

MR EDWIN CHAN:

Thank you, David, for the introduction. I also want to thank the Home Affairs Bureau and HAIA for having me. I am very, very excited to be here. Without wasting more time, let me try to dive into the presentation. I know I only have 10 minutes, and thank you beforehand for bearing with me.

When I was growing up in Hong Kong, I did not think that I was going to be an architect because I thought that being an architect you make buildings that look like the image on the left-hand side and that did not inspire me very much. However, I was fortunate enough one summer after primary school to take a vacation in the U.S., and for the first time I saw open space.

The picture on the right-hand side was actually taken from my apartment from Los Angeles, and I like the horizon. I like the sky. For me, that represents a freedom of expression.

After that, I bugged my parents to let me go to the U.S. and since I was not going to do any drugs or do anything bad, they were kind enough to let me go after I completed my form three education at college. I completed my high school in the Bay area and after that I went to Berkeley for my undergraduate degree and then after that at Harvard.

Now, Berkeley was not in my opinion a great architecture school, but it was a great undergraduate education because I took a lot of classes outside of the Architecture Department, and it gave me a very solid liberal arts and the arts background. It was only at Harvard that I started to get into architecture very seriously, and it opened up new doors for me in the sense that it was at Harvard that I discovered architecture as an artform.

After I graduated from Harvard, I decided to apply to Frank's office because number one, I have always wanted to be in Los Angeles but more importantly, I thought that Frank

was the only architect in the world who has a very close relationship with the arts. Every day was new artistic challenge, and I have stayed there ever since working with Frank on various architectural projects.

These are two images I thought I would share with you of our office. The one on the left-hand side was about maybe 10 years ago when we were doing the Guggenheim in Bilbao. It was a much smaller office. It had about 70 people, and now the one on the right-hand side looks like a big supermarket. There are 130 people in the office. Things have changed but hopefully there is still a spirit of the artist's studio. It is in this kind of spirit that we continue to do our work.

One of the first projects that I worked on at Frank's office is the American Centre in Paris. Now, at the time the way of exploring the design was very much shown in the image on the left-hand side. We used a lot of physical models and the models were made by wood blocks, and we piled the wood blocks together like a little kid would. The buildings ended up looking kind of like that. I have to say I was not very good at that, and I did not think that the American Centre -- it was my first project. I was not experienced enough. In the end I did not think it was a very good project in my mind.

Now, having said that, a few weeks ago, Frank and I had the opportunity to revisit the building after more than 10 years. Now it is not called the American Centre anymore. It is called the French Cinemateque. In an interesting way, the French have figured out a way to use the building and in some ways I do not feel so bad about the building anymore because it is being used in a very nice way.

Since I was not very good with making the wood blocks, I figured I needed to figure out a new way to create the image, so we started cutting out paper, which I was a little bit better at using the scissors. The model that you see on the left-hand side is the working model for the Wiseman Art Museum that you see on the right-hand side, and it is in this process that

we discovered the use of the metal because the metal skin when it is folded looks like the paper that I am good at cutting.

Of course, it is in growing that technique to its ultimate potential that the Guggenheim in Bilbao was created. We were very much inspired by the Matisse cutout that you see on the left-hand side, and you see actually from the sky the plan shape of the building very much resembles a Matisse cutout. It is all conceived with cutting the silver paper.

We were also able to explore something a little bit smaller from a very big project. I like to design little furniture and artistic things, so on the left-hand side are some lands we looked at that I designed for a winery. On the right-hand side, I was able to explore something else, which is a lamp made by eggshells, and it resembles a lotus. I guess I like the lotus gardens in the ancient Chinese palace.

I was very much also interested in set design, so the two images that you see are sets for an opera. I was in collaboration with a film director. His name is William Friedkin. He directed the Exorcist. Some of you may have heard of him. We worked together to create these opera sets. It is called Ariadne of Naxos. The one on the left-hand side is the first scene for a Rich Man's House, and the one on the right-hand side is a deserted island set.

I also design exhibitions. We were lucky enough to have designed three exhibitions for the Guggenheim Museum for the Exhibition of the Motorcycles. The image that you see on the left-hand side is the transformation of the Frank Lloyd Wright Guggenheim in New York City. We put stainless steel on the ramp and then on the right-hand side, we used the same material this time in Las Vegas for the same exhibition but used in very different ways.

For the third motorcycle exhibition, I thought that I would look at Chinese calligraphy for inspiration, so we created a black ribbon ramp looking very much like calligraphy in our own museum in Bilbao. The motorcycles are organised

along the black ribbon ramp again in a very calligraphy kind of way.

I was also interested in the Chinese Rock Gardens, so I had the opportunity to design a house in Colorado that for me looks like the rocks in China because they are made with black. I just figured black rocks would look good in the white snow in Colorado. Of course, for Hong Kong I looked at the Chinese landscape paintings for inspiration. This is our not so successful alternative to the Hong Kong Museum.

After all of that, a material that has always fascinated me is the use of glass because for me it is associated with transparency and freedom. In the early '90s we used the glass for a glass tower in Prague. Some of you may have seen that building. It is on the left-hand side. To co-ordinate the glass, we also developed computer technology that some of you may have also heard of that tries to model the glass and make it constructible in a very economic manner.

The image on the right-hand side is all curved glass. It is an interior project using the same technology but now, of course, in Los Angeles we were also able to incorporate the technology with the aerospace industry to be able to custom curve each piece of glass.

With that in mind, we started to explore some glass buildings that for us have a very ephemeral quality like the water colour.

The image that you see on the left-hand is a competition we did, a proposal for a building for the rock band U2 in Dublin. The building on the right-hand side is a high rise building also in glass proposed for New York City. Unfortunately, none of these two buildings have gone anywhere. However, these two buildings are under construction. The one on the left-hand side is an office building in Switzerland, and the one on the right-hand side is a little museum now that we are developing in Paris.

The interesting thing about these two glass buildings is that the technology part, how to make the glass in those particular geometries is actually less of a challenge. We promised the client that the building would be energy efficient so we are working with a German environmental firm. These two buildings are, if you build them, if I believe their calculation, they would be totally energy efficient and they pay for themselves, believe it or not.

Finally, two recent projects, one little museum in Germany and the one on the right-hand side that I just came back from Spain is a little winery. The colour that you see on the winery project is made with a coloured titanium.

Finally, while we were in Spain, I went back to Bilbao and since the building has been completed, I was fortunate enough to be able to go back there and see the building once every year or so. Going there is like visiting a friend and there has been a lot of discussions about what the Bilbao Effect is. Of course, the media portrays it as way that generates the economic boom for a provincial Spanish city. Then for me when I go back there every time, I actually see the building activating the riverfront, giving the people in Bilbao a life.

I took these pictures just recently about three weeks ago, and it was extremely satisfying for me to see that people are enjoying the city. The urban life that you can see that families are gathering around the museum. On a Saturday afternoon they actually go and see art. You can see that very few people are actually tourists. Most of these people are local people and 10 years after the building has been finished, I think that it contributes to the cultural life of the city in a much more significant way than attracting tourists, as you seek that families actually enjoy walking along the waterfront.

Some people are looking at the titanium and titanium actually ages fairly gracefully. It is like a friend so to

speak. You can see people young and old, married couples. People are still enjoying the museum and some people might even get married there.

For me, I think more importantly going back to the meaning of the Bilbao Effect to me is that I think it establishes -- it gives people a sense of hope. The building gives people a sense of inspiration and for young people, there is a work of architecture of a significant quality that they can look up to and that for me is the most important aspect of the Bilbao Effect.

All the projects that I have shown you, I did not do them by myself. These are just some images of my team at the office. They contribute a lot in their youthful energy, through their creativity, and the creative search of these buildings. Thank you.