

# (RE)MADE IN CHINA: MATERIAL DIS:CONNECTIONS, ART AND CREATIVE REUSE

#RemadeInChina

Concept and organisation by  
**Anna Grasskamp**

4-5  
May  
2023

global dis:connect,  
a Käte Hamburger  
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## (RE)MADE IN CHINA: MATERIAL DIS:CONNECTIONS, ART AND CREATIVE REUSE

The creative reuse of 'made-in-China' materials has a short history in the daily practices of middle-class households, but a long history in art, craftsmanship and design. When Ming-dynasty potters in China's 'porcelain capital' Jingdezhen made plates, cups and bowls, they could not have known that their work would be reused to decorate European sites, such as the ceiling of Lisbon's Santos Palace and the wall panels of Berlin's Charlottenburg Palace. Similarly, factory workers and ragpickers on contemporary Chinese garbage dumps may be unaware of artworks made entirely of discarded objects that are being exhibited in exclusive urban art spaces around the world. Despite global material flows, value and knowledge systems connected to such materials are disrupted in two main ways. First, these flows traverse cultural boundaries, allowing for radical changes in systems of material evaluation (e.g. enabling the perception of 'trash as treasure'). Second, transcultural artistic research reuses and re-evaluates seemingly 'meaningless' garbage, turning it into a resource for multi-million-dollar art installations and prized design innovations. As one of the world's leading waste-receiving and waste-producing countries, China is a particularly important case study.

This event understands 'recycling' as a range of creative practices, including the upcycling of biodegradable, inorganic and artificial materials, as well as the appropriation of architectural fragments (*spolia*), *objets trouvés* and industrially produced items elevated to the status of art (ready-mades). It aims to probe art and design in these categories:

- Historic recycling practices in Ming and Qing-dynasty China
- Historic examples of transcultural recycling of Chinese matter in Europe
- Creative reuse in modern and contemporary Chinese art and design
- Recycling in contemporary design outside of the 'art world'

Bringing together artists, curators and scholars from the fields of history, art history, Chinese studies and the history of science and technology, the participants will fill a lacuna in research by scrutinising, conceptualising and theorising early modern, modern and contemporary practices of recycling Chinese materials across China and Europe. The event will contribute to a non-hegemonic history of art, craftsmanship and design that touches upon urban hubs and rural ecologies, the works of artists and artisans as well as the products of craftsmen and factory workers across social, historic and cultural divides, complementing Western-centric theories of creative reuse.

**Registration:**

[remade.in.china.conference@gmail.com](mailto:remade.in.china.conference@gmail.com)

global dis:connect, a Käte Hamburger research centre  
LMU Munich with support of the School of Art History at University of St Andrews  
Keynote in collaboration with the Akademie der Bildenden Künste (cx)

## DAY 1, Thursday 4 May 2023

### ARTIST TALK

Venue: super+CENTERCOURT, Adalbertstraße 44, 80799 München

- 15:00** Registration; coffee and snacks in the *traces* exhibition
- 15:30** Artist talk by Iina Klaus, *Conversations about value and waste / an artist's perspective*
- 16:00** Response by Silvia Gaetti (GRASSI Museum of Applied Arts) followed by Q&A
- Moderator: Sophie-Charlott e Bombeck (super+CENTERCOURT)

### KEYNOTE LECTURE

Venue: Room E.EG.28 (auditorium annex building), Akademie der Bildenden Künste, Akademiestraße 4, 80799 München and online (via Zoom)

- 17:15** Lisa Claypool (University of Alberta), *The trash heap of history: garbage and design in Chinese visual culture*

Moderator: Susanne Witzgall, Akademie der Bildenden Künste München (cx)

**19:00** Conference dinner

## DAY 2, Friday 5 May 2023

Venue: global dis:connect, LMU Munich  
Maria-Theresia-Str. 21, 81675 Munich

### THE POLITICAL DIMENSIONS OF REUSE

- 09:00** Meiqin Wang (California State University), *On the ground of the discarded: ecological materialism and socially engaged public art in Chongqing*
- 09:30** Response by Simone Müller (University of Augsburg) followed by Q&A
- 10:00** Anna Grasskamp (global dis:connect/University of St Andrews), *Material dis:connections: the urban fabric of Hong Kong, jewelry and creative reuse*
- 10:30** Response by Ursula Ströbele (Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte) followed by Q&A
- Moderator: Andrea Frohne (global dis:connect / Ohio University)

**11:00 – 11:30** Coffee break

### TRANSCULTURAL RECYCLING

- 11:30** Mei Mei Rado (Bard Graduate College), *Chinese dress refashioned in Europe: from eighteenth-century indoor robes to twentieth-century couture*
- 12:00** Response by Hanni Geiger (global dis:connect) followed by Q&A
- 12:30** Anne Gerritsen (University of Warwick/Leiden University), *Repair, reuse, recycle: the circular economy of Asian goods in Europe*
- 13:00** Response by Max Oidtmann (LMU Munich) followed by Q&A
- Moderator: Siddharth Pandey (global dis:connect)

**13:30 – 14:00** Lunch break

### MATERIAL DIS:CONNECTIONS

- 14:30** Kyoungjin Bae (Kenyon College), *Wastefully scant: affordance and the cycle of red sandalwood at the Qing court*
- 15:00** Response by Michael Risse (Technical University of Munich) followed by Q&A
- 15:30** Ilse Sturkenboom (LMU Munich), *Recycling the Chinese idea of decorated paper in the early modern Islamic world*
- 16:00** Response by Monica Klasing Chen (Heidelberg University) followed by Q&A
- Moderator: Jonas Stuck (Rachel Carson Center for Environment and Society, LMU Munich)
- 16:30 – 17:00** Coffee break
- 17:00** Concluding Remarks by Cassandra Nakas (Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz)
- 17:30** Discussion  
Moderator: Anna Grasskamp
- 18:00** End