

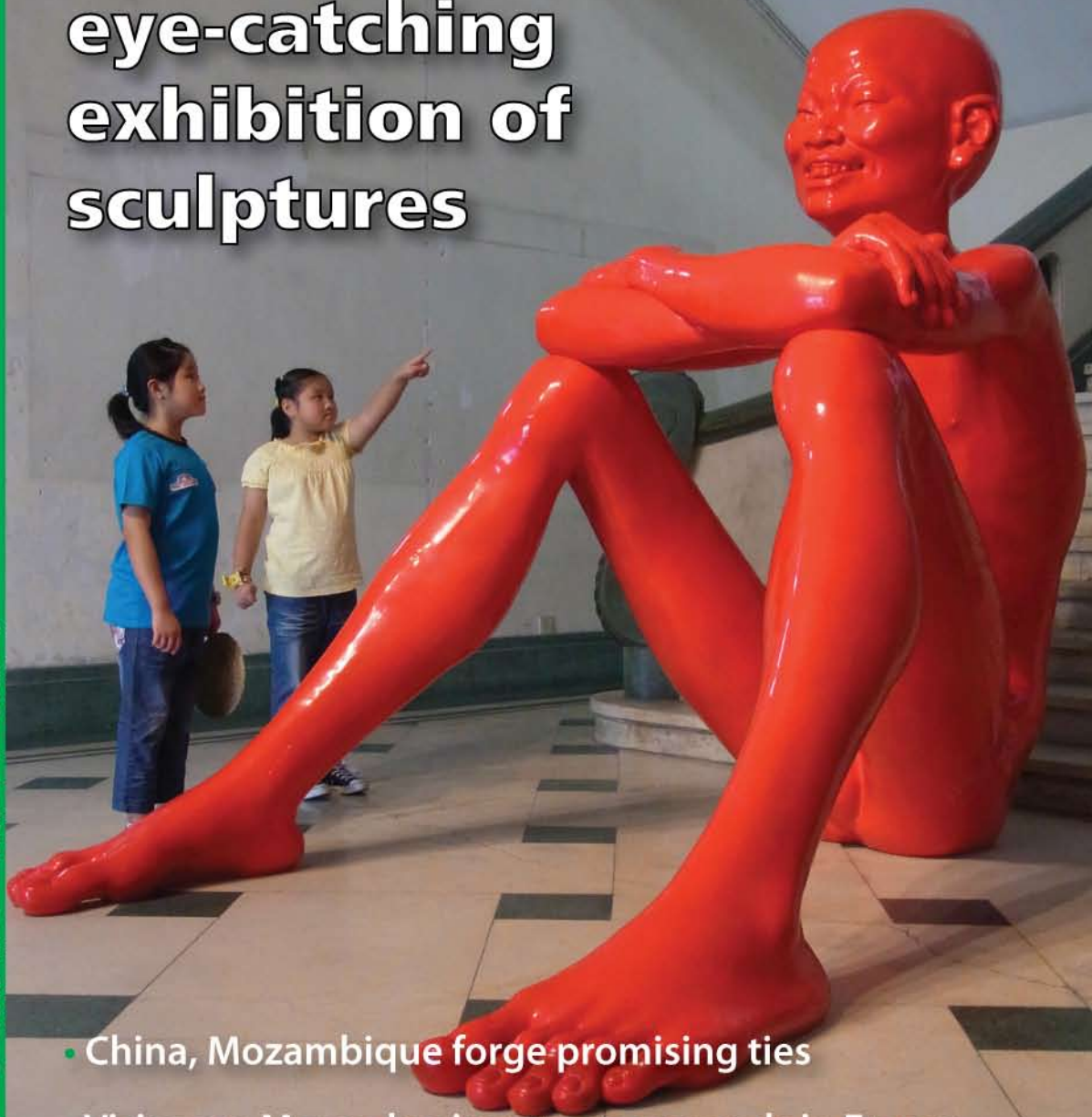
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- Visionary Macao businessman succeeds in France
- Macao Music Festival: A Feast for the Ears



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Matsu parade

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DIRECTOR

Victor Chan Chi Ping

EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Alberto, Au Kam Va

EDITOR

Eva Lei Sao lok

PUBLISHER

Government Information Bureau (GCS) of the Macao SAR
Address: 15/Floor, China Plaza Building,
Avenida da Praia Grande, 762 - 804
Macao, China
Phone: + 853 2833 2886
Fax: + 853 2835 5426
E-mail: info@gcs.gov.mo

PRODUCER AND DISTRIBUTOR

Macaolink News and Information Services, Limited
Address: 8/Floor L, The Macau Square,
43 - 53A, Av. Infante D. Henrique
Macao, China
Phone: + 853 2835 5315
Fax: + 853 2835 5466
E-mail: macaulink@macaulink.com.mo

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Gonalo C sar de S 

CONTRIBUTORS

Allan Salas (photos), Ant nio Escobar, Carmo Correia (photos),
Catarina Aleixo, Christian Ritter, Eric Tam (photos),
Fernando Correia, Filipa Queir z, Gonalo L. Pinheiro (photos),
H lder Beja, Jos  Carlos Matias, Jos  Goul o (photos),
Jos  S. Morais, Kirsty Ridge (copy editing), Louise do Ros rio,
Lu s Almo ter (photos), Marco Antinossi, Mark O'Neill,
Mark Phillips, M rcia Gonalves (photos), Patr cia M. Pereira (photos),
Rafael Bi , Rita  lvarez Tudela (photos), Sacha Matuszak,
Thomas Chan, Wong Sang (photos)

COVER PHOTO

M rcia Gonalves

NEWS AGENCIES

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Editor's note

With the relations with China developing in leaps and bounds, Macao is further strengthening its unique role as a hub between China and the Portuguese-speaking world by offering a growing range of training and promotion facilities and services.

Macao Magazine talked to experts, bankers and diplomats about the future prospects of Sino-Mozambican relations, and Macao's role as a business-service platform between the two sides.

Macao has always generated inspiring business success stories, such as the one of the local entrepreneur who launched a children's clothing brand in France. It has become a symbol of the professionalism of Macao's economy. It has also become an example of the revival of the city's clothing industry.

In the Delta's latest socio-economic growth cycle, Hong Kong and Macao are set to become ever more integrated into the region. Three PRD locations – Hengqin, Qianhai and Nansha – will play a central role in the development drive.

The three locations are still largely under-developed. They have been officially designated as close development partners of China's two Special Administrative Regions – Hong Kong and Macao.

Macao is striving to become a regional cultural and creative industries hub, involving music, design, arts, exhibitions, workshops and cinema.

At the same time Macao's museums – such as the ones dedicated to the Grand Prix and to the wine culture – are upgrading their facilities and launching new services and exhibits to attract more visitors.

Being a UNESCO-listed World Heritage city, Macao is replete with cultural relics, such as its erstwhile cannon foundry that once supplied Imperial China.

Moreover, the Archives of the Roman-Catholic Diocese of Macao have recently become part of UNESCO's Asia-Pacific Memory of the World Register.

Meanwhile, Macao Magazine is continuing its coverage of important events in the greater China area and the Portuguese-speaking world.

For instance, an opera dedicated to the life of Dr Sun Yat-sen, the father of modern China, has premièred in Hong Kong. A puppetry museum in Taipei traces the history of this unique type of theatre performance, and the UNESCO-inscribed World Heritage destination of Hangzhou, capital of Zhejiang Province, enjoys both an economic and cultural renaissance.



Beauty [Mei]

The character for mei combines two picto-grams to express the Chinese ideal of 'beauty'.

Above is the character for 'sheep', showing the face and horns of the animal traditionally seen by the Chinese as a model of gentleness and passivity: the inner beauty implied by mei. Sheep have no will, no striving. They follow their natures and live in harmony with one another. Below 'sheep' is the pictogram denoting 'big' or 'adult' - a 'person' with arms outstretched.

Beauty: the docility of a sheep as displayed by an adult.

From the book "The Spirit of the Chinese Character - Gifts from the Heart" by Barbara Aria with Rusell Eng Gon



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Hangzhou sees economic renaissance
with World Heritage Site status



Full Speed Ahead

**China-Mozambique
relations
get big boost from
President Guebuza
visit**

By António Escobar

Picture this: Chinese cars manufactured in Mozambique, driving along the streets of Maputo. They carry workers home to houses built by Chinese companies. Freight trains full of rice, cotton and sugar rattle through the countryside on railways built using Chinese funding. Their cargo has been produced by Chinese-Mozambican companies.

This is a vision of the future that is coming within our reach. Thanks to the openness of the governments of the two countries, the private sector is buzzing and in search of profitable business. Over the next few years Mozambique, could become – along with Angola – China’s major partner in Africa.

President Armando Guebuza had an ambitious agenda for his visit to China from 9 to 15 August. At the end of his stay, he went home with a wealth of gifts: 10,000 houses, a railway line, and Beijing’s availability for funding agreements to build huge flagship infrastructure projects. These include a new bridge in the capital, Maputo.

The low-cost houses are the result of an agreement signed by the Mozambican Housing Fund and Chinese company Henan Guoji. They will house state workers, young people and former military personnel, and will cost a maximum of 70,000 Euros. A total of 5,000 will be built in the Intaca neighbourhood, in the municipality of Matola. The remaining homes will be built in other regions of the country, to be announced by the end of this year.

The railway will be funded by the China Kingho group. It will run between Moatize and the port of Beira, passing through Chimoio in Manica province on the way. The group has already carried out pre-feasibility studies for these projects, along with other proposals centred on ports. They are of strategic importance to both China and Africa, as they could become vital for transporting products. Items manufactured by Chinese companies could otherwise become landlocked in neighbouring countries, such as Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Chinese President Hu Jintao with Armando Guebuza in Beijing



A year ago, the Mozambican government and China Kingho signed a memorandum of cooperation to develop several sectors. These included the mining industry, infrastructure construction, agriculture, and social welfare in relation to education. Initial investment in logistics and prospecting work for mining is expected to total US\$20 million.

In Beijing, Guebuza also met with the China Export Import Bank (the Eximbank). Funding from the bank is considered to be essential for the completion of several major infrastructure projects.

Researcher Loro Horta is one of the analysts who closely follow China-Mozambique economic relations. He predicts that these agreements “may create numerous jobs for Mozambique – an area that has been contentious in bilateral ties”. He told Macao magazine: “If the large infrastructure projects and other plans are implemented, thousands of jobs will be created.”

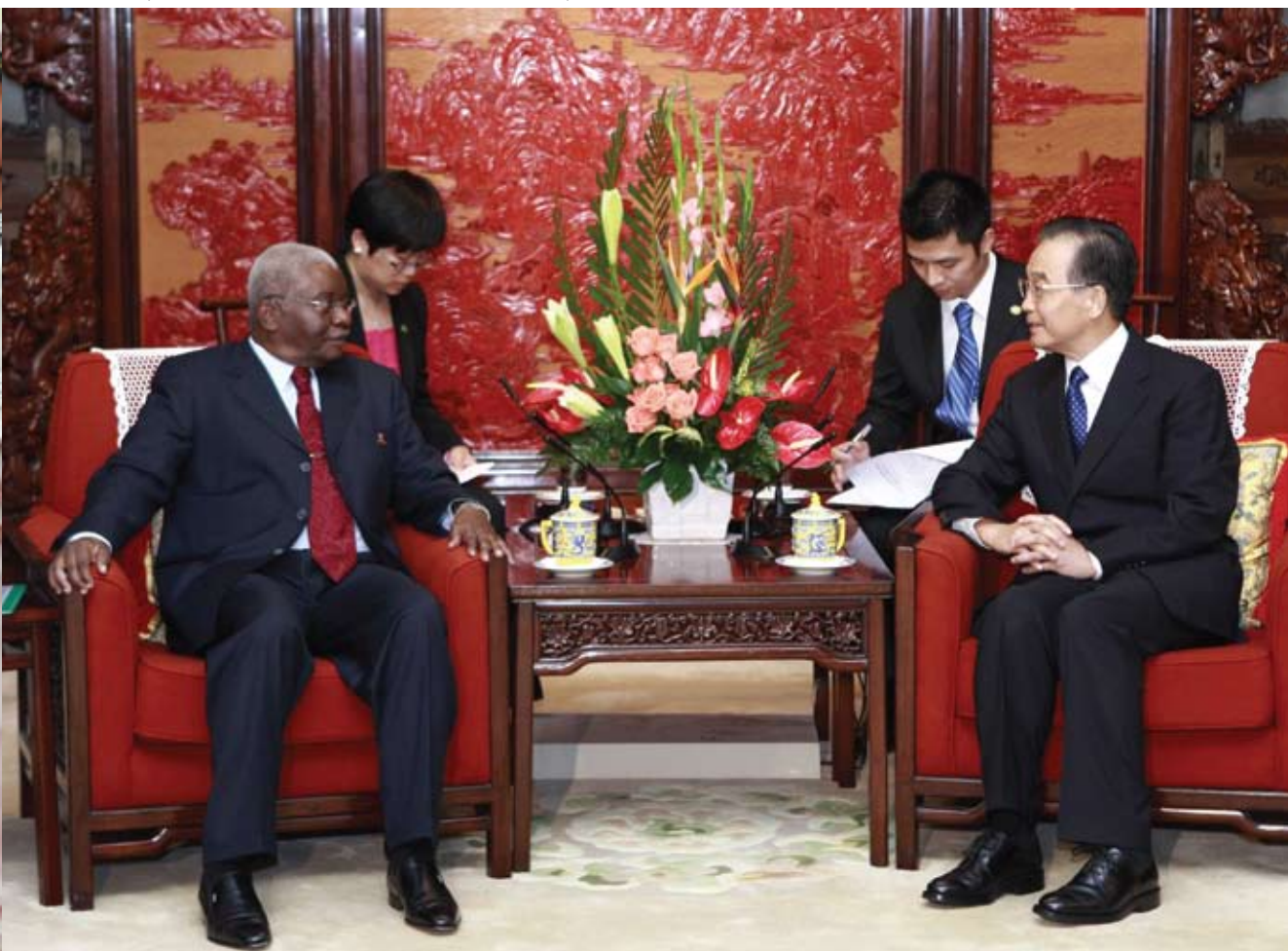
The buzz of the private sector

Mozambique’s openness to receiving Chinese investment was made clear well before Guebuza’s visit to China. Speeches by the Mozambican authorities both before and after the visit underlined their eagerness for collaboration. However, even before the states’ seal of approval, big business deals had got under way between the two countries.

“It’s interesting to note that most of the Chinese investment in Mozambique was initiated by state investment. Yet in the last two years there has been a rise in private investments,” said Loro Horta. Whilst the support of institutions such as the Eximbank was important for the launch and expansion of the economic relations of the two countries, they now have “a life of their own, and are accelerating”.

The Eximbank granted the Mozambican government funding of US\$2.3 billion for the construction of a large dam in the country, named Mpanda Nkua.

Chinese prime minister Wen Jiabao with the President of Mozambique Armando Guebuza





Maputo airport

Chinese companies have built roads, bridges, military facilities and hospitals. They have even constructed the country's main airport in Maputo, along with several public buildings.

The main Chinese investment project in the country so far is worth US\$1 billion, and is a coal production project by Wuhan Iron and Steel. Recently, a similar project by Kingho was announced, worth US\$5 billion. The interest of Chinese entrepreneurs extends to digital television equipment and receivers too. They will be introduced by Chinese company StarTimes, in partnership with Mozambican investors. According to Valentina Guebuza, the Mozambican representative on the project, the proposal involves an investment of almost US\$100 million.

"State investment remains strong and will continue that way. However, increasingly, it is Chinese and Mozambican citizens who are building bridges between the two economies," said Horta. An academic researcher originally from East Timor, he is a graduate of China's National Defence University of the People's Liberation Army, and is a former resident of Mozambique.

A business seminar was organised by the Mozambican government in Shanghai in June 2010. It ended with pledges to invest US\$13 billion into the production of cement, cotton and agricultural goods.

Whilst large investments are channelled towards infrastructure, mining and agriculture, China has given tax exemptions to 420 Mozambican agricultural products. Foreign trade increased more than three-fold between 2007 (US\$208 million) and 2010 (US\$690 million).

Free trade

According to Loro Horta, export-tax exemptions could become a trump card for Mozambique. The country benefits from exemptions in exporting to China, the European Union and the United States. Rising labour costs in China are also making Mozambique more attractive for Chinese companies. Indeed, they are beginning to be tempted to move into its industrial parks.

"Western countries and Japan have set up a number of factories outside of their own territories, and China will probably do the same. Thirty years ago, thousands of foreign companies set themselves up in China to benefit from (cheap) labour and the huge Chinese market. It brought enormous benefits to China. Maybe now China can do the same for Mozambique and Africa," said Horta.

This view seems to be shared, and even promoted, by economic agents from both countries. It does

not appear to intimidate the main Mozambican industrial association. Just before Guebuza landed in China, the president of the Confederation of Economic Associations (CTA), Rogério Manuel, pointed out a way of attracting Chinese business investment. He explained that the ease of entry into the African, European and North American markets was a key factor.

“The creation of the free trade area of the Southern African Development Community has proved significant. Products with 30-percent value added in Mozambique have unrestricted access to the South African market. It has opened up access to over 40 million people with strong purchasing power, as well as to another 12 countries that are part of the bloc,” Manuel told the news agency Macauhub. The US African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) benefits several African countries, such as Mozambique. It does so by providing preferential access to the US market for certain select categories of products.

Loro Horta notes that Chinese investment has often been seen as invasive in Western countries. By contrast, Horta currently sees keen competition for Chinese investment amongst African nations. It is often focused on basic infrastructure and production units that are lacking in Africa. These are set up for a number of reasons, including creating wealth, and jobs for the large, available workforce; reducing

imports; making basic products available at cheaper prices and, lastly, enabling the region to develop. “Mozambique has to be aware that there are other African countries seeking investment from the ‘Middle Empire’. Maputo will have to continue with its policy of attracting investment,” he told Macao magazine.

A seminar on economic and trade cooperation between the two countries was held in Henan province during the official visit in August. Its purpose was for officials and economic agents to identify business opportunities in Mozambique. The Mozambican head of state, who attended the seminar, opened up his country’s doors to Chinese business people. “We want to reiterate our invitation to more business people from Henan province and from China in general. We invite them to invest in Mozambique in areas such as agriculture and agri-processing, the manufacturing industry, mining, tourism, new and renewable energy, and a range of infrastructures and services,” Guebuza said.

He also noted that the government had approved a new, more flexible Labour Law, a new Commercial Code, and a Tax Benefit Code for investments. Added to this were regulations for licensing companies. Speaking after official talks with his Chinese counterpart, Hu Jintao, Guebuza also said he wanted to see more public-private partnerships between the two countries.

Maputo



The Mozambican factory?

A project to which particular attention is being paid is the installation of a factory on the outskirts of Maputo to assemble Chinese vehicles. The plans envisage Chinese cars being made in Mozambique for the entire regional market. If the project goes ahead, it will be the most visible sign of Chinese industrial investment in the country. It will have an impact not only on the economy's products, but also on its exports.

The director of the Office for Accelerated Development Economic Zones (Gazeda), Danila Nalá, recently talked to Mozambican newspaper O País about the project. He explained that after an investment of US\$200 million by China Tong Jian Investment, the factory will initially aim to produce 10,000 vehicles per year. This figure will later be increased to between 30,000 and 50,000 per year. The plans outline that 30 percent of the cars will be placed on the Mozambican market, and the remaining 70 percent will be sold in neighbouring

countries. In total, the factory will provide 3,000 jobs on the outskirts of Maputo.

However, Chinese automotive companies are not only focusing on the capital city. In April, Mozambican state newspaper Notícias reported that a group of Chinese business people planned to invest over US\$10 billion in Sofala province. The planned projects include a chain of hotels, airport and port facilities, and a vehicle assembly-line in Beira or in Dondo.

According to the chairman of Mozambique's Export Promotion Institute (IPEX), João Macaringue, the balance of trade between the two countries is currently in China's favour. "We want to produce in Mozambique the same items that are imported from China. That approach will balance trade and economic relations between the two countries." He noted that Mozambique was interested in attracting Chinese investors to set themselves up in the country, in order to even out this balance.

Agri-industrial techniques and technologies from China might also boost Mozambican exports soon.



There are many projects being worked on in this area. One of the most ambitious is that of China CAMC Engineering, which plans to build factories in Mozambique. One will be for husking rice, another for processing maize, and a third for cotton. The chief executive of Sociedade de Gestão Integrada de Recursos (Sogir), Felizardo Arouca, spoke to MacaHub in Maputo. He said that the three factories would be built in Namacurra (Zambézia province), Ulóogue (Tete) and Guro (Manica). He said they represented an investment of US\$32 million, funded by the Chinese government.

Mozambique, which covers almost 802,000 sq km and has a population of less than 23 million people, has an abundance of arable land. Some of this is of the highest quality, such as that in the Zambezi Valley. Although Brazilian companies are forging ahead with biofuel projects, Chinese companies are more interested in agricultural production – particularly rice. According to the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce, the government of Maputo has offered land for rental to Chinese companies at

US\$8 per hectare. A similar agreement was recently made with Brazil.

Other resources that are plentiful in Mozambique include titanium, natural gas and tantalum, as well as precious gems such as emeralds, rubies and sapphires in the provinces of Niassa and Cabo Delgado. Coal reserves of international significance are starting to be mined in Tete. According to the Economist Intelligence Unit (the EIU), the country's mining department believes that further north in Niassa province, there are reserves of a similar size.

Macao's role

In the latest official figures from China, the rise in trade between the two countries is obvious. Between January and July, Mozambique posted trade with China of US\$491 million. This was 39.80 percent more than in the same period of 2010. Whilst China's exports to Mozambique rose 35.5 percent year-on-year to US\$380 million, Mozambique's sales to China rose a sharp 57 percent to US\$111 million.



Zimpeto stadium in Maputo

In this crescendo of trade, Macao may have an important role to pay.

According to the Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute (IPIM), the Special Administrative Region could become like a 'pilot project' for Mozambican exports entering the Chinese market. Echo Chan, the director of IPIM, was recently in Maputo. He noted that the geographic position of Macao and the historical ties the region has with Portuguese-speaking countries made an economic approach easier.

"Exporting to Macao could be treated as a trial run in exporting Mozambican products and services to the Chinese market. Companies from Chinese provinces can also establish relations with Portuguese-speaking countries," Chan said at a seminar in Maputo. They could do this via Macao's business platforms or through economic and commercial conventions and exhibitions."

The rise of the 'mamba'

'Mamba' is the name of an aggressive African snake that is common in Mozambique. It is usually the name given to the country's soccer or basketball teams, but is now the nickname some economists give the country's economy. It is similar to the description of China as a 'dragon'.

Indeed, Mozambique is now experiencing one of its greatest-ever influxes of foreign investment. This is all thanks to business projects originating in China, as well as in India, Brazil, and more traditional partners such as South Africa, Portugal and the United Kingdom. New mines are opening, factories

are being built, buildings are going up and hotels are opening their doors to tourists.

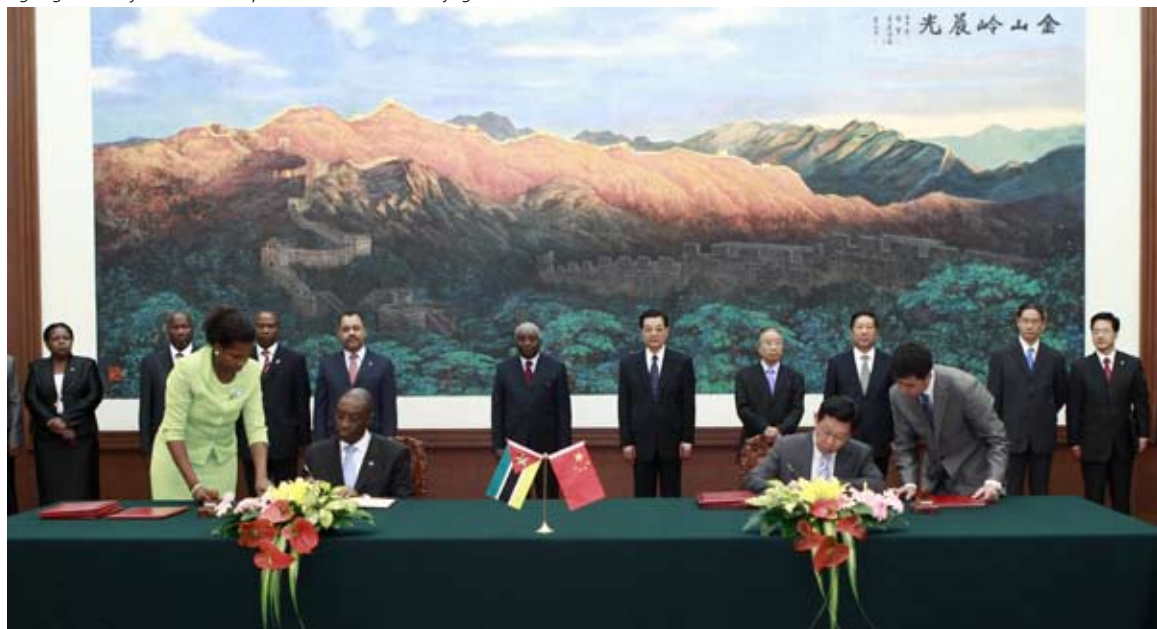
Mozambique can boast exceptionally beautiful natural landscape, wildlife parks and abundant game, as well as an enormous coast dotted with beaches. For this reason, the country is one of China's official tourist destinations. However, travelling between the two countries requires lengthy stopovers in South Africa or Ethiopia, and over 20 hours of travel. The long-awaited launch of the first direct flight between Maputo and Beijing may be the key to drawing more Chinese tourists to the African country. According to the Mozambican press, this could account for up to one million tourists over the next decade.

The Economist Intelligence Unit for this year points to growth of the Mozambican economy of 7.3 percent, which is an increase of 0.8 percentage points on last year. GDP growth is expected to increase next year to around 7.5 percent, as a result of investment, exploration of natural resources and the start of production of new projects.

Increased cement production is particularly interesting, as it is expected to increase three-fold over the next two years. After leaving the production lines of three new Chinese-owned factories, the cement will reach the market next year.

The Africa Great Wall Cement Manufacturer chose Magde as the location for one such cement plant. It has an annual production capacity of 500,000 tons, costing US\$78 million. The China International Fund's plant near Salamanga is also now under construction. Located south of Maputo, the project is estimated to cost around US\$72 million.

Signing ceremony of bilateral cooperation documents in Beijing





Vegetable field of China-Mozambique agricultural technology demonstration center in Boane county of Maputo province

Estimated production stands at 800,000 tons per year. A third unit, owned by GS Cimento, will have the capacity to produce 550,000 tons of Portland cement per year. This factory, which is the most expensive of the three, is expected to cost US\$100 million. It will be located in the Boane industrial park very close to the Mozal aluminium foundry – Mozambique’s industrial colossus – along with the Cahora Bassa Hydroelectric Facility.

Of all the planned investments, the biggest is from South Africa’s Pretoria Portland Cement. Expected to cost US\$200 million, the plant has the capacity to produce 600,000 tons of cement per year. The market leader is Cimento de Moçambique, controlled by Portuguese group Cimpor, which has a capacity of almost 700,000 tons per year.

Demand for the product is increasing due to the many investments in infrastructures under way across the country. According to the EIU, one of the latest is Nacala international airport, in Nampula province. This airport will prove important for bringing tourists to the region.

Mining for success

Another sector that is expanding is the mining sector. A new player is Beacon Hill, which recently paid US\$42 million for the assets of US company Global Mineral and Metals in Moatize, Tete province. It has estimated coal reserves of 450 million tons. In April,

another British company, Pan African Resources, was awarded a gold mining license in Manica – the historical gold mining centre of Mozambique.

“The growth outlook for Mozambique is significantly more favourable than for the overall group of sub-Saharan African countries,” said Portuguese bank BPI, which controls Mozambique’s Banco Fomento. In its latest report on the country’s economy, it noted, however, that “given the growing interest of foreign investors in Mozambique, particularly in its mining resources, it would not be surprising if new deals were less generous to investors”.

The credit rating agency Fitch published a report in August on the country’s macroeconomic situation. It states that the outlook for the Mozambican economy is ‘stable’, and the outlook for coal production in the country is ‘brilliant’. It adds: “Historically, Mozambique has seen impressive growth and prudent macroeconomic management against low per capita income.” The analysts from the ratings agency also said that the dynamics of economic growth remained strong. They estimated GDP growth of between 7 percent and 8 percent for the 2011–2013 period.

For the private sector, the opportunities are obvious. For Mozambique, bringing large foreign companies to the country is an opportunity to speed up development, as Armando Guebuza said in China. “We are certain that we can beat poverty, and open up the way to prosperity.” ■

Photos by Xinhua and Mécia Gonçalves

Deepening Ties for the future: China and Mozambique

By Maria João Belchior in Beijing

In August, Mozambican president August Armando Emilio Guebuza made a visit to China. Mozambique's Ambassador in China, based in Beijing, is António Inácio Junior. He says that the aim of the trip was to "strengthen the cooperation between the two countries in traditional areas, as well as in other sectors of common interest." He added that the recent visit had contributed to "the deepening of ties between the two countries". During President Guebuza's stay, 12 different agreements were signed.

Since 2006, Mozambique has been on China's official list of tourist destinations. Although Chinese tourism is still not a common presence in the country, there is a growing interest in developing ties in different economic areas. This should also help to boost Chinese tourist numbers.

President Hu Jintao visited Mozambique in 2007. It was his first time since the Forum on Africa-China cooperation, which took place in Beijing in 2006. The relations between the two countries date back to the 1960s. But the economic cooperation has been steadier since the turn of this century, when China's development started to impact

on Mozambique.

"The traditional areas of co-operation are education, health, culture and agriculture," Ambassador António Inácio Junior told Macao magazine. The meetings in August also aimed at looking at new areas to be explored, and improving the networks for commerce and investment necessary for these areas.

Educational cooperation

In terms of education, China has been offering student grants and scholarships to Mozambican people since 1992. This type of aid is to be continued, as the Ambassador explained.

"At the moment there are 100 Mozambican students in China with scholarships from the Chinese government. But in the academic year of 2011/2012 this number is expected to increase to 200."

In the beginning, the scholarships were given to students by the Chinese Minister of Education. Recently some Chinese companies have also offered Mozambican students the opportunity to receive grants for undergraduate and postgraduate studies.

"Companies like ZTE Chinese

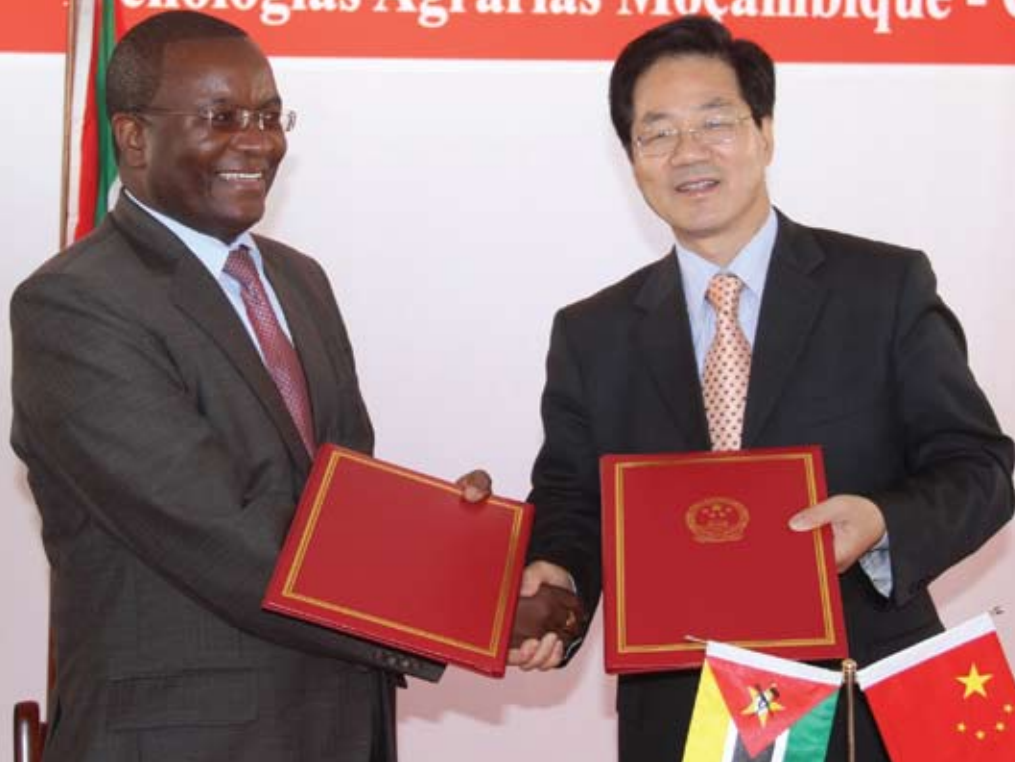
Holding and Huawei have shown interest in receiving Mozambican students for short-term courses," said António.

The IT group Huawei has already given out over a hundred student grants for the coming academic year. Indeed, Huawei is the main company at present developing this type of cooperation. However, ZTE Holding has also been investing in the formation of a small group of students in the country.

The Ambassador highlighted the importance of agreements signed in August which should connect small and medium enterprises from Mozambique with small and medium enterprises from China.

The first Confucius Institute in Mozambique will also open later this year. As António Inácio Junior explained, "The institute will be opened in cooperation with the Eduardo Mondlane University and the Zhejiang Normal University of China." There are a growing number of students willing to learn the Chinese language in Mozambique. Similar to other Confucius Institutes around the world, Mozambique will employ Chinese teachers from China, and relocate them to Maputo to teach Mandarin.

Cerimónia de Entrega e Recepção do Projecto do Centro de Investigação e Transferência Tecnologias Agrárias Moçambique - China



China-Mozambique cooperation in agriculture

Economic bonds

"On the economic level, we have seen growth of more than 30 percent over the last five years," said António. "The total value in terms of transactions today stands at \$700 million dollars, and this figure is still trending upwards." President Gebuza's visit attracted a large group of Mozambican entrepreneurs to China. They participated in a seminar on Hainan Island, creating a network of over 200 people. They used the forum to discuss investment opportunities in Mozambique. "About 30 entrepreneurs came to China. This was a record number of participants for our country," noted António. The participants from Mozambique included people from a range of

sectors, including construction, agriculture, the mining industry, textiles, forestry resources, and law.

A month before the meeting took place in Hainan, a similar seminar took place in Maputo. It led to over fifty Chinese companies becoming familiar with the country and what it had to offer. According to António, the Hainan meeting contributed to a wider discussion about adopting a legal framework for future cooperation between companies from China going to Mozambique. "An agreement was signed between the Chamber of Commerce of Hainan and the Investment Promotion Centre of Mozambique. It will bring together the island of Hainan and the province of Maputo,"

he explained. There is a growing interest in linking different cities in Mozambique and China. "The idea of creating sister cities is for each one to learn from the other."

For the Ambassador, it is important for China to continue to learn more about his country. "We have to publicise Mozambique in order to promote our tourism from China," he explained.

There is a need for a stronger presence at tourism fairs, as well as future partner meetings.

"The two countries are now in a phase of finalising an agreement to create direct flights between them," said António. However, for this to happen, an investment is required. "China should create incentives for Chinese companies to open up direct flights."



Ambassador António Inácio Junior

At the moment, Hainan Airlines is interested in introducing a new route to Mozambique. António considers the business opportunities in the country to be a stimulus for China to establish vital connections.

On the other hand, some Mozambican companies have been coming to China to explore the market. "There are no companies registered yet in China, but the number of people coming is increasing," noted the Ambassador. "Mozambique wants to look at the source of the products. This is what is bringing people to China."

On bilateral cooperation, Mozambique enjoys zero tariffs to export products to the Chinese market, as do other African countries. So far there is no constant presence in the country. "China has offered Mozambique the opportunity of having a constant show room at Yiwu market in Zhejiang province," explained António. He considers this opportunity to be extremely important for Mozambique's entry into the Chinese market.

Providing homes and healthcare

Besides culture, education and agriculture, China is heavily investing in the infrastructure sector in Mozambique. According to the Ambassador, many new buildings, roads and bridges to be constructed in the next few years have China's backing.

One of the newest projects announced is the construction of a housing project by the group Henan Guoji. "Together with the Fund for Habitation, China will construct 10,000 new houses in

the city of Matola,” said António. Luxury and mid-market homes will begin construction this October. The building project is expected to take 18 months to complete. Infrastructure for water, electricity and sanitation will also be funded by China.

Health is one more area being added to the bilateral cooperation.

“We have had Chinese medical teams in Mozambique since the 80s,” explained the Ambassador. The most recent investment in health involved a collaboration in the fight against malaria. “A new centre for malaria control is being sponsored by China, who conceived the infrastructure,” said António.

Indeed, in terms of infrastructure, China is modernising Maputo International Airport, investing in a cement factory in Sofala province, and in a cotton-processing factory which just opened in Beira.

Clothing and feeding people

Processed cotton is an area where

Chinese investment has been particularly positive for the country. The new Chinese factory in Beira opened with productivity expected to reach 40,000 tonnes per year. China-Africa Cotton Mozambique will invest \$22 million in the project. The Chinese company buys raw cotton from the farmers. In the first phase, up to September 2012, it expects to buy up to 6000 tonnes.

On agricultural cooperation, there are the rice and the corn crops to consider. “Rice is our first priority,” noted the Ambassador. “Nowadays we have a deficit on the consumption of rice of around 400,000 tonnes.” The good land conditions of Mozambique only need the right partnership for the development. “With the help of China and other countries, we can expect to achieve self-sufficiency.”

“In Gaza province, in southern Mozambique, there is an experimental project under way. It centres around the rice crops produced in Hubei province in China. Since we began the cooperation, the harvest has

increased a lot,” says António. According to figures from the Mozambican Embassy in Beijing, China’s input has given Mozambique a score of eight tonnes per hectare in the non-irrigated land of Gaza province. “Our goal is to apply this experience to other provinces,” said the Ambassador. “If one day we can have excess, we can begin to export.”

There is a need to increase the production in different provinces. “Zambeze, for example, is a very rich region where there is a gap in investments in agriculture,” added António.

Chinese collaborative projects focus on investing in studying and researching new seeds. “We now have the first centre for the research of new technologies for agriculture. At this centre we are grooming experts from Mozambique.” The bilateral cooperation with China is vital for this stage of agricultural development in the African country. One of the main ideas is to learn from China about poverty reduction, using agriculture as a tool.

Maputo



Land and sea resources

"We've had interest from foreign companies in exploring our sea resources," said the Ambassador. China and Mozambique created the first joint venture for exploring marine resources back in the 90s. "Today we have aquaculture production of shrimps, which are mainly exported to the European market."

The entrance of new companies in the market is, according to the Mozambican Ambassador, a positive step. It should create employment for local people.

China is also developing other fishing projects. For example, China is discussing having special places in Mozambique, under preferential loan, for the storage and processing of fish.

The mining industry is one more area where the Chinese presence is getting stronger. Different projects of prospecting minerals are taking place in various provinces, such as Tete, Gorongosa and Sofala. Gold, precious or semi-precious stones,

and metals are also being prospected by China.

The southern African country has a strong industry in exporting gas to other countries. "China is interested in buying gas from Mozambique. There are a few enterprises establishing contacts, although this subject was not discussed in the President's recent visit," said António.

Minerals, gas and coal will be the next things to be explored and developed.

"In terms of cement production, we do not have enough to cover the real need," explained the Ambassador. "The government is very interested in increasing our production capacity. That is why China is vital."

The different bilateral channels are all to be explored between the two countries. China will continue to expand its investment and cooperation, as well as giving opportunities to Mozambique to enter its national market.

"The national companies will try to promote their products in China. They will do it despite

the drawbacks of being mainly small- and medium-sized enterprises. It will be the China Development Bank that will make it possible for these companies to create partnerships through an investment fund," said António.

The prospects for the future are very bright, according to the Ambassador. Mozambique has found an ideal partner to help it promote its own development and at the same time move its economy onto a more global scale.

Attracting Mozambicans to Macao

"The Macao Forum has been a complementary mechanism for the bilateral relations between Mozambique and China," said the Ambassador. For him, "The idea of using the facility of communication contributes to the strengthening of Chinese investments."

The Fair of Lusofonia – a tradition, as the Ambassador refers to it – has evolved into an exchange today. "Mozambique has contributed to this exchange by offering artists, cultural activities, and gastronomy. We are very happy with the positive results." António Inácio Junior recognises the importance of Macao for Mozambique. As he says, "It is very positive if we can continue to have different exchanges with students with the help of scholarships." For the Ambassador, the Macao government's financing of grants and scholarships is extremely important for Mozambique. António concludes: "We would like to have more Mozambican students learning in Macao, especially in the tourism sector." ■



Macao

Photos by Xinhua and Rita Tudela in Beijing

Raising the stakes

China increasingly active in Mozambique

By Rafael Bié in Maputo

China's support for Mozambique is mainly evident in the country's capital, Maputo. This is according to Inaete Merali, the executive director of Moza Banco, who spoke about Mozambique to Macao Magazine. He added that it is particularly noticeable in the construction sector. Examples of China's input include government buildings and the modernisation of the city's international airport. Worthy of a special mention, too, is the National Stadium.

The most active Chinese companies in Mozambique to date have been the China Henan International Cooperation Group (CHICO), the Anhui Foreign Economic Construction Corporation (AFECC) and Construção CCM.

"Over the last 20 years China has undergone far-reaching changes. It has switched from a closed economy to one that is open to international trade. This, coupled with strong investment in the domestic market, has led to China recording consecutive growth rates close to or above ten percent. Particularly strong sectors in 2010 were the property and consumption sectors. They have even been able to withstand some of the effects of the serious global economic and financial crisis currently facing us," Merali stated.

He added that the changes have driven China to seek strong relations with developing countries who have natural resources. Major mineral and energy reserves have been discovered in Africa, especially in Mozambique. These resources are

proving vital for ensuring that the Chinese economy can maintain its impressive growth rate.

For this reason cooperation between Mozambique and China has been extended. Indeed, it has now moved beyond state level, and rests principally with the citizens and companies of the two countries.

Citizens get involved

"A growing number of Mozambican companies have established business relations with China," Merali said. He explained that China needs raw materials to sustain its 'extraordinary economic growth' and has the money to pay for them. Mozambique lacks capital but has abundant natural resources.

"But it is important for the Mozambicans to know how to take advantage of this relationship. A strategy must be conceived so that Mozambique's wealth can be used for the good of the country and its population," the bank executive stressed.

Merali cited the land question to illustrate his point. "Although farming activity is at subsistence level – except for that associated with companies producing sugar and tobacco – steps must be taken to ensure that the interests of people living on that land are protected. Land allocation models must be studied so that agriculture can develop without generating the conflicts that have arisen in other places."



Inaete Merali

He added that the government should play an active role in that study in order to increase agricultural production and productivity. "We should produce enough food to meet the population's needs. We also need to raise livestock levels, promote fisheries and ensure that the products deriving from these activities are set up with infrastructures and market access."

Favoured partner

Inaete Merali went on to comment on the Mozambican president's recent trip to China, where he was accompanied by the ministers for Agriculture and Mineral Resources. The trip saw the two states sign various agreements, whose plans for action should soon come to fruition.

"The President of the Republic used the trip to obtain information about Mozambique's conditions for their plans. This included looking at the development of agro-livestock projects, electric power production and transport, and natural

resources," he said, adding that "we now expect those agreements to be achieved in due course".

Asked whether the presence of Chinese companies is a solution for attracting investment to Mozambique, Merali said that China is now, and will continue to be, a favoured partner of Mozambique. Moreover, the investment trend will most likely continue over the next few years.

"China's interest in Mozambique is due to the combination of two central factors of Chinese external economic policy. On the one hand they want to ensure access to a market necessary for its expansion and the international projection of state-oriented companies. On the other hand, highly necessary is access to raw materials in sufficient quantities to sustain its economic development and social stability," the banker stated. He noted that in Mozambique the government has been making notable efforts to attract foreign direct investment. They have done this by promoting Special Economic Zones and Industrial Free Trade Zones which "will certainly attract Chinese investors".

Role model for partnership

Soon after starting activity in 2008, Moza Banco signed a memorandum of understanding with the Bank of China. Its purpose was to allow its clients to conduct transactions not just with China but also in cities where the Chinese bank has branches or offices. Merali insisted that the memorandum was currently working well, and that some import/export deals had been financially settled through the bank.

In terms of his own bank, the Moza Banco executive announced that three business units would open in Nampula in October. He said they would be followed later this year by other units in the cities of Tete and Beira. The respective personnel are now being trained.

Moza Banco began operations with only two shareholders. They were Geocapital – a capital investment company based in Macao and Portugal – and the Empresa de Investimentos Moçambicana, representing more than 220 Mozambican investors. The bank recently acquired a third shareholder, BES Africa, pertaining to Portugal's Grupo Banco Espírito Santo. It holds a 50.4 percent controlling stake in the institution.

Institutional information from the bank indicates that the addition of BES Africa to the Moza Banco shareholding structure in January 2011 has leveraged its activity. It has enabled a faster network expansion process, thereby strengthening the institution's technological infrastructure. At the same time it has benefited from the knowledge and specialist expertise of Banco Espírito Santo in terms of both corporations and individuals. ■



R A B B I T

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Carlos Marreiros & Friends
@ One Central

展覽日期 | Duration :
09.09.2011 – 13.11.2011
免費入場 | Free Admission
開放時間 | Opening Hours :
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L A N T E R N

聯絡資料 | Contacts :

澳門仁慈堂婆仔屋 | Albergue SCM
電話 | Tel : (853) 2852 2550、(853) 2852 3205
傳真 | Fax : (853) 2852 2719
電郵 | E-mail : creativealbergue@gmail.com

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電話 | Tel : (853) 2822 9838
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電郵 | E-mail : jho@onecentral.com.mo



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French Success

**Macao entrepreneur
sets up famous
French brand of
children's clothes**

By Mark O'Neill





Howard Yiu Kai-kwong

He left school at 13 and went to work in a factory in the morning to put food on the family table in the evening. Now he runs one of the most well-known chains of children's clothes in France. It boasts 150 shops across Europe, Canada and Mexico.

La Compagnie des Petits is the most famous foreign brand created by a Macao entrepreneur. It is the greatest achievement in the remarkable life of Howard Yiu Kai-kwong.

While he owns 100 percent of the firm, he keeps a low profile. All 300 employees of the company and shops are French. Set up in 1990, its headquarters in Marseilles, it has an annual turnover of over 50 million Euros.

"It is one of the most famous children's shops in France," said buying director Estelle Chapelin on a visit to Macao. "It has received a lot of publicity and has a very faithful clientele. We are making a major push to move up-market, with better window displays, a new logo and an improved image."

The French firm belongs to Yiu's holding company, Group BH, which he established in 1977. Involved in retail, manufacturing and wholesale business, it sells its products in Europe, Asia and the Middle East. It has an annual turnover of more than US\$120 million during peak periods.

Learning the Hard Way

All this is a far cry from the small, low-cost housing estate in Hong Kong, where Yiu is from. He was born in 1950, one of six children of a poor family. His parents scraped a living from odd jobs, sometimes borrowing money, and not knowing where the next meal was coming from.

While he was at primary school, Yiu started to earn money, painting toys on the dining table at home. He graduated at 12 and started to work in textile factories, the mainstay of the Hong Kong economy at that time.

"I worked very hard from eight in the morning until eight at night," he said in an interview. "Working conditions were not healthy, with dust in the air which got into our lungs. We did not wear facemasks. I started coughing, and my lungs are affected even now."

"I had to do this to look after my family. I gave 90 percent of my earnings to my mother. I continued to live with my parents, while my brothers and sisters moved out."

Yiu worked and studied diligently, eager to master the textile business and have a life better than that given to his parents. His talents were noticed by his boss, who offered him a post as a manager in his factories in Taiwan, the Philippines or Macao.

Move to Macao

The job in the Philippines offered a salary three times as high as the amount he was earning in Hong Kong. But life there was dangerous. The salary in Taiwan was double, but the rate of success was low, so he chose Macao, moving to the city in 1970. It was close to Hong Kong and his family, and he had been before on visits with his friends. He was given a salary of 1000 patacas a month, plus board and two meals a day.

"The city was very small, and industrialisation was just beginning," he recalled. "There were only a few factories – small ones. Hong Kong factories had quotas on their exports to the US but those in Macao did not. It was very easy to adapt. The population was small, and there was a strong feeling between people."



Flying on his own

In 1983 he started up his own business. It grew rapidly, with output doubling both that year and the one following it. Yiu opened a factory in China. It offered cheap wages and quota-free access to the European Union – but also meant a flight of nearly 20 hours, via India or Singapore.

He also opened plants in Lille in France, Setubal in Portugal, and in Vietnam. However, due to the quota issue, he was not able to continue the plants

in those countries.

Then Yiu decided on a change of strategy. Instead of producing the garments, he would contract others to do it. So he closed all of his factories and chose outside plants to make the goods and accessories. His firm would provide the materials, designs and patterns, and ensure that its specifications strictly adhered to the European Union standard.

Until 1990, Group BH only produced for foreign clients, and its products carried their brand names.



Setting up shop in France

Then, in 1990, Yiu made a strategic decision. As well as producing clothes for other people, his company also needed to establish its own brand. He chose the world's most competitive fashion market – France. It was a brave decision and, according to many in the industry, a foolhardy one. “When I went to the French banks, they asked me how I would do it. They said I would lose money,” he recalled. But Yiu

went on to prove they were wrong about him.

His strategy for La Compagnie des Petits (LCDP) was to make a firm that was an entirely French enterprise. Yiu owned 100 percent of the company, but all of its employees, including designers and stylists, were French. He placed its headquarters in the southern port city of Marseilles.

“We decided to make clothes for children, from newborns to ten-year-olds. People love children most of all and want the best things for them. We aim at the middle range of the market,” he said. “The French are outstanding in creation. They make the best clothes in the world, while Italians are the best at making things by hand.”

When setting up the business and getting it running, Yiu spent 60 percent of his time in France. LCDP grew rapidly, and now has 150 retail shops. They cover many different countries, including France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Spain, Hong Kong and Macao, as well as Mexico, Canada, Taiwan and mainland China for the wholesale business. The majority are self-managed. In these shops, the consignee manager hires the space and pays the rent and wages, while LCDP provides the merchandise. Each evening the manager puts the receipts in the bank account of LCDP, which pays him a certain percentage. The annual turnover has now reached 50 million Euros. The company has its largest presence in France. Its stores cover the country, from Strasbourg in the east and Nantes in the west, to Lille in the north and Antibes in the south. They have established a presence in the surrounding area of every French city that has a population of over 50,000.

Jean-Pierre Druart, chief executive of LCDP, plans to expand the brand into new markets in North Africa, Eastern Europe and the Middle East.

The BH group continues to manufacture children's clothes for other companies, including famous European brands like Chevignon, Naf Naf and Von Dutch. Its latest client is the French company Zadig & Voltaire, with whom it signed an agreement in April this year to produce children's wear.

LA COMPAGNIE DES
Petits



The future

Yiu is not sure about the future. The younger generation in Macao does not want to be involved in the textile business, which it considers too challenging. It is easier to find a well-paid job in a casino, a hotel or elsewhere. The old workers are retiring.

The garment industry is dominated by giant conglomerates which can obtain the cheapest prices for the materials they use by making bulk purchases. They are increasingly run by accountants and financiers who have little feeling for the products and their employees, and demand only a certain return on equity.

They do not have the passion for the garments and their staff that Yiu has developed over the last 40 years. During the past four decades, Yiu has faced many difficulties in his work for the company, but he has never given up.

Charity work

Alongside working on his own business, Yiu dedicates himself to social charity work.

He is a director of Tung Sin Tong, Macao's biggest private charity. He is also president of the Macao Association for the Mentally Handicapped. "There are many such people who need our help. I have been involved in this work for six years and want to do as much as possible."

This non-profit association was set up in 1986 to provide education and support for people with mental-health disabilities. It has established four education and training centres, organises seminars and celebrations, and lobbies for better welfare for them.

"They are part of our society and people should not look down on them," said Yiu. "We should respect them and give them equal treatment and enable them to live with dignity." The four centres aim to reduce the burden on the families, enable their children to receive training, and integrate them better with the outside world. They also train them to communicate better with their families and people outside of the centres.

In addition, the association lobbies for more long-term residential places for people with mental-health issues. ■

Photos by Carmo Correia in Macao and Agence France Press in Paris

LCDP's Paris stores

La Compagnie des Petits has three branches in Paris. One of them is situated in Les Quatre Temps – one of the biggest shopping centres in the capital.

Les Quatre Temps is in La Défense, Europe's largest purpose-built business district. Located in the west of Paris, it lies on the other side of the Seine from the historic areas for which the city is famous. La Défense has 72 glass and steel buildings, occupying 3.5 million square metres of space. Around 180,000 people go there to work every day.

These office workers are some of the key customers of La Compagnie des Petits. "They come at lunchtime and in the evenings," said Carre Benedicte, a saleswoman in the shop. "The number of people who pass through this centre is very large. In addition to the office workers, we have tourists, residents, and foreigners, including Chinese people."

LCDP's store stands out amongst its competitors on the second floor of the giant shopping centre, awash with red, blue, green and other colours. It sells items for children, catering to youngsters from one month to 10 years' old.

Luring the shoppers

The store opens from 10:00 until 20:00 every day of the week except for Sundays. "At weekends, we tend to get customers who spend less than those during the week," said Benedicte.

"We aim at the middle range of the market. What sets us apart is our array of bright colours – full of joy. Our clothes are ones which children can wear all the time. We use very little black. We offer everything for children, including gloves and accessories. The only thing we don't sell is a shoe range. We cater to all tastes, including classic and not so classic," she said.

All the products are designed by the artists and staff of the company itself. The clothes are made in China, whilst the accessories are usually produced in France.

The firm plans more publicity campaigns for this year, to raise its profile.

Les Quatre Temps offers a shopping experience different to that found in the rest of the city. Rows of colourful shops line the massive mall, and a large food court dominates the fourth floor. Underground there is a metro station with a stop on the city's suburban railway line, which brings in a large volume of traffic every day.

Traditional shoppers prefer to stay on the other side of the Seine, where they can stroll beneath the blue sky along the wide, tree-lined boulevards. Here they can sample the dozens of boutique shops and brands which have made the city famous. La Compagnie des Petits must have a presence in both markets – new and traditional.

Les Quatre Temps - Paris





New stimulus for growth

Hengqin and Qianhai to help
neighbouring Macao and Hong Kong
to diversify economy

By Thomas Chan
*Head of China Business Centre
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University*



Hengqin and Macao

A conglomeration of rapidly expanding cities is emerging in the Pearl River Delta. Indeed, the PRD could be seen as the engine of growth in southern China. Linking these expanding cities are new infrastructures, industries, services, property developments and other large-scale collaborative projects.

In this new era of growth, Hong Kong and Macao are going to be more integrated into the region than ever. Central to achieving this will be the help of three places in particular in Guangdong: Hengqin, Qianhai and Nansha.

These three coastal districts are currently largely undeveloped. They have been officially

designated as close partners of the two Special Administrative Regions (SARs) – Hong Kong and Macao.

The draft of China's 12th Five-Year Plan (2011–2015) has recently been announced. In it, the three Guangdong areas are named as 'experimental zones', with preferential policies and tax concessions to help them support the two SARs.

Hengqin in Zhuhai, Qianhai in Shenzhen, and Nansha in Guangzhou are located in the west, east and centre of the Pearl River estuary respectively.

Of the three, Nansha is probably the least significant for Hong Kong and Macao because it is the furthest away from them.



Room to grow

Why has the Chinese government chosen the three localities to support Hong Kong and Macao? It is because both major cities are facing serious constraints in terms of land.

Macao is in urgent need of space, given its tiny area of 29 sq km. With the involvement of Hengqin, Macao will have four times more land for development. This will help the city develop new industries, generate more jobs and diversify its lop-sided economy.

Hong Kong, too, is suffering from a limited land supply. This has led to serious property inflation and rising costs. In recent years, the central government has helped the city with policies such as giving mainlanders greater freedom to travel to Hong Kong. They have also enabled easier market access for Hong Kong professionals and companies operating in China. These measures have boosted local retail sales and created jobs. It has not been enough, however, to revitalise an economy showing signs of stagnation.

With the help of Qianhai, the SAR could expand some of its financial business across the border. In fact, this is what the mainland planners have in mind. The 15-sq-km area is twelve times the size of Hong Kong's Central district.

Hengqin: the winner

Of the three localities, Hengqin has the best chance of succeeding, with the highest administrative status of a 'state-level special zone'. It has an area of 106 sq km – seven times larger than that of Qianhai.

Hengqin was incorporated into Zhuhai only recently, in August 2009. At that time, there were no development plans in place that might have conflicted with the incorporation project.

The island is adjacent to Macao, providing easy access to individuals and companies in and out of the SAR. Existing and planned railway links will connect Macao to the centre of Zhuhai, and then to Hengqin. The airports of Macao and Zhuhai are also close to Hengqin – another important consideration in the integration of the two cities.

Most importantly, Hengqin will provide Macao with much-needed space to develop new industries and services. In August 2009, the State Council named three sectors to be developed in Hengqin: commercial services; leisure, tourism and science, education and Research and Development.

Hengqin is also to be a special customs zone. Goods imported for manufacturing and industrial processing within the zone will be exempt from tax. However, taxes will have to be paid if the goods are

shipped to other parts of the mainland.

The profit tax for companies investing in Hengqin is favourable at 15 percent against 25 percent elsewhere in China. Hong Kong and Macao residents working on the island will also enjoy a salaries tax rebate from Guangdong. The rebate will cover the tax difference – as high as 30 percent in some cases – between the SARs and Hengqin. These tax incentives aim to attract talented and skilled professionals to Hengqin.

There are high hopes for the planned campus of the University of Macao in Hengqin. With adequate back-up and good management, the university could provide the appropriate setting to nurture high-value services.

Qianhai: Manhattan of Shenzhen

For a decade, Shenzhen has promoted Qianhai as its financial district – like Manhattan in New York or the City in London. But not much has happened, except for some land reclamation.

Qianhai is divided into three zones: the logistics zone close to existing container- port facilities, the financial and commercial zone close to Shenzhen

airport, and a mixed zone.

Qianhai is to be connected to the rest of Shenzhen by two subway lines. One is the Hong Kong-Shenzhen high-speed railway, although not much work has been done since the initial announcement.

In August 2010, the State Council designated Qianhai as a ‘Shenzhen-Hong Kong Modern Services Cooperation Zone’. The announcement included bold suggestions not only for the district’s economy but also for its administrative structure. These involved, amongst other things, setting up a Hong Kong-style independent commission, and the appointment of two Hong Kong people to its major administrative body.

On 27 June 2011, the People’s Congress of Shenzhen rejected these ideas. They felt that Qianhai would simply turn into just another low-tax zone in southern China.

The local congress passed regulations to promote service industries such as finance, logistics, technology and information. However, there was no mention of offshore financial activities. The hope had been that Qianhai would develop into a ‘mini Hong Kong’, with freer financial regulations than in the rest of China.

Shenzhen





Shenzhen

Qianhai's administrative status within the Chinese government is that of a so-called 'local special zone'. This means it is much weaker politically than a provincial and ministerial-level zone. It has not been given any powers to pass financial regulations independently. The central government in Beijing continues to control all important matters related to the financial sector.

Without a special mandate on financial matters, Qianhai is not attractive to investors. Why should banks, insurance companies, securities firms and other financial institutions move their businesses to a largely undeveloped new zone? In Shenzhen, there is already a well-established financial district – Futian.

The only area in which Qianhai has made headway is developing its port. The Shenzhen Qianhai Bay Bonded Port was officially established in October 2008. Its main activities are international transits, distribution, procurement, the re-export trade, and export processing.

Shekou: A strong rival

In these areas, Qianhai is competing with another shipping and logistic centre nearby – Shekou. A long-established economic zone, Shekou is located on the same peninsula as Qianhai in Shenzhen. Shekou has been operating for over three decades and has attracted a large number of local and

international companies. Many of these companies have established their China headquarters there. Its subway brings commuters to the centre of Shenzhen. The zone, successfully established by the China Merchants Group, will want to attract financial institutions as well.

Other cities in the Delta are targeting the potentially lucrative financial sector. The most successful one is the Nanhai district of Foshan – a city only recently incorporated into Guangzhou. Nanhai set up a finance and high-tech service zone in 2007. By mid-2011, it had signed contracts for 64 projects worth 22 billion yuan. It has also developed into a major back-office centre for financial institutions, including HSBC.

With so much competition, it is quite unlikely for Qianhai to realise its dream of achieving a GDP of 150 billion yuan by 2020. ■

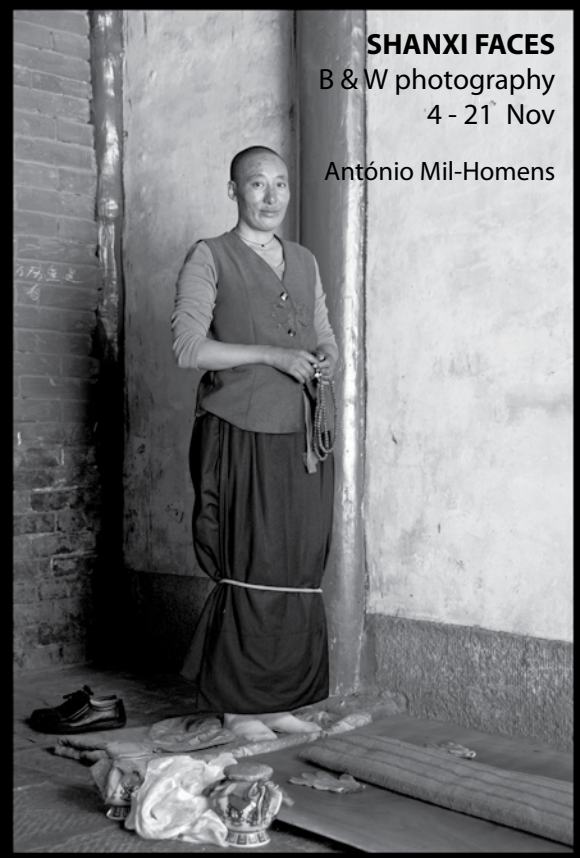
Photos by Eric Tam



SHANXI FACES

B & W photography
4 - 21 Nov

António Mil-Homens



SOCCERSTARS by Idreams

product launch
23 November 6:30pm



JINGMAI photography by Carol Kwok

10 - 27 Feb 2012



LOST 2 video art by Cindy Ng

6 - 31 Jan 2012



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"LOUD IMAGE COLOURFUL SOUND"

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EXHIBITION 3 - 31 DECEMBER

Government buys Sun Yat-sen pharmacy downtown Macao

Macao, China, 25 Jul - A crumbling three-story building that was built almost 120 years ago has been bought by the government because it believes that the edifice was the former address of the Chinese-Western Medicine Pharmacy where the founder of modern China, Dr. Sun Yat-sen, worked for a short period of time.

Work on the dilapidated building will start early next year and it will be open to the public on completion.

Population rises to record 558,100 in June

Macao, China, 10 Aug - Macao's population – comprising residents and non-local workers – reached 558,100 at the end of the second quarter, the highest number on record, the Statistics and Census Bureau (DSEC) announced.

The previous population record stood at 557,330, at the end of the third quarter of 2008. At the end of June, the population was up 2.5 percent year-on-year.

Macao allows second Taiwan bank branch

Macao, China, 16 Aug - The Macao government has authorised a second Taiwan bank, Hua Nan Commercial Bank, to open a branch in the territory. The other Taiwan-incorporated bank licensed to operate in Macao is Bank SinoPac.

25 JUL



10 AUG



16 AUG



08 AUG



11 AUG



17 AUG



Sands China announces 6,000-room 'Cotai Central' project

Macao, China, 8 Aug - Sands China has announced that its newly branded "Sands Cotai Central" project will feature 6,000 rooms and suites from the Conrad, Sheraton, Sheraton Towers and Holiday Inn hotel chains as well as meeting and convention space, two casinos and a wide range of retail outlets and entertainment and dining options.

Hilton's five-star Conrad is expected to open in the first quarter of next year, featuring 600 rooms and suites, according to the statement. The four-star Holiday Inn "is also scheduled to open late first quarter" 2012, comprising 1,200 rooms and suites.

Shun Tak buys First Ferry

Macao, China, 11 Aug - Shun Tak-China Travel Shipping Investments, that operates under the brand TurboJet, said that it has entered into a sales and purchase agreement with New World First Holdings, to acquire all shareholdings in New World First Ferry Services (Macao).

The transaction, amounting to HK\$350 million, includes acquisition of vessels and operation concessions granted by the Macao government.

Residential property prices rise 38.2 pct in Q2

Macao, China, 17 Aug - The average transaction price of residential units in the Macao Special Administrative Region (MSAR) rose 38.2 percent year-on-year to 44,269 patacas per square metre (10.76 square feet) of usable area in the second quarter, the Statistics and Census Bureau (DSEC) announced.

Quarter-to-quarter, the average transaction price was up 15.7 percent in the second quarter.

China plans to boost training of staff from Portuguese-speaking countries

Macao, China, 18 Aug – China plans to expand its cooperation with Portuguese-speaking countries, paying special attention to staff training, the vice president of the International Training Academy for the Trade Authorities of the Chinese Trade Ministry said in Macao.

Zhu Liugui also said that in two-way cooperation China always gave great importance to developing human resources and that the country had trained over 130,000 staff from developing countries, 7,500 of which were from Portuguese-speaking countries.

18 AUG



22 AUG

Policies applied to Hengqin Island are more far-reaching than those in Chinese economic zones

Macao, China, 22 Aug – Macao's Chief Executive, Fernando Chui Sai On said that the policies approved by the Chinese State Council to be applied in Hengqin Island were even more far-reaching than existing policies in Chinese special economic zones. Chui was speaking during a meeting to provide information about the new policies to be applied to Hengqin Island, next to Macao.

Macao logs 41 billion pataca BOP surplus

Macao, China, 24 Aug - Macao recorded a balance of payments (BOP) surplus of 41.3 billion patacas in 2010, an increase of 144.4 percent on 2009, the Macao Monetary Authority (AMCM) said in a statement.

According to the statement, Macao's current account stood at 97.0 billion patacas last year, up 80.9 percent year-on-year.

24 AUG



28 AUG

United States takes revenge on Brazil to retain World Grand Prix volley title

Macao, China, 28 Aug – Defending champion the United States retained the World Grand Prix volley title as they swept Brazil in three straight sets in the last match of the 2011 FIVB World Grand Prix Finals at Macao.

In front of 4,600 fans, the defending champion USA won 26-24, 25-20, 25-21 in 1 hour and 32 minutes.

Unemployment rate stays unchanged at 2.7 pct

Macao, China, 30 Aug - Macao's officially estimated unemployment rate remained unchanged at 2.7 percent in the May-July and April-June survey periods, according to figures released by the Statistics and Census Bureau.

Macao's total labour force stood at 340,000 in May-July, when the labour force participation rate amounted to 71.8 percent.

30 AUG



30 AUG

Macao GDP growth quickens to 24 pct in Q2

Macao, China, 30 Aug - The growth of Macao's gross domestic product (GDP) quickened to 24 percent year-on-year in real terms in the second quarter, after rising 21.6 percent in the previous quarter, according to data released by the Statistics and Census Bureau.

For the first half of this year, GDP increased 22.9 percent year-on-year in real terms.

Macao Airport company buys out management firm

Macao, China 31 Aug - The Macau International Airport Company (CAM) announced in a statement that it has bought out the Sino-Portuguese Airport Management Company (ADA).

Prior to the buyout, ADA was owned 51 percent by CNAC (Macao) Aviation Limited, owned by Air China's majority share-holder China National Aviation Holding Company, while the remaining 49 percent of ADA was held by Portugal's airports management company ANA.

Macao economy to grow 20 pct in 2011 and 15 pct in 2012

Macao, China, 8 Sept - The Macao economy is expected to see growth of 20 percent in 2011 and 15 percent in 2012, years in which investment is expected to start rising once again after falling sharply in 2009 and 2010, according to the latest report from the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU). The report, quoted by MacaHub news agency, expects year-on-year growth in gross fixed capital formation of 8.5 percent this year and 8.9 percent in 2012.

Tour of Sun Yat-sen's Trail launched in Macao to commemorate Xinhai Revolution

Macao, China, 15 Sept - The Culture Affairs Bureau of Macao and the Macau Heritage Ambassadors Association jointly launched the Tour of Dr. Sun Yat-sen's Macao Revolutionary Trail to mark the 100th anniversary of Xinhai Revolution. The route of the tour includes Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall, the Lou Lim Ioc Garden, Meeting Place of the Tong Meng Hui Union and the Kiang Wu Hospital, where Dr. Sun worked as a volunteer doctor decades before Xinhai Revolution, also known as the Revolution of 1911.

31 AUG



08 SEP



15 SEP



02 SEP



14 SEP



18 SEP

Trade between China and Portuguese-speaking countries nearly US\$63 billion in first seven months of 2011

Macao, China, 2 Sept - Trade between China and the eight Portuguese-speaking countries from January to July totalled US\$62.986 billion, a rise of 26.95 percent against the same period of 2011, according to official figures from China's Customs Bureau published in Macao.

In the period, China imported goods from the eight Portuguese-speaking countries worth US\$41.639 billion (22.92 percent more) and exported goods worth US\$21.350 billion (35.62 percent more), generating a trade deficit of US\$20.289 billion.

Macao Dragon ferry goes bust after just 14 months of service

Macao, China, 14 Sept - Macao Dragon Company Limited, which launched ferry services between Hong Kong and Macao in July 2010, announced that it has filed for bankruptcy in Hong Kong and is ceasing operations.

According to the company, it is no longer able to run its service due to the cap on the number of passengers per sailing, which shrank the ferry company's passenger capacity from 1,152 to 750 on each sailing from Hong Kong to Macao, and 600 from Macao to Hong Kong.

Taiwan's Chan Yih-shin wins Macau Open Golf

Macao, China, 18 Sept - Taiwan's Chan Yih-shin grabbed his second Asian Tour golf title by three shots in the \$750,000 Macau Open. Chan's tee shot went out-of-bounds for a double bogey on the first hole but he rallied with a massive chip-in birdie from 40 feet on 12 before closing with two-under-par 69 in blustery conditions at the Macau Golf and Country Club.

Pacific Asia Travel Association urges Macao to 'go after India'

Macao, China, 19 Sept - Macao should place its bets on the Indian market, improve transport infrastructure and service quality, as well as create more offers for families, to become a global tourism and entertainment centre, head of the team of experts of the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA), Andrew Drysdale, suggested.

Macao promotes trade with Portuguese-speaking countries at PPRD forum

Macao, China, 22 Sept - Backed by Macao, Portuguese-speaking countries (PSC) are this week seeking to attract more Chinese investment at a forum hosted by the Pan Pearl River Delta – the nation's major manufacturing region, according to a report released by Xinhua News Agency. Macao is sponsoring a business seminar at the four-day 7th Pan Pearl River Delta (PPRD) Regional Co-operation and Development Forum in Nanchang, capital of south-eastern Jiangxi province.

Chui opens Macao-Portuguese Speaking Countries expo centre in Jiangmen

Macao, China, 23 Sept - Chief Executive Fernando Chui Sai On inaugurated an exhibition and sales centre for products from Macao and Portuguese-speaking countries (PSCs) in Jiangmen city, some 70 kilometres north-west of Macao. The new centre, an initiative of the Macau Exporters and Importers Association, is housed in the Jiangmen Xinhui Bonded Warehouse owned by Jiangmen Dah Chong Hong-Sims Food Processing & Warehousing Ltd.

19 SEP



22 SEP



23 SEP



22 SEP



23 SEP



26 SEP

Inflation hits 6.15 pct in August – highest since Dec 2008

Macao, China, 22 Sept - Macao's composite consumer price index (CPI) rose 6.15 percent last month from a year earlier, the highest rate in over two and a half years, according to the Statistics and Census Bureau. August's inflation rate was the highest since December 2008, which stood at 6.16 percent.

Gaming tax receipts rise 45 pct in Jan-Aug

Macao, China, 23 Sept - The government's income from direct gaming taxes rose 45.1 percent year-on-year to 59.9 billion patacas in the first eight months of the year. Direct gaming taxes generated 85.4 percent of the government's total income between January and August. In the same period of last year, direct gaming taxes produced 84.5 percent of the government's total income. Macao's casinos pay 35 percent of their gross receipts as direct tax to the government.

August logs record 2.69 million visitors

Macao, China, 26 Sept - Macao logged a record 2.69 million visitor arrivals in August, an increase of 14.4 percent on the same month last year, according to official data. In the first eight months the number of visitor arrivals reached 18.49 million, up 10.4 percent year-on-year.

Typhoon Nesat sweeps past Macao

Macao, China, 29 Sept - Typhoon Nesat swept past Macao after lashing the Philippines, bringing floods in the Inner Harbour and holding up visitors at the airport and maritime terminals due to suspended flights and ferry services.

It was Macao's first No. 8 tropical cyclone warning to be hoisted in the past two years. All schools, banks and government bureaus closed.

Chief Executive to spare no efforts in inflation relief

Macao, China, 1 Oct - The government will spare no efforts in driving economic development and controlling inflation, Macao's Chief Executive promised during ceremonies of the China National day in Macao.

Fernando Chui Sai On said the government attached serious importance in monitoring the rising inflation rate.

He also acknowledged that inflation has been causing difficulties for the general public, especially disadvantaged groups.

Macao's gross gaming revenues total US\$24.294 billion in first nine months

Macao, China, 6 Oct - Gross gaming revenues in Macao totalled 194.350 billion patacas (US\$24.294 billion) in the first nine months of 2011, representing a year-on-year rise of 45.9 percent, the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau (GICB) said. In September alone gross casino gaming revenues totalled 21.244 billion (US\$2.655 billion), an increase of 38.8 percent, which was the lowest year-on-year rate since January, in which growth was 33.2 percent.

29 SEP



01 OCT



06 OCT



01 OCT



04 OCT



06 OCT

China wins pyrotechnic contest on National Day

Macao, China, 1 Oct - Mainland China's Panda Fireworks Group won the 23rd Macau International Fireworks Display Contest, coinciding with the People Republic of China's National Day.

According to a statement by the Macao Government Tourist Office (MGTO), the winner won a cash prize of US\$8,000. Tamaya Kitahara Fireworks from Japan finished in second and Brezac Artifices from France in third place.

Macao's trade deficit totals US\$4.31 billion between January and August

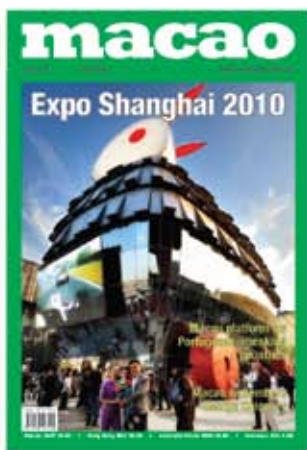
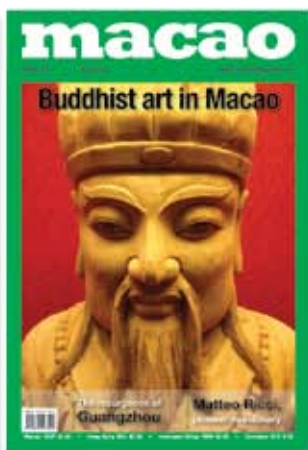
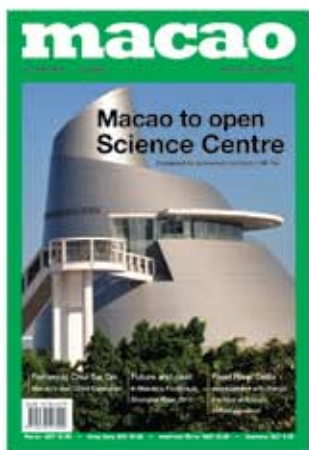
Macao, China, 4 Oct - Macao's balance of trade posted a deficit of 34.48 billion patacas (US\$4.31 billion) in the period from January to August, which was a rise of 49.2 percent against the same period of 2010, the region's Statistics and Census Bureau (DSEC) said.

In that period, Macao's exports totalled 4.53 billion patacas, a fall of 5.4 percent year-on-year, and imports rose by 39.8 percent to 39.02 billion patacas, leading the rate of coverage of imports by exports to drop by 5.6 percentage points year on year to 11.6 percent.

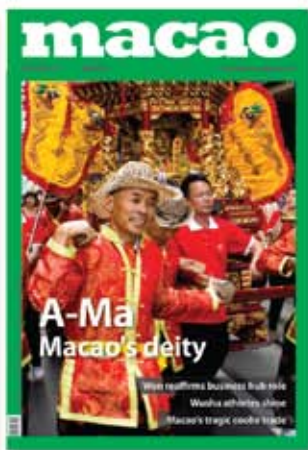
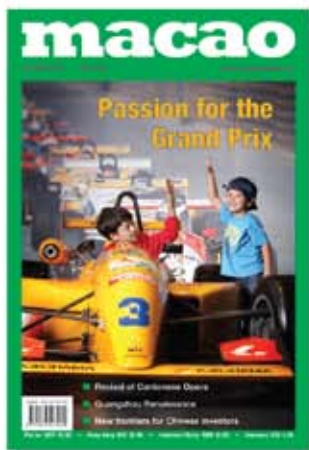
F3 winners Merhi, Nasr, Bottas, Stanway to contest 2011 Macau GP

Macao, China, 6 Oct - Six open-wheel champions will race this year's prestigious Formula 3 Macau GP with Roberto Merhi, Felipe Nasr, Valtteri Bottas, Richie Stanway, 2009 German F3 champion Laurens Vanthoor and 2007 British F3 champion Marko Asmer announced the Co-ordinator of the Macau Grand Prix Committee, Manuel Costa Antunes. Other notable names include GP3s Alexander Sims and Mitch Evans, as well as Carlos Sainz Jr. Antunes also said that the 58th Macau Grand Prix will receive 225 competitors from 34 countries and territories.

2009/2011
YEARS OF macao
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 Parnadas de Azavedo (b) e Francisca
 Liger (c) Neto paterno de Sebastiao
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500 years of Western presence

Unique documents shed light on the history of Europeans in Macao

By Pedro Daniel de Oliveira

Last year the Archives and Materials of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Macao were formally recognised by UNESCO. On 9 March 2010 the Archives were inscribed on UNESCO'S Memory of the World Regional Register for Asia/Pacific. They are currently one of the world's oldest and most complete collections portraying the European presence on the continent of Asia since the 16th century.

Covering the period between the 1550s and 1800s, the archives include documents and books written in Chinese, Latin and Portuguese, as well as other European languages such as French and Italian.

The inscription owes much to the significant support from the director of the Macao Documentation and Information Society, Helen leong Hoi Keng. She is also the functional head of the Public Access and Document Unit of the University of Macao.



Helen leong Hoi Keng

Macao as bastion of Catholicism

Nearly five centuries ago missionaries from Europe began converging on the Far East. The then Portuguese-administered territory became the bastion of Catholicism in this part of the world.

The Macao Diocese encompassed the Catholic churches in China, Japan, Korea, Vietnam and Timor. Its influence also extended to Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand, among other places. Only in 1981 was its jurisdiction limited to what is now the Macao Special Administrative Region, i.e. the Macao Peninsula and the islands of Taipa and Coloane.

According to Helen leong Hoi Keng, "The Macao Diocese Archive contains the individual cases of the missionaries, official documents issued by the Ecclesiastical Chamber, and case files about Catholic schools and religious congregations established in the territory. They contain birth and marriage records and obituaries from the 16th century onwards. Also documented is correspondence with the local government, the authorities in mainland China, and the Holy See."

One of the most valuable Ecclesiastical Chamber items included in the UNESCO register is the 1803 copy of a Papal Bull dated 10 February 1575. Written in Latin by Pope Gregory XIII, it created the Bishopric of Macao (now called the Diocese of Macao) which took effect on 23 January 1576.

The archive also possesses the Bullarium – the publication containing all bulls up to the 20th century. It comes from the library of St Joseph's Seminary, Macao, and includes a copy of the bull creating the Diocese of Macao. Other important records in the Ecclesiastical Chamber date to 1796 and contain accounts of priests from various places in Europe.

Extensive collection

The library at St Joseph's Seminary has an extensive collection of books, including the manual '*Linguae Sinarum Mandarinicae*'. Written by Stephanus Fourmont and published in 1742 in Paris, it was used to teach Mandarin and its respective grammar.

One of the most important religious personages to pass through the Seminary was Bishop Joaquim de Sousa Saraiva. He was born in Portugal on 15 October 1765, and became the appointed Bishop of Beijing from 1804 to 1818. He arrived in Macao on

16 September 1804, but was never able to continue on to the capital to take up his post.

He remained at St Joseph's Seminary, teaching mathematics, philosophy and theology until his death on 28 February 1818. According to Helen leong Hoi Keng, Bishop Joaquim de Sousa Saraiva also brought the '*Linguae Sinarum Mandarinicae*' manual to Macao. It was originally meant to accompany him to the Chinese mainland.

Friar Joaquim Afonso Gonçalves is another such figure. One of Portugal's most renowned Sinologists, he compiled important Chinese-Portuguese and Latin-Chinese dictionaries along with many other works and textbooks on Chinese grammar. Gonçalves was born in Portugal on 23 March 1812, and taught Chinese, English and music at St Joseph's Seminary until his death on 3 October 1841.

The library's collection also contains a series of three volumes written in Latin and published in Belgium in 1670 – the '*Vera Concilii Tridentini Historia*'. It concerns the Ecumenical Council of the Catholic Church and their religious doctrines.

Efforts to publish

Elsewhere in Macao are housed other significant, though extremely, rare editions.

"Macao counts very few instances of systematic publication of sources," explains Tereza Sena. "In any case, the late Father Manuel Teixeira was the one who most used the Macao Diocese Archives. He drew much of the information used in his broad-ranging work from them. He also tried to start up the systematic publication of the religious archives, though with little success. His first and only volume went to press in 1970 and was entitled '*Archives of the Macao Diocese*'."

Sena is a researcher at the Centre for Sino-Western Studies at the Macao Polytechnic Institute. She also recalls Father Manuel Teixeira's efforts to disseminate the history of the Catholic Church of Macao. He published a number of separate documents in the '*Ecclesiastical Bulletin*' in the 1960s, as well as various religion-related articles in the local press. She also acknowledged the contribution of the late Father Videira Pires, specifically the magazine *Religião e Pátria*. Although more centred on the Jesuits and their sources, it used the archives of the Diocese as well.



Tereza Sena

Cataloguing and preservation

The Archive of the Macao Diocese was subject to an early attempt at chronological cataloguing. In the mid-20th century efforts were made to catalogue the collection in alphabetical order. The documents are currently kept in files stored on metal shelves in the Ecclesiastical Chamber.

The Bishop of the Macao Diocese, Dom José Lai, aims to preserve this important collection for future generations. To that end, a working group has been set up, headed by the parish priest of Our Lady of Carmel Church, Father Luís Xavier.

The project's first phase envisages the simultaneous inventory, cataloguing, description and digitalisation of the collection. The second phase will involve the more delicate work of preserving the documents. A third and final phase will aim to complement the Archive with copies of documents that pertain

to the Macao Diocese but which were moved for various reasons to Lisbon (Torre do Tombo National Archive), Paris and London.

"The documents kept in the Ecclesiastical Chamber are not all catalogued but are in principle confidential. The prelate from the Macao Diocese is responsible for deciding which part of the archive is open to the public and which to researchers, to whom we give access to more private documents," explains Father Luís Xavier.

But he emphasises that "institutional and ecclesiastical rules must be respected". That's why, for example, correspondence between the Macao Diocese and the Holy See remains beyond the reach of researchers and the public.

There are plans to transfer the books from the Archives to the Seminary library. According to Xavier, though, the confidential documents will remain in the Ecclesiastical Chamber.



Father Luís Xavier

Still a long way to go

In order to implement the project, a working methodology must be chosen. The software used needs to be carefully selected, as the documents are not just written in Latin and other European languages but also in Chinese. And the best way to preserve the oldest documents must be agreed on. "It's a project that will surely take about 20 years to accomplish. Some documents will be very hard to decipher. So it's going to take time," says Father Xavier. He will be counting on the experience of the Vice-Rector for Research and International Relations at the University of St Joseph. He will also lean on professor Ivo Carneiro de Sousa, who will be in charge of the palaeological work and will help catalogue the documents.

The hiring of a full-time ecclesiastical archivist from Portugal or Italy is also being considered, to coordinate the daily tasks.

The Society of Jesus

Macao's religious history is not complete until mention is made of the archives of the Society of Jesus.

In the 18th century, Portugal's Marquis of Pombal expelled the Jesuits from Macao. "It led to the transfer of several important archives to European cities," explains the professor and historian Luís Filipe Barreto, Director of the Macao Scientific and Cultural Centre, based in Lisbon, Portugal. "Amongst these were the Japan Archive and the archives of missions in East Asia and the Southeast.

Also significant is the documentation, mainly in Latin, printed from the 16th to the 18th centuries. So, too, the manuscripts from the missions in mainland China, with copy or notification to and from Macao. Examples include the Portuguese/Chinese wordbooks found in archives in Portugal, Italy, Sweden and China, among others."

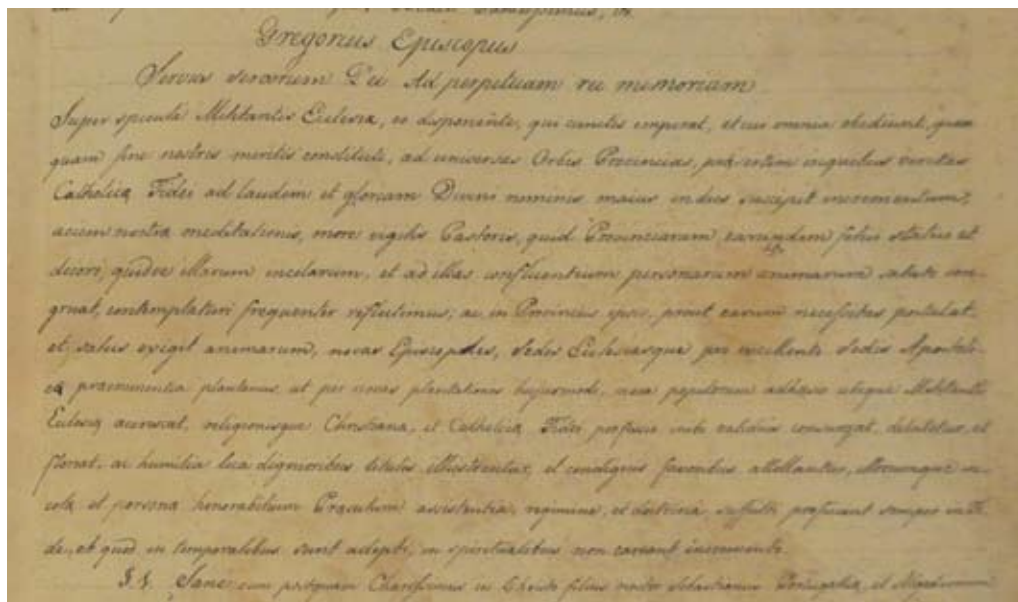
Barreto adds that "the conditions for preserving manuscripts in Macao involved regularly copying many documents that had deteriorated with use. There are 18th-century copies of 16th- and 17th-century originals which can now be found in the cities of Lisbon, Évora, Madrid, Rome, Seville, London and Leiden, among other places."

Other archives

Several other religious orders based in Macao from the 16th century onwards possessed important archives. The Augustinians, Dominicans and Franciscans and their respective document stores existed in the territory from the time of the Europeans' arrival. Other orders that eventually established themselves in Macao were the Salesians, Canossians and the Sisters of the Precious Blood, to name just a few.

Macao nowadays boasts one of the most important collections documenting the history of the Catholic Church and the Western presence in Asia. The fact that the Diocese archives are being inventoried will enhance the territory's status as a centre for historical research. It will further understanding about East/West relations, which date back to the 16th century in Macao. ■

Photos by Luís Almoester and José Goulão in Lisbon



Ordinance in Latin about establishing the Macao Diocese 1575
Rewrote in 1803, Courtesy of the Macao Diocese



Luis Filipe Barreto



AN FIELES DE ME
NEZ ESCOL DA INDIA
AMADO O FAZER
JO AN RO DE IGALO

Weapons of Yesteryear

Portuguese
cannon foundries
in Macao

By João Guedes



Bocarro Cannons

The name Krupp is one that must be familiar to a great many people. The German weapons manufacturer has supplied equipment to armies around the world for over 400 years.

The Krupp family first appear in historical documents in 1587, when Arndt Krupp joined the merchants' guild of Essen. Arndt, a trader, arrived in the city just before a major plague epidemic took hold. He survived to become one of the city's wealthiest merchants, buying up properties from families who had fled the city to escape from the disease. After he died in 1624, his son Anton took over the family's affairs. Anton became responsible for the manufacturing of cannons during the 30 Years' War (1618–1648). This marked the start of the family's long association with the arms industry, lasting right up to the present day.

But most people probably don't know that the making of cannons (at least modern cannons) was not invented by the German Krupps. Far from it. The manufacture of bronze and iron cannons for use on land and sea had been developed by the Portuguese decades beforehand.

This was the technology that enabled Portugal to

bring half the world into submission. Thanks to the efforts of Afonso de Albuquerque, they were able to ensure Portuguese supremacy on the trade routes to India. Albuquerque used bronze and iron cannons (especially the latter) to his advantage, to dominate the Persian Gulf. The result was a cutting of trade links between the Italian republics, Persia and the Arab countries.

He was likewise able to conquer Malacca and its strait, which allowed Portugal to control trade between Europe and the Far East for more than two centuries.

But who was responsible for making the cannon that enabled an empire to rise from nothing? Until that point Portugal had been merely a small country at the far western fringe of Europe. How could it achieve this manufacturing feat?

The answer lies in Macao. Here, a master engineer from Portugal named Manuel Tavares Bocarro set up a cannon foundry.

The Krupp family business continues today. But Bocarro's only lasted for two or three generations. His name was lost as different business lines took over, and is only kept alive in the annals of history.

Lime, bronze and iron

Tourists who visit Macao today are taken to the St Paul's Ruins, the Kum Iam Tung Temple and the Barra Pagoda, among many other sites. Only rarely do they venture into a small and much-changed neighbourhood nestled in the shadow of the Portuguese consul general's residence. It lies just over 200 metres from the Praia Grande Palace, which now houses the government seat of the Macao Special Administrative Region.

Practically nothing remains of the old properties in this neighbourhood. A small 19th century two-storey building stands awkwardly beside tall, modern edifices that reach towards the sky. Few passers-by have any historical awareness of the ground they are treading on.

The neighbourhood is known locally as Chunambeiro. According to historian Charles R. Boxer in 'Macao Three Hundred Years Ago', the word is derived from an Indian term for the lime obtained from seashells. Indeed, oyster-shell lime kilns once stood here. It also became the site of the old artillery foundry and powder magazine run by the famous Manuel Tavares Bocarro in the 17th century.

The two-storey Ricci building that nowadays houses the "Estrela do Mar" school has a long past. It once served as the initial base of the great English trading company Jardines & Matheson – opium traders and tea merchants. But the foundations of this yellow-painted building have borne much more history than that. This was, in fact, the location of the foundry that cast the bronze and iron cannon made by master Tavares Bocarro.

Unsung hero

A search through historical records reveals scant details of Bocarro's life.

In 1625 Manuel Tavares Bocarro arrived in Macao. He had travelled from Goa, where he had learned his craft from his father – namely managing the family foundry. At that point the foundry was situated in Chunambeiro, next to the Bom Parto Fortress and at the foot of Penha Hill.

The foundry went on to become famous for its metallurgical techniques, where Eastern and Western expertise converged. Over the years, it produced countless cannon, bells and statues.



Estrela do Mar School



Although we know about the cannon and bells, not a single statue is known to have survived the passage of time.

Charles R. Boxer stated that “in 1623 Dom Francisco Mascarenhas, first captain general of Macao, signed a contract with two ‘Chinas’ to cast cannon at the colony’s foundry”. He added that “the main source of supply for the Portuguese forts and fleets in India continued to be Macao. Here a Sino-Portuguese foundry was ably run by Manuel Tavares Bocarro, son of Pedro Tavares Bocarro, head of the Goa casters. They manufactured both iron and bronze cannon”.

The chronicler António Bocarro wrote the following about Macao in 1635: “This place has one of the world’s best cannon foundries, whether of bronze, which has been here a long time, or of iron, which was done by order of the Viceroy Count of Linares. It’s where artillery for the whole State (of India) is continually cast, at a very reasonable price.”

Construction of the Chunambeiro landfill is dated at 1871. In 1873 work began on extending Praia Grande Street from the Chunambeiro landfill to Bom Parto. Before then, the Barra residents had crossed Santa Sancha Hill to get to Praia Grande, one of the city’s most isolated areas, containing only a few country houses.

Arrival in Macao

Manuel Bocarro arrived in Macao in mid-1625. He worked until the end of that year as an assistant at the Caza da Fundação (Foundry House). In 1626 the foundry was freed from management by ‘two Castilians’. This meant that Manuel Bocarro was able to dedicate himself entirely to producing iron and bronze cannon. The first cannon he cast was a 36-calibre that was active for centuries on the Monte Fortress. It is known in history texts as the ‘Mandarin Artillery Piece’.

In 1627 Manuel Bocarro cast several large cannon that could shoot stone projectiles weighing 50 lb each. All the cannon were dedicated to saints: St Alphonse, St Ursula, St Peter Martyr, St Gabriel, St James, Pope St Linus and St Paul, among others. For many years they defended Macao from their fortress positions. During the Pacific War (1937–45) they were all removed, and sold to the Japanese in exchange for rice. The St Lawrence and St Ildephonsus cannon are exhibited at the Tower of London, while those dedicated to St Anthony and St Michael belong to the Woolwich Museum.

In the Jakarta Museum’s inventory, the following artillery piece is described as item no. 27012: “Cannon; once the ‘holy cannon’ of Jakarta, origin:

probably cast by the Portuguese, captured by the Dutch from the Portuguese at Malacca (1641).” The ‘Holy Cannon’ is traditionally deemed to be of Portuguese origin and has been carefully studied by M. Neyens and K.C. Crucq. The latter wrote: “Finally, I’d like to say something of vital interest regarding the Holy Cannon of Batavia. Lisbon’s military museum has a cannon presumably cast by Manuel Tavares Bocarro which was shot with the same shape as our Holy Cannon, which again confirms the Portuguese origin of the Batavia cannon. It is now most probable that this cannon was cast by Manuel Tavares Bocarro. In this regard, Bocarro used a special soldering technique that allowed him to add grips to move the pieces, as well as fittings such as the dolphin handles that even today distinctively mark his artillery pieces.” Manuel Tavares Bocarro’s life may be an interesting subject for historians, but what he produced in iron and bronze can still be seen in various museums around the world.



Model of Bocarro Foundry



Buried in history

Unfortunately, little remains of Bocarro's life and work in Macao – the territory Bocarro operated from. Historians have only identified a small cracked bell at St Michael's Chapel next to the Guia lighthouse. It serves as a reminder of the golden days of Bocarro's foundry, though even this is seldom mentioned in local guidebooks.

Legend has it that nearly three centuries after Bocarro's death, Marshal Wellington used a number of his cannon. They proved very effective in many clashes and battles during the Peninsular War (1807–14), which resulted from the French invasions of Spain and Portugal.

The discovery of the Portuguese galleon Sacramento is a notable find. It sank in 1647 while transporting a cargo of Bocarro cannon from Goa to Lisbon. In 1978 divers were able to recover these bronze

cannon, which were still in good condition. They had been cast in Macao in 1640, the very same year that Portugal recovered its independence from Spain. According to Charles Boxer, it was the first large cargo of cannon transported from Macao through the Dutch blockade.

The furnaces of Manuel Tavares Bocarro's foundry are now forever lost under the foundations of buildings that began encroaching on the slopes of Penha Hill in the 1980s. Even the Jardines & Matheson building now overlooks a reclamation area that did not exist when the great 17th century cannon and bell maker worked in the area.

The discovery of the furnaces where Bocarro's cannons, bells and statues were cast is an impossible task. Yet it is still worthwhile to seek out that small broken bell, still preserved at the Guia Fortress, just a few short metres from the lighthouse. ■

Bocarro's bell at Guia Chapel

Photos: José Goulão and Courtesy of the Military Museum in Lisbon and Eric Tam in Macao





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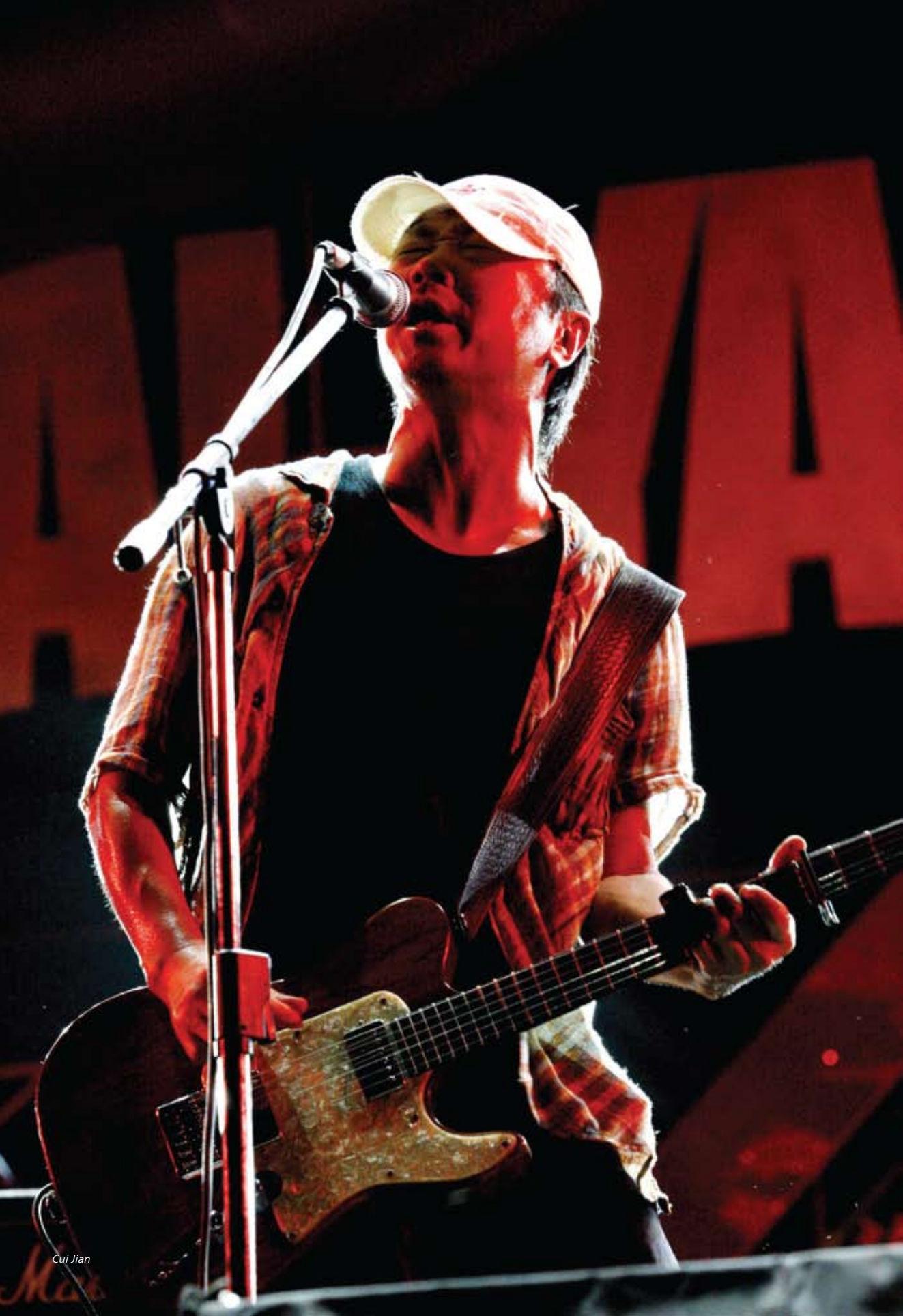


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Macao Festival: A Feast for the Ears

Beach concert brings new flavour to Macao International Music Festival

By Mark O'Neill

This year, fans of the Macao International Music Festival (MIMF) have been able to attend a beach concert by China's most famous rock star, as well as a performance by the Vienna Philharmonic.

These are two of the highlights of the 25th MIMF, which opened on 7 October. Running until 5 November, it features 34 performances by 20 different groups from across the globe.

"Our aim is to attract world-class orchestras and performers from around the world," said Warren Mok, the Hong Kong tenor who has been the Artistic Director since 2000. "We aim to offer different programmes every year and to showcase Macao as a vibrant city that is open to outsiders.

"Last year 95–96 percent of the tickets were sold. They numbered 70,000 in total, representing more than 10 percent of the population. The proportion of local audiences is high. It is very important that the festival has the support of the government and

the people of Macao, who are very proud of it and see it as their own festival."

Attracting world-class performers is not cheap. The budget for this year's festival is 34 million patacas, compared to 27 million in 2010. Ticket prices do not cover the cost. They range from the cheapest, at 100–150 patacas, to the most expensive, at 1500 for the Vienna Philharmonic.

This year's event has a particular significance as the festival's silver jubilee, its 25th anniversary. "We are very excited," said Ung Vai Meng, president of the Cultural Affairs Bureau, which organises the event. "The performances at World Heritage sites combine architecture and music, radiating the mystique of living history.

"I designed the poster for the first festival by hand. We had no computers then. Twenty-five years have passed very quickly. We hope that we can continue to develop," he said.



Ung Vai Meng

Star-studded line-up

The festival offers a wide variety of events. It opened with a new production of 'Fame – the Musical' by Barkley Kalpak Associates. Set in New York in the early 1980s, it is a bittersweet but inspiring story of a group of students as they face four years of gruelling artistic and academic work.

Since its debut in New York, this pop/rock musical has pleased audiences around the world – in London's West End and on international tours.

Then production companies from Macao and Hong Kong presented 'Rising Sun – the Musical' – about Dr Sun Yat-sen, the revolutionary leader. Born in the nearby village of Cuihang, he began his career as a medical doctor in Macao. This year marks the 100th anniversary of the Xinhai revolution he led and of the Republic of China of which he was president.

The musical was performed in the Mandarin House. The building was meticulously reconstructed by the city's Cultural Affairs Bureau (CAB) over eight years at a cost of 45 million patacas. The audience sat in different rooms in the house, with television screens connecting the two spaces.

On 30 October, the House will also be the venue for a recital of Chinese folk music by Li Xiangting. He is the most influential master of the contemporary era of Guqin, a traditional instrument of the zither

family with seven strings. He'll be joined by two performers of Chinese string instruments.

Lovers of classical music were able to attend a recital by Itzhak Perlman, one of the world's most famous violinists, playing works by Mozart, Beethoven and Saint-Saens. They could also listen to the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra playing Mozart and Bruckner. Founded in 1842, it is one of the pioneers of European classical music.

The Macao Orchestra is performing two concerts. One is in commemoration of Matteo Ricci, the Italian Jesuit who was the first Catholic priest to work as a missionary in China. He lived in Macao before he went to China.

The second features works by Gustav Mahler and Franz Liszt.

The Macao Chinese Orchestra is presenting world premieres of works by four Chinese composers of contemporary folk music. They will be heard at a concert to commemorate the Xinhai revolution.

Another attraction was a concert of sacred and non-sacred music by two early music consorts from Portugal: Ensemble Vocal Introitus, and Sete Lagrimas. For the first time, the MIMF is dedicating an event to World Sight Day and has donated all the proceeds from this concert to the international charity Orbis. It will go towards a medical project in Nepal.

Also on the agenda is the Dirty Dozen Brass Band from New Orleans, who have played in the US and more than 30 countries in five continents.

The Hac Sa (black sand) Beach is serving as a venue for the first time, with two events. One is Antonio Zambujo, one of Portugal's most famous fado singers. He is followed by four of the country's best-known female vocalists from the Rua da Saudade and Rui Veloso, 'the father of Portuguese rock'.

On 1 November, the beach will belong to Cui Jian, the best-known rock star in mainland China. After him, Macao's Jun Kung, a composer, drummer and singer, will perform, backed by a six-piece rock band from Hong Kong.

The festival aims to utilise different venues in Macao – churches, historic buildings and the Hac Sa Beach – as well as conventional concert halls. In this way, it can display its rich history and landscape.

From accounting to La Bohème

The festival's Artistic Director since 2000 is Warren Mok, a Hong Kong resident and one of the few Chinese to have become a tenor on the global opera stage.

"The main theme of the festival is classical music, opera and symphony," he said. "That is our foundation. We must have world-class performers. Over the 25 years of the festival, the programme has become longer and more diverse, and the attendance has increased."

Mok heads a committee which decides whom to invite to Macao. It mixes famous performers from Europe and North America with local talent, from countries in Asia as well as Macao, Hong Kong and mainland China.

Warren Mok



A promotional poster for the FIMM 2011 festival. The background is a warm, golden-brown gradient. At the top, the word "FIMM" is written in large, bold, white capital letters. Below it, the year "2011" is displayed in a similar font. In the center, the dates "7. 10 - 5. 11 - 2011" are prominently featured in large, bold, white characters. To the right of the dates, there is a stylized white musical note. In the bottom left corner, a portrait of Warren Mok, the festival's Artistic Director, is shown. He is a middle-aged man with dark hair, wearing a dark suit jacket over a light-colored shirt, with his arms crossed. At the bottom center, the text "ORGANIZAÇÃO / ORGANISER" is written in a smaller, white font. At the bottom right, the website address "www.icm.gov.mo" is displayed in a bold, white font.

7. 10 - 5. 11 - 2011

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Mok is well qualified for his position because of his unusual history.

He was born in Beijing, the son of a doctor. When he was six, he moved with his family to Hong Kong. As a child, his only singing experience was in a choir. When he was in his teens, he and his family moved to Hawaii, where he enrolled in the university to study accountancy. A friend took him to see the Hawaii Operation Theatre Production of *La Bohème*.

"It was my first time seeing opera and I was really fascinated by it. I was like 'My God, the human voice can sing that loud without a microphone'. I also really loved the music. I hated the accounting classes, so it was a good time for me to escape." Seeking to switch his course, he auditioned with a voice professor named John Mount and ended up with a scholarship.

After graduating from the University of Hawaii, he went on to obtain a Master of Music degree from Manhattan School of Music.

Then he flew to Germany, where he joined more than 1000 hopefuls in auditioning for Deutsche Opera Berlin's young artist programme.

"In Hawaii I had found German very hard. When I was in Berlin, I had to attend language courses." Finally, he was one of three people chosen and, after one year, the company offered him a contract. He

went on to spend seven years at the Berlin Opera, one of the few Chinese at that time to perform at such a level.

"The Germans are fair. Regardless of the colour of your skin, if you meet the correct standard, they respect you. It was a good opportunity." He started from the bottom, singing single lines for three years. Then they offered him leading roles. "'Next week, you are going to sing the Duke from *Rigoletto*. Can you go on without a rehearsal?' 'Sure, I can do it!' I was fully prepared because I had sung in other, smaller houses."

His European debut in 1987 was the start of a career that has taken him around the world. He has a repertoire of 50 operatic roles, including Calaf in *Turandot*, Cavaradossi in *Tosca*, Don José in *Carmen* and Radames in *Aida*. He has recorded many solo albums and opera CDs, including *Il Trovatore*, *Simon Boccanegra*, *Roma*, *Robert le Diable* and *Les Huguenots*. He has also appeared regularly on television and radio programmes worldwide.

"But I hated German food and missed Chinese food. In 1995, I decided to come back to Hong Kong, which was booming. It was a very big decision. My friends in Germany could not understand, saying that I should stay and build on what I had achieved. I still sing in Europe two to three times a year," he said.



Vienna Philharmonic



Warren Mok in *Aida*

Return to his roots

After moving back to Hong Kong, his role changed. He has since divided up his time, working half as a performer and half as a producer. He juggles the latter role with the task of acting as a bridge between China and the classical music culture of Europe.

Whenever he goes to China, he gives master classes. "Now thousands of Chinese are singing in Europe and the United States. Many are performing in European opera companies."

In 2000, the first year after Macao's return to China, he became Artistic Director of the MIMF. In 2003, he co-founded Opera Hong Kong, the city's first opera company.

"Before, I was a performer who was only concerned about his own role. As a producer, I look at everything, even the wigs the singers are wearing. It is a different kind of enjoyment."

He was in a small hotel in Taipei when he saw a beautiful woman in the lobby. "It was love at first sight. I gave her a ticket for a Chinese opera, saying that the show was sold out. She asked me what opera was."

The lady, Winnie, went on to become his wife. They got married on the set of *La Bohème* at the Hawaii Opera Theatre in 1996.

Looking to the future, he said that the foundation of the MIMF would remain classical music. Asked if he would continue as director, he said that this was up to the Macao government to decide: "I will do what they want." ■

Photos by Gonçalo L. Pinheiro



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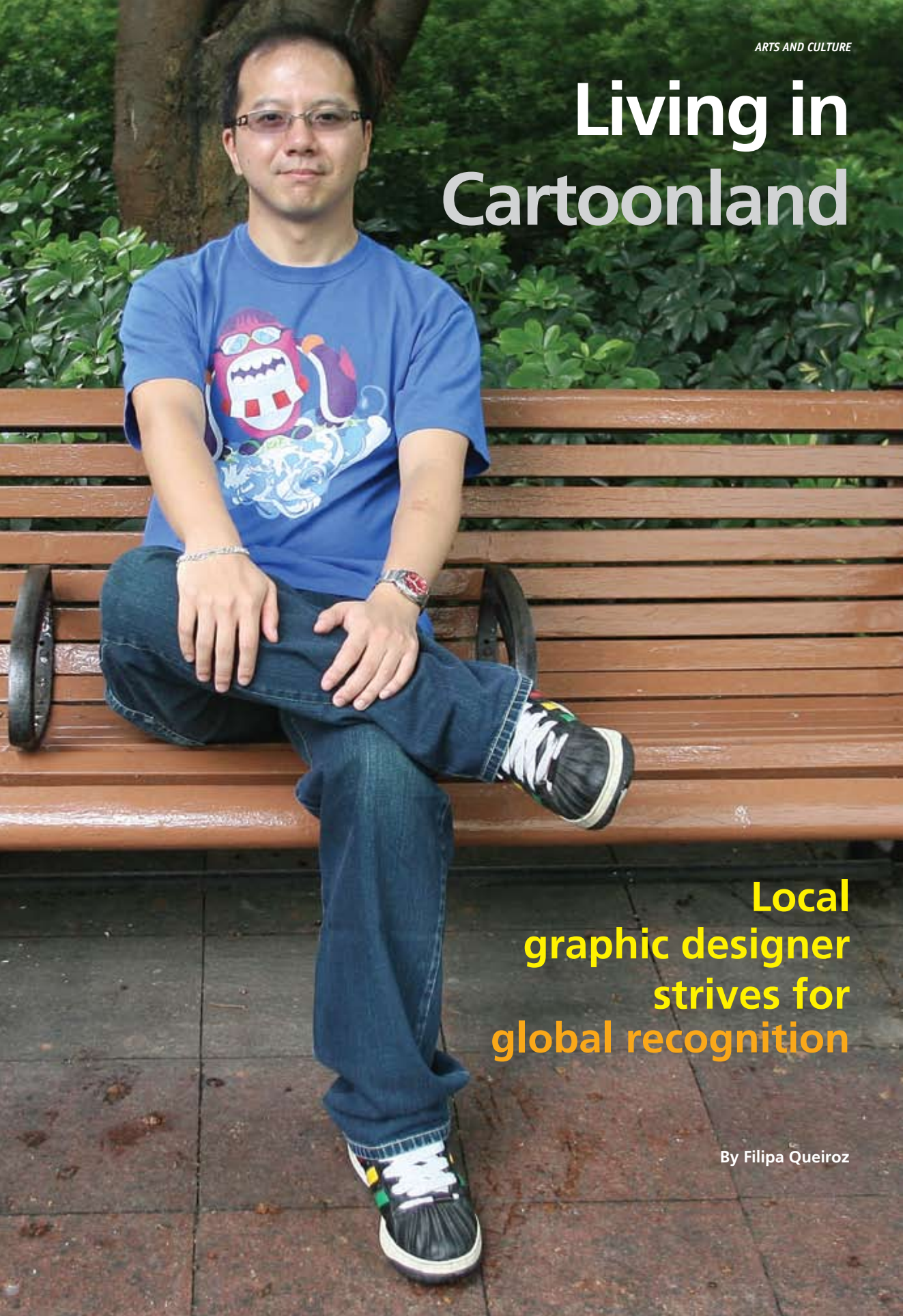
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Living in Cartoonland

**Local
graphic designer
strives for
global recognition**

By Filipa Queiroz



He likes Asian cartoons but identifies himself more with American animators. Indeed, Macao designer Américo das Neves attributes his artistic growth to American company Coca-Cola, and a competition they launched. It gave him the impetus to think outside of the box and let his imagination fly. The man who has created more than 50 action characters out of squares never wants to stop trying out new things. His aim is to achieve international recognition, and he seems to be on the right track.



International Toy Design Competition - 2007

"He is a fan of Coca-Cola who has always believed in knowledge, ideas, creativity and innovation. By breaking new boundaries he can bring a better tomorrow. Despite his undeniable abilities, he is never very confident about his artworks and designs, and is always afraid that his creations will not be accepted by the general public."

These words sound like those of Américo das Neves describing himself, yet they are not. The text is the from the explanatory blurb for Lâmpada-Man, the designer's

creation for an international toy design competition held in 2007. The theme for the competition was 'A Better Tomorrow', and the challenge was to design a Trexi toy inspired by the theme.

Américo's design was rated among the top fifteen, and was selected to be produced into a real toy along with those of ten other designers. From that moment onwards, the Macao designer's outlook changed. And the internet and America have had a lot to do with it.

I met the artist/designer (as he defines himself) at a coffee shop downtown to talk about his artwork. I discovered how Américo's work has changed direction and developed over the last couple of years. He has been involved in projects ranging from digital illustration to his recent 'Daily Doodle' challenge. His latest passion is the iPad.

Blossoming artist

He says he grew up in a 'graphic arts environment' as the son of a teacher and a flower lover. Yet Américo knows how lucky he is that his parents accepted his risky choice of career path.

"It was difficult for them to let me study something that fifteen years ago simply didn't exist in Macao," Américo says. "I had always loved art, then when I went to England to study, I got my best grades in graphics and interior design. So I made up my mind to pursue art."

Américo graduated in Visual Communication Studies at the Kent Institute of Art and Design. Then he went to work at a communications company for four years. Two years later, having lived in the UK for six years, he decided to return to Macao. It was 2003. "My roots are here in Macao, so I guess I just had to come back one day," he says. It didn't take long for him to get a job at the Macao Government Tourist Office, where he currently does his design work and a bit of advertising. "It's something completely different from my art work," he stresses. "When you work for someone you can't always do

what you want. But with my artwork, I can give my imagination free reign. It's a personal passion."

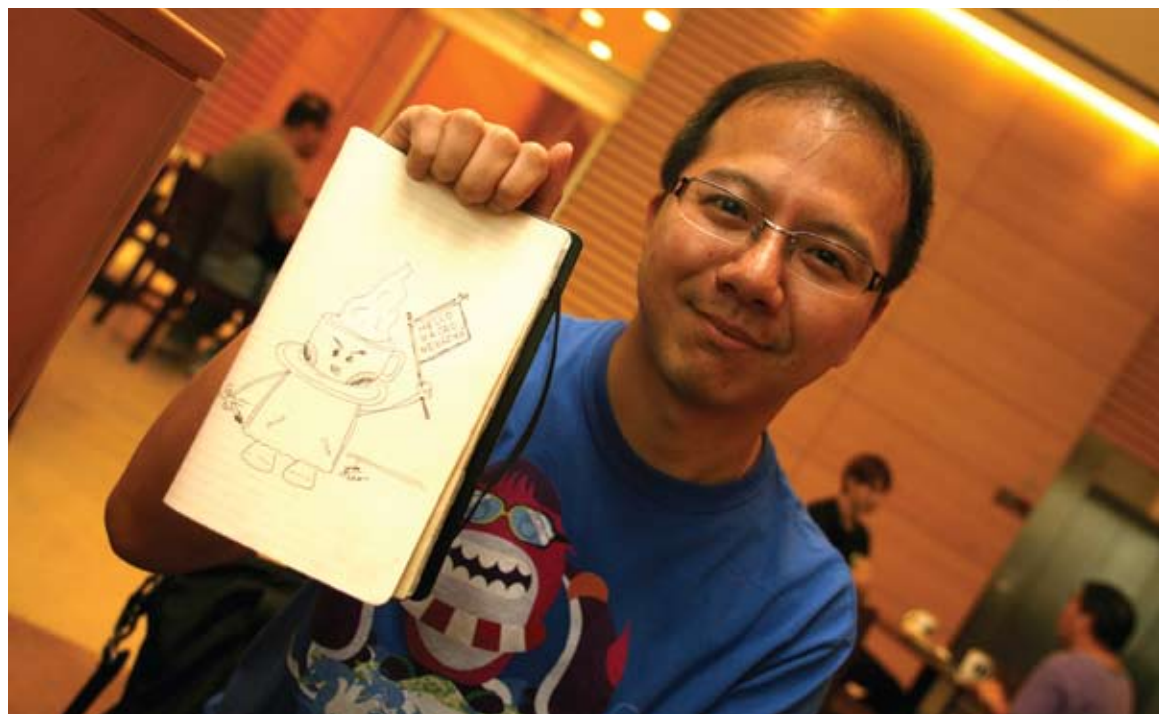
Learning to fly

For years the computer has been Américo's greatest tool. Digital illustration, especially designing cartoon icons, is his favourite hobby. Since winning the Coca-Cola competition in 2007, the designer has not only continued drawing but he also shares his work in the blogosphere, for example at <http://cornerchai.blogspot.com>. He hopes that by doing this he will reach a wider audience.

'Unknown – A Miracle Vision' was Américo's first solo exhibition in Macao. In April 2009 the designer saw his 61 digital characters of humans, animals and monsters printed on canvas and displayed at Creative Macau. Each one has its own story behind it. Some were created by computer, others were done by hand.

Américo is 'inevitably' a fan of Japanese manga and animation – especially from the 80s and 90s – such as 'Dragon Ball', 'Slam Dunk', 'Saint Seiya', 'Chibi Maruko-chan', 'Doraemon', as well as animation movies from the Japanese Studio Ghibli. However, Américo says that his style is closer to that of Western animators, especially American ones. Pixar is one of his main points of reference. As for individual designers, names like Tim Biskup (American), Jon Burgerman (British), Kennie Wong (Hong Kong native), Diogo Machado (Portuguese), and Alberto Ceriteno (Mexican) come to his mind.

Américo Neves





In his free time, the designer likes to read. Or, rather, to research. International Designers Network and 360 Design – Concept and Design Magazine are two of his favourite magazines, besides blogs like Spanky Stokes (www.spankystokes.com), Shift (www.shift.jp.org/en) or Toys Revil (www.toysrevil.blogspot.com).

"I like Japanese comic books, but I think my style is more American," he observes. "Maybe it's because of my name," he jokes. "Seriously, though, American ones are more streamlined. I've never been to America, but I hope to go some day."

Not simply squares

After several years of trial and error, Américo began to develop art and design characters in his own style. 'The Squares' series is an example of this. It was the first project he had set himself to do on his own. "I wanted to challenge my creativity by setting some boundaries. I wanted to see how far I could go within a shape limitation, such as squares. I used square facial expressions that all had the same basic square shape but had differences between them."

Every single one of the amusing, colourful 'square' characters has their own individual identity. So, why not create some stories about the characters, I ask.

Américo explains: "I tried, but I couldn't do it. I need to create a whole complete environment, which involves a very systematic approach." Creating these miniature 'environments' definitely seem to give the self-defined 'kidult' designer an enormous amount of fun.

Recognition at last

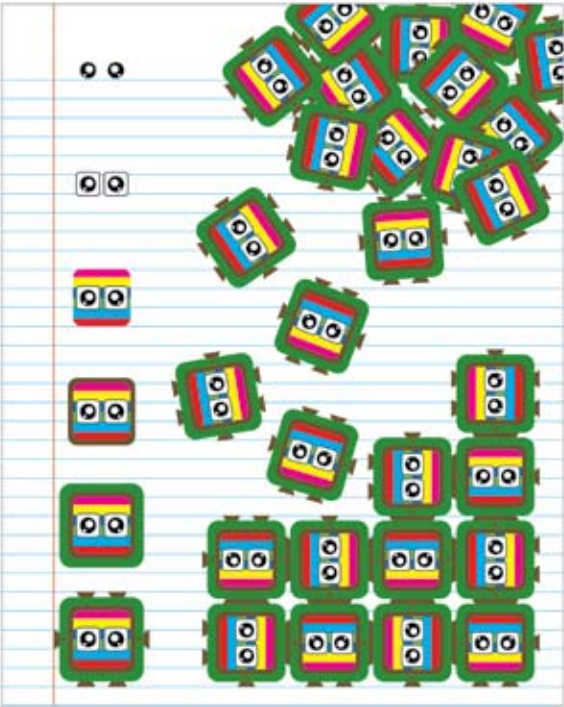
Little by little, the once under-confident designer has been heading for success. To date, Américo's works have been exhibited in Japan, Singapore, Beijing, the United Kingdom, the United States, Hong Kong and the Ukraine.

The 31-year-old was one of several designers to be awarded a prize in Persepctive Magazine's '40 under 40' competition in 2008. He was also named one of the best ten entries in the Macao Annual Art Exhibition in 2007. In his native Macao, Américo was one of the artists invited to participate in the

Traditional and Creative Rabbit Lantern Exhibition, at Albergue SCM. "I made a rabbit seated on a cannon because of the Portuguese influence. Portuguese fortresses and cannons are part of Macao's history, dating back to when the Portuguese protected the city against pirates," he explains.

The city's history was also the inspiration for the joint photovisual exhibition 'Time – Space – Travel' last June in Albergue SCM. Américo collaborated with his friend Delfino Gabriel to create some fusion pieces about things related to their memory and cultural background in Macao. "Delfino had the idea, and called me to see if I was interested," the designer says. After some meetings they came up with the idea of drawing elements of the past on to Delfino's pictures. The result gave the effect of time travel. "The images were about our childhood. We wanted to bring out a little bit of Macao's history for people to see."

One of the pieces depicts old buildings facing new ones, highlighting the contrast between them. The paradoxes of old and new, rich and poor, are something that Américo wanted to transpose to paper. "I drew old and new objects above the buildings, such as CDs and old tapes, a mobile phone and an old-fashioned one," he says. All the artwork is done in his unique, slightly naïve style.



Never give up

Américo plans to keep creating artworks alongside his day job. "I'm not giving up either work or art," he says. "I don't know what will happen in the future, but the important thing for an artist is to keep active." Américo believes the Macao government is going through a good phase at the moment as far as the arts are concerned. So, too, are local artistic associations. "They now have more space to exhibit their work," he stresses.

Yet, alongside the extra space are extra artists. The designer says there are no great opportunities in Macao for graphic designers, either in the public sector or in the advertising industry. "At advertising agencies the competition is steep. With the style that I have, it would be difficult for me to adapt myself to business operations," he says. "I'm an artist. If you ask me to do commercial stuff, it will take time."

Américo has already bought the new iPad, which allows him, among other things, to draw with his own fingers. "I have already downloaded some drawing programmes so that I can draw whenever I want and without wasting any ink or paper," he stresses. His first creations are already online on his blog – A Miracle Corner Chai (www.cornerchai.blogspot.com).

Photos by Gonçalo L. Pinheiro



Last year Américo Das Neves set himself the challenge of drawing one piece a day for 100 days. "It's a way of working that is already well known abroad," explains Américo. The 'Daily Doodle' process was shared online through another one of Américo's blogs: www.americodd.blogspot.com. So from June to September 2010 the designer drew and drew. But why 100, I ask?

Américo explains: "Because I guess the number is special. At the time I just wanted to draw and practise. At school, scoring 100 is the best result you can get, for example," he says. "I did it because I wanted to create a work of art, and I thought: Why not subscribe to the exhibition?"

The display was called '10 Years – A Decade of Glory', and was exhibited in the Old Court Building. Américo doesn't know exactly why or how he has done it. He only knows that he has been driven by passion. "When it was finally over I felt like I needed a holiday, because it was a bit stressful to think of a different thing to draw every single day." The designer recalls number 65, for example. "That day I started getting a bit disheartened and didn't know what to do. So I drew what was in front of me – the computer," he sighs.

Américo confesses that at points he had a total lack of inspiration. And with some of the pieces he doesn't really know where they came from. "I just took the pen and drew without thinking about what would come out." His favourite piece is probably the one displaying a sardine and the colours of the Portuguese flag. "It's not a question of nationalism. I was inspired by Saint Antony's feast on TV. As the World Cup was going on at the time, and Portugal was playing, I wanted to do something special to support the team."

Anything can inspire the designer. Things he sees or hears in his daily life can give him ideas, as well as the news or particular events going on, people he passes in the street, or even abstract subjects. Generally he draws for two or three hours before bedtime. "It's the quietest time of the day," he says.

Using different colours and cartoon styles, Américo claims he never gets tired of trying new things. Even if he has to go backwards in time. Project 100 comes after ten years of not picking up a pencil to draw. "I thought it was time to start drawing again. This may be another beginning to my life," says Américo.



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Art Without Borders

Macao-Mexican couple brings global culture to Macao

By Staff Reporter



On 29 August, 50 children and adults enjoyed a special day at the Macao Cultural Centre. They sang songs from around the world, juggled, and used puppets which they had made themselves from newspapers and plastic bottles. It was an opportunity to learn about cultures and countries far away from Macao and China.

The event was the work of 'the Kumara Singers', established by an unusual husband and wife team. He is Raul Saldana, 37, a Mexican who plays a wide variety of instruments. She is Heidi Che, 31, who was born in Macao, and graduated in international relations from Ritsumeikan University in Kyoto, Japan. They have been performing for four years as part of the summer workshops at the Macao Cultural Centre – an opportunity for children to learn new things during the holidays.



"The creative process and learning are very important," said Che. "We like to do interactive performances, bringing the audiences into the show. Whenever we perform in Macao, we do something different each time. This time we taught the children how to juggle. In a big auditorium, in front of many people, they feel nervous. So this time we had a workshop."

The children delighted the audience by singing the traditional songs they had learned and playing hand-made musical instruments. They also used the puppets they had made to tell stories. Saldana and Che were helped at the workshop by performers from Brazil and Portugal.

Leading a simple life

Che first met Saldana in 2001 when she was back home during a summer holiday from Japan. Saldana himself was busy rehearsing for a performance. They got married in Macao in 2007. They have made their home in a village of 80 households in the mountains of Yunnan, between Dali and Lijiang,

in southwest China. The village is inhabited by the Baizu minority.

"We like a quiet life. Six years ago we built a natural house, next to a lake. We wake up to the sound of birds," she said. "Our living costs are very low. We grow vegetarian food to eat, and my husband does the repairs. We do not need much. We like yoga and Buddhist meditation. We volunteer in the village, teaching English and music at the primary school and organising yoga events."

When they are not living there, they visit Raul's family in Mexico or perform in Macao, Europe and elsewhere.

Saldana was born in Mexico City. At the age of 17, he showed the first signs of what would become a strong emotional link to the natural world. He went to live in an ecological community. He has grown into a versatile and talented musician who can play many styles of music on several different instruments, including the piano, guitar, Indian flute and Nepalese sarangi and percussion. His repertoire includes Mexican folk music, jazz, classical, American Indian music, Tibetan, Indian and medieval music.

With associates from Spain, Portugal, Mexico, the United States and Macao, he set up Terrae Ignota, a group formed to play music from different parts of the world. They have performed music as well as other forms of art in New York, London, India, Nepal, Thailand, Japan and Macao.

Che went to Japan at the age of 16, spent a year at language school and then entered the university in Kyoto. She has come into contact with people from many different cultures.

Melting pot

The couple invites people from different cultures to perform together, through which they can understand and appreciate each other better. Since 2001, they have started up projects in world culture, music, environmental awareness and unity. They have been collaborating with artists of different disciplines, doing performances and workshops, as

Heidi Che and Raúl Saldanha

well as touring schools in Macao, Hong Kong, Japan, Thailand, Portugal and elsewhere.

Their audiences include people from all age groups, from children to pensioners. "We aim to introduce different cultures from different countries, explaining the bad things as well as the good," said Che.

"The children of Macao are very fortunate. They live well compared to many other children. They have good and bad points. They are well behaved, co-operative and follow their teachers. They have a natural innocence and kindness. But Macao is small and lacks open space. So, while the brain reacts fast, the body does not react so quickly. During our workshops, we take children to the hillside in Coloane, so that they can have the opportunity to be with nature.

"Children are like a fertile field. You must put in the best seeds. That is extremely important." ■

Photos by Eric Tam and courtesy of Macau Cultural Centre







Sculptures exhibition raises the bar on Macao art

An old courthouse in the city centre was host to an exhibition bringing together some of the best contemporary Chinese sculptors, along with two local artists. 'Remaking of a Civilisation', which ended in September, showcased the human body both inside and out as never seen before in Macao.

By Hélder Beja





The building before us, right in the centre of Macao, was once a courthouse. The architectural features indicate Western roots, with its austere lines giving due dignity to the law practised within it. Yet, on entering the doors on this occasion, something unusual strikes us. By the staircase sits a huge, entirely red-coloured man, his arms crossed and a large smile covering his face. Or rather, not a real man, but one of the sculptures by the artist Chen Wenling for 'Remaking of a Civilisation'. The sculpture served as a distinctive advert for the exhibition, which focused on contemporary Chinese sculpture.

Organised by the Macao Cultural Affairs Bureau, the show brought together works by Chen Wenling, Qu Guangci, Xiang Jing, Cao Hui, Li Hongjun and Li Wei, along with local artists Coke Wong and Konstantin Bessmertny. The exhibition curator and president of the Art For All association, James Chu, picked each artist's work with the space in mind. He also focussed on the concept that sculpture can indicate ongoing changes in civilisation.

The metallic paint commonly used on automobiles covered Chen Wenling's fibreglass and bronze works. It is what first drew the visitors' attention.

This artist, born in 1969 in Fujian province, presented 'Red Memory – Shy Boy', a sequel to the 'Memory' series he had presented previously. The body of the sculpture that introduced the exhibition was truly immense, but the face was that of a child. "This giant with a childish face looks far away with his childlike eyes to the horizon and across the sky. He is supposed to be looking forward to a better future, full of hope," writes James Chu in the prologue to the exhibition.

The old courthouse's ground-floor hallways and rooms were turned into an art gallery containing more works by Chen. The sculptor has held individual exhibitions not only in China, but also in Singapore and Indonesia. His works, which comprise anthropomorphic figures, have been included in collective exhibitions around the word – from the USA to Japan and Spain.

Blocking the entrance to one of the spaces was a giant foot. Indeed 'Foot', by Cao Hui, was one of the exhibition's highlights. "It was the one with greatest visual impact out of them all," says James Chu. "Cao often presents works with the surface torn open, which might fill an audience with varying degrees of unease and misgivings," he adds.

Chen Wenling



The artist from Kunming made the giant foot out of coloured fibreglass. The inner parts we could see were like a window into our own body. They

pointed to a reality that always accompanies us but which we rarely perceive – the stuff of which human beings are made.

Cao Hui



Inside the body

Whilst Chen Wenling's sculptures were naked, Cao's were almost all opened up to show what was inside. In the animals he represented, the artist didn't portray skin but rather he put flesh and muscles on show, as if stressing the rawness of art. Cao countered Chen's smiles with the melancholic look and sullen faces of his sculptures. "Surely not everyone has the desire to tear apart his or her own or another's skin. Everyone would instantly feel uncomfortable if really faced with nakedness," says James Chu.

But Chu believes that the Macao public was ready to receive such an exhibition. "It was natural. We always see a lot of nude sculptures from Europe but they are not in colour. The so-called 'explicit sexuality' came from the pureness of the works. I think Macao visitors were wise enough to appreciate this kind of work."

Here the curator was talking about the show in general, and particularly about the often-disturbing works by the artist Xiang Jing. The series 'We' occupied another space in the old courthouse and

showed women entirely naked but without any sexual connotations. They were almost androgynous dolls, totally hairless, with their heads slightly out of proportion with the rest of their bodies, and with very expressive eyes.

Xiang Jing was born in Beijing in 1968. Her work has focused on the feminine condition and on women's bodies. Although she has never held an individual exhibition outside of China, her works can be found in a number of major international galleries. Among them are the Saatchi Gallery, the Central Academy of Fine Arts, the National Art Museum of China, and the Shanghai Art Museum.

The fibreglass she used in her work gave each sculpture a vivid tone and stressed her interest in portraying those around her. "If I had to select the work that showed the most interest in human nature, it would be Xiang Jing's 'We'," says James Chu. "With her skilled technique, Xiang presented the theme which interests her the most: man." The curator viewed her sculptures as being "statues without any feeling of sensuality. They were protesting against patriarchy and male voluptuousness filled by a desire for power."

Xiang Jing



Wild horses

The works by Konstantin Bessmertny were also powerful. This Russian artist, who has lived in Macao since 1993, was the only non-Chinese person among the eight creators involved in the exhibition. James Chu explains why he decided to ask Bessmertny to take part. "I didn't consider Chinese or non-Chinese artists. I just wanted to bring out some good Macao sculptures. In Konstantin's case, he has always played with wood. Whether nudes or horses, it didn't matter."

Wood was the raw material chosen by Bessmertny for the two sculptures presented in 'Remaking of a Civilisation'. One was a massive life-sized horse able to withstand the weight of a human body. It was created with very fine attention detail. The other was the trunk of a naked man as a symbol of virility and robustness. Chu explains that the Russian artist "attempted to explore his ideal civilised world"

through these two works. He adds that the horse "mimicked much-revered ancient heroes. But this time the horse-rider, sitting high, was being worshipped not as an emperor or general, but by you – the visitor".

The other Macao artist in the show, Coke Wong, filled a corridor of walls with a series of small mimetic fibreglass figures entitled 'Group'. Between the sacred and profane, the figures sculpted by this former student of the Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts were among the exhibition's most discrete objects.

The same might be said about the works of Qu Guangci, a Shanghai native who did not achieve the visual impact of the other artists. But more attentive visitors could find in this artist's works a broad-ranging concept which art critics call 'political pop'. Qu recreated and satirised situations from daily life, focusing on the present or journeying into the Chinese collective memory, evoking the Cultural Revolution and different players in society.

Konstantin Bessmertny





Li Hongjun

Paper sensations

In the half-light of a corner of the courthouse stood the figures made by Li Hongjun – a true paperwork artist from Shaanxi province. He used traditional techniques for sculpting in paper along with advanced technologies. The result was a series of visually surprising sensations and perspectives.

"Be they flat or three-dimensional, they were works showing breakthroughs in paper sculpture and art

creation. Combining technology with traditional craft, they took full advantage of paper's unique quality to create distinctive effects," says James Chu.

The thin layers of white paper left viewers in a limbo suggested by the author. "Between the real and unreal, through his deliberate thinking and use of the gaps between the papers, Li Hongjun created very intricate visual-deception effects. He reflected what the reality is in the real world," the curator adds.

Choice of artists

James Chu says there was a strong reason for choosing these artists. "Personally I had known all of these artists for a long time, and I can say I knew them before they were famous. I think they had earned a lot of respect up to that point because they had never given up their creativity and hard work."

To gather the eight creators' work in this exhibition was a way of telling Macao people that more must be done. "We always call ourselves the international city, but we should have higher standards regarding exhibitions," he asserts.

From a more conceptual standpoint, James Chu believes that "sculptural works by any artist invited to display in this exhibition, either deliberately or unconsciously presented certain ideologies and values". The curator states that "everyone knows that China is changing. There's no need to discover it from the sculptures. But the important thing is that we always have good and bad change. This exhibition

helped us to think more about the reality".

Chu believes that the Macao Government and the exhibition's sponsors were offering the public "a precious opportunity to perceive and explore the relationship between artwork and the construction of civilisation".

The president of the Macao Cultural Institute, Guilherme Ung Vai Meng, agrees. He describes sculpture as a "unique art form that expresses ideas, imagination and strong emotions".

Ung Vai Meng praises the progress made by Chinese art in recent years, and welcomes the closer look that was afforded by this exhibition. "All the works had something in common: attaching utmost importance to man. Invariably, based on their life experiences and different realities, the artists expressed their ideas through their artwork."

Ideas, many of them, are what remained with the visitors when they left the old courthouse building on Avenida da Praia Grande. But the startling red giant sculpted by Chen Wenling stayed behind by the staircase, sitting and smiling. ■

Photos By Mécia Gonçalves and Xinhua News Agency

Qu Guangci



Xiang Jing









Macao Through the Lens

Fledgling local film industry is supported by emerging talent

By Helder Beja



They view the Macao Special Administrative Region with the detached eye of youth, and aspire to careers in making film. Vincent Hoi, António Faria and Elisabela Larrea belong to this new generation of young people in search of cinema.

Some of these young people like to film fishermen and document the stories of seaside folk. Others entwine Macao in romantic plots. All of them are relatively young and live in Macao, where cinema is an emerging art form. Two major initiatives have driven this increasing interest in film: the Macao International Film and Video Festival, and the CUT Association. The CUT is adding the finishing touches to a second batch of short films under the title 'Macao Stories', whose theme this time is love.

But let's begin with the festival organised by the Cultural Centre of Macao (CCM): Macao Docu Power. It includes a programme for supporting the production of local documentaries. Indeed, Macao Docu Power has already financed 35 films, and provides opportunities for all interested parties to develop their productions. It caters for beginners through to the most experienced film-makers.

At this year's Docu Power – the fifth since its inception – 37 projects were presented. Seven of them, taken from different categories, were endorsed by the jury, and are now being produced. Two are at

advanced level (involving financial backing of up to 80,000 patacas), four are at open level (up to 50,000 patacas) and only one is in the freshmen category (up to 10,000 patacas).

Last year's big winner was 'Time Travel', directed by António Faria and Carolina Rodrigues. It still lingers in the memories of this year's participants, as well as those of some audience members. Backed by the CCM, the film won the top Macao Indies prize, awarded in May during the Docu Power festival. António Faria explains: "It was the last festival's big winner, and blends documentary and fiction. It recounts a trip by Wong Kei, a self-searching 25-year-old. He witnesses a way of life from the past that is maintained by those who still live off the fish they catch in the territory's waters.

"It's always good to know that people who've been in the area for some time acknowledge our work," Faria adds. "The prize motivates you. And obviously that motivation makes you always want to do more – to learn, evolve and try out other themes and subject matters."

António Faria





Wong Kei

Faria is not yet 30 years' old, and has been in Macao for four years. Soon after arriving, he entered the 48-Hour film competition. As the name suggests, competitors are given only two days to prepare a short film. "I took part in that competition just two weeks after arriving in Macao. I won, and found myself appearing in newspapers and on radio and television. So I wondered: 'where am I?' The projection here is much faster," the young filmmaker comments. Faria doesn't hide the fact that he was "somewhat disillusioned" by the quality of what was done in Macao in terms of cinema. And even now he believes that "people have to evolve more," though he recognises that "this applies to everyone in the area, including myself".

Not lost in translation

The idea to do a bigger project in Macao began to take shape last year, when 'Time Travel' was chosen by the CCM to receive financial backing. The duo of Portuguese directors found that the main obstacle to producing the film was language. "It was the most complicated challenge we've had. I spent three months doing all the translations so that we could edit. We often didn't know what people were saying but continued filming. We tried to capture the feeling of each scene by the things we could

understand in Cantonese, since we've lived here for four years," he says.

The film was thus conceived by a team of friends who basically worked at home. It followed the young Wong Kei, transformed into an actor through the film. Its aim was to project on screen the situation for fishing vessels in Macao nowadays. "The people who've been here for longer may not understand the viewpoint of a younger generation who arrived four years ago. We're talking about Macao's history a bit. It's our viewpoint – that of people who've arrived and learned something about the past. But we haven't been working with the aim of portraying the past. We're talking about the present, and that's the purpose of the film," Faria stresses.

The director says he knows how to handle criticism, because that's the only way to continue evolving. But the film is entirely spoken in Cantonese, and that's where Faria insists that he doesn't accept objections. "If they come and tell me 'you don't understand anything about Macao, you should have spoken of this and that', then I disagree with them. I am Portuguese and proud to be in Macao. But I don't accept the responsibility of carrying the Portuguese language on my back, because that's already been done. I am concerned, however, with representing a meshing of cultures. That's what we wanted to do."



Wong Kei

A base in Macao

'Time Travel' has been sent to various international festivals. António Faria hopes that even if it is not selected to be screened, then one day another of his films will be. "I'm never satisfied with my work, but this one was a big challenge. We sent it to top festivals, so we hope to find out where we stand. And if we're not yet at the level of festivals such as Locarno and Venice, etc., that doesn't matter. We'll continue working, and one day we'll get to that point," he asserts.

The film-maker's next project has a more global message. It's called 'Rutz' (www.wix.com/rutztravel/rutz) and is about backpackers in Latin America. The idea came to him after he made a three-month trip with a friend, travelling from Buenos Aires in Argentina to Bogotá in Colombia. António Faria is now back in Macao finishing the film, which should be ready by the end of the year.

Macao serves as a base for young people not just to work, but also to think about settling down. "For now my base is Macao. I think I'll stay for three or four more years. I never close doors. Macao is an uncertainty; it holds on to you and gives you stability. But I'd like to take a step somewhere else at some point. Above all,

Macao's technical people have to understand that you can do work outside of the region and then come back to finish it."

This goes for the professionals in the entertainment sector who produce quality work, too. In Faria's opinion, these experts number just a few. He explains: "There's a lack of training. We need a university that makes films, and recruits interns. We also need government support. Private institutions have to understand that they, too, should help promote the entertainment sector. It could be an interesting industry," he observes.

Faria suggests that Macao be promoted as a filming location, given its wide variety of backdrops. "You just have to walk along the streets. We have the Chinese parts and the Portuguese parts. On Coloane island you can invent jungle scenes... We could sell Macao as a place for filming. It has a lot of potential."

Faria admits that fiction is what he's aiming for. He says that he's already thought of short film projects to work on in partnership with other young local enthusiasts, such as António Conceição, Sérgio Perez and Rui Borges. He stresses that "there has to be more collaboration amongst people in this area".



Vincent Hoi

Seeking qualified people

If there is one body responsible for bringing together film-makers – mainly Chinese ones – it's the CUT Association. Vincent Hoi, a co-founder, alongside his work as an independent director, says there is still no film-making industry in Macao. But when he looks at what's being done, he thinks things are on the right path. "We can't say that the industry is getting bigger. But I believe it's now getting better. The government apparently wants to put more emphasis on cultural and creative development in Macao. I think film production has become more important. A few years ago it wasn't even considered," he adds.

Like António Faria, Hoi believes that the responsibility for promoting local film-making should not be the burden of the government alone. "The current situation makes me hope that it may be possible to find the necessary funding. Films need support not just from the government but especially from private enterprise. Investment nowadays is global, so we shouldn't just think of local companies."

The author of films such as 'Aim vs Peep' and 'Before Dawn Cracks' is launching a new project, which he hopes to begin filming in March. If he can't get backing from local public bodies or companies, Hoi

has already decided on the next step: to submit the proposal to Asia's big cinema festivals, such as Busan in South Korea or the ones in Taipei.

Hoi is aware that more and more young people are leaving Macao after secondary school to study cinema elsewhere. "This is good, because they'll come back to Macao later, which will mean more people working in the industry here. What we need in Macao are people to work in this area," he states. Qualifications are particularly important. The lack of people holding them means that "cinematographers still have to be hired from Hong Kong, along with lighting technicians". Hoi notes that this is also positive, because it forces those still in Macao to learn and share experiences.

The same is true for the actors, who tend to be amateurs in Macao due to the low pay. "Whoever wants to work as an actor or actress has problems earning a living in Macao, and ends up doing it only part time. What we need are full-time actors and actresses, for whom it's not just a weekend job. A good example of how this situation works out in reality is the filming of 'Macao Stories'. It had to be filmed during the Christmas holidays because it was one of the few times in the year when people were available."

Photos by Gonçalo L. Pinheiro and Hélder Beja

Macao Stories

The CUT Association asked six local directors to make films on the theme of romance in Macao. The challenge for the second 'Macao Stories' was put forward in October last year. The films should open in November at the Hong Kong Asian Film Festival.

Tou Kin Hong, Fernando Eloy, Mike Ao leong, Jordan Cheng, Harriet Wong and Elisabela Larrea are the names attached to the short films, lasting from 15 to 17 minutes. The head of the CUT, Albert Chu, himself a director, explained: "I saw films by various Macao directors, and thought that they had the potential to do cinema. That's why we picked them – to give them another chance to make a professional film, and to promote their talent."

One of the participants, Elisabela Larrea, gave her film the name 'Shocking'. Having previously made documentaries, this was her first venture into fiction. The story is about a famous boy who decides to isolate himself on a terrace because he's frustrated with his

life. But love makes its appearance – from another world. "My idea of love is that it's something free of worries about social status, salaries or other day-to-day material concerns. That's what the feeling is for me," the young film-maker says.

This 32-year old daughter of a Spanish father and a mother from Macao is making her fiction début after directing 'Filhos da Terra' ('Sons of the Land') in 2008, a documentary about identity in the Macanese community. In 'Shocking' she has conceived "this very romanticised idea of love". The girl who arrives from another planet "is like a baby. When a baby first sees a ball, it likes the way it looks and what it is, not because it's made by this or that label".

This and the other 'Macao Stories' films should be available for viewing in Macao after the Hong Kong festival. Albert Chu says, however, that there is still no scheduled date for screening the works here. So viewing audiences may have to wait.

Elisabela Larrea



An international **Red Market**

The Red Market is a place to go shopping for a wide variety of items in the north of Macao. It has always been known for its architecture, as well as for its blood-red tones both outside and in, where a huge amount of meat is sold.

Now, João Rui Guerra da Mata and João Pedro Rodrigues have taken the fame of the place to international levels in 'Red Dawn'. A 20-minute short film, it was first screened in May at the Indie Lisboa film festival, and won in its category. Since then the film has been shown in some of the most famous festivals on the international circuit, such as Locarno and Vancouver. It has been praised by a number of publications, including Cahiers du Cinema.

The film was made between shoots for a more ambitious and longer project – 'A Última Vez que Vi Macau' ('The Last Time I Saw Macao'). It lies somewhere between fiction and documentary, and features the two film-makers themselves. João Rui Guerra da Mata lived in Macao in the 1970s, and revisits the territory on the film with João Pedro Rodrigues. The latter is one of Portugal's most renowned film-makers, who made movies such as 'Odele', 'O Fantasma' ('The Ghost') and 'Morrer Como um Homem' ('Die Like a Man').

In Red Market, the directors filmed a blood-filled morning, documenting preparations on the fish and meat stalls. They did so without making a single explicit comment, or a single judgement. Nobody speaks in 'Red Dawn'. The camera merely moves through an industrial quantity of headless chickens and fish, their bodies still jerking on the cutting

boards before being put into the pots.

As for 'The Last Time I saw Macao', the plan is to finish the feature-length film next year. Indeed, its directors are hoping that it will be completed in time to have its premier at one of the big European festivals. Cannes is the favourite.

João Pedro Rodrigues offers a taste of what the film will be like: "A sort of off-the-record fiction, but which has rhythm and a story – in fact, several stories that flow into each other." So there will be a lot going on beyond the images that the viewer can see. The sound will include action and, potentially, the voices of the film-makers themselves. "But never in a 'now we are here, and we are going there' register," they explain.

'The Last Time I Saw Macao' will not be a thriller featuring gangsters and the mafia. However, it will have a film noir feel to it that the directors say they identify with the territory. They will make use of many references to other movies that are set, if only partly, in Macao. Examples include the classic 'Macao' (1952), by Josef von Sternberg, starring Robert Mitchum and Jane Russell in the main roles. 'The Last Time I Saw Macao' will be a film with many films inside it.

After its European premier, the directors would like to take the film to Macao itself. Indeed, they would like to do the same with 'Red Dawn', which has yet to be screened in the MSAR. "It would make total sense to come back here with the films. We are very keen for that to happen. I think that one way or another it will be possible," says João Rui Guerra da Mata.



João Pedro Rodrigues - João Rui Guerra Da Mata

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Father of Modern China

Dr Sun Yat-sen's life is celebrated
with new opera

By Mark O'Neill

Artists from Hong Kong and the mainland are celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Xinhai revolution with an opera on the life of Dr Sun Yat-sen. It forms part of a wide range of events to mark this important event.

Dr Sun Yat-sen had its world première on 13 October at the Hong Kong Cultural Centre Grand Theatre. It ran for four days. It was performed by Opera Hong Kong (OHK) and the Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra.

The work was commissioned by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department of Hong Kong and OHK. It was performed in Putonghua, using Chinese and English subtitles.

Sun received his secondary education and medical training in Hong Kong. The city also played a key role in his revolutionary struggle, and is marking the 100th anniversary with performances, exhibitions and many other activities.

The opera was four years in the making and the result of a collaboration between composer Huang Ruo, librettist Candace Chong Mui Ngam, and Warren Mok, artistic director of OHK. As a tenor, he has the dual role of playing the part of Dr Sun and acting as producer for the show. Vinci Li, a spokesperson for OHK, said that about 16 people would take part in the opera. Split into two casts, the performers are mainly from Hong Kong and mainland China.

The three searched for a segment of Sun's life that would be effective as operatic drama. Chong found the story of a wedding gift that had belonged to Sun's second wife, Soong Chingling. This persuaded them that the love story between Sun and Soong would form the basis of the opera. It would also explore the relationship between Sun and Charlie Soong, his future father-in-law. The elder Soong was one of the earliest and most active of Sun's supporters.

Storyline

The first act of the opera sees Charlie Soong hosting a party at his home, ostensibly to raise money to build a church, but actually to raise funds for Sun. From the moment he enters the room, Sun is the centre of attention. Suddenly, a messenger arrives with a note for Charlie informing him that a reward has been placed on Sun's head.

Sun flees to Japan, where he is helped by his new assistant, Chingling. She is attracted to his revolutionary ideals, and he to her youth and vivacity. They fall in love. At their wedding, Charlie arrives furious. He has not given his consent as Sun is still married to his first wife in China. Charlie storms out of the wedding, renouncing his daughter and his association with Sun's revolutionary group.



Sun Yat-sen and Soong Chingling Courtesy of the Macao Museum

Back in China, Sun tries to overthrow the government with the help of Yuan Shikai. But Yuan betrays him, throwing the country into chaos and seizing control for himself. One night Sun's house is attacked, and Chingling suffers a miscarriage. A messenger arrives to tell Sun that Charlie is on his deathbed. Chingling visits her father for the last time and finally receives his blessing.

The final act, set in May 1918 in Shanghai, is full of pathos. On his deathbed, Soong regrets having severed his friendship with Sun. He explains that he was selfish, because he was unwilling to see his daughter suffer in exile. He gives her a dress – a

belated wedding gift – in a scene which overlaps with Sun's final speech.

Charlie was a devout Christian who was trained as a missionary in the United States for China. After returning to Shanghai in 1886, he only spent a short time as a missionary before going into business and funding Sun's revolution. He opposed the marriage not only because Sun had a wife in China, from an arranged marriage, but because Chingling was 27 years his junior. After he refused to approve the marriage, Chingling escaped on a boat to Tokyo in the middle of the night, to rejoin Sun.

Warren Mok as Sun Yat-sen



Warren Mok as Sun Yat-sen

The opera's characters include Sun and Chingling, along with his first wife, as well as Charlie Soong and his wife, and Umeya Shokichi – one of Sun's closest friends in Japan – and his wife. Yan Huichang led the world première, with the Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra and the OHK Chorus.

The opera integrates Chinese operatic and theatrical elements with contemporary music.

On 14 May, audiences at the Contemporary American Opera Lab in the Skirball Center at New York University were able to see 25 minutes from the first act.

Warren Mok, a Hong Kong Chinese tenor with a distinguished international career, played the leading role of Sun Yat-sen. He has been the artistic director of the Macao International Music Festival (MIMF) since 2000.

Mok said: "I feel that the public in Hong Kong and mainland China should pay more attention to culture. A country that only cares about economic

development and ignores culture is of no use. As a person who has been singing for over 20 years, my responsibility is to bring the art of opera to the people of Hong Kong and the mainland.

"My aim is to sing at the London Olympics next year. Of course I could bring the Beijing Opera with me, but no-one would know how to listen," he said.

The librettist, Candace Chong, holds a bachelor's degree in psychology from the Chinese University of Hong Kong and a master's degree in playwriting from Royal Holloway College at the University of London. Her dramas have been performed in many cities in Asia.

Her most recent work was the translation of the Chinese dialogue in David Henry Hwang's *Chinglish*, a bilingual comedy about the adventures of an American businessman in China.

Composer Huang Ruo was born in Hainan island and recently completed his doctoral studies at the Juilliard School in New York. A winner of many awards, he made his operatic début with *Dr Sun Yat-sen*. He lives in New York. ■

Photos courtesy by Opera Hong Kong





A scene from the opera "Dr. Sun Yat-sen"



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Pelo Povo

EXPOSIÇÃO

EXHIBITION

FOR THE PEOPLE

SUN YAT SEN

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MUSEUM MACAU



Racing Cars and Fine Wines

New audio-guide system
raises visitor experience at
Grand Prix and Wine Museums
to new level

By Staff Reporter



How do you give renewed spark to museums that have been around for years? The Tourist Office believes that you do it by improving the visitor experience. This year the Grand Prix Museum and the Wine Museum will be equipped with an e-guide system. It will enable visitors to discover the details of the history of the motor sport as well as the origins of the 'Nectar of the Gods'. And the ideas don't stop there.



Museums are all about history and stories. If the former is generally known and rather obvious to a visitor, the latter – the stories of who did what over the years – often go unnoticed. That is what the Macao Tourist Office wants to bring to an end at the Wine Museum and, especially, at the Grand Prix Museum.

For example, it is easy to find out that the Grand Prix Museum opened in November 1993 in the month that has been the month of motor sports in the MSAR since 1954. But it is not so easy to find out the name of the first driver hired by a Formula 1 team to take part in the Guia Circuit's Formula 3 race. And the answer is? We'll come that a little later.

The two museums work side by side in the basement of the Activities Centre. By the end of this year, the Tourist Office wants to equip them both with an e-guide system similar to those used across the world. Guided tours offered by professional tourist guides have lost ground to audio and video equipment that can provide a personal and more interactive experience to each visitor. Frederico So, one of the people responsible for the museum, explained the new technology. "We want to generate more interest for the public. Normally there would be a route that would guide visitors through the history of the Macao Grand Prix (MGP), so that they'd get some idea of the event's historical development."





Dodjie Laurel's car

Classic cars

On entering the Grand Prix Museum, the most obvious features are the large black and white photographs of the MGP from times gone by in which drivers ran to their cars before the race began. In the middle of the first room we find a Triumph TR2, the car that won the First Macao Grand Prix, with Portugal's Eduardo de Carvalho at the wheel. However, it was Paul Dutoit, a great lover of motor sports who lived in Hong Kong, who gave the decisive push for the first race. "This is not a treasure hunt. What you have here is a Grand Prix." It was with this phrase that Dutoit convinced local enthusiasts who contacted him to move ahead with the MGP début. They included Fernando de Macedo Pinto, Carlos da Silva and Paulo Antas.

The territory's narrow roads were thus shaped into a circuit which, according to both drivers and aficionados, was very similar to the mythical Monaco race track. The local authorities supported the idea and, from then on, the race just kept on growing. In the museum's first room, there is a display of cars ranging from a classic Ford T to the car in which Brazil's Ayrton Senna raced in Macao. He managed to win the very first time he raced there. The Ford T took part in the first MGP classics race, and was

bought by the Government in 1997 for 200,000 patacas. The roar of racing cars can be heard from the speakers dotted around the exhibition space.

"Most of the vehicles are not of great monetary value, but all of them have a symbolic value for the MGP," said Frederico So. "The Ford T was the first mass-produced vehicle. We are very lucky to have one here. This car took part in the 1963 Grand Prix race, and became part of the race's history."

Frederico So knows most of the contents of the e-guide system by heart. He recounts that the Austin Princess in the collection was used by the governors of Macao from 1963, and became the official car for several years for the opening of the MGP. He also tells us that Dodjie Laurel from the Philippines was the first driver to win a race. He was in first place from the start, as well as being the first driver to win two years running. "These were donated by the family," said Frederico So, pointing to the museum's area dedicated to the driver. "After winning twice, Laurel returned to try to win a third time in 1967. He chose a more powerful car but unfortunately became the first driver to be the victim of a fatal accident at the Macao Grand Prix."

Mr Grand Prix

Some citizens of the Philippines visit the museum just to pay homage to Dodjie Laurel. But for the Chinese community the idol is another driver, whose name is Teddy Yip. As a great motor sports aficionado, he is known as 'Mr Grand Prix'. So explains: "He was the one who made the MGP an international event. He was also a talent-hunter, and brought Ayrton Senna from Brazil to race in Macao. He ended up winning, and from then on the MGP achieved great recognition and became attractive for drivers." Senna won in 1983 in what was the first official F3 race in the territory. He was just one of the almost-famous to be attracted by the Guia Circuit.

Before moving on to the motorcycles and the well-known F3 cars, you have to put the brakes on and stop at the race simulator. This machine makes it possible for everyone to get a small taste of the adrenaline of the local races. The single seat is similar to a WTCC car, and the circuit is the Guia

circuit. In the virtual recreation of the route, you can recognise places like the Sands and Lisboa casinos – and it's very hard not to crash on this tight corner of the track.

The Grand Prix Museum does not forget local drivers of Portuguese origin. André Couto and Rodolfo Ávila also have a place on the walls. Couto won the F3 MGP in 2000, and Ávila now races in the Porsche Carrera Asia Cup. Indeed, the trophies from several years of competition are on display.

The motorcycles section features many drivers who "love to come back every year" to race in Macao, said Frederico So. Amongst those on display, "some were donated to the museum and we bought others from the drivers or the teams". The highlight of the motorcycle exhibit is the Yamaha RD56 that won the first MGP on two wheels. It was ridden in 1967 by Japan's Hiroshi Hasegawa, who also won the following year. Robert Dunlop, who won in 1989, and John McGuinness, who came first in 2001, also have the right to a place in the exhibition.

Teddy Yip - Mr. Grand Prix





The best until last

The equipment and car belonging to Ayrton Senna are the most-recognised items at the museum. When you arrive at the biggest room in the complex, you can see the machine driven by the Brazilian driver. But other big names are also featured. The single-seaters of Michael Schumacher, David Coulthard and Takuma Sato stand proud. Sato was the first driver to be officially hired by an F1 team to race in the MGP.

Frederico So gives details about each driver in Macao. He recalls that even the son of the former British prime minister, Margaret Thatcher, raced in the MGP in 1981. "These are things that can make the visit to the museum much more interesting. This is what we want to offer to visitors. We are constantly seeking ways of improving the experience for the public," he said.

So explains that there is also an idea to create a 3D video of the Macao circuit, as well as some other technology that combines entertainment and information. But what the Grand Prix Museum would really like to have is something very real: A WTCC car. "That's what's missing. The race is perhaps the most prestigious one in the world after the F1 and the Moto GP. It would be fantastic to have one of those cars. We have voiced that wish for some time, and we hope it will become possible," he said.





The wine route

Even at the door to the Wine Museum you get the feeling that you are partly in Portugal. The temperature drops, and there are pictures of endless vines across the walls. Wicker baskets spill over with artificial grapes, and a cart for carrying them stands by.

The first corridor of the museum traces the history of wine. Through maps and texts, we find out about the areas of the world that are best for producing wine. In the northern hemisphere, a band of wine-growing country crosses the south of the United States, some European countries such as Portugal, Spain and Italy, and part of China. In the southern hemisphere, the wine route traverses Chile, Argentina, South Africa, and Australia. "These are the areas most capable of wine production," explained Pualine Kuok, from the museum's team. China is present here, and for good reason. According to museum research, wine has been present in the

country for centuries, specifically since the time of the Han dynasty (206 BC to AD 220). Vines arrived in China through Iran. Despite having little tradition in the sector, in a short space of time China has become one of the world's top 10 producers of wine.

The large amount of information is available to everyone – in Chinese, Portuguese and English. But installing the e-guide system will take it directly to the ears of the visitors. They will find out, for example, that after the last Ice Age, wild vines disappeared from the Caucasus region and moved on to Mesopotamia along the Euphrates and Tigris rivers. Later vines were also introduced by the Phoenicians and the Egyptians.

The wine-making area in the Iberian Peninsula is the last in a series of posters along a corridor paved with what looks like tiles. In the room before the wine cellar, a video about wine production in Portugal is played on a loop. After the door is opened, the story becomes even more real.



The wine cellar

For those who know what a wine cellar is, and are used to visiting one, it may seem strange to visit this one at the Wine Museum. Recreations are always different from reality. Yet the majority of people who visit the museum are not familiar with the wine-making process, and it gives them an idea of wine-production procedures. "Visitors find out what equipment is used for planting vines and picking grapes," said Pualine Kuok. "It's hard work," she added.

Hoes and forks hang on the walls, and an array of implements used for maintaining the vines are spread across the room. They include sprayers and wicker baskets. The harvest season is shown as a celebration, in images on the wall and on a video projected onto a screen. People tread the grapes in bare feet – still a reality in Portugal, if only on a small scale. The music that is played in the museum is traditional Portuguese folk music. "It's

a celebration. They are very happy, and they dance and sing," said the museum's representative whilst watching the video.

The cellar smells of wine as we walk by the barrels used to store it. And the wine is actually here, in small display cases split into different regions. They cover the Douro region to the Setubal area near Lisbon, and from the Dão region, in the north of Portugal, to Alentejo further to the south. There are bottles ranging from the 19th century to those from more recent times. In the collection of over 1100 different wines, the oldest bottle is a Port wine from 1815.

Wine tasting

The final area in the Wine Museum, which opened in 1995, is a display of Portuguese traditional costumes that are no longer in use in Portugal. Alongside them are the uniforms of the wine guilds of both Portugal and Macao.



Barrels of Wine

After a geographic tour of Portugal through its costumes, you arrive at the tasting area. For just a few patacas, visitors can taste a variety of wines, from Port to Madeira wine, including classic reds and whites, as well as muscatel and rosé.

The museum ends with a shop where visitors can buy wine and carry on enjoying the flavours in the comfort of their own homes. It is at this point that the e-guide system stops being of so much use. ■

Photos by Eric Tam and Gonalo L. Pinheiro



十八年前開口笑

大舍

引調判官
吹蕭童子

九天風雨院田者

二舍

東富舍人
舞仙將軍

位

醉倒金階玉女扶



The Company of Four
The Company of Four is a traditional Chinese puppet show. It is a form of shadow puppetry, where the puppets are made of leather and are manipulated by a person behind a screen. The puppets are dressed in traditional Chinese clothing and are used to tell stories. The Company of Four is a popular form of entertainment in China and is often performed at festivals and in theaters.

Pulling the Strings

Dutch director takes
Taiwan puppets
around the world

By Mark O'Neill in Taipei





Robin Ruizendaal

During a performance at the Macao Arts Festival, the audience was sitting on the Esplanada Don Carlos on the waterfront and saw a dazzling spectacle of puppets, dancers, actors and musicians. They were re-enacting the exile of a famous Portuguese poet and a Chinese general.

'Pilgrimage', in Cantonese and Portuguese, was held on a boat in the harbour, with the light and sound provided by the festival organisers. Writer and artistic director of the performance was Robin Ruizendaal, a Dutchman. He is director of the Taiyuan Puppet Theatre and the Lin Liu-hsin Puppet Theatre Museum in Taipei, where it is based.

The museum sits in a narrow house in the old commercial district of Taipei. With over 10,000 items, it is the largest puppet museum in Asia, with pieces from Japan, India, China and elsewhere, as well as from Taiwan itself. It is also home to a 100-seat theatre, a workshop, four floors of exhibition space and two performing troupes, the Taiyuan for traditional performances, and the Nadou for modern ones.

Since 2003, the troupes have performed in 47 countries across the world, including the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Royal Festival Hall in London, the Casa Mila in Barcelona, a temple in Cambodia, a tropical forest in South America and 16th-century churches in Europe.

Ruizendaal, 48, has been the driving force behind bringing one of Taiwan's most popular native art forms to foreign audiences since he started work at the theatre in 1997. "I was welcome because I was a fan. The chairman, Lin Jing-fu, wanted to internationalise and felt I was very suitable. If it were an official museum, I would have had no chance."

Personal odyssey

Ruizendaal is one of the few foreigners who can speak fluent Mandarin and Taiwanese, and probably the only one who in addition has a PhD in Quanzhou puppetry. Quanzhou is a city in southern Fujian province, the ancestral home of many Taiwan people; its residents speak the same dialect as the majority of Taiwanese.

His long journey from a middle-class household in the Hague to a puppet theatre in Taipei began at the age of three, when he first saw a puppet show on television. "As a student, I preferred drama, art, literature and languages. I liked Asian languages because you learn about the culture and society as well." His grandparents had returned to Holland from Indonesia, reluctantly, after its independence in 1949. "They did not want to go back to Holland. In their house, I saw pictures and tasted food from Asia. Since my youth, I have liked Asia."

He obtained an MA in Sinology at Leiden University and spent one year at Xiamen University. It was here that he studied Taiwanese and first saw live performances of the Quanzhou puppet theatre, a close relative of the same art in Taiwan. "I was totally amazed and overwhelmed by its beauty." After 4 June 1989, he moved to Kunming, capital of Yunnan province, where he started a clothes shop with friends. After six months, he returned to Holland and, in 1991, began a PhD at Leiden University, specialising in Quanzhou puppets. "A key reason that motivated me to study puppet theatre was that there was not a lot of research done in this area."

He came to Taiwan for the first time in 1991, with a three-month research grant to study the hand puppets in the south of the island. "The attraction was that Taiwan had preserved the original moral standards and traditions of China."

He went back to Holland, but not for long; the island had left a deep impact on him. In 1993 he returned to Taiwan to live permanently, and received his PhD in 1999.

Prized puppets

In 1997, he started to work in the Puppet Theatre, which had been set up by Paul Lin Jing-fu, the son of Lin Liu-hsin, one of Taiwan's most famous gynaecologists. "We had no fixed home at that time. We had a foundation and a planning committee." In 1980, Lin had established the Taiyuan Art and Culture Foundation, to preserve and develop this traditional art form. He donated his collection of over 8,000 puppets and puppet-theatre objects, accumulated over more than 30 years, as the basis of the museum. Trained as a gynaecologist like his father, Lin has in recent years devoted most of his time to promoting puppet performances.





In appointing Ruizendaal, he saw an opportunity to take the art beyond the borders of Taiwan, by using the talents of a person uniquely qualified for this mission. The theatre started to perform abroad in 2003. In 2005, the widow of Lin Liu-hsin donated the family house as the permanent home of the collection. The building is over 80 years' old, in the Dadaocheng district of Taipei, close to the Tamsui river which

runs through the city and the area where the city began. Nearby are old temples, piers, wharfs, family-owned stores selling fish and Chinese medicines, and houses of the leading traders of the era when Japan ruled Taiwan, between 1895 and 1945. The four-storey building is both a museum and a centre for exhibitions, performances, workshops and educational programmes.

"It is the biggest such collection in Asia – a treasure – which has been put together over decades by Lin," said Ruizendaal. "I have added pieces, like 18 sets from Guangdong. I asked the chairman, who gave me money. He has been a very big sponsor, providing millions of New Taiwan dollars. The place is not big enough to show everything but there is no plan for a bigger museum." It is so well known that, in addition to Ruizendaal and his colleagues looking for new pieces, dealers come to offer them antique puppets.

Rich tradition

Hand puppets have been an integral part of Taiwan culture since the Han people brought them from the mainland in the 16th century. The island boasts 300 troupes, traditional and modern. They perform at festivals, usually at temples who invite and pay for them. Sometimes there is no human audience, only the statues in the temple. In 1970, a television channel broadcast a series of puppet shows for the first time; it caused a sensation and broadcast nearly 600 episodes. Now there is one television channel which broadcasts puppet shows 24 hours a day and has a large following.

"The size of our audiences depends on the show," said Ruizendaal. "We had 800 in Macao and large audiences in Beijing and Wuhan. In Taiwan, we often get 200–300." His team has 11 full-time people, including musicians and directors. He is the artistic director. "We have won the approval of Taiwan and the world, which sees the museum as part of Asia's heritage. Asia suits me. I will not go back to Holland."

The puppets, actors and musicians tell stories from Taiwan's present and its history, using real and imaginary characters, producing creative music theatre productions aimed at local as well as international audiences. In recent years, subject matters from Chinese history, as well as plays with more international themes, like Marco Polo, have been produced and performed successfully around the world.

Fighting for finance

Despite its artistic and critical success, the troupe struggles for money. "Finance is a big problem," said Ruizendaal. "We get 25 per cent of funding from the government, 25 per cent from chairman Lin and 50 per cent from companies. The performances and exhibitions bring in money. The museum loses money."

He said that corporate sponsorship in Taiwan was far behind what it was in the United States, where firms can write off against tax money donated to charity and cultural causes. "This kind of corporate sponsorship has just started in Taiwan. Here the donations are small; we get introduced to companies, through connections. Lin's friends supported us for the first five years. I hate being in debt. We are always looking for money; we do performances to raise money, which is very tiring. It is hard to get money from civil society."



His troupe is one of ten puppet companies who receive financial support from the government; it funds a total of 100 artistic troupes, including dance and music. "The government sends us abroad on diplomatic visits."

Praise for Macao

The troupe performed 'Pilgrimage' in Macao in November 2004, the first of four appearances at the Macao Arts Festival. The most recent, in November 2010, was La Boite (the Box), at the Macao Cultural Centre, a collaboration with a French troupe, La Compagnie des Zonzons. It was performed on one of the biggest puppet stages in the world, a huge four-metre box that could rotate 360 degrees. It

served as a stage for puppets and actors, a lantern, a shadow stage and a film screen.

Accompanied by original live music from Taiwan and France, it told the story of two glove puppet theatre companies, one based in Lyon and one in Taipei. The audience was taken on a journey through different cultures and traditions, from the past to the present, in a performance that transcended the boundaries of language and nationality. Ruizendaal was creative director and stage designer. "The Macao audiences are less complicated than those in Taiwan, who are more intellectual and more critical. In Macao, the audience wants entertainment and is more pleasant, open and embracing. Since one troupe cannot play at the festival two years running, we hope to return in 2012." ■

Photos by Mércia Gonçalves

Students in the Lin Liu-hsin Puppet Theatre Museum





Massimo Godoli Pelli

Massimo Godoli Pelli, an Italian, worked as a puppeteer with the Taipei Puppet Museum from 2000 to 2010, before he left to set up his own company.

His fascination with Taiwan puppets came through a love affair with a lady from Tainan, whom he met on his first visit to the island in 1999. She acted as his interpreter while he performed at an international puppet festival for two weeks in Yunlin, the home of the art in Taiwan. She came to visit him in his hometown of Ravenna, in northeast Italy, and the two decided to stay together. Since she could not find a good job in Italy, they moved to Taiwan in September 2000 and got married in 2002. She works for a large financial company. "I want to be a puppeteer until my dying day," he said. "But, without my wife, I could not continue here. I would have to leave Taiwan and seek work abroad, probably in Britain, where there are many great puppet companies."

Hooked from childhood

As with Ruizendaal, Pelli's fascination with puppets began at an early age. "I saw a show for the first time in 1968 when I was seven, in our school. The ticket

was very expensive and my mother did not want to pay but she had to. It was our only entertainment of the year. It was very exciting. I loved the joy and the atmosphere." The show was performed by the grandfather of Mauro, one of his classmates. The old man was the fifth generation of a family of puppeteers called Familia Monticelli, founded in the 18th century. Pelli started to visit Mauro's home, 200 metres away, and saw the old man making some puppets himself, buying them and being given them. "During hard times, the troupe performed on farms and were paid in the form of food. Sometimes, they even used the puppet heads for firewood."

In 1979, the grandfather, in his 80s, became unable to continue, so Mauro took over the company because he did not want it to die, and Pelli joined him. His mother opposed this career, deeming it unstable and poorly paid. Unmarried, she worked as a nurse in a hospital, raising two children on a meagre income; their house, in an old quarter of Ravenna, did not have a toilet. "She wanted me to have a more stable career. I was a very good waiter and had been invited to work at the London Hilton at the age of 17. I declined because I was afraid and did not speak English. I did not tell my mother."

For 20 years from 1979, Pelli worked mainly as a puppeteer for the troupe. They changed the name to Teatro Del Drago, after characters in books by JR Tolkein, whose stories they performed. They did traditional and modern shows and a stint of three months with a company in Brighton, England. "But I did not earn enough money. Sometimes I had to quit, working in a hotel for two years and making aluminium windows for three years, but I always wanted to go back." He paid money regularly to his mother but she continued to criticise him for his choice of career.

Life change

His life changed in 1999, when he came to Taiwan for the international puppet festival and met Miss Liu. It was no easy decision to leave Italy and the troupe where he had worked for 20 years; Mauro had been his closest friend since 1966. "I told them in advance that I was leaving but they did not believe me. When I did, they had to cancel some engagements and do extra rehearsals. It was also sad for my mother, who is 75.

She has a heart condition and cannot fly; so she has never come to Taiwan. When I return to Ravenna now, I feel like a foreigner. I call Mauro, who says that he is very busy and can see me only once."

From 2000 to 2008, he worked full-time for the Taipei Puppet Museum and then part-time for two years, before he left to set up his own company, Uncle Pippo and Kaku Theatre, which has four people. They perform in schools and ask children to make puppets and stage a performance. "In Taiwan, the audiences are lively and enthusiastic, it is part of the culture. In Italy, it is only entertainment and there is not even the money to open a small puppet museum in Ravenna. But it is hard to survive in Taiwan as a puppeteer unless you are very famous. I could not continue without the financial support of my wife."

He has performed three times in Macao. "I enjoyed the good audiences, the atmosphere and the food. Some of it is like a European city, with its vitality, culture and good living." His brother, Mattia Peli, is a well-known Italian musician, composer and conductor.



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Dusting off an Old Gem



Hangzhou

Hangzhou sees economic renaissance with World Heritage Site status

By Sascha Matuszak in Hangzhou

It's just past nine o'clock on a mid-autumn evening, and the silver orb of the full moon is finally visible.

We are gathered by Hangzhou's West Lake, on the island of Santan Yin Yue. The crowd were ferried out here – one extended family at a time – from 5pm onwards. They now fall silent for the first time since they arrived here.

It will be a few hours before the moon reaches its zenith, but by then the West Lake will be deserted. The remaining crowds will be filling up the restaurants and clubs.

Only solitary men, a few couples, and the ghosts of emperors and poets past are there in the dead of the night. They listen to the water lap gently against the concrete banks as the western hills turn silver under the light of the moon.

Earlier that evening, I had spoken to Cai Hong, who, at only 22, was thinking of her upcoming trip to England. She had told me the legend of Madame White Snake, said to be imprisoned beneath the Leifeng Pagoda. The white snake spirit was punished for falling in love with a mortal man and she remains there now, buried underneath the ancient Ming Dynasty bricks and caged in by the modern steel girders that hold the pagoda up today.

"There are a thousand stories about West Lake, and that's what makes this place beautiful," she said. "Many lakes are bigger and more impressive, but only the West Lake has such a rich culture."

West Lake

Water Town

During the day, the dual nature of Hangzhou is visible from the top of Leifeng Pagoda. Lush tea mountains rise up out of the lake and march west along the Qiantang River. To the east, the gleaming high rises of Zhejiang's capital city follow the path of the Grand Canal north toward China's traditional heartland.

The West Lake splits Hangzhou into the ancient tea producing, poem-inspiring Wulin Mountains on one side, and the modern corporate hub and popular MICE destination on the other.

Peering down from the Leifeng Pagoda, the hills, the lake and the skyscrapers fill the view. It is easy to overlook the tiny Tiesha River – the true heart of the city. The Tiesha links Hangzhou together through a series of tunnels and bridges. Small alleys lead in and out of residential complexes and cross over the gleaming tracks of the new high-speed line between Shanghai and Hangzhou. The route of the river formed the original shape of the Hangzhou old town. It became a natural border between Wulin, as the city was once known, and the rest of the world. The river was and still is the city's primary source of wells and washing water. Locals washed their clothes and boiled their ducks in the Tiesha for centuries. Then in 1930 the Qingtai Waterworks were built to modernise and sanitise the city's water supply.





Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception cathedral

Ducks and fish

A dozen stalls now operate, assembly-line fashion, along the riverside, dishing out duck after duck to the gathered crowd. Duck soup is a local staple, and the various stages of the process are visible throughout the city. Bamboo cages filled with flapping ducks are transported via bike to the market. Steaming vats for de-feathering line the back alleys. Men and women silently clean the ducks using outdoor taps. When the ducks are ready to eat, families seat themselves around a large bowl in the quiet residential courtyards.

The duck market melts into the Bian Jiang Village seafood market – a natural transition for Hangzhou. It is a city in love with duck and fish. The seafood market is remarkably quiet by day. Fishermen arrive as early as sunrise and as late as sunset with their catch. It is quickly seized by lucky individuals or, more likely, by one of the several dozen restaurants that open at 6pm to serve fresh seafood.

By night, the market is a raucous collection of circular tables overflowing with beer and seafood. Everything is available, from shrimp and mussels to the local West Lake carp, as well as imported salmon. The feasting doesn't end until well past midnight, when the barbecue stands are the last ones remaining, and red-faced groups of men stagger out into the night.

The Tiesha loops west here, following the lines of the old town long since torn down to make room for boulevards and high rises. Few structures remain, but one that still stands is Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception – China's first Catholic cathedral. The Italian Jesuit Martino Martini built the cathedral in 1661. It is just a few paces from the original churches built by Li Zhizao to house refugees fleeing from religious persecution. The original churches and the old town did not survive. The cathedral, however, is an active place of worship, and masses are held each Saturday and Sunday in Chinese.

The secret of silk

Watery tendrils drift west from the Tiesha River as it heads north from the city centre. They help to feed China's first and only wetland park – the XiXi National Wetland Park – a vast marsh that takes up more land than the West Lake.

The wetlands were a centre for silkworm production for centuries. It helps to explain why this gorgeous maze of islands and lagoons is far less famous than the lake. Silkworm production and cultivation was a jealously guarded state secret that aided China to keep its coffers full no matter what the geopolitical climate was.

Now that the secret is out and silk production is a global affair, the wetlands have been transformed into a tourist attraction and local getaway. The former silkworm farms are now a museum. The huts of the farmers have been replaced by boutique restaurants, sight-seeing pavilions and international resorts.

Leaving the wetlands behind, the Tiesha flows north away from the old town, eventually linking up with the Grand Canal and becoming part of eastern China's vast irrigation network. This ancient network still pushes a lot of cargo up and down the seaboard – moving three times as much annually as the railways between Beijing and the Lower Yangtze region.



Longjiang tea

Green Gold

West Lake Longjing (Dragon Well) green tea is China's most famous green tea. It can fetch good prices around the world, but like many famous things, its origins are quite humble. Sifeng village, a centre of Longjing tea cultivation in Hangzhou, is nestled in the Wulin Mountains. Consisting of thirty or so homes, it was built along the waterway that flows down from the original dragon well down towards the city. Tea plantations cover every square inch of earth, right to the top of the mountains. Local Sifeng families own virtually every bush.

Zhang Julian has six small plots of her own. As she pours hot water into the glass, tiny emerald slivers turn bright and plump.

"We sell most of our tea to locals," she says as she brings out the first of several delicious dishes. "They are old friends who are looking for fresh, original Longjing green, not the stuff the shops sell to tourists."

She can sell some of her best tea for 600 yuan per 500g, which is a good price for China's premier green tea. Longjing is sold across the planet, from upmarket tea-houses in Hangzhou to hip cafés in Portland, USA, where it can cost as much as US\$5 per cup. With green gold literally growing all around them, you'd think the farmers of Sifeng could relax, but no one here is resting on their laurels.

Tea hills are beautiful at any time of the day. But in the dusk that falls just before the true night arrives, accompanied by the cicadas singing and the wind dying down, Sifeng's humble tea plots look positively divine.

The best of China always goes first to the Emperor. Eighteen Imperial tea bushes cluster around a tiny well that is the source of Longjing Green Tea's fame. The bushes still produce tea each year. It has been known for 25g of the Imperial Green brand to go for thousands of dollars.

The story of the Song general

Few regions on earth are as productive and fertile as the Lower Yangtze region from Wuhan in the east to the Hangzhou Bay. The sheer commercial power of the silk, tea and rice growing regions around Hangzhou helped to keep the Southern Song Dynasty alive. Reigning from 1127–1279, they survived even after the Jurchens overran the north and established the Jin Dynasty (1115–1234).



West Lake

Every Chinese schoolchild knows the story of the Song general Yue Fei. They can relate how he inflicted defeat after defeat upon the Jin until his army stood before the old capital of Kaifeng, one assault away from restoring the Song Empire. They learn how corrupt officials and a fearful emperor colluded to have Yue Fei executed in exchange for peace with the Jin. The story of his betrayal is both an exhortation to patriotism and a warning against colluding, corrupt ministers.

The Song and Ming Dynasties are powerful symbols of ethnic Han rule. As the capital of the Song, Hangzhou acts as a massive shrine to the glory of the ancient Song empire. Yue Fei's tomb is still a popular pilgrimage location. It used to be tradition to spit upon the kneeling, cast-iron sculptures of his betrayers that face his tomb.

After the fall of the Song, Hangzhou Bay slowly silted up and the centre of power shifted. It went first to nearby Nanjing and Suzhou, and then later north, to Beijing.

For centuries the heart of Song power slept and the full moon rose over a peaceful West Lake each mid-autumn, providing an inspiration to visiting rulers and poet-governors.

A new Song revival

Today, a new Song revival is taking place beneath a full moon on Southern Song Imperial Street. A plaza built below the Temple of the City God atop Wushan, it lies in the centre of the city. Thousands of locals have turned out – families and couples, rich and poor – to celebrate the Mid-Autumn Festival.

The Temple of the City God is lit up in splendid red and gold. Above it, the moon is so bright that even the lights of the massive, gaudy Wushan Southern Song Palace restaurant pales by comparison.

The last few decades have seen quite an economic revival in Hangzhou. The city has seen double-digit growth rates for years, with GDP just short of 600 billion yuan last year. Per capita income surpassed US\$10,000 for the first time. Disposable income went over 30,000 yuan, giving rise to a boom in retail developments. Rural residents' incomes rose 11.5 percent to more than 13,000 yuan. This has helped to boost the real-estate industry, as farmers are now looking to buy modern apartments in the city.

Much of the recent growth is due to sky-rocketing tourism numbers: 100 billion yuan in revenue and more than 65 million visitors.

The West Lake was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site last June, which should boost Hangzhou's international standing. The completion of the high-speed rail link between Hangzhou and Shanghai also makes it easier for white-collar workers to get away for the weekend.

The tourism numbers, coupled with 20 years of double-digit growth, have jump-started a number of other industries. Most noteworthy of these are the high-tech industries and MICE. Manufacturing and finance are not the driving force for cities like Hangzhou. The city has too strong a cultural legacy and, it could be argued, is too beautiful to mar with smokestacks and warehouses.

Instead, Hangzhou is building its capacity to host international exhibitions and events, ranging from corporate excursions to large sporting events. Established MICE players in Asia, such as Pacific World, are venturing out of the major destinations. Instead of using Beijing and Shanghai, they are organising events in second-tier cities such as Hangzhou. The city's combination of explosive growth, rich cultural legacy and natural beauty ensure that events like the World Leisure Conference, held in Hangzhou, are just the beginning for China's number one Green Meeting City. ■

Photos by Mécia Gonçalves and Xinhua News Agency



Lingyin Temple



Lingyin Temple

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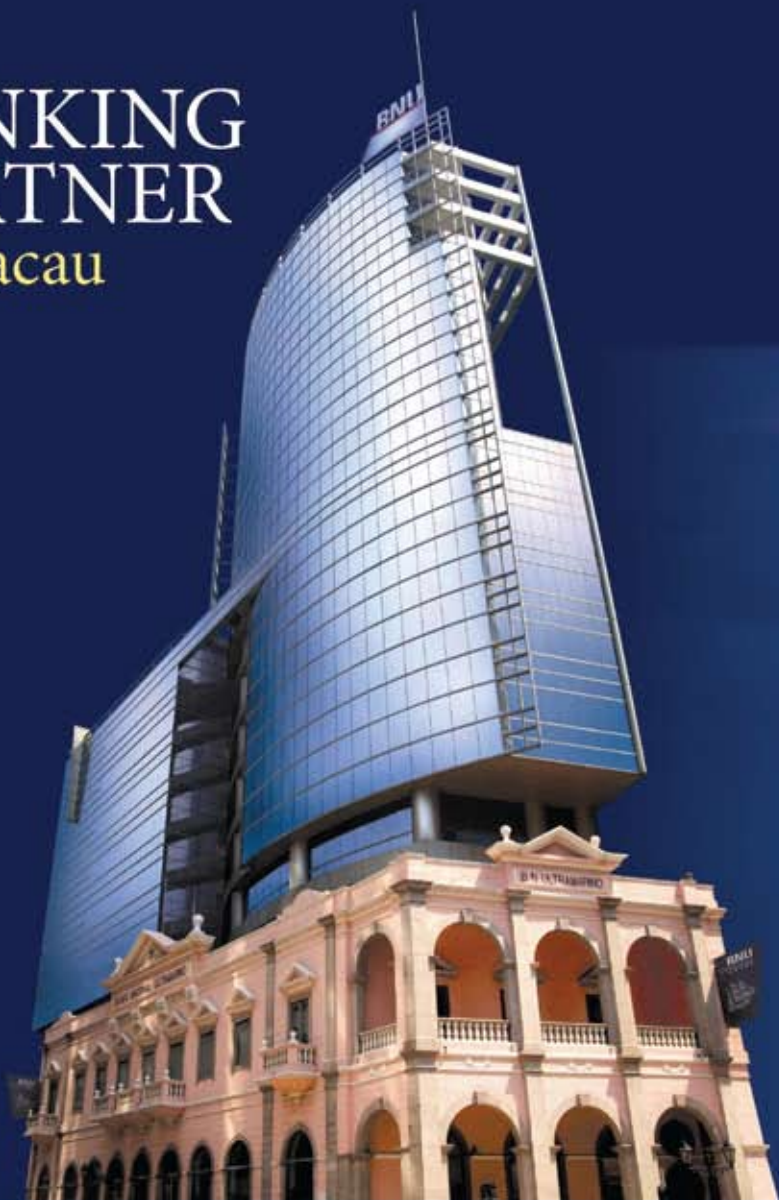
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