



MAHJONG: CONTEMPORARY CHINESE ART FROM THE SIGG COLLECTION: PUBLIC PROGRAMS

In conjunction with the landmark exhibition **Mahjong: Contemporary Chinese Art from the Sigg Collection** (September 10, 2008 – January 4, 2009), the University of California, Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAM/PFA) presents a range of public programs that reflect and embrace the diversity of contemporary China and its art.

Mahjong: Contemporary Chinese Art from the Sigg Collection features 141 works by 96 artists, including exceptional paintings, drawings, sculptures, photographs, video works, and installations. Through these, this major exhibition, which is unusual in containing examples of Socialist Realism, traces four decades of rapid and world-altering change in China. This is the first time that a significant number of works from the unrivaled collection of Uli Sigg have been shown in the Americas.

Artists-in-Residence

In association with the presentation of **Mahjong**, BAM/PFA hosts two artists-in-residence this fall. **Ai Weiwei**, one of China's best known and most influential artists, will participate in two public programs during his residence in September. Ai's international reputation as an artist, architect, curator, and editor places him among the most creative, outspoken, and sought after commentators on the current Chinese art scene today. **Ning Ying**, one of China's most important filmmakers, discusses her films at the Pacific Film Archive Theater October 23 through October 26, and offers a master class for UC Berkeley students on October 27.

Public Conversations

A series of conversations between noted authorities in diverse fields provides a broad context for the art in **Mahjong** and the themes of the exhibition. A range of cultural, socio-economic, and political issues are explored.

Art, Censorship, and Politics

Orville Schell and Uli Sigg

Sunday, September 14, 3 p.m.

Museum Theater

China authority Orville Schell, director of the Asia Society's Center on US-China Relations, in New York, and former dean of the UC Berkeley School of Journalism, converses with Uli Sigg, former Swiss ambassador to China and one of the world's leading collectors of contemporary Chinese art. They examine what contemporary Chinese art can tell us about the country's recent development.

China's Emerging Art

Hou Hanru, Jane DeBevoise, and Ou Ning

Sunday, September 21, 3 p.m.

Museum Theater

This conversation features internationally renowned curator and critic Hou Hanru, director of exhibitions and public programs at the San Francisco Art Institute; art historian Jane DeBevoise, chair of the Board of Trustees of the Hong Kong-based nonprofit Asia Art Archives; and leading Chinese multimedia artist Ou Ning. Topics

include new media and transdisciplinary collaboration, the social role of the artist at a time when art is a major force in the Chinese market, and creating “memory” through documentation.

Wen-hsin Yeh and Uli Sigg

Monday, September 22, 4 p.m.
Institute of East Asian Studies
2223 Fulton Street, 6th Floor

Leading authority on twentieth-century Chinese history Wen-hsin Yeh, professor of history and director of the Institute of East Asian Studies at UC Berkeley, converses with collector Uli Sigg. Presented by UC Berkeley’s Institute of East Asian Studies.

Ai Weiwei and Jeff Kelley

Tuesday, September 30, 4 p.m.
Museum Theater

Ai Weiwei, together with critic and independent curator Jeff Kelley, discusses a range of issues pertaining to Chinese contemporary art, including the history and present state of artistic freedom in China. Kelley, who taught theory and criticism in UC Berkeley’s Department of Art Practice, organized the exhibition **Half-Life of a Dream: Contemporary Chinese Art from the Logan Collection**, on view at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art through October 5. Co-sponsored by UC Berkeley’s Institute of East Asian Studies.

Inside/Outside: The Great Wall of China

Peter Hessler and David Spindler

Sunday, November 23, 3 p.m.
Museum Theater

Peter Hessler, Beijing correspondent for *The New Yorker* and the author of two critically acclaimed books on China—the prizewinning *River Town: Two Years on the Yangtze* (2001), and *Oracle Bones: A Journey Between China’s Past and Present* (2006)—joins David Spindler, a China-based historian of the Great Wall. They explore the significance of the Great Wall in the premodern era and what it means today. Spindler and his research were the subject of a major profile by Hessler in *The New Yorker* in 2007.

Gallery Talk

Ai Weiwei and Uli Sigg

Thursday, September 25, noon
Exhibition Galleries

As they walk through the exhibition, artist-in-residence Ai Weiwei and Uli Sigg—longtime friends and associates—engage in a spirited exchange on art and contemporary China.

Symposium

China Transformed: Artscape/Cityscape

Friday, October 17, 4 p.m. (keynote address)
Saturday, October 18, 9:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m.
Museum Theater

The dizzying pace of urbanization in contemporary China provokes varied responses from artists and filmmakers, ranging from optimistic expansiveness to a

sense of radical dislocation. In this two-day international symposium, leading curators, critics, and scholars look at artists working in different media as they respond to the new Chinese megacity.

Keynote speaker is Wu Hung, an international authority on classical and contemporary Chinese art. Other participants include Julia Andrews, Chinese art specialist and art history professor from Ohio State University; Hou Hanru, director of exhibitions and public programs at the San Francisco Art Institute; Wendy Larson, professor of East Asian languages and provost of Portland programs at the University of Oregon; William Schaefer, professor of East Asian languages and cultures at UC Berkeley; Kuiyi Shen, associate professor of the visual arts at UC San Diego; Jerome Silbergeld, professor of Chinese art history at Princeton University; Pauline Yao, an independent critic based in Beijing; and Zheng Shengtian, managing editor of *Yishu – Journal of Contemporary Chinese Art*. Symposium co-sponsored by UC Berkeley's Department of History of Art, Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures, Institute of East Asian Studies, Center for Chinese Studies, and Division of Arts & Humanities, together with the UC Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive.

Places at the Table: Asian Women Artists and Gender Dynamics

Saturday, September 13, 9 a.m.–5 p.m.

Museum Theater

Mahjong artist Zhang O, whose work focuses on the status of young girls in China, is a featured presenter at this daylong symposium exploring issues facing Asian women artists today. In addition to **Mahjong**, the symposium is presented in conjunction with two special exhibitions: **The Offering Table: Korean Women Activist Artists**, at the Mills College Art Museum, and an exhibition of artist Mayumi Oda's *Goddesses* series at UC Berkeley's Institute of East Asian Studies (IEAS) Gallery. Co-organized by the IEAS, the UC Berkeley's Center for Korean Studies, and Mills College.

Film Series

On the occasion of the **Mahjong** exhibition, the Pacific Film Archive explores recent developments in Chinese cinema. Retrospectives of two of China's leading filmmakers, Jia Zhangke and Ning Ying, are presented in September and October. A survey of contemporary Chinese film, including narrative, documentary, and experimental works, is offered in November and December. Titles and dates will be announced in the fall.

Unknown Pleasures: The Films of Jia Zhangke

September 12–October 17

Viewers wishing to understand the vast changes that China has undergone in the last decade should start with the critically acclaimed films of Jia Zhangke, one of the most important directors of our era. Jia was born (in 1970) and raised in the mining town of Fenyang, Shanxi province, a region to which he returns in nearly all of his work. His films depict a China that seems to reinvent itself every other year—a country moving from communism to (hyper)capitalism, a rural world entering the urban age, an industrialized cityscape turning to neon-lit bars and Internet cafes, and an ancient, closed society seeking to join the global market. His heroes and heroines are disaffected youth, small-time crooks, artists, prostitutes, and the elderly: those left behind in the transition, too unconnected or not ruthless enough to make the jump.

I Love Beijing: The Films of Ning Ying
October 23–27

Ning Ying, born in Beijing in 1959, creates small-scale, naturalistic, dryly funny studies of present-day life. In the 1980s, Ning, who attended the Beijing Film Academy, studied at Italy's Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia; there she met Bernardo Bertolucci, who employed her as assistant director on *The Last Emperor* (1987). Returning to China after six years in the West, Ning observed her native country with a distanced and ironic, yet affectionate, eye. Her Beijing Trilogy—*For Fun* (1992), *On the Beat* (1995), and *I Love Beijing* (2001)—is, in the words of the filmmaker, “a visual memory about this social moment,” a portrait of three generations of ordinary urbanites during the decade of change that followed the economic reforms of 1991. *Perpetual Motion* (2005) is the first of her films to offer a distinctly female perspective on China's cultural transformations, while documentaries like *Railroad of Hope* (2001) expand the frame to include the concerns of rural people.

Guided Tours

Thursdays at 12:15 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m.

Graduate students from several UC Berkeley departments, including History of Art, Art Practice, and East Asian Studies, will present tours of **Mahjong**. Tours in Mandarin are available on request.

Support

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Ai Weiwei's artist residency is supported in part by Cheryl Haines Gallery.

The Jia Zhangke and Ning Ying Film Retrospectives are presented in conjunction with the Center for Asian American Media, with the generous support of the Consortium for the Arts and the Center for Chinese Studies at UC Berkeley.

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Museum Information

Location: 2626 Bancroft Way, just below College Avenue near the UC Berkeley campus.

Gallery and Museum Store Hours: Wednesday to Sunday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Closed Monday and Tuesday.

Admission: Programs are free with museum admission. Seating is limited, and is on a first-come, first-served basis.

General admission is \$8; admission for seniors, disabled persons, non-UC Berkeley students, and young adults (13–17) is \$5; admission for BAM/PFA members, UC Berkeley students, staff and faculty, and children 12 and under is free; admission for group tours is \$3 per person (arranged in advance: call [510] 642-5188). Admission is free on the first Thursday of each month.

Special Admission during Mahjong:

\$12	General Admission
Free	BAM/PFA members, UC Berkeley students, staff and faculty, and children 12 and under All museum visitors on the first Thursday of each month Visitors to the MATRIX Gallery every day
\$7	Non-UC Berkeley students, senior citizens (65 and over), disabled persons, young adults (13 – 17)
\$5	Per person for group tours (to arrange a group tour, call [510] 642-1002)

Information: 24-hour recorded message (510) 642-0808; TDD (510) 642-8734

Website: bampfa.berkeley.edu

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For further information on public programs, contact Jonathan L. Knapp, BAM/PFA, 510-642-8691 or jlknapp@berkeley.edu.

For information on **Mahjong**, contact Libby Mark or Lucy O'Brien, Jeanne Collins & Associates, LLC, New York City, 646-486-7050 or info@jcollinsassociates.com.