



# 2008 Olympics to blaze new trail

The Beijing Olympics Special is prepared by China Daily and the Media and Communications Department of Beijing 2008 Organizing Committee for the Games of XXIX Olympiad.

**Editor's note:** A Monday symposium offered a platform for leading scholars and artists to explore the relationships between culture and the Olympics and became a highlight of the ongoing Beijing Olympic Cultural Festival, with China Daily reporters WANG SHANSHAN and YU NAN covering the event.

## 'Beijing has plenty of time to do it right!'

Professor Ron Newman comes from Sydney, a city whose name is familiar for most Chinese people, after it beat Beijing and became the host for the 2000 Olympic Games.

Newman, a professional designer and also dean and director of the Sydney College of the Arts with the University of Sydney, said that the newly selected logo for the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games blazed a new trail in the field of logo design.

"When I see all the other ones that they could have chosen, I am glad they chose this one," Newman said. "It's a very difficult process to go through, and I think they've done it very well."

"It's interesting because it's a new type of Olympic logo," he said.

Newman said the design of "seal" is one of the important elements of the graphic which brings people back into an ancient Chinese tradition.

What concerns Newman is where the logo goes from the designers' studio and from the office of the organizing committee.

"Beijing should be cautious and on guard against misuse of the Games logo," he said.

Newman has held various design and design management positions in Australia and Europe, besides teaching and managing the Sydney art college. He convened the Design Institute of Australia's Sydney Design 99 conference in 1999 for some 1,800 delegates from 47 countries.

While Sydney hosted one of the best Olympic Games in history, Newman said the Sydney Olympics "may be a good example and a bad

Olympic Games started with the 1936 Berlin Olympics, in which graphics, visual communication, urban planning, architecture, product marketing, interior decoration and the logo were all specially designed for the event for the first time.

Newman believed that the image design for the Sydney Olympic Games was successful, but the artists and designers had to travel a zig-zagging path to achieve success.

The first selection of the logo for the Sydney Olympics failed because of confused management.

Professional designers then became involved in the management and decision-making process, and they finally came out with an excellent logo for the Sydney Olympics two years before the Games started.

"The design process is a very sensitive process, during which proper management guarantees a good result," he said.

Newman also warned against misuse of the Games logo, which Sydney had paid much attention to correcting.

He showed a blue name card with the logo of 2000 Sydney Olympic Games, where some decorations and extra colours were added around the logo. "It became too complicated. We had to get rid of the complications and bring it back to being simple again," he said.

"The logo of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games is simple and striking and they need to keep it that way," Newman stressed. "They need to resist people who want to change the surroundings for the wrong idea and complicating the message it presents."

example" in his presentation entitled "Design Management and the Beijing Olympic Logo."

According to Newman, the first designed

"Beijing has a very good start, because the Games is five years away and you have plenty of time to do it right," Newman said.



Monument to 850th birthday: A 1 Saturday in the southern part of Beijing.



LIU PING  
The bronze and granite structure is unveiled on Saturday to commemorate the 850th anniversary of the city being

## 'A look of both the ancient and the new China'

Systematic urban planning must be undertaken which takes into consideration the future use of the Olympic stadiums and affiliated buildings, said Tsinghua University Academy of Art Professor Yuan Yunfu, also once a visiting professor to Harvard University in the United States.

A most prestigious artist of design and educator on public art in China, Yuan has designed the decorations and surroundings of many important buildings including the Millennium Monument in Beijing, and has held solo exhibitions around the world.

"A mistake that may appear is that every building has been well-designed, and is beautiful and colourful," said Yuan, 70.

However, without careful planning, "they as a whole may make a buzzing noise instead of a symphony," he warned.

"We have already been victims of the random development that happens in many cities. Without a powerful overall design of the space our masterpieces are 'drowned' in the 'JU'," he said, meaning urban jungle of skyscrapers.

"The landscape design, in a city or a certain area, is still a new topic in China," he said. "The design, to satisfy both the users' physical and psychological demands, should take into consideration the growth of the future generations after the event."

Yuan expected the landscape design for the Olympics to have a simple and unified modern style and a powerful, graceful traditional spirit.

He also suggested the combination of new materials and technology with traditional handicrafts while decorating the buildings.

"For example, we can start from such charming artifacts as the traditional Chinese bells and drums, and make new visual images and audio effects according to a modern aesthetic," he said. "We are to give the world a look of both the ancient and the new China."

## 'It's a great opportunity to promote our culture'



LI TAIHANG/China Daily  
Signature seals: He Zhenliang (second left), a member of the International Olympic Committee, and Jiang Xiaoyu (second right), vice-president of the Beijing 2008 Organizing Committee for the Games of XXIX Olympiad, look at a jade seal carrying the Beijing 2008 Olympics emblem on display at the Monday symposium.

China has the most 2008 Beijing Olympic Games to promote Chinese culture, said Lin Pan from Tai from the selection of the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games.

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designers should make he opportunity that the Olympic Games offers Chinese culture, said g, a graphic designer and also a member of a panel for the logo of 2008 Olympic Games.

Each "Game Image Dets Spread," Lin said these designers must part in the design process of the Olympic Games, a good for them to demon- imagination and cre-

They excellent designs enabled the designers of both countries' to be promoted around the world, while the cultural values of the two countries were quickly recognized on the international stage.

"China will be the focus of the whole world by 2008. It is a great opportunity to promote our broad and profound culture," Lin said.

"China has many excellent designers and what we should do next is to integrate the design resources and make the best team possible.

"The success of the logo is a good start. It will enlarge the design market in China, and encourage more and more of the best designers to become involved in the Olympic design work surrounding the Games."

Lin said that follow-up design work includes the designs for the mascot, medals, sports pictograms, typefaces, colours, the Olympic torch, posters, the Olympic gardens and the logo for Paralympic Games.

"It's a vast field that allows many designers to get involved," said Lin.

## 'China should do better'

During a week-long trip earlier this month to Athens, the host city for 2004 Olympic Games, School of Design with the Central Academy of Fine Arts Dean Wang Min gathered a lot of graphic design works that will be used at the Athens Olympics.

The Athens Olympic graphic designs are "fantastic," said Wang, 47, who worked for Adobe Systems Incorporated for many years as a senior graphic designer and once taught at Yale University's School of Design.

He said the first moment he landed in Athens, he felt a little disappointed because there was little Olympic atmosphere he could sense around the city.

But when the night fell he happened to see the grand Parthenon bathed in glorious lights, and was captivated by it.

"From that moment, I began to believe that a country with such a great and amazing culture surely will hold a successful event," he said.

"But we must do better."

There was an energetic team consisting of the most excellent designers in Greece taking charge of designing a unique Games on a human scale and "they are doing a marvelous job," he said.

Wang said their designs highlighted ancient history and Greek culture, as well as its unique nature landscape while demonstrating them in a very modern way.

"Although so far I cannot say which key theme we should present for our Games, but at least it should be very 'Chinese'," he said.

A design management system is needed to organize an integrated and high-level design team in order to "create a simple, clear visual image and a perfect look for the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games," Wang said.

"We are a larger country, we own more designers and obviously we have greater enthusiasm for the Olympic Games," he said. "That's why we should do better."

## 'It's important to cheer on local designers'

A good visual image of the coming 2008 Beijing Olympic Games is built on a broad base of social support and open atmosphere, said Central Academy of Fine Arts President Pan Gongkai.

A creative Chinese ink painter, the 56-year-old was a professor with the China Academy of Art in East China's Zhejiang Province and a visiting professor to the University of California at Berkeley in the United States before he was appointed to his current position.

"The birth of a good Olympic image needs common support from society and a more free, active and open atmosphere for artistic creation," he said and cited architecture as an example.

"Beijing is becoming more international

and magnanimous with the involvement of international architects in such landmark buildings as the Olympic Garden, the Main Stadium of the Olympic Games, new office buildings for China Central Television, and the third phase of the World Trade Centre and the National Opera House," he said.

However, he stressed that "it is important to cheer on local Chinese designers, and to create a more open social atmosphere in which good works by native Chinese artists are understood and put into use."

He said that the faculty of his school are working on the design of the visual image of the 2008 Olympic Games, including the extension of the Olympic emblem "Chinese seal."

"We Chinese should follow that example," he said.



Extension: The dancer in the



Chinese seal is linked to many aspects of Chinese culture, as China Daily cartoonist Luo Jie envisions.