

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

3 Artists, 2 Generations, 1 Fantastic Show

—Song Dong plays the dual role of curator/collaborating artist for Ma Qiusha's *Address* and Wang Shang's *Sleuthing*

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For over three years, the UCCA “Curated by...” series has been pairing established curators with emerging artists in an effort to increase the diversity of UCCA’s exhibitions and make it easier for young artists to bring their work to the public. “Curated by Song Dong”, the latest exhibition in this Bloomberg-sponsored series, is a special occasion indeed: in tandem with his first UCCA solo show *Wisdom of the Poor*, Song Dong will curate an exhibition for Ma Qiusha and Wang Shang, two talented young artists who began studying art with Song Dong at the ages of 7 and 5, respectively.

In his dual role as curator and artistic collaborator, Song Dong has created a stunning Beijing-style courtyard installation (reminiscent of his much-talked-about “Para-pavilion” in the Arsenale at this year’s Venice Biennale) to serve as a framework for the two artists’ works. The installation, constructed of wooden wainscoting made from old wardrobes, ubiquitous corrugated tile planks and a recycled wooden door, divides UCCA’s Blank Box & White Cube space into two very different but interconnected environments. One side recalls the interior atmosphere of a Beijing *dazayuan* (a courtyard house divided into living space for many families) while the other side evokes the exterior atmosphere of a traditional Beijing *hutong*.

UCCA visitors can regard “Curated by Song Dong” and *Wisdom of the Poor* (2005-2011) as 3 separate solo exhibitions, 2 linked exhibitions, or 1 collaborative exhibition by three artists who have gone, in the words of Song Dong: “from being teacher and students, to friends, and now finally, fellow exhibiting artists.” However you slice it, it means three great UCCA exhibitions in one!

Ma Qiusha: *Address* and Wang Shang: *Sleuthing*

In the interior space, female multimedia artist Ma Qiusha presents a contemplative but powerful series of works on the theme of family, personal identity and the female experience. In one quirky but moving installation piece, she displays her deceased grandfather's 27-year-old collection of beard shavings, which he carefully stored in glass medicine bottles and labeled with each year. As the title of the work indicates, Ma Qiusha's grandfather's stubble collection is only two years younger than she is.

In the exterior space, Wang Shang recreates a setting from his novel-in-process: a laboratory populated by items symbolic of our complicated relationship with Nature. While Wang Shang's fictional lab is filled with energy generators, breeding tanks and strange new species of plants, his UCCA exhibition features his father's collection of antique cameras, his jewelry designs made from his mother's collection of gemstones and "new naturalist" wallpaper of his own design.

In his exhibition foreword, curator Song Dong provides some insight into the ties that link these three artists: "We all grew up in a similar environment, Beijing's *hutongs*. But an era of great changes has led us to very different lives. Different family environments made us different people, and gave us different futures. We share a special bond, and our lives will always be linked. In this exhibition, I have created a backdrop for their work. In real life, I was part of the backdrop of their lives.

"The stories of Ma Qiusha and Wang Shang, appropriately set in Song Dong's 'crowded courtyard,' offer us a new perspective on the relationships between past and present, teacher and pupil, friends and fellow artists," concludes UCCA Director Jérôme Sans.

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

Related Events at UCCA

Migrant School Students' Art Program, *Rainbow Journey 11: The World at Your Side*

Date: Thursday, July 28 / 14:00-16:00 / UCCA Loft

Guests: Ma Qiusha, Wang Shang

Language: Chinese

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Artists' Talk:

Date: Saturday, Aug 27 / 14:00-15:30 / UCCA La Suite
Guests: Song Dong, Ma Qiusha, Wang Shang
Language: Chinese

About Ma Qiusha

Ma Qiusha (b. 1982, Beijing) developed her interest in art at age 7, when she first started to learn how to draw with Song Dong. She later received her undergraduate degree from the Digital Media studio at the Central Academy of Fine Arts, Beijing. Upon graduating from CAFA in 2005, she furthered her studies in electronic and digital media at the Alfred University in New York where she received an MFA in Electronic Integrated Art. Ma Qiusha often investigates the complex relationships between people through her works of performance, video or installation.

About Wang Shang

Wang Shang (b.1984, Beijing) was just 5 years old when he first began to take art lessons from Song Dong. In 2007, he graduated from Goldsmiths College with a BA degree in Fine Art & Contemporary Critical Studies. Wang Shang's interests go beyond the boundaries of art; he is fascinated by science and philosophy and is influenced by figures from Darwin to Foucault. His multifaceted personality later took him to Royal College of Art where he graduated in 2009 with an MA degree in Curating Contemporary Art. His UCCA solo exhibit *Sleuthing* is his first show ever.

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 12 "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. In 2011, Bloomberg began sponsoring the "Curated by..." series, thus enabling UCCA to make the series free to the public.

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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.