



## DETAIL 15

# Welcome to Chinatown

'To outsiders, Chinese cities all seem chaotic, uncontrolled and somewhat illegal – a fast, casual and self-determining way of making cities without an overall master plan. Yet underneath we see an underlying social system of urban patterns at work in lieu of master planning.' Speaking of urban design in China is Grace S. Cheung, principal of architecture firm Xrange of Taipei. For an exhibition on this theme at

Taipei's Museum of Contemporary Art, Cheung and colleague Royce Hong translated her ideas into a hallucinogenic installation agleam with mirrors and moiré. Lighted spaces of mesh-covered acrylic overlapped in a tri-level, glass-floored space to create a meandering experience that blurred one's perception of depth and boundaries. Moiré is by nature non-stereoscopic, but by carefully determining the size of the mesh

openings, the distance between them, the direction the fabric should take and the amount of tension to apply while stretching it over the acrylic, the designers were able to give each panel a different stereoscopic appearance. A visitor manoeuvring through the installation had to refocus on her immediate surroundings, time and again, to keep from falling or bumping into something. 'Much like navigating the streets

Chinese cacophony: Xrange of Taiwan created an installation filled with mirrors and moiré to mimic the chaotic street patterns of China's metropolises.

of Chinese cities,' says Cheung. 'One needs to constantly check for ground obstructions, overhead bombardment of signage, hawkers' stalls and motorbikes overtaking on sidewalks, while looking for that hidden alleyway.'

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