

Press Release

A DAY IN AN OPEN CITY:  
A JOURNEY THROUGH “SPRINGTIME ALONG THE RIVER“

An unprecedented project organized by  
**The Palace Museum (Beijing)** and **Phoenix TV**  
with **Bank of China (Hong Kong)** as chief charity partner

Exhibition Curated by **Beatrice Leanza | B/Side Design**

July 26 – August 25, 2019

Asian World Expo – Hall 3 | Hong Kong

“Springtime Along the River“ 清明上河图 is one of the most iconic works in world art history preserved in the collection of The Palace Museum in Beijing’s Forbidden City, a hand-scroll painting attributed to the artist Zhang Zeduan and completed around the beginning of the 11<sup>th</sup> century. A masterpiece of literary and visual depiction measuring 5.28m in length and 24.8cm in height, “Springtime Along The River“ is a repository of situated historical knowledge around the cultural, economic and social ecologies of a large metropolis in the 11th century, i.e. Bianjing, the capital of the Northern Song Dynasty that is today Kaifeng city.

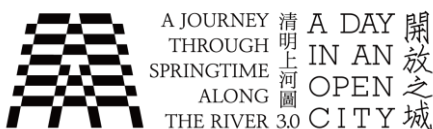
Co-organized by **The Palace Museum (Beijing)** and **Phoenix TV** with **Bank of China (HK)** as chief charity partner, the project is hosted in a 4000sqm hall at the Asian World Expo, where the unprecedented exhibition *A Day in An Open City* together with a relevant *Library* section curated by **Beatrice Leanza** accompanies the monumental *Hayday Scroll* a 2.5 digital animation of the painting presented on a 5m high and 30m long ultra-high-definition projection previously shown in Beijing, and a 180-degree *Dome Theatre* that allows visitors to experience a virtual boat ride on the Bian river, both developed by **Phoenix Digital Technology**.

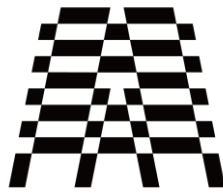
The space also hosts an events area that will feature programs on various topics relevant to the paintings and Song Dynasty, an area for kids dubbed Song Dynasty Park and a gift shop with newly designed items.

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About the Exhibition

In the painstaking minutiae of its details, “Springtime Along the River“ embodies progressive values of urban and civic nature: diversity is here celebrated both in the monumentality of its environmental scapes - natural, man-made, haphazard or ‘designed’ - as well as in the social and occupational multiplicity which characterized the unparalleled prosperity of the Chinese empire during medieval times.





This vision of sociability and accessibility is the timeless feature that from antiquity to contemporary times has never ceased to inspire the hopes and ambitions of great thinkers – it is the image of an “open city”.

Due to the specific form of consumption that characterizes hand-scroll painting (that is sequential reading), “Springtime Along River” literally embodies a voyage in both time and space inside the day of a bustling urban centre. The temporal narrative begins at dawn in a tranquil rural scenario, and takes the observer through the city’s suburbs among its markets and busy river banks, until revealing the frenzied life of the inner quarters of the walled city in the afternoon hours.

The **main exhibition** covering 1500sqm *A Day in an Open City – A Journey Through “Springtime Along the River”* and the **accompanying library project** with over 80 books and catalogues are curated by **Beatrice Leanza**, creative director of the Beijing-based **B/Side Design** and co-founder of **The Global School**.

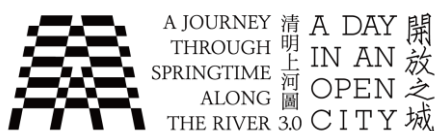
The exhibition is composed of two main parts, the first dedicated to reveal the “*making of*” process of the 2d animation and an introduction to the painting’s background. The main body of the show instead is organized following the spatio-temporal narrative present in the scroll, letting visitors explore the phantasmagoria of its author’s imagination while delving into the historical and cultural facts that surrounded its creation.

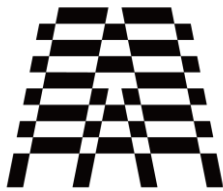
*Eight core scenes*, sections of the scroll itself, function as key content frameworks each composed of newly produced exhibits, covering a breadth of research subjects contextualizing the political, economic, cultural and social history of Song times. Each subject takes inspiration from details that can be observed in the painting itself. These range from figures of historical importance including emperors, court painters and politicians, master builders and philosophers, to presentations diving into the design of the built environment, architecture, furniture, civil and naval engineering, the material culture of Song porcelain, fashion and the unique history of its commercial prosperity and global expansion.

A highlight of the show are the **ten installations** commissioned and newly produced especially for this exhibition by ten of the most talented designers working in China today. They are **Atlas**, **BenWu Studio**, **FIELD**, **HVN Studio**, **LAVA Beijing**, **MAT Office**, **MAX Office**, **Pinwu Design Studio**, **Weestar Studio**, **Nod Young**.

Product of months of research, each of these works focuses on a particular aspect of Song history and culture to offer audiences unique ways to experience more broadly the importance and relation of said subjects to contemporary urban life and visual culture.

The exhibition design is developed by **reMIX Studio** in a series of light weight structures where visual transparencies and materials juxtapositions highlight the three core spatial sections (Rural Scape – City Outskirts – Inner City) with the eight content chapters each bearing its own visual character, within a conceptual rendering of the overall exhibition as an entanglement of urban alleys.





The graphic design project is by **Studio NA.EO** of designer **Liu Zhizhi**, who has developed an iconized visual system referencing key details in the scroll with color coding determined by an analysis of those used in paintings and porcelain of Song times.

*Details of the installations and contents of the show will be made available in a following release at the beginning of July.*

## INFO

**Organizers:** The Palace Museum, Phoenix TV

**Chief Charity Partner:** Bank of China (Hong Kong)

**Supported by:** Home Affairs Bureau

**Promotion Support:** Hong Kong Tourism Board

**Venue Support:** Asia World Expo

**Executive Organizer:** Phoenix Digital Technology, The Forbidden City Publishing House

**Co-organizer:** Phoenix Exhibitions

**Chief Curator:** Beatrice Leanza – B/Side Design | [www.bside.design](http://www.bside.design)

**Space & Exhibition Design:** Remix Studio | [www.remixstudio.org](http://www.remixstudio.org)

**VI Design:** Studio NA.EO | <http://www.studionaeo.com>

## **Special Installations:**

Atlas, BenWu Studio, FIELD, HVN Studio, LAVA Beijing, MAX Office, MAT Office, Pinwu Design Studio, Weestar Studio, Nod Young

Tickets Info: [www.cityline.com](http://www.cityline.com)

## PRESS CONTACTS (INTL)

For press materials and to receive further details on the exhibition please send an email to:

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For regular updates follow [www.bside.design/blog](http://www.bside.design/blog)

## Download Links:

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[Full Press Kit](#) (available from July 3)

