

New Beijing

As China emerges as the economic powerhouse of the 21st century, Beijing is undergoing the biggest and fastest redevelopment since Haussmann redesigned Paris in the 19th Century.

International architects Paul Andreu, Australia's PTW, OMA'S Ole Scheeren, and ARUP Engineers Rory McGowan and Tristram Carfrae change the city's face with new iconic buildings like the Watercube, Birds Nest, Stadium, National Theatre. The end of the Olympics has also signalled hundreds of new projects.

Not everyone is happy. Historic Qianmen, home of Peking Opera, is demolished and re-constructed in 2008 by developer SOHO and unveiled as a bizarre 'replica' of "Old Beijing".

Local resident Zhang Jinqi launches an inspirational project to photograph Qianmen and other Beijing districts facing demolition, gathering local residents to document their neighborhoods. This project grows to encompass six Chinese cities and in January 2009, Zhang and colleagues open the exhibition "Memory of China", showing the vanishing cultural heritage of Chinese cities.

Will the efforts of emerging Chinese NGO's like Zhang's or the global financial crisis slow the pace of change? Sadly, with 400 cities of the size of Beijing to be built by 2020, China may have little time to reflect.

"WARRIORS IN A DESPERATE BATTLE TO PRESERVE BEIJING."

Weifeng Liu, China Daily

NEW ZEALAND PREMIERE

SCREENING TIMES

AUCKLAND

Sun 28/2 5.15pm
Wed 3/3 5.45pm
Thurs 11/3 5.45pm

WELLINGTON

Sun 14/3 5.10pm
Wed 17/3 5.30pm
Sat 20/3 12.30pm**
Thurs 25/3 5.40pm

** City Gallery



-With the kind assistance of GZDOC

Australia, China | 2009 | 53mins | Mandarin | Dir. Georgia Wallace-Crabbe