

MY EXPO | ALEXANDRE DANG



The Dancing Solar Magnolia at the Belgium-EU Pavilion.

PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

## The power of art

Exhibiting my work at the Belgium-EU Pavilion at the Expo 2010 Shanghai is like a dream come true, as I am able to share my sustainable spirit with China.

I was so lucky to be picked to show my exhibit, *The Dancing Solar Magnolia*, at the Belgium-EU Pavilion. I chose the magnolia because I knew that the magnolia is the symbol of the city of Shanghai.

I made each dancing solar magnolia with a solar photovoltaic mechanism, which activates the flower in the presence of light, especially for the Expo. By these movements, the flowers will attract visitors and raise their awareness of the renewable sources of energy, particularly solar energy.

Instead of expressing my concept in writing, I wanted to catch people's attention with colorful and interesting exhibits that have scientific purposes. The exhibit is suitable for visitors of all ages and they take photos or stare at the exhibit with curious facial expressions.

It was my way to combine art and energy to remind people of the use of solar energy. I was so

happy standing by my work at the pavilion while crowds showed their excitement for my solar magnolia wall instead of just passing by.

I come from a scientific background, being an engineer at the Ecole Polytechnique in Paris. I became a self-taught artist to raise awareness of the potential of environmentally friendly technologies and sustainable development.

I often emphasize the topics of eco-technologies in my work, in particular kinetic art incorporating solar energy as the power source. Though the sun provides 10,000 times more energy to the earth than humans need, more than 1.7 billion people still don't have access to electricity. I wanted to create art where I combined scientific approaches, environmental concern and humanism.

I have developed a pedagogic aspect to my art, using it to educate young people about the potential of eco-technologies with a focus on renewable energy.

I founded Solar Solidarity International, a non-profit international association that supports solar electrification in schools in develop-



Alexandre Dang with one of his solar magnolias.

ing countries. I arrange artistic activities targeting a large public audience and trigger debate about renewable energies to help people know the essential of renewable energy sources for the environment in our daily lives.

Energy is very important for development. It enables access to water, quality education, medical care and telecommunications. Bringing renewable energy contributes to promoting environmental respect, tackling climate change and building

a world of solidarity and peace.

After the exhibition in the Expo Garden, I want to take my exhibits around the world to promote fair and sustainable development by creating momentum to bridge the gap between the huge potential of renewable energy and the enormous energy needs of mankind.

*The author is a Belgium artist whose work The Dancing Solar Magnolia is on exhibit in the Belgium-EU Pavilion.*



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