

# Draft Peter Harris speech at the National Museum

I am honored to be here today to represent the European art world at this wonderful exhibition in the magnificent National Museum of China.

When I first encountered the work of Anna Chromy in the south of France my initial impression was that it immediately arrested my attention. It was monumental. It was figurative and used traditional materials of bronze and marble yet it had a mystical quality which belied its size and format.

It invited me to explore the message it conveyed.

Great art often teaches us to look at the world from different perspectives, to relate the past to the present, question the future, and challenges us to consider what is black and white, right and wrong.

Artists are motivated to create from within their souls but leaving this aside I believe that art should be something for somebody.

How amazing then it is to see over 50 sculptures by Anna in highly visible public spaces throughout Europe, the Middle East and Chinese cities. Many sculptures relate their location to the essence of the environment and to its people.

Why is her work in situ so successful?

I think the answers lie in the nature of commissioning art by property developers, urban planners and their clients. They are often bound by committees with members who have divergent views. Anna's work has a general appeal as it is figurative and uses materials that are recognizable to all. The carving, casting and pagination are of the highest quality and the construction shrieks of longevity.

Public spaces are complex, often very large with many different focal points. Art placed in these spaces needs to have an appropriate scale to be effective. Anna's work has successfully been scaled up and down to create the perfect harmony needed.

Add to this the devotion to mythology and the dedication to a greater civilization and the puzzle is answered.

"The Cloak" is her central work, the largest sculpture ever created in marble from the famous Michelangelo quarry in Carrara. It is over 4 metres high and weighs 50 tons without the plinth.

The sculpture can be entered and I stood inside the cloak and experienced an amazing feeling of "Being". My life came flooding into the space and illuminated the void.

A truly remarkable sculpture it appears in smaller versions throughout more than 15 locations either cast in bronze or carved in marble.

It is a symbol of hope for a better world and one day "The Cloak" will reside in a prestigious location as a true legacy to her work and life.

"Ulysses" has become for three cities on the Mediterranean a symbol of their intimate relationship with the sea, and "Sisyphus", in the University of Pisa and the Museum of Modern Art of

Guangzhou, is a symbol of strenuous efforts for a better life.

Her sculptures "Musicians" have appeared in several apt locations in Luxemburg, Portofino and Pietrasanta and as a group entitled "Fountain of Musicians" in the Old Town of Prague, famous for its musical heritage where her "The Commendatore in Mozart's

Don Giovanni" can also be seen outside the Mozart Opera House.

One of the best examples of how Anna's work encapsulates the essence of a location is "Olympic Spirit" with figures of "Citius, Altius Fortius".

(Faster, Higher, Stronger) is the Motto of the Olympic Games.

The 5.8 metres high sculpture was located outside the home of Team GB in the Olympic village in London in 2012.

Many say it proved successful in helping to motivate the athletes to aspire, advance and achieve success through its inspirational quality.

Inspirational is a word that can in many ways describe the work of Anna Chromy.

This exhibition here has set the benchmark for future activities for Anna in the US and UK where we hope to have exhibitions with major property developers where some work can remain in situ.