Culture-led Regeneration

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tourists excited by the new cultural provision flock in, so the ancillary businesses take off. From accommodation, catering, transportation to retailing, jobs are created and the service-oriented industries grow. The tourism bonanza draws inward investments and increases taxation, which can be used to improve infrastructures and amenities. Trades directly related to the cultural institution (galleries, music companies, creative-industry sector, film houses, etc.) also tend to benefit and draw customers from the visitors.¹

Hot on the trail of cultural lovers are property developers. With the completion of the neighbourhood/city image reconfiguration, luxury high-rising apartments mushroom and gentrification ensues.

While each success has to be attributed to its own set of reasons, a growing body of studies affirm that a carefully-orchestrated culture-led regeneration policy can indeed revitalize the community economically, environmentally, socially and culturally² (Brand et al., Evans & Shaw, 2004). It must be emphasized that this improvement strategy is by no means a guarantee of a commercially-promising future, and many attempts to replicate the method have flopped,³ but plenty more enticed by the reincarnation vision are currently pursuing it with great enthusiasm (Evans, 2001).

In the museological sector, an early instance where a cultural institution acts as a catalyst for the urban rebirth is the Georges Pompidou Centre and the Marais neighbourhood in the first arrondissement in Paris. But perhaps no recent cases are as well-documented as the Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao (hereinafter GMB) in Spain and the Tate Modern in the United Kingdom. The sharp contrasts of ‘before’ and ‘after’ in each of these cases have garnered tremendous media coverage and extraordinary cult following.

Prior to the depletion of its mining, steel and shipping industries, Bilbao had long been an affluent port capital, producing 20% of the world’s iron ore (Zulaiki, 1997). The decline had started in the early 20th century, and by the time the Guggenheim Foundation, New York, arrived in the ‘90s, Bilbao’s unemployment was among the highest in Spain and its political situation the most volatile in Europe. The Guggenheim branch in Bilbao, designed by Frank Gehry, was intended to be part of a large-scale urban make-over plan, and its futurist, dramatic titanium exterior proved to be a shining star. Hailed by numerous architectural magazines as one of the most iconic designs in the century (Stephens, 1999), the curvilinear, flower-shaped building invited millions of visitors to pass through its entrance in the first year (Rauen, 2001).

The visitor number has since fluctuated but rarely dips under 900,000 per year⁴ (Anderson & Nurick, 2002). With surveys supporting that the majority of the tourists making the trip to Bilbao exclusively to see the GMB or extending their stay for it (Plaza, 1999; 2000), the GMB is estimated to have generated €27 million for the Basque coffer in the year 2001 alone. Although it usually takes a while for the novelty to wear off to assess the true economic and social recovery (Gómez, 1998; Gómez & González, 2001), it is indisputable that to date, the GMB has been phenomenally successful in attracting cultural visitors and revamping city image.
(Keating & de Frantz, 2004). From an economically depressed area plagued with social unrest, Bilbao has morphed into a hot destination in international cultural map.\(^5\)

The Basque’s ‘fairy tale’ found its English version in the form of Tate Modern. When the trustees of the Tate Gallery elected to convert a power station in Southwark to house the Tate Modern, the London neighbourhood was an unassuming area in the shadow of the bustling West End. It was the potential of the building, not the economic outlook, which underpinned the decision, but the decision subsequently spearheaded the progress of Southwark (Blazwick & Wilson, 2000). Since the launch in 2000, the average annual attendance number (4-4.5 million) has exceeded the most optimistic expectations and prompted the Tate Modern to become the most visited modern art museum in the world. McKinsey consultants, originally estimating that an overall economic benefit of fifty million pounds can be created, now believe that a more realistic impact figure of the Tate Modern should fall within the range of seventy-five to one-hundred-and-forty million pounds, about half of each is specific to Southwark (Travers, 2005:25). For better or worse, growth in local property values and commercial developments outstripped the London average during the Tate’s construction, and continues to ascend after its completion. With Charles Saatchi’s collection, the Architecture Foundation’s exhibition centre (under construction) and a cluster of commercial galleries moving in to operate in the vicinity of the Tate’s site, Southwark has leapfrogged to become a cool and trendy hang-out (Newman & Smith, 2000).

Despite all the fanfares, cautions must still be exercised. Cultural economics tend to err on the side of over-estimation. Differentiating ‘primarily culturally-motivated’ from ‘combined-motivated’ visitors is one of the thorny questions that analysts have to face to avoid inflated statistics (Stanley et al.); deciding on an appropriate economic ‘multiplier’ is another one. However, even though the impact assessments are frequently less than flawless, they seem to have produced sufficient proof to convince France’s Ministry of Culture to champion the idea. When choosing the venue for the outpost of the Louvre, the Ministry made a point to aid the ailing industrial north: all six towns on the shortlist were located in the impoverished provinces. It was to implement ‘cultural decentralization’ as well as to breathe new life into the struggling regions. In 2004, Lens, an ex-mining town whose unemployment rate stands above the national average, was picked and an abandoned coal pit earmarked for the site of the new Louvre.

**Museums and Architectures**

To generate the buzz, a museum needs to pull in crowds, and various factors, working alone or in conjunction, may help it to achieve the goal. ‘Collection’ is one of them. The unrivalled extensiveness of the modern art collection possessed by the Museum of Modern Art, New York, single-handedly turns the MoMA into an art Mecca. The all-encompassing collection of the British Museum and the queue outside its door also testifies the importance of
exhibits. ‘Curatorship’ is another. Both the ‘by theme’ display in the Tate Modern, and the ‘visible storage’ display in the Museum of Anthropology, University of British Columbia, stir media interest and tempt curious public to go in. Since the stupendous success of the GMB, largely due to its trophy building, ‘architecture’ appears to enter into the limelight, too\(^6\) (Sirefman, 1999). The avant-garde exterior may be ridiculed by Zulaikí as a “titanium artichoke” (Zulaikí, 1997:61), but if it is “so powerful that it puts visitors in a state that lasts longer than the visit” (Giovannini, 1998:84), architecture is arguably a more than adequate reason for tourists to pay a visit to the museum. In fact, many do. When even visitors of the stern-looking Tate Modern “discuss the merits of the building rather than the images it contains” (Cork, 2003:353), architecture has come to represent a critical dimension of museum attendance.

This is not to deny that the architecture of museums had its moment before. Frank Lloyd Wright’s Guggenheim, New York, the above-mentioned Georges Pompidou Centre, and the Louvre’s pyramid, all have had their fair share of publicity. The ethos of the new era, nevertheless, is in the unprecedented extent of actions by museum professionals as well as the public to consciously push the architecture from background to foreground (Davis, 2005). The role of museum architecture comes under fresh scrutiny: Is the notion of ‘neutral container’ officially passé? Should the building be daring and full of character so that to make a statement or register with tourists easily?

Since the inauguration of the GMB in 1997, re-embodiments of ‘architectural spectacle’ sprout apace: Shigeru Ban’s Pompidou outpost (Mets, France); Santiago Calatrava’s Milwaukee Art Museum extension (Wisconsin, U.S.A.) and City of Arts and Sciences (Valencia, Spain); Zaha Hadid’s Rosenthal Centre for Contemporary Art (Cincinnati, U.S.A.) and the above-mentioned Architecture Foundation’s new exhibition centre (London, U.K.); Stephen Holl’s Bellevue Art Museum (Washington, U.S.A.) and Musee des Confluences (Lyons, France); Daniel Libeskind’s Jewish Museum (Berlin, Germany), Imperial War Museum North (Manchester, U.K.), Denver Art Museum (Colorado, U.S.A.), Grand Canal Performing Arts Centre and Gallery (Dublin, Ireland), Military History Museum (Dresden, Germany), and Royal Ontario Museum (Canada)...to name just a few.\(^7\) All of them have flamboyant façade and extravagant cost. While some of these are developed independently from the GMB’s spell, many are commissioned by the trend-following museum boards, clamouring to reproduce the magic (Filler, 2001).

The emphatic presence of form has, however, met skeptics in certain quarters. Architectures that have the ‘wow’ factor may be visitor magnets, but what if it clashes with the curatorship, or upstages the exhibits? Libeskind gives Berlin’s Jewish Museum such an evocative space that it perhaps works best when there is nothing in it (Filler, 2001; see also Newhouse 1999 for the curatorial challenges). Gehry’s GMB is deemed as relatively curator-friendly, though the immensity of the space inevitably swallows up small-size art works (Cembalest, 1997; Cork, 2003; Giovannini, 1999). The curators at the Bellevue Art Museum,
Washington, also have difficulties working with their strong, uncompromising architecture, whose high ceiling and curved walls are at odds with regional paintings and crafts favoured by the local audiences. Recently, in an unusual coincidence, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (in 2003) and the Whitney Museum of Art (in 2004) replaced Rem Koolhaas’ lavish plans with Renzo Piano’s understated designs. It is understood that the rationale behind the double changes is the shift of emphasis from ‘viewing the museum’s shell from the street’ to ‘viewing art inside the museum’. The shift concurs with the core principle of Tadao Ando’s Modern Art Museum in Fort Worth (2002) and Yoshio Taniguchi’s MoMA, N.Y. (2004), both distancing themselves from the belief that the building needs to be a sculpture of art in order to bring the world to the museum (see also Litt, 2005).

A sheer exuberant diversity is flourishing in museum architecture. When architectural historian Victoria Newhouse postulates that of all the factors, architecture may have been the most important one to aesthetically/financially ‘make or break’ a new art museum (Newhouse, 1998), she certainly taps into the latest preoccupations of museum curators. Yet there is no cut-and-dried formula on how to ‘make’ it. Are architectural landmarks the shortcut to museum identity and booming tourism? ‘Form’ and ‘function’ need not to be mutually exclusive, but will irregular-shaped buildings inspire or frustrate curators and artists? As the functions of museums getting diverse, have ‘entertaining’ and ‘civic meeting place’ already risen up to the prominence of ‘exhibiting’, thus nullified the ‘form v.s. function’ conflict and legitimized the patronage of state-of-the-art building (Davis, 1990)? Given the shaping force that the building wields in the management of a museum, and given the economic drive that the museum is responsible for in a culture-led regeneration scheme, the issue of ‘museum architecture’ clearly merits more attention.

In line with the ever-growing interest in ‘regeneration’, ‘museum’ and ‘architecture’, two art museums are presented in this paper. The museums concerned also engender the momentum for the rejuvenation of the places, yet what marks them out is the pronounced reciprocity between the museum, the architecture, and the place (landscape as well as host community). Firstly, the museum building, though not technologically or aesthetically innovative, offers a unique yet intimate setting to enhance the appreciation of the exhibits. Secondly, while many of the exhibits inside the ‘museum’ are nurtured by the ‘place’ outside, the museum architecture is also firmly anchored in local context, thus able to mediate the two and reinforce the continuity from inside out.

The museums are where art, architecture and landscape meet.

**Donald Judd and the Chinati Foundation**

Despite his intense aversion to be labeled as a ‘Minimalist’, Donald Judd (1928~1994) was seen by many as a leading figure of the movement (Strickland, 1999). First establishing his name as an art critic, by the late 1960s,
Judd had held his solo exhibition in the Whitney Museum of Art, and formulated the signature motifs. From here, he was to embark on a productive journey, unfolding the basic theme in endless variations.

‘Specific objects’ is the term that Judd coined to describe his three-dimensional artworks, and of which, he is best remembered for his revolutionary stance on ‘space’. While Brancusi recognized that ‘base’ is part of a ‘whole’ and ‘pedestal’ part of a ‘sculpture’, Judd proposed to eliminate pedestal to allow art work to articulate in the space without interfering. In his view, the position of a ‘specific object’ in the surrounding conditions the way a viewer responds to it. Therefore, there should be no pedestal, platform, or rope to distort the position or distract the viewer to be engaged in the kinetic dialogues with the art work and with the surrounding. Only when the viewer’s mind and body are absorbed into the space, will the appreciation complete. In addition to ‘space’, Judd was fastidious about ‘colours’ and ‘materials’, too. He was one of the artists pioneering the use of industrial paints (light cadmium red being his favourite) and industrial materials for the exactitude and finish. The combinations of different colours and materials, different degrees of surface reflection and transparency, fill up the range of his works.

To render each constituent of his unadorned boxes to capture the light and deliver the elaborate interplays and contrasts, Judd had to be meticulous about the installations of his art works, but his preferences were denied by the prevailing exhibition practices. More often than not, museums juxtaposed works of assorted artists in crowded, poorly-lit spaces; exposed his polished objects to the dangers of handling and the touches of curious audiences, and in the worst instances, placed his works onto pedestals. The lack of context in museum display incurred Judd’s wrath. He resorted to his own five-story house in New York for displaying his collections, but he yearned for more: a proper museum where he could place art works permanently in an ideal surrounding.

In 1972-3, Judd relocated to Texas, whose expansive desert landscape had impressed him many years ago when en route to Korea for the military service. The chosen Marfa, Texas, is an incongruous ranch town. It had been inhabited by the Indians but the town was only founded when the railroad connected it to the outside world in the 1880s. Thanks to its close proximity to the Mexican border, Marfa was used as a strategic base, and the military built Fort R. D. Russell to accommodate the cavalry soldiers. But like most frontier towns in the West, when the troops pulled out after the war and the prosperity came to an abrupt halt, sparsely-populated Marfa had no answer to the abandonment except the old cattle industry. Geographically and culturally, the barren, almost tree-free hinterland was thousands of miles away from New York. It is in this rugged wilderness that Judd would later present one of the largest contemporary art installations in the world.

With the financial aid from the Dia Foundation, Judd began to acquire dilapidated houses and parcels of lands. Architecture had always been his passion, and from his prolific writing, it is evident that he was well versed in the architectural practices (Viladas & Judd, 1985; Judd, 2000; See also Noever, 2003). Many
characteristics of his non-functional art translated into functional architecture effortlessly: pared-down aesthetics, non-obtrusive approach to the ambience and interest in the history.

The strict observations of the philosophies led Judd to base his architectural plan mainly on existing buildings, which he purposely-converted to suit the needs. Two airplane hangars and the adjacent building were remodeled into his private compound, and to seclude it, he revived an almost forgotten vernacular building technique for the adobe enclosed wall. The museum ‘Chinati Foundation’ (named after the local mountain range) was sited on Fort Russell and comprised of various types of houses. Here Judd also kept the alterations to the minimum. 11 U-shaped barracks of former soldier’s quarters were renovated for exhibitions. The Arena, the fort’s gymnasium and riding hall, was stripped off of later additions to expose the original concrete-and-gravel floor. This became the museum’s guesthouse. The Artillery Sheds were two huge buildings once used as a prisoner-of-war camp. To introduce natural light in, Judd lined the two sides of the long walls with continuous, quartered rectangular windows from floor to ceiling. He also took the cue from local storage structures to add a vault roof of galvanized steel onto the original leaky one (Newhouse, 1998:116). As he restored the ruined architectures tenderly, he showed a profound respect to the landscape. The only constructions that he contracted to build from scratch are the ten concrete houses on the outskirt of the town. Nevertheless, they were situated on the spot where remains of earlier houses were found; no virgin land was disturbed (Huck, 2003:37).

Since the underlying concept of the Chinati is “art...encountered in the context of its surrounding architectonic spaces and in a natural situation [and not isolated in a museological anthology]” (Judd, quoted in Fuchs 2003:87), Judd consulted with each artist the installation place, some outdoors and some in separate buildings. This sees Claes Oldenburg’s ‘Monument to the Last Horse’, a big horseshoe made to honour the last horse put down by the cavalry, on the horse’s burial site, Richard Long’s rock circle on a former tennis court outside the Arena, Carl Andre’s written poems in a former mess hall where natural light level is lower, John Chamberlain’s ‘Texas Pieces’ sculptures in the Wool & Mohair building, Ilya Kabakov’s ‘School No. 6’ (praised by New York Times art critic Roberta Smith as one of his best works) and Dan Flavin’s fluorescent-lighted Untitled (completed in 2000) in the barracks, and some of John Wesley work’s in a building which stands across the street from a Methodist church, founded by an early John Wesley (Beal, 2000:124). But it is the Artillery Sheds that elucidates best the importance of surrounding towards the production and the consumption of art:

“The buildings...and the works of art that they contain were planned together as much as possible. The size and nature of the buildings were given; this determined the size and the scale of the works” (Judd, quoted in Beal 2000:120).

The works referred to are 100 milled aluminum boxes: 48 in one shed and 52 in another. The boxes (except the last four) are placed in three straight rows which run the entire length of the building. They are
fitted with planes of dividers, which Judd alternated vertically, diagonally and horizontally, to create different pockets of spaces inside the boxes. All deceptively simple, until the sunlight filters through the windows, and falls upon the aluminum boxes and the concrete floor. The light bounces off and is immediately reverberated through by the equally reflective surfaces nearby. The extreme fluidity of the light and reflections destabilize the guises of the boxes: some aglow, some darkling, some water-like, some serene, some weightless, some heavy (Agee, 2000). The sheen, the glint, the hollow, the depth, the hue, the nuance, the texture, the shape...alter infinitely as the sun moves, the clouds float by, the viewing angle changes or the standing position differs.

The boxes are framed by the building, which, in turn, is hemmed in by the landscape. Visible from the windows are antelopes, occasional passer-bys, and another fifteen of Judd’s box-like ‘objects’ in the field to expand the context from inside out. It is in such a theatrical setting that Judd wanted to assimilate ‘permanence’ into the collection. The participation of art, space, light and viewer, in equal measure, creates a never-exhausting visual effect that will be the envy of conventional museums.

By the late 1980s, Judd had bought up more than 30 buildings scattered on 340 acres of land. He was one of the largest private employees in Marfa (Smith, 1995), and, literally, the prime architect of its resurrection. The social and economic repercussions are widely felt. Even though the nearest commercial airport is three-hour drive away, permanently-installed works of celebrated ‘Minimalists’ transform Marfa to a quirky tourist sight. Modern art aficionados have duly taken the pilgrimage to come to see it. When Judd passed away in 1994, the Chinati Foundation and his personal estate ensure the legacy to last. Except for looking after the installation ensembles, they also organize temporary exhibitions (aiming to enrich the historical context of the permanent collection), residency programmes, summer art activities with local communities, Open House festival in October, and international symposiums.

The steadily-growing annual visitor number reached 10,000 before the year 2000 (Beal, 2000), and about one third of them came from abroad. This may be a diminutive figure compared to the GMB’s staggering millions, yet no small feat for a town whose population barely breaks 2,500. The cluster-effect took longer to manifest, though. In 1999, Marfa Book, an art bookstore/café/gallery, opened in this dominantly labour-class town. Meanwhile, the Lannan Foundation acquired two properties in Marfa and has moved its residency programmes there since 2000. The streams of resident curators, poets, and writers have infused Marfa’s art scene with sparkling energy. The Ballroom, Marfa, a non-profit contemporary art centre located in a former dance hall, is the latest cultural addition to the faraway town. Launched in April, 2004, the Ballroom’s opening show, ‘Optimo’, was anything but parochial and featured pieces by Takashi Murakami and Martin Creed (Hirsch, 2004). It received no less than 4,000 visitors in two months. Buoyed by the success, the Ballroom is set to hold two or three exhibitions a year as well as film and performance arts pro-
grammes in the future. The nexus between these local institutions is emerging. One of the Ballroom’s co-founders, Virginia Lebermann, sits on the board of the Chinati Foundation, and in 2005, a residency programme became the first collaborative projects of the Ballroom, the Lannan, and the Chinati.

The congregation accelerates the pace of Marfa’s metamorphosis. Sophisticated restaurants and hotels catering to the tastes of city dwellers are already in business, and a few development complexes are in the pipeline. A score of professionals and artists from New York and Austin have either set up or considered buying up a second base in Marfa (Hirsch, 2004). More than 10 houses were snatched up by these ‘outsiders’ on the Ballroom’s opening weekend alone, and anecdote evidences suggest that the real estate prices in general are hiking up to a record high.

“It was groundbreaking in the ’70s to take an old building, renovate as simply and beautifully as possible and put the art in there for the long time’” (Michael Govan, quoted in Beal 2000:122~123). The groundbreaking concept is inherent in Judd’s edifice. He was fascinated by the beauty of inter-relationship: colour to colour, material to material, colour to material, viewer to ‘object’. It seems only natural that his exhibits were spawned in relation to architecture, and architecture to place. Whether or not Judd foresaw, or even liked, the economic ramifications brought by the Chinati to the Marfa, he has fashioned a mutual-sustaining cycle between the place and the museum. The local architecture and landscape come into play in the creation and appreciation of his works, and the museum repays the host community with economic regeneration. An analogous example where the symbiosis can be found is the Tate St Ives in St Ives, United Kingdom. In the same vain, this is a comparatively ‘low-key’ case where no global-trotting architects can be advertised, but the rhythms of local life, which give rise to the exhibits, are resonated with by the building. Through the physical negotiation of the architecture, the inside and outside of the museum come to a dovetailed relationship.

**Tate St Ives**

St Ives, Cornwall, has been a perennial holiday favourite for the Britons since the 19th century. Its surrounding seascape and glittering light attracted tourists as well as the likes of Turner, Whistler and Sickert in search of inspiration. In 1939, Barbara Hepworth and Ben Nicholson moved there to escape the life in London, and soon, friends lured by the Mediterranean lifestyle descended upon St Ives to join them. The loosely-defined St Ives School of Artists was formed. It includes Alfred Wallis, Bernard Leach, Hepworth & Nicholson, Christopher Wood, Naum Gabo, Bryan Wynter, Peter Lanyon, John Wells, Roger Hilton, Terry Frost, Wilhelmina Barnes-Graham, and Patrick Heron. Each interpreting the sea, the land, and the quite Cornish town with individual artistic language (Hammacher, 1987).

In 1985, Tate, London, mounted the retrospective exhibition, ‘St Ives 1939-64: Twenty Fives Years of Painting, Sculpture and Pottery’, to revisit the glory days of the St Ives’ arts heritage. It inadvertently jump-started the homecoming journey of
the artworks. The Cornwall County Council, alarmed by the increasingly dwindling visitor number, saw the prospect of rekindling seaside trade and began to investigate the possibility of having a purpose-built space to display the artworks in the place of origin. A disused gasworks overlooking Porthmeor Bay was selected and two architects with local connections were appointed for the conversion task.

From the outset, what the architects for the Tate St Ives aspired to achieve is to lay bare the relation between ‘what is inspired’ and ‘what inspires it’ through the mediation of the architecture. The ‘exhibits’ and the ‘place’ were therefore both factored into the design, so that “art, building, town and nature” altogether can form “part of one experience” (Evans & Shalev, 1993:30). The aspiration dictates the selection of gray slate roof and white textured walls to echo the familiar town scene. Rooms with the size approximately of an artist’s studio constitute the exhibition space. The Cornish sunlight, which has enchanted generations of artists, proves to be the biggest challenge. In order to protect the exhibits from UV damage while providing “some insights into the artists’ inspirations” (Stephens, 2003:110), a vast curved glass commanding a panoramic view of the Porthmeor beach is fitted in the sculpture balcony.

“What you will see out of the window will be depicted in the very works hung on the walls” (Eldred Evans, quoted in Stephens 2003:114).

The ‘authentic setting’ embedded in the Tate St Ives’ location is seen by Stephens as a devise appealing to tourists searching for authenticity in ‘experienced tourism’ (Stephens, 2003). But at the same stroke, it also turns the gallery into a parallel to an in-situ archaeological museum. While a museum of archaeology situated on the excavation site shows an animated narrative of the discovery, this rare in-situ art gallery imparts an informative history on the origin and the development of the displayed arts to visitors.

300-strong works by the St Ives School of Artists in the Tate’s holding were transplanted to the tailor-made site. The Tate St Ives was unveiled in June 1993 and became an overnight sensation, welcoming 200,000 visitors in the first year, three times of the original anticipation. The permanent collection rotated occasionally and visitors keen for more art can choose to purchase joint tickets for the nearby Barbara Hepworth Museum (under the Tate’s supervision since 1980). Since 2001, to broaden the context and place the regional arts in a bigger picture, three gallery rooms are devoted to select non St Ives works.

In a survey directed to the Tate St Ives’ visitors, more than half of the respondents cited the gallery as the main reason for coming to Cornwall (Evans & Phyllida, 2004:36). Commercial galleries capitalize on the ‘Tate Effect’ and proliferate quickly. Many of these sell tourist kitsch, but serious works by new St Ives artists are also on view. The restitution of the ‘art colony’ fame helps, and is helped by, the ‘bohemia’ restaurants, cafes, boutiques, and a wide range of cultural activities and festivals (Axten, 1995). The impact study carried out in 1995 also backed up the economic spill-over, indicating that 70% of businesses believed that they had profited from the opening of
the local Tate (ibid: 36). Since the year 2002, Tate St Ives becomes the only Tate branch that still charges admission fees, but its popularity has not waned and a building extension plan is currently in progress.

Conclusion

The Bilbao Effect, the reinvigoration of a desolate area through the launch of a cutting-edge museum and its emblematic building, has transfixed academic circles as well as municipal officers in the past decade. Imitation and emulation are all the rage. Who is going to be the next ‘must-see’? Which high-profile building is going to epitomize museums in the Noughites? Meanwhile, warnings have been made on the un-sustainability of superficial cloning (Baniotopoulou, 2001; Litt, 2005). Perhaps it is time to rephrase the question: apart from a striking exterior, what can a building do to help moulding the museum’s identity? And what else needs to be done to give a museum substance?

The opinions are polarized on whether the boldness of the architecture will drive bold curatorial programmes to match up with, or put the exhibited arts into the shade. The inspection of the two cases in this paper attempts to join the ongoing ‘showcase or showpiece’ debate and throw in some thoughts from a different perspective. The Chinati Foundation and the Tate St Ives, one engineered by an émigré artist, one spurred by the local government, both predated the much-hyped GMB, yet both similarly led the regions to new affluence and image. But dissimilar to the GMB, their architectures stand out, not because of the glamour, but because of the ambition to weave together the places and the museum.

It is common for museums to commission site-specific works, and for architects to incorporate local elements to the design in order to connect it to the surrounding. But it is still a luxury to have an art museum sited in a place where its exhibits are bred or shaped, and housed in a building deeply rooted in the locality to reiterate the intricate ties. An equivalent case will be a museum converted from an artist’s studio, such as Monet’s garden in Giverny, but the array of artists in the Chinati and the Tate St Ives highlights the fruitful contacts among a group of like minds, and supplies a dimension seldom seen in single-artist presentation.

Uncritical extolment must be avoided, though. Even in a triumphant regeneration movement, museum’s relation to the host community can sometimes be tense. The rising traffic, parking, garbage, and gentrification are the expenses that the native residents have to bear. The two cases seen here are also susceptible to the negative consequences. Though it is not in the scope of this paper to deal with the issues, they must be addressed at some point and tackled with rigour.

What light do they shed on, then? This may sound old-school, but after all, a well-defined collection and a mutual relation with the place can have as much charm as a visually-breathtaking building to allow the museum to be noticed. Or rather, all is integral to the distinctiveness of the museum. Above all, without artistic articulation or definite orientation, all idiosyncratic-looking museums are, in fact, homogeneous underneath. The build-up of
a collection centres on the mission and vision of the museum, yet a symbiotic relation can be materialized in various manners. Even with no historical ties to the places, it is imperative for museums to develop ‘outreaching’ programmes to establish a rapport with the host communities (Karp, Kreamer & Lavine, 1992; Litt, 2005). The Chinati and the Tate St Ives are blessed with the complements of art, architecture and landscape, chiming with one another to contribute to the final perception of the audiences. While there are museums defined by tourists or architectures, they are museums defined by the harmony.

Note

1. The ever-growing arts festivals and biennial, though less permanent in temporality and spatiality, have also become a major player in culture-led regenerations. See Dermis 2001 for the case of Havana Biennial in tourism-stimulating and image-changing.

2. However, long-term sustained benefits accrued to the areas are yet to be ascertained.

3. Sheffield’s National Centre for Popular Music, and Cardiff’s Centre for Visual Art are two of the infamous failures in the United Kingdom.

4. Discrepancies of visitor numbers exist between different reports. See Jones 2004 for more conservative figures.

5. In spite of a new Basque art collection promised by the Guggenheim Foundation, doubts on the GMB’s contribution to local cultural activities have, however, being raised. It is asserted that the funds used to subsidize the GMB were taken from the money that the Bilabo authority had originally set aside to support Basque culture. Another concern is that most of the curatorial programmes in Basque are controlled by the New York headquarter. In terms of management and operation, the GMB is therefore more like Guggenheim’s franchise than its satellite. See Bradley 1997, Cembalest 1997, Zulaiki 1997.

6. The collective interest provoked by the GMB’s exterior allows it to be seen as being at the threshold of the era, but it must be pointed out that there is no exact time-line in the development of museum architecture, and the term ‘era’ is used here only loosely.

7. The new Louvre’s outpost has also been promised a ‘startling building’.

8. See Temkin 2004 for the discussion on the vulnerability of Judd’s works and the conservation issues.

9. Not every site-specific artist embraces the notion of ‘permanence’. See Princtenthal’s article on the Dia Foundation and the opposing views.

10. The Tate Modern, Tate London, and Tate Liverpool have reached agreements with the Department of Culture, Media and Sports to abolish admission charges.

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藝術、建築與地景的交界

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摘要

文化帶動地區重生的現象，在近年來成為學術界競相研究的議題。由於古根漢畢爾包分館的成功，炫目建築的人氣聚焦效果也對相關的決策及討論產生衝擊。本文藉由「極簡」藝術家賈得(Donald Judd) 在美國德州Marfa的博物館及英國泰特美術館在聖艾芙的分館兩個作品，探討博物館與地區間的共生關係，及其地方風格的建築物在其間所扮演的橋樑角色。

關鍵詞：文化帶動地區重生、畢爾包效應、博物館建築、唐納．賈得(Donald Judd)、泰特美術館聖艾芙分館

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