artistic innovations that extend backwards and forwards in time and, geographically, west, embracing cultures along ancient routes that, like China today, are home to ever evolving forms of new artistic expression. It is said that in ancient Xi'an east met west. OCAT Xi'an aims to continue that convergence through the contemporary practices of artists at the forefront of the age.’ (OCAT, 2015, p. 118).

This research argues that, as a result of the OCAT Xi'an operating as a hub of contemporary art, artists have not only found new platforms to conduct knowledge

production but have also found new ways to initiate cultural dialogues between tradition and contemporary art. In the following section, I will first briefly outline the way in which contemporary art knowledge production has been recognised and developed through the practice of the OCAT Xi'an, and how contemporary art survives at Xi'an as a hub of the old Silk Road. I will then discuss the characteristics of a hybrid combination of tradition and contemporary art in Xi'an, and the dialogue with contemporary art and the local cultural environment. Finally, I will end by assessing the influence of OCAT on the local art ecology of Xi'an, which has been previously dominated by traditional modes of expression. The central hypotheses that drove this analysis, based on the research questions, were firstly subjected to investigation through the synthesising of archival evidence. This was followed by semi-structured interviews of individuals who were main participants in the selected exhibitions, participant-observation methods and theoretical considerations from the fields of museum studies.

The central hypotheses are as follows:

1. The OCAT Xi'an – an art museum sponsored by real estate enterprise – has positive impacts on the construction of the local art ecology. Not only do they offer an exhibition platform but they also promote the contemporary art knowledge production mechanism in the ancient city.
2. Contemporary art links to the local art ecology, with a recreation of the history of the old Silk Road.
3. Despite increased audiences, due to the tradition context, the OCAT Xi'an still maintains a cautious distance from contemporary art and is conservative compared to art museums based in Beijing and Shanghai.

Between Character and Calligraphy, the first exhibition in the OCAT Xi'an was opened on 3rd November 2013. This exhibition, which included the highly-celebrated calligraphers Wang Dongling and Qiu Zhenzhong, as well as Xu Bing, who is one of the world's influential contemporary artists, highlighted the relationship between

traditional and contemporary art. The strategy of this exhibition lay in using calligraphy as a symbol of traditional Chinese culture. It precisely examined the connections between calligraphy and contemporary art, and explored new possible dynamics in the contemporary context. Today, traditional arts such as calligraphy are more acceptable to audiences within cities with a depressed contemporary art scene, which exacerbates the contrast between traditional and contemporary art. As pointed out by the curator, Yan Shanchun, and Qi Xiaochun, the ancient art of calligraphy has always occupied a position on the margins; a position greatly at odds with its central role in the culture of the classical era. However, in the face of modern art theory, calligraphy's vital role in Chinese culture has been undermined (OCAT, 2015, p. 464).



Figure 3.16: *Lanting Preface (Lanting Xu)* by Wang Dongling. (Courtesy of The Randian, 2013.)

Wang Dongling is steeped in the Chinese calligraphic tradition and best known for his cursive script (*caoshu*) style. However, this cursive script has not only broadened the visual experience of calligraphic art, but also engaged calligraphy in pre-modern practice. By employing the abstraction and scepticism of language and power, the artist explores the traditional art's expression in the contemporary context. As shown in Figure 3.16, Wang Dongling's works, including *Lanting Preface* and *Longcang Temple*,

translate the text of ancient Chinese poems through the creation of traditional characters. According to the interview with Karen Smith, Wang Dongling's artworks are popular with modern Xi'an audiences, even though – or, more likely, because – it is represented through the ancient art of calligraphy.



Figure 3.17: A detail of the *Work Writings to be Verified Series Nine* by Qiu Zhenzhong. (Courtesy of the Artist, 2012.)

On the contrary, however, Qiu Zhenzhong's and Xu Bing's artworks have not gained acceptance from audiences in this ancient capital. Qiu Zhenzhong is a calligrapher and poet whose practices are dedicated to the transition of calligraphy to contemporary art. His distinctive style of combines calligraphy with his poems. He said: 'I have found a new regime (for my work), which is not only related to traditional practices (in terms of subject matter and visual form) but also concerns the imagination of contemporary visual image' (Qiu, 2013). As shown in Figure 3.17, the *Writings to be Verified* series and the *New Poems* series were unveiled in this exhibition, through which Qiu

Zhenzhong liberated and restored the unrecognised and unmeaning Chinese characters which embody the abstract art form. Qiu does not follow the traditional art forms of calligraphy, but instead has created a close abstract style by deconstructing calligraphy. Karen Smith argues that artworks by Qiu Zhenzhong go beyond the traditional art form of expression accepted by audiences in Xi'an, as his calligraphy artworks are based on his own poems.⁵³



Figure 3.18: *The Character of Characters (hanzi de xingge)* by Xu Bing. (Courtesy of the Randian, 2013.)

Karen Smith further mentioned that, the OCAT Xi'an do concerns with the traditional art form such as ink and wash painting, calligraphy, which audiences in Xi'an are familiar with them.⁵⁴ Yet the OCAT Xi'an delivers the opening exhibition was bucking the traditional way of Xi'an audiences' understanding. Xu Bing is pioneering Chinese contemporary artist who does not use noticeable traces of traditional calligraphy in his artworks. Unlike Qiu, Xu Bing creates 'false characters'. For example, *The Character of Characters*, presented through an animated video, discovers the inner relationship of Chinese personalities and the language Chinese have been using for a few thousand

⁵³ Interview with Karen Smith on 7th March 2018, Xi'an.

⁵⁴ Interview with Karen Smith on 7th March 2018, Xi'an.

years. This artwork is a response to the symbols of the Chinese culture, Chinese characters and traditional art, yet it does not easily capture audiences' attention in Xi'an. *The Character of Characters* was inspired by a piece of calligraphy work, *The Sutra on the Lotus of the Sublime Dharma*, by Xu Mengfu, the great painter, calligrapher and scholar of the Yuan dynasty. According to Karen Smith, audiences in this city did not understand how to talk about artworks by Xu Bing. Instead of being viewed as calligraphy, the piece seems to be more approximated to a new media word game, with no significant relevance to the tradition.⁵⁵

When the OCAT Xi'an delivered its opening exhibition, it challenged the traditional understanding of the Xi'an audience. In Karen Smith's thinking, the opening exhibition of the OCAT Xi'an had gone beyond interests of audiences in this ancient city, especially with artworks created by Qiu Zhenzhong and Xu Bing. In an interview she told me: 'this exhibition is our first show presented in Xi'an, people who live in this city are unfamiliar with our institution as well as contemporary art, they still need time for negotiating, communicating and accepting with us about opinions of contemporary art'.⁵⁶ The question here is how can contemporary art be constructed in the ancient city? How does a contemporary art space arrange an exhibition in a city which is embedded in traditional culture? Is it conflict, compromise or persistence? In discussing what kind of art form meets the challenge of representing both the depth of the old Silk Road history and the contemporary nature of the locality, the conversation led by the OCAT Xi'an surrounding the emerging contemporary art is turned in two different directions.

In this respect, it is interesting to highlight the exhibition *Sanzu Ding and its Patterns: Hypotheses on the Origin of the 'Hammer-Sickle' Sign*, a solo show by the Paris-based artist Yao Qingmei (as shown in Figure 3.19). The 'Hammer Sickle' sign – as seen on pottery decorated with the three-legged frog pattern (Figure 3.20) which was found on a site not far away from the Banpo Heritage site – is a reinterpretation of the

⁵⁵ Interview with Karen Smith on 7th March 2018, Xi'an.

⁵⁶ Interview with Karen Smith on 8th March 2018, Xi'an.

contemporary significance of the antique, according to the artist's investigation of historical relics and museums of Xi'an. This exhibition applied scientific research methodology and analysis of cultural heritage to a thoroughly researched archive of material Yao had procured in the course of carrying out her methodical groundwork. By employing perspectives of archaeology, anthropology, psychoanalysis, semantics, semiotics and mythology, Yao posed six hypotheses for the sign, and presented a series of multi-material installation arts, including photography, videos, texts and other medias. The strategy of this exhibition explored the contemporary significance of cultural heritage in Xi'an, and the site-specific art created by Yao, who lived outside Xi'an, illustrated the artist's worldview.



Figure 3.19: The exhibition view of *Sanzu Ding and its Patterns: Hypotheses on the Origin of the 'Hammer-Sickle' Sign* by Yao Qingmei. (Courtesy of the Artist 2016.)

With the term 'site specific' I refer to the artwork created by the artist which took the specific location into account, and interrogated its contemporary and historical realities. Since the 1960s, art objects could only exist within an art museum. Modernist art objects were transportable, it could not only exist in the art museum space but also were the objects of the market and commodification. The artist was trying to find a way out of this situation, and thus drew attention to the specific site and the context around this site.

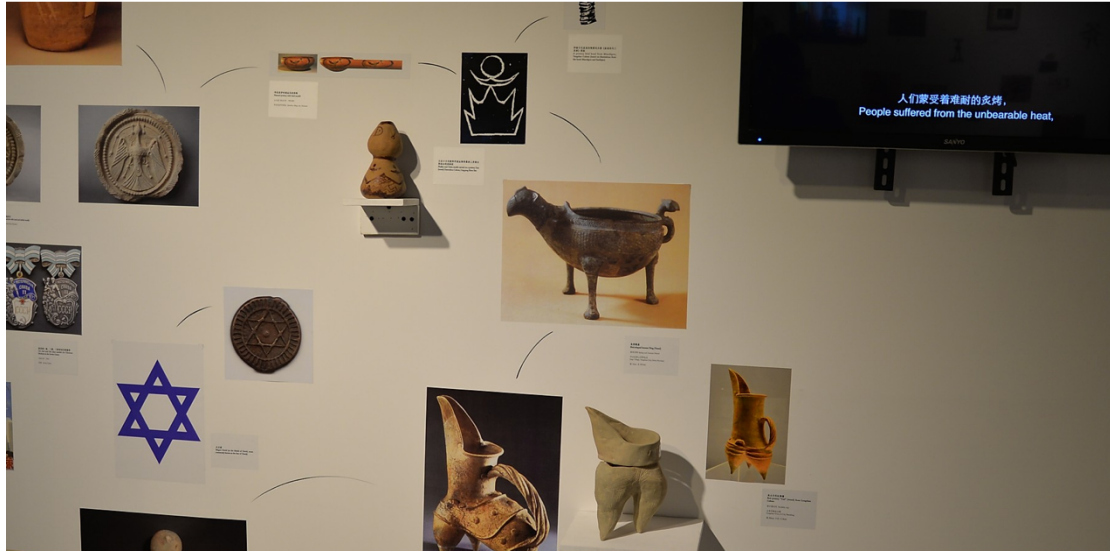


Figure 3.20: Part of the analysis of the three-legged frog pattern by Yao Qingmei. (Courtesy of the artist, 2016.)

Here its meaning is found in the way the artist reflects a certain relationship with the city of Xi'an. A very similar strategy, based on the site-specific art, has been used by the museum in another exhibition, *Civilisation, Second Round: Yulin*, curated by Dai Zhuoqun in 2014. Here, the focus shifted from a specific object to a site-specific one. As the name implies, the focus was the area known as Yulin, in the northern part of Shaanxi province, which has 2000 years of history. Eighteen artists from Shaanxi and other areas were invited to take part in the exhibition and embarked on an extended period of research to explore their personal understandings with imagination and experimentation. Each of the artists took inspiration from a one-year period of field work research conducted in Yulin, and created artworks using oil paint, water colours, ink, installations, sculpture, mixed media, experimental film and photography. 'Works of art began to emerge from the walls of the museum and galleries. However, because they were created specifically for the museum and galleries (Michael Asher, ...) thus criticizing the museum as an institution that sets the rules for artists and viewers' (Kwon, 2002, p. 13). In this exhibition, the OCAT Xi'an presented the results of artists' experiences in the city. Instead of direct influence from the institution, insights from this exhibition combined to form a rich historical resource brimming with artistic thinking and reflections of these issues.

Of concern to the OCAT Xi'an was the issue of whether emerging contemporary art can be the contemporary expression of tradition. The third exhibition thus appeared to give possible answers to the questions: 1) how does contemporary art meet with tradition in Xi'an? 2) does contemporary art conflict, compromise or continue tradition in the ancient city?

The Xi'an Academy of Fine Arts, located in the capital city, is an important front where contemporary art is made, discussed and debated. Yet they still continue the tradition of oil painting rather than challenging the conventional methods. According to the curator, Karen Smith, oil paintings made by students in this academy are particularly conservative and would not get high scores if they did not follow their tutors' personal preferences and styles.⁵⁷ Regarding this phenomenon, in the exhibition entitled *About Painting*, six artists were invited to join the exhibition, five of them were graduates from the Xi'an Academy of Fine Arts, and the other was a graduate from a foreign academy, which has a different system and style of painting context. Every artwork presented in this exhibition was created with the artists' own personal art languages and styles, combined with their personal experiences, narratives, stories and various worldviews. The concept behind this project was to precisely discuss the attitudes towards traditional art forms in the contemporary context; treating traditional art forms as a medium which audiences in Xi'an were familiar with in order to initiate discussions on the boundaries between traditional and contemporary art.

To summarise, the business strategy of the OCT – engaging in real estate development in second-tier cities, and investing in art museums such as the OCAT Xi'an – has had unintended impacts. Although the 108 Town has been successful in becoming an avant-garde real estate project, and plays a significant role within the context of OCT's overall wealth, it has not resulted in the same sort of explosive contemporary art scene as can

⁵⁷ Interview with Karen Smith on 9th March 2018, Xi'an.

be seen in Beijing and Shanghai. However, this new space has injected fresh impetus to artists to a greater degree than an exhibition platform. The exhibition *Grouping in the Dark* was a celebration of the fifth anniversary of the OCAT Xi'an. As one of Xi'an's artists, Qiu Ruixiang, said, the OCAT Xi'an was the first major contemporary art museum in the Western city of Xi'an.⁵⁸ Since then, contemporary art spaces have sprung up across the town. Numerous institutions, large and small, such as the Xi'an Art Museum was inspired by the OCAT Xi'an to revitalise the contemporary art scene in the old Silk Road region. Increasing, they are drawing on the inspiration from the explosive art scene to become involved in the greater context of Chinese contemporary art. Karen Smith further explained:

You could say that it was a turning point. Because I think it is still very important to remember that China is a top-down country. So, you could fight and fight and fight to make something happen. But you would only really do it in very small circles and less. You have official recognition and then you could really do something much bigger. Of course, somebody choose to do something smaller, but the fact that doing an art museum, it is a public institution, so if you going to do an art museum, you want to make people come as possible, you want to be relevant to what people want to see.⁵⁹

Instead of selfless philanthropic donations, corporate patrons look forwarding to potential investment returns with the OCAT cultural brand values as a result of their business investments. In an age of scarce government funding for private art museums, however, corporate patronage plays a vital role of keeping the show on the road. In my opinion, this case study shows that an art museum belonging to a real estate development can be more than a high-margin real estate project, and instead become a new knowledge production platform that collaborates with traditional resources, thus

58 Interview with Qiu Ruixiang on 11st March 2018, Xi'an.

59 Interview with Karen Smith on 10th March 2018, Xi'an.

reshaping the local art ecology of the city. As clarified in Chapter Two, there are positive and negative influences of corporate involvement in the art sponsorship.

Although the OCAT Xi'an has had a positive impact in reshaping the Xi'an contemporary arts scene, it is definitely not in an ideal status. With the exception of direct funding from the company, a few problems have emerged within the institution. For example, as part of the OCAT Xi'an's fifth anniversary ceremony show in 2018, there are three exhibitions: *Groping in the Dark*, the *Only Question is How to Endure*, and *Good Cheer* presented by artists Qiu Ruixiang, Chen Zhe and Dan'er. At the time, both Qiu Ruixiang and Dan'er mentioned that the lighting system and the height of the building hindered the final presentations of their exhibitions⁶⁰ – this was of course due to the fact that the OCAT Xi'an was established as part of a larger commercial property development, the space was previous used as the sales office of real estate project 108 Town before. Clearly, the building's lighting, roof design and facilities are different from typical art museum architecture and do not necessarily meet the requirements of a professional art museum. There are also major problems in terms of the lack of standard equipment as well as concerns over the lack of personal and professional support to develop an exhibition.

Similar issues may even become common problems that many enterprises involved in real estate development in second-tier cities will have to resolve. Yet, up to this point, the art museum remains largely an experimental space for artists to reimagine their role in the contemporary art scene, rather than a site of commercial success on the real estate market.

It must be noted that the case presented in this chapter offers a research perspective of knowledge production and dissemination in real estate-driven art museums in China. This chapter has demonstrated there are three mechanisms of the OCAT which maintain

⁶⁰ Interview with Qiu Ruixiang and Dan'er on 11st March 2018, Xi'an.

the daily management and the standard of knowledge production and dissemination, as follows: 1) the Academic Committee of OCAT, 2) the headquarter office, and 3) the research-oriented centre. The findings suggest that daily mechanisms of art museums are necessary so that they have their own institutional adaptability in accordance with their layout and professional orientation during the operational process. This chapter also highlights that non-governmental art museums – which operate without public funds and the Party Affair Office – offer an alternative knowledge production solution in Chinese art museum world. By examining an OCAT branch set up in a second-tier city, the case has presented findings that the art museum operates as an experimental space for contemporary art and artists to reimagine their role in the contemporary art scene. Although the knowledge production within the institution has been examined in this chapter, when making an investigation of art museums emerging from the urban regeneration it is also important to make clear explanations about the art educational practices with public engagement both inside and outside the art museum, which will be examined in Chapter Four.

CHAPTER FOUR
**ART EDUCATION WITH PUBLICLY ENGAGED ART
IN THE BUND: ROCKBUND ART MUSEUM**

In the previous chapter, I outlined knowledge production and practices of the OCAT Museum Group. The increase in exhibitions and scholarly practices in art museums comes with a large number of educational practices and opportunities for engagement with audiences. In this chapter, I argue that during the period of culture-led urban regeneration, the educational practices of real estate-driven art museums in the Chinese context became more recognisable and significant. It is therefore important to present and explore various forms of education that include public engagement in order to discover why and how public programmes are operated and curated alongside the knowledge production that takes place inside and outside an institution. This will provide a complete understanding, rather than just a snapshot, of the impact of an institution's operations, which will show the symbiotic relationship between real estate businesses and art museums.

I will argue that art education in private art museums cannot be considered independently of public engagement. Where, formerly, education from art museums in China was limited to providing specific provision to a limited audience, the educational practices of the RAM are understood to include public engagement. The role and aims of education at the RAM have been clearly spelled out in the RAM's official description:

‘art education is at the core of RAM’s mission of supporting the production and sharing of contemporary art in China and in this way, of contributing to the progress of the society in general’ (RAM, 2019). In accordance with this outline, the RAM’s ambition to support contemporary art production and sharing call for a collaborative approach to education and public engagement. In this research, the term ‘public engagement’, as a part of art education, refers to the many ways in which art education and research activities and benefits can be shared with the public (NCCPE, 2018). In this research, the art education function of the RAM not only refers to its educational projects, such as lectures and seminars developed around the themes of an exhibition, but is also supported by wide-ranging content and forms that are not related to exhibitions. Compared with the past, the educational practices of art museums are now understood to incorporate a wide range of programmes including exhibitions, displays, events and workshops. Instead of an ‘education room’, the venue for educational practices is the whole museum (Hooper-Greenhill, 1994). Therefore, for the purpose of this research, screenings, performances and other public activities that take place as part of the Night @ RAM⁶¹ programme are considered to be public engagement for the purpose of art education.

In China, a large number of art museums are still struggling with being a *Kunsthalle*, or an art museum without a collection, let alone operating with visitor-centred practices.

A museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment. (International Council of Museums [ICOM], 2007)

⁶¹ As a public space for social and artistic topics, Night @ RAM is a platform for artistic, cultural and intellectual projects at the RAM and is a forum for public engagement. The programme includes talks, screenings, performances and exchanges about innovative artistic and social practices in the country and around the world.

According to this definition of museums, the ICOM recognises that museums serve as educators, and that education is their common and primary purpose. As noted by museum education scholar Hooper-Greenhill (1999), it is the educational responsibility of art museums to follow visitor-centred principles. It can be noted that under the *Regulations on Museums* (2015) promulgated by the state council of the People's Republic of China, museums, including art museums, should contain an educational function. Furthermore, according to the *Shanghai Art Museum Management Approach Article 39*, art museums in Shanghai (no matter whether they are public or private art museums) are required to set up a public education work plan and public education programmes for different audience groups.

However, instead of nurturing society by largely operating as educational institutions, early Chinese art museums were cultural institutions that served as instruments of political propaganda (Fan, 2007a; 2007b). While much attention has recently been placed on the increasingly educational element of art museums, this is yet to take shape in China (Li, 2007; Yang, 2008a). The censorship of art education in China reflects two perspectives. First, the structure of art education is centralised because policy and materials emanate from Beijing. Second, art education has a strong agenda with moral, spiritual and political goals (Lowry and Wolf, 1988). Therefore, consideration of the art education role and educational practices of the RAM is valuable for this discussion on education in art museums in the Chinese context.

As well as the key issues raised above, the context of art museum education in China provides a background for the main focus of this research; that is, educational practices involving public engagement from private art museums with investment from real estate developers. For the three cases examined in this research project, education is not at the core of these institutions' operating missions. In the following sections, I will look at the RAM and discuss why I selected it as an example.



Figure 4.1: Aerial view of the Rockbund before and after the urban renaissance project (design by the author, 2019; original photo courtesy of David Chipperfield Architects).



Figure 4.2: The Ampire Building, one of the buildings renovated as part of the Rockbund project (courtesy of David Chipperfield Architects, unknown date).

The RAM has an active role as an educator of the general public, and education projects have become one its widely recognised professional strengths. The RAM was established in 2010 as part of the Rockbund urban renaissance project to revitalise and redevelop 11 historical buildings at the heart of Shanghai's old town. The RAM is located in an exquisite art deco building that was built for Britain's Royal Asiatic Society in 1932. The location is a mixed-use area with hotels, retail spaces, offices and apartments. As part of a luxury redevelopment on Shanghai's Bund waterfront, the

RAM was created with investment from the Rockefeller Group and Sinolink Worldwide Holdings. This renovation project had the ambitious goal of regenerating this long-neglected site into a new luxury cultural hub. In this case, the RAM has a prominent role as the catalyst for property transformation and economic development.

Since its opening, the RAM has been operating without permanent collections, with multi-media, multi-identity and multi-diverse education programmes in the form of collaborations with universities, schools and foundations. This makes the RAM an important force in education and engagement in the public sphere. The RAM is one of the higher profile examples of a privately-run art museum established during the second art museum boom that offers education programmes. The real estate investment background of the art museum has a significant influence on the planning, implementation and sustainability of its education programmes. This is one of the reasons I selected the RAM as an art education case study.



Figure 4.4: The main building of the RAM (courtesy of David Chipperfield Architects, unknown date).

The RAM is part of a high-end luxury real estate project. It operates educational programmes with the following distinct characteristics: its prosperous location, the absence of a dedicated educational space, and its partnership with schools. This chapter will discuss whether these characteristics are key factors that influence the art education strategy of the RAM and whether they are an irreplaceable element for understanding education at the RAM. This discussion will be presented in three separate sections. This chapter looks at case studies showing different approaches by the RAM towards its education programmes with public engagement. These provide insights into the institutional conditions and artists' and curators' intentions and can illuminate the effects that these programmes have on visitors and the community. I expound these ideas through the following questions:

- Does the geographic location of the RAM create barriers to greater visitor numbers?
- What is the art education role of art museums with a real estate background in the context of Chinese art education?
- How has education at the RAM been established, operated and sustained alongside its real estate development in the context of art education in China?
- Is the RAM's real estate investment background hindering or developing urban culture?

In Section 4.1, I will discuss the influences of the real estate investment on the RAM's art education strategy. In particular, I will look at the connection between the location and visitors, which is a key factor in the RAM's specific educational practices. There are advantages and limitations to the RAM's real estate investment background, which will be considered. The exhibitions and educational practices of the symbiotic space will be introduced and explored in relation to specific projects in Section 4.2, illustrating the collaborative strategy that operates without a dedicated educational space. Finally, there are common understandings about the weak state of Chinese art education, the majority of which takes place in schools and publicly funded institutions. In these circumstances, it is valuable to discuss the RAM's background as a real estate

investment under state and government leadership. Section 4.3 will explore the distinct agendas of the art museum–school partnerships at the RAM and the relevant legal regulations.

4.1 The RAM's educational strategy with real estate investment

Traditional museum study is a discourse around collections-centred museum models and is concerned with curatorship (Harrison, 1993). The general public understands that a museum is a cultural authority, which focuses its social links on the cultural tastes of particular social groups. Compared with this traditional concept, new museology redefines the relationship between the art museum and the public. New museum studies are concerned with the active role of the public in museums and include a shift in focus from objects to the public (Weil, 1990). The critical difference in the new model is that it emphasises educational functions that are to the advantage of the museum visitor (Hooper-Greenhill, 2000). The main purpose for this change of direction and the new theories of museum studies is to provide more access for diverse groups. As noted in the Introduction, the new museology theory is employed for this research.

This more visitor-orientated ethos and transition from 'legislator' to 'interpreter' has resulted in a perceived shift in the identity of museum experts (Ross, 2004). As seen in the RAM's official statement, it is an interpretive planning institution and art museum that considers its reception from the perspective of the visitor. Its communications strategy is to be responsive to the needs of its visitors (Villeneuve and Love, 2017).

The RAM education programme endeavours to build meaningful connections between RAM artistic projects and their public, introduce to them artistic and social practices at the frontline in China and in the world, and stimulate thinking and exchange between different disciplines and social groups. We hope, through these activities, the museum will become a site of learning,

debate and enjoyment to which all members of the public have equal and full access. (RAM, 2019)



Figure 4.4: Yifeng Galleria, the high-end shopping mall located in the Rockbund project (photographed by the author, 2018).

Providing an interactive discursive space is an important part of the RAM's public engagement as the institution is keen to highlight that high quality public engagement benefits all involved. However, during my second period of fieldwork in this city, I walked through the Rockbund real estate project in the city's developing area. The high-security buildings and the luxury high-grade decoration of the buildings left me feeling excluded when I was walking past the Associated Mission Building and the Yifeng Galleria (shown in Figure 4.4). I stood opposite the main entrance to the art museum and observed that people were busy with their own individual lives, running late for work or delivering food, or were residents of the old-style lane area out for a walk (as shown in Figure 4.5). The RAM and the Rockbund real estate operation seemed irrelevant to their lives. To reconsider the introduction to the RAM (above), 'the museum will become a site of learning, debate and enjoyment to which all members of the public have equal and full access' (RAM, 2019). I am going to question what visitor-centred education actually means within the RAM. Is the group using the RAM's educational space actually very limited? Does the real estate investment background of this art museum hinder or develop engagement with the broader population?



Figure 4.5: The main entrance of the RAM building (photographed by the author, 2018).



Figure 4.6: The work plan of the Rockbund project (courtesy of David Chipperfield Architects).

Located in the Huangpu District of central Shanghai, the RAM operates as part of the Rockbund project, a joint venture investment from real estate enterprises. In 2003, the government gave the development rights for eleven 70-year-old historically protected buildings to the joint venture, which had investments from the state-owned holding company New Huangpu Group and the real estate holding firm Sinolink Worldwide

Holdings Limited. It was a comprehensive development project (as shown in Figure 4.6), including the restoration and conversion of eleven historically protected buildings and the construction of six new buildings, in what is now known as the Rockbund project. It includes office complexes, upscale restaurants, luxury hotels, retail buildings, high-end apartments and a series of community facilities. To revitalise the Bund area in this culture-led urban regeneration project, and to capture the spirit and character of modern art, the Royal Asiatic Society building's exquisite art deco exterior was partially maintained by restoring the existing building and renovating the interior with simplicity, grace and functionality.

Shi Hantao, the former manager of the RAM's marketing and development department, points out that the tricky part of this real estate development project was the joint venture with distinctive Chinese characteristics. One of the developers in the Rockbund project, the New Huangpu Group, is owned by the Huangpu District government, which is also responsible for other urban regeneration projects in the Huangpu District.⁶² The benefit of the venture's investment from the real estate group was that it positioned the art museum at the centrepiece of an expensive development project, which enabled it to be ideally located in the centre of Shanghai. Although the art museum itself, as a non-profit institution, is unlikely to be a particularly lucrative investment for the company, its status as an architectural icon and a seat of culture, as well as rising land values, allows the Rockbund project to make more money from the other works in progress along the Bund. This comprehensive development project features Michelin restaurants, an art auction house, luxury hotels and apartments, all of which prove attractive to Shanghai's burgeoning population, who place a premium on art and luxury commodities. This model, by which land prices rise in response to investments in both culture and real estate, is also seen in other case studies, such as the OCAT in Shanghai and in several of China's other major cities.

⁶² Interview with Shi Hantao, November 2019, online.

Shi (2018) believes that the Rockbund project gives a clear indication of the government's involvement, and that the RAM is an important way for the Rockbund to distinguish itself from traditional commercial real estate projects. As mentioned in Chapter One, a land transaction formed the deal between the government and the investors, which give birth to the art museum. Therefore, if the RAM, which is seen as cultural infrastructure, conceptually belongs to the state and the government, its art educational practices and public engagement could be considered to be inherent ways of contributing towards the enterprise's social obligations in the Chinese context. In the interview with the deputy director of the RAM, Liu Yingjiu, he stressed the real estate investors' strong willingness to bring in more visitors through different kinds of public engagement activities.⁶³ Therefore, to answer the questions raised above, I will explore the relationship between the geographical location of the RAM and its visitors.



Figure 4.7: Michelin-starred restaurant in the Associated Mission Building, one of the renovated buildings of the Rockbund project (photographed by the author, 2018).

First, I will consider the positive effect of the real estate investment background of the RAM. The RAM aims to achieve its comprehensive development purpose of enhancing the cultural aspects of urban regeneration and growth. The project provides the RAM's

⁶³ Interview with Liu Yingjiu, December 2019, online.

geographical advantage and convenient access for visitors. The excellent geographical position of the RAM is unparalleled. The Bund is an important location that integrates rich cultural traditions and a mainstream location for a new lifestyle in downtown Shanghai (Art Market Monitor, 2010). As outlined at the beginning of this thesis, an art museum is unlikely to be set up in a great location in the city centre without collaboration with the state and the government. This can be regarded as a benefit of this RAM's background of real estate investment in the Chinese context. The RAM is only eight minutes from the nearest subway station (East Nanjing Road). It is located in a flourishing area of the Huangpu District, surrounded by intensive large-scale office buildings, the financial district and mature business infrastructure with a large number of white-collar employees based nearby. Furthermore, well-educated students from Fudan University and Shanghai International Studies University can arrive within 20 minutes using public transportation. These visitors want to explore new things and acquire knowledge of contemporary art, which is totally unknown in their work and lives. Liu Yingjiu also notes that of the visitors to the RAM, 40% are students from universities and that white-collar workers and university students make up the majority of the RAM's visitors. Furthermore, besides its exhibitions, educational practices in the RAM consciously target these specific groups.⁶⁴

In the interviews, Liu Yingjiu and Chen Dan, former manager of the RAM's education department, both mentioned the RAM's strategy around educational practices. As shown in Table 4.1, exhibitions are formulated by the RAM itself based on the institution's own aesthetic taste. Conversely, the RAM bridges its art educational practices with audiences according to the interests of the specific audience. Arguably, this not only relies on the 'consciousness' of the art museum itself, but is also inherent to its real estate investments, which seek more people to engage with the development project. This is one of the obvious reasons for its educational practices. While the number of private art museums has increased in the last ten years, there is no specific

⁶⁴ Interview with Liu Yingjiu, December 2019, WeChat Interview.

act or regulation on art museum education in Shanghai or China. For example, although the city of Shanghai launched the *Shanghai Museum Management Approach 2018*, there is no requirement detailing the number, content or quality of the educational programmes of private art museums.

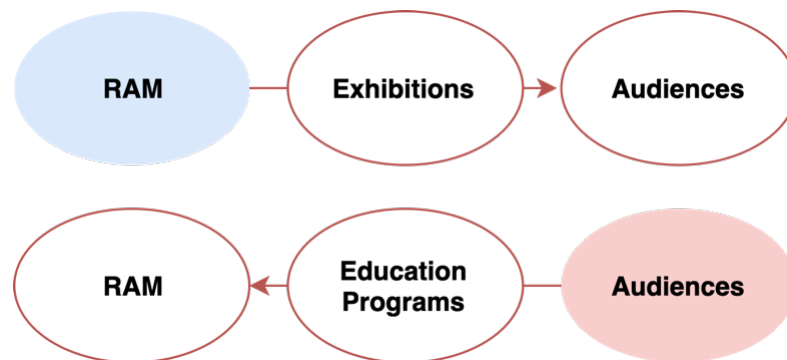


Table 4.1: Audience strategies of the RAM's exhibition and education practices. 2019.

In order to discover the RAM's public education strategy, I will discuss a specific example exhibition *By Day By Night: Or Some (Special) Things a Museum Can Do*, curated by Hou Hanru in 2010. It can be seen that there are two distinct but intertwined components of the exhibition and education practices. These are mainly embodied in the following aspects. First, I will consider the exhibition structure. To produce different forms of site-specific contemporary art projects presenting ideas on the new functions and social role of an art museum, nine artists from both China and abroad spent two to three weeks in a residency in Shanghai. The project entailed two connected sections related to the exhibition and educational practices. First, the art museum was open around the clock, from day to night. During the day, the works were on view in the traditional sense. At night, the second floor of the art museum was converted into an education space (as shown in Figure 4.8). The evening programmes, named *Night @ RAM*, encompassed eighteen different seminars, dialogues, workshops and performances, as well as 27 different movies recommended by the participating artists. The introduction to the exhibition, put forward by the curator Hou (2010), also shows the idea of transcending the conventional concept of an exhibition:

It is a city where life never stops: in the day, Shanghai is an enterprising center of economic and urban activities, accentuated by the uproaring noise of traffic, machines, and commerce. In the night, the streets are then invaded by the most electrifying symphony of all kinds of sounds that mix the night market hub with popular karaoke outcries – between hidden dark corners and dazzling neon lights, the city is turned into a paradise for leisure, culture and pleasure, with a flair of seduction, dream and fleur-du-mal style of poesy and adventure...

Second, as its title implies, *Or Some (Special) Things a Museum Can Do* represents the nocturnal extension of the exhibition through the Night @ RAM programme. This raises discussion about the art museum's identity: as an institution with ambitions to engage with broader audiences, the RAM is considering how many things an art museum could do other than presenting an exhibition in a conventional way. As the former director Lai Xiangling said, Night @ RAM aimed to build an intimate and interactive dialogue amongst the institution, the artists, the exhibition, education and the everyday reality of urban life, 'all of which serve as a radical attempt to bring art to life' (RAM, 2014).



Figure 4.8: Screening of the Night @ RAM session in the RAM exhibition hall (courtesy of the RAM, 2010).

Compared with a more stable and tangible format of an exhibition, the after-hours events, situated in the exhibition hall and several neighbouring buildings, were part of a public participation project that required a physical visit that was fluid and ongoing. The Night @ RAM project could be considered the real starting point of the RAM's engagement with public education. The programme helped the newly established RAM to define its mission in the early stages of its ambitious plan, through which it hoped to eventually become a cultural hub in the Bund, no matter whether these ambitions came from the investor or the art museum itself.

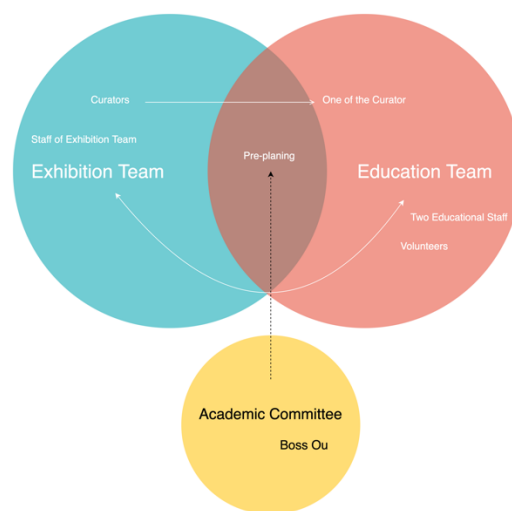


Table 4.2: The planning process between the RAM's exhibition and education teams. 2019.

Third, I will look at the RAM's planning process. As Table 4.2 shows, there is an intersection of the exhibition team and the education team under the leadership of the Academic Board (*xueshu weiyuanhui*).⁶⁵ The two branches are independent but are in constant dialogue with each other. According to the interview with Shi Hantao, the reality is that, all educational events must be approved by the Academic Committee, which is, in practical terms, led by the boss of the real estate enterprise. As part of the initial discussions, two ideas were proposed by the education team. These included a lower cost for educational activities, at only £40,000 to £50,000 per year, compared

⁶⁵ The Academic Board advises the art museum on all knowledge production, distribution, public activities and questions that affect the daily operations of the RAM. The board holds one to two sessions each year. The board is made up of the director of the real estate enterprise, curators, professors and other professionals within the contemporary art field, and it delegates the day-to-day running of the RAM to the director and other staff.

with over £100,000 per exhibition. However, the RAM's visitor numbers increase with its educational practices.⁶⁶ I also want to mention the cooperation between the exhibition team and the education team. These teams work closely together and the RAM's educational practices have been formulated through this cooperation. For instance, Chen Dan discussed the convergence of curatorial and educational co-construction. The planning process for the RAM's education projects is carried out alongside the curatorial meetings on annual exhibition projects. During these meetings, the concept of the exhibition, artworks and the exhibition spatial graph are clarified by the curator. After engaging with the exhibition team, the education team proposes topics to be discussed with the curator, director and deputy director of the art museum.⁶⁷ The formation and development of the symbiotic space is created through the structure of the exhibition and the planning process, as shown in Table 4.2, which I will discuss in the next section.

Data analysis on Visitors

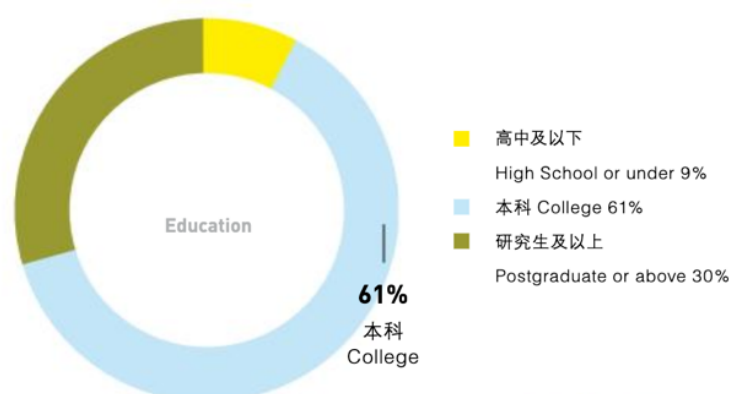


Figure 4.9: Data analysis on visitors (courtesy of the RAM, 2010).

The data analysis showing the educational background of visitors to the RAM is shown in Figure 4.9. It can be seen that 91% of visitors are well educated. It would seem that the RAM has a clear public strategy. As well as the Night @ RAM project discussed above, another educational programme targeted well-educated groups: the RAM @ Campus project of 2018. This included walking, writing and the improvisation of

⁶⁶ Interview with Shi Hantao, November 2019, online.

⁶⁷ Interview with Chen Dan, March 2018, Shanghai.

poems under the theme of walking around the city. This approach was used by Belgian artist Francis Alÿs and was inspired by his solo exhibition *La dépense*, which translates as ‘consumption’. Curated by Yuko Hasegawa, the show recorded the artist exploring geopolitical contexts during his travels around different regions of the world with ‘a sort of discursive argument composed of episodes, metaphors, or parables’ (Alÿs, 2007, p.11). The exhibition presented close to 1,300 works, including drafts, videos, sketches, paintings, drawings and other preparatory works.

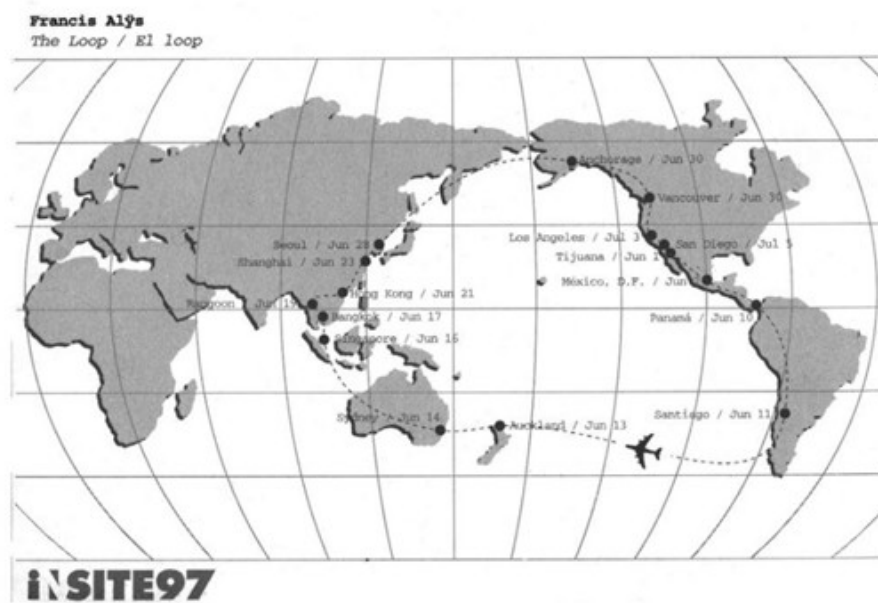


Figure 4.10: Artist’s roadmap of the performance artwork *Loop*, presented in the RAM (courtesy of the RAM, 2018).

Alÿs’s artworks are best known for his close observations of everyday life and geopolitics. Regarding the creative process and ideas behind the project, Alÿs stated:

I spend a lot of time walking around the city... The initial concept for a project often emerges during a walk. As an artist, my position is akin to that of a passer-by constantly trying to situate myself in a moving environment. My work is a succession of notes and guides. The invention of a language goes together with the invention of a city. Each of my interventions is another

fragment of the story that I am inventing, of the city that I am mapping. (RAM, 2018)

As described here, the artist's walking creation as he moved through different cities can be easily read from his artwork documents and poetry.



Figure 4.11: The performance artwork *The Green Line* records the artist pouring green paint through Israeli border controls (courtesy of the artist Francis Alÿs, 2004).

For the duration of the show, the RAM hosted its educational activities in cooperation with China's Fudan University. The Fudan Poets Society was established in 1981 and has nurtured many great poets over the past thirty years. The famous society has become a stronghold of modern poetry in China and represents a community of highly esteemed Chinese-language poets. During the exhibition, audiences from the Fudan Poet Society walked the different streets near the RAM, admiring Alÿs's works and seeking inspiration from the Bund to the Huqiu residential area, from East Beijing Road to Yuanmingyuan Road; in other words, from a real and complex city, where participants experienced the everyday life of the Shanghainese. The poets roamed the city's streets among the historic buildings from the height of the early colonisation and

overcrowded attractions occupying the Bund in different scenarios put together as part of the exhibition. Then, based on key words provided by the art museum, the participants improvised poems to mark the images of the diversified urban blocs with their own senses.

Visitors during the RAM @ Campus project, including members of the society, were considered to be a well-educated group. Chen Dan stressed that the majority of the RAM's visitors for educational events come from all walks of life but are mainly university students.⁶⁸ This was also stressed by Liu Yingjiu introduced earlier. In terms of the characteristics of visitors, I have stressed that the RAM aims to create an educational space for those who are well educated but unfamiliar with contemporary art. Although the visitors to this exhibition were well educated and based at Fudan University, contemporary art is perceived as a relatively novel concept for education in China, since it departs so completely from their own education and personal experiences of the visual arts. Chinese contemporary artist Cao Fei, who was personally involved with art education after the reform and opening up (*gaige kaifang*) recorded:

While it is true that, by 1997, China's 'open-door' policy had been in place for over twenty years and that Western culture and values had long been present in the East, before the internet became widely accessible, there was a delay in the transmission of information from the West, especially of news from the art world. In the art school where I was studying at the time, we knew little of modern art history beyond the Impressionists. My generation's conception of contemporary Western art was confined to images of European cemeteries and sculptures shown to us on slides by our professors. (Cao, n.d.)

In 2001, at government policy level, legislation issued by the Chinese Culture Ministry abolished the performance and display of artwork involving depictions of animal abuse,

⁶⁸ Interview with Chen Dan, March 2018, Shanghai.

corpses, violence or pornography. As a result, diversity and freedom of expression eventually disappeared from contemporary art in China.

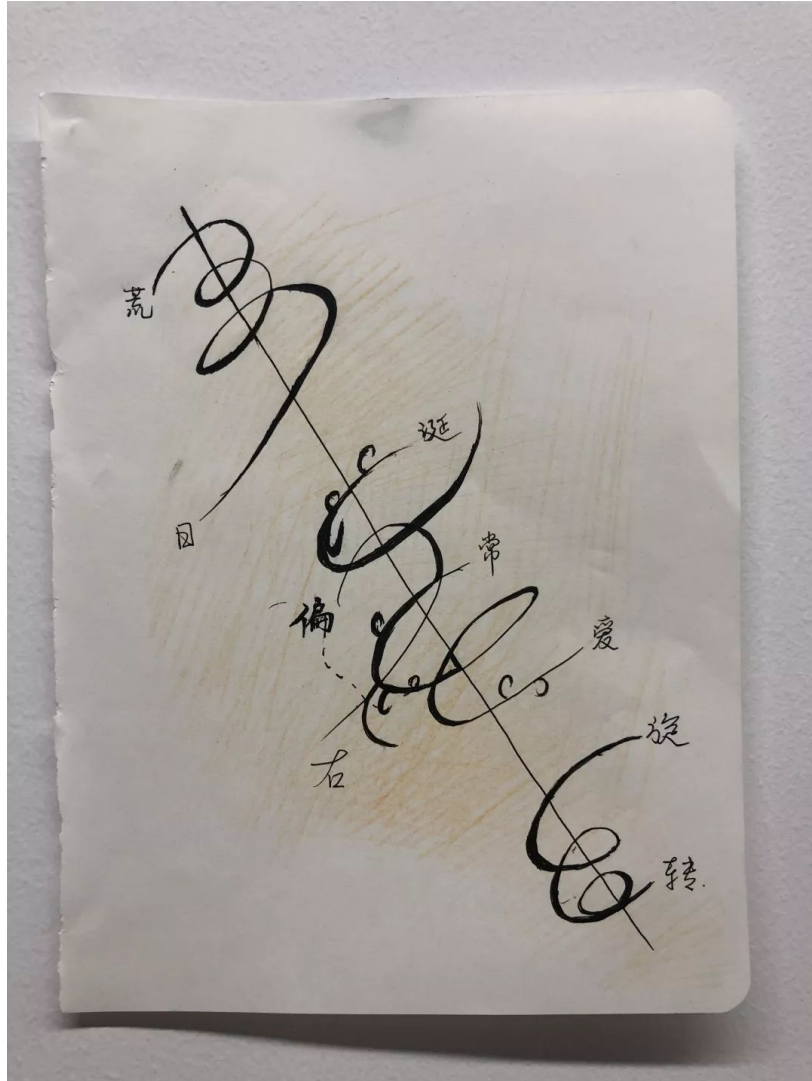


Figure 4.12: The combined poetic text and visual materials executed by a member of the Fudan Poet Society (courtesy of the RAM, 2018).

The RAM's education programme in the Bund found a way for participants to communicate and express themselves, which came from walking around the city as a way to inspire and invent ways to depict the complex urban scene, so that the invention of a new language went together with a city walk. These well-educated visitors were unfamiliar with the content of the exhibition, but invented new expressions with poetic text and visual materials (shown in Figure 4.12) as a depiction of receiving. For instance, Figure 4.13 shows an image from a 39-minute video artwork called *Tornado*, which

was shown as part of the exhibition. The video records Alÿs's repeated actions to chase the tornadoes that have repeatedly occurred in the dusty highlands south of Mexico City over the past decade. Three actions unfold in *Tornado*: waiting for the storms, pursuing the storms and catching or missing the storms. Audiences describe coming to contemporary art 'empirically', an approach that intersects with the context outlined by the RAM. Figures 4.12 and 4.15 were created as a result of the participants' direct experience of trying to re-perceive the work using the artist's creative approach in a space for audiences.



Figure 4.13: Screenshot of the video artwork *Tornado* (courtesy of the RAM, 2018).

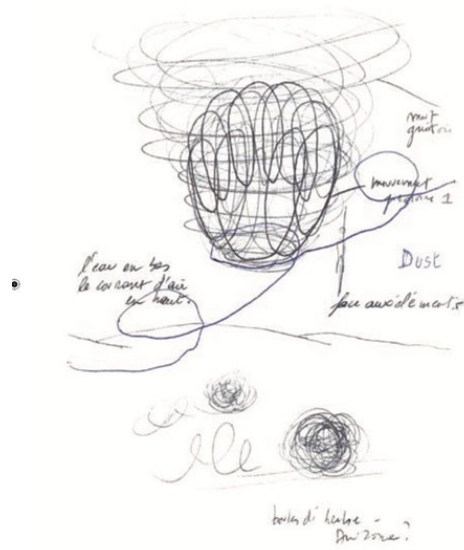


Figure 4.14: Working paper on the video artwork *Tornado* (courtesy of the RAM, 2018).

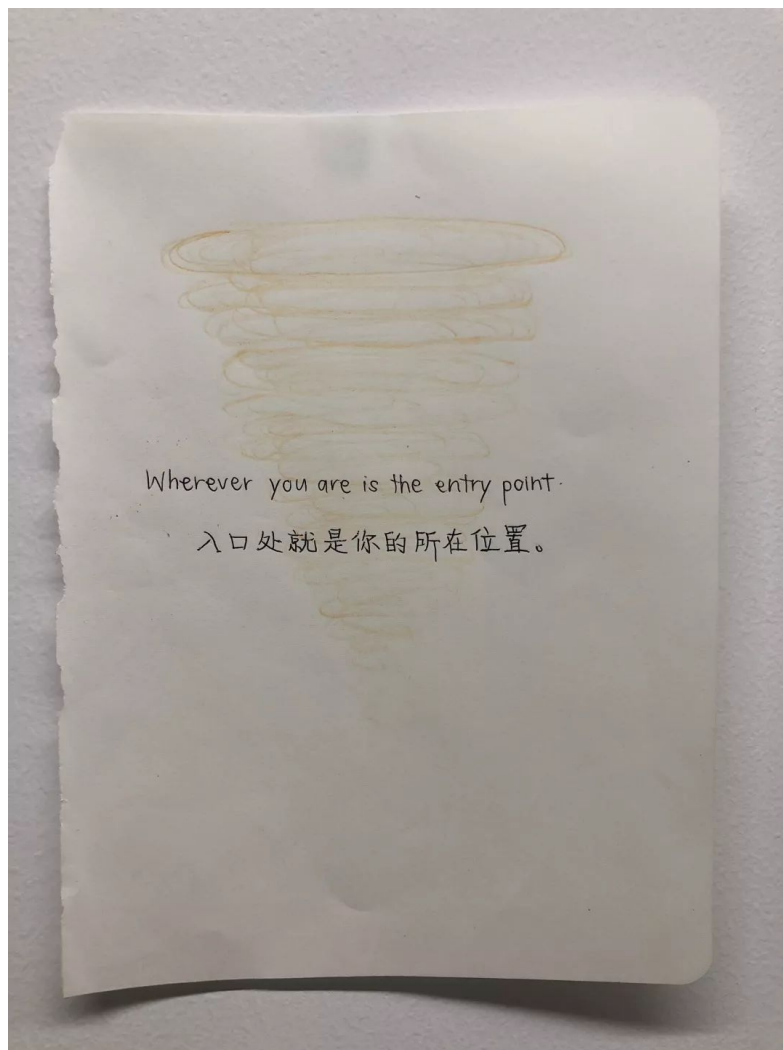


Figure 4.15: Work executed by a member of the Fudan Poet Society (courtesy of the RAM, 2018).

However, it is not difficult to find a lack of suitability or a lack of activities when audiences try to engage with the RAM's educational programmes. In the interviews, the positioning of the RAM's educational programmes emerged. The institution's programmes focus on ideological, critical and on obscure topics.⁶⁹ Arguably, the geographic location – the Bund – is, to the broader population, an 'unreadable book'. In such a context, if the RAM's educational programmes are aimed at the well-educated, I could not resist asking the RAM: what about the remaining groups who aspire to receive an art education in China?

4.2 A symbiotic space for art education practice

In this section, I will look further into the RAM's audience strategy in relation to the building's interior space. This investigation looks at the symbiotic space created because of the RAM's background as a real estate investment. This background is the second reason why I chose to look at the RAM as a case study considering the characteristics of educational practices in real estate art museums in China. Before I describe the symbiotic space for art education, it is important to look at the renovated spaces of the heritage building, as these have a direct impact on the planning and implementation of its education projects.

FLOOR	SPACE	AREA	HEIGHT	
1F	Entrance and Reception	187sqm	3.4m	
2F	Exhibition Gallery	228sqm	4.7m	
3F	Exhibition Gallery	228sqm	3.4m	
4F	Exhibition Gallery	228sqm	3.4m	Atrium Space 7m
5F	Exhibition Gallery	150sqm	2.7m	
6F	RAM Café	150sqm		

⁶⁹ Interview with Chen Dan, March 2018, Shanghai.

Table 4.3: Functional division of the RAM's space (courtesy of the RAM, 2019).

The original layout of the historic Royal Asiatic Society building was preserved with the restoration. As shown in Table 4.3, the entrance and reception are on the first floor and the exhibition halls are located over the second, third and fourth floors. These are finished in different architectural styles, yet in all cases the design complements the function without a specific space for education. The interviews during the fieldwork were conducted in the education team's office, located on the ground floor of a residential building opposite the main RAM building (as shown in Figure 4.16). This made me wonder whether the RAM's education practices were also separated due to the absence of a specific space in the RAM building, or, alternatively, whether there was a symbiotic space in the RAM for exhibition and education practices.



Figure 4.16: The education team's office, located in a residential building opposite the RAM's main building (photographed by the author, 2018).

The RAM has a superior location with complete infrastructure and convenient transport on the Bund. This allows the institution to benefit from visitor flow. However, it also raises another issue for this investigation. Here, I will examine the diverse perspectives of an art museum with real estate investment in a specific way. The renovated space of

the heritage building has an impact on the planning strategies and implementation of its education projects. As the RAM (2019) declared on its website, ‘they provide operational conditions sufficient to meet the demands of major international art exhibitions as well as a diverse range of events’. However, in reality, this may not be so. After analysing the interviews and fieldwork, it can be seen that due to the absence of a specific educational space, most of the education programmes take place in the RAM’s exhibition hall, including the Night @ RAM programme that was discussed in Section 4.1.⁷⁰

From Chen’s educational experiences at the RAM, it can be seen that the RAM’s educational programmes are centred around its exhibition programme. Furthermore, the exhibition site plan shows that the curator plays an important role when the education team is designing its programmes. I argue that the investment background of the art museum has an influence on the organisation of educational activities in different spaces. Because the RAM is a renovated heritage building with limited space, there is no specific space for education (as shown in Table 4.3). This is different from K11 Shanghai (as discussed in Chapter Two), which has a specific education space in the shopping mall. Because of this feature, most of the RAM’s education programmes are integrated with exhibitions in this symbiotic space. The notes show that the curator of an exhibition shows the education team the exhibition plan in the co-construction stage. The *Hugo Boss Asia Art 2017* exhibition, which opened to the public on 27 October 2017, presented newly commissioned and existing artworks by four finalists. At the time, the exhibition space was full and there was no additional room for educational activities. Possibilities were explored within the exhibition venue and a sensuality with a poetic atmosphere was created when the exhibition and education activities echoed together in one space. On the other hand, the RAM’s exhibition team had worked to create more activities in the exhibition hall when there was no space for education.⁷¹

⁷⁰ The Night @ RAM programme can be found in the Appendix 1.

⁷¹ Interview with Chen Dan, March 2018, Shanghai.

There are two examples that show the characteristics of the symbiotic space in the RAM. The RAM Walk & Talk series is an exhibition-based education activity offered by scholars, artists, critics, curators and professional journalists with the aim of appreciating and understanding the exhibited artworks from diverse perspectives. The personal and subject-matter points of view from speakers encourage audiences to undertake educational ‘wanderings’ around the works in the RAM’s different exhibition halls. In 2016, the Walk & Talk series included a wandering in the RAM entitled *More Than a Guided Tour: A Love Letter to the Deceased*. This was based on the solo exhibition of American artist Felix Gonzalez-Torres. Up to this point, the RAM’s education and public programmes had taken place using guides; that is, the visitor-centred lead of the new museology. Instead of rudely placing the artist and artworks in a historical perpetual flow, the RAM’s education practices allowed audiences to associate artists and artworks with a specific time and space.

One of the intriguing aspects of this project is that the artist’s works were produced in the 1980s and 1990s in a society deeply influenced by the AIDS epidemic in America.

Throughout his work, the tension between the public and private, the shared and the personal, comprises a recurrent theme for Gonzalez-Torres. Many of the artist’s works consist of everyday objects, such as strings of light bulbs, mirrors, wall clocks or printed sheets of paper. Other works are comprised of spills of candy, mirrors, and jigsaw puzzles. His artwork itself is like a puzzle, but lacking a univocal order. Its demure minimal aesthetic solicits the audience to put the pieces together for themselves, inviting a plurality of pictures to emerge. (RAM, 2016)

Therefore, the observed feedback⁷² suggests that the on-site communication with his artworks was an invitation from the artist, and the educational activities involved in the

⁷² The observations of this exhibition and education project came from the video recording created by the RAM, which can be accessed via the following websites: <https://v.qq.com/x/page/p0384ydnhd.html> and <https://v.qq.com/x/page/j03471y5lcz.html>

exhibition were a form of symbiosis in the space, generating sensuality and a poetic atmosphere.



Figure 4.17: The work '*Untitled*' (*Go-Go Dancing Platform*) by Felix Gonzalez-Torres. Materials include wood, lightbulbs and acrylic paint. The work shows a go-go dancer in a silver lamé bathing suit and sneakers, with a personal listening device (courtesy of Andrea Rosen Gallery, 1991).



Figure 4.18: The work '*Untitled*' (*Portrait of Ross in L.A.*) by Felix Gonzalez-Torres. The material is candies individually wrapped in multi-coloured cellophane (courtesy of Andrea Rosen Gallery, 1991).

But surely the historical and cultural context of Gonzalez-Torres' work experienced a dramatic change when the works went abroad to China. This challenges the audience, their cognition and the existing aesthetic. Based on the investigation above, I argue that the RAM is delicately creating opportunities for the audience to consider how a twenty-first century Shanghai public confronts these messages in artworks. During the education session, the speaker was Xiong Xiaomo, a media worker and photographer who is openly gay. This identity lets him engage more with this topic. Three decades ago in America, AIDS destroyed a community of openly homosexual creative artists. The homosexual artist Felix Gonzalez-Torres died young but left many works that react to the devastation of the AIDS crisis in a visual way. Based on this context, as the speaker, Xiong shed light on homosexual issues and the AIDS crisis from his personal perspective and identity. He conducted a tour of the exhibition hall that engaged with the artist's works in commemorating, narrating or protesting against the destruction of the AIDS crisis. More than just a guided tour, the speaker discussed the impacts of the artist's homosexual identity and AIDS on the art. It can be noted that the symbiotic space for education evolved with the exhibition in the same space.⁷³



Figure 4.19: Screenshot of the work 'Untitled' (*Go-Go Dancing Platform*) by Felix Gonzalez-Torres (courtesy of the RAM, 2016).

⁷³ Apart from the photography, video recordings and the brief introduction shown on the RAM website, there is no other evidence about this project.

There is another example, the RAM HIGHLIGHT. This is a bi-annual art programme with public engagement at the museum. It aims to select one artist or collective to feature innovative works in the space for eight to 15 days. In September 2016, the RAM HIGHLIGHT hosted a programme called *Zhang Ding: Devouring Time*, which commissioned the young Chinese artist Zhang Ding. Zhang Ding overthrew of the limits of the exhibition hall and shook the audience's expectations of the experience of an exhibition and engagement with art. To push the boundaries of traditional exhibition-making, during the project, Zhang Ding transformed the space into a 'prison' (as shown in Figure 4.20) to rediscover the art museum space, distinctive from the conventional exhibition and public programme.



Figure 4.20: The exhibition hall was transformed into a 'golden prison' (courtesy of the RAM and the artist Zhang Ding, 2016).



Figure 4.21: The audience was temporarily imprisoned (courtesy of the artist Zhang Ding, 2016).



Figure 4.22: The audience was required to take photos before being locked in 'jail' and given specific labels (courtesy of the Enjoy, 2016).

As shown in Figure 4.22, the audience was required to take a photo before being locked in a 'jail' with specific label, identity and symbol. In the entrance to the space, farcical scenes filled with conflict and contradictions as metaphors for absurd social scenes were placed on the stage. Entering the main hall, the artist experimented further and set up a stage for collective behaviour by opening up the artistic authorship to the audience,

which was invited to collaborate in the ongoing installation by improvising with the artist (as shown in Figure 4.23).



Figure 4.23 The actions of audience became part of the work (courtesy of the artist Zhang Ding, 2016).



Figure 4.24: The 'warden' offering 'prison food' in a golden cage (courtesy of the artist Zhang Ding, 2016).



Figure 4.25: The artist Zhang Ding watching the audience having lunch in his set (courtesy of the RAM and Zhang Ding, 2016).

Artist Zhang Ding acted as the prison warden, whose job is to supervise and distribute the audience's lunch in the way it would be in jail. This imitates societal realities. The official statement from the RAM and the artist mentioned that the exquisite and enjoyable dining experience was prepared by one of Shanghai's top chefs. Food and drinks were served on gold tableware (as shown in Figure 4.26). Even the ceremonial eating process was extensively monitored by the artist. As can be seen from the documentary video of the programme, fellow prisoners enjoyed a day of cooking and talking, even while they were temporarily locked up and imprisoned. At the same time, the 'golden prison' turned into an art auction house that held a real auction of artworks, creating a sharp conflict between space and the dramatic effect.



Figure 4.26: Food and drinks were served on gold tableware (courtesy of the artist Zhang Ding, 2016).

In a whirlwind turn of events, when people were freed from ‘prison’, the space only had scraps of food left on the table (as shown in Figure 4.27), which corresponds to the title *Devouring Time* (*feng juan can yun* in Chinese); that is, the wind puffs the clouds away to give the space a clean sweep. After the audiences left, the scenic displacement created a psychic displacement, and all the things in the space were taken away, just like a dream. The space and the public all returned to the real world. Here, I argue that the symbiotic space that was created refers to public engagement and involvement in exhibitions through performances that happen in different time periods. Simultaneously, the actions of the audience become part of the project, whereby the co-construction in the space reflects the indispensable relationship between the artist and the public, the work of art and public engagement, the imperfect scene and the dramatic ‘performances’. It is not stationary, whereby the multiple identities of space and the co-construction method make a symbiotic space, but dynamic with unceasing growth and mutual symbiosis.⁷⁴

⁷⁴ There is no evidence recorded by the RAM of what the audience thought of the event (e.g. response forms). However, audience reactions can be found from the video recording of this project.



Figure 4.27: When people were freed from ‘prison’, the space only had scraps of food left on the table (courtesy of the Enjoy, 2016).

It can be argued that this is a ‘guerrilla’ space that is constantly changing, and that this has an influence on the sustainability and consistency of its activities. On the other hand, while the RAM’s education is not stable and is constantly changing, these characteristics do not overly restrict its educational activities, which expand beyond the original site and therefore initiate further opportunities. In the next section I will look at the key projects of the RAM @ Campus programme to illustrate the educational ‘turn’ of this guerrilla space.

4.3 The RAM and its educational ‘turn’

In the previous section, I discussed two aspects of the RAM’s symbiotic space. I will now focus on the RAM’s educational practices in terms of the art museum’s school partnerships during its development as a real estate project under the leadership of the state. This argument will reassess the relationship between private art museums and schools in terms of art museums’ ‘turn’ towards education. This educational ‘turn’ reflects the change from independent education to the co-construction of educational practices between exhibition and education. Therefore, a symbiotic space for art education is created by the collaboration between private art museum and school.

In terms of the art museum–school partnership, art museums have extensive cooperation with schools and creative organisations in order to deliver cultural experiences inside and outside the art museum. It is a common phenomenon in the UK, Europe (as shown in Figure 4.28) and the Americas for art museums to work closely with school across different levels. Take the Tate Liverpool as an example. Under the leadership of the Liverpool Cultural Education Partnership, the Tate collaborates with schools across the city to deliver more than 25 art educational experiences for every child in the Liverpool region (Findlay, 2018). However, this kind of partnership is absent in China.⁷⁵ It is a special characteristic of the RAM, which is one of the reasons I talk about the RAM in this context.

⁷⁵ According to the fieldwork and secondary research into private art museums across China, long-term art museum–school partnerships are so rare that the RAM’s partnerships with schools provide a unique perspective for discussion.



Figure 4.28: Students from primary school attend art class in an art museum at the Centre Pompidou in France (photographed by the author, 2018).

According to Hong's (2015) study, in terms of art education, China may have failed because Chinese students have poor knowledge and strategies for understanding art. The state established art education as a full-time compulsory course incorporated into the art education curriculum in primary and secondary schools throughout the country through a series of laws. Government policies have been issued stressing the importance of art education, including the *Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2002, 2006* and the *Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China, 2010*, which aim to educate and develop participants morally, intellectually, physically and aesthetically to continue the socialist agenda of the CCP (Hu, 2012). In fact, art education in schools is not given attention; laws and policies are certainly not being enforced. Zhong (2013) argues that art education in China seems to exist in name only. The main reasons for this are a misunderstanding of the value of art education, the negative impact of the increasingly examination-oriented education system, an absence of art education in the family and community, a lack of student interest in art and a lack of art teachers.

Generally, art education in schools is neglected compared with other core subjects (Guo, 2007). One of the obvious negative influences of the examination-oriented education system is that scheduled art education lessons at school are usually taken over by other subjects. Before students begin university, there is an emphasis on subjects such as English, Chinese, maths and chemistry, which play decisive roles in university entrance examinations. Fostering students' art appreciation and performance skills cannot be achieved in schools under these circumstances.

‘This is not because they don’t really like art but because they don’t know how to like it. If the examination-oriented system doesn’t change and art courses in schools continue to be replaced by other subjects, students will never have the chance to understand art. And, if art education only focuses on skill training, students will not learn how to understand art, either. (Wang, 2015)

As described above, these circumstances were confirmed in Hong Wang’s studies. In addition, the examination-oriented education system, which devalues the importance of art education, may also cause negative effects for art teachers, who do not attach too much importance to art education. Teachers’ art education practices are likely influenced by their opinions and attitudes about the nature and content of the subject; as a result, teachers may become uninterested in teaching art in school (Pajares, 1992). Based on this argument, Gray and MacGregor (1991) argue that teachers make decisions about what kind of art classes to deliver in school and how art is taught based on their personal values and beliefs.

Apart from school education, public art museums and the Children’s Palace,⁷⁶ set up by the state and the government in different cities, take responsibility for socialist education through political tasks.⁷⁷ Similarly, as Liu Yingjiu stressed, there is a

⁷⁶ The Children’s Palace is found in socialist countries. It is an ambitious plan to train the next generation of socialists. It is a public institution where children engage in extra-curricular activities including visual education that is directly led by the central government of China.

⁷⁷ Interview with Lin Zixiong, December 2019, WeChat Interview.

socialist agenda for educational content set by the management of the art museum. This is used as a guideline for what kinds of art are appropriate and inappropriate to share with the public.⁷⁸ The majority of RAM visitors are well educated; however, the art museum–school partnership is between different groups of audiences from schools, which is more like obeying the regulations put forward by the state and the government. Under *Article 35 of the Regulations on Museum* (2015), schools must arrange for students’ activities in art museums based on the curriculum and teaching programmes of the school, and art museums must provide support and assistance for relevant educational activities in schools. This could be considered as a political task for both public and private art museums.

Above all, numerous reasons exist that account for the weak state of Chinese art education when the majority of art education happens in schools, public art museums and the Children’s Palace. In this sense, instead of an in-depth analysis of the existence of art education in China, here I am going to explore the role and responsibility of the RAM, noting its real estate investment, in the context of the current state of Chinese art education. More specifically, I will explore art museums’ move towards art education in an attempt to diversify students’ art education practices through cooperation within or beyond the art museum.

I suggest that schools are routinely paying less attention to art education, which has led to this turn towards art education from art museums, and that this kind of change is mainly reflected in two dimensions of the RAM’s educational practices. First is the art museum–school partnership. As a number of art education studies consistently point out, art museums and schools are natural educational partners (Berry, 1998; Hicks, 1986; Institute of Museum Services [IMS], 1996; Saunders, 1991; Sheppard, 1993). The collaboration between them is considered to be an effective way of educating and learning (IMS, 1996).

⁷⁸ Interview with Liu Yingjiu, December 2019, WeChat Interview.

I am going to question whether the RAM's real estate investment background reinforces or weakens these public activities. I disagree with Chen Dan's argument on the sustainable operations of the RAM's programmes. Chen insists that real estate art museums are more reliable in terms of sustainability. It can be said the real estate background contributes to the implementation of long-term educational plans in the RAM.⁷⁹ Chen takes the RAM @ Campus project as an example. The institution does not target short-term profitability from this education programme but benefits from long-term investment in public education and receives sustainable financial support from senior leadership. However, this is still insufficient to explain its sustainability. As Chen clarifies, 'there is no venue for educational activities in our art museum; we need to negotiate with our own real estate enterprise to rent a space that has not yet been organised. Due to the different purposes of usage for the temporary site, the educational space has changed over the years.'⁸⁰

Chen also points out that 'three exhibitions take place in the RAM every year. Two exhibitions link with schools through educational programmes. These school-based practices are formulated for various reasons. The shortage of educational space at the RAM is one of the main reasons.'⁸¹ In the previous section, I stressed that the insufficient space for education in the RAM was influenced by its real estate investment background. But in turn, this disadvantage promotes the alliance between the art museum and schools, which fills the gap that exists in school art education programmes. This kind of partnership is well worth developing and sustaining, as it offers 'complementary learning experiences, combining two languages of learning – the words of the classroom and the objects of the museum' (Sheppard, 1993, p.2).

⁷⁹ Interview with Chen Dan, March 2018, Shanghai.

⁸⁰ Interview with Chen Dan, March 2018, Shanghai.

⁸¹ Interview with Chen Dan, March 2018, Shanghai.



Figure 4.29 Chen Dan delivers an art class to primary school students in the exhibition hall (courtesy of the RAM, 2018).

The RAM's education programmes endeavour to establish significant connections and influences between its artistic practices and the public, and in this way, to make up for the limitations and shortcomings of in-school art education in China. The education role of the RAM is supported by wide-ranging practices and forms including the Exhibition Know-More, educators' forum, Night @ RAM and RAM @ Campus programmes. The RAM @ Campus programme, along with the RAM's highly acclaimed exhibition projects, has become one of the widely recognised strengths of the art museum–school partnership. Here, I take the RAM @ Campus programme as an example to illustrate the performance of 'turn' towards art education at the RAM.

The 2018 exhibition *Walking on the Fade Out Lines* was a collaboration with Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo. The exhibition included 29 works selected from the Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo collections from over 23 artists from all regions, spanning forms including painting, interactive installations, photography and video, along with additional video works from Shanghai artists Song Tao and Zhang

Ruyi, which strengthened the rich connection to local contexts. As the RAM's senior curator Hsieh Feng-Rong (2018) says,

‘By means of the artistic statements and imagery as carried across by the works, the exhibition uses the artworks as critical reflective tools and brings viewers into an unfamiliar landscape, entering into dialogue with them, and attempting to rebuild the state of imagination in that blurred boundary between the known and the unknown.’

The exhibition's categories of artistic expression were constituted by artworks with trans-regional characteristics. From the end of twentieth century to the present, artists have questioned, examined and analysed the concept of alterity in a globalised context. This invites audiences to reassess the past and to explore unknown areas. *Walking on the Fade Out Lines* changed the ways and perspectives of ‘watching’, revealed the meanings of works through the perspectives of the open multiplicity, and continued to explore dialogic space and the unknown.



Figure 4.30: The sound artwork *Dom-Tak-Tak-Dom-Tak* (screenshot of the exhibition video, 2019).

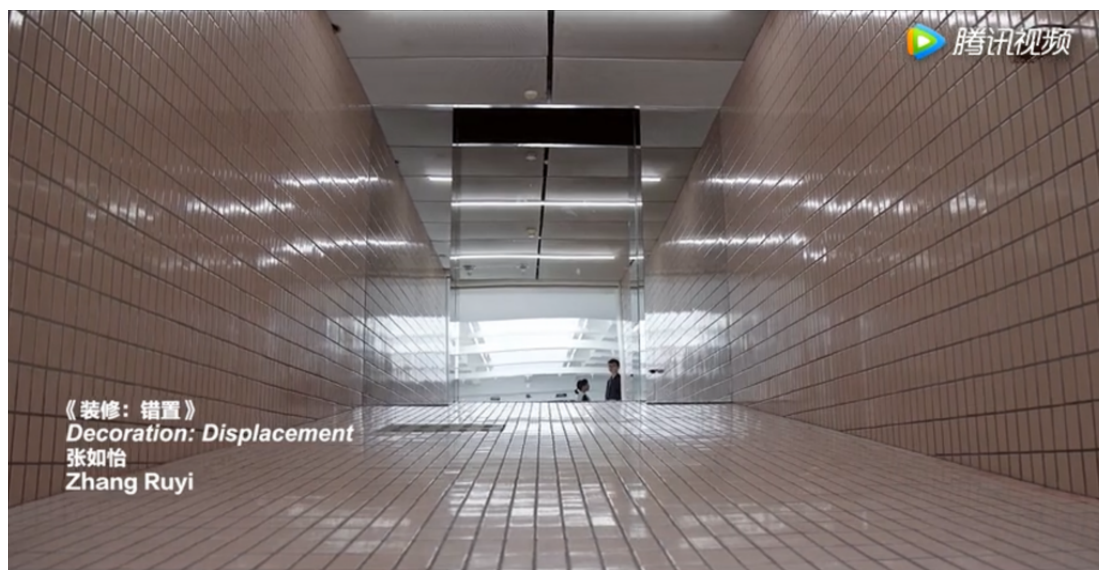


Figure 4.31: The installation artwork *Decoration: Displacement* (screenshot of the exhibition video, 2019).

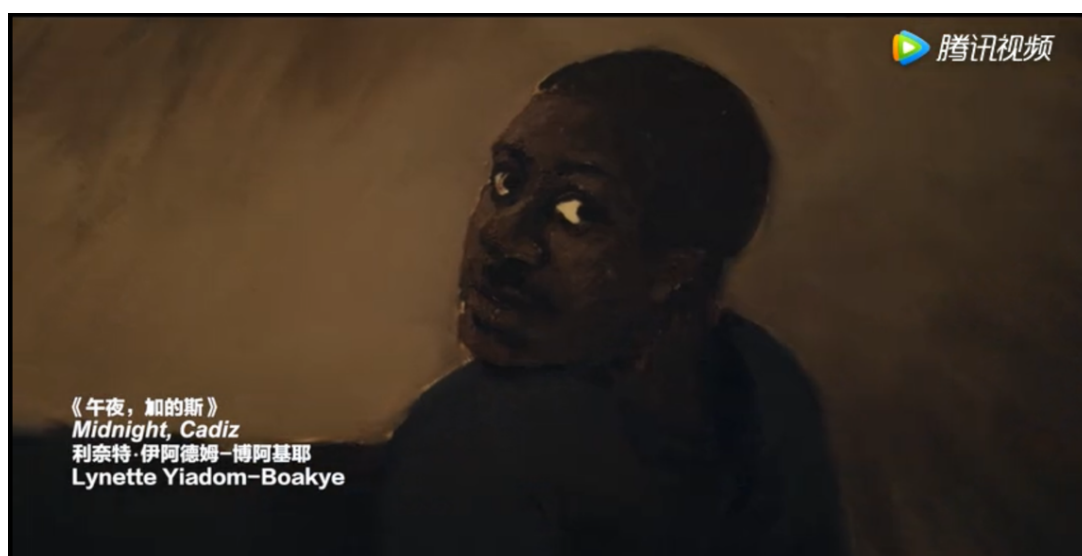


Figure 4.32: The painting *Midnight, Cadiz* (screenshot of the exhibition video, 2019).



Figure 4.33: The installation artwork *Bang-Bang Room* (screenshot of the exhibition video, 2019).

A series of educational activities took place over the course of the exhibition to further explore the exhibition topic. To achieve the public mission of the art museum, the exhibition acted as the primary vehicle by using limited space, plenty of time, and accumulated experiences. In this context, the exhibition and education practices of the art museum are tight mutual destiny. When public education is recognised as the core public mission of an art museum, an exhibition sets a basic framework for the implementation of educational practices.

One of education programmes during *Walking on the Fade Out Lines* was called *Can I Take a Primary School Student to see an Exhibition if I am not an Art Teacher?* Here, I will explore this programme in more detail. The programme is an example of the RAM–school partnership, illustrating collaboration between the RAM’s education team and the teachers at East Beijing Road Elementary School (*Niuzhuang Road Campus*). It was a RAM workshop held at the school, developed and delivered with school partners. It introduced students to the idea of conducting a site visit and offered tips for getting the most out of the exhibition.

One week before the site visit, a letter to the grade three students at the primary school was sent by the RAM. In the first part of the letter, students were asked to read the visitor guidelines, which were designed for this specific group, before their visit. The purpose was to inspire them to think about and discuss why they should visit. As well as general instructions for the on-site visit, it is worth mentioning the questionnaire that was given to students (see Appendix 2). In conjunction with the exhibition topics of ‘crossing the boundaries of art forms’, ‘animal’ and ‘identity’, the RAM designed a questionnaire for the students so they could preview the contents of the exhibition before their visit.

In the exhibition, a bear artwork greeted visitors at the entrance (as shown in Figure 4.34). This work is named *Have You Seen Me Before?* It is a large installation created by Italian artist Paola Pivi. A yellow bear covered in chicken feathers crawls on the floor. The bear is composed of materials common in everyday life: feathers, foam, plastic, steel and wood. The bear artwork aims to recall visitors’ childhood memories by blurring the boundary between daily life and a novel concept. Figure 4.35 shows one of the drawing records of this artwork by a primary school student during the exhibition visit, with the bear drawn in pen at the bottom of the paper. This scribbled record attempts to describe the yellow feathers of the artwork discussed above by drawing and writing in front of the artwork itself in the art museum. As Bourriaud (2002) emphasises, the physical interaction visitors have with artworks is important: contemporary art objects demand ‘participation’ and invite the public to engage in them, which is different from the way modernist artworks are to be ‘viewed’.



Figure 4.34: The artwork *Have You Seen Me Before?* (courtesy of the RAM, 2018).

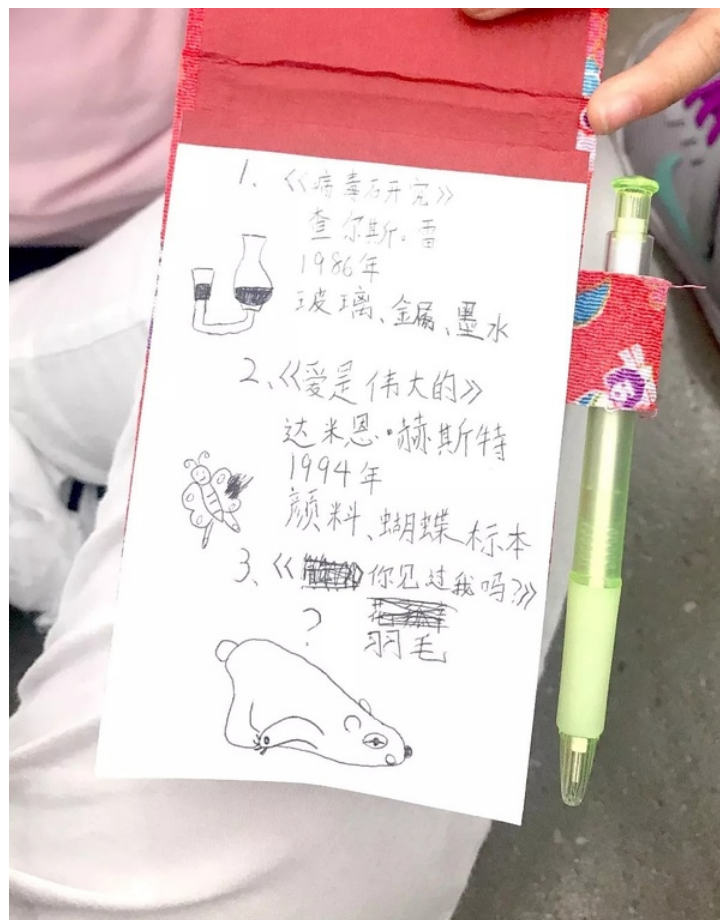


Figure 4.35: One of the drawing records from a primary school student during the exhibition visit (courtesy of the RAM, 2018).

In order for art museum–school partnerships to be more productive, art museum educators must be aware of the educational demands, challenges and insufficiencies of art teachers in schools. On the other hand, art teachers must be aware of the resources offered by art museums. Arguably, the experiences and knowledge offered by art museums complement the curriculum and the disadvantages of art education in schools. The IMS (1996, p.49) stresses that well-planned partnerships between private art museums and schools ‘strengthen a museum’s community involvement, enrich its educational capacity, build an enlightened audience, and signal a commitment to educational reform and improvement’. Art museums hold important resources that can supplement art education and assist with teaching art in schools (Stone, 1993). One of the effective ways to encourage art teachers to use the RAM as an educational resource was the educators’ workshop (shown in Figure 4.36), which was a response to the issue noted above that art education in schools is influenced by teachers’ personal opinions and attitudes towards the subject.



Figure 4.36: The on-site guided tour as part of the educators’ workshop (courtesy of the RAM, 2018).

Apart from the education programme open to students, the RAM @ Campus *Walking on the Fade Out Lines* educators' workshop arranged an on-site guided tour of the exhibition that was available to art educators from schools and other educational institutions. At the same time, discussion took place on how to bring these educators' classes to the exhibition or vice versa. After the discussion, the RAM's education team supported the realisation of the selected proposal.

The RAM's educational practices confirm the argument for an art educational 'turn' at the point where an art museum's educational practices no longer exist in the 'education room' but throughout the whole art museum. More precisely, these art educational 'turns' reflect the shift in responsibility for education from the school to the art museum. As part of the land deal, the regulations on art museums and the flexible funding schemes of private art museums, art museum–school partnerships began in Shanghai. This educational 'turn' enriches the structure of the art education system and diversifies the methods of participating in art education.



Figure 4.37: A symbiotic space between exhibition and education (courtesy of the RAM, 2015).

Another part of this educational ‘turn’ is seen in educational practices outside the art museum, with art classes being held as a result of collaboration between schools and art museums. Art educators who enter schools across Shanghai include educational officers, curators, artists, art historians and other art practitioners. In 2019, the RAM @ Campus programme initiated an activity outside the art museum named *In the Laboratory with the Curator*. This was a collaboration between the RAM and the Tongji Creative and Innovation High School. The programme started with a guided tour of the *Hugo Boss Asia Art 2019* exhibition, with the help of a questionnaire co-designed by the teachers and the RAM educator looking at the perspectives of space design, materials, presentation and the curatorial concepts of the exhibition. In this inquiry-based art viewing programme, students spent extended periods of time with the artworks in the exhibition in the RAM. The facilitators – the teachers and the art museum educator – encouraged students to observe and analyse the artworks, to make connections, to interpret, to enrich their understandings and to voice their assertions on what they saw.

While I acknowledge the very different agendas of art educators and curators, I also witnessed this co-construction strategy, which could be the way out of the impasse.

‘Edu-curation will need to be aligned with the deeper values and goals of the museum and its value to the community if it is to succeed. Exhibition work needs to be seen as a process of construction, not just production. There will be less transmission and more sharing of knowledge. In this way, curators and educators entering the space for exhibition development will approach their work in a spirit of collaboration, experimentation, and inclusiveness and not with trepidation or a fear of crossing borders’ (Hogarth, 2017)

Arguably, the co-construction strategy between educators and the curator was behind this appeal. Billy Tang, the curator of the exhibition, initiated discussions with students in their classroom after the guided tour. Based on the exhibition, the students learned

about the process of producing an exhibition and the role of the curator during this process. As well as answering questions, students were requested to ‘think aloud’, which inspired them to elaborate the reasons for their preferences in the exhibition and to put their experiences engaging with the artefacts into their own words. Moreover, in order to make a connection between curatorial knowledge and students’ creative practices, the curator made suggestions on the students’ artistic creations from their courses.

The edu-curation⁸² carried by art museum–school partnerships has been recognised conceptually and physically, consciously and unconsciously in art museums in China. However, the co-construction strategy is still in a very early stage.

‘Contemporary curating is marked by a turn to education. Educational formats, methods, programmes, models, terms, processes and procedures have become pervasive in the praxis of both curating and the production of contemporary art and in their attendant critical frameworks... curating and art production more broadly, have produced, undergone or otherwise manifested an educational turn’. (O’Neill and Wilson, 2010)

Above all, instead of considering curatorial work as a specialised area of expertise, this new convergence of the curatorial and educational helps to achieve the co-construction of exhibitions. However, collaborations are difficult to implement because the curator-driven exhibition method is still the common approach in most art museums.

There is no denying that the RAM’s educational practices are envisioned as more generalised functions associated with curatorial work, linked with schools and focused on broadening understandings. Different from art museum education, teachers educate

⁸² The term ‘edu-curation’ comes from the *Visitor-Centred Exhibitions and Education in Art Museums* (2017) edited by Villeneuve and Love. It refers to a balanced, collaborative approach to exhibition-making that restructures the traditional approach. The concepts of edu-curation and visitor-centred exhibitions complete a long-term shift since the 1990s to move away from object-centred practices towards visitor-centred practices.

in a fixed educational pattern with well-defined curricula and compulsory courses; students are required to join art classes as part of their school's learning norms. The art museum is complementary: it offers multiple styles of education for participants of all ages. Art museums are independent institutions and so can offer a more flexible curriculum without restrictions, beyond what a student can participate in at school. To create strong lifelong education experiences, a partnership between art museums and the schools complements each institution's mission, although, as Cochran (1986) and Chen (2007) point out, these are different. In this sense, the RAM's art museum-school partnership achieves its political mission in a 'bringing in' and 'going out' manner.

This chapter has presented findings that provide insights into the educational strategy, educational practices and the educational 'turn' of the RAM, an art museum with a background in real estate investment. Chapter Four has demonstrated that in art education programmes, the audience benefits from the geographic location of the art museum. The educational space in this real estate-driven art museum has a specific audience group. On the other hand, the real estate investment background of the institution has an impact on its planning and implementation of educational activities. Its multiple identities, space and the co-construction method have created a symbiotic space for art education, with the exhibition in the same place. Simultaneously, the co-construction method between the artist and the audience in the space reflects public engagement with exhibitions. As an inherent task advocated by the Chinese government, the art museum-school partnership was created to perform the museum's social obligations by delivering cultural experiences inside and beyond the art museum. Arguably, the partnership achieves the museum's inherent political task in a 'bringing in' and 'going out' manner. This 'bringing in' and 'going out' approach will be discussed in a broader context in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE
**FROM LOCAL PRACTICE TO GLOBAL DIALOGUE:
TIMES MUSEUM AND TIMES ART CENTRE BERLIN**

In the previous chapter, I discussed various forms of educational practice with public engagement with real estate-driven art museum. Ending with a discussion of the case of RAM educational practice, the previous chapters have examined new forms of art sponsorship, the daily mechanisms and practices of knowledge production and the art education with publicly engaged art. After examining the ‘bringing in’ and ‘going out’ strategies of publicly engaged art in Chapter Four, this chapter provides insights into the local practice and ‘going global’ performances in response to the Pearl River Delta (PRD)’s urban regeneration. The chapter focuses on discussing the characteristics of the south of China and the Global South, as well as the architectural design and overseas strategy of the first parallel institution, Times Museum’s overseas branch, Times Art Center Berlin (TACB), from the context of rapid urban regeneration.

Before going further, I would like to clarify my use of the term ‘the south’. Though it is an untimely discussion in the current trend of globalisation to offer spatial limits, I use the perspective of the south to discuss visual arts, a practice led by Times Museum and TACB, rather than offering a political critique of capitalist hegemony. In relation to geographical locations, the characteristics of the Global South are a significant concept driving public exhibitions in Times Museum and TACB: the museums use ‘a methodology aiming to build a new concept of modernity relevant to the Global South,

in this case related to the particular circumstances of the Pearl River Delta' (Times Museum, 2019).⁸³ Times Museum and TACB place strong emphases on their connection with the urbanisation of the PRD area and on contextualising global changes through regional artistic activities. As a metropolitan centre of the PRD in southern China, the city of Guangzhou possesses the geographical and cultural narratives of the PRD. In this case, from local practice to global dialogue, it represents two dimensions – southern China and the Global South.

As well as the attributes of southern China mentioned above, the idea of the Global South is also worth discussing. A number of criticisms of the phenomenon of global knowledge inequalities and the ruling Global North have been raised in the last few decades (Morrell, 2019).⁸⁴ When discussing the Global South, it is necessary to mention that the authority of northern-centred knowledge formations still exists; this impacts on countries in the periphery and marginalises their cultural construction and knowledge output. And yet, a process of knowledge production in the Global South is arguably underway. As unique cases in the urbanisation process of the PRD in southern China and the Global South, Times Museum and TACB use geography as a key idea to present and criticise artistic practices in relation to such inequalities and marginalisation.⁸⁵

In this chapter, I do not intend to explore unequal power relations in the period following the end of colonialism. Instead, for the purpose of my argument, I am going to answer questions that were put forward at the beginning of the research. This chapter aims to analyse a new architectural form for private art museums, i.e. the property

⁸³ The PRD economic zone is a leading economic region and a major manufacturing centre in China. The PRD is a mega-city region comprised of nine cities, all located along the southern coast of China. The PRD constitutes the wealthiest region in the country and is also one of the most densely urbanised regions in the world. Guangzhou is located in the centre of the PRD area.

⁸⁴ The 'Global North' normally refers to the former colonial nations of the 19th and 20th centuries, which included the West and the so-called first world. Although Northern countries only make up a quarter of the world's population, they control over half of global earnings. As representatives of modernity, they are still considered to be the centre of knowledge economy and knowledge production.

⁸⁵ It is also important to note that there is a 'North' in the 'Global South' and a 'South' in the 'Global North'. These inequalities of resources exist in regions, countries, parts of countries and in cities, and even in many areas within suburbs.

development led by Times China. This will be explored through the design concept of a ‘space with exacerbated difference’, as proposed by architect Rem Koolhaas, cited in Chung et al. (2002, pp. 27-28),⁸⁶ to answer the question of how private museums have been established and operated alongside property development in the context of extensive urbanisation in China. This mixed-used building reflects the relationship between the art museum and the community, and this is a vital angle to discuss alongside the previous chapters’ findings as it directly contributes to my argument and the concept of ‘symbiotic space’ that can be explored from this case study.

Conceived as a hybrid space in response to the PRD’s urban regeneration, Times Museum has played a crucial role in the growth of private art museums during southern China’s rapid economic and cultural development and urbanisation. This chapter concludes by analysing TACB’s strategy of participating in globalised mechanisms of cultural production and dissemination. The parallel institution was initiated to discover an autonomous identity for southern China and the Global South, and the institution examines the impact of private art museums’ overseas development of Chinese contemporary art.

⁸⁶ After in-depth research in China, the Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas put forward a concept of the PRD as a ‘city with exacerbated difference’.

5.1 A symbiotic space of experimentation for urbanisation

There are myriad criticisms of China's rush to build vanity projects, as the generation of spectacular architecture has left vast quantities of underutilised space, leading to private art museums that have 'vision without intellectual clout, and mediocre collections' (Qian, 2015; Li, 2017; Zhang 2017). Arguably, museums have become the most exciting building type in recent times; people not only go to visit art, but also to encounter cutting-edge architecture (McClellan, 2008). China's architectural experimentation is closely related to the private art museum boom. Driven by the expanding number of real estate developers, scores of architecturally stunning private art museums have been built, including: the Sifang Art Museum (Figure 5.1), designed by world-leading architect Steven Holl in the city of Nanjing; the Long Museum Shanghai, in Shanghai West Bund's culture corridor (Figure 5.2); and the Yinchuan Museum of Contemporary Art, in the city of Yinchuan (Figure 5.3). Real estate developers have benefited from a five-year plan initiated by the central government that allows them to receive favourable real estate deals for art museum construction.⁸⁷ As an example, there have been public–private partnership projects set up, as discussed in Chapter One. Therefore, thousands of private art museums have been built as landmarks as part of urban regeneration.



Figure 5.1: Sifang Art Museum at night (Courtesy of Sifang Art Museum, 2017).

⁸⁷ The Chinese government initiated a directive to build up the country's cultural economy in the 1980s. The directive fuelled investment into the cultural development via different consecutive plans: the five-year plan launched in 2010 by China's parliament, the national people's congress, aimed to build a total of 3,500 museums by 2015 – a target it reached three years early (Macleod et al., 2018).



Figure 5.2: The Long Museum in Shanghai West Bund (Courtesy of Long Museum, 2015).

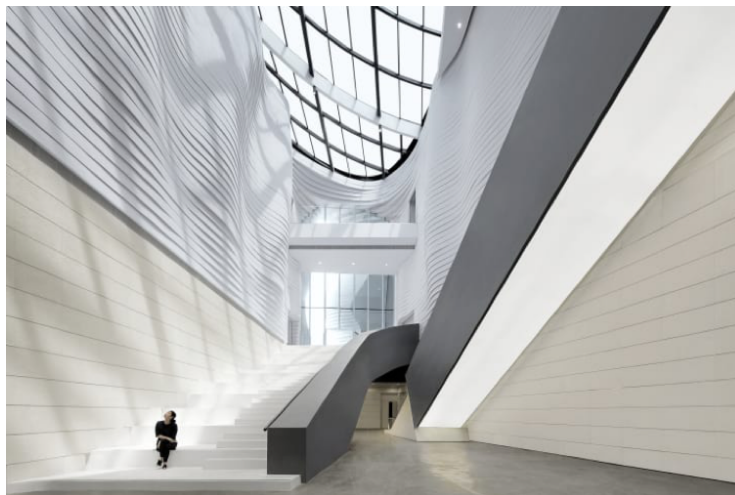


Figure 5.3: Interior space of the Yinchuan Museum of Contemporary Art (Courtesy of Yinchuan Museum of Contemporary Art, 2015).

Many of these new museums, including the Nanjing Sifang Art Museum, which illustrates China's cultural boom, have opened as part of real estate developments: critics have indicated that these art museums are used as a sweetener for land deals and to inject a superficial gloss of culture. As observed by Ren and Sun (2012), 'local states in China actively use the presence of contemporary artists to rezone certain areas of cities into art districts in order to profit from land leasing and real estate development' (pp. 504-521). Lu Xun opened this art museum with his father, real estate developer Lu Jun. The ambitious and complex architectural experiment of the Sifang Art Park aims to showcase projects by 24 leading architects – 11 from China and 13 from abroad.



Figure 5.4: Art Hotel in the Sifang Collective Arts Hub. (Photographed by the author, 2017.)



Figure 5.5: The building 'Blockhouse' in the Sifang Collective Arts Hub. (Photographed by the author, 2017).



Figure 5.6: The building ‘San-he Residence’ in the Sifang Collective Arts Hub. (Photographed by the author, 2017).

Scores of architecturally spectacular buildings were built at the high cost of £132 million. The buildings operate with different functionalities; in the 700-acre site, there are a contemporary art museum, a conference centre, a hotel, a recreational centre and a number of houses and pavilions. As shown in Figures 5.7 and 5.8, the Sifang Art Museum and the real estate project Nanjing Taohuayuan are only separated by a wall, and there is a strong commercial atmosphere. In a 2017 interview, the director of the Sifang Art Museum, Lu Xun, firmly rejected the argument about land deals and other benefits: ‘As a site-specific project, 24 architectures are part of the permanent collections of the Sifang.’⁸⁸ It is tempting to think that art gets lost in the shuffle and that the true purpose of an art museum is betrayed when the art museum itself becomes the event (Knight, 2000). But what was undeniable in this case was that the well-designed buildings are architectural works of art. Lu Xun further emphasised that it was a coincidence for real estate developers engaging with private art museum development and operation because of they are rich in land resources, but also they are good at building infrastructure.

⁸⁸ Interview with Lu Xun in May 2017, Nanjing.



Figure 5.7: Real estate advertisements in the Sifang Art Park. (Photographed by the author, 2017.)



Figure 5.8: Sifang Villa, built behind the wall of Sifang Art Museum. (Photographed by the author, 2017.)

The present study does not intend to review the distinguished artworks of the Sifang Art Museum; the case was introduced as a representation of the laboratory for

architecture. As outlined in an interview with British Chinese artist and curator Qin Siyuan, lots of art museums in China have the problem of a mismatch between their system for developing knowledge production and public engagement.⁸⁹ After my field work in China, I firmly believe that this mismatched scene exists in cities ranging from ‘first tier’ to ‘third tier’ in size and status. The common scene of private art museums in China is that of cities occupied by numerous architecturally beautiful buildings, but with nothing inside. In interviews with Lu Xun and Qin Siyuan, questions have been raised about the breadth of content that most of these art museums have access to. Therefore, this section aims to investigate the role of architecture in the operation of private art museums, as well as how to balance the outside and inside of the museums’ architecture.

In terms of the questions raised above, I would agree with the argument put forward by James (2001): ‘building don’t make museums: art and only art does’ (p. 51). However, I do not wholly agree with the vision of art critic and author Peril (2000), who noted how architecture has the possibility to negatively impact art activities: if the architecture stands for and often houses a new museum culture, this often brings forth the development of mass art consumption, including popular (often profit-driven) blockbuster exhibitions, shops and restaurants, further resulting in ‘the annihilation of the museum as we know it’ (p. 31). But no matter what odd or radical shapes appear on the outside, the core issue is whether a museum’s space is appropriate to house art and art-related activities. With regards to the integrity of art museums, the more balance exists between the function inside and the form outside, the more likely it is that there will be better engagement with the art. The reality of private art museum development in China was noted in the interview with Qin Siyuan: ‘The flourishing development of the art museum is compatible with the rise of the rapid economy at the primary stage of socialism in China. However, the ‘hardware’ comes before the ‘software’ in the art museum boom in China.’⁹⁰

⁸⁹ Lecture discussion with Qin Siyua in August 2017, Beijing.

⁹⁰ Lecture discussion with Qin Siyua in August 2017, Beijing.

It should be noted that China focuses on the development of the ‘hardware’, in that thousands of new art museums have been built, while the ‘software’, i.e. high quality art to encourage art engagement, is to be dealt with later. This proliferation of private art museums is an aggressive plan to speed up the expansion in the field of culture in the country (The Ministry of Culture, 2012).



Figure 5.9: Times Museum hanging over the Times Rose Garden III (Courtesy of Times Museum, 2017).

According to Jeffrey Johnson, architect and director of Columbia University’s China Megacities Lab, ‘In many cases architecture comes first and art comes second’ (cited in McCafferty, 2016). However, Times Museum in Guangzhou is an exception, as it is an institution that not only has interesting architecture but also quality exhibitions and strong events programmes. As mentioned in 1.4.1, the architectural project of Times Museum is part of the product of the Second Guangzhou Triennial, presented as an ‘artwork’ of the architect’s imaginary ideas and produced by leading international architect Rem Koolhaas. Following on from the analysis of the art museum’s image based on the residential real estate development in 1.4.1, the ‘artwork’ production process was selected to discuss what architectural and spatial forms of private art museums are being invented to accommodate these new commercial and cultural ambitions.

This architectural project, sponsored by the real estate enterprise Times China, was a combination of a public and private art museum. The theme of the Second Guangzhou Triennial was ‘Beyond: An Extraordinary Space of Experimentation for Modernization’. In Chinese, the word ‘beyond’ (*chaoyue*) means ‘a different or a better type’. The official press statement (2015) said:

“‘Beyond’ refers to various forms of special cultural and artistic phenomena and methods developed under new social and economic circumstances that are unique, flourishing and full of vitality. These phenomena and methods embody the exciting and complicated imprints of globalisation; they represent those specific solutions and patterns created and adopted by China and other non-western countries in their own process of modernisation.”

This official clarification of the theme clearly draws a relationship between the global and the local. By dealing explicitly with urbanisation and the possibilities of the PRD, the project explicitly sought to reconfigure a connection between the triennial and the local area, which allowed the exhibition to intimately fuse with new realities. From the exhibition’s curatorial statement above, the notion of the experimental space is put forward based on the location itself.

The art museum space was in a distant suburban annex in a new housing complex paid for by its developer. As a participant of the triennial, Rem Koolhaas’s project was to design this art museum in the residential complex of the Times Rose Garden, owned by the real estate company Times China, one of the triennial’s sponsors. Rem Koolhaas was the artist/architect invited to carry out specific projects to reflect on the new social and economic circumstances. From the initial concept to the architectural form and its location, the building and space reflect new lifestyles, economic patterns and space strategies during the extraordinary modernisation and high-speed urbanisation process of the PRD.

Former chief curator of Times Museum Shen Ruijun (2012) stated that the management of Times China felt that setting up an art museum in their residential complex corresponded well with the real estate company's marketing campaign, as reflected in their corporate slogan 'to bridge art and life'. Before the art museum space intervened, the construction of the residential building had already been completed. Instead of commissioning the establishment of an independent art museum building in the garden of the apartment complex, as is the case for most art museum buildings, Koolhaas aimed to build 'a museum without shape'.



Figure 5.10: The entrance to Times Museum. (Photographed by the author, 2017).

To reinforce the concept of a 'symbiotic space', I would like to clarify the form of symbiotic space here. I noticed that the morphology of an art museum changes with variations in the real estate project. At first, as described in the 1.4.1, the art museum space was used to clinging to the sales office, but the symbiotic relationship had changed after all the apartments of the real estate project Times Rose Garden had been

sold. Physically, the spatial evolution process of Times Museum has followed the ever-changing trail of the residential project's development.

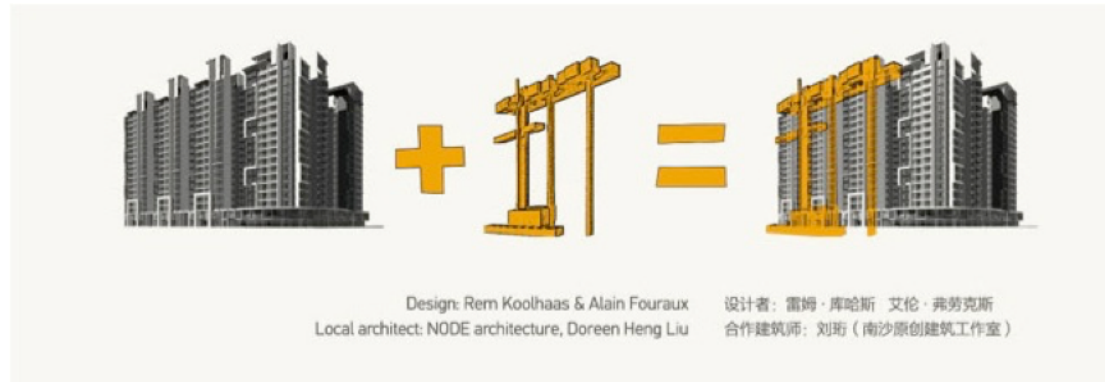


Figure 5.11: A form of symbiotic space from Times Museum. (Courtesy of the Domus 926. 2009.)

As shown in Figure 5.11, the new symbiotic spaces are an experiment of urbanisation. There are three different floors embedded into the residential building. According to the first fieldwork of Times Museum, diverse functionalities of the art museum are distributed over different floors of the residential building belonging to the Times Rose Garden residential complex, which became an interweaving structure of urban everyday life and urban living space. The main entrance of the art museum, located on the ground floor, is used as a multi-purpose space opening onto the street. It includes the Banyan Commune space and a multi-functional hall. Three apartment units on the 14th floor were transformed into an office area. The art museum's elevator only goes to the 14th floor and the top floor. The museum's glasshouse exhibition hall was set up on the top floor of the residential building, combining art with a café, an art bookshop and an art flower and gift shop on the balcony (see Figure 5.13). As a place where many scattered forces converge, the art museum's location inside the place owned by the neighbourhood means that it has a very close connection to the community.



Figure 5.12: The glasshouse exhibition hall of Times Museum. (Courtesy of the Domus 926. 2009.)



Figure 5.13: The view of the Huangbian neighbourhood outside Times Museum. (Photographed by the author. 2017.)

Above all, the symbiotic space is destined to become the new centre of experimentation on urbanisation and to provide the city's cultural production and consumption with a new possibility. Now let us turn to the question raised at the beginning of this section: the role of architecture in the operation of a private art museum. As an artistic output for urbanisation, the Times Museum's space as it was designed by Rem Koolhaas intended to offer better diversification of the urban community. The curator of the

Second Guangzhou Triennial, Hou Hanru (2005), noted that, “in the end, an international event happening at a specific site [...] can act as a catalyst for the local community to reinvent their own ‘locality’ with a larger social and geopolitical framework, hence bringing more diversity to the world.” I argue that the work done by Rem Koolhaas did achieve its ambition to respond to the situation of social chaos engendered by rapid economic and social changes and the astonishing scale of mushrooming urbanisation in the PRD area. Nevertheless, the internal dynamics was not easy to validate the proposition in this section that the symbiotic space and the involvement activities appeared here as interventions or catalysts, and the symbiotic space here represented more parts of the maelstrom themselves. From the sales office to the residential building, the symbiotic relationship between the private art museum and the residential enterprise presents an unstable situation that perfectly echoes the work done by the ‘guerrillas’. Therefore, in the following section, I will raise the following question: if the art museum itself is a piece of artwork, what about the art inside?

5.2 All the way south

Guangdong Times Museum was inaugurated in Guangzhou in 2010, in the residential complex of the Time Rose Garden III, owned by the real estate enterprise Times China. During the extensive urbanisation of southern China, Times Museum has been a specific example of something shaped by the distinctive social, economic and cultural environment of the PRD. The city of Guangzhou is the capital city of the Guangdong Province, located on the southeast coast of China. As a reproducible model of modernisation in Asia, the accelerated state of the PRD reveals an image of the urbanisation of southern areas. Guangdong was still mostly agricultural land until the end of 1970s, but within 20 years the PRD was transformed into the biggest urban area in China and a world manufacturing hub as a result of the former Communist Party of

China's leader Deng Xiaoping's 1992 tour of southern China.⁹¹ According to the World Bank Group (2015), the PRD has become the largest urban area globally, both in terms of size and population.



Figure 5.14: Times Museum is situated on top of the residential building in the Times Rose Garden III (Courtesy of Domus 926, 2009).

For nearly half a century, China has been witnessing the largest industrialisation and urbanisation wave in the Global South as the result of the Opening of China, begun in 1978. Through the reshaping of the landscape by urbanisation with the urban–rural integration model of Huangbian in the Baiyun District, we can see the evolutionary path of urbanisation in the rapid changes to the urban landscape of Guangzhou City in the PRD. For the southern paradigm, ‘all the way south’ ranges from rural China to urban China. Narratives, imagery and aesthetics resulted from the landscape changes in the PRD in relation to the country bridges the artistic constellation from Times Museum with the cultural dynamics of its host city Guangzhou and the area of southern China.

⁹¹ In the spring of 1992, Deng Xiaoping made a tour of southern China, visiting the cities of the PRD area including Guangzhou, Shenzhen and Zhuhai. He used this southern tour to reassert his economic policy. After the Opening of China began in 1978, he insisted on committing to economic liberalisation and the implementation of free-market methods in China. The tour was recognised as being fruitful for economic development in the southern cities.



Figure 5.15: The view of Guangzhou's central business district (Courtesy of Dongfang IC, 2018).

As mentioned in Section 1.4.1, there has been a mismatch between Guangzhou's contemporary art scene and its socio-political and economic situation and urban regeneration process. The city has been the frontier of global capital flow and material production since the 1990s. Beijing and Shanghai, situated in the northern and central regions of China, have significant roles as hotspots for contemporary art production and trade, with mature art industry chains throughout China (AMMA, 2016). However, compared to these hubs, Guangzhou lacked a proper infrastructure for art. It was noticed that public and private institutions and spaces committed to engaging with emerging contemporary art and artists were far behind the social transformation of the area; there were only a few spaces devoted to contemporary art exhibitions, such as the Libreria Borges Institute for Contemporary Art, the Vitamin Creative Space and Park 19 (Nigris, 2017). However, the leading national economic status of the city put artists and artists' experiments together with the same situation of modernisation and urbanisation.

The art scene in Guangzhou was beginning to change and has been attracting a great deal of attention from the art world since the Guangzhou Triennial in 2002.⁹² With the relatively freer political climate and more developed market economy, this southern city has become a representative region that should not be ignored when discussing contemporary art in China (Zhang, 2004). But before this, art infrastructure in the city was absent, as was support for artists who lived in southern China. In 1991, Big Tail Elephant Working Group (*daweixiang gongzuo zu*, sometimes translated as ‘Long Tail Elephant Group’ or ‘Big Tail Elephants Working Group’) emerged as ‘urban guerrillas’, inhabiting temporary spaces instead of art museums or institutional spaces. The artist group created work with rich and complex Southern narratives and images of urbanisation, modernisation and consumerism.

Big Tail Elephant Working Group was a four-member artists’ collective active in Guangzhou. It was comprised of the artists Liang Juhui, Chen Shaoxiong, Xu Tan and Lin Yilin, who worked together between 1991 and 1998. The works of the group in southern China included photography, performance pieces, installations and video work across multiple media. The group put on five exhibitions at various temporary venues, from local bars and private homes to basements of commercial building. These fleeting shows and their temporary sites offered prescient insight into the socio-political context of the 1990s and 2000s. The artists and their self-organised experiments witnessed and recorded the complex set of the PRD region’s realities, reflecting mainly on the combined forces of China’s explosive economic growth, modernisation and urbanisation.

Big Tail Elephants: One Hour, No Room, Five Shows opened in Guangzhou Times Museum in 2016 and featured more than 20 of the group’s works, based on archives and documentary materials. In the exhibition name, ‘One Hour’ refers to *One Hour*

⁹² The Guangzhou Triennial was founded by the Guangdong Museum of Art in 2002. As a result, there has been a boost to local institutional interest in contemporary art in the entire region. Since then, the triennial has become a professional contemporary event with regional and global influence.

Game, the group's performance installation in a skyscraper construction site in Guangzhou. 'No Room' indicates the group's temporary exhibition spaces, as mentioned above, while recalling the name of their fourth exhibition, in 1994; it also reveals the absence of exhibition spaces for contemporary art in the 1990s. 'Five Shows' is a reference to the total number of exhibitions delivered by the artist group in alternative spaces from 1991 to 1996, which formed the core of Time Museum's investigation into their works.

As previously stated, the artist group documented and criticised the postmodern urban reality resulting from the 'socialist capitalism' that had erupted in the city of Guangzhou in the form of catalytic urban development with the launch of Deng Xiaoping's reform policy. One of the noticeable characteristics of the artist group was how they set up temporary exhibition spaces at a time when there were no established exhibition spaces in the city. The third exhibition of Big Tail Elephant Working Group took place in 1993 at a local bar, Red Ants Bar (*hongmayi jiuba*) (Gao, 1999); this was a place where they frequently met, which has since been closed. In 1995, group member Lin Yilin performed a work called *Safely Maneuvering across Linhe Road*. The construction site of the performance, Zhongtian Square, has now become the busiest district, housing the CITIC Plaza, a landmark building of Guangzhou. The 1994 exhibition *No Room*, organised at 14 Sanyu Road in the Dongshan District, took place in an old Western-style house. This district was the political and cultural centre of the city before it was disestablished in 2005; it is now non-existent as new urban planning has since been carried out. The group's art pieces and actions in the 1990s were all created or performed in reaction to the high-speed transformations of urban spaces and landscapes that had characterised the regions, and the explosive economic growth that was flooding the cities with modernisation, commodity economies and consumerism. Their guerrilla exhibitions hinted at a lack of space for contemporary art display in the 1990s.



Figure 5.16: Guangzhou CITIC Plaza (Courtesy of CITIC plaza, n.d.).



Figure 5.17: *One Hour Game* (Courtesy of Liang Juhui, 1996).



Figure 5.18: *One Hour Game* (Courtesy of Liang Juhui, 1996).

In Liang Juhui's performance *One Hour Game*, the artist played electronic video games for one hour in the worker's elevator cage of a skyscraper construction site in Guangzhou's new-town area, while the elevator continued to carry workers from deep underground to high in the clouds at a high speed. The artist said of the piece, 'Through the course of the game, I realised the infiltration of the expanding public space into the individual private space, and furthermore searched for a means to reconcile the passive and active conditions' (cited in Wu, 2010, p. 208). The act of suspension disturbed the 'normal' function of the urban construction site, and the vertical construction route was interrupted by the game's intervention. The elevator became more than a construction tool while Liang created and used the temporary space to explore the theme of rapid urban regeneration development. By performing 'urban guerrilla' interventions on the backdrop of urban construction in Guangzhou, the artist offered and created experiences that transcended the original site.

Another interesting artwork presented in the exhibition was a recording of an original performance delivered by Lin Yilin in 1995, *Safely Maneuvering across Linhe Road*, for which Lin took a stack of concrete blocks from the edge of the pavement one by

one and built a brick wall across a busy main street in a newly developed zone of Guangzhou, dismantling an existing wall to do so. He was repeating the same gesture for hours. The 90 minutes of action disrupted the heavy traffic, forcing it to swerve around the wall. As shown in Figure 5.19, Lin Yilin had the appearance of a migrant labourer who was shaping his responses and interventions to the mushrooming urbanisation of the PRD region. To explore how the relationships between people and community are shaped by urban development, the artist created a moment of disruption in the turbulent flow of urban life, causing people to rethink the fundamental urban changes in this globalised and neoliberal world.



Figure 5.19: *Safely Maneuvering Across Linhe Road* (Courtesy of Kadist, 1995).



Figure 5.20: *Safely Maneuvering Across Linhe Road* (Courtesy of Lin Yilin, 1995).



Figure 5.21: *Safely Maneuvering Across Linhe Road* (Courtesy of Lin Yilin, 1995).

This idea was enhanced by the artist's use of various materials that were low in cost and accessible, such as building waste and construction materials produced during the urbanisation development, including neon lights, bricks, scaffolding and so forth. This documented the relationship between Big Tail Elephant Working Group and the urban development process of the PRD at that time. As can be recognised in Xu Tan's 1992 multimedia installation *Uniform Velocity, Variant Velocity 2*, the artist experimented with his artistic language, using fluorescent plastic tubes, which were easily available in Karaoke bars of 1990s Guangzhou.⁹³ This use of visual material was a symbol of the prevalence of consumerism in the area.

⁹³ Karaoke bars appeared at the end of 1980s in the PRD and became a popular type of cultural consumption in the 1990s.



Figure 5.22: *Uniform Velocity, Variant Velocity 2* (Coutesy of Asia Art Archive, 2012).

However, concealed by notions of consumerism, the relevance of artists to the rapid urbanisation in the PRD is not only reflected in the materials of the works. The second salient characteristic of the artist group was the artist and artistic production that keep distance with the ideology and the trendy Chinese political pop art. These artists, who were based far from the North's socio-political art (Davis, 2005), represented the 'de-politicisation' concept that reflected the independence of creative thinking. Chen Shaoxiong sought to strip away the influence of Chinese politics in his 1992 installation *72.5 Hours of Electricity Consumption*, in which a number of fluorescent strip-lights were arranged in the shape of human figures and draped with transparent raincoats. The artist employed fluorescent lights commonly used in street lighting and Karaoke bars, a wattage-per-hour meter, raincoats, wood and chalk to create the impression of a crowd of neon people in an urban nightscape. The electricity meter at the side recorded power consumption while the work was turned on. The installation was composed from a place of relative cultural and political freedom, made from the detritus of the urban context in which the artist worked. The work was developed through a series of creative strategies that can best be described as intervening on a local scale and engaging in daily life. Big Tail Elephant Working Group took full advantage of their relative

autonomy, initiating critique and resistance to consumerist society as opposed to the northern part of China, whose people were battling tight government censorship. Southern autonomy led to an environment with more creative discourse, and the group moved with ease between different urban spaces during the urban regeneration of southern China.



Figure 5.23: *72.5 Hours of Electricity Consumption* (Courtesy of Ran Dian, 1992).

5.3 Gentrification of the Huangbian neighbourhood

At the city border, the Huangbian neighbourhood, where Times Museum is situated, witnessed the shaping of the suburban landscape of the PRD, enabled by a hybrid of urbanisation, social transformation and complex demographics. As a multi-functional community, the area surrounding the art museum is an urban–rural integration community, blending Huangbian’s numerous attributes: native rural farmers, the new middle class drawn in by real estate developers and migrant workers gathering around

small, low-end manufacturers. Times Museum inhabits in the Times Rose Garden III from the form of ‘parasitic’ to the form of ‘symbiotic’. One element of the gentrification of certain areas of China is that a great number of well-designed walled communities were built by real estate enterprises, which generate a strikingly different landscape inside and outside. The narratives of gentrification in the Huangbian neighbourhood are echoed in the changes to the landscape and the social upgrading led by residential development.



Figure 5.24: An aerial view from the 19th floor of Guangdong Times Museum (Courtesy of Domus 926, 2018).

Gentrification is a well-known Western phenomenon that is the result of complete urbanisation and suburbanisation; it is a prominent process of neighbourhood changes (Hamnett, 1973; Smith, 1979). The term ‘gentrification’ is related to suburbanisation, an uprising middle class and urban restructuring (Rose, 1984; Beauregard, 1986; Wagner, 1995; Ley, 1996; Smith, 1996; Bondi, 1999; Uzun, 2003; Hackworth, 2005; Boddy, 2007; Butler, 2007; Murdie and Teixeira, 2011; Wu et al., 2011), but the term has expanded to include housing transformations and new developments in vacant or emptied city centres (Smith, 1996; Hackworth, 2002; Clark, 2005; Davidson and Lees, 2005). Although gentrification is considered a positive urban planning strategy led by real estate developers, it also has negative impacts, including residential segregation, displacement problems and social differentiation (Chernoff, 1980; Lyons, 1996).



Figure 5.25: Times Rose Garden III community garden (Courtesy of Domus 926, 2009).

Guangzhou has undergone a swift process of gentrification, particularly in the Huangbian neighbourhood, an area boosted by residential gentrification rather than commercial gentrification. Gentrification plays a key role in urban regeneration involving the upgrading of urban landscapes; higher-income groups continually move in and the original inhabitants, i.e. those from lower-income groups, are ‘deported’ to suburban areas of the city, as described by Davidson and Lees (2005, p.58). Social polarisation resulting from residential segregation is aggregated by the social spatial effects of gentrification, and this breaches the principles of social equity (Zhang et al., 2014). Increased polarisation between lower-income and higher-income groups is becoming an intensive social problem in urban areas. On the one hand, the poor are gradually excluded from walled communities, which in reality become non-public areas only accessed by wealthier groups of people. On the other hand, with an increased flow of poorer people being moved out of the original site, a new marginalised area is produced. Figures 5.26 and 5.27 show a group of farmers living in poverty in run-down shacks in shanty towns in the shadow of the Times Rose Garden III. In contrast to this situation, the gated community of the Times Rose Garden, a high-quality garden-style

community, is the result of meticulous planning and is occupied by residents of a higher socio-economic status. The phenomenon of segregation in the Huangbian area is likely to become increasingly serious.



Figure 5.26: The environment surrounding Times Museum (Courtesy of Domus 926, 2009).



Figure 5.27: A remaining group of farmers lives in poverty in very poor living conditions near Times Museum (Courtesy of Domus 926, 2009).

In 2016, Times Museum initiated the community art project Banyan Commune to make communicating with the surrounding neighbourhood a key priority of its programme and scholarships. As Figure 5.28 shows, the banyan-centred space is a unique social area of civic culture and community life in southern China and a public gathering space that functions as a community centre for the neighbourhood. By researching the Huangbian neighbourhood, the Banyan Commune invites artists to act as hosts of the temporary public space and to generate a visual record for the changing Huangbian neighbourhood in the process of the city's regeneration. For the purpose of initiating continuous dialogue with the context of Times Museum, the residential building features a ground-level window space on its street-facing side, offering views of the exhibition space and surrounding landscapes for both inside and outside audiences.

In 2017, the fourth Banyan Commune Artist Residency Project proposed the theme of 'international village produce'. The selected artist collective, Myvillage, was founded by artists Kathrin Böhm, Wapke Feenstra and Antje Schiffers in 2003 and aims to address the relationship between the rural and the urban, bringing a different perspective to the solidified concepts of local resources and production, agriculture and culture. During a month-long residency, the artist group carried out street interventions, newly commissioned products, a documentary film and a retrospective exhibition, *Huangbian Village*, all of which received a large number of walk-in visits. Their commissioned product recorded the urban regeneration process of the Huangbian neighbourhood, but the present study mainly discusses the commissioned Huangbian Bag (*huangbian bao*) made by Dutch artist Wapke Feenstra.



Figure 5.28: People resting and chatting under the shade of wide-spreading banyan (Courtesy of Liu Wei, n.d.).



Figure 5.29: The Banyan Commune space, located on the ground floor of Times Museum (Courtesy of Times Museum, 2017).

With the rapid development of the manufacturing industry, Huangbian has become known as a leather manufacturing hub in the last two decades. Huangbian's urban

village land has been replaced by endless low-end manufacturing, export-production workshops and garages; the everyday life in this area has been upgraded but without visible traces of land use. The land previously used for farming is now hidden and covered by reinforced concrete. As a result, the social identities of the villagers have also been transformed, as thousands of migrant workers from across the city and beyond join in the area's wave of urbanisation. Villagers and rural migrants shoulder their bags as they head to work to produce shoes, clothes and bags. 'Their rural heritage is mental and portable, since they had to leave their homeland and go where the labour is' (Feenstra, 2017). Therefore, the characteristics of portable and hidden land use have become a symbol linking the past with the present.

Interestingly, the design idea of the Huangbian Bag is based on street observations, text recordings and oral history gathered by the artist by participating in a number of experiences (as shown in Figures 5.30 and 5.31). The artist spent hours walking the streets of Huangbian, reaching out to farmers, workers and immigrants to understand the history of the region, the local skills and people's knowledge in different areas of craft.



Figure 5.30: Artist Wapke Feenstra records visual material in the Huangbian leather manufacturing workshop (Courtesy of Myvillages, 2017).



Figure 5.31: Artist Wapke Feenstra chats with residents in the Huangbian neighbourhood (Courtesy of Myvillages, 2017).

The newly commissioned Huangbian Bag, made by skilled workers in Huangbian, is a good way to become acquainted with and understand the history and resources of Huangbian, since it is a portable visual history with characteristics of the area's hidden land use. The bag's logo, shown in Figure 5.32, is an image of fruit and leaves of the Jixinshi persimmon tree. When you open the Huangbian Bag, you can see a similar pattern, also originating from Huangbian, as the area has abounded in seedless fruit for centuries. The visual connections between the past and present are reflected in two ways: on the one hand, the diverse characteristics of the land have led to inhabitation by different groups of residents; on the other hand, the phenomenon of alienation between community and individuals, as well as residents' neglect of their inheritances of natural and cultural history, have been caused by the temporary and loose spatial structure, large mobility of the population and deficiency of public life. In a new round of urban planning to regenerate the Huangbian area, the industrial distribution will aggravate the disappearance of regional uniqueness. This newly created bag and its accompanying documentary by filmmaker Yuan Shaofei show the urbanisation and gentrification process of the Huangbian area. Both the bag and the documentary form part of the

residency's exhibition of the international village produce project. As a result, artistic involvement has become necessary and sufficient when the regional uniqueness and public memories are gradually disappearing during urban regeneration.



Figure 5.32: The jixinshi logo marked in the inside of the Huangbian Bag (Courtesy of Myvillages, 2017).

Through participatory experiences and organised activities, the art museum has an ambitious plan to cooperate with Huangbian Village to initiate discussions and visions about their neighbourhoods and local production. ‘These kinds of local projects provide the dual benefits of raising the profile of the institution in the community and building an institutional understanding about the surrounding population’ (Catching, 2019, p. 54). Times Museum initiated the project to find a way to bridge their relationship with the community and those who are not interested in contemporary art, even while the clash of gentrification is still intense in this area.

There is another local project held in the Banyan Commune, in 2017, is *What It Meant to Me Will Eventually Be a Memory*, an artist residency project delivered by Bangkok-based artist Henry Tan (nicknamed Ar Liang during his time in Guangzhou). After this six-week residency, Ar Liang proposed the *Ar Liang Fixes Everything (Ar Liang Bao Gaoding)* project, a unique repair shop offering free repairs and repurposing services

for Huangbian residents. The idea behind this project was to construct a physical space of memory storage in order to bring memory back to members of the community. In exchange, local residents shared stories or memories of these items with the public. Each of the items took inspiration from a real story and was reinterpreted by the artist in a visual form. As part of the project, the Banyan Commune project space was converted into a repair store, and owners of items became part of the exhibition. The reinterpretation of these goods associated the items with art that involved not only those who produce art but also residents, who could then interact with the work, the artist, the audience and people who are not artists as well as (more broadly) art and daily life. This practice reversed and shuffled the classic roles of artist and the community, but also the role of local people; this practice enabled the area's residents to interact with and take possession of the creative process.

These projects confirm that Times Museum has ambitions to engage with the Huangbian neighbourhood and its residents, but in my opinion, the role of art museums in urban regeneration remains dual, and there are certainly negative aspects, which should also be examined. According to the global experience, urban regeneration of specific neighbourhoods and gentrification are incentivised by significant investments in the arts (Markusen and Gadwa, 2010; Nicodemus, 2013; Vicario and Martinez, 2013). Other research has found that once art institutions have moved into a neighbourhood, arts-led redevelopment in urban neighbourhoods has already begun to take place (Schuetz, 2012, 2014), and a higher income level appears in the area (Schuetz, 2014). The phenomenon of urban regeneration and gentrification in the Huangbian neighbourhood is not an exception to this. House prices in the Huangbian area increased due to urban regeneration, and as a result, the existing residents were gradually expelled, and the area's collective memories have faded away. Clearly, there are two sides to discuss of the role of art and art museums during urban regeneration.

5.4 A parallel institution in Berlin

After the analysis of the local practice of Southern characteristics, I am now going to discuss the ‘going global’ image, an overseas strategy proposed by Times Museum that appeared during a period in which private art museums boom in China. Art institutions in Europe have not ceased to export exhibitions and institutions to China over the past decades. An example of this is the Victoria and Albert Museum, which opened its own branch in the city of Shenzhen. In many ways, TACB is an extension of this idea. As one of China’s biggest property developers, Times China launched TACB as a plan to ‘go out’ beyond China. TACB is tucked away in the heart of the art district of Berlin on Potsdamer Strasse. Founded in July 2018 by Times Museum, TACB is the first parallel institution founded overseas by an Asia-based art museum. The Berlin branch may be modest in scale, but the institution strives to facilitate cultural immigration centred around narratives, imageries and aesthetics from the PRD region in combination with the cultural dynamics of Berlin, extending the institutional positioning of ‘academic independence’. TACB opened the art museum up for collaboration with Berlin-based artists, curators, intellectuals and institutions, and it organises a wide range of activities in the form of exhibitions, research panels, screenings, discursive events, artist residencies and publication programmes, making TACB an important force for cultural conversation between Asia and Europe. Times Museum (2018) stated:

‘Responding to the socio-political context of Europe, Times Art Center Berlin expands the institutional visions and geographies of its parallel institution – Guangdong Times Museum – with the principle of ‘co-production’ and ‘cosmopolitanism’.

As I have already discussed, Guangdong Times Museum is the first contemporary private art museum in China fully devoted to supporting contemporary art production and creativity. It has a particular emphasis on discussing economic and urban

developments and changes in the PRD region. As discussed in previous sections, embracing different ways of ‘engaging’ with ‘southern theory’ is a key idea driving the art museum’s work: the self-diasporic gesture of the South-based methodology of discussing contemporary issues aims to contextualise global changes through local and global urban and artistic developments. This concept can be inferred from the perspective of exhibition projects from Big Tail Elephant Working Group and the Banyan Commune Artist Residency Project. It has been conceptually used to develop a concept of modernity relevant to the South, and this emergence of ‘new institutional geographies’⁹⁴ from the South intends to initiate a new conversational paradigm relating southern China to the world as a whole.⁹⁵



Figure 5.33: The main entrance of TACB (Courtesy of TACB, 2018)

As noted by Cai Nikita Yingqian (2019), chief curator of Guangdong Times Museum, instead of reiterating ‘the geographic division or socio-cultural hierarchy between the

⁹⁴ The concept of new institutional geographies put forward by Cai Nikita Yingqian aims to answer the question of what exactly the role of an institution is on such a massive scale of social construction (Choi and Krauss, 2014).

⁹⁵ In this research, the term ‘global’ means an encompassing of the entire world, all areas tied together into a single globalised community to reverse the dualistic demarcation of north and south, west and east.

South and the North'⁹⁶, as a newly immigrated institution migrating from the Southern narrative of Guangzhou to the Northern modernity of Berlin, the aims of TACB are to situate the art museum's geography and imaginations of southern China into a negotiation of global capitalism and local forms of contemporary art. Northern countries, representative of economically developed regions worldwide, are still regarded as the beacon of knowledge production, liberal democracy and cultural constructs, and this fact continues to impact on the experiences and knowledge of the Global South (Rantanen, 2013). Willems (2014, pp. 7-23) conducted a thorough piece of research on the cultural characteristics and the cultural exchanges of the Global South:

The Global South is the location of underdevelopment and emerging nations that needs the 'support' of the Global North. However, from the perspective of the inhabitants (and we say consciously inhabitants rather than 'citizens,' regional or global), the 'Global South' is the location where new visions of the future are emerging and where the global political and decolonial society is at work.

Willems (2014) further mentioned the relationship between the North and the South, saying that 'it still largely frames the Global South through the prism of a predefined relationship to the Global North instead of understanding it on its own terms' (pp. 7-23). While it cannot be denied that the technological advancement, international trade and politics of Northern countries have impacted and continue to impinge on economic and cultural landscapes in the Global South, the trend of cultural globalisation is formulating a world that shares the characteristics of both a fuzzy centre and a distinct periphery. Instead of a one-way flow from North to South, the flow of culture is now present as a complex multi-dimensional conversation. In this regard, the cultural

⁹⁶ The term 'Western' does not have a clear or strict definition, but in this research the term refers to European countries and areas whose populations mainly come from Europe. The West is part of the global North but is not exactly the same as the North in the North-South paradigm.

immigration of TACB is largely framed in terms of the Global South's reaction to and resistance of the Global North. Therefore, I posit that the strategy of the Global South should function as the starting point for analysis.

As reported by Xi Bei, the artistic director of TACB (Times Museum, 2018), a new satellite space with a PRD perspective is creating cultural conversation between Asia and Europe that is not dominated by Western paradigms. Guangdong Times Museum presents artworks from the perspective of an Asian contemporary art institution from the city of Guangzhou. Informed by methodologies of the Guangdong Times Museum, TACB reacts to and interacts with the art environment of Berlin. So why has Times Museum rushed to open a branch in Berlin? What is the strategy of the institution for forging its place within the city's, and indeed the world's, contemporary art discourse?

The executive director of Times Museum, Zhao Qie, made a comment on TACB's overseas strategy in a 2018 interview. He stated that Times Museum chose to set up a branch in Berlin instead of one of China's metropolitan cities (such as Shanghai or Beijing) to avoid the homogenisation of competition with other institutions. Furthermore, the parallel institution in Berlin aims to be in line with Times Museum's position in Guangzhou; TACB can directly participate in the knowledge production in relation to the art environment of Berlin. For decades, the city of Berlin has been a dynamic hub for artists across the world, offering diverse art infrastructures that have nurtured institutions of different scales and orientations. As a newly immigrated institution, TACB not only benefits from the art environment of Berlin; the city's art communities actively advocate for multiplicity and heterogeneity in the public sphere, encouraging overseas knowledge production and communication. Cai (2019) discusses this strategy of TACB and adds that the curatorial approach to the PRD's urban regeneration is not the only focus of TACB.



Figure 5.34: The opening of *the D-tale, Video Art from the PRD* (Courtesy of TACB, 2019).

TACB's inaugural exhibition was a three-part series, *The D-Tale, Video Art from the PRD*, curated by Hou Hanru and Xi Bei and contributed to by 21 artists, all of whom have been based in or have examined the PRD region, such as Big Tail Elephant Working Group, Cao Fei and Chen Tong, as well as younger artists such as Song Ta and Wong Wing Sang. The first part, *Episode I: Urban Explosion*, was made up of 22 moving images displayed on eight screens. The images include one-minute clips and one-hour-long films. As part of the PRD curatorial framework following Big Tail Elephant Working Group's 2016 exhibition, this TACB exhibition continued the concept of having visuals of contemporary art and culture from the PRD. To trace the entanglement of unrelenting urbanisation and the social phenomenon wrought in the PRD, the inaugural exhibition articulated the more positive conceptualisations of the Global South through the medium of moving images.

TACB promised to share this temporary exhibition with Berlin and to promote contemporary Chinese art. These new allies and new lives in Berlin could be seen as a

product of interaction and international coalition, further transforming the form of production with strong regional identity initiated by Guangdong Times Museum. Co-curator of the Second Guangzhou Triennial, Hou Hanru, a PRD native and transnational curator working in Paris and San Francisco, confirmed the significance of Southern imaginaries: as a starting point, TACB adopted a more effective, faster and more appropriate way through the para-curatorial series, reflecting the cultural complexities and experimental art scene of the PRD. It is perfect for TACB as it can position itself effectively as an influential, international institution representing contemporary Asian art.⁹⁷



Figure 5.35: *Opening of the Episode III: The Politics of the Self*. (Courtesy of Times Art Centre Berlin, 2019.)

Obviously, as Hou Hanru has discussed above, by embracing different ways of performing Southern images, TACB aims to facilitate overseas immigration and accommodate encounters, interrogations and representations of different subjectivities

⁹⁷ The audio material used here was referenced from the Jiang Luyang's interview with Hou Hanru in Berlin. Available at: <https://www.ximalaya.com/renwen/18993110/146477630> accessed 15 July 2019.

in Berlin's art environment. However, it is difficult to tell whether this overseas strategy will be effective or not at this early stage. It is noteworthy that although the overseas art environment (including art critics, curators, cultural brokers and galleries) has increased, there is still a strong tendency to rely on the powerful art museum system when staging international knowledge production and communication of contemporary Chinese art. Let us take a look at an earlier overseas exhibition, *Mahjong*, which extensively exhibited Chinese artists (Koch, 2011, pp. 66-139):

‘Although the circle of Chinese artists who exhibit internationally has grown continuously, twenty-nine of the 110 artists in the Swiss exhibition *Mahjong*, which toured Germany, Austria, and the USA from 2005 to 2007, are the same as twelve years ago. If one considers only the one-third of *Mahjong* participants who were born prior to 1970,⁹⁸ then 30% of them were already presented in 1993. And taking Gao Minglu's 2005 publication *The Portraits of 100 Most Influential Artists in Contemporary Chinese Art* as another reference point, forty-five of these one hundred artists were already presented in one or more of the three 1993 exhibition catalogues (even if their work was not exhibited).’

This demonstrates the canonising power of the incoming overseas practices in TACB, potentially providing the institution's participants with a steppingstone to their international career in the art world. The Chinese artist Zhuang Wei, who is based in Berlin, agreed with this opinion and argued that the operation of TACB was an exciting development for artists from China living in Berlin.⁹⁹

On the one hand, the leveraged power of the capital and market are infinitely magnified in the regime of the global art world, and the existing hierarchy of power is clearly consolidated by the exchange of power with money. It is mostly in this respect that the

⁹⁸ Since those born after 1970 were too young to have participated in the exhibitions of 1993.

⁹⁹ The audio material used here was referenced from the Jiang Luyang's interview with Zhuang Wei in Berlin. Available at: <https://www.ximalaya.com/renwen/18993110/146477630> accessed 15 July 2019.

cultural communication and contradiction between the Global North and South are developing with an ever-fiercer tendency. Even though the Global South's power of discourse on contemporary Chinese art is emerging in the global dialogue, asymmetries still exist in the discourse between the North and South. Koch (2011) stated that exploiting the spectacular function of art attracts a lot of criticism and attention, and this demonstrates that Chinese artists function as part of the institutional and economic mechanisms of the global mainstream. The asymmetries between the Chinese and Western art worlds is also bridged by this tendency. The global contemporary phenomenon led by this mutual rapprochement, adaptation and dialogue. As previously mentioned, it does not matter that Guangdong Times Museum and its Berlin branch have mainly concentrated on 'southern theory', i.e. production and communication from Southern nation states; they aimed precisely to react to the inequalities mentioned above in the broader context of a dialogue.

As a rising global player, the exhibition practices taking place in China are affected by globalisation. The first exhibition in TACB featured video art from the south of China that was relatively unfamiliar to people living in Berlin. In my view, to take a proactive strategy towards a more global discourse, TACB's presence overseas is another step towards improving people's concept and understanding of contemporary Chinese art, and this should be used in many ways to reach audiences in Europe.

On the other hand, instead of simply acting as an appendix to the original framework of the modernity of the Global North, institutional practitioners should extend and modify existing visual language to generate different expressions to fit in a new context in accordance with the location. Therefore, TACB should continue its Guangzhou strategy while proactively engaging with and contributing to the growing artistic culture of Berlin. According to the official statement from the institution's website, TACB follows the principles of co-production and cosmopolitanism, contributing to a new and experimental contemporary art space based on the growing art ecology of Berlin: it aims to promote the aesthetics and visions in a European cultural context related to the

‘new institutional geography’ put forward by Times Museum. This parallel institution initiative encourages active participation and cooperation with local cultures and the art ecology of Berlin.¹⁰⁰

The previous ‘multi-centred avant-gardism’ with the characteristics of various conceptual, temporal and spatial imbalances and divergences, has come to the ‘global village’, a term first coined by Canadian philosopher and theorist Marshall McLuhan (1962) to point out that a gradually shrinking globe has the possibility of great disagreement, discontinuity and contradictory diversification in a post-literate electronic age (Stearn, 1968). According to another point of view, the circulation of visual arts and their creators and brokers creates an intensified mutual relationship and multiple flows among the multi-centred art world, in which a transcultural community has been drastically and abruptly reconfigured by economic, technological and cultural changes, raising the likelihood of ongoing negotiations of cultural identities, diversities and differences.

By examining artistic practices with Southern characteristics, I have identified the local and global strategies from the perspective of institutional production and knowledge dissemination. The Southern characteristics of Times Museums and TACB took full advantage of their relative autonomy to initiate creative discourse, including critique of and resistance to the consumerist society during the extensive urban regeneration in China. In terms of the architectural design of Times Museum, I have argued against neglecting the negative impacts of urban regeneration, i.e. the gentrification discussed in Section 5.2, which clarified the phenomenon of residents’ segregation in the Huangbian area. Artistic involvement has become indispensable under this context. The ‘going global’ strategy proposed by the art museum not only emphasised the ‘southern

¹⁰⁰ As the artistic director of TACB Xi Bei clarified (2019), there were three main reasons for selecting Berlin as the overseas site. First, the city is currently one of the most experimental, dynamic and unique areas in the development of contemporary art worldwide. Compared to other art cities in Europe, Berlin is a more suitable academic research hub for long-term planning and development. Second, the art community of Berlin has a profound intellectual tradition and has long attracted a large number of artists to engage in artistic production. Third, the art ecosystem here actively advocates the pluralism of art practices. Other than Xi Bei’s opinions about the site, Zhao Qie has also stressed that house prices and rent costs in Berlin are low and therefore more acceptable.

theory' of production and dissemination, but has also enabled TACB, operating in Berlin, to be a pioneer of Chinese private art museums. In other words, the overseas strategy of TACB can be considered a starting point that provides its participants with a steppingstone to an international career in the art world.

CONCLUSION

Conclusion

Private art museums which are closely tied to rapidly growing real estate development constitute a vital part of the museum-building boom in China. Although private art museums are thriving, there are limited studies on this topic in China, especially in relation to the art museum boom that is closely linked to real estate development. The existing research offers a macro overview of general art museums, and highlights the establishment of art museums with a real estate background as a cultural phenomenon. As a result, there is a lack of specific investigation into these emerging dominant institutions.

This study reaffirms the importance of real estate-driven art museum research in art museum studies. By investigating more deeply their role in urban regeneration, and innovations in architecture, art sponsorship, production, education and social engagement this study provides additional insight into China's private art museums, thereby potentially contributing to art museum studies and practices, art sponsorship and urban regeneration research. Previous chapters emphasised how art museums set up by property entrepreneurs in the context of China's rapid urban regeneration have

provided a new cut-in point for art museum studies to engage with the symbiotic interactions between art and real estate, to interrogate art production and distribution within art museums in the Chinese context, and follow the impacts of their practices. The thesis has another two further contributions: firstly, it defines the real estate-driven art museum as the concept of symbiotic space for considering the implications of the findings for future theory and practice; secondly, the study points to the potential future development of real estate-driven art museums during China's ongoing urban regeneration. It looks into the process on multiple levels, including the role of these art museums in urban China, symbiotic spaces in urban China, and the strategies of 'bringing in' and 'going global'. The following sections of this chapter summarise the original findings that contribute significantly to the field of art museum research.

The Role of Real Estate-Driven Art Museums in China's Urban Regeneration and Innovation

Over the past four years, this research has focussed on a select group of art museums that were established after China's Reform and Opening-up, and which have flourished or died during the extensive urban regeneration. There are three reasons why they are special. Firstly, they were generated by China's economic and social transitions which evolved in the 1980s, following the Reform and Opening-up. More relevant is the success of wealthy individuals who benefited from the explosive economic growth, which contributed to the Chinese private art museum fever. Secondly, the successful development and decline of private art museums are in line with the PRC macroeconomic trends as well as the urban regeneration in China, especially following property development. Thirdly, public-private partnerships and urban management business leaders were two key players in the museum construction boom within the process of urban development. As such, real estate art museums inherited distinct Chinese characteristics, including motivations and operations, which were very different from those seen in developed Western countries.

The concept of how private art museums were established, operated and sustained alongside property development in the context of China's extensive urbanisation has intensively influenced their operations. The particular focus in this research makes this issue more evident. According to the scenarios discussed in Chapter One, the joint initiative between property development and art museums was necessary for cultural infrastructure construction within urban regeneration, given the visible benefits for the participants. As an external environment, the Reform and Opening-up policies promoted massive urban regeneration in China, including the establishment of real estate-driven private art museums with distinctive Chinese characteristics. Firstly, real estate businesses were encouraged by the state to join the urbanisation process, in particular the culture-led urban regeneration, which aimed to generate financial revenue from property enterprises through land transfers and mortgages to supply urban infrastructures and drive up prices in the regenerated areas.

From 2002, the private art museum boom reflected the central government's ambition to boost China's cultural soft power following its rapid economic growth. Not only did the government achieve good performance, but the participating enterprises received economic and social benefits from the transactions. As a result of profitable contract deals between local government and property developers, massive art museums were established and operated alongside different types of real estate projects across regenerating cities in China.

Secondly, in contrast to philanthropy without profitability, this research uses art sponsorship to define the interactive relationship examined in Chapter Two. The intervention of art in urban development is not only a symbol of aesthetics of everyday life, or a win-win between art and business alliances, it is also knowledge production and distribution; these art museums have influenced different levels of contemporary art and urban culture. As discussed in Section 1.3, real estate business leaders are devoted to contemporary art sponsorship, from collecting contemporary artwork and curating real estate contemporary art exhibitions, to public art museums collaborating

with property developers to set up art museum branches. Since the late 1990s, this wave of contemporary art patronage has gradually transformed into a private art museum construction force, with self-operated art museums as the primary form of art sponsorship in China.

Thirdly, in the process of urbanisation, the distribution rule and development trends of these museums are, to a certain degree, tightly interwoven with the property project positioning and operational targets. Private art museums were established by real estate developers in cities and districts with insufficient cultural infrastructure, and inhabited a variety of property projects – either located in the same space or some distance away – with the result that developers were able to improve property values by building communities with facilities. These features can be seen in the Chi K11 chain of museums discussed in Chapter Two, and the OCAT branch museums in Chapter Three. The burgeoning urbanisation across the country gave birth to numerous thriving and prosperous private art museums, and these non-profit organisations with for-profit backgrounds became the alternative force for driving contemporary art development in China.

The roles of these private art museums in urban regeneration were identified: 1) an alternative resolution, and 2) a catalyst. They reshaped the art ecology of regions with weak contemporary art scenes, where art museums remained largely an experimental space for contemporary art beyond the public art museum system and official discourse, rather than in a high-margin real estate development project with business benefits. In the cases studied in this research project, art museums had two roles in different situations.

The first role that the museums took up was an alternative knowledge production solution between public and private art museums, and between public funds and governance outside of the state – a role defined by the situational context of private art museums. Political objectives remain in the public art museum system in China, due to

the involvement of the Party Affair Office in the organisational structure, and because the liberty and independence of knowledge production are dependent on state funding sources.

To some extent, art museums in China are operated to consolidate the state's soft power, rather than the pursuit of independence in the Chinese political and cultural context. As non-government organisations, private art museums constitute a healthy alternative to the state-run public museums, 'less fettered by ideological confines' (Guo, 2017, p. 18). Funding sources essential to the independence of art museums have been examined: firstly, the premise that knowledge production and dissemination independence in private art museums legitimises an institution's independent identity; secondly, the idea that private art museums in real estate developments offer an alternative solution between public funds and governance outside of the state. Therefore, the promotion of legislation by the Chinese government actually worked to advance the legal construction of private art museums. As a key finding, the long-term contribution of real estate businesses lies in the close link between private art museums and the local government. The private art museums directly benefit from this operational engagement and, as a result, their decision-making power is less limited than other art museums.

As introduced in Chapter Three, the Chinese government set up the Party Affair Office to serve as the top-down enforcement of cultural affairs within public art museums. However, as a non-government organisation, the OCAT Institute is devoted to visual arts research, which is entirely outside of the government's discourse, and this top-down organisational structure does not exist in the OCAT Institute. This new structure has enabled the OCAT Institute to employ a new knowledge production method which has facilitated a great deal of knowledge production. Furthermore, it is conceivable that this new knowledge production method has had a positive impact on the visual arts, and offers an alternative possibility of art production. For example, one part of knowledge production which differs from the traditional method is the OCAT

Institute's annual speaker who explores a selected research topic through lectures, seminars, publications and exhibitions.

As demonstrated in the analysis of collaborations between public and private art museums in Chapter Five, another prominent characteristic generated from the significant support is the diversity of the museum ecology outside of the public art museum system. This broadened ecology benefits from the promotion of the museum management department and offers more flexible mechanisms for private art museum development. The Times Museum collaborated operationally with the GDMOA (a public museum) for seven years before it registered as a non-profit organisation. The research found that the PRC government is pushing for legislation and regulations that would promote the possibility of multiple discourse platforms beyond public art museums. The discourse of soft power mentioned above sets the context for private art museums. Art museum development is within the context of the promotion of cultural and creative industries at the central government level, as first manifested in the *Tenth Five-Year Plan* (2001–2006), *China's Eleventh Five-Year Cultural Development Program*, *Ministry of Culture's Cultural Industries Revitalisation Plan* in 2009, and the *Regulation on Museums* in 2015. These independent cultural sites encourage diversity discourse, involving individuals and various perspectives beyond public art museums. Therefore, private art museums invested in by non-public funds might suggest a more flexible method and vigorously map a new ground for art production. In this sense, these real estate-driven art museums provide an alternative resolution of knowledge production in urban China.

The second role these private art museums took up was a catalyst, playing a vital role in real estate business and urban culture development in the urban regeneration process. Practically, the catalyst role means that art museums were set up as architectural icons and attractive cultural bases to ensure that land prices in the local area rose, and to allow enterprises to make more money from property development and other works in progress, rather than to facilitate creativity and creative entrepreneurialism. This model,

by which land prices rise in response to investment in both art museums and real estate, is being copied by a large number of real estate developers as an incredibly lucrative investment. Compared to one-off fieldwork research, three research trips offered more chances for conversations between art museums, curators and artists, bringing together perspectives and learning opportunities from each side. Chapter Two and Chapter Three identified several crucial characteristics from the literature and personal interviews with directors, curators and artists of the Chi K11 Art Museum and the OCAT Xi'an. Chapter Three examined how, during the *Monet: Master of Impressionism* exhibition in the K11 Art Museum, more than 400,000 visitors came to see the exhibition within its three-month run, during which time the art mall's turnover rose by 20% and commercial rents increased by 70%, raising a total income of approximately £4 million. However, this case only tells part of the story and similar financial scenarios can be seen in the other case studies in this research. For example, as discussed in Chapter Five, in relation to the Times Museum in Guangzhou, the house prices in the Huangbian neighbourhood increased through urban regeneration led by real estate development.

The two-way perks are clear. On the one hand, developers are rewarded with lucrative contracts, and local government benefits from the revenue drawn from the regenerated area's new visitors. On the other hand, museums are not merely cultural anchor points for the profitable businesses that spring up around them; they are also capable of serving a prominent role as a catalyst and are often the next driving factor for urban cultural growth. As seen while observing and working in Xi'an, Karen Smith, director and curator of the OCAT Xi'an, has evidence-based ideas about the catalyst role of private art museums for contemporary art ecology and urban culture development. Prior to the establishment of the OCAT Xi'an, contemporary art was a novel concept as a peculiarity of the traditional environment in Xi'an. As discussed, the art production led by the OCAT Xi'an, surrounding the emerging contemporary art, turned in two different directions: knowledge production, reflecting a specific relationship with Xi'an, and the contemporary expression of tradition. Within five years of the OCAT Xi'an operating in the ancient city, contemporary art spaces sprang up across Xi'an, and this

new knowledge production platform was a hub of contemporary art, reshaping the local art ecology of the city. Furthermore, this new hub provided Xi'an-based artists with fresh impetus, which allowed them to find a new way to engage with contemporary art production and distribution, as found in the observations and interviews with artists such as Qiu Ruixiang, Dan-er and students from Xi'an Academy of Fine Arts. Such discussions extend the scope of different roles of real estate-driven art museums, outside of a profitable unary.

However, this research also asserts that private art museum involvement in urbanisation could lead to gentrification in the regenerated areas, as demonstrated by the gentrification of Huangbian in Guangzhou, which priced out individuals, farmers and small factories (see Chapter Five). It is hard to ignore the fact that a great number of gated communities were built by real estate developers, which exacerbated the gap between higher-income and the lower-income groups. The phenomenon of segregation and social differentiation is likely to become increasingly serious in urban areas. Also, as found in the research on the commercialisation of art phenomena in the K11 Art Museum, the real estate developer tried to establish an artistic intervention space with persuading ambitions to get in touch with a mass audience. In this 'persuasive space', invested by the real estate developer, the exhibition, activity and artwork were embodied as the medium of commercialisation of art and art world.

Symbiotic Spaces in Urban China

The second section addresses the related question: what is the interactive relationship between the enterprises operated by real estate developers and private art museums they have constructed? A significant finding that emerged from the research is the attempt to define art museums of real estate development that derived from the explosive urban regeneration in China. The four cases examined in this research are based on specific places according to city scale, art ecology and practical consideration of available resources and networks at hand. These selected art museums are spread over first-tier

and second-tier cities in very different parts of the country, all of which help reduce research bias.

One effective approach to defining such practices is emphasising the knowledge production and distribution characteristics these art museums operate, as they aim to attract public engagement, open up discussions and act on the interactive relationship between enterprises and the museums. The evolving nature of the operation and the real estate-based patronage projects are equally important, defining features of real estate-driven art museums in China. All cases discussed in this research were not established as ‘vanity architecture’ and did not operate solely using funds from a wealthy individual; rather they were driven by real estate businesses leading urban regeneration, and these businesses depended on the win-win relationship.

These art and business alliance projects can be termed as symbiotic spaces where art museums coordinate institutional operations with parent companies, in this case, real estate enterprises. The term symbiotic space is defined as a space that consists of two components: art museums and real estate businesses, which collaborated together during the culture-led regeneration of urban China. With regards to this research question, it is a relationship in which one symbiont inhabits the building of a real estate project, either within or outside the project. It also refers to the mutualism, where both components benefit, and the art museum and the parent company help each other, as opposed to parasitism, where the art museum benefits, and the real estate business is harmed.

Three types of real estate-driven art museums were outlined in Chapter One, using particular cases based on the fieldwork, as well as analyses of the first and second-hand materials. According to the previous chapters, the art museums are summarised into the three types (as shown in Table 6.1), discussed through the perspectives of art sponsorship, knowledge production, public education and overseas strategy. The first type is the art museum based on residential real estate development, also known as a

civilised community, such as the Times Museum (examined in Chapter Five). The characteristics of symbiosis are reflected in the art museum space, which was coordinated with housing sales during the same time period and at the same location. In China, against the background of extensive urbanisation and urban population growth, the sales office suddenly became the main battlefield of the real estate-driven art museum development. The second type is the art museum based on the commercial real estate development, such as the Chi K11 Art Museum (examined in Chapter Two). According to the art and business symbiotic collaboration, art museums operating in a mall make shopping more appealing to visitors, and the formulation of persuasive space in a shopping mall is embodied in the concept of symbiotic space. The third type is the art museum based on a comprehensive development, such as the OCAT Art Museum (see Chapter Three) and the Rockbund Art Museum (explored in Chapter Four). These art museums are closely tied to real estate development; they have very different symbiotic architectural forms within or close to a real estate project. This type of art museum branch, which runs alongside real estate development in different cities, is one of the representative cases operated by the OCAT.



Table 6.1: Three types of symbiotic space with specific cases in chronological order. (Table created by the author, 2020).

The concept of symbiosis is appropriate because it emphasises various forms of symbiotic associations in different stages. These are understood as close and often long-term interactions between two different institutions. In the field of real estate-driven art museums, the symbiotic association is translated to the relationship between an existing space and a new intervention. In contrast to parasitic relations, the symbiotic association allows both symbionts to draw mutual benefits and protections from the interactive

relationship. Thus, the following highlights the distinctive characteristics of three sustainable operations, illustrated in the analysis of different cases through the lens of art sponsorship.

Regarding the characteristics of the symbiotic space, the findings are below. Firstly, spatially mutualistic venues are a common feature of real estate-driven art museums; a project has different shapes at different stages. By benefitting from the real estate investment background, the art museums are usually set up in a sales office or within a real estate project. In the case of the OCAT Xi'an and the OCAT Institute in Peking (discussed in Chapter Three), the museums inhabited the property sales offices, structurally and materially. Art production, distribution and consumption happened alongside property sales in the symbiotic space. Notably, the Times Museum set up space in the sales office at the beginning and then moved out to the residential building, shifting from parasitic to symbiotic, while growing in symbiosis. The spatial evolution process of art museums has followed the constantly changing route of real estate development. Therefore, the mutualistic association between art museums and businesses has not been stationary and constant throughout their evolution in the process of urban regeneration, but instead it has been dynamic, with unceasing growth and mutual symbiosis.

Secondly, during practically mutualistic operations, there is insufficient space for art museum activities on site as a real estate investment background. Therefore, the symbiotic space and the symbiotic strategy between exhibition and education were created. For example, in the case of the Rockbund Art Museum (examined in Chapter Four), it was noticeable that the formation of exhibition space for education involvement could be found in several projects, such as the *Night@RAM*. The Rockbund Art Museum educational programs were simultaneously involved with exhibitions in this symbiotic space. The symbiotic relationship is also reflected in the co-construction strategy of converging curatorial and educational works in the planning process.

Furthermore, the art museum of real estate development is the urban guerrilla in contemporary China, developing a prolonged campaign with culture-led urban regeneration: extending from a first-tier city to a second-tier city, from on-site to off-site, and from this real estate project to the next. The case of the Rockbund Art Museum, which inhabited a renovated colonial building, showed that some of the art museum's activities had to be performed at different sites from the parent company during the refurbishment of the original building. In the close harmony between art and business, the form and function of the art museum in the symbiotic association are conditioned by the real estate business development.

In summary, this symbiotic space plays a major role in sustainable operations, and it may be an essential part of the explanation of rapid bursts in private art museum development during urban regeneration in China. It plays an obvious role in the active contemporary art production and distribution. The form of the symbiotic space has continuously changed throughout the operation process, and it is closely tied to the operation status of real estate enterprises.

'Bringing In' and 'Going Global'

Taking an overview of the second art museum boom in the twenty-first century, what is the impact of the real estate-driven art museum in the rise of Chinese contemporary art? This research has examined and evaluated the impacts of art museum of real estate development in the context of China's high-speed economic growth, rapid civilisation and the ongoing gentrification, from 2002 onwards. Real estate developer investments in art museums have indeed operated as effective methods of art sponsorship with mutual benefits, providing observable business value to corporate profits and corporate social responsibility. However, the contributions to the arts and the public have been considered insufficient and, given their brevity and unofficial development, these private art museums have therefore been seen as pointless at this time, leading to more

in-depth institutional investigations in museum studies. However, this thesis examined and emphasised this neglected part of the art museum boom.

This research, based on the ‘bringing in’ and ‘going global’ slogan, represented two dimensions: art institutions established inside China and those developed outside. In 2017, the Victoria and Albert Museum opened their first international branch in South China. As a comprehensive development project, the company China Merchants Property Development has invested significantly in real estate, and the museum is part of an ambitious cultural project to regenerate the Shekou area in Shenzhen. This ‘bringing in’ strategy was quickly followed by the Centre Pompidou, which opened its satellite museum in Shanghai in November 2019. This project was a cooperation between West Bund Group, a government-owned property developer, and the Centre Pompidou. From a new perspective of culture-led urban regeneration strategy – the case of the Victoria and Albert Museum in Shenzhen and the Centre Pompidou in Shanghai, are two new large-scale examples of culture-led regeneration. For China, ‘bringing in’ means importing art shows to China in the Western paradigm. Whilst all of the art shows must be pre-approved by the state, it aims to roll the dice on cultural diplomacy: such cultural exchanges come with strings attached in that they provide access to Western culture, a side effect of the cross-pollination. This research does not include a focused discussion on the new ‘bringing in’ phenomenon, but it does allow for the prospect of future research to focus on the developing impact of these foreign art museums with real estate background for contemporary art and urban culture development.

Again, the argument put forward by Koch (2011) firmly confirms art as part of the institutional and economic mechanisms in the global mainstream, bridging the asymmetries between the Chinese and Western art worlds; ‘the global contemporary’ has been formulated under this process. Arguably, private art museums began to ‘go global’ and, correspondingly, impacted the methods of contemporary art production and distribution paths, and also raised the importance of the overseas strategy. The latter

half of this PhD journey witnessed major changes in the Times Museum: the first parallel institution, the Times Art Centre Berlin, was set up overseas by the China-based private art museum as a proactive strategy of ‘going global’. As expressed in Chapter Five, this newly created institution embraced different ways of presenting southern imaginaries, from the southern narratives of Guangzhou to the northern modernity of Berlin; it is hard to examine and catalogue the overseas immigration performances in the initial stage.

There are no longer only ‘bringing in’ actions; as global participants, a rising number of private art museums in China have taken the initiative to conduct overseas strategies towards a more global discourse. However, the original intention of the Times Art Centre Berlin was to avoid homogenisation with other institutions that arose from the fervour for private art museum construction in China’s metropolitan areas, such as Peking and Shanghai. Also, it is undeniable that asymmetries still exist in the global dialogue. From one-way flow to two-way flow, private art museums are going overseas to participate in the cultural globalisation trend. Accompanied by the intercultural movement, presenting a multi-dimensional complex conversation, art practices made in China are experiencing the process of globalisation. For example, the inaugural exhibition of Times Art Centre Berlin, *Episode I: Urban Explosion*. This exhibition was the first of a three-part exhibition series – *The D-Tale, Video Art from the Pearl River Delta* – in which practices by 21 Chinese artists were exported to Berlin to situate the institution’s geographic specificity and narratives to southern China. The multi-centred art world has been formulated with the characteristics of both a fuzzy centre and a distinct periphery because of the reconfiguration of economic, technological and cultural changes; and the ‘bringing in’ and ‘going global’ trends involved have intensified mutual relationships and multiple flows created by visual arts and their makers and brokers. As suggested before, as products of interaction and an international coalition, these new overseas allies should generate different expressions in the broader context of dialogue, rather than participating as supplements to the original framework dominated by the modernity of northern China.

As a starting point, the Times Art Centre Berlin is contributing to a new experimental contemporary art space based on the growing artistic ecologies of Berlin, while proactively engaging with and contributing to art production and distribution of globalisation. The overseas branches are created to build conversation in the global context that won't be dominated by Western paradigms, but which will be used to reach audiences outside the country, as well as blazing new trails in promoting the development of contemporary art alongside the promotion of New Urbanisation which will be continued in China.

These findings contribute in several ways to the identifying and understanding of this kind of art museum effort in the ongoing urban regeneration process in China, and to the key role of urban culture and contemporary art development, which might be considered inconsequential. For now, the research relevant to this topic is extremely rare. More empirical research is needed, including timely follow-up and case studies, as the urbanisation of China is growing rapidly. At the same time, the operational experience of art museums in the West is an absolute rule of reference for a large number of private art museums in China, a factor which requires closer scrutiny in future research and operations. It is crucial to have in-depth considerations of institutional operation methods and more effective ways to initiate dialogue with the Chinese public. To advocate for the relative liberty of expression for private art museums in China, or to act solely to make up for the lack of cultural infrastructure, the operational processes and symbiotic relationships need to be carefully examined in a timely manner so these symbiotic spaces of contemporary art production and distribution are dispersed over cities of different scales and can become more effective and active operations for participants.¹⁰¹

¹⁰¹ Before this study was completed, the COVID-19 virus was discovered and began to spread globally. Undoubtedly, the Coronavirus pandemic has posed great challenges to art institutions on a global scale. As governments in different countries take increased precautions to limit the spread of the Coronavirus pandemic, art museums are struggling to dealing with immediate operational concerns. As some art museums in China are re-opening as Coronavirus cases wane, further studies are needed to examine what impact the pandemic is having on art museums and their practices, and more broadly on the art world as a whole. While some art museums are playing

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a key role in documenting the Coronavirus pandemic, further work could also investigate the roles of art and art museums during the outbreak.

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LIST OF CHINESE NAMES

Cai Nitika Yingqian 蔡影茜, date unknown.

Cao Fei 曹斐, b.1979.

Chen Jiagang 陈家刚, b.1962.

Chen Shaoxiong 陈绍雄, b. 1962.

Chen Tong 陈侗, b. 1962.

Dan'er 旦儿, b. 1983.

Dai Zhuoqun 戴卓群, b. 1981.

Mao Zedong 毛泽东, 1893-1976.

Deng Xiaoping 邓小平, 1904-1997.

Fang Lijun 方力钧, b. 1963.

Hou Hanru, 侯瀚如, b.1963.

Li Xianting, 栗宪庭, b.1949.

Liang Juhui 梁钜辉, b. 1959.

Lin Yilin 林一林, b. 1964.

Liu Yiqian 刘益谦, b. 1963.

Pan Shiyi 潘石屹, b.1963.

Qi Xiaochun 祁小春, b.1984.

Qiu Zhenzhong 邱振中, b. 1947.

Qiu Ruixiang 邱瑞祥, b.1980

Qiu Zhijie 邱志杰, b. 1969.

Song Tao 宋涛, b. 1979.

Wang Dongling 王冬龄, b. 1945.

Wang Wei 王薇, b. 1963.

Wu Wenguang 吴文光, b.1956.

Xi Bei 希蓓, date unknown.

Xi Jinping 习近平, b. 1953.

Xu Bing 徐冰, b. 1955.

Xu Tan 徐坦, b. 1957.

Yan Shanchun 严善鎔, b. 1957.

Yao Qingmei 姚清妹, b. 1982.

Zhou Chunya 周春芽, b. 1955.

Zhang Xiaogang 张晓刚, b. 1958.

Zhang Ruyi 张如怡, b.1985.

Zhao Qie 赵赳, date unknown.

LIST OF CHINESE TERMS

Caoshu 草书. Cursive Script.

Chengshi Yunyingshang 城市运营商. Businessman of Urban Management.

Daweixiang Gongzuozu 大尾象工作组. Big Tail Elephant Working Group.

Gaige Kaifang 改革开放. The Reform and Opening-up.

Lantingxu 兰亭序. Lanting Preface.

Wenhua Shiye 文化事业. Public Cultural Undertakings.

Xueshu Weiyuanhui 学术委员会. Academic Board.

Zhongguo Gongchandang 中国共产党. The Communist Party of China.

Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo 中华人民共和国. The People's Republic of China.

Zhejiang Sheng 浙江省. Zhejiang Province.

108 Fang 108坊. 108 Town.

LIST OF SELECTED INTERVIEWEES

The following selected interviews were conducted and translated into English by the author, listed by the names of the interviewees.

Chen Dan 陈丹, education director of Rockbund Art Museum, interviewed in March 2018, Shanghai.

Dan Er 旦儿, contemporary artist, interviewed in March 2018, Xi'an.

Prof. Guo Weiqi 郭伟其, OCAT Institute director of academics, interviewed in March 2018, Guangzhou.

Huang Shengzhi 黄圣智, the former director of Shanghai chi K11 Art Museum, interviewed in 2017, Shanghai.

Karen Smith 凯伦.史密斯 art historian and critic, curator, executive director of OCAT. Xi'an, interviewed in May 2017, Shanghai. The second interviews conducted in March 2018, Xi'an.

Li Jing 李静, the former Operational Director Powerlong Art Museum, interviewed in May 2017, Shanghai.

Lu Xun 陆寻, art collector, director of Sifang Art Museum, interviewed in May 2017, Nanjing.

Li Yusha 李戡莎, director of executive Department in OCAT Museum Group, interviewed in August 2017, Shenzhen. The second interviews conducted in February 2018, Shenzhen.

Liu Yingjiu 刘迎九, deputy director of Rockbund Art Museum, interviewed in December 2019 by Wechat.

Qiu Ruixiang 邱瑞翔, contemporary artist, interviewed in March 2018, Xi'an.

Shi Hantao 施翰涛, the former manager of Rockbund Art Museum, interviewed in November 2019 by Wechat.

Tong Hai 童海, education director of OCAT Xi'an, interviewed in March 2018, Xi'an.

Prof. Wang Huangsheng 王璜生, the former director of the Guangdong Museum of Art, the former director of Central Academy of Fine Arts Art Museum, interviewed in April 2017, Beijing.

Yan Yan 晏燕, deputy director of exhibition and academy of Today Art Museum, interviewed in April 2017, Beijing.

Ye Zi 叶梓, director of Xu Gu Tang, interviewed in August 2017, Shenzhen.



Zhao Qie 赵赳, director of Times Museum, interviewed in April 2017, Guangzhou.

The second interviews conducted in Feb 2018, Guangzhou.

Zhou Li 周力, contemporary artist, interviewed in February 2018, Shenzhen.

Appendix 1

Visual and text materials of the Night @ RAM project that selected from the 2010 Annual Report of Rockbund Art Museum:



左页：伊藤浩一、陈鹤良、杜卫
多媒体装置（投影、音响、声音）
策展人：Shahida Bhandari, Du Yun
Gassama
Multi-media (projection, performance, sound),
4th floor gallery
10/10/2010
右页：侯瀚如

二、展览：展览：2010
Right page: Tu Weicheng
Prehistory of Motion Pictures
Photo Film Sculpture to Projection
2nd floor vestibule
Installation, 2010
摄影：金静芳、Photographer: Jin Jingfang

《日以继夜，或美术馆可为之若干事》由知名策展人侯瀚如担纲策展，并邀请九位国际当代艺术家共同参与。本展览关注当代艺术在公共空间中的形态和可能性，对于公共美术馆的功能和社会角色提出探讨。九位参展艺术家通过调查、研究并探索城市及本馆的历史和现状，针对本馆建筑和展览场地进行创作，建立与各自文化背景的联系，并为其创作带来更多的实验与发展。

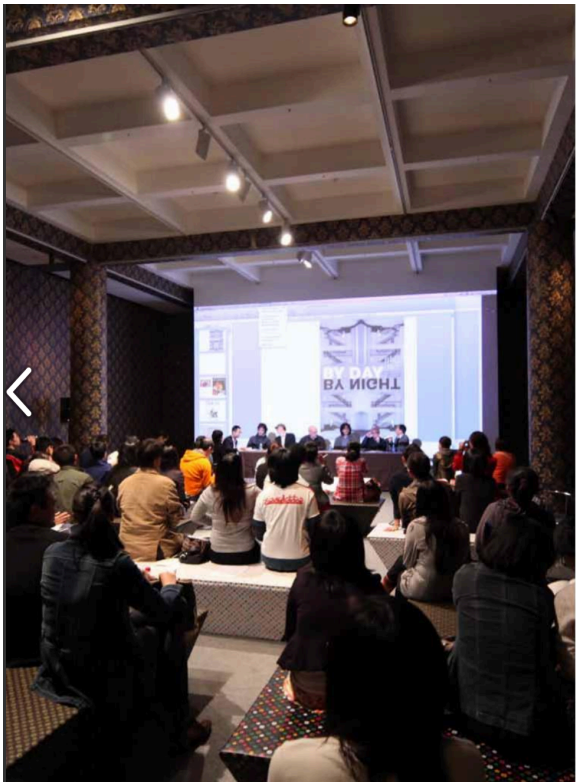
展览规划分为白天和夜晚两个风格鲜明、彼此独立但又相互交织的部分，以期在艺术家、作品、活动、机构与城市生活的现实之间形成紧密而高效的互动关系。白天，展览呈现艺术家的创作，分别安放于美术馆内以及邻近的空间，以具体的作品形态呈现；夜晚，美术馆邀请“习艺室”、“现象馆”、《艺术世界》以及《艺术当代》等本地艺术教育及传媒机构共同策划组织演讲、表演、音乐等系列艺术欣赏、教育和交流活动，并推出由参展艺术家们推荐的电影榜单，以更为灵动、自由的方式建立一个在传统展览形式之外的、跨领域、跨学科、多方位的交流平台。

"By Day, By Night, or Some (Special) Things a Museum Can Do", curated by the renowned curator Mr. Hou Hanru, brought together nine artists from China and several other nations and focuses on different forms of contemporary art in the public space, presenting ideas on the new functions and social role of an art museum. The artists studied and explored the history and reality of both the city of Shanghai and the Rockbund Art Museum and based their works on their own cultures and experiences. All of them also incorporated features of the exhibition space into their experimental works, producing site-specific artworks for this exhibition.

The exhibition consists of two parts: an art exhibition during the day and "By Night @ RAM" events in the evening. The two strands are independent, but also in constant dialogue with each other. The art exhibition, situated in RAM building and several neighbouring places, is the material realization of an art event, stable and tangible. The evening events include the "Night School" programme in cooperation with local art education and media organizations, such as Xiyang, Ray Art Center, Art World Magazine and Art China Magazine, offering lectures, music shows and performances, as well as film screenings made up of movies recommended by the artists so as to build a cross-disciplinary and cross-sector platform that could transcend the conventional concept of an exhibition in a more dynamic and free manner.

26 Exhibitions 展览

展览 Exhibitions 27



时间：2010年10月25日
地点：上海外滩美术馆2楼

对话者：侯瀚如
崔正化
彼得罗·加布里塔·莱昂
山姆·萨摩尔
涂维成

“日以继夜圆桌会议——策展人与艺术家的对话”同时也是展览特别项目“艺术夜生活”的第一站。通过策展人侯瀚如与九位参展艺术家的对话，让观众更深入地了解这次展览以及相关艺术创作背后的内容。会议中，侯瀚如阐述了本展的策展概念以及选择这九位艺术家的缘由，向观众解释了自己对当代艺术的理解和对美术馆的社会角色的定义。现场观众也参与讨论，就艺术家推荐电影的选择等问题，与策展人和艺术家展开互动。

By Day By Night: A Conversation between the Curator and the Artists

Date: October 25, 2010
Venue: Rockbund Art Museum, 2F

Participant: Hou Hanru
Choi Jeong Hwa
Pedro Cabrita Reis
Sam Samore
Tu Weicheng

"By Day By Night" Roundtable - A Conversation between the Curator and the Participating Artists marked the initial installment of the By Night at RAM series, featuring a dialogue between exhibition curator Hou Hanru and several of the participating artists that helped visitors understand the exhibition and the origin of some of the art on display. During the seminar, Hou Hanru explained his curatorial concepts and the reasons why he selected the nine artists with accounts of his take on contemporary art and definition of the role of art museums in the society. The audience joined an interactive session with the curator and the artists with a number of questions, including how they selected and recommended the movies.

Lectures



extending 公共空间

5月8日	主讲：王寅 《南方周末》专栏作家 与大众分享他对于蔡国强近身观察
5月22日	主讲：陆蓉之 独立策展人、评论家 介绍当代艺术的多元化和多样性
5月29日	主讲：王南溟 艺术家、评论家、独立策展人 讨论蔡国强创作理念和形式
6月5日	主讲：顾振清 独立策展人、评论家 回顾当代艺术展览的形成背景与规划机制
6月19日	主讲：龚卓军 台湾台南艺术大学艺术创作研究所教授、评论家 讨论当代艺术家如何以身体与行为作为创作之媒介
6月26日	主讲：张郁武 北京大学中文系教授、文化评论家 由社会学角度探讨农民与当代文化的关系
7月10日	主讲：王小箭 四川美术学院教授、艺术评论家 从图像史探讨艺术叙事方式的改变及产生的影响

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8 May	Searching for Peasant Da Vinci with Cai Guo-Qiang Speaker: Wang Yin, Columnist for Southern Weekly Sharing a close-up on Cai Guo-Qiang
22 May	An Artistic Life of Five Senses Speaker: Victoria Lu, Independent Curator, Art Critic On the pluralism and diversity of contemporary art
29 May	Transnational Exhibitions and Chinese Contemporary Art: Seen from the Works of Cai Guo-Qiang Speaker: Wang Nanming, Artist, Art Critic, Independent Curator A discussion on the concepts and forms in Cai Guo-Qiang's works
5 June	Curatorial Systems in Developing Countries Speaker: Gu Zhengqing, Independent Curator, Art Critic A recap of the background and planning mechanism of contemporary art exhibitions
19 June	The Aesthetics of Performance: From Tehching Hsieh to Cai Guo-Qiang Speaker: Gong Jow-Jun, Professor of Doctoral Program in Art Creation and Theory, Tainan National University of the Arts, Art Critic A discussion on the use of body and performance as media for creation
26 June	The Imaginativeness of Peasants and Chinese Contemporary Culture Speaker: Zhang Yiwu, Professor of Department of Chinese Language and Literature, Peking University, Cultural Critic A sociological perspective on the relationship between peasants and contemporary culture
10 July	Genres in Fine Arts and New Works by Cai Guo-Qiang Speaker: Wang Xiaojian, Professor of Sichuan Fine Arts Institute, Art Critic The history of images as an approach to changes in art narratives and their impacts

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Art China Magazine

Panel Discussion: Alternative Spaces in China

2010/11/20

主持：徐可 《艺术当代》主编
对话者：徐震 没顶公司创办人
郑为民 DOM, 中国当代艺术数据库ARTLINKART创办人
座席：廖康空间 艺术总监、策展人
鲁毅 博尔赫斯书店合伙人
林平 台北东海大学教授、台中20号仓库总监
冯美华 香港美基创意书院创意教育总监

自2005年中国当代艺术市场启动之后，存在源自商业画廊和私人美术馆所构成的展览和商业系统之外的一些艺术空间，它们以独立的姿态和独特的视角关注、鼓励与支持当代艺术的实验创新和前卫实践。他们曾是中国当代艺术空间探索的先驱者，为年轻艺术家及暂不能进入商业流通领域的艺术项目提供平台。然而在艺术市场的大潮中，这些空间的生存环境都不容乐观，前途不甚明朗。它们的身份也变得越发模糊和尴尬。是独立空间？非盈利？还是充当临时角色的中转站？《艺术当代》通过“艺术家生活”平台促成了一次真诚的对话，以呈现三类空间的特点和生存状态，同时也通过中国港、台等地的第三类空间的生存经验来寻求一条更好的生存和发展之路。

Moderator: Xu Ke, Editor-in-Chief, Art China Magazine
Participants: Xu Zhen, Founder, Madeln Inc.; Zheng Weimin, Founder and Director, ddm Warehouse, ARTLINKART
Tang Xin, Art Director and Curator, Talkang Space
Lu Yi, Partner, BORGES_Libreria
Lin Ping, Professor, Fine Arts & Curatorial Program Tunghai University, Art Director, STOCK20 Taichung
May Fung, Deputy School Supervisor, HKICD Lee Shau Kee School of Creativity

Since 2005 when the contemporary art market started to heat up, some independent art spaces, together with commercial galleries and private museums, have been established that support innovation and experimental practices in contemporary art with their unique perspectives. They are pioneers in art spaces in China, providing a platform for emerging artists and art projects. However, as the contemporary art scene becomes more and more commercial, these spaces are faced with a hostile environment and unclear future. Their roles are also blurred. Are they independent spaces, or non-profit organizations, or a transitional form? "Art China" organized a sincere dialogue on the features and reality of the alternative spaces as well as on the experiences of such spaces surviving in Hong Kong, Taiwan and other cities in China.

A Talk Between Art Animation and Music

2010/12/3

Moderator: Weng Zhijuan
Qiu Anxiong, Artist
Jin Wang, Composer

Vision and hearing are the two most important senses for us to receive outside information. Visual art and music have been developing along their own paths and there have also been many cases of convergence. Qiu Anxiong has been working with Jin Wang on many projects over many years. In this speech, they will introduce to the audience their collaborative works, experiences and opinions on art. The presentation will be moderated by Weng Zhijuan to explore the collaboration between two artists and the relationship between visual and auditory art in the form of Q&A, dialogues and discussions.

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Art World Magazine
Forum on Urban Time and Sound

“都市时间与声音论坛”意在探讨都市的时间和声音的多个维度，形成都市时间感的历史脉络，都市时间为艺术创作所提供的素材和思考，都市的声音现象学，都市时间和声音与都市人心理的关系，因都市而蓬勃的媒体对都市时间的回应。本次论坛将采取“讲座+讨论”的形式，避免艰深的理论探讨，本次论坛关注都市人最根本的生活状况，意图为没有时间的都市人思考自己的生存境况，帮助人们拓展看待自己所处世界的眼光，聆听都市的种种声音，与观众共鸣，共同思考。

11月12日 时间与艺术创作
主讲：胡介鸣 艺术家
对话者：沈奇岚 《艺术世界》杂志编辑部主任

11月13日 双耳为道而开——城市声音现象
主讲：姚大钧 学者，声音艺术家
对话者：龚彦 《艺术世界》杂志主编

12月10日 换一种方法去听都市
主讲：熊峻 音乐家，声音艺术家
对话者：熊峻，《艺术世界》特邀编辑

12月11日 艺术知世界
主持人：龚彦 《艺术世界》杂志主编
嘉宾：于其多 电视策划人、制作人，曾任上海电视一台编辑、导演，上海东方电视台电视专栏节目制作人、主持人；上海广播电视台STN国际桌面制作总监。
王小龙 诗人 上海文广新闻传媒集团(SMG)人文频道首席导演

"Forum on Urban Time and Sound" discussed the many dimensions of urban time and sound in the form of four "speeches + discussions" and covered issues such as the historical context of urban time, urban time as an inspiration for artists, the phenomenology of urban sound, the relationship between urban residents and urban time and sound as well as the reaction of prosperous city media in the face of urban time. Instead of abstract theories, the forum focused on the living conditions of urban residents and encourage the ultra-busy people to think about the environment they live in, giving them an opportunity to look at and reflect on our world from another angle and listen to the sounds in cities.

11/12 Time and Artistic Creation
Hu Jieming, Artist
Moderator: Shen Qilan, Executive Editor of Art World

11/13 Who Do We Save Our Ears For? Urban Sound Phenomenon
Yao Dajun, scholar, sound artist
Moderator: Gong Yan, Editor-in-chief of Art World

12/10 Listening to the City in Another Way
Yan Jun, Musician, sound artist
Moderator: Zhao Junyuan, Guest Editor of Art World

12/11 Discussion Session with Special Guests: To Know the World Through Art
Moderator: Gong Yan, Editor-in-chief of Art World
Speaker: Yu Qiduo, Producer, Director, Shanghai Television Station, Wang Xiaolong, Poet, Chief Director of Art Channel at Shanghai Media Group

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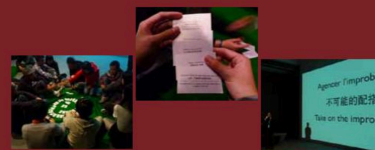
Xiyitang
Workshops: Unmanageability/Unpredictability
of Contemporary Art Exhibitions/Training

当代艺术的“展览”与“教学”是相互影响的两种姿态。欧洲第一批博物馆将私人收藏如同画廊一般面向艺术家开放，以供研究。今天还是如此：艺术学院的学生们在展览参观中学习的和在学校中一样多。作为公共媒介之一，“成为艺术教育系统中的一环”是展览在今日不可忽视的一点。一场优秀的展览，它的角色定位是提出假设更胜于展示本身，正如教育本质是一种研究活动更胜于几次常规课程。从模因的护存到艺术趋势的预测，当代艺术展览与艺术学校的功能密不可分，共同帮助公众更好地理解当代艺术。“假如艺术是一场游戏？那么？”——在习艺堂设计的三场讲座中，组织者以法国当代艺术教育为背景与切入点，阐明当代艺术作品与教育之间的关系。

10月29日 “我们有什么经验可以分享？”
演讲者：多米尼克 派斯基尼
艺术家，法国Chalon-sur-Saône高等艺术媒体学院院长

10月30日 “游戏，让生活更美好”
演讲者：弗朗索瓦 戴克
艺术顾问，法国格勒诺布尔高等艺术学院教授

11月26日 艺术的游戏——“评估也是艺术家作品的一部分？”
指导老师：Paul Devautour
习艺堂院长



"Exhibition" and "teaching" are the two mutually influencing arms of contemporary art. Similar to galleries, the earliest museums in Europe opened their doors to artists. Today, the case remains the same: art students can learn as much in exhibitions as in classes. As art museums are a public medium, "being a part of art training system" is an important role that should never be ignored by them. An excellent exhibition can be successful by having original concepts and assumptions alone, which might be more important than the works displayed. The same is true for education: it should be a research activity instead of a project consisting of a few lectures. In terms of the protection of artworks and prediction of the trends in the sector, art schools and museums are closely linked, which jointly can help the public to better understand contemporary art. "If art is a game, then..." The three events by "Xiyitang" tried to explain the relationship between contemporary artworks and education using French contemporary art education as an example.

10/29 "What are the experiences that we can share?"
Instructor: Dominique Pasqualini
Artist IIFPI, Director of Chalon-sur-Saône Arts and Media Academy

10/30 Better Game, Better Life
"Unmanageability of Art?" Francois Deck's Workshop
Instructor: François Deck
Artist consultant, Professor from Grenoble Academy of Art

11/26 The Game of Art
"Is Review Also A Part Of Artworks?" Paul Devautour Workshop
Instructor: Paul Devautour
Director of Xiyitang

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China Academy of Art, Open Media Lab
Performance: Bund Sound Site

2010/11/27
策划: 姚大钧
徐程-上海: 城市的声音与影像
Soul Lemon (姚大钧, 陈立功等)- "手持终端 iPad 现场" (世界首演)

声音艺术不断在拓展与其他媒介间的融合可能。此次演出展现了当下中国声音及跨媒体艺术前沿的热点方向, 及其与城市空间和社会互动的结合。上海艺术家徐程以日常视听经验为素材, 经过自制的编程 Scape Sequencer 反编译成视觉听觉新感受, 构成城市主题艺术的震撼表演。在中国美术学院开放媒体工作室推出的全新演出形式中, 演员用四个 iPad 及四个 iPhone 上的平凡软件即兴创作出充满惊喜的声音及影像。解模式打破了既定的乐器及作者概念, 也象征着 "声音2.0" 及社会媒体的时代精神。演出最后他们提供设备并邀请现场观众加入自由即兴。

2010/11/27
Curator: Yao Dajun
Xu Cheng-"Shanghai: Urban Sound and Image"
"Soul Lemon (Yao Dajun, Chen Ligong, et al.)-"iPad Live" (World Premium)

Sound artists have been exploring possibilities of combining sound with other media. The performance this evening will demonstrate the most avant-garde sound art and cross-media works and their interaction with urban space and society. Xu Cheng used professional software and hardware to manipulate visual and auditory materials he collected in the streets of Shanghai, creating an amazing city-themed show. In the innovative show, members of the "Open Media Lab" from China Academy of Art used applications in four iPads and four iPhones to create on-site surprisingly fantastic sounds and images. Their approach broke boundaries of the concepts of "musical instruments" and "composers", representing the spirit of "Sound 2.0" and the era of social media. Toward the end of their show, participants were invited to join them on stage.



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Appendix 2

The questionnaire used in the educational program *Can I take a primary school student to see an exhibition if I am not an art teacher*:

1. Please find unhappy emotions in the following words that express emotions below. When did you feel this emotion? Have you observed this same emotion in others? When? What kind of expression will he or she show? Depression; remorse; melancholy; gratification; pride; disgust; guilt; boredom; calmness; relief; hesitation; naughty; ecstasy.
2. Are you a boy or a girl? Do you like to be a boy (girl)? Why?
3. Do you like to be close to nature? Have you observed animals or plants? Where and how to observe them?
4. Have you ever been praised by others but not feeling happy?
5. Which of the following art forms have you seen? Painting; sculpture; photography; calligraphy; installation; music; film; drama; dance, others (please add) _____.