Pre-Announcement for the Press:

ZAI XING TU-MU MUSEUM
Fifteen Chinese Architects

Exhibition as part of the ANCB-Program:

THE MUSEUM OF THE 21st CENTURY
Content-Form-Impact

A collaboration with Zumtobel

Opening on August 26, 2016
Exhibition from August 27 – October 13
at Aedes Architecture Forum Berlin

For more information, press images and contact to the architects please write to:
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Intro Exhibition: “ZAI XING TU-MU MUSEUM - Fifteen Chinese Architects”

Aedes and China

After presenting the first generation of independent architects from China 15 years ago, in 2001, first in Berlin and later in Shanghai and thus bringing them to international attention and acknowledgement, it is a great pleasure to announce “ZAI XING TU-MU MUSEUM”.

“TU-MU – Young Architecture of China“ at that time showcased Yung Ho Chang, Liu Jiakun, Ma Qingyun, Wang Shu, Zhang Lei, Ding Wowo, Wang Jun-Yang, Zhu Jingxiang and Ai Weiwei. Most of them had their work presented outside of China for the first time. Since then, Wang Shu received the Pritzker Prize, Yung Ho Chang became Dean at the School of Architecture at MIT, Ma Qingyun received the same position at USC in Los Angeles and Ai Weiwei, for the first time exhibited in Germany at Aedes, is now an artist of international fame. Liu Jiakun, Zhang Lei and the other participants have become highly respected architects and teachers in China and abroad.

To our surprise we found out many years later, that the TU-MU exhibition ignited an intense and controversial discussion within China on architecture, building culture, identity, tradition and modernity. Today TU-MU is a synonym for an awakened and enforced self-consciousness and independency in Chinese contemporary architecture.

Aedes followed up on these developments over the past decade with exhibitions on individual architects and their respective approaches. ANCB The Aedes Metropolitan Laboratory has now curated another collection of works by Chinese architects on a very specific and globally discussed topic – the museum!

By showcasing this unique compilation, made possible by and in collaboration with our Research Partner Zumtobel, ANCB launches the first exhibition of a continuous series. Over the next three years “The Museum of the 21st Century“ will be implemented as a critical, international discourse on the task of the museum in a globalised, brand-oriented and digital age with regards to current socio-political, urban and cultural backgrounds.
The exhibition, curated by Dr Eduard Kögel and conceptualized by Hans-Jürgen Commerell, is characterized by three basic elements: Instead of showcasing photographs of the realized museums in different Chinese cities and regions, ANCB commissioned professional painter Yiming Liao from Dafen Village in Shenzhen to interpret the buildings in their urban or rural environment. These oil paintings will be presented in a museum-style layout together with a selection of models for each project. Video-interviews with the architects and representatives from the fields of arts and culture will provide an insight into the contemporary approach of museum culture and its connection to societal and urban development in China. (More info about the artist Yiming Liao please find attached)

Fifteen of the sixteen museums on show are designed by architects and are either new or converted buildings, with the New Workers Museum in Beijing being an exception. Grown from a NGO initiative and implemented in a former industrial plant in a village outside of Beijing, this project is a remarkable example for an architecture without architects and the need to discuss issues of identity.

The ANCB “Museum of the 21st Century” program targets

Private or royal collections opening for the first time to the public 250 years ago in Europe had two main functions: representation and education. Since the 19th century museum design often resembled ‘art temples’, reflecting the claim of replacing social and didactic functions of churches within the urban fabric.

The last thirty years have seen an unparalleled rise of new museum buildings all over the world with many more being planned right now. Next to the important role of conservation, presentation or discussion of cultural values, museums act locally as social centres for education and citizenship. At the same time their impact from national to global scale is growing, aiming to attract mass audiences, and representing the driving force for urban development or functioning as incubator for the art business. In turn, the value of culture itself is in need of a clarifying debate. There is a new focus on the role of the museum as one of cultural “storytelling” and situating that story in the context of a physical place while also integrating the co-production of art-works and history through the audience. A special emphasis in the program is placed on the museum within the context of its local environment, its adjacent buildings, the city and the region while it is asked who and what
defines the content, shape and impact of museums and to what purpose? What function and position do museums have today and how can architects and curators, educators, artists and policy makers design the tasks of the new institutions and reach the citizens?

China Case

China represents an outstanding example for this “museum boom”, discussed intensely in Western and Chinese media. The sheer number of new projects in China is overwhelming and international visitors as well as local inhabitants wonder about the long-term effect on society and public urban space.

The fast urbanisation of the last thirty years in China shaped, among other aspects, new societal needs, which resulted in new building typologies addressing issues of identity, change and memory. The roles and programs of new museums are crucial and not always fully clear in the beginning, but they reflect the demand for deeper cultural roots of a new, dramatically risen middle class. The recent museum buildings often serve hybrid purposes and are in search of their role in city and society. Today, more than 3500 museums in China are open to the public, mostly financed by the government. In addition, private collectors or commercial firms established about 500 museums to display their collections.

“ZAI XING TU-MU MUSEUM, Fifteen Chinese Architects”

The exhibition works like a lens that focalizes crucial questions: How is the local and national identity defined, now and for the future? How does the museum work within the context of its local social and urban environment and what form or shape has been chosen as adequate for its function and context? What does this mean for the future? A bubbling global art market, accompanied by diminishing public support for cultural institutions creates a much-debated rise in public-private partnerships and a growing influence of private maecenes in the cultural scene. Well-funded large institutions reflect an increasing need for the representation of their respective cultural identities.

Architects and Museums

Fifteen selected museums designed by Chinese architects and one museum conceptualized by the users are presented in the exhibition. These projects were not only chosen for their formal novelty, but for certain aspects they represent within the current museum development. Furthermore, we discuss societal meaning and impact on an urban as well as on a rural level. Each designer shows one important project. Further information by architects, artists, curators and collectors about the urban context, the brief and the difficulties to implement a museum in the China of today are displayed as videos. This allows a unique insight into the difficulties and challenges for the professionals involved, but also offers a new understanding of cultural production and public engagement.
The following projects are shown:

**The Ningbo History Museum**, designed by an amateur architecture studio (WANG Shu / LU Wenyu) from Hangzhou, was conceived as a competition and has been built between 2003 and 2008 in the city centre of a new town in Yinzhou district in Ningbo. The façade of reused bricks and tiles from demolished villages nearby became the distinctive mark of the museum. Visitors and locals look at the building as a reminder of a vanished history, sacrificed in the name of progress.

**The Ordos City and Art Museum**, designed by MAD Architects (MA Yansong / DANG Qun / Yosuke HAYANO) from Beijing, is located in the administrative centre of Kangbashi New Town in Ordos in Inner Mongolia. Kangbashi was developed as a huge urbanisation project that is not very populated yet and is sometimes called the biggest ghost town in China. The radical organic design for the museum resembles the sand dunes of the desert that previously covered the area. Due to the lack of inhabitants and population, the new museum is still waiting to unfold its purpose.

**The Power Station of Art in Shanghai**, designed by local architects Original Design Studio (ZHANG Ming / ZHANG Zi), houses the first state run museum for contemporary art in China. The building is a reused power station at the Huangpu River, which belongs to the new cultural axis of West Bund in Shanghai. Through an international program and without a permanent collection, the museum acts as an open platform for discourse with a significant role in education and negotiation of contemporary art production.

**The Guangdong Museum in Guangzhou**, designed by Rocco Design Architects (Rocco Yim) from Hong Kong, is located in the new city centre opposite the opera house of Zaha Hadid Architects. Rocco Design architects won the international competition in 2004 and the building was finished in 2010. Ancient treasure boxes inspired the spatial arrangement while the interior also reflects a translucent layering of traditional Chinese architecture in a contemporary way.

**The Long Museum** at West Bund in Shanghai, designed by Atelier Deshaus (Liu Yichun / Chen Yifeng) from Shanghai, was commissioned by the government and today contains the private collection of Liu Yiqian and her husband Wang Wei. The museum opened in 2014 and was built on an already existing two-storey underground parking garage and around an old coal-hopper unloading bridge at Huangpu River. The umbrella-like vaulted concrete construction shapes the buildings’ distinctive appearance.

**The Artron Art Centre** in Shenzhen is designed by urbanus (MENG Yan / WANG Hui / LIU Xiadu) from Beijing and Shenzhen. The centre is located at the cities edge and surrounded by three highways while the compact form developed as protection against the noisy, chaotic environment. Combining different functions like a printing factory, an office and a roof sky garden with the art centre, the mixed-use-program is a new approach to add value to an otherwise completely private production facility.

**The New Workers Museum** in Picun Village in Beijing, organised and operated by an NGO, was initiated in 2008 and is located in a village with a fundamental working class population. The new workers, often called the floating population, have only limited access to the amenities of urban life. To educate themselves and their children, the NGO set up the museum with the donations of the workers, the support of OXFAM Hong Kong, the Cultural Bureau of Beijing Municipality and the Village Committee of Picun Village. The permanent collection focuses on the life of the migrant workers, their achievement and struggles with employers and administration.
The Wang Xiao Hui Art Museum in Suzhou, designed by EXH Design (ZHANG Xi / Erich DISEREN) from Shanghai with artist WANG Xiao Hui, serves as a showcase facility for the artist since 2012. The architects transformed the old courtyard building in cooperation with the artist by keeping the general layout and adding the necessary technical improvements. To indicate the new location, the architects tautened a metal mesh across the front façade, which is backlighted during the night.

The famous artist Huang Yongyu initiated the Jishou Art Museum Bridge in Jishou in Hunan province. Atelier Feichang Jianzhu (Yung Ho CHANG) from Beijing took the opportunity to identify a location and proposed a footbridge across the local river within the traditional urban fabric. The museum bridge is a reverence to the traditional covered footbridges and accommodates all exhibition spaces above the pedestrian circulation. The construction is scheduled to 2016 and will finish in 2018.

The Xiao Feng Art Museum in Hangzhou in Zhejiang province resulted from a competition, won by ZAO/standardarchitecture (ZHANG Ke) from Beijing. The museum is dedicated to the artist Xiao Feng, a famous socialist realist. He worked from the 1960s onwards and served as professor at the China Art Academy in Hangzhou. The organic building in the landscape adds a new destination to the wider scenery of the West Lake. The museum is in the planning process.

The National Earthquake Memorial and Museum in Beichuan in Sichuan province, designed by CAI Yongjie from Tongji University Shanghai, was commissioned through a competition. The site covers the ruins of the Beichuan Middle School, where many pupils lost their lives during the earthquake. Embedded into the landscape, the museum and the memorial reflect and remind us of the power of natural forces. The buildings construction finished in 2013.

The Zhujiajiao Museum of Humanities & Arts, designed by Scenic Architecture (ZHU Xiaofeng) from Shanghai, is located at the old water town Zhujiajiao near Shanghai. The new museum, next to two more than 470 years old ginkgo trees, is dedicated to house paintings and other works of art related to the history of the town and opened in 2010.

The Museum of Handcraft Paper, designed by Trace Architecture Office (HUA Li) from Beijing, locates in the Gaoligong area in Yunnan province. With local craftsman and traditional materials such as timber, bamboo and handcraft paper, the new museum is conceived like a micro-village where the tradition of papermaking is kept alive. The museum opened in 2010.

The Dali Museum of Contemporary Art, designed by Studio Zhu Pei (ZHU Pei) from Beijing, is located at Dali in Yunnan province. The site is an abandoned temple with a pagoda from the tenth century. With respect to the traditional constructions of temple and pagoda, the new museum is mostly underground while only smaller elements for natural lighting appear above ground. The museum is under construction.

The Qingdao Earthly Pond Service Centre, designed by HHD_Fun (WANG Zhenfei / WANG Luming / Li Hongyu) from Beijing, served for the International Horticultural Exposition 2014 in Qingdao in Shandong province. The buildings are integrated into the landscape and became part of the surrounding landscape. The expo showgrounds are still accessible, but the buildings wait for a new future use.

The Intangible Cultural Heritage Museum, designed by Vector Architects (GONG Dong) from Beijing, will be part of the Horticultural Exposition at Taihu Lake near Suzhou in Jiangsu province in 2016. Organized around courtyards and covered by the landscape within a precious wetland, the museum will serve as infrastructure for recreation and touristic use after the expo.
Yiming Liao Painter, Dafen, China

Interpretation of The Artron Art Centre in Shenzhen

Interpretation of The New Workers Museum in Picun Village in Beijing