

# MARTHA SCHWARTZ: FROM BEIJING TO LONDON

## 玛莎·舒瓦茨：从北京到伦敦

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当我来到“从北京到伦敦——2012当代中国建筑展”时，我并不确定我所期望看到的和听到的是什么。

2010年以后，我因为各种原因多次来到中国。在这期间，我也访问了中国的主要城市。尽管它们给我留下了深刻的印象，但是也仅仅局限于一些表面的印象。对我而言，中国拥有的古老而深厚的文化有更多值得我去学习和理解的。虽然在我人生的大部分时间它对我来说是如此遥远。

在2008年的北京奥运会上，通过赫尔佐格和德梅隆设计的“鸟巢”体育场，中国向世界展示了它的本色。我当时怀着敬畏的心情观看了整个开幕式。演出的巨大规模和错综复杂的编排震撼人心。真可谓是一场视觉盛宴！我是在同类演出中从未见到过的。显而易见的是，在中国，规模极其重要。在这里，新的理念和文化被迅速消化，“鸟巢”的诞生宣示了建筑如何成为一场变革中的有力标志。中国通过引进外国的当代文化为登上世界舞台营造了一场炫目的开场秀，这是我们有目共睹的。

为了弥补失去的时间，中国不得不通过进行一场“愚公移山”式的发展来创造奇迹，这使得建造建筑的速度和规模完全挤压了思考的空间。这一时期出现的建筑规模巨大，建造速度极快，因此催生了大量雷同、毫无特色的建筑。人们对规模和速度的迷恋超过了对品质的追求，似乎对于中国当代建筑而言，没人对“品质”有太大兴趣。我的观点是品质与意识密切相关，而这—意识深植在或者忠实于某一对象。比如说艺术领域，一件物品能够在其制作和完成过程中传递出一种态度或情感。但是，品质很难在规模生产的前提下实现，因为制作者和观者的联系被切断了。当速度与数量成为最重要的价值时，品质的保证变得岌岌可危。“品质”的缺失，或者说真实感、地域感、亲密感和个性感的缺失，这些都是在我看到占据中国当代城市的大量建筑时最为怀念的。怀着上述情感，我对在本次展览中看到和听到的一切都充满了浓厚的兴趣。

在离开时，我欣欣鼓舞，充满希望，对自己的所见闻满是兴奋之情。参展建筑师的作品都是典型的小型建筑，尽管他们中的许多人大多从事设计和建造大型而出色的建筑。然而，他们的作品展示了自身对于本真或者说“中国特色”和个人标志的探索。不言自明的是，中国建筑未来的希望之种埋藏在这些所展示的为更小型的建筑之中。在这里，与传统相关的亲密和情感联系，对于材料的热爱以及建筑师的个性都可以被清楚地感知和享受到。伴随着这些小型建筑师项目，一种全新的当代中国建筑正处在孕育的过程之中。中国在初始时期的大规模建筑消费和对于拿来主义的巨大兴趣终将作为历史。据此，我看到了正在崛起的中国建筑的灿烂未来，到那时中国文化将重塑当代建筑语言，取代现在毫无真实性和影响力的对西方风格的东拼西凑的模仿。中国有大批建筑方面的天才，这些新的建筑师将重新审视中国人过去的传统，并加以利用，打造出独具中国特色的全新的当代建筑。本次展览的作品向人们昭示了他们正在朝着这一方向不断前行。

I am not sure what I expected to see and hear when I came to the exhibition, From Beijing to London, The Exhibition of Contemporary Chinese Architecture 2012.

Since 2010, I have been to China many times for a variety of reasons. I have visited most of the major cities, and although I have an impression, it is just that—an impression. There is much more for me to learn and to understand about such an ancient and deep culture, that has been, for most of my lifetime, off the map.

China showed its true colors to the world during the 2008 Olympics with Herzog de Meuron's and Ai Wei Wei's famous "Bird's Nest" stadium. I watched the opening ceremonies in awe. The sheer magnitudes of the performance, along with the intricacies of the choreography were sensational. This was truly a feast for the eyes on a scale I had never seen before. It made it apparent that in China, size matters. In a country where new ideas and cultures were quickly being consumed, the Bird's Nest came to demonstrate how architecture could be a powerful symbol of change. China employed foreign contemporary culture to make a dazzling entrance onto the global stage, and we all took notice.

To make up for lost time, China has had to move mountains, building at a speed and magnitude that has left little time to think. The buildings that have emerged during this period are of massive scale and built at break-neck speed, resulting in a vast sameness and anonymity. Size and speed have prevailed over quality. There seems little interest in what "quality" may mean in contemporary Chinese architecture. From my perspective, quality relates to the sense of what is inherent within, or authentic to an object. In art, an object can impart an attitude or emotion that is expressed in its making. However, quality is difficult to achieve in mass production where the connection is lost between the maker and the beholder. Quality is always at risk when speed and quantity are the most important values. This lack of "quality", or sense of authenticity, sense of place, intimacy and personality is what I miss in so much of the architecture that makes up China's contemporary cities. I was therefore, very interested in what I might see and hear at the exhibition.

I came away, energized and hopeful, and extremely excited by what I had seen. The work by these architects, many of whom typically work on very large and excellent buildings, were typically small-scaled. However, the architecture expressed a search for authenticity or "Chinese-ness" and individualism. What became self evident, is that the seed for the future of Chinese architecture resides in the smaller projects shown here, where intimacy, emotional bonding to traditions, a love for materials, and the individual personalities of the architects were felt and enjoyed. Within these small projects, a new and contemporary Chinese architecture is in the process of being born. China will definitely move through this initial era of architectural mass consumption and its intrigue with foreignism. Out of this, I can see an incredible future for Chinese architecture emerging, where a contemporary language will be reshaped from Chinese culture that will replace what has been a pastiche of foreign styles that have no authenticity or authority. China has an immense resource of talent. The new architects will be allowed to re-examine their past traditions and re-shape it into new and uniquely Chinese contemporary architecture. The work included in this exhibition shows us the way forward.

