Book - Notes of Landscape in Shenzhen

Object: Book

Place of origin: Shenzhen (published)

Date: 2013 (published)

Artist/Maker: Zhanning, Han, born 1970 (Graphic Designer)

Shenzhen Press Group Publishing House (publishers)

Materials and Techniques: Paper

Credit Line: Given by Han Zhanning

Museum number: CD.1-2014

Gallery location: In Storage

Public access description


This book is intended to document and showcase a completely different aspect of a city best known across the world for its industrial output. This is the first book in China to document the flora and fauna of a major Chinese metropolis and the author was invited to write a weekly column for the Jing Bao newspaper to mark its publication.

Shenzhen, China’s first special Economic Zone is located at the tip of the Pearl River Delta. The city grew from a modest fishing town into a vast, sprawling metropolis of more than fifteen million in just thirty-five years, through manufacturing, trade and relentless commercial energy. Today Shenzhen is the world’s third busiest container port, with a population with an average age of the less than thirty and almost entirely composed of recent migrants.

The invitation to participate in the Bi-City Biennale enabled the museum to engage with this fast-changing city and to road test the recently introduced Rapid Response Collecting strand. The museum asked more than sixty people in Shenzhen to propose a design object that told a story about their city and the result was an exhibition of twenty-three things and twenty-three stories about the place. By exhibiting everyday objects, the show placed centre stage the realities of urban life, of industry and of commercial and social change.

Notes of Landscape in Shenzhen was suggested by the graphic designer of the book Han Zhanning. The book details the ecology of Shenzhen and the surrounding landscape, what Han Zhanning describes as ‘the natural ecosystem of the city’. Behind the book is a desire to shift perceptions of Shenzhen from being just a place of dirty industry, to an awareness of the maturing city’s landscape, flora and fauna.

The Shenzhen exhibition was the first opportunity to test Rapid Response Collecting. This new approach to collecting is intended to make museum collecting more responsive to global events, and to situate design in immediate relation to moments of political or social change. The museum opened its own space dedicated to Rapid Response Collecting in July 2014.

Descriptive line

Notes of Landscape in Shenzhen, Nan Zhao Xu, Shenzhen Press Group Publishing, 2013

Physical description

Book Notes of Landscape in Shenzhen, dust cover of book has illustrations of a kingfisher in the centre, there are illustrations of plantlife and other birds and insects. The jacket reads Notes of Landscape in Shenzhen and A new journey of natural wanders of Shenzhen.

Dimensions

Height: 270 mm  Open dimensions at 45°, Width: 280 mm  Open dimensions at 45°, Depth: 250 mm  Open dimensions at 45°, Height: 248 mm, Width: 350 mm open

Museum number

CD.1-2014

URL

http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O1282529/notes-of-landscape-in-shenzhen-book-zhanning-han/