

Panorama with  
the context  
水塔全景及周邊環境



- Wang Shuo
- Wang Shuo is a Beijing-based architect, researcher and curator as well as the founding partner of META-Project.
- He received his B. Arch. from Tsinghua University in Beijing and M. Arch. from Rice University. He has practiced extensively in New York, Rotterdam and Beijing in the field of architecture and urbanism research. Projects located from New York, Chicago, London, and UAE to major South East Asia cities, Shanghai and Beijing. He had worked for OMA on various large scale projects including RAK Gateway City – which won the 2009 Cityscape and International Business Award, BBC London headquarter strategic planning, and Interlace – a residential project in Singapore. As project architect for OMA’s Beijing office, he worked on the tallest tower complex in Bangkok – MahaNakhon. Wang Shuo left OMA in 2009 to focus on the practice of META-Project with partner Zhang Jing and Max Fu.

- 360°: Please introduce the VANKE’s Water Tower Museum Project.

- W: We took the water tower project two years ago, a small-scaled project as a part of VANKE China’s Blue Mountain project in Shen-yang, the capital city of Liao-ning Province, Northeast China. Blue Mountain project is a residential complex project, located in the campus of a former arsenal built in 1950s. Blue Mountain project is characterized by its re-planning of urban industrial relics. For some reason, the disused water tower was left untouched. In the meanwhile the whole construction had already started. So VANKE consulted me whether the tower should be torn down or not. If not, what we could possibly do with it.

- This tower sits right at one end of the axis through the residential area, casting no substantial effect on the

buildings around. After discussing about the new uses the tower could have, we, the first party and I drew an agreement that we would not demolish the tower and instead we would renovate it with as much money as demolition required.

## WANG SHUO

王碩



- 360°: Did you consider other possibilities? You only thought of it to be a museum, did you?

- W: VANKE tends to call it “Museum”. I prefer to give it a name much more open to possibilities. So I borrowed the term “Folly” from the European Landscape Architecture. Folly refers to a kind of building constructed for decoration, suggesting by its appearance some might-be uses in history and with time going by, its uses are blurred as well, finally becoming a thing between installation and the real architecture. Because the tower is also on the borderline, I hoped the new tower could become a view for the outsiders, while inside the residents could take a new look at it. There should be no set use of it and at present it shows many possibilities. Some young residents who just moved in snapped photos in front of it. Even some newly-wedded couples chose it as their wedding-photos’ setting.

- 360°: Where did your inspiration come from?

- W: I am not as much a believer in the so-called inspiration. A design is the combination of an architect’s personal

experiences and on-site feelings. Since you bring it up, I think I may find one inspiration matching what you ask. I remember when I first got there, there was a mess. Bricks torn down from other old buildings scattered here and there. It occurred to me at that moment that I could recycle the used bricks and reuse them to build a landscape. Sadly, waste pickers stole a march on us and if we wanted the bricks back we had to buy, which was obviously not our intention.

- When I first stepped into the tower, I looked up and found profound darkness. For unknown reasons, there were eight small windows randomly positioned. In usual cases, water tower has no such a demand for lighting. But in our case, sunlight filtered in through windows, generating a strong contrast between light and dark. The light came down from high up creating a churchly aroma. It struck me to bring the light in. In this way, people can observe the outside from the inside, which creates communication, not the kind of communication among people but more like a spiritual one. That is why we created the viewfinder-like windows, or “camera lens” or “ears” as you may like to call them.

- 360°: What is the lighting like inside the tower?

- W: The outcome is not exactly what we planned. Our basic concept is to stimulate people to think about the present and the history: how they differ from one another and how they coexist. The project itself is a practical challenge for us due to its strict limits on cost, which is on the other hand the very reason convincing me to take the challenge since the very beginning. We have to use as much money as demolition costs to renovate it. That is why we still revised our plan in the phase of construction.

- We first planned to embed in the

“可以說，我們新加進去的東西都是和歷史、過去截然不同的，都是很現代的材料：玻璃、鋼，以及鮮亮的色彩。像是一個已經死去的老樹長出了一個新藤，從每一個窗口伸展出來，跟它盤根錯節在一起。”



1 2  
3 4

1:  
View-up inside  
the water tower  
水塔內部從下向上看

2:  
Mini theater  
inside the water  
tower  
水塔內部小劇場

3-4:  
Cut model of the  
water tower  
水塔剖面圖

tower an upside-down white funnel, 20 meters high, linking its top through a concrete-made trans-section to an opposite funnel at the top for the gathering of daylight. In fact we only made the white funnel up to five meters high conditioned by costs, interior space and construction difficulties. That is to say, during the whole process we modified our idea bit by bit to make it fit better into the real situations, without ever thinking about giving it up in the face of real challenges.

- As to the light, we planed it this way. We expanded the existing windows and installed view-finders to break the stereotype of windows. The result shows eight expressive viewfinders made of steel and colorful glass. These viewfinders are white blocks seen from inside. Only when daylight touches the painted glass, would subtle hues spill in after diffuse reflection.

- 360°: The final result is a great contrast between the history and the present. Is this your way to showcase your understanding of the contemporary Chinese sculpture?

- W: We have never regarded it as a relic preservation. Water tower, nevertheless, stands as a remaining relic of an industrial history. If we do nothing but preserve, I am going to ask what on earth we want to preserve. History has past, but the present, the city and the surrounding environment have never stopped changing. If we suppose the thing we preserve as a dead thing, we would definitely treat it as an exhibit in a museum or a bird in cage. I believe what we really need to preserve is a constantly changing culture. This project itself is a moving target. We want to reset and reuse it in the present context and stimulate communications. It could either be consistent or contradictory with its context. The solution is to stimulate people to think about the relationship between the present and the history through contrast. After all, what matters is that people can use it and in turn it could benefit in a larger scale, not only the residents but also people who live in the city.

- We intended to create a collision of the past and the present. Briefly

speaking, we kept the original tower intact, only allowing necessary structural reinforcement and minor treatment on the existing windows. The underlying meaning is that towards preserved relics we would not rush to change it. All the things we added to it are very different from the history, from the past. They are modern materials, like glass, stele and vibrant colors. It's like a dying old tree shooting forth fresh veins. New veins grow out of the tower body from every possible opening, while intertwined with the main body.

- 360°: How do you think about the massive construction and deconstruction happening in China every day?

- W: I am not quite sure if the "massive construction and deconstruction" you mentioned refers to anything specific. I think the present architectural culture is intensely heated and polarized. On the one hand, it is utopian. For instance, we kind of think architecture could improve the status quo, social relations, the culture and people's opinions. On the other hand,

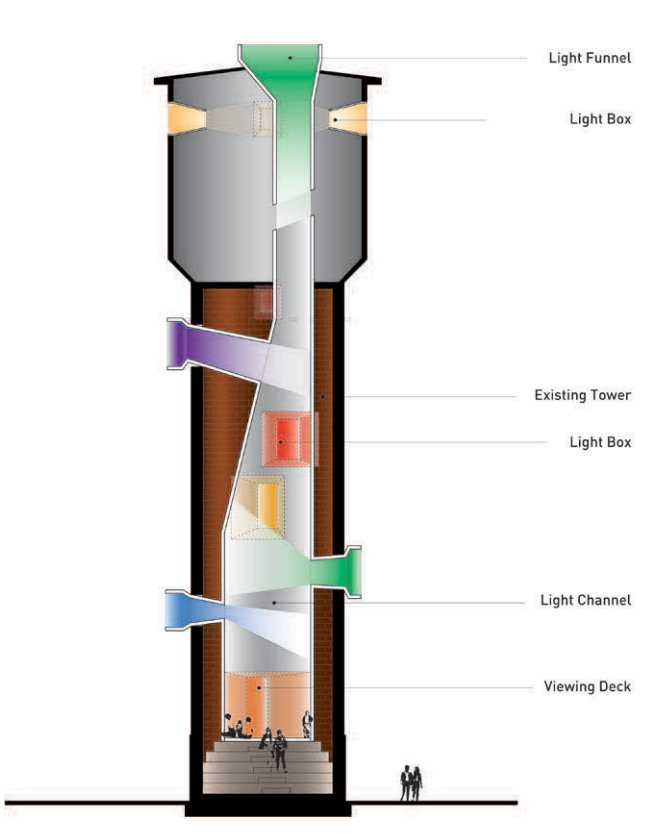
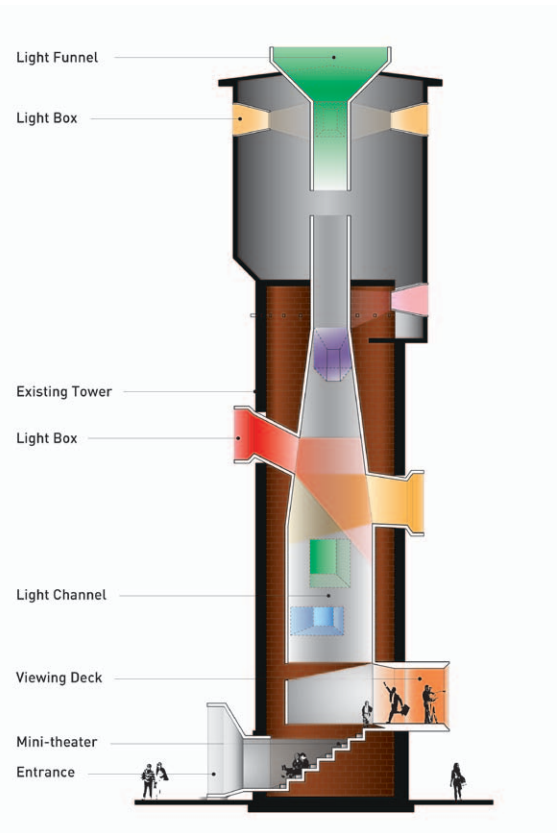
it is anti-utopian. Massive residential constructions come to replace historical communities, valuable green spaces and arable lands. A lot more other similar cases fall into these two extremes. But I can see beyond the two extremes there is a broad in-between area, where practical problems of daily life are addressed.

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- **360°: What are you engaged with recently? What is in your pipeline?**
- **W:** To answer this question I need to restate what Meta Project is about. We spend half of our time on some small-scaled projects to express our attitudes towards architecture and demonstrate how we understand it. For the other half, we conduct some non-profit urban researches and themed lectures, and etc. Recently we are doing a research called “Meta Hutong” (Added: Hutongs are a type of narrow streets or alleys, most commonly associated with Beijing, China). At

the moment, there are a lot of similar platforms ongoing, including researches, forums, fairs, art projects and etc. We find most of them heading for the two extremes I mentioned above. People make a vague and empty proposal for Hutong’s protection, without a clear target of protection; or people take barbarous actions demolishing and clearing Hutong or keep the exterior intact while change the interior into a deluxe club exclusive for the rich.

- If we don’t rush to debate on protection or demolition, there is still a large scope for reality. If I were the one to address this issue, my research questions would be: What is going on here and now in Hutongs? What is the way people lead their lives? To this point, the research is qualitative and we would conduct the quantitative research, too. The city as well as Hutongs can be seen as a data set. Then a rule can be summarized from people’s daily activities and such a rule enables

people to meet when their activities overlap simultaneously. If we believe Hutong has a future, what would be the future like at social and cultural levels? What would be the life like in future? Our research is no traditional architectural research. We are not doing a research for a design, which will end with submitting renderings. Actually we don’t think at this moment anyone can come up with a convincing and feasible design to solve the problem. What we want to do is to work with people of different backgrounds and from different disciplines, such as social anthropologist, new media artists, media professionals, designers, urban planning scholars, and developers to take steps to gain an insight into the complexities and contradictions of this issue and to propose some effective ways of intervention.



- 。 王碩
- 。 建築師，城市研究學者，策展人，META-工作室創立合夥人。

。 畢業於清華大學並在美國萊斯大學取得建築學碩士學位，曾在紐約、鹿特丹、北京多家國際知名的設計事務所從事建築設計及城市研究。負責的項目實施地包括紐約、芝加哥、倫敦、阿聯酋、以及東南亞主要城市、上海、北京。曾參與荷蘭大都會建築設計事務所（OMA）的一系列城市規劃及建築項目，包括RAK Gateway City- 榮獲2009全球城市景觀與商業地產大獎(Cityscape and International Business Award)，BBC倫敦總部戰略規劃，以及新加坡凱德The Interlace創新住宅項目，並作為項目建築師設計曼谷最高樓Maha-Nakhon項目。王碩2009年離開OMA，與合夥人一同專注於META-工作室的實踐探索。

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- 。 360°: 簡要介紹一下萬科水塔博物館項目。

。 W: 兩年前，萬科找到我們做這個項目。這是個小尺度的建築項目，屬於萬科在瀋陽“藍山項目”的一部份。“藍山項目”的原址是瀋陽市五幾年建成的一個軍工廠，萬科買下來建住宅綜合體。萬科藍山項目都是跟一些老的工廠，遺跡的保護有關。後來，因為種種原因這個水塔一直都沒有拆，但整個施工都已經開始了。所以他們最初找到我也是想知道這個水塔到底拆不拆，如果不拆，可以做什麼用。

。 這個水塔正好處在整個住宅區中軸線的末端，對周圍規劃沒有絲毫影響。當時我和甲方討論如果不拆，能不能給它一個新的用途。最後決定用拆的費用來改造它，儘量控制在一個低造價的範圍內。

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- 。 360°: 當時就想到要把水塔改造成博物館嗎？有沒有考慮過其他用途？

。 W: “博物館”是他們提出來的，我更傾向於把它定義為更模糊的東西。藉助歐洲景觀建築裏面的術語，我把它叫做“展廊”。“展廊”指在歷史上有過一定的作用，但隨著歷史的變遷，成為了一個介乎於裝置和實用建築物之間的存在。水塔正處在小區的邊界上，我希望水塔建好後可供小區外面的人觀看，而小區

的住戶也可以重新看待水塔。水塔的功能並不是明確唯一的，在當下它有多種可能性。有些年輕人剛搬進來，拍拍照、拍婚紗照的都有。

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- 。 360°: 靈感來源是什麼？

。 W: 我不是特別相信所謂的靈感。每個設計都是設計師挖掘自身經歷，結合具體的現場感受推導出來的。我覺得有一點算是你說的靈感吧。我們剛去的時候周圍環境很亂，地上散落著拆除廠房留下的舊磚。我曾經想過回收這些舊磚，做周圍的景觀。但這些舊磚很快就被回收的人收走了，要是再去找這些舊磚，還得買，這就不是我的本意了。

。 我第一次進到水塔里，從裏面往上看是很幽深的。不知道什麼原因，這個水塔的身上原本就有八個小窗戶，高低錯落還不一致，一般的水塔是沒有採光要求的。光線透過窗戶進來以後，明暗對比很強烈，光從很高的地方照下來，有一點進到教堂的感覺。我當時產生了一個想法，就是把光線從外界引進來。人在裏面可以觀察外界的環境，產生一種很好的交流，這種交流不是日常人與人的交流，它可能是一種更精神上的交流。所以，我們才有了增加取景窗的創意，你也可以叫它“相機鏡頭”或者“耳朵”。

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- 。 360°: 塔內的光線是怎樣的？

。 W: 最終實現的跟一開始的概念不一樣。我們的概念是激發人們對於新舊區別和新舊共存的思考。這個項目本身有一個非常實際的挑戰，也是一開始我願意去做的一件事，就是對低造價的把控，要用拆除水塔的差不多的造價改造它。所以到了施工階段我們的想法也還在改。

。 我們一開始設想嵌入一個倒置的白色漏斗裝置，20多米高，直接到水塔的上半部份，也就是混凝土的部份；經過這部份的轉換連接另一個和它方向完全相反的漏斗，用來接收光線。但實際工作中，由於造價、水塔內部空間和施工難度的限制，我們這個漏斗只往上做到五米。所以說，整個過程中我們都是把我們的想法一點點的往現實上面去轉變，並沒有因現實的挑戰而讓想法死掉。

。 具體說到光線，我們的想法是這樣的。我們擴展了水塔本身的窗洞口，通過安裝取

景器，打破原有窗戶給人的感覺，最後人們從外部看到的是一個個富有表情的取景器。取景器是鋼架和玻璃做的，我們在玻璃上塗了顏色。取景器內部看上去都是白的，但白天當陽光照在取景器的外側，一些稍帶一點色相的光就會通過漫反射進入塔裏面。

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- 。 360°: 最後作品呈現出了強烈的歷史與現實的衝突感。你是想通過這種方式來表達你對中國當代建築的理解嗎？

。 W: 我們從來不認為這是一個遺址保護的項目。水塔體現了一段工業遺跡的歷史過程，但是如果單純的保護它，那我要問保留的是什麼。歷史已經過去了，我們的當下，現實的城市和周圍的環境總是在變化著。如果我們把保留的東西當做一個死的東西，這樣無疑是把它當做博物館里的陳列品或者是關在籠子裡的鳥。我認為真正需要保留的是一種不斷變化中的文化，我們這個項目就是一個變動中的目標。我們要做的是怎麼在現在這個環境把它利用起來，和周圍的環境對話，既可以和周圍環境一致，也可以製造一些衝突。這種衝突激發人們思考新與舊之間的關係。但不論怎樣，重要的是它在這個當下是能夠被人們去用的，住宅區的居民也好，更大範圍內的城市居民也好，都可以使用它。

。 我們有意營造歷史與現實的衝突。簡單概括一下我們設計的方式：我們對舊的東西一點都沒有動，僅僅是外圍的結構加固，把一些窗戶移位、擴大。這其中的意思是，對於保留下來的東西，我們不會面目全非地改變它。可以說，我們新加進去的東西都是和歷史、過去截然不同的，都是很現代的材料：玻璃、鋼，以及鮮亮的色彩。像是一個已經死去的老樹長出了一個新藤，從每一個窗戶伸展出來，跟它盤根錯節在一起。

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- 。 360°: 你如何看待中國每天上演的大拆大建？

。 W: 我不知道你所謂的“大拆大建”是不是特指某些東西。我覺得中國當下的建築文化是非常白熱化的，傾向於兩個極端。一個是烏托邦式的。比如說我們認為一個建築可以改善現狀、社會關係、文化以及人們的觀念。

1:  
Close-up view  
水塔近景

2:  
Night view  
(partial)  
水塔夜景 (局部)



“中國當下的建築文化是非常白熱化的，傾向於兩個極端。一個是烏托邦式的。比如說我們認為一個建築可以改善現狀、社會關係、文化以及人們的觀念。另一個是反烏托邦式的。大批量地建設住宅，拆掉一些歷史街區，有價值的綠地、耕地。”

另一個是反烏托邦式的。大批量地建設住宅，拆掉一些歷史街區，有價值的綠地、耕地。很多大拆大建都是和這兩種極端有關的。我覺得這兩個極端之外是有很廣大的中間地段。即通過中間層面去應對日常生活中的一些實際生活問題。

。 360°：你最近在忙什麼？未來有什麼計劃？  
。 W：這個回到了我們對Meta工作室（Meta Project）的定位。我們一半時間做一些小尺度的項目表達我們對建築的態度和認知；另一半做一些非盈利的城市研究，專題講座等。我們最近在做的一個叫做“Meta胡同”的“超胡同城市研究”。目前討論北京胡

同的平臺有很多，包括相關的研究、論壇、展會、藝術項目等。我們發現大多數的討論都懸置在剛才講的兩個極端，一方面是空泛的胡同保護，具體到保護胡同的什麼並不明確；另一方面是很野蠻的行為，拆掉或清空胡同，或者在形式不變的情況下把裏面的內容都換掉，改成高級的會所，變成富人居住的地方。

。 如果我們不談保護或者拆掉，這之間其實還有很大的現實空間。如果這個問題由我來提，我會問：在現階段的胡同空間裏面實際發生著什麼？人們的生活方式是什麼？這是一個定性的研究；另外還有定量研究，即把胡同、城市當成一個數據集合體。人每天的活動在時間上是有規律可循的，人和人時間上的交

錯便產生了人們的邂逅。如果我們相信胡同有一個未來，那麼這個未來在社會文化生活層面是怎樣的？未來的生活方式又會是什麼？我們這個研究不同以往的建築研究，它不是拿一個研究做一個設計，最後提交一個渲染圖。我們不認為現階段有誰能就胡同問題提出一個很有說服力、可實現的設計方案。我們希望召集各行各業、不同學科背景的人：社會人類學家，新媒體藝術家，媒體人，設計師，城市規劃學者，胡同開發商等，逐步深入地探討這個問題的複雜性和矛盾性，提出一些有效的介入方式。