

CHANGING THE PERCEPTION OF CHINA



A NEW EXHIBITION IN LONDON DESIGNED BY TONKIN LIU SHOWS CHINA IN A DIFFERENT LIGHT

Pics: Keith Collie



In the run up to the Beijing Olympics, the V&A's 2008 spring exhibition in London, China Design Now, explored the recent explosion of new design in China, from the 2008 Olympic stadium to the most interesting fashion and graphics. The exhibition captured a dynamic phase as China opens up to global influences and looks at developments in three rapidly expanding cities – Beijing, Shanghai and Shenzhen.

In three galleries dedicated to the impact of design in each of the three cities, China Design Now

displayed the work of Chinese and international designers highlighting architecture, fashion, youth culture and graphics as well as film, photography, product and furniture design and digital media.

The design concept for the exhibition is a journey through electric mountains. Drawing on the verticality of classic Chinese landscape and the scale of contemporary Chinese cities, Tonkin Liu designed a series of very tall towers that capture light and are clustered to create different types

of spaces throughout.

To capture the unique character of each city, there is a subtle shift in colour in each gallery to evoke the changing times of the day from dawn to dusk. The young vibrant city of Shenzhen is captured at dusk, Shanghai is set at night to evoke both the city's glamorous style and its dark underbelly and China's booming cultural capital, Beijing, is captured on the precipice of a change, at dawn.

Working with the designers Tonkin Liu, Light Perceptions developed a unique lighting theme for each of



the three gallery spaces mostly using existing V&A stock from Light Projects Group.

In the introductory gallery the visitors experiences 'Shenzhen Frontier City', one of China's earliest multiplying instant cities. It was the first to open for business and its special economic zone has become a frontier town where graphic artists suck on exhilarating drops of freedom issued from nearby Hong Kong.

Contemporary Chinese graphic art is seen in posters, books, CD covers, skateboards, trainers and toys. Here the lighting is both cold and colourful with the entire ceiling bathed in blue that reflects gracefully over the entire gallery. Combined with the use of large-scale coloured patterns, and offset by the use of multiple video projections, the lighting creates a strong background against which individual graphics and other exhibits are subtly highlighted.

The middle hall, entitled 'Shanghai Dream City', is perhaps the most telling. In the 1920s the Paris of the Orient sold Eastern fantasies to the West. Now it sells Western fantasies to the East. 40 years ago the Chinese hankered after the 'Four Great Things': a sewing machine, a watch, a bicycle and a radio. Now it's a Nokia, a BMW, an Apple Mac computer and a home by Zaha.

The lighting for Dream City is quite subdued. Many of the exhibits are internally illuminated, and others are made from sensitive fabrics so the lighting levels are kept at a suitable low level.



JAPANESE

V&Aが開催する2008年春の展示会はChina Design Nowと呼ばれ、中国で近年、新しいデザインが急成長していることについて取り上げた。この展示会では、中国がグローバル世界からの影響にオープンになっていく劇的な局面をとらえ、急激に拡大している北京、上海、深川の3都市における発展を考察している。この3都市でデザインに影響を与えた3つのギャラリーを使い、China Design Nowは中国人や国際派デザイナーの作品を展示、ハイライトとして建築やファッション、ヤングカルチャー、グラフィック、映画、写真、商品や家具デザイン、デジタルメディアなどを紹介している。Light PerceptionsはTonkin Liuからのデザイナーとの共同作業で、3つのギャラリーそれぞれに独特の照明テーマを展開、展示会のデザインコンセプトは「electric mountainを超える旅」となった。一連の

超高層ビルにおける中国古来の縦を中心とした景観と中国の近代都市のスケールを取り入れたデザインはTonkin Liuによるもので、この光を受容するビルは随所に建てられ、全体として多様性に富む空間を作り出すことになった。

CHINESE

V&A 的 2008 春季展 China Design Now 研究了近期中国呈爆炸式增长的新设计方案,从 2008 年奥运会体育场到最有趣的式样和图案。展览会捕捉中国开放对全球的动态影响并关注三个快速扩张城市(北京、上海和深圳)的发展。在三家专门展览这三座城市的设计影响的陈列室中,China Design Now 展示了中国和国际设计师的工作,重点是建筑、时尚、青年文化和平面造型艺术,也包括电影、摄影、产品和家具设计以及数字媒体。

Light Perceptions 与设计公司 Tonkin

Liu 合作,为这三家陈列室分别开发了一个独具特色的照明主题。展览会的设计概念是一次穿越电子山的旅程。考虑到中国典型地形的垂直分布和当代城市的规模,Tonkin Liu 设计了一系列高塔来捕捉光线,这些聚集在一起的高塔创建了不同类型的空间。

FRANÇAIS

L'exposition printemps 2008 de V&A, China Design Now, explore la récente explosion du nouveau design en Chine, du stade Olympique de 2008 aux tendances et graphiques les plus intéressants. L'exposition saisit un moment de plein dynamisme en Chine, alors que cette dernière s'ouvre aux influences globales, et considère ces développements dans trois villes en pleine expansion - Pékin, Shanghai et Shenzhen.

Dans trois galeries consacrées à l'impact du design dans chacune de ces trois villes, China Design Now présente le travail de designers chi-

nois et internationaux qui mettent en valeur des œuvres d'architecture, de mode, de culture jeune et de graphiques ainsi que des films, des photographies, des produits et meubles designs et des médias digitales.

Tonkin Liu, de Light Perceptions, qui travaille avec les designers, a développé un thème d'éclairage unique pour chacune des trois galeries. Le concept design de l'exposition est un voyage à travers des montagnes électriques. En se basant sur la verticalité des paysages chinois classiques et à l'échelle des villes chinoises, Tonkin Liu a conçu une série de tours très hautes qui capturent la lumière et sont rassemblées en faisceau pour créer différents types d'espace tout le long.

DEUTSCH

Die Frühlingsausstellung 2008 des V&A-Museums, "China Design Now", untersucht die kürzlich erfolgte Explosion an neuem Design in China: vom Stadion für die Olympischen Spiele 2008 bis hin



Delicate spotlighting is used to highlight many of the exhibits whilst others are lit by the output of a series of video screens. In the third hall, 'Beijing Future City', you see the impact of the rise of all forms of design in China today. Here, visible in stunning architectural models, photographs and films, is the architectural face of new China, newly 'Botoxed' with iconic projects. The lighting style is as bright and

strong as the exhibits. Emphasis is given to the three dimensional modelling and large format illustrations of the architectural masterpieces. The gallery is further decorated with gobos projecting a varied pattern of coloured 'digital dots' (ETC Source Fours with gobos from Rosco and colour filters from Lee Filters) further emphasizing the frantic nature of Chinese design in the modern age. The exhibition has been curated



by Zhang Hongxing and Lauren Parker of the V&A after four years of research involving close collaboration with institutions and individuals in China. Lauren Parker said: "This exhibition captures an extraordinary moment in Chinese design and the rise of China's consumer society. There is truly a sense of design frenzy in China right now." Zhang Hongxing said: "Design in China's cities has changed be-

yond all recognition in the last two decades. This is a moment when you can start talking about things being designed in China, not just made in China. The designers included in China Design Now are pioneers for future generations who will bring Chinese design to an international audience."

www.tonkinliu.co.uk

www.lightperceptions.co.uk

zur interessantesten Mode und grafischen Darstellungen. Die Ausstellung fängt eine dynamische Phase der Öffnung Chinas gegenüber globalen Einflüssen ein und betrachtet die Entwicklungen in drei schnell wachsenden Städten – Peking, Shanghai und Shenzhen.

In drei Galerien, die dem Einfluss des Designs in jeder der drei Städte gewidmet ist, zeigt die "China Design Now" die Arbeiten von chinesischen und internationalen Designern, die die Bereiche Architektur, Mode, Jugendkultur und Grafiken sowie Film, Fotografie, Produkt- und Möbeldesign und digitale Medien beleuchten.

In Zusammenarbeit mit den Designern Tonkin Liu entwickelte Light Perceptions einen einzigartigen Beleuchtungsentwurf für jede der drei Galerieräume. Das Design-Konzept für die Ausstellung ist eine Reise durch elektrische Berge. Indem sich Tonkin Liu der Vertikalität der klassischen chinesischen Landschaft und der Größe der heutigen chinesischen Städte bediente, gestaltete das Un-

ternehmen eine Serie von sehr großen Türmen, die das Licht einfangen und so gruppiert sind, dass sie durchgehend verschiedene Arten von Räumen erschaffen.

ITALIANO

L'esposizione di primavera V&A del 2008, "China Design Now", esplora la recente esplosione delle nuove tendenze del design in Cina, a partire dallo stadio per le Olimpiadi del 2008 per arrivare alle più interessanti realizzazioni nel campo della moda e della grafica. L'esposizione coglie quella fase di dinamismo della Cina che si apre alle influenze mondiali e che guarda allo sviluppo di tre grandi città in espansione: Beijing, Shanghai e Shenzhen. In tre gallerie dedicate all'impatto che il design ha su ciascuna di queste tre città, "China Design Now" ha esposto le opere dei designer cinesi e internazionali nei settori dell'architettura, della moda, della cultura giovanile e della grafica, non trascurando,

tuttavia, il settore della filmografia, della fotografia, del design di prodotti e di arredamenti e le tecniche multimediali.

La collaborazione con i designer di Tonkin Liu ha consentito a Light Perceptions di sviluppare un tema di illuminazione particolare per ciascuna delle tre gallerie espositive. Il concetto progettuale dell'esposizione è un viaggio tra "montagne elettriche". Attingendo dalla verticalità dei panorami classici cinesi e dalla contemporaneità delle città cinesi, Tonkin Liu ha progettato una serie di torri molto alte che catturano la luce e che sono state raggruppate per creare varie tipologie di spazio.

ESPAÑOL

La exposición de primavera de V&A 2008, China Design Now, explora la reciente explosión de diseños nuevos en la China, desde el estadio olímpico 2008 hasta la moda y las gráficas más interesantes. La exposición captura una fase dinámica

a medida que la China se abre a las influencias mundiales, y observa el desarrollo en tres ciudades que se están expandiendo rápidamente – Beijing, Shanghai y Shenzhen.

En tres galerías dedicadas el impacto del diseño en cada una de las tres ciudades, China Design Now, mostró el trabajo de diseñadores chinos e internacionales resaltando la arquitectura, la moda y la cultura juvenil, al igual que el cine, la fotografía, el diseño de productos y muebles y los medios de comunicación digitales.

Trabajando junto con los diseñadores Tonkin Liu, Light Perceptions desarrolló un tema único de iluminación para cada uno de los espacios de las tres galerías. El concepto de diseño de la exposición es un viaje a través de montañas eléctricas. Al dibujar en la verticalidad del paisaje clásico chino y en la escala de las ciudades contemporáneas chinas, Tonkin Liu diseñó una serie de torres muy altas que capturan la luz y se agrupan para crear diferentes tipos de espacios desde el principio hasta el fin.