



For Immediate Press Release

CURRENTS – Art and Music

Zhang Peili - Phrase

Opening Reception: 2006 – 11- 11, at 3:00 p.m.

Duration of Exhibition: Nov. 11th, 2006 to Dec. 22nd, 2006

Office Hours: Tues. – Sun. 11:00 a.m. – 06:00 p.m.

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Sarina Tang presents **CURRENTS'** inaugural art exhibition, *Happiness* and *Attitude* by the forefather of video art in China - **Zhang Peili**. Opening reception will be held on November 11th, 2006, at 3:00 p.m.

Zhang Peili's new interactive work *Phrase* will be presented for the first time. Another recent work titled, *Happiness* will also be exhibited at **CURRENTS**. This exhibition will be Zhang Peili's first solo exhibition in Beijing for more than ten years.

Zhang Peili's interactive video installation *Phrase* consists of two screens facing each other. The speed and sound of the action in the video vary according to the viewer's relative position. The dialogue and images shown were taken from the 1964 film *Guards under the Neon Lights*, in which a soldier of the liberation army, having conquered Shanghai claims sternly, "The United Nations? It knows me, I don't know about it!"

Happiness consists of two video projections of excerpts from the 1970's revolutionary film *In the Shipyard*¹. One projection is the original film and the other is the artist's own tampering with this film. Zhang Peili's says about this work,

I attempt to use double projection to present the relationship between a rhetorical structure and symbolism. Once symbols are extracted from the narrative time frame, it gains a great (comprehensible) degree of freedom. The subject matter of the films from the 1970's has special

¹ Synopsis of *In the Shipyard*: in the early 70's of the 20th century, factory worker Lei Haisheng at Dajiang Shipyard proposed to build a thousand ton ship in their small shipyard that has received supports from the party committee and staff. The hidden enemy – Dong Yiwen, whom held a high position of the head in the factory's technical team, secretly took advantage of the conservative mentality of the factory's president Zhao Ping, damages the ship. In a vigorous struggle, Lei Haisheng revealed the crimes of Dong Yiwen, and Zhao Ping came to recognize his mistakes in this struggle, and the first ten thousand ship was build in this small shipyard. This film is directed by Fu Chaowu, and produced by the Shanghai Film Production in 1974.



meaning for me, representing utopia. Its romantic flavor and spirit are beyond personal sentiment, and bring forth comparisons with aspects of our lives today.

Zhang Peili, the **Pioneer of Video Art** in China, is the director of the new media department at the China Academy of Fine Arts in Hangzhou. A true pioneer of avant-garde art in the twentieth century, Zhang is often considered the precursor to **Cynical Realism**. Zhang had a solo exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art New York in 1998, participated in the 1999 Venice Biennale, the 2001 Yokohama Triennale, as well as the inaugural exhibition of the Mori Museum in 2003, Tokyo, Japan. As a well-respected academic on contemporary art, Francesca Dal Lago, sums up Zhang's work,

Zhang Peili's oeuvre since the early 1990s draws ongoing attention to the subversive potential found in the narrative fabric of well-known images of authority: using this material, he acts as a saboteur vis-à-vis the normally accepted meaning of a given presentation by tampering with its presentation, editing a form of display to expose the intrinsic absurdity of rhetorical structures.

Brief Introduction of Currents

CURRENTS – Art and Music invites contemporary artists and musicians of international reputation to its Beijing location for one to two-month residencies. Artists will create installations resulting in an exhibition. Composers will explore Chinese music traditions and instruments, and collaborate towards a concert.

Currents facilitates and increases interaction between the Chinese and international art and music communities. Encounters and discussions proposing and resolving issues, concerns and topics related to Contemporary art and music will be organized and held at Currents.

CURRENTS – Art and Music inaugurated on October 29th, 2006, with a concert, "Composer-in-focus", featuring chamber music by Zhou Long, performed by the Beijing New Music Ensemble. Works of art by artists in the *Huantie Art District* was displayed for visits a week prior to the concert and through November 4th.