LIFE AND ART
MAKE INVISIBLE VISIBLE IN CAO CHANGDI VILLAGE, BEIJING, CHINA

A Thesis Presented
by
PENG ZHANG

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
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Architecture
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DEDICATION
To my beloved parents and family
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks for my family.

Thanks to all people I ever met and all tough and happy time I ever experienced during these three years.

Thanks to all my studio mates. Thanks to the suggestions my studio mates provided. Thanks to the reference books they suggested. Thanks to their kind help.

Thanks to the happiest time we have experienced. Thanks to the meals Jiansen Ye’s mother cooked every day.

Special Thanks to Kathleen Lugosch, Sigrid Miller Pollin, Joseph Krupczynski, Ray Kinoshita Mann, Caryn Brause, Sandy Litchfield for their academic advice, significant critics and kind help.

I should surely admit that I cannot make it without them.
ABSTRACT

LIFE AND ART
MAKE INVISIBLE VISIBLE IN CAO CHANGDI VILLAGE, BEIJING, CHINA

MAY 2016

PENG ZHANG, B.A., TAIYUAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY
M.ARCH., UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST

Directed by: Professor Kathleen Lugosch

Why do we design architecture? How we design it? Why do we design architecture in this way, not in that way? What's the most important characteristic for architecture? How we can identity if architecture has realized all ideas we proposed before? With these questions, with the help from kind professors, I found one interesting place - Cao changdi, Beijing, China. Luckily, I found one interesting street and noticed there are some problems here. I needed to figure out what exactly are the problems and try to solve the problems with architecture.

I found that relations and connections are missing at this street. They are supposed to be there, but they are invisible. Why not make them visible?

I tried to direct this design based on the user’s stories or experiences. My approach was to visualize peoples’ experience in a new architecture through story boards, or ‘frame’ of applying the film director’s skills and design minds to approach architecture.

Let peoples’ experience in an architecture become a movie. Applying the film director’s skills and minds to the design of architecture.
Space plays an important role in architecture design. What happened in that space is what is important. Of course, stories would happen in that space. Then what’s the story?

My thesis project would illustrate how three stories - visitor, villager and artist's experience help to direct the design.
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CHAPTER 1
WHAT’S THE STORY THE ARTIST AND ART CAN TELL?

1.1 Artist Marcel Duchamp and his selected art works

Marcel Duchamp: what's art?

Marcel Duchamp (1877-1968) was a French artist who worked in the Dada style. He was a modernist artist with very strong opinions about art and he produced many provocative works in a variety of mediums.

Duchamp has had an immense impact on twentieth-century and twenty-first-century art. By World War I, he had rejected the work of many of his fellow

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1 Image from GOOGLE IMAGE
2 Images from GOOGLE IMAGE
artists as "retinal" art, intended only to please the eye. Instead, Duchamp wanted to put art back in the service of the mind.3

One of his most famous works - “Fountain” is a urinal, turned in a different direction, with the name “R,Mutt 1917”. It is also one of the most provocative work in the history of art. Duchamp himself explained: "it is really not important to make this fountain with his own hands, what’s important is creating a new thinking and perspective of the selected daily object, forgetting its original old meanings. No reasons can explain why he chose urinal or bicycle wheels. but the choice of the urinal really can help to extend the categories of arts.

“In 1913,” recalled Marcel Duchamp, “I had the happy idea to fasten a bicycle wheel to a kitchen stool and watch it turn.”

“When Bicycle Wheel was first displayed, Duchamp encouraged viewers to spin the wheel. Although he claimed to select objects for his readymades without regard to beauty, he said, “To see that wheel turning was very soothing, very comforting…I enjoyed looking at it, just as I enjoy looking at the flames dancing in a fireplace.”4

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3 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marcel_Duchamp
1.2 Artist Xu bing and his selected art works

This project began in 2008 and he was invited to design and install a sculpture for the Beijing World Financial Center.

Xu bing recalled, “The first time I visited the field, I had a sense of shock. Migrant day labors were able to build the luxury high-rise buildings. But their
living conditions were so terrible. I really can not imagine that. So I decided to collect architecture trashes from the construction field and their tools to make a self - respected phoenix rise.

Throughout China’s history, every dynasty has had its form of phoenixes. Representing luck, unity, power and prosperity, these mythological birds have, for the most part, been benevolent, gentle creatures. But this pair, fashioned from the materials of commercial development, reflect the grimmer and grittier face of China today.

“They bear countless scars,” Mr. Xu explained, having “lived through great hardship, but still have self-respect. In general, the phoenix expresses unrealized hopes and dreams.”

When Chinese people show off their wealth, Xu Bing created the phoenix to show the self-respect of people from bottom of the society. His concern his art with social issues and revealed the social drawbacks.

7 http://www.nytimes.com/2014/02/15/arts/design/xu-bing-installs-his-sculptures-at-st-john-the-divine.html?_r=0
1.3 Artist zhang huan and his selected art works

Zhang huan is a Chinese artist based in Shanghai and New York. He began his career as a painter and then transitioned to performance art before making a comeback to painting. He is primarily a performance artist but also makes photographs and sculpture.\(^9\)

Zhang Huan said "These ash remains speak to the fulfillment of millions of".

\(^8\) Image from GOOGLE IMAGE
\(^9\) Image from GOOGLE IMAGE
\(^10\) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zhang_Huan
hopes, dreams and blessings. It was here that I finally discovered the ingredient I had been looking for to pave the way for new work."\(^\text{11}\)

The ash produced from burning incense is collected from twenty or so temples in Shanghai weekly and is brought to Huan’s studio in the Min Hang district to be sorted by color gradation for his paintings and sculptures. Aside from the materiality of the ash itself, it carries with it an symbolic significance in Eastern cultures with its use in rituals to commemorate ancestors and venerate deities. For Huan, "these ash remains speak to the fulfillment of millions of hopes, dreams and blessings".\(^\text{12}\)

Ash maintains a metaphoric connection to memory, the soul and the spiritual. Past and present are synthesized with the use of ash as material and as contemporary subject matter. Huan inherently addresses the collective experience of Chinese identity with memory, spirituality and soul. In Huan’s words: "Everything we are, everything we believe and want are within these ashes."\(^\text{13}\)

\(^{11}\) https://www.artsy.net/article/phillips-zhang-huan-spiritual-made-material
\(^{13}\) Zhang Huan: Ash Paintings and Memory Doors
1.4 Artist Ai weiwei and his selected art works

Ai weiwei, a cultural figure of international renown, was born 28 August 1957 in Beijing. He is a Chinese Contemporary artist and activist. As a political activist, he has been highly and openly critical of the Chinese Government's stance on democracy and human rights. He is an activist, architect, curator, filmmaker, and China’s most famous artist.

Open in his criticism of the Chinese government, Ai was famously detained for months in 2011, then released to house arrest. “I don’t see myself as a dissident artist,” he says. “I see them as a dissident government!” Some of Ai’s best known works are installations, often tending towards the conceptual and sparking dialogue between the contemporary world and traditional Chinese modes of thought and production.

His works often relates to history and memory.

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14 Image from GOOGLE IMAGE
15 https://www.artsy.net/artist/ai-weiwei
The three photographs capture the moment when tradition is transformed and challenged by new values. At the same time, new ideas and values have been produced through the act of dropping a Han Dynasty urn to the floor.

Ai weiwei said, “Regardless of how art represents destruction or negativity, it is a progressive explanation of mankind’s understanding of self and of the world. Art does not have a negative or destructive quality, no matter which period it belongs to.”

For *Sunflower Seeds* (2010) at the Tate Modern, he scattered 100 million porcelain “seeds” hand painted by 1,600 Chinese artisans to express mass consumption and the loss of individuality.
Coca-Cola Vase (1994) is a Han Dynasty urn emblazoned with the ubiquitous soft-drink logo. This is the artist’s earliest series using antiques. The work blends contemporary design and branding from the global marketplace with the aesthetic and taste of people many centuries earlier.

Other works

Figure 1.11  Caco-cola Vase

Figure 1.12  Grapes

Figure 1.13  Table with two legs on the wall
These Masterpieces are inspired by life and successfully make the transformation between invisible and visible.

Figure 1.14 Diagram of art and life
CHAPTER 2
WHAT THE STORY THE ARCHITECTURE CAN TELL?

The following projects developed an approach to the making of their architecture program and design through an analysis of peoples’ desires and needs. This approach influenced the development of my “stories of people in architecture”

2.1 Seattle Central Library / OMA + LMN

The example of Seattle Central Library / OMA + LMN could illustrate Koolhaas’s response to the “culture of congestion”. Multi-systems have been organized and “urban spaces” have been contained within the geometry. Koolhaas even did not care about the form of the library, which was produced by the organization of the programs. Koolhaas tried to redefine library’s condition, which more than a mere library, is a public space around

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22 Image from GOOGLE IMAGE
23 Image from GOOGLE IMAGE
knowledge based on the new program relations. He answered the question about “In an age where information can be accessed anywhere, what we built the library for?” Koolhaas said, “The library can be the simultaneity of all media and curatorship of their contents. The Seattle central library successfully created a civic space for the circulation of knowledge in all media under the threat from a shrinking public realm on one side and digitization on the other.” Programmatic thinking played an important role in koolhaas’s career. He analyzed the programs to response to different groups of people and meet their desires.

Figure 2.3 Diagram

The library’s various programs are intuitively arranged across five platforms and four flowing “in between” planes. Each platform is a programmatic cluster that is architecturally defined and equipped for maximum, dedicated performance. Because each platform is designed for a unique purpose, their size, flexibility, circulation, palette, structure and MEP vary. The spaces in between the platforms function as trading floor where librarians inform and

24 Image from GOOGLE IMAGE
stimulate, where the interface between the different platforms is organized - spaces for work, interaction, and play.

Koolhaas was always trying to contain all programs and systems within one system, which each system was always keeping its own features.

2.2 The Philosophy of Ando’s design

“I believe three elements are necessary to crystallize architecture - material, a pure geometry and nature” said by Ando. From Ando’s work, we can clearly find how this architecture philosophy shape Ando’s building. Besides these three elements, Ando still composed the architecture by seeking an essential logic inherent in the place. A site always has a distinct field of force that affects man. Ando recognized that the purpose of architecture is basically the construction of place. How could the building respond to the demands made by land? Ando insists that the logic of architecture must be adapted to the logic of nature and the aim of architecture is always the creation of an environment where the logic of nature and the logic of architecture are in fierce conflict yet coexist.

Ando’s building could guide the visitor through different psychological layers of space and touch the mind, the body and the senses on many levels. He created a sense of the landscape that touches and reinforces people’s deep attachment to a place and gave them a sense of stability and belongings.
The Chikatsu-Asuka Historical Museum is dedicated to exhibiting and researching kofun culture. In order to produce a museum integrated with the burial mounds, Ando conceived it as a stepped hill, lifted technically from the natural terrain. The building was stepped up in order to provide a view of the surrounding area. The roof has become a large stepped plaza and used for drama and music festivals as well as lectures and other performances. Inside the building the display areas are dark and the objects are exhibited as they were found in the tombs. Visitors receive the sensation of entering an actual tomb and feel drawn, in mood, back to an ancient time.
2.3 Prada transformers / OMA

Another example is the Prada transformers located in South Korea, Seoul, is a temporary structure picked up by cranes and rotated to accommodate a variety of cultural event. The 20 meter high Prada transformer is located adjacent to the 16th century Gyeonghui Palace in the center of Seoul. The pavilion consists of four basic geometric shaped - a circle, a cross, a hexagon, a rectangle - leaning together and wrapped in a translucent membrane.

Figure 2.6\textsuperscript{27} Picture of Prada transformers

\textsuperscript{27} Image from GOOGLE IMAGE
Each shape is a potential floor plan designed to be ideal for three months of cultural programming: a fashion exhibition, film festival, an art exhibition, and a Prada fashion show, wall become floors and floors become walls as the pavilion is flipped over by three cranes after each event to accommodate the next.

The Prada Transformer is considered an unusual building which has one of four different apparent shapes, depending on the function of the building which is needed at the moment. How did this idea come about? The past several years there has been an interaction of applied arts; fashion is in architecture, architecture is in fashion; art is in fashion; art is in architecture and so on. Some decades ago these disciples were separate and different, in current day they act as one. The concept behind this project is the following a hosting of four different events in one pavilion. The hexagon was used for the PRADA fashion exhibition, the cross was used for the art exhibition, the rectangle as a movie theater, the circle for a special event.

28 Image from GOOGLE IMAGE
When the building has rotated and changed its identity the visitor can always look at the plans of the other events which are like a memory that define the space. The facades of the tetrahedron are not those of the triangle; other shapes were used instead like a hexagon, a cross, a rectangle and a circle.

2.4 Casa Da Musica - concert hall for the city of Porto / OMA

The architecture has been regarded as a systematic background by Koolhaas created to provide several specific programs of events and activities. Sometimes, he would think of the way of focusing on the proportion, structure, detail and scale as the chains to limit his minds. He believes the reasons why he can always do not fall into the routine is that he can get rid of the chains, and explore the mutual adaptation of the relationship between

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29 Image from GOOGLE IMAGE
architecture form and function. Studying on the problems of the city for a long time, a lot of city planning and design training helped Koolhaas design architecture to respond to the whole city.

In the project, CASA DA MUSICA - concert hall for the city of Porto, Koolhaas used “excavated” techniques.

Figure 2.930 concept model of CASA DA MUSICA

“The past thirty years have seen frantic attempts by architects to escape the domination of the "shoe-box" concert hall. Rather than struggle with the inescapable acoustic superiority of this traditional shape, the Casa da Musica attempts to reinvigorate the traditional concert hall in another way: by redefining the relationship between the hallowed interior and the general public outside. The Casa da Musica, the new home of the National Orchestra of Porto, stands on a new public square in the historic Rotunda da Boavista. It has a distinctive faceted form, made of white concrete, which remains solid and believable in an age of too many icons. Inside, the elevated 1,300-seat (shoe box-shaped) Grand Auditorium has corrugated glass facades at either end that open the hall to the city and offer Porto itself as a dramatic backdrop.

30 Image from GOOGLE IMAGE
for performances. Casa da Musica reveals its contents without being didactic; at the same time, it casts the city in a new light."

He did focused research on the classical music concert hall and found most of them are "shoe boxes", This is an ideal shape as acoustics and sound effects in such a shaped space can be well controlled. In recent years, architects tried to make "shoe box" becomes interesting, beautiful. But in another way, Koolhaas also believed that the "shoe box" had the potential to make the music hall unusual.

CASA DA MUSICA - concert hall for the city of Porto includes two concert hall, the big “shoe box” and small concert hall. These two concert halls excavated and decomposed most of the volume of the building.

The rest of the entity has been excavated at several vertical dimensions to become the indispensable functions - the rehearsal hall, music classrooms, office, restaurant, storage, transportation, space and equipment,

Ultimately the concert hall has become a hollow block.

In a word, “excavated” is the first process of avoiding limitation and exploring new possibilities. Secondly, the excavated spaces have been organized, arranged transformed within one container responding to rigorous, scientific, specific research.

A design method of Koolhaas’s excavating space came from his research on the problem of the city. The book written by koolhaas - Delirious New York: A Retroactive Manifesto for Manhattan explained his theories and his thoughts on Metropolis. This booked mentioned the “congestion” including the congestion of population, transportation, culture, people’s desires and so on.
The crowded city is not just made up of the building systems, but also the “void” spaces, which play an important role in urban planning and architecture designing.
CHAPTER 3
SHOULD THE ARCHITECTURE LEARN FROM THE MOVIE?

3.1 From film director’s manuscript to movie

A storyboard is a graphic organizer in the form of illustrations or images displayed in sequence for the purpose of pre-visualizing a motion picture, animation, motion graphic or interactive media sequence.31

Figure 3.132 film director’s manuscript

31 From “https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Storyboard”
32 Images from GOGLE image
Figure 3.2 Montage - shower sequence

Figure 3.3 Film director Zhang yimou’s manuscript in the film Hero

Figure 3.4 Film director’s manuscript and story board

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33 The clip is owned by Paramount Pictures and Universal Pictures
34 Images from GOGOLE image
35 Images from GOGOLE image
Figure 3.5 Film director Gao xiaosong’s manuscript and Story board

Figure 3.6 The Wachowskis sisters’ manuscript and Story board

36 Images from GOGOLE image
37 Images from GOGOLE image
A film storyboard is essentially a series of frames, with drawings of the sequence of events in a film. A storyboard provides a visual layout of events as they are to be seen through the camera lens.

One advantage of using storyboards is that it allows the user to experiment with changes in the storyline to evoke stronger reaction or interest. The process of visual thinking and planning allows a group of people to brainstorm together, placing their ideas on storyboards and then arranging the storyboards on the wall. This fosters more ideas and generates consensus inside the group.39

Could the same rules and skills be applied in the architecture design?

38 Images from GOGOLE image
3.2 From the movie to the architecture

The screenplays set up hypothetical situations relating individual events or sequences to similar space or spatial sequences. The spaces range from common urban typologies to exaggerated architectural demonstrations. The events include both everyday occurrences and extreme passions. The depictions of events find their origins in movie sequence, and the ritualistic formalization of cinematic events in general and the "freeze - frame" in particular is taken as paralleling the formalization of spaces in architecture.

As a series, the screenplays were intended as an investigation of architectural concepts and techniques, exploring the relationship between events and architectural spaces.

Just as you had taken pieces of novels or excerpts from other fiction as your program before, now you take file clips as your staring point, can architectural drawings be organized as a movement sequence? 40

Figure 3.8 41 screenplay (Frankenstein)

"Taking images from a film from 1932, Frankenstein (especially, the sequence in which Dr. Frankenstein fights the monster), you examine the film for ways

40 Frederic Migayrou 2014 BERNARD TSCHUMI ARCHITECTURE: CONCEPT & NOTATION. P.96
41 Image from GOOGLE IMAGE
to document the relationships of event, space and movement.

You first draw arrows that correspond to the choreography of the flight between the doctor and the monster. The arrows or vectors are then solidified to transformed into solids. Then, in the next frame, you reverse them into a negative or void."

Figure 3.9 screenplay (football)

Figure 3.10 screenplay

The bodily movement becomes the generator or origin of the building.

“There is no architecture without action, no architecture without event, no architecture without program.” From various films, adding a few still frames: this will be the program, adding the arrows, that will express movement

42 Frederic Migayrou 2014 BERNARD TSCHUMI ARCHITECTURE: CONCEPT & NOTATION. P.97
43 Image from GOOGLE IMAGE
44 Image from GOOGLE IMAGE
45 Frederic Migayrou 2014 BERNARD TSCHUMI ARCHITECTURE: CONCEPT & NOTATION. P.94
through the architectural space.

The use of film images in these works originated in Tschumi’s interest in sequences and programmatic concerns. Rather than composing fictional events or sequences. The Screenplays aimed at developing a contemporary set of architectural tools.
Cao changdi is an urban village and renowned arts district located in the Chaoyang District of northeast Beijing at the intersection of the 5th Ring Road and Airport Expressway. Translated as "grasslands" in Mandarin, Cao changdi is home to a diverse group of residents, including migrant workers, farmers, students and artists, most notably, Ai Weiwei. Cao changdi developed into a thriving arts and cultural hub when artists began to move into the area around 2000, attracting international attention similar to the nearby 798 Art Zone.48

Cao changdi is now in midst of the encroaching city of Beijing. It is minutes from the central business district, and not far from the Olympic sites. And yet,
the economy and atmosphere of the villagers itself is much life a rural Chinese community.

4.1 Art and life in Cao changdi

At the end of the 20th century, artist Ai weiwei moved to Cao changdi and built a compound of illegal structures to serve as a house and studio. An influx of other artists and galleries soon followed. Cao changdi is now a home to a mix of farmers, taxi drivers, day labors, other industry people, artists, students. Also, Beijing has many villages. These villages contain countless illegally constructed buildings. Countless illegal and temporary buildings get overlooked, all waiting for laws or regulations to be implemented. But laws and regulations will not be realized unless it is a “glorification project,” property.

In addition, Ai weiwei said, “Beijing is not old Beijing anymore. It is a city that
does not really belong to its residents. The large scale city it not designed to consider ordinary people’s lives. So you never consider this your city or your town or even part of that area as your neighborhood.”

Cao changdi is a village which represents thousands of villages outside of the city in China. Also, Ai weiwei said, “Cao changdi for the city is rather a problematic area. The reason why it is problematic is not planned. It is self-growing, Migrants come to the city. They are settled on the outskirts of the city. So they are working as labors to construct the city and to make a living and support their families.”
4.11 Art in Cao changdi

Figure 4.5 Map of Cao changdi with art areas

Figure 4.6 Map of Cao changdi with green space
“Several year ago, the pre-eminent Chinese artist Ai weiwei made a bold move to the outskirts of Beijing. In an area called Cao changdi Village, by the fifth ring road in the city’s developing northeast, he designed a compound for himself, some friends and a gallery called China art archives and Warehouse.”

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49 Image from google image
4.12 Life in Cao changdi

Figure 4.8 Map of life programs in Cao changdi

Figure 4.9 Images from ROBERT MANGURIAN & MARY - ANN RAY 2009 CAO CHAGNDI BEIJING INSIDE OUT.
Ai weiwei said, “The model of Cao changdi is interesting because the village in China is basically neglected. There is no planning, there is no real consideration. It is been like that for thousand years. You get permission from the village, and you get a limited amount of space, and then you build basically as you like. In old times they built according to some kind of moral aesthetic situation. Today, they just build as they like with the only regulation being the economics, the cost.”

Cao changdi’s development is spontaneous and seemingly overlooked by the planning authorities. This spontaneous behavior is, in fact, experimental urban development, and can be seen as extremely healthy for the large city.

52 ROBERT MANGURIAN & MARY - ANN RAY 2009 CAO CHAGNDI BEIJING INSIDE OUT. P.442
4.2 Ask questions: what’s art? What’s life? What’s what?

Cao changdi translated from Mandarin as ‘grassland’ and it has undergone radical change during imperial times, the cultural revolution, and the Deng reform period. Cao changdi is now a home to a mix of farmers, taxi driver, villagers, day laborers, floaters, artists, designers, poets, photographers, art dealers.

It becomes an ideal place to study the relations of art and life.

In terms of the relations of art and life, here is a question: Tai chi, modern dance and square dance, which is art, which’s life?
Chinese people always like hanging sun quilts in the outdoor space. If a villager hangs the quilts on an art installation designed by an artist to sun the quilts, what would other people think about when seeing this scenario. Would they consider it as art or life?
CHAPTER 5
ONE STREET BETWEEN LIFE AND ART IN CAO CHANGDI

Interestingly, one street in Cao changdi attracted my attentions. One side is compact, self-growing folk houses with commercial at the ground level, the other side is well-planned art studio and gallery. The site plan view can clearly illustrate these two different conditions. North side, folk houses area, is

53 Picture captured from baidu image
compact with lots of self-growing small parts. South side, art district, is well planned with lots of outdoor spaces. These two different conditions co-existed.

5.1 North part of this street

Standing at this street, what people can see is street life, lovely facade and some out-growing parts from the local houses.
What we know is so many colorful lives happened in these local houses. It is interesting to find the “illegal outgrowing parts of the local houses” could exactly express local people’s life and their desire and needs. Of course, if they do not need extend their living space, they would not need to add these “illegal” parts. These “illegal houses” could accurately illustrate their life extension and their inner desires.

So for the north part, these illegal parts of local houses help to make visible invisible lives inside their houses and their needs.
Because of these lovely outgrowing parts from the local houses which become the visible expressions of what happened inside, the facade of north parts compile into a soft interface towards to the street.

5.11 Reading “illegal architecture”

Illegal architecture is a kind of self-constructed building related to the sense of existence. Illegal architecture is the extension of body and life. Also, they have become the occupation of architecture by the general public.

Wangshu said, “In almost all Asian cities, illegal architecture is a commonly - seen scenario. Compared with other regions, illegal architecture in modern

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54 Images from GOOGLE IMAGE
cities in South America is rampant, and the way they confront each other highlights the astonishing antagonism between the rich and the poor in the society. In Africa, self-constructed buildings seem to be the main body in the city, while modern buildings are isolated islands. In Europe and North America, illegal architecture is rarely seen. In Asia, a strange mixture has emerged as Asian cultures deep and diversified, are forced to face the tsunami of modernism. What we have seen is more than a conflict between tradition and modernity. It is a struggle between the global pursuit of modernism and the unique characteristic in Asian society. As Asian societies, with the fastest economic development and largest scale of city constructions, work harder than anyone else in the pursuit of modernism, the self-constructed, bottom-up buildings and the new buildings in the power system of modern cities have no choice but to fight each other at close quarters."

Hsieh Ying-chun said, “We still need to come back to life, the kind of life determines the kind of architecture we have, if you do not even have enough time to sleep, then certainly you are not able to appreciate the beauty of illegal architecture.”

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55 WANG SHU & HSIEH YING-CHUN 2011 reading illegal architecture . P.129
56 WANG SHU & HSIEH YING-CHUN 2011 reading illegal architecture . P.155
5.2 south part of this street

Figure 5.8  Street view to an art studio’s facade

Figure 5.9  Street view to an art studio’s facade
Unlike north side, what you can see from the street is cold facade and boundary it presents.

We know something may happen on the other side of the wall. Artists are working and living inside the building. Here are some questions, Should the
art studio building be honest enough to express its identity? Should south part learn from north part to express what it is supposed to be with visible things? Why not expose some parts of artist’s life and works to communicate with passing by? Could make some hidden art works and artist’ life visible?

5.3 between both sides

Figure 5.11 Diagram of life and art in Cao changdi

Walking in this street, two different conditions co-exist.

The north side is full of life, some out-growing parts from the local houses,
which became an expression of desires and needs. and south side presents a cold facade and boundary.

These two conditions appear to be separated. My intention is to explore and make visible the invisible connections that existed between north and south sides.

Actually, another invisible thing is, artists usually are involved in the life area to absorb life materials for their art. Why not make this visible?

With breaking down of the boundary of the walls, the life is entering into art, life and art no longer have limits and receive their freedom. Exposing the invisible connection of life to art. By making the invisible visible, art becomes in service of life and the service of life to art is seen. Their boundaries have disappeared. People are starting to think about what's life and what's art? What's what?
CHAPTER 6
THE STARTING OF EXPERIENCE, THE BEGINNING OF STORY

6.1 story - telling pictures about art and life

Finding the art installation can be used as place to dry quilt, then inadvertently, another kind of art work has been produced, interesting.

Wandering through the exhibit hall and enjoying different art works, then suddenly notice the civilians activities in their courtyard.
Figure 6.3  Story - telling board 3

Going through glass corridor, one side is compacted houses with super high density, the other side is well planned art studio.

Figure 6.4  Story - telling board 4

Reprogramming the exhibit hall and restaurants, the actions of eating or drinking can also be an exhibition work.

Figure 6.5  Story - telling board 5

The old gathered on the outdoor space to plan Tai Chi with music on.
Through glass, young people are practicing modern dance.

Evening, with lights and music on, women are dancing on the square. Many people would stop and watch this folk show.
6.2 what’s visitor’s experience?

VISITOR’S EXPERIENCE

Morning, visitors come to Cao changdi - the natural village mixed art and life. Suddenly, they find one interesting street, of which one side is art and the other side is life area. They are so different and co-exist.

Hallways in the air go across the street and gently touch the roof of the local house. Some hallways are just growing out from the red wall. Some “red boxes” are scattering around the street. At the local houses’ side, some art sculpture is standing in the red box. The other side - the art area, some villagers are playing with the outdoor exercise.
equipment in the box.

Some are selling vegetables and fresh fruits. Some are showing the performance art. Some red box with art work is growing out though the wall.

Walking through the building and coming to the studio courtyard. This moment what you see is the vegetable booth, the next moment you would see the sculpture.
In the studio’s courtyard, some people are eating BBQ with the music on. Some old people are playing the outdoor exercise equipment.

A staircase is standing there and attracting people to go up.

At the upper level platform, an elegant sculpture is sitting there, silently.
Going across the narrow bridge, getting close to the sculpture and looking through the sculpture, suddenly they find some old people are playing Tai chi on the roof of the studio behind the wall.

Going across the courtyard and arriving at another upper level platform, people are eating the snacks, while appreciating the art works breaking through the wall. It is really an interesting scenario.
Walking along another hallway, just between the life and art side, two different series of pictures are interweaving with each other.

Crossing the street, though the hallway, they are arriving at the studio on the roof of the local house.

At one side studio place, one artist is painting on the canvas.
Space located at the other side exhibits the art works.
The process of artist’s creation can also be considered as an art.

After leaving the studio, they are surprised to find another lovely roof space behind the studio. Some people are eating and drinking in the transformed red box. Some are seating and watching the art works, some of which is covered with quilts.
6.3 what's villager's experience?

**VILLAGER'S EXPERIENCE**

Villager B is living and working in Cao changdi. Everyday when he back to home, he would pass by this interesting street. Sometimes, the young would practice dancing at brick terrace just at the side of the street. Also some people would sit on stairs and watch this.

Along this street, another red construction with one staircase inside attracts people's attentions. Several piece red walls are standing at different angle to transmit a sense of welcome.
Going upstairs and coming to one upper level platform, finding wooden steps gently touch the surface of platform and part of steps have stretched to formed the bench. Some people are sitting at the bench and appreciating the art which are trying to break through the wall.

Everything becomes so silent. Unlike the noisy and warm street, here people can enjoy the silence, peaceful and lovely sunshine.
Continuing to cross the courtyard, people are standing at the hallway and looking down. Some in courtyard are playing the outdoor exercise equipment, some are just going through the courtyard with the vegetable they buy. Now they realize that the street life have already involved in the studio’s courtyard.

Keep going and hearing sounds indistinctly, behind the wall they find some young people are dancing with music on.
It is a surprise to find this lovely outdoor roof space which becomes a performance area. Some people are sitting on the steps watching this performance.

Going back across the courtyard and coming to another upper level platform, some are eating snacks and talking with each other about the art works just in front of them.
Everyday, they would pass by one narrow alley. Someday, they notice one bright white box is floating there in this alley.

Getting close and finding a straightforward staircase inside the box.
Going upstairs to the roof of the local house, they are surprised to find the eating and drinking space on the roof combined with the existed out growing house.
6.4 what's artist’s experience?

**ARTIST’S EXPERIENCE**

Figure 6.10  Story - telling boards - Artist’s experience

An Artist C is working in the fashion design studio. Sometimes, she would notice some other people pass by and they would smile at each other. Sometimes, people would be attracted by the fashion design and stop to appreciate this works. Of course, she likes this way to communicate.
Sometimes, she would also come out to the hallway to refresh her mind. This hallway has become an extension of the street. One side towards to the courtyard, the other side towards to the street.

Going through this hallway and coming to the courtyard, she find the vegetable booth has extended into the studio courtyard. Some people are buying the fresh fruits, some are watching the art work.
and talking with each other, some are playing the outdoor exercise equipment.

With the indistinctly sounds, going upstairs and finding some old are playing Tai chi on the roof.
This small performance area people has flexible inside and outside space. According to the user’s needs, the inside performance or lecture could extend to outside.

Getting to another upper level platform, some are watching the sculpture, some are eating snacks. This existing upper level outdoor has transformed from studio’ outdoor space to public space.
One hallway directly goes across the street and enters into the alley.

Through hallway to the roof, it is really a surprise to find some art works standing in the red box on the roof of the local house.
Some art works is even covered with the Quilts. Maybe some villager put his/her quilt on the sculpture to dry with the sunlight. Maybe the quilt is part of the sculpture created by artist, Who knows?
7.1 conceptual design

The two conditions appear to be separated. My intention is to explore and make visible the invisible connections that exist between north and south sides.

How to realize this idea? Building bridges to connect both sides or creating exchange between the two sides. Some art related programs can be built on the life side. In the meantime, the life related programs can be brought into the art side.
The white color represents art studio side, purple color represents life side.

The black represents the added art part. The blue represents the added life part.
The exchange of some parts of life and art programs and spaces where events could happen. People’s movement help to connect all these space where some activities may happen.
Figure 7.4  Concept Model Exploration

Figure 7.5  Concept Model Exploration - Zooming in and studying one block

Respecting original structure and space type, making an exchange of two sides.
Figure 7.6 Concept Model Exploration - Zooming in and studying one block

Figure 7.7 Concept Model Exploration - Zooming in and studying one block
The red parts represent the added buildings.

Artists can rent the roof of the local houses to build their studio. At the same time, the villagers can be inspired by the arts which help them realize what they did can also be regarded as art. The women and the old people can play square dance and Tai chi in the studio courtyard. At night, people can have BBQ in the studio’s courtyard with the music. Along the street, someone is selling vegetable and fresh fruits, someone is watching the performance art and art work. So many activities happened in these “red boxes”.

The invisible is now visible.
7.2 final work

Figure 7.9 Bird View 1

Figure 7.10 Pictures of Different Moments
Figure 7.11 Concept Diagrams
Figure 7.12  Site Plan

Figure 7.13  Section A-A
Figure 7.14  Ground floor plan

Figure 7.15  Section B-B
Figure 7.16  Upper level floor plan

Figure 7.17  Section c-c
Figure 7.18  Street View Perspective 1

Figure 7.19  Street View Perspective 2
Figure 7.20  Street View Perspective 3

Figure 7.21  Courtyard Perspective 1
Figure 7.22  Small Performance Area Perspective 1

Figure 7.23  Small Performance Area Perspective 2
Figure 7.24  perspective 1  From Roof of The local house

Figure 7.25  perspective 2  From Roof of The local house
Figure 7.26   Bird View 2
CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

Urban design and Architecture design strive to solve problems and figure out the best answers for particular circumstances. With the growth of the society, economy, more and more inner related problems appear and need to be solved. Designing can help to create better conditions, can help to offer better solutions.
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