

Business As Usual: New Video from China

Cao Fei and Yang Fudong

Traveling Exhibition Arizona State University Art Museum

Business As Usual is an opportunity to examine two of the most prominent contemporary Chinese video artists. Both Cao Fei and Yang Fudong address the emergence of a new middle class in China. Contemporary artists in China employ a range of media to explore the experience of living in a rapidly changing urban environment. Globalization has brought them into contact with Western contemporary art, which explains the increasing visual similarity, but their concerns remain unique to present-day China.

In the triptych *Whose Utopia* (2006), Cao Fei portrays workers who left their small hometowns to pursue life in the big city. They took with them dreams to be dancers and singers, and ended up in factories. Working with employees in a light bulb factory, Cao Fei has the workers dress in the garb of their dreams and perform within the environment of their actual lives, the factory.

Yang Fudong's *City Lights* (2000) and *Honey* (2003) features his generation of people in their late 20s and 30s who are part of the emerging middle class in China and who hover between the past and present. Fudong's work epitomizes how the recent and rapid modernization of China has overthrown traditional values and culture. He skillfully balances this dichotomy to create works endowed with classic beauty and timelessness.

Cao Fei was born in 1978 in Guangzhou, China. She received her BFA from the Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts in 2001. Her work is frequently exhibited in international biennials and surveys of contemporary Chinese art. Cao Fei lives and works in Beijing.

Born in 1971 in Beijing, Yang Fudong graduated from the China Academy of Fine Arts in Hangzhou where he trained as a painter. He began working with film and video in the late 1990s. Yang Fudong's work was exhibited in the 2003 and 2007 Venice Biennale, the first Moscow Biennial in 2005, and the fifth Shanghai Biennial in 2004. Yang Fudong lives and works in Shanghai.

All works in the exhibition are drawn from the Haudenschild Collection, San Diego. *Business As Usual* was featured in the September 9, 2007, *New York Times* article on contemporary art from China by Holland Cotter and in *Art in America's* fall preview issue for 2007.



Cao Fei, *Whose Utopia*, Video. Photo: Lombard-Freid Projects, New York.

Curators:

Marilyn A. Zeitlin, Director and Chief Curator, Arizona State University Art Museum

Heather S. Lineberry, Senior Curator, Arizona State University Art Museum

Exhibition information:

Business As Usual includes:

- Three video pieces
- 1,000 gallery guides
- Labels (hard copy or disc)

Rental fee: \$2,800
Insurance: Provided by venue
Availability: 2008 and 2009
Security: Moderate
Space req: Variable

For more information contact:

Heather S. Lineberry, Senior Curator
ASU Art Museum
480.965.5272
heather.lineberry@asu.edu

 Herberger College
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