Rethinking the Curation of Chinese Contemporary Art: toward “post-West” artworlds, political economies, spatial practices, and historiographies.


This graduate seminar will be held in conjunction with a one-day online international symposium organized by the University of Maryland and the University of New South Wales, Sydney and supported by the 4A Center for Contemporary Asian Art, Sydney and the Shibunkaku Gallery, Kyoto.

Since the end of the 1980s, contemporary art produced by artists of Chinese cultural identity has been exhibited internationally in accordance with western(ized) curatorial discourses and practices associated with the White Cube and its postmodernist variants. This graduate seminar and the symposium will intervene critically with those discourses and practices by exploring the possibility of alternative approaches to the curation of culturally Chinese contemporary art.
Framing the graduate seminar and the symposium are recent debates related to the idea of “contemporaneity” and their vision of present times as being marked by an increasingly conspicuous plurality of socio-political and cultural outlooks, among them emphatic resistances to Euro-American post-Enlightenment thinking and practice. An acknowledgement of the conditions of contemporaneity is taken as a starting position for critical reflections on established institutional allegiances to western(ized) curatorial discourses and practices. As a recent statement by the journal *Third Text* asserts, “Decades of liberal demands for ‘diversity’ have failed to change the artworld’s devotion to the civilizational accomplishments of the West or undo [its] mechanisms of exclusion.” The graduate seminar and the symposium are intended as a means of looking beyond such exclusory mechanisms toward differently “grounded” approaches to the selection, organization, and presentation of artworks, and, by extension, the active projection of “post-West” artworlds, political economies, spatial practices, and historiographies. Students will have the opportunity to interact with invited speakers and to work on virtual 3-D exhibition design.