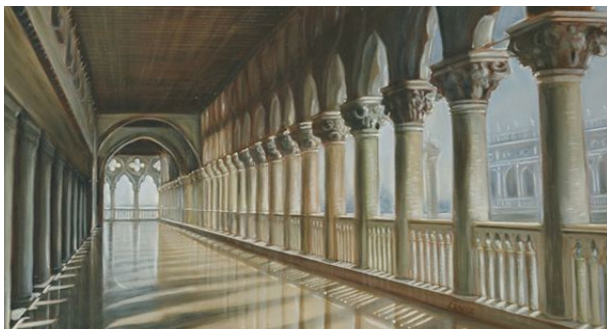


## 2015 Venice Forum

The fifth Euro Chinese High Level Transcultural Forum will take place in Venice, under the umbrella of Venice Biennale Chinese Pavilion. It will be jointly organized by Beijing Contemporary Art Foundation and Transcultural International Institute on September 28 and 29 2015 . This Forum will address the Focal Points to be shared between European and Chinese Cultures in Art Patrimony, extending this concern to African and Arab cultures, with the new challenge :

*“What should be a Transcultural Museum?”*



### Forum's Academic and Scientific Committee:

**Presidency:** Umberto Eco

#### Curators:

Beijing Contemporary Art Foundation  
Transcultural International Institute  
Europe Study Center, CASS  
AMO Thinktank (with Rem Koolhaas)  
IMA (Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris)

#### Consultants:

Huang Ping, Zhao Tingyang, Alain le Pichon

#### Contact:

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[www.euchinaculturalforum.com](http://www.euchinaculturalforum.com)

### Transcultural International Institute

The scientific direction of the forum was entrusted to the Transcultural International Institute, founded in 1988 by Umberto Eco and Alain le Pichon. Based on a civil society dialogue, and transcultural methodologies, Transcultural has become during those past decades the first Euro Chinese Think Tank, benefitting a complete trust from the both Chinese and European side.

For the last 20 years the Institute has developed – along with its Chinese, Asian, African or Indian partners – an approach to reciprocal understanding and the methodologies that such understanding provokes. This implies, considering the reality of the cultural forces and resources, to develop scenarios of cultural and artistic exchange based on reciprocity.

**President of Scientific Committee:** Umberto Eco

**President of Transcultural :** Alain Le Pichon

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*就文化视角来看，跨文化应时而生、必能实现。*

*Le projet de Transcultural arrive au moment précis où, du point de vue de la culture, il s'avère réalisable.*

Umberto Eco

### A promising success

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Bringing together leading intellectuals from both the European Union and the People's Republic of China, the High Level Cultural Forum held in Brussels on October 6th and 7th 2010 has been one of the most important supporting events of the 13th EU-China Summit.

The challenge has been achieved, to draw upon a large and renewed multidisciplinary scale of the best minds and experts on the both sides, as to ensure a real open dialogue, based on free debates, without any political or institutional pressure.

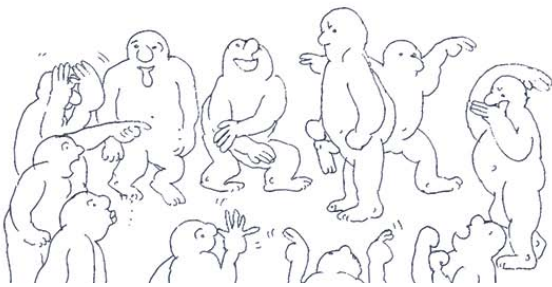
### What is the Forum ?

The EU-China High Level Cultural Forum is an unprecedented platform for comprehensive communication between Chinese and European influential scholars.

The Forum is designed to be the framework for an open dialogue on the ancestral values of two civilizations, on their models of society, their different patterns of knowledge, epistemological, ethical and aesthetic.

It has to be forward-looking, taking into consideration the changes in the world.

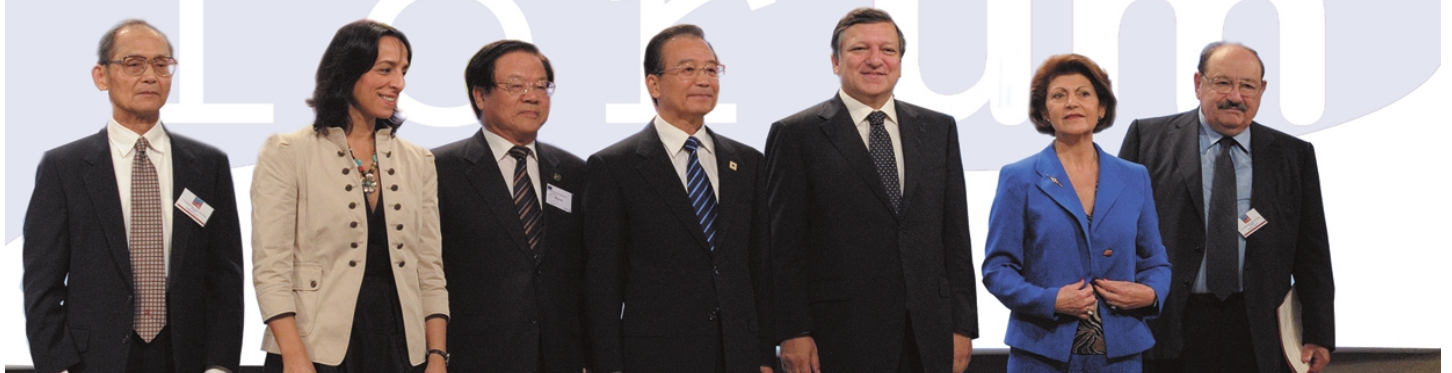
*“May reciprocity between cultures be a basis for political and economic cooperation”*  
Zhao Tingyang



*How many languages do we need ?*  
Zhao Tingyang

**CHINA**  
Ministry of Culture  
Chinese Academy of Social Sciences

**EUROPE**  
Union Européenne  
Institut International Transcultural



## BEIJING'S FORUM 2011

*Scientific direction: Huang ping and Alain le Pichon*

Following Brussels First EU China High Level Cultural Forum, about the concept of Globalisation, the Second Forum had chosen to treat about urbanism and the modern forms of life and Environment, with the aim of building a cooperative and innovative Euro Chinese platform to face the challenge of **“Inventing new cities”** in a Globalized world.

In choosing this topic, the aim was altogether to anchor the forum in the reality of one of the main challenge resulting from globalization the both sides have to face, and including a wide range of problems, from the political and social governance aspects to the economic and technological ones and explore, in this sense different complementary areas and channels of cooperation. This ambition required us to build a multidisciplinary panel of some of the best scholars, experts in technologies and policy makers.

### Forum's curators

**Huang Ping**, (Sociologist, Director, Centre for World Politics, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences )

**Zhao Tingyang**, (Philosopher, Institute of Philosophy, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences)

**Alain le Pichon**, ( Anthropologist, President and co-founder with Umberto Eco of Transcultural International Institute)

**Rem Koolhaas**, ( Dutch architect, theorician, urbanist, and Professor in Practice of Architecture and Urban Design" at Harvard University, USA)

### Argument

A city is an important place in the development of human civilization. Moreover, the modern city becomes the heart of civilization and centre of politics, economy and culture. Research on urban problems refers to those studies about comprehensive phenomena of various problems in human society. Therefore, urban research is a kind of interactive and integrated study which involves sociology, economics, political science, philosophy, cultural studies and all other humanities and social science. It is also a leading-edge and forward-looking study on future human problem. Just because the city becomes the source of all decisive movements of mankind, such as political, economic and cultural activities, we must get in-depth understanding of a series of issues, such as what the city is, how the city functions, what kind of living space a city could shape, and what sort of possibilities a city could offer? From such a perspective, urban research has made direct and significant difference to national building, social construction and development of the world.

## LE LOUVRE'S FORUM 2012

*Scientific direction: Zhao Tingyang and Alain le Pichon*

### « In search of the focal points of cultures : Mindsets, Arts and Globalization : Which Patrimony for the Future ? »

Nowadays although material wealth and technology have been greatly developed with more comprehensive political system and more effective social management system designed, social contradiction and international conflict around the world have not been accordingly reduced. Instead they have increased and grown more profound. People have noticed the abnormal modern paradox, and by critique of modernity, thinkers even already have expressly uncovered all kinds of modern problem causes, however people are powerless to change the current situation. The modern dilemma of being strong in will whereas being weak in power further reveals the modern absurdity.

The reason why the modern dilemma is hard to solve is because it is hard for people to make concerted efforts and pull together in times of trouble. Therefore, it is our task in the age of globalization to seek or create cooperative condition which makes people willing to pull together. With regard to thinking and analysis of the issue, “focal point” concept from Thomas Schelling, the 2005 Nobel Prize Laureate in Economics, is quite helpful. The “focal point” refers to the same strategy which people are most likely to choose among different options without prior consultation, i.e. an equilibrium of strategies which is most likely to happen. Generally the reason why some point can become the “focal point” is because the consensus people reach on patterns of culture, mind and behavior seduces them into jointly expecting that the point should be the one everybody is most likely to think of. The “focal point” can explain what will most likely happen in the world.

The “focal point” can bring about both good things and bad things. For example, it is possible that people would feel the same about the concept and make concerted efforts to improve the world; or would jointly destroy the world without prior consultation, which depends on the values, mindset and behavior pattern accepted by people. Therefore, our top priority today is to seek favorable and positive focal points of mind and behavior among various cultures, and besides, if ready-made favorable focal point is not available, then we must create it.

We choose Mindset, Arts as the topic considered in the point of view of globalization, because 1) mindset essentially determines way of act; and 2) arts is where focal points of intercourse are most easily identified, in the globalized process where common interest of the world lies.

Two specific debates will be devoted to 1- the future of Museums, 2- the future of the “Book”, as a key media for the transmission of cultural patrimony, gathering some of the main Publishers in Europe and China

## BEIJING FORUM 2014 : Towards Post 2015 World

*Scientific direction: Huang Ping*

## VENICE FORUM 2015

### La Biennale Venise - international academic forum

The fifth Euro Chinese High Level Transcultural Forum will take place in Venice, under the umbrella of Venice Biennale Chinese Pavilion. It will be jointly organized by Beijing Contemporary Art Foundation and Transcultural International Institute on September 28th and 29th 2015.

This Forum will address the Focal Points to be shared between European and Chinese Cultural Heritage, with one question, raised through a wide transcultural horizon, extended to the other Asian and African areas:

**“Why should you bother us with the future?”**

and a new challenge:

**“What should be a Transcultural Museum?”**

Forum’s Academic and Scientific Committee:

**Presidency:** Umberto Eco

**Curators:**

Beijing Contemporary Art Foundation

Transcultural International Institute

European Study Center, CASS

IMA (Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris)

**Consultants:**

Huang Ping, Zhao Tingyang, Alain le Pichon

Umberto Eco, president of the Scientific Council of Transcultural International Institute, will chair the debates, in three sessions, dedicated to the “Future of Museums”, raising three main questions

- Key-concepts and Key-images, as defining the main streams of our both European and Chinese Art Culture,
- Gaps between cultures versus Globalized Standardization: as a resource for a Transcultural Museum
- Looking new ways for a transcultural Art, and a Transcultural Museum

Questions of cultural reflexivity and transmission, as well as the ones of transposition and interpretation of key concepts and key Art images in different cultural fields, are at the heart of the debate. That is why, considering the importance of the works you devote to this subject, we hope that you will accept to pronounce a Key speech in one of those three session.

## VENICE FORUM 2015

### La Biennale Venise - international academic forum

**Time: 28-29 September 2015**

**Venue: Doge’s Palace (Palazzo Ducale): Sala di Scrutinio**



**Theme**

- Preliminary question: Why should we talk about the future?
  - Philosophy and Arts
  - Politics and Arts
- Round Table 1: The question of the “Future of Museums”,
  - The question of Key-concepts and Key-images, as defining the main streams of our both European and Chinese Art Culture,
  - Gaps between cultures versus Globalized Standardization: as a resource for a Transcultural Museum
  - Looking new ways for a transcultural Art, and a Transcultural Museum
- Round Table 2 (Curator : Cui Qiao): The role of Foundations in building a network of Transcultural Museum

**Participants**

**Hosts:** Alain le Pichon ( Day 1 ) , Shu Kewen ( Day 2 )  
**Special invitee:** Okwui Enwezor, Curator of the 56<sup>th</sup> International Art Exhibition

**Chairman:** Umberto Eco

**Speakers :**

**China:** Huang Ping, Zhao Tingyang, Fan Di’an  
**Italy:** Giorgio Agamben\*, Gabriella Belli  
**France:** Vincent Pomarède (Le Louvre); Jack Lang ( Former Minister of Culture, President of Institut du Monde Arabe); Alain Badiou\* ( philosopher)  
**Netherland:** Rem Kolhaas\*  
**Lebanon:** George Corm (Essayist, Former finance Minister of Lebanon)  
**Russia:** Andrei Gratchev\*  
**Honor Guest:**  
**Senegal:** Amath Dansokho\* (Minister of State)

\*: to be confirmed

## VENICE FORUM 2015

### La Biennale Venice - international academic forum

#### Agenda

DAY 1.

10:00-11:20

#### Welcom by :

Gabriella Belli: President of Venice Museum Foundation

Cui Qiao: President of Beijing Contemporary Art Foundation

Alain Le Pichon: President of Transcultural

#### Opening – about great international art exhibition

Okwui Enwezor & Rem Kolhaas\*

Speech 20min X 2 , Dialogue 20min , Public 20min

11:20-11:35 Coffee break 15min

#### 11:35-13:00 Session I : A philosophical approach

Zhao Tingyang & Giorgio Agamben

Speech 20min X 2 , Dialogue 30min , Public 15min

13:00-14:00 Lunch

#### Session II : A political approach

14:00 Huang Ping & Peter Sloterdijk\*

Speech 20min X 2 , Dialogue 30min , Public 15min

Coffee break 15 minutes

15:40 : Jack Lang, George Corm

Arts of the Arab World today: How to address Political Destruction of Art Heritage

Speech 20min X 2 , Dialogue 30min , Public 15min

#### Day 2: What should be a Transcultural Museum?

9:30: Key Speech: “*Venice and the Orient, a Transcultural History*”(provisory title), Gabriella Belli

10:00 : Presentation of Shanghai Tower: Mi Qiu



Shanghai Tower

10:30 : Coffee Break

10:45 Session III : **Roundtable and Launching of Transmuseum**  
(Chair-woman: Gabriella Belli)

Opening Speakers: Fan Di'an, Vincent Pomarede (Le Louvre) 20X2,  
Dialogue 30, public 15

12:00 : **Proposal for a Transcultural Museum**, argument by the  
Committee for a Transcultural Museum: Vincent Pomarède, Gabriella  
Belli, Alain le Pichon, Claude Mollard, Elisabeth Azoulay (Chairman :  
Umberto Eco) 30 min.

13:00 Lunch

#### 14:00 Roundtable Chairman Fan Di'an

Jack Lang, Gabriella Belli, Elisabeth Azoulay, Claude Mollard, Alain  
le Pichon , Shu Kewen, ....Public 15 minutes

15:15 Coffee break (15 minutes)

15:30 Round Table 2 (Curator : Cui Qiao) : *The role of Foundations in  
building a network of Transcultural*

## VENICE FORUM 2015

### La Biennale Venice - international academic forum

#### Proposal for a Transcultural Museum

Since thirty years, Transcultural, an international think tank network, born from the common will of Chinese, European and African independent scholars, chaired by the philosopher Umberto Eco, has been a pioneer in promoting a “connected approach” of our Global world. This Forum, jointly organized by..... will gather in a Round Table a team of scholars, curators and specialists, from the whole world, in an open and controversial debate about the challenge of a Trans-cultural Museum : today we’ve got this incredible opportunity and privilege, thanks to the initiative of the Chinese Pavilion in Venice Biennale, to ask us a question that no museum designer has raised before us: why and how to build a trans-cultural museum?

For the first time, the idea is not to create a museum that would be the pride of a country or of a city, but a museum born of the will of many countries and of the very dialogue between them. Such trans-cultural museum aims at helping cultures to shake off their mutual indifference and instead to see themselves in the reflection of each other... The main difficulty lays not so much in the difference between Eastern and Western cultures as in their indifference towards each other.

Of course, we know such great museum as Le Louvre, the MET or the British Museum, display major works of art created by so many different civilizations... How dare we claim to bring together, from scratch, a collection as rich as the collections of these fine museums, so patiently gathered, sometimes for centuries and under more favorable circumstances?

We also know that in our times of massive dematerialization and ubiquity, the cross-cultural has already become trivial. It is part of our everyday life, as powerful search engines and collaborative encyclopedia already provide access to so much information, ideas and images coming from all over the world. This has thoroughly changed the game and no museum scheme could rival with these major digitally powered forces.

As a matter of fact, these two considerations do not close the debate; quite the opposite. We are in case of urgency: we believe such an initiative is the main answer, if not the only one, to the terrorist art heritage mass-destruction process to day, over the world.

We certainly face a challenge that we can tackle by acknowledging that we live a profoundly new situation: For the first time, the idea is not to create a museum that will seek to display its collections, however rich, as a series of monographs reunited in exhibition halls dedicated to a particular civilization or historical era, highlighting alleged differences that essentialize and divide cultures. Contrary to this trend, a trans-museum will favor the idea of gap between cultures. Unlike “the narcissism of minor differences”, so thoroughly exposed by Freud, the notion of gap reveals a distance that favors the dialogue.

## VENICE FORUM 2015

### La Biennale Venice - international academic forum

Gaps between cultures are incredible resources against, on the one hand, the globalized standardization, and on the other hand, the hazard of a languid and lifeless syncretism. While difference - as a tool for nomenclatures and typologies - is a categorizing and classifying concept, gap is, on the contrary, an exploratory and heuristic notion. Difference is specifying and definitive, while gap is inventive. Gap is a bold and adventurous concept. Today - when the world puts its finishing touches to globalization with its inherent threat of standardization -, the question we are facing is : how far away gaps between cultures can venture and spread out?

Trans-cultural museum would be based on two activities:

- The meeting of a few major iconic works acquired or registered for limited periods
- The organization of exhibitions, focusing on contemporary creation, which can be held in multiple locations. These two activities could be grouped around a number of key themes:

1. The relationship between artistic creation and ecological concerns: art and nature, as one of the main challenges of the future of the planet.
2. The development of traditional and ancestral knowledge, within the first arts, to transcend the artistic hierarchies imposed by fashion or the market. It highlights the transformation to the different materials used for artistic purposes by men in history.
3. artistic forms from world religious practices: to identify, compare and show both their matches and differences in a context of mutual tolerance.
4. artistic expression through the use of the most advanced technologies ranging from robotics to create all kinds of images: how these new art forms work as a global homogenization factor and how they can promote the formation of trans-cultural languages.
5. The exercise of the reciprocal relation between the different forms of cultures and artistic expressions is one of the components of the trans-cultural museum that must be on the other four above inventoried vectors. Mutual gaze leads to uses and matchmaking modes that transcend nations, promotes understanding, while avoiding the domination of one form over the other.

## VENICE FORUM 2015

### La Biennale Venice - international academic forum

According to these objectives, a trans-cultural museum would be based on three structural elements.

- a) A limited scope of reference collection, but bringing together global iconic works. It may be a few hundred works drawn from different countries either registered for limited periods or acquired. It may be deposits of existing works in multiple copies or exceptional copies or originals deposited for a fixed term.
- b) Exposures address cross-cutting issues, either historical or contemporary. The Silk Road is an example of historical themes as it concerns China, Europe and the Arab world.
- c) The places of transcultural museum should be distributed in the different territories: China, Europe, the Arab world ... gradually extended, one place after the other to Africa or America.

*The Committee for a Transcultural Museum  
Chairman : Umberto Eco*