International Trip Report at the UK and New York
Rui Mu

I went to London, Scotland and New York in the Summer 2008 for studying the public education system in UK and US. I believe that the creativity level of a country is not just determined by artists and designers; unprofessional people in the country also need to appreciate art and design to encourage the development of the creative industry. So in this trip, I was studying their design education for both designers and the non-designers, which include the education open to public such as museums and art and design centers and professional programs in universities.

In London, I visited Museums and Art and Design centers. I visited The British Museum, Natural History Museum, design Museum, Victoria and Albert museum and so on. I made contact with Ms Amanprit Sandhu from design museum, who is in charge of a very interesting program – “Kids’ activities” giving young children design classes. She and Joe (a design teacher) showed me around and talked about how the program works and why it is special and what classes they have specifically.

Another person I contacted is Mr David Judd in Victoria and Albert museum. I went to their interior design workshop for teenagers. During that time, an exhibition – “China design now” was showed in V&A museum. It is interesting to see how people in the UK see the development of design as a new industry in China. The work included graphic design, product design, Architecture, movie and so on.

In Scotland, I visited many beautiful castles such as Sterling castle and Edinburgh castle. I visited The Lighthouse, Scotland’s Centre for architecture and design. I made contact with Tassy Thompson and I participate the design workshop -“Fabric in the City” The designer showed the process and methods that she uses to design patterns of for fabric.
I also visited Universities in Scotland. I met Professor Mike Press, Director of School of design at University of Dundee, which is one of the top five art and design schools in the UK. I also talked to their graduate students and a PHD student. I visited the 2008-degree show on June 16th.

I also met Professor press’s colleague Dr Catriona Macaulay. She introduced the new MSc in Design Ethnography, and explained how the idea for the world’s first taught masters degree course in Design Ethnography came about.
I also met Professor Craig Whittet, Acting Head of Department, Product Design Engineering, and Professor Gordon Hush, Acting Head of Product Design at Glasgow school of Art. They individually introduced to me their departments and showed me students’ projects.

I also visited Kelvingrove Gallery and Museum at Glasgow, which is amazing museum that offers systematical fundamental knowledge about art and design to Children, and
house for an art lover, which is the building Macintosh designed but didn’t finish when he was alive.

When I got back from the UK, I went New York and generally visited museums, such as MOMA, Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum, Children’s museum of art and so on, unfortunately, some of the famous museums were remodeling during the time and most schools were having the summer break, but still I visited as many places as I could and had a substantial trip.

During this trip, I was collecting information about public education in the UK and New York by observing, talking to people and participate their activities. This information is very useful for the research I was doing and helps me to understand why the creativity industry means so much to the UK and how the society response to it. In addition, visiting museums and schools as a mean of getting information also impacted my personal growth and expanded how I see the relationship between art and design. Therefore, I appreciate very much the opportunity of the trip.