

**CENTRE FOR CHINESE VISUAL ART**  
**10<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONFERENCE****CHINESE ART OUTSIDE THE ART SPACE****Date: 12-13 October 2017****Venue: Lecture Theatre, School of Art, Birmingham City University, B33BX****12 October Thursday**

9.30-9.50 Registration

9.50-10.00 Welcome  
(Professor Tim Wall, Associate Dean Research, ADM, and Professor Jonathan Harris, Head of School of Art, Birmingham City University)10.00-10.40 **Keynote: Karen Smith**  
**Art and its Place-Space from the 1990s to Today**

10.40-11.00 Q&amp;A

PANEL ONE11.00-11.20 **Jiangtao Gu**  
*Inside Out: the Remaking of Home as an Institution of Critique*11.20-11.40 **Jonathan Kearney**  
*Outside, Inside, Landscape*11.40-12.00 **Mai Corlin**  
*Trojan Horses in the Chinese Countryside*

12.00-12.30 Panel discussion (Chair Jonathan Watkins)

12.30-13.30 Lunch Break

## PANEL TWO

- 13.30-13.50 **Janet Marstine**  
*Crossing Borders, Building Trust: Interrogating Silences in Curatorial Practice*
- 13.50-14.10 **Stephanie Fenner**  
*Alternative Spaces for Art Display in Twenty-First Century China: Their Role and Potential as a Critical Curatorial Intervention*
- 14.10-14.30 **Julie Chun**  
*Recent Formats for Public Art in Shanghai: Who Speaks for the Public? Why, How, and Does It Matter?*
- 14.30-15.00 Panel discussion (Chair: Karen Smith)
- 15.00-15.30 Break

## PANEL THREE

- 15.30-15.50 **Luise Guest**  
*(In)visible Ink: Outsiders at the Yaji, the Ink Installations of Bingyi and Tao Aimin*
- 15.50-16.10 **Magdalena Furmanik-Kowalska**  
*Social Media Art and/or Interactive Art? 'Exhibitionist: PeeP Strem' by Funa Ye and Beio*
- 16.10-16.30 **Sipei Lu**  
*Exhibition as Method: Researching Socially Engaged Practices through the Curatorial*
- 16.30-17.00 Panel discussion (Chair: Monica Merlin)
- 18.30 Conference Dinner at Cielo Italian Restaurant

## **13 October Friday**

9.30-9.50 Registration

9.50-10.00 Welcome

10.00-10.40 **Keynote: Pauline J. Yao**

10.40-11.00 Q&A

### PANEL FOUR

11.00-11.20 **Chen Shuxia**  
*Learning from Home: Di Yuancang and the Friday Salon, 1975-1980*

11.20-11.40 **Edward Sanderson**  
*The Social Sensibility Research & Development Program at Bernard Controls, Beijing, China*

11.40-12.00 **Marco Meccarelli**  
*Beyond the Artistic Space: Yuanmingyuan cun, Beijing Dongcun and Songzhuang Cun as Subcultures within the Official Chinese Art World Where Past and Present Meet*

12.00-12.30 Panel discussion (Chair: Jiang Jiehong)

12.30-13.30 Lunch Break

PANEL FIVE

- 13.30-13.50 **Harry Leung Ho Yin**  
*Reading 'Refugee' and 'Socially-engaged' in the Context of Contemporary Chinese Art*
- 13.50-14.10 **Yanhua Zhou**  
*The Pursuit of Social Criticality of Socially Engaged Art in the Rural Areas of Contemporary China: A Case Study of "Yangdeng Cooperatives"*
- 14.10-14.30 **Frank Vigneron**  
*Socially Engaged Art Projects in Hong Kong – Easy theory, difficult practice*
- 14.30-15.00 Panel discussion (Chair: Wenny Teo)
- 15.00-15.30 Break
- 15.30-16.10 **Keynote: Scott Lash**  
**Art and the 10,000 Objects**
- 16.10-16.30 Q&A
- 16.30 Introduction to *Journal of Contemporary Chinese Art* + Closing Remarks (Jiang Jiehong)
- 18.30 Conference Dinner at Cielo Italian Restaurant

# Biographies and Abstracts

## Keynotes

**Karen Smith** is a British national, a specialist in the field of China's contemporary art. To mid-2012, her main activities were writing and curating. Following her appointment as founding director of OCAT Xi'an (the third institution under the OCAT Museum Group based in Shenzhen), she has been occupied with running the museum, the first dedicated contemporary art museum in Xi'an, since its launch in November 2013. She also acts as artistic director of Shanghai Center of Photography (SCoP) located on Shanghai's West bund, which launched in 2015.

**Pauline J. Yao** is a curator, writer, and co-founder of the nonprofit art space Arrow Factory in Beijing. A co-curator of the 2009 Shenzhen Hong Kong Bi-City Biennale of Architecture and Urbanism and recipient of the CCAA (Contemporary Chinese Art Award) Art Critic Award, she is a regular contributor to Artforum, e-flux Journal, and Yishu Journal of Contemporary Chinese Art. She is the author of *In Production Mode: Contemporary Art in China* (2008), and co-edited *3 Years: Arrow Factory* (Sternberg Press, 2011). Yao served previously as Assistant Curator of Chinese Art at the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco and holds an M.A. in East Asian Languages and Civilizations from the University of Chicago. She joined M+ as Curator in November 2012.

**Scott Lash** is a professor of sociology and cultural studies at Goldsmiths, University of London. Lash obtained a BSc in Psychology from the University of Michigan, an MA in Sociology from Northwestern University, and a PhD from the London School of Economics (1980). Lash began his teaching career as a lecturer at Lancaster University and became a professor in 1993. He moved to London in 1998 to take up his present post as Director for the Centre for Cultural Studies and Professor of Sociology at Goldsmiths College.

## Chairs

**Jiang Jiehong** is curator, writer and research professor at School of Art, Director of Center for Chinese Visual Arts, Birmingham City University. He has published extensively in contemporary Chinese art and visual culture, including most recently *An Era without Memory: Chinese Contemporary Photography on Urban Transformation* (Thames and Hudson, 2015). Jiang's curatorial projects include the *Guangzhou Triennial: The Unseen* (in collaboration with Jonathan Watkins, 2012), *The Asia Triennial Manchester: Harmonious Society* (2014), and currently, the *Thailand Biennale: Edge of the Wonderland*, that opens in November 2018.

**Jonathan Watkins** has been Director of Ikon Gallery since 1999. Previously he worked for a number of years in London, as Curator of the Serpentine Gallery (1995-1997) and Director of Chisenhale Gallery (1990-1995). He has curated a number of large international exhibitions including the Biennale of Sydney (1998), *Facts of Life: Contemporary Japanese Art* (Hayward Gallery, London 2001), *Quotidiana* (Castello di Rivoli, Turin 1999, Tate Triennial (2003), Shanghai Biennale (2006), Sharjah Biennial (2007), *Negotiations* (Today Art Museum, Beijing 2010) and the Guangzhou Triennial (2012). He was on the curatorial team for *Europarte* (Venice Biennale, 1997), *Milano Europa 2000*, (Palazzo di Triennale, Milan 2000), and *Riwaq* (Palestinian Biennial 2007). He curated the Iraqi Pavilion for the Venice Biennale 2013. Jonathan Watkins has written extensively on contemporary art. Recent essays by him have focused on the work of Giuseppe Penone, Martin Creed, Semyon Faibisovich, Yang Zhenzhong, Noguchi Rika, Caro Niederer, Beat Streuli and Cornelia Parker. He was the author of the Phaidon monograph on Japanese artist On Kawara.

**Monica Merlin** is the newly appointed Programme Leader for the MA Contemporary Arts China at Birmingham City University. She joins BCU and CCVA after a post as lecturer in the MA Arts of China at Christie's Education (London). Following a BA in Chinese Studies specialising in Chinese Art and Archaeology at Ca' Foscari University (Venice), Monica lived and worked in Beijing for two years. She returned to Europe to pursue an MA in Asian Art at SOAS (2007), and after two years as curator in a contemporary Chinese art gallery in London, she continued her studies gaining a DPhil (2013) at The University of Oxford with a

thesis on early modern Chinese art. Monica conducted her post-doctoral research (2013-14) at the Tate Research Centre: Asia with a project on contemporary Chinese women artists. Her major research interests lie in contemporary Chinese art and visual culture, women artists and gender, socially and politically engaged art, and transcultural communication.

**Wenny Teo** received a BA in History of Art and English Literature from the University of York (2003), and a MA (2004) and PhD (2011) in History of Art from University College London. Her doctoral thesis, 'One World, One Dream: Contemporary Chinese Art and Spectacle', supervised by Professor Briony Fer, examined the highly ambivalent relationship between contemporary Chinese art and spectacle from China's 'open door' reforms in 1978 to the historical watershed of the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing. Her research currently centres on socially engaged and participatory East and Southeast Asian art, subversive practices, geopolitics, language art and online visual culture. Prior to joining The Courtauld as the Manuela and Iwan Wirth Lecturer in Modern and Contemporary Asian Art in 2012, she worked as a curator at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Shanghai, and as curatorial assistant at Tate Modern. In 2014, she was an associate curator of *We Have Never Participated*– the 8th Shenzhen Sculpture Biennial, and is currently co-curating an exhibition of newly commissioned Chinese outdoor installations at Cass Sculpture Foundation that will open in May 2016.

## Presenters & Abstracts

\*In the order of programme

### **Panel I**

#### **“Inside out: The Remaking of Home as an Institution of Critique” -Jiangtao Gu**

As your call for paper has rightly discerned, contemporary Chinese art utilized spaces outside of the art institution as the site of production and exhibition from its early developments. From the first Star Group exhibition in 1979 to Song Dong’s site-specific work in the 1990s, avant-garde Chinese artists have experimented with spaces that are parasitic or antithetic to the official spaces of the nation-state. Such practices might have successfully deconstructed the art institution and its symbolic orders in an earlier moment, they are nonetheless prone to the processes of institutionalization and canonization. This is especially true when museums, galleries, and academics, together with market players, have claimed such spaces and artists as the place and subject of a new order known as “institutional critique.” Departing from the institutional critique as a mode of art criticism, this article identifies home as a critical place and subject in contemporary Chinese art practices since the late 90s and early 2000s. By examining how an artist collective, Migrant Workers’ Home, organized itself in building various educational and cultural institutions for the migrant workers living in Pi Village, Beijing, this article argues that there is indeed no place like home that is better suited for the production, exhibition, and critique of art in China today. Joining what is known as the “third wave” of institutional critique, or the reclamation of an “institution of critique,” this article also interrogates what might constitute a new subject of cultural criticism precisely when state-sponsored art institutions are defunded and demolished by neoliberal governments around the globe. Turning inside out, it reworks the dichotomy of interiority and exteriority as they are articulated by the bourgeois class to return art to that of the marginalized and disfranchised.

**Jiangtao Gu** is a PhD Candidate in the Graduate Program for Visual and Cultural Studies from the University of Rochester. His dissertation “The Prospective Vision of Empire” examines early photographic practices in China that emerged in the

course of colonial warfare and rapid state-building from 1856 to 1915. In addition to his graduate work, Jiangtao is especially interested in Chinese visual culture and its intersections to the nation-state and the formations of both dominant and marginal identities. He is a contributor to the *Trans Asia Photography Review*, the *Journal of Contemporary Chinese Art*. He holds an Andrew W. Mellon Fellow Fellowship in the Digital Humanities, a Dissertation Development Fellowship funded by the Social Science Research Council.

## **“Outside, inscape, landscape”**

-Jonathan Kearney

In 2009 the exhibition ‘Inscape on the spot’ () opened at TCG Nordica Gallery in Kunming, Yunnan. The location, the title of the exhibition, the work included and the interviews and writing that accompanied the exhibition, all reveal the subtle play between the concepts of ‘outside’, ‘inscape’ and ‘landscape’. The gallery was located in an abandoned factory area known as Chuangku/Loft and was an ‘outsider’ collective of artists’ studios and a few galleries, that pre-dates Beijing’s 798. From the beginning international exchange was a significant flavour of the area, driven largely by TCG Nordica and its two founders, Anna Mellergård (from Sweden) and Wu Yuerong (from China). These remarkable women shared a common dream of promoting greater knowledge of their respective cultures. Their commitment formed a history for this ‘outsider’ location, which enabled a space for dialogue, a true *jiaoliu*, a communication of equals. The exhibition ‘Inscape on the spot’ considered ways that contemporary landscape art could form connections to traditional culture. This paper explores the way the traditional Chinese concept of *jingjie*, although having no adequate English translation, was connected with the British poet, Gerard Manley Hopkins’ idea of ‘inscape’. This enabled an exhibition that drew on the complex and deep traditional ‘insider’ ideas but connected them with artistic forms that promoted an awareness of challenges of a more contemporary nature. These traditional concepts sought to connect the external and inner worlds, with perfect harmonious artistic forms. However, this exhibition attempted to explore these dreams of the perfect realms of life, through an understanding of the anxiety of contemporary fragmentation. This paper asks whether the uniqueness of the location, alongside the deliberate choice to look at

the 'inscape' to consider the 'landscape' actually encourages a greater understanding of the 'outside'?

**Jonathan Kearney** is a British artist, Course Leader for MA Fine Art Digital and Postgraduate Programme Director at University of the Arts London: Camberwell College of Arts. Having lived and worked in China, he maintains an ongoing engagement with Chinese contemporary art. Along with 6 Yunnan artists, Jonathan's work was included in the 'Inscape on the spot' exhibition.

Luofei is a Chinese a curator, art critic and artist. Formerly the Gallery Director and Curator for TCG Nordica in Kunming and Coordinator for Lijiang Studio, Yunnan. He is now an independent curator and writer and curated the 'Inscape on the spot' exhibition.

### **“Trojan Horses in the Chinese Countryside” -Mai Corlin**

The Bishan Commune and the Practice of Socially Engaged Art in Rural China  
Concerned with socially engaged art practices in the Chinese countryside, the vantage point of this paper is the Bishan Commune; a socially engaged long-term utopian art project initiated under the rural reconstruction umbrella in the Chinese countryside. In 2010 the Chinese artist, editor, and curator Ou Ning drafted a notebook entitled *How to Start Your Own Utopia*. The notebook presents research into micro-nations across the world as well as drafts and ideas for an alternative community in rural China; a utopian ideal of another way of life based on the Russian anarchist Peter Kropotkin's idea of mutual aid. In 2011 the commune was established in Bishan Village in rural Anhui Province. This paper examines how artists and intellectuals alike bring utopian imaginaries of the future to a countryside perceived to be in crisis. What are the imaginaries that they carry with them to the rural areas and what happens to these art projects as they venture into the fabric of rural society and leave the confined space of the art space? I explore the Bishan Project as a Trojan Horse – in the sense feminist art critic Lucy Lippard evoked, when she called the Trojan Horse the first activist artwork. I draw attention to Lippard because the dual connotations of the understanding of the Trojan Horse create a platform from which to understand the Bishan Project as a subversive power, that functions dialectically in the tension between gesture and aggression,

the imaginary and the actual conversations taking place in the village. The arrival of urban artists is often followed by negotiations, clashes of imaginaries and conflicting visions of the future and of how the Chinese society is best organized for all parties involved. I thus also explore the Bishan Commune as a practical example of what happens when urban artists practice in the face of power and people in rural China.

**Mai Corlin** has a PhD degree in China Studies from Aarhus University, Denmark, where she wrote her PhD thesis: “Trojan Horses in the Chinese Countryside – The Bishan Commune and the Practice of Socially Engaged Art in Rural China.” Mai’s PhD project investigated art practices outside of the, often urban, museum and gallery systems. Her research included several fieldwork stays in Bishan Village from the fall of 2013 to the fall of 2014. Mai is currently employed as external lecturer of China Studies at the University of Copenhagen, where she teaches courses in Chinese literature and cinema.

## **Panel 2**

### **“Crossing borders, building trust: interrogating silences in curatorial practice”**

-Janet Marstine

As political and market pressures challenge the autonomy of the fast-growing sector of museums, galleries and arts organisations in both Hong Kong and Guangdong, artists and curators have developed innovative strategies to deal with the twin phenomena of censorship/self-censorship. Despite the climate of fear and mistrust that such pressures instill, this paper asserts that these strategies should be shared among stakeholders across borders in an effort to advance curatorial agency. Marstine will present comparative understandings of how censorship and self-censorship operate and are negotiated in Mainland China and Hong Kong. Contending that the conventional dialectic of state prerogatives prevailing in Mainland exhibition spaces and market forces ruling in Hong Kong art galleries is no longer valid, they examine slippages in curatorial practice. The paper identifies common ground for knowledge exchange, mutual support and joint advocacy whilst also respecting differences particularly in relation to risk. *Crossing borders,*

*building trust* makes a compelling argument for shedding light on the silences in curatorial practice that is relevant and useful in diverse global contexts.

**Janet Marstine** is Lecturer in the School of Museum Studies at the University of Leicester. She writes on diverse aspects of museum ethics from codes of practice to artists' interventions as drivers for ethical change. She is author of *Critical Practice: Artists, museums, ethics* (Routledge 2017), editor of *The Routledge Companion to Museum Ethics: Redefining ethics for the twenty-first century museum* (Routledge 2011), co-editor of *New Directions in Museum Ethics* (Routledge 2012) and editor of *New Museum Theory and Practice: An introduction* (Blackwell 2005). She is currently principle investigator for a three-year British Academy grant 'One Country, Two Systems? Negotiating Censorship and Self-Censorship in Hong Kong and Guangdong exhibition spaces'. She sits on the Ethics Committee of the UK's Museums Association.

**“Alternative Spaces for Art Display in Twenty-First Century China: Their Role and Potential as a Critical Curatorial Intervention”**  
-Stephanie Fenner

Since the 1990's, the cultural production in the People's Republic of China has increased and the museum landscape has developed on an order of magnitude that approaches the level of international standards. Art galleries have also strengthened their position in the art market and their influence remains strong. However, there are sites other than museums and galleries that display and encourage cultural production. Experimental art shows have been taking place since the 1990's and now appear in a second generation in the form of independent and alternative art spaces. These spaces have significantly influenced the art production in China since the beginning of the twenty-first century and specifically started to develop outside of the official system of art education and the art market. It must be recognized that in contrast to established and fully funded institutions, these alternative art spaces provide a different context that enables the evolution of critical thinking and experimental curatorial approaches. They can also be understood as an expression of criticism of the existing system. The aim of this paper is to understand and follow the development of alternative art spaces in China by taking a closer look at their structures and current forms. Based on interviews and field work, four independent art spaces in four different Chinese

cities were selected as significant examples, discovering their different methods of searching for alternatives in exhibition making. This paper examines how such independent spaces have shaped new discourses about art, art criticism and art production, as well as how the place of art production and presentation affects both audience reception and artistic conception. It poses the questions of whether or not neutral spaces are needed for the evolution of art criticism in the formation of experimental curatorial approaches and critical thinking.

**Stephanie Fenner** completed her B.A. in Sinology and European Art History at Hamburg University and Sichuan University. She graduated with a M.A. in East Asian Art History and Sinology at Heidelberg University in 2016. The focus of her research lies within the range of contemporary Chinese Art and her curatorial work encourages and supports artistic exchange, which has the potential to lead to fresh approaches of artistic and creative practices. Specifically, she researches contemporary tendencies and developments of alternative art spaces in China in the twenty-first century. Since 2017 she is Associate Director of the non-profit art space DISKURS Berlin.

### **“Recent Formats for Public Art in Shanghai: Who Speaks for the Public? Why, How, and Does It Matter?”**

-Julie Chun

Public art in China has its own prescriptions for “publicness” that places it firmly within a statist context. This obviously holds true for monuments and sculptures sited in public areas for propagating the endorsed ideals of the Communist Party. In the past two decades, there has also been an upsurge of corporate sponsored fixtures disguised as art placed in open areas to serve as decorative landmarks and to promote brand identity. Thus, the notion of public art in China can be perceived as restrictive, banal and even eclectically haphazard, despite austere regulations. Yet, there is more than meets the stagnant gaze regarding public art in China. By referencing Nicolas Bourriaud’s Relational Aesthetics as a point of departure, this study examines recent formats for public art in China, using the city of Shanghai as a case study. Through privately funded and self-initiated endeavors, artists and curators have been expanding the field and discourse of public art by organizing smaller scale exhibitions to situate behavioral and musical performances,

interactive sessions, and even cook offs in accessible venues, devoid of entry fee, outside the precincts of conventional and official museums. By distilling the wealth of five--years field study that foregrounds primary interviews, my paper seeks to 1) compare and contrast the conditions of former terms of “public art” with recent strategies for “new public art” in China, 2) examine the expressed intent of artists and curators of self--organized sites in Shanghai, which are slowly but steadily gaining in numbers, and 3) interrogate the value and significance as well as the consequences of how these relational formats of exhibition - making are being translated and received by the diverse sectors of the viewing public.

**Julie Chun** is an independent art historian and lecturer based in Shanghai from 2011. Since 2013, she serves as the Art Convener of the Royal Asiatic Society China in Shanghai, delivering regular lectures at museums and galleries to widen the public’s understanding of artistic objects, past and present. She holds an MA in Art History from San Jose State University and has completed graduate studies in East Asian Modern History at Yonsei Graduate School of International Studies in Seoul. She is a regular contributor to Yishu Journal of Contemporary Chinese Art. Her independent reviews are published on Randian, LEAP, ArtReview Asia, Art Forum China, Shanghai Daily, and the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society China.

### **Panel 3**

#### **“(In)visible Ink: outsiders at the yaji, the ink installations of Bingyi and Tao Aimin”**

-Luise Guest

This paper examines the work of Bingyi and Tao Aimin through the prism of gender. Each negotiates literal and figurative ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ spaces, subverting the conventions of contemporary ink painting in China. The corporeal and temporal performativity of the act of painting and/or writing with ink and brush assumes new forms that would be unrecognisable to the scholar painters of the literati, including sculpture, performance art, animation, installation, and various forms of ‘new media’. However, the body embedded within, and expressed through, this performativity has generally been assumed to be male. Until very recently the female body, whether subject or active agent

in its production, has been almost entirely absent. Bingyi's use of ink and water in monumental land art installations created in mountain landscapes in China, exhibited within and beyond conventional art spaces, become a form of land art. Tao Aimin's ink-based installations comprising painting, video, sculpture and printmaking employ the ancient *Nüshu* script invented by unlettered rural women in Jiangyong County, Hunan Province. Bingyi's *'Époché'*, a 2014 performance in which she dropped 500 kilograms of ink/oil 'missiles' from a helicopter over the airfield at Shenzhen Bao'an Airport, and Tao Aimin's 2009 *'The Secret Language of Women'*, an installation of bound books printed from rural women's washboards, are examined through the lens of transnational and intersectional Chinese feminisms, revealing the artists' creation of a gendered visual language of ink that positions them *outside* the dominant contemporary discourse, and *outside* the historically masculine discourses of calligraphy. Their works are interpreted as insertions of a woman's voice and a female body into the ink genre. Each, by virtue of their gender and training, may be positioned as both insiders *and* outsiders in the context of contemporary Chinese art.

**Luise Guest** is a Sydney-based writer and researcher, currently Director of Education and Research for the White Rabbit Collection of Contemporary Chinese Art. With a background in art education, Luise's writing has been published in a range of online and print journals including *Randian* and *Artist Profile*. Her paper exploring *Nüshu* in the work of Ma Yanling appeared in the *Journal of Contemporary Chinese Art* in 2015; her book, *'Half the Sky: Conversations with Women Artists in China'* was published by Piper Press in 2016. Her current research focuses on female artists who subvert the conventions of ink painting and calligraphy.

### **“Social media art and/or interactive art? ‘Exhibitionist: PeeP Stream’ by Funa Ye and Beio”**

- Magdalena Furmanik-Kowalska

In December 2015 three artistic events from 'Exhibitionist: PeeP Stream' Series were held, initiated by Funa Ye (b. 1986) and Beio (b. 1987). The artists and several other participants took part in a performance, which was shown live online. At the same time, previously invited viewers were able to post their comments about it. Their

statements, including given Irons, became part of the artistic project. “The purpose of *Exhibitionist Series* is to break the boundaries of ‘daily display’ and ‘art exhibition’, and to reduce the distance between the public and contemporary art” – said Funa Ye. The Series raises a question about contemporary consumerism, boundaries between what is public and domestic, sexual identity and a lot of other significant social-political issues. It fits into the aesthetics of Camp, as described Susan Sontag (1933-2004), as well as stylizations derived from Japanese pop culture. The artists used alternative tools and methods to make the work - social media and live streaming. Thanks to these chat members were able to participate in the project. Thus, should ‘Exhibitionist: PeeP Stream’ be regarded as social media art? How can social media art be defined? Or does this work rather fit into the genre of interactive art? Is it an interactive spectacle, as described by Ryszard W. Kluszczyński in the publication “Sztuka interaktywna. Od dzieła instrumentu do interaktywnego spektaklu” [‘Interactive art. From the artwork as an instrument to the interactive spectacle’] (2010)? The object of the paper is to point out the innovativeness of ‘Exhibitionist: PeeP Stream’ as an artwork created on the border of art and daily life and indirectly continuing the artistic tradition of Fluxus.

**Magdalena Furmanik-Kowalska** is Doctor of Art Studies at Nicolaus Copernicus University in Torun (2014). In 2009 she also graduated from Gender Studies at the University of Warsaw. Co-organizer of several international conferences on Asian art including “**Poland - China. Art And Cultural Heritage**” (Krakow, 2009). Curator of many exhibitions of Polish contemporary art. Author of the book titled “Uwikłane w kulturę. O twórczości współczesnych artystek japońskich i chińskich” [‘Culture trouble. The Contemporary Art of Japanese and Chinese Women’] and many articles on Chinese contemporary art. Editor of the publications “Costume – mirror of culture” and “The art of dress, dress in art”.

## “Exhibition as method: Researching socially engaged practices through the curatorial”

-Sipei Lu

This paper examines the relation between socially engaged practices and art space in China. The research uses *socially engaged practices* to refer to projects that use art-making as a medium to attract public participation, opening up discussions and acting on social issues. Many of the projects are often long-term and based on specific locations (Wang 2017; Zheng 2010). While many artists in this research started their projects more or less out of a reflection of the art system and choose to keep a deliberate degree of independence from the institutional realm through operating alternatives such as self-organised initiatives, the relationship between socially engaged practices and art space is not an antagonistic one. For example, in exhibition-making processes, exhibition syntax is contemplated to address the discursive and dialogical nature of the work, and many artists attempt to critically transform projects in art spaces and embed them into their work outside art space. On many occasions, curators and art spaces are not at a ‘neutral’ position, instead, they actively take part in the conceptualisation and implementation of projects according to various institution agendas. The paper argues that curatorial practice is a necessary component of knowledge about socially engaged practices, and sees the relationship between socially engaged practices and art spaces a dynamic one, mutually influencing one another. Drawing on field research employing participant observation and interviews, as well as collaborations with multiple artists and curators, this study is a contribution to an exhibition history that is subjected to oblivion, despite an increasing attention on socially engaged practices. It aims to generate new understanding of socially engaged practices via curatorial projects and encourages the acknowledgement of the complexities involved in the process.

**Sipei Lu** is a PhD researcher in the School of Museum Studies at the University of Leicester. Her recent projects include 'Research in-and-through Art' (guest researcher), in collaboration with the Times Museum, Guangzhou (2015); and '100 Stories of Migration' (co-curator), a photographic and media exhibition at the School of Museum Studies in partnership with the Migration Museum Project, London (2014). Sipei edited for the peer-reviewed journal *Museological Review* and she is the translator of *Active Withdrawals: The Life and Death of Institutional*

Critique (Jilin Publishing Group and Blackdog Publishing).

## Panel 4

### Learning from Home: Di Yuancang and the Friday Salon, 1975–1980 -Chen Shuxia

Public space during the turbulent early years of the Cultural Revolution was sites of persecution and violence, which was associated with ‘public humiliation’ and ‘public struggle’, an extreme form of execution of extreme state ideology at the time. Meanwhile, private spaces such as homes were intruded by red guards, and in some way, were forced into a place for public event, such as *chaojia*, searching someone’s home and confiscating his/her property. Toward the end of the Cultural Revolution (c.1976), many ‘educated sent-down youth’ (*zhìqīng*) had returned to the city from the countryside and were waiting to be assigned a job by the government. With spare time at hands, some gathered in private spaces, such as someone’s home, to share similar interests. Home became the final line of defense for being a private self-such as practicing art or learning, to withdraw oneself from the politicized public life. In this way, amateur photographic cohorts emerged in the cities, where photography enthusiasts could access cameras and set up home darkrooms. Di Yuancang (1926–2003), a famous photographic educator and critic, began giving casual photographic classes at his home from 1975. In 1977, he continued his classes more formally in Chi Xiaoning’s (1955–2007) home every Friday night until 1980, and undertook some photographic outings with these young students to the outskirts of Beijing. Their gatherings were later dubbed the ‘Friday Salon’. Taking Di Yuancang, and the Friday Salon as a case study, this paper aims to provide an alternative, hitherto neglected perspective on the recent history of Chinese photography. While no photographic classes were then available due to the closure of all schools, private spaces such as houses and apartments became key sites for photographic education and practice.

**Chen Shuxia** is a PhD student at the Australian National University, researching on the Chinese photography groups as “amateur” cultural actors in the 1980s.

As an artist and curator, her work was featured in the 2013 OZ-Asia Festival, Adelaide. Curated exhibitions include “Shen Jiawei: Brothers and Sisters” and “Make Yourself At Home” 2012, Sydney. Chen is also the fellow of the Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Greater China Curatorial Residency, Asia Art Archive, 2014-2015. She will develop an exhibition on the topic of "From Socialist Realism to Social Reality: April Photo Society, 1979-1989".

## **The Social Sensibility Research & Development Program at Bernard Controls, Beijing, China** -Edward Sanderson

In 2011 the Italian artist and curator Alessandro Rolandi was invited to establish the Social Sensibility Research & Development (SSR&D) Program within the Beijing factory Bernard Controls, a French-owned engineering company.

Bernard Controls has been operating in China for 20 years, and now employ c.100 staff on their Beijing site. They produce highly specialised actuator and valve products used in the nuclear industry, demanding high levels of quality control.

The working environment is premised on an economics of movement, productivity being attained through effective management and a highly codified system of safety and production. This environment might seem antithetical to artistic activity, characterised as a practice that favours the unplanned and possibly counter-productive (in the conventional sense). However, one of the Bernard Controls directors is an engineer with a particular interest in corporate social responsibility, a concern that led to his bringing in Alessandro Rolandi to develop this program.

The SSR&D Program was envisioned as an on-going series of artist interventions in the daily life of the factory, engaging with all levels of the hierarchy of workers and management, and with the aim of improving the ‘sensibility’ of the working environment. Rolandi characterises ‘sensibility’ as “not only the fuel for positive human relationships, well-being, but also for innovation, that go to develop long term vision and sustainable growth.” Rolandi has been keenly aware from the beginning of the necessity to create a link between the discourses of art and the discourses of the workers and management. At this point Rolandi has organised over 40 artist projects in the factory.

This paper will introduce the SSR&D Program, outline a number of examples of artist interventions, and place the Program in a wider context of art practices that seek to critique the social environment in China.

**Edward Sanderson** is an art critic and researcher, living and working in China. His writing focuses on contemporary art created in the Chinese context, particularly focusing on “alternative” practices in the visual and sonic arts.

**“Beyond the artistic space: Yuanmingyuan cun, Beijing dongcun and Songzhuang cun as subcultures within the official Chinese art world where past and present meet”**

- Marco Meccarelli

*Yuanmingyuan cun, Beijing dongcun and Songzhuang cun* are three different kind of *huajia cun* (artists’ village) within the global contemporary artistic world. They functioned not only as subcultures of the “official” Chinese art world but also as networks of mutually supportive communities. The 1990’s China was characterized by the acceleration of transformation from *Industrial Society* to *Post-Industrial Society*. Due to such transformation, a number of industries *withdrew from the city center*, with the consequence that warehouses and factories were abandoned. Outskirts were being included into the urban areas and China’s urban art district was born accordingly. At the same time, the ruins of the historical places or imperial park acquired a reputation as the home of artists’ community. The art districts were also developed into consumable spaces other than simple artist’s colonies. This changed both the art groups themselves and the relationship between art groups and the public as well as the society. The aim of this paper is to focus on certain issues related with the claiming and reclaiming of the past in artists’ village. Most of the international studies are concentrated on the production of artists, focusing on the analysis of their work at the light of social contest, but they usually neglect the cultural, ideological, and sociopolitical strategies of legitimation and the securing of tradition. This paper shall discuss in further detail the vital contribution of *huajia cun* towards providing meaningful directions in the form and for the use of public, private and symbolic spaces, not only in a changing urban context but also in the cultural “revivalism” of Chinese contemporary art.

**Marco Meccarelli** is Lecturer on contract in Chinese Modern Art (University of Macerata), Chinese Art (University of Urbino) and in Chinese Culture and Literature and in History of Oriental Asia (University of Catania). Phd (2010) in History and Civilization of Oriental Asia and Postgraduate Diploma (2005) of Second School of Specialization on Oriental Archaeology (Sapienza, University of Rome).

## **Panel 5**

### **“Reading ‘refugee’ and ‘socially-engaged’ in the context of contemporary Chinese art – Case study of Art in Camp (1989-1991)” -Harry Leung Ho Yin**

"Refugee" and "socially-engaged" are two of the very popular terms being discussed in the recent art world. This paper aims to discuss the two keywords relating to the notion of "art outside art space" by using a very early example in Hong Kong, Art In Camp(1989-1991). A decade before pedagogic program becomes a popular form to engage with people, a group of artists in Hong Kong organized a project that took place right inside the detention camp for Vietnamese refugees. This project demonstrates two layers of significance: first, it reveals a very early attempt to engage with refugee through different artistic strategies in late 1980's; secondly, it shows how art could function beyond art space (in this case, art is put at the detention camp). This paper will look at Art in the Camp (AIC) with Foucault's spatial theory of 'heterotopias'. Although Foucault didn't discuss the dimension of race/ethnic problems, this paper would still like to borrow his understanding on the problems of classification of space through the metaphor of mirror to interpret AIC as an early example of socially engaged art in Hong Kong. Besides, this paper will be developed into two parts: media representation of Vietnamese refugee in Hong Kong through newspapers published at that time. This part will also touch on how the Detention Camps, in which the British government settled Vietnamese refugees in Hong Kong, were illustrated as space of deviation and crisis. Following images that represent the detention camps as pseudo-prisons, the second part will zoom-in at what Art In Camp actually did inside the detention camps.

**Leung Ho Yin** is a researcher and artist from Hong Kong. His interest is art and everyday life. Before starting his M.Phil at Department of Fine Arts, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, he studied in Seoul and Zurich where he learnt about sculpture and public art. He is also the founder and director of I Live it All (iliveitall.com), a project that deals with housing issues and living condition of elderly through artistic strategies.

**“The Pursuit of Social Criticality of Socially Engaged Art in the Rural Areas of Contemporary China: A Case Study of ‘Yangdeng Cooperatives’”**  
-Yanhua Zhou

Socially engaged art is often associated with social engagements that involve artistic interactions in public spaces. Artists have begun to explore how art could interact with common daily life since the beginning of the twentieth century. Since socially engaged art is a popular style rooted in Western art history, there have been a great number of debates about whether it can be utilized in China as an instrument of social critique. The pursuit of social criticality of socially engaged art has been embodied in different periods in the history of Chinese contemporary art, including avant-garde practices of the '85 Art Movement, experimental art of the 1990s, and community-based art after the new millennium. In recent years, artists pursue social criticality through their socially engaged art practices in rural areas, the marginalized communities of China's economy, politics and culture, in order to search for the 'spiritual homeland' of Chinese intellectuals, to discuss the issues of China's urbanization, and to maintain the freedom of artistic creation by avoiding the 'Political Red Line', a term used as a metaphor for Communist ideological control. In these art practices, "Yangdeng Cooperatives", organized by a group of Post-80s artists from Southwestern China, can be regarded as a typical example. Having entered Yangdeng village, these artists aim to explore how artistic interaction can create public discourses, establish interrelationships between different people, and reconstruct the public site of this village. This paper focuses on a case study of the socially engaged art project, "Yangdeng Cooperatives". By examining how socially engaged art practices can have an impact upon the society of Yangdeng village, the purpose of this research is to highlight the social criticality that essentially exists within these socially engaged art practices in China.

**Yanhua Zhou** is currently an assistant professor from the Contemporary Visual Art Research Center of Sichuan Fine Arts Institute, China. She is also a Ph.D. candidate from the Department of East Asian Studies at University of Arizona. She received her first Ph.D. Degree in Art History from Southwest University (China) and her MA in Art History from University of St Andrews (UK). Her research interests embrace modern and contemporary art theories, including Minimalism, Conceptual art and site-specific art, with a special interest in socially engaged art. Her recent research focuses on socially engaged art in the rural areas of contemporary China.

### **“Socially engaged art projects in Hong Kong – Easy theory, difficult practice”**

-Frank Vigneron

Following the idea of socially-engaged art practices as dissensus formulated by Jacques Rancière, and considering it in the context of the idea of universal education he analyzed in *The Ignorant Schoolmaster*, this paper looks at different ways to introduce contemporary art practices to a public not prepared to appreciate them. Several art events organized in Hong Kong over the last few years, and analyzed as either tactic or strategy (following Michel de Certeau’s classification), will be presented in order to understand how they can function as a way to the public’s emancipation aesthetically and, sometimes, even politically. If the difficulties against such art practices exist in their reception by the press and the public at large, additional difficulties exist also in the context of the tactics of socially-engaged art and its confrontation with funding agencies. The final example presented in this paper, also of a Hong Kong-based project, will show some of the difficulties involved in managing such endeavors.

**Professor Vigneron** received a Ph.D. in Chinese Art History from the Paris VII University, a Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from the Paris IV Sorbonne University and a Doctorate of Fine Arts from the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. He joined the Department of Fine Arts, CUHK in 2004, teaching courses on the History of Western Art, the theories of Modernism and Postmodernism in art, and Chinese and Western comparative aesthetics. His

research focus is on the history of Chinese painting from the 18th century onwards and on different aspects of contemporary Chinese art seen in a global context. In 2010, he became Chair of the Hong Kong Art School Academic Committee as well as a member of the Hong Kong Art School Council. He is also a member of the International Association of Art Critics Hong Kong. Professor Vigneron is also a practicing artist. He has held several solo exhibitions in Hong Kong and has taken part in