

MUSEUM DEVELOPMENT IN CHINA

UNDERSTANDING THE BUILDING BOOM

A NEW BOOK BY
THE CHINESE MUSEUMS ASSOCIATION
AND LORD CULTURAL RESOURCES

PREVIEW BROCHURE

Not for Distribution
Contact: glord@lord.ca

NOVEMBER 2018

Cover image: Studio Zhu Pei

ABOUT THE CHINESE MUSEUM ASSOCIATION

Founded in 1935, the Chinese Museum Association (CMA) is a nationwide non-profit alliance. Its membership includes museum professionals as well as museum-related organizations and individuals. In 1983, CMA resumed its membership in ICOM and established ICOM-China.

Supervised by the State Administration of Cultural Heritage, the CMA closely follows museum codes and ethical standards, to unify these values and collaborate with museums, and museum-related organizations and individuals on a nation-wide basis. It acts as a guide, monitor, coordinator and legal advocate of museum industry. CMA has been involved in the work of organizing academic activities, publishing academic journals, undertaking national research projects,

conducting international communications, building platforms for inter-museum cooperation, providing services to its members and encouraging its members to develop the capacity for self-improvement. Its achievements throughout the years have greatly contributed to the improvement of Chinese museums management and academic research, contributing to the vigor and prosperity of Chinese culture.



ABOUT LORD CULTURAL RESOURCES

Founded in 1981 in response to an emerging need for specialized planning services in the museum, cultural and heritage sector, Lord Cultural Resources is now the world's largest cultural professional practice with the successful completion of more than 2,400 projects in over 57 countries on 6 continents. The firm has earned an international reputation for sector leadership, innovation and excellence.

We are dedicated to the creation of cultural capital worldwide, the value created as a result of the maximization of cultural resources. Our mission is to collaborate with people and organizations to plan and manage cultural places, programs and resources that deliver excellence in the service of society. We distinguish ourselves through a comprehensive and integrated full-service offering built on a foundation of visioning, planning and implementation.

We help clients clarify their goals; we provide them with the tools to achieve those goals; and we leave a legacy as a result of training and collaboration. Our clients are in all sectors including private and public corporations, foundations, governments and non-profit institutions.

With a network of offices in Toronto, New York, London, Mumbai and Beijing, we conduct ourselves with respect for local adaptation, cultural diversity and collaboration, embodying the highest standards of integrity, ethics and professional practice.



National Museum of Beijing

Understanding the Museum Boom

By: An Laishun,
Vice President of the International Council of Museums

As lively places throbbing with life, today's museums stand in sharp contrast to the desolate, dark and dusty institutions of 30 years ago. Part of this change has of course been driven by the visitor. The viewing public, who 30 years ago had few opportunities to even travel to different cities within their own province, now travel all over China and around the world and their tastes have changed accordingly.

Along with China's increasing economic power, comes a new demand for diverse cultural products. It's a story which very much reflects the stories of other countries as they transitioned into developed economies. But what's unique about China's situation is that while, Western governments are beginning to retreat from their role as cultural investors, the Chinese government has increased its investment in cultural heritage from 3.76 billion RMB in 2006 to 25.85 billion RMB in 2013—a six-fold increase. China's museum boom has also seen other important drivers, such as the basic need for capacity building. While in the Reform Era, the government had previously measured its progress based on pure economic growth, it began to seek a balance between the economy and regional and cultural indicators—highlighting a new understanding of the subtle relationship between GDP and the value of soft power.

Chinese museums have also made great strides in terms of outreach with the full implementation of the free admissions policy. The policy was supported

by government subsidies of 15 billion RMB (2.2 billion USD) per year over five years. In response to this stimulus we have seen the audience of each museum grow by over 50% attracting migrant laborers, urban low-income workers and other groups who previously experienced barriers to entry.

Chinese museums are also trying to extend their reach in a virtual sense with a recent push towards digitalization. The First National Survey of Movable Cultural Heritage was conducted from 2012 to 2017—a mammoth task whereby over 64 million collection items were either filed or re-filed digitally—to pave the way for the future sharing of this information with the public.

Perhaps some of the most interesting changes have emerged from the the management of the public and private sector. Private museums, which were previously left to more-or-less fend for themselves, have seen their fortunes improve due to a change in government attitudes since 2010. This involved new regulations and policies to encourage, support, guide and regulate the development of private museums towards healthy and sustainable growth. Therefore, through both the public and private sector engagement, we can look forward to continued evolution and transformation of this robust and dynamic industry.

—An Laishun,
Vice President Chinese Museums Association



Suzhou Museum

Overview of the Book

By the editors: Gail Lord, Javier Jimenez and Rebecca Catching

Some Chinese scholars trace the origin of museums in China to 478 BCE—the year after the death of Confucius. Since then, we have seen unprecedented growth in both the number and scale of Chinese museums, from about 1,400 at the turn of the century to over 5,000 to date.

This book seeks to explore the motivations behind the rapid development of museums in China. It also aims to answer the questions such as “How is the public responding?” “Who pays for these museums and how?” “How has China’s rapid urbanization affected this trend?” “How do Chinese museums balance education, scientific research, social cohesion, cultural diplomacy, and tourism both internal and external?”

In the course of exploring these issues, we also aim to introduce readers to the rich diversity museological practice in China through a variety of case studies and a rich array of photographs. We have engaged leading Chinese museologists and academics to provide chapters exploring the history of museums in China, evolving national museum policies, museum exhibitions and cultural diplomacy, the role of private museums, and the impact of museums on society. We also reached out to knowledgeable Western contributors from such diverse fields as architecture, urban planning, and contemporary art, to contribute essays on Chinese in place-making, the creative economy, systems of governance, and the complex relationships between private and public sectors and the many levels of government.

The book is structured in four sections.

Section One places the current building boom in context. Dr. An Laishun provides an overview of the development of Chinese museology. Javier Jimenez and Gail Lord identify two comparable museum building booms in the global North and West and propose some causes—urbanization in particular—that are also in contributing to the boom in China today. Professors Song Xiangguang and Duan Yong provide histories of Chinese museums while Sofia Bollo and Yu Zhang share their experience of the evolution of Chinese museum policy and practice.

Section Two addresses how China’s rapid urbanization has stimulated the museum building boom, framed it, formed it and in some cases financed it. Doug Saunders who is an expert on urbanization and migration writes about the particular ways that Chinese cities grow and how real estate development impacts new museums throughout the country; while urban planner Phil Enquist shares his experience working with new Chinese cities and helping them develop a sense of place. He Jingtang explains why symbolic architecture has become the hallmark of China’s newest museums and two case studies illuminate the role of private developers (the Today Art Museum) and the genius loci of the Jingdezhen Imperial Kiln Museum.

Section Three analyzes how Chinese exhibitions are tools for cultural diplomacy (Zhou Ming) and key elements of soft power (An Laishun). Chinese-Canadian curator Chen Shen contributes a memoir on international exhibition exchange. Tomislav Sola sees a new form of internationalism emerging through China’s global cultural activities. Tian Kai explains how opening up to more international influences has profoundly changed the philosophy of Chinese museums and Tim Reeve has written an insightful case study on the V&A partnership in Shenzhen.



iSTART A4 Art Museum

The **five case studies in Section Four** provide insights into the impact of a British Museum blockbuster on Chinese museums, exploring how China’s museums are harnessing technology, what it means to be visitor-centered at the Palace Museum, and in Suzhou the expansion of merchandising. We have titled this section Challenges and Opportunities because it explores the range of both, including how private museums create bridges to contemporary art (by our co-editor Rebecca Catching), the enduringly popularity of natural history museums (Jian Guan) and the dichotomy between relic preservation and public access (Han Yong).

This book is an international collaboration which aims to discover how much East and West can learn from each other about museum roles, our publics, how we preserve what we preserve and future sustainability—even as we marvel at the amazing accomplishments of China’s museum building boom.

—Gail Lord, Co-founder and President of Lord Cultural Resources

—Javier Jimenez, Director of Organization and Strategy Operations

—Rebecca Catching, Museum Planning Consultant

Contributors



AN LAISHUN,
Vice President of the International
Council of Museums



GAIL LORD
Co-founder and President of
Lord Cultural Resources



JAVIER JIMENEZ
Director of Organization and
Strategy Operations,
Lord Cultural Resources



GUANG QIANG
President, Chinese Museums
Association



SHAN JIXIANG
Director of the Palace Museum



DUAN YONG
Former Deputy Director
of the Palace Museum



SONG XIANGGUANG
Professor of the School of
Archaeology and Museology,
Peking University. Executive
Director of the China Museums
Association



DOUG SAUNDERS
International Affairs Columnist
The Globe and Mail and Author
of "Arrival City" (2010)



GAO PENG
Director of Today Art Museum



PHIL ENQUIST
Consulting Partner, Skidmore,
Owings, and Merrill



HE JINGTANG
Head of the School of Architecture
at the South China University of
Technology



ZHU PEI
Founder of Studio Zhu-Pei,
Dean of Central Academy of Fine
Arts, School of Architecture



ZHOU MING
Deputy Director of the
International Communications
Center of the China Relics Bureau



CHEN SHEN
Senior Curator and Vice President
of Art and Culture, the Royal
Ontario Museum



TOMISLAV SOLA
Former ICOM National Committee
Chairman



TIAN KAI
Director of Henan Provincial
Bureau of Cultural Relics



TIM REEVE
Deputy Director &
Chief Operating Officer
of the V&A



YANG ZHIGANG
Vice Chair Chinese Museums
Association, Director of the
Shanghai Museum



WEI JUN
Director of Guangdong Museum



REBECCA CATCHING
Museum Planning Consultant and
independent curator specializing
in Chinese Museums and Chinese
Contemporary Art



JIAN GUAN
President of Sino Lord



CHEN RUIJING
Director of Suzhou Museum



PEI DEQIANG
Director of Operations Beijing
Sino Lord



SOFIA BOLLO
Ph.D. Candidate,
University Research Priority
Program (URPP) Asia and Europe
at the University of Zurich



YU ZHANG
Founder of Yu Culture Consultancy

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION

Preface

Guang Qiang

Introduction

Gail Lord

Javier Jimenez

SECTION 1 - CHINA'S MUSEUM BOOM IN CONTEXT

1.1 Transforming China's Museums

An Laishun

1.2 Museum Booms in a Global Context

Gail Lord and Javier Jimenez

1.3 A Brief history of Chinese Museums to 1949

Duan Yong

1.4 A Brief History of Chinese Museums 1949-1995

Song Xiangguang

1.5 The Musealization of China

Sofia Bollo and Yu Zhang

1.6 The Dichotomy of Precious Objects and Public Service in the Structures of Public Funding

Han Yong

SECTION 2 - MUSEUM BUILDINGS IN THE NEW URBAN CULTURE

2.1 How Chinese Cities Stimulate the Museum Boom

Doug Saunders

2.2 Case Study: Today Art Museum: Born of Real Estate

Gao Peng

2.3 The Role of Culture in Planning China's Cities

Phil Enquist

2.4 Character Building in Museum Architecture

He Jingtang

2.5 Case Study: Jingdezhen Imperial Kiln Museum: Adapting Architecture to the Needs of Heritage

Zhu Pei

SECTION 3 - OPENING UP TO THE WORLD

3.1 Cultural Diplomacy and Soft Power

An Laishun

3.2 Exhibitions as Tools of Diplomacy

Zhou Ming

3.3 Navigating Cross-cultural Collaborations: A Memoir of Cultural Exchange between China and Canada

Chen Shen

3.4 Museums and Public Engagement: Changing Concepts and Strategies

Tomislav Sola

3.5 The Changing Ideology of Museums: From Hermetic and Inward-looking to Outward-reaching and International

Tian Kai

3.6 Case Study: The V&A Partnership with the Design Society in Shenzhen

Tim Reeve

SECTION 4 - INNOVATION AND RISK-TAKING

4.1 Case Study: Shanghai Museum: "A History of the World in 100 Objects"—Growing the Capacity for Institutional Change

Yang Zhigang

4.2 Case Study: Guangdong Museum: The Dawn of the Smart Museum

Wei Jun

4.3 Case Study: Palace Museum: Museum Fever—Keeping Up With Public Demand for New Experiences

Shan Jixian

4.4 Private Museums — Building Bridges to Contemporary Art

Rebecca Catching

4.5 Underappreciated, Yet Wildly Popular — The Development and Evolution of Natural History Museums over the Last Four Decades

Jian Guan

4.6 Case Study: Suzhou Museum: Harnessing the Power of People, Products and Place

Chen Ruijing

4.7 Case Study: Guanfu Museum: Entering Through the Gift Shop: Creating Products Which Speak to for the Museum and to the Visitor

Pei Deqiang

CONCLUSION

Towards a Sustainable Future

Gail Lord, Javier Jimenez and Rebecca Catching



Shanghai Natural History Museum



Guangdong Provincial Museum

Keeping up with the Latest Trends in Museology



Ningbo Museum



Wuzhen

Lord Publications are available through booksellers and our website. These include our manuals on various aspects of cultural planning and management, and our Lord museum books for young people.

Publications:

Published by Rowman and Littlefield, rowman.com:

Manual of Digital Museum Planning, 2017

The Manual of Strategic Planning for Cultural Organizations, 2017

The Manual of Museum Learning, 2007, 2nd Edition 2016

Manual of Museum Exhibitions, 2001, 2nd Edition 2014

Manual of Museum Planning, 1991, 2nd Edition 1999, 3rd Edition 2012

Artists, Patrons, and the Public: Why Culture Changes, 2010

The Manual of Museum Management, 1997, 2nd Edition 2009

(Chinese, Georgian, Russian and Spanish translations also available)

Published by Rowman & Littlefield Publishers American Alliance of Museums, rowman.com:

Cities, Museums and Soft Power, 2015

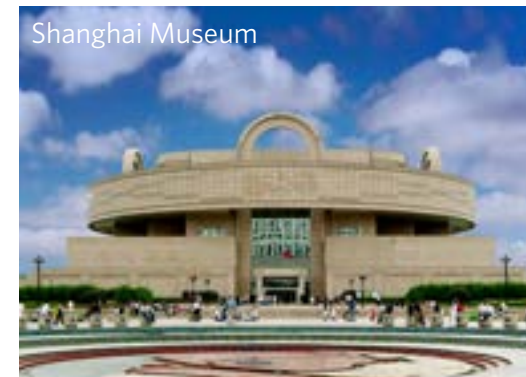
Art & Energy: How Culture Changes, 2014



Yinchuan Moca



Today Art Museum



Shanghai Museum



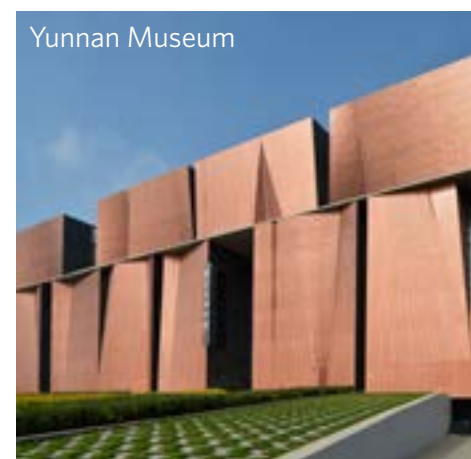
Terra Cotta Warriors at the Romanian Museum of National History



Nanjing Museum



Design Society, Shenzhen



Yunnan Museum



Public outreach event at Times Museum

*Museum Development in China is
published by Rowman and Littlefield
and will be available at select
bookstores and online in Spring 2019.
For more information please contact
glord@lord.ca*