

March 13 –

April 18, 2015

Martin Wong : *Painting Is Forbidden*

Curated by CCA's Graduate Program in Curatorial Practice
Class of 2015

Martin Wong : Painting is Forbidden is a solo exhibition dedicated to the work of Chinese-American artist Martin Wong (1946–1999), and encompassing writing, calligraphy, drawing, ceramics, theatrical set design, painting, poetry, and collage.

Wong is known primarily for the paintings he produced while operating in the dynamic subcultures of the Nuyorican poets and graffiti artists of 1970s and 1980s New York City.

Prior to this interlude in his life, Wong, who grew up in San Francisco and studied in Eureka, California, had already produced a wild and curious body of work.

He was a prolific poet and ceramicist, a psychedelic painter, an artistic collaborator in the radical communal theater of the Angels of Light, and a self-described “Human Instamatic.”

The exhibition's title is taken from the following passage in his journals:

Painting is forbidden. The joys and pleasures of being a painter are almost identical to those of being a serial killer: the solitary quest, the thrill of the hunt, the compulsion of trying to complete an imaginary set, to live totally in the

imagination , the suspense , the urgency , and finally the uncontrollable spasms...

Drawn from the artist ' s archives at the Fales Library at New York University , the artist ' s estate at P . P . O . W . Gallery , New York , the de Young Museum , and private collections in Northern California , the exhibition includes over 150 works and ephemera by the artist from across his career , most of which have never been presented before .

Though Wong has been exhibited nationally and internationally in recent years , in New York City , Berlin and Hong Kong , this will be the first expansive and cross-media exhibition of his work in San Francisco , the city the artist called home .

Martin Wong : Painting Is Forbidden is organized by the 2015 class of the Graduate Program in Curatorial Practice at California College of the Arts , with the support of the Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts . Special thanks to the Martin Wong Foundation , The Estate of Martin Wong at P . P . O . W . Gallery , The Fales Library & Special Collections at New York University , and the Angels of Light .