

7th Shanghai Biennale

Translocalmotion

Opening: 8 September 2008

Duration: 9 September - 16 November 2008

Artistic Director: Zhang Qing

Curators: Julian Heynen, Henk Slager

Since its inauguration the Shanghai Biennale has repeatedly taken the city itself and its urban conditions as a starting point for its artistic explorations. In line with this inner logic, the curatorial team of the 2008 edition proposes to focus on one of the most important cornerstones of urban design: the public square which is a prime location of transfer, connection, connectivity, meeting, social and economical exchange.

Translocalmotion

As a starting point for the Seventh Shanghai Biennale the curatorial team suggested utilizing People's Square, of which the Shanghai Art Museum is actually part of. This public square seems to contain on a small-scale level a lot of crucial issues that the current Chinese society faces today. One of the most significant aspects of these is the migration from underdeveloped rural areas to developed urban spaces, in search of opportunities amidst the drastic social and economic changes in China. The nation is rapidly developing from an agricultural society to an industrialized and digitized one, and from planned economy to market economy. At People's Square the curatorial team found many issues related to the transition, such as the topical capitalism, the ultramodern architecture that express a spirit of optimism, the desire for a better life envisioned by for example the Grand Theater and the Museum for Urban Planning, as well as the numerous small stands operated by migrants.

Project

For the 2008 Shanghai Biennale the curatorial team would like to connect the Shanghai Art Museum directly to People's Square. For this reason, twenty emerging and established artists have been invited to take People's Square as visual metaphor for the complex dynamics of the people's mobility. Their work will be displayed on various media within and outside of the museum. Works that are shown outside were created with an intent to interact with the environment or the public. Each artist will also create an additional piece to be shown on the ground floor of the museum.

Keynotes

On the second floor, the curatorial team will focus on solo-exhibitions of three prominent artists. This rather unusual proposal was conceived in reaction to a tendency among many Biennales to present a vast number of hardly distinguishable artistic positions. As a guideline for the choice of artists in this section a more reflective and general attitude towards the issue of mobility related to the urban, economical and social development should be apparent in their artistic production.

Context

On the third floor, under the same theme, another twenty artists will be showing their work using non-shanghainese elements, to explore and discuss mobility issues in Asia, Europe and the Americas.

Publication: Shanghai Papers

Besides the standard exhibition catalogue the curatorial team will produce a sourcebook that consists of texts by the participating artists. These texts should present the artists' views on their artistic research within the context of the exhibition's theme.

Curatorial Team

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