



Written by Teresa Stoppani
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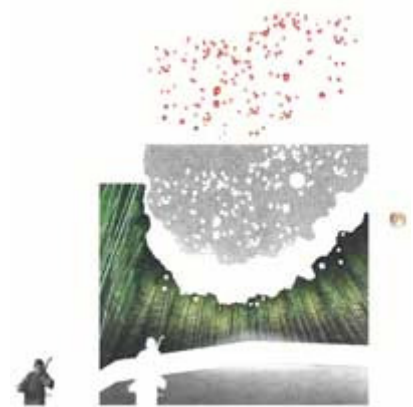
Greenwich Architecture Open Lecture Series 200607
Identities and Representations

University of Greenwich School of Architecture & Construction
Mansion Site, Avery Hill Campus
Bexley Road, Eltham, London SE9 2PQ

- Norbert Singer Lecture Theatre (M055)
- Thursday 09 Nov 2006 17.30

Doreen Bernath
Architectural Association London
The Constructed Image as a Space of Translation

This lecture examines the questions of translation in the language of images, focusing on the production of renderings in contemporary Chinese architecture. In a context where the knowledge of the west has been systematically imported and adapted, the materialisation and use of architectural renderings become a space of translation: on one hand they structure the process of design visualisation from an imaginary 'super-reality' to a built-reality; on the other hand, they act a readily recognisable 'translated imagery' that allows aspects of a foreign conceptual framework to be adopted and digested locally. The resulting visual approximation remains suspended between design imagination, fantasy and practical reality, revealing patterns of stereotypes, symbolisms and social perceptions. The phenomenally growing industry of architectural renderings in contemporary China is addressed here with insights which challenge the iconographical and structuralist debates familiar to the western studies of visual arts and pictorial tradition. At issue is no longer the translation between different 'languages' of images - ultimately rooting images in a context of recognisable stock of visual representations- but the capacity of constructed images to actively intervene in ways of thinking and patterns of architectural practice.



Doreen Bernath studied architecture at the University of Cambridge and received an MA in Histories and Theories from the Architectural Association London, where she is currently undertaking a PhD. Her research focuses on the phenomenon of production of renderings in contemporary Chinese architecture and on its implications in the design practice and cross-cultural discourses in architecture and visual arts. Together with fellow PhD student Hua Li, she has initiated a research project on Anglo-Chinese conceptual translation of architecture. She has written for the magazine Dialogue Architecture in Taiwan and has worked in architectural practices in London and in Shanghai, where she has recently established a workshop (with Tao Luo and Cheng Zhao).

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