

Shanghai's Diverse Contemporary Art

The exhibition *Mahjong: Chinese Contemporary Art from the Sigg Collection* took place in the Kunstmuseum Bern in 2005. Media response was overwhelming both at home and abroad. The show was an ideal introduction to Chinese contemporary art, which received little attention at the time. The *Mahjong* catalogue is still regarded as standard literature on the topic today. Initiated in 2006, the *Chinese Windows* exhibition series allows us to further collaborate with Uli and Rita Sigg, so we can give our audience the opportunity of viewing their extensive collection regularly. *Chinese Windows 2010* focuses on Contemporary Art from Shanghai, a metropolis of superlatives.

The Kunstmuseum Bern is exhibiting works selected from the Sigg Collection by thirteen artists who live and work in Shanghai as well as showing works by two Beijing artists who explicitly engage with this megacity and dynamic seaport in their art.

A diverse art scene

With more than 18 million inhabitants, Shanghai – or the “city over the sea,” if we translate the Chinese characters – is among the ten largest metropolises in the world. The incredible pressure due to the demand for innovation, triggered by China's growing international economic significance, finds expression in the breathtaking momentum in which Shanghai with its millions of inhabitants is constantly changing. The city perpetually reinvents itself anew, generating tension-filled contrasts of traditional and modern China, of Western and Chinese thought.

Shanghai's progressive development, permeated with contradictions and tension, impacts its very diverse art scene. Besides other venues, numerous galleries provide a platform for recent Chinese art as well as events such as the Shanghai Biennale, the Shanghai Art Fair, and this year also the Expo 2010.

Immense creative potential

It is difficult to single out typical artistic issues, content, or pictorial language in regard to art in Shanghai. Rather, approaches in art stand out on account of their great diversity in content and in formal aspects. We therefore find not only painting represented in the exhibition but also photography and video art, sculpture and installations. While Shi Guorui engages with outward appearances and presents us with a futuristic view of Shanghai with his urban silhouettes, Jin Jiangbo, in an interactive installation, zooms in on the life of a day laborer. Zhang Qing has taxis dance in his video, and Shi Yong evokes the anonymity of city life with small plaster-of-Paris figures. In contrast, Ni Youyu designs geometrical experimental spaces on canvas in which he inscribes bizarre landscapes.

The exhibition gives insight into the city's diverse and vibrant art world, which appears to constantly be in a planning stage – continually incomplete, always changing, never final, and thereby endlessly promising. The selection, comprising fifteen male and female artists, brings home to us Shanghai's present tremendous creative potential.

The exhibition includes works by: Chen Yuyu, Chi Peng, Ji Wenyu & Zhu Weibing, Jin Feng, Jin Jiangbo, Liu Jianhua, Lu Chunsheng, Ni Youyu, Pan Xiaorong, Shi Guorui, Shi Yong, Xu Zhen, Zhang Jian-Jun, Zhang Qing

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The Exhibition

Opening: Thursday, November 18, 2010, 6:30 p.m.

Event linking the Kunstmuseum Bern and Culturescapes China see the agenda below.

Duration: November 19, 2010 – February 6, 2011

Curators: Matthias Frehner and Monika Schäfer

Admission: CHF 12.00/8.00

The catalogue (in German and English)



Big Draft – Shanghai Contemporary Art from the Sigg Collection

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Agenda

Linking the Kunstmuseum Bern and Culturescapes China:

Shanshui – Both Ways (Artists-in-lab)

11.18.2010 - 12.3.2010 in the Stadtgalerie in the PROGR building

(as part of Swiss Chinese Cultural Explorations of the Swiss Cultural Foundation Pro Helvetia)

Thursday, November 18, 2010

6:30 p.m. Official exhibition opening of the exhibition in the Kunstmuseum Bern

7:30 p.m. Aperitif in the PROGR building

8:00 p.m. Official exhibition opening of the exhibition in the Stadtgalerie

For more information on Culturescapes: www.culturescapes.ch

Guided tours in German

Sunday, 11:00 a.m.: November 21, 2010, and

Tuesday, 7:00 p.m.: January 11, 2011, January 25, 2011

Credit Suisse presents: The collector Uli Sigg in a conversation with Hans-Ulrich Doerig, Chairman of the Board of Directors and the Chairman's and Governance Committee of Credit Suisse Group AG. The moderator is Andreas Breitenstein, editor for the arts pages of the NZZ

Thursday, December 2, 7:00 p.m. No admission fee

For their generous support of the exhibition and the catalogue we wish to thank

Uli und Rita Sigg, collectors



Partner of the Kunstmuseum Bern

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