

CONVERSATION WITH QINGYUN MA

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You also have to think of the ages of students. When they are in college, they're 18 and 19, right? They are like animals. No, I'm sorry, how can you let them loose in the wilderness, imagining that they all will become leaders? They need to be trained, and training is limiting, right? You train them so that they become a part of society. In the end it's still how to make sure the middle zones of the society are stable.

JM | Which actually is not necessarily a disservice, because there's this idea that every student is gonna become Le Corbusier.

QM | Exactly.

JM | But at a certain point, you want a life and a job, you don't want to be saying, "Oh, I went to school to become Le Corbusier, and I'm completely unequipped to make a living, so I took to drinking."

QM | Absolutely... Really, I'm much more of a humanist in that way. I welcome all forms of joy. That's why I'm confused every five years. I'm so extremely tired of the practice. You know, I'm not practicing in my office anymore. I just form another company out of it. You do a building, and it's so celebrated. You do a second one—"Oh, it's good, it's good!" You do a third one, and it's boring.

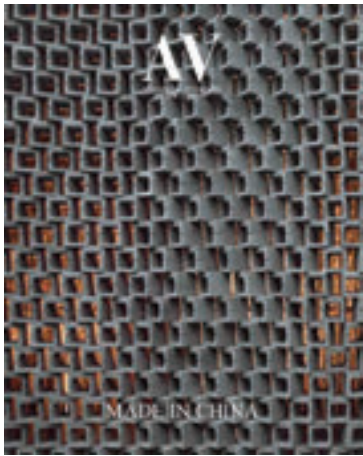
No, really, I'm bored. So when I see Rem and Frank Gehry, I say, "Are you bored? You must be bored. You're flying around the world to talk to the same people, and you come back to your office with the same headaches. You scream the same screams every week. C'mon, you're much better than that. Just stop doing it." So Rem...after the CCTV, I actually strategized Rem's career. I said, "Rem, after the CCTV, you should close your office."

And what you do from now on, I told him, is you travel around the world. You work with other firms, right? It will be Rem, you work as a music director. You go to...

JM | Yes, a producer.

QM | Rem with Beijing Design Institute; Rem with AECOM Los Angeles; Rem with Gensler in Shanghai. You create a new model. You don't carry the baggage of your own office. If you really want to educate and influence society, this is the way you do it, right?

But Rem didn't do it—that was six years ago. After that, I said, "Rem, you're now completely not cool anymore." He does another building and another building. I said, "Rem, let me create companies. You'll be the independent board member, and you'll be paid because of your name. Let's just form a business around you." 文明



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