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Art

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A still from artist Sarah Morris' latest film from her City Portraits series, 'Beijing'

Artist Sarah Morris's latest film Beijing

ART

By Skye Sherwin

Famed since the 1990s for her architecturally themed films as well as colourful, geometric abstract painting, it makes sense that the Architecture Foundation has teamed up with UK-born artist Sarah Morris (her strong graphic art was featured on Wallpaper's April 2009, W*121 cover) for the UK premiere of her new film, Beijing.



See some still's from Sarah Morris' latest film

For her latest portrait of a city, Sarah Morris has moved beyond the metropolitan inner circles of her native America: the Hollywood in-crowd she probed in her film Los Angeles or the Big Apple's human traffic of Mid Town to tackle that brave new frontier of commerce and global spectacle, Beijing.

Shot during the 2008 Olympics, Morris's behind-the-scenes camera captures flexing muscles, acrobatic feats, neon floorshow and elaborate costumes. Herzog and de Meuron's Bird's Nest Stadium is filmed in what seems an eternal loop as her car patrols its glass surround. Yet Beijing is more than buildings.

Set to a zingy electronica score by the artist's partner [Liam Gillick](#), the film depicts

INFORMATION

Organised by The Architecture Foundation, Beijing received its UK premiere at the Barbican Centre, London on the 4th November

[Read about the 'Modern Views' exhibition in New York, where Morris premiered her previous 'Points on a Line' film](#)

[Read more about the AF's Architecture on Film programme](#)

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an ever-changing constellation of people, media, and shopping. Sushi is guzzled, money changes hands, a man and a pretty girl row, a Panda gives birth, star turns like Norman Foster, Rem Koolhaas and Jackie Chan are faces in the crowd. For the most part though, whatever stories lurk behind these images, they're lost to Western eyes. As with the polished glass cabinets of department stores or skyscrapers' mirrored fronts, all is surface.

If this urban cavalcade sounds familiar that's the point. With Olympic marvels shown through TV footage as well as her own material, Morris reveals Beijing as an endless spectacle on repeat. It loops around and around like the struts of the Bird's Nest or the vast ring road that envelops the city.

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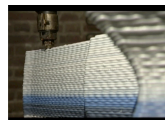
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