

A new generation of museum/hybrids in South and East Asia

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Theses

- A. In China and India, there is a (re)emergence of the art markets and of the art world. Many of the newly established art institutions are seeking their potential roles within the society, articulating their mission statements and planning their directions, taking into consideration their reception by the local communities, as well as integrating institutional critique.
- B. In India, the absence of state-level support of the contemporary art sector leads to the emergence of private and corporate art initiatives.
- C. Most of the museums in India are already in operation, organizing exhibitions and extensive outreach programs, although they often do not have their own buildings.
- D. One of the biggest challenge Indian museums face is that the public shows very limited interest in visiting their institutions. To engage new audiences, these newly established institutions need to find out-of-the-box methods to develop their audience and rethink the perception of the museum.
- E. In China in the last 20 years there has been a centrally orchestrated museum boom, resulting in several hundreds of newly established institutions, which have been built in an unprecedented pace.
- F. A typical metaphor used by professionals for China's situation is that the country lacks software that can operate the large number of new hardware well. Others compare Chinese museums to empty shells, referring to the fact that while museum buildings are spectacular, there has not been enough consideration about their management, curatorial programs or audiences.
- G. To remedy the gap in curatorial expertise, many of these new institutions rent out their spaces, so that their funding and their programming is taken care of. Others turn to their Western counterparts for collaboration. This is done in many ways: one-off exhibitions, extensive training programmes or long-term partnerships.