

# ULLENS CENTER FOR CONTEMPORARY ART 尤伦斯当代艺术中心

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## Luminous Landscapes from Planet Earth —Kong Lingnan: *Only her body*, Curated by Yang Shaobin

April 1, 2011. Beijing.

Following Yang Shaobin's environmentally-themed solo show *Blue Room*, he returns to UCCA to curate *Only her body*, an exhibition of luminous landscapes from talented young painter Kong Lingnan. This is the eleventh in UCCA's series of "Curated by..." exhibitions, which aim to foster a new generation of Chinese artists by pairing them with established artists and guest curators.

In her hauntingly minimalist paintings, Kong Lingnan shines a light on our conceptions of beauty, nature, prosperity and progress: "If we try," she writes, "we can cast off our human blinders and see the planet not in terms of good or evil, not as beautiful or ugly, but simply as a body—only her body."

UCCA Director Jérôme Sans notes how the artist's unique technique informs, and is informed by, her subject matter: "Using nothing more than regular oil paint and a painstaking application of color, Kong Lingnan creates a 'neon effect' that gives mountains, valleys, glaciers and ice floes an eerie, otherworldly glow. But not even these distant, isolated regions are immune to the depredations of human activity: everywhere we look, we find tiny human figures [...] leaving behind the detritus of their tools and technology, seemingly oblivious to their impact on the landscape around them."

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Exhibition curator Yang Shaobin feels that “the appeal of Kong Lingnan's work is the way it transports familiar settings, people and objects into the realm of the dreamlike and unreal... She channels the natural world or natural universe in the direction of her own interests, and uses the female body as a metaphor for the planet or the cosmos.”

Kong Lingnan's style is deceptively simple, in that all of her canvases evoke the vast panorama of planet earth, yet they still remind us of how small and insignificant we are in the big scheme of things. "Mountains, human figures and inanimate objects are depicted as glowing outlines," writes curator Yang Shaobin, "as if the artist were sketching the human circulatory system; the body's veins, arteries, vessels and meridians flowing, pulsing, pausing, stopping, drifting through the dark empty silence..."

UCCA Director Jérôme Sans concludes that this exhibition “reveals the bare bones of a much larger story: that with everything we do, we are altering the contours of this planet, chipping away at the only body she will ever have.”

The "Curated by..." series is free to the public thanks to the generous support of Bloomberg.

## **Related Events at UCCA**

### **Artists' Talk: Only her body**

Date: May 7th /14:00-15:30/ UCCA Loft

Guest speakers: Kong Lingnan, Yang Shaobin

Language: Chinese with English translation

### **Migrant School Students' Art Program: So Many Ways to Paint!**

Date: May 12th / 14:00-16:00/ UCCA Loft

Guest speaker: Kong Lingnan

Language: In Chinese only

### **About Kong Lingnan**

Kong Lingnan (b. 1983, Jilin, China) graduated from the Central Academy of Fine Arts in 2007 with a degree in graphic design. Eager to express her observations and concerns about isolation, anomie and the human condition, she began to convey these ideas through oil paintings during her last year at the academy. Having trained and practiced as a graphic designer, her design aesthetics have undoubtedly influenced her rationally and meticulously executed canvases.

### **About the UCCA *Curated by...* Series**

Initiated in July 2008 by UCCA Director Jérôme Sans, the UCCA *Curated by...* series invites established Chinese artists to recommend emerging talents and curate exhibitions for them. The series helps to forge connections between artists of various ages working at different stages of their careers, and provides valuable exposure and exhibition opportunities for young Chinese artists, particularly those who have never held a solo exhibition before. Thus far, UCCA has presented 10 *Curated by...* exhibitions in its Black Box & White Cube space. The average age of the young artists showcased in these exhibitions was 30 years old; the youngest was a second-year student at the Central Academy of Fine Arts (CAFA) in Beijing.

### **About UCCA**

The Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (UCCA) is a non-profit, comprehensive art center founded by collectors Guy and Myriam Ullens in November 2007. UCCA presents exhibitions of established and emerging artists and develops a trusted platform to share knowledge through education and research.