

Parasol unit

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Press Release

YANG FUDONG: *One half of August*

13 September–6 November 2011 (Preview 12 September, 6.30–9 p.m.)



Left: Yang Fudong, *Fifth Night*, 2010, HD video Installation, 7 screens, black-and-white, sound, 10' 37". Centre: Yang Fudong, *Ye Jiang (The night man cometh)*, 2011, HD video installation, 1 screen, black-and-white, 19' 21". Right: Yang Fudong, *One half of August*, 2011, HD video installation, 8 screens, black-and-white, 15'. All images courtesy of the Artist and Galerie Marian Goodman, Paris/New York and ShanghArt Gallery, Shanghai, copyright © Yang Fudong.

After the resounding success of his first exhibition at Parasol unit foundation for contemporary art in 2006, the foundation is dedicating a second major solo exhibition to the renowned artist and filmmaker Yang Fudong, one of the most important artists yet to emerge in contemporary China. It presents three new works: *Fifth Night*, 2010; *One half of August*, 2011; *Ye Jiang (The night man cometh)*, 2011.

Fifth Night, a video-installation composed of seven synchronized projections, is shot supposedly in the streets of Shanghai's old town at night, revealing some commotion in which carriages, rickshaws and vintage cars are driven. A stage has been built and a tramcar is being frantically repaired. Unrelated characters perform their own activities, some engaged, others bored as if awaiting some event, all lack any interest in or compassion for one another. Yang Fudong uses 35-mm cameras to film the same scenes from different angles, with variations of scale and depth of field. This highlights a character's simplest action or subtle expression so that what a viewer might perceive as separate instances are actually all part of a single scene. As in most of Yang Fudong's works, all is left open-ended, with no beginning or end. Without conclusion, the search for spiritual life continues.

One half of August is an eight-screen, black-and-white, HD video installation, for which Yang Fudong projects scenes from earlier works (particularly from *Seven Intellectuals in Bamboo Forest*) onto architectural elements, props, structures and objects built for the purpose. He also includes artefacts, uses light, and inverts external space. This creates new realities that challenge one's vision and mind, and expands our understanding of the world. This first derivative of Yang Fudong films, almost an attempt at three-dimensionality, poses the question: Am I watching a film or a film of a film? Issues of the subconscious, reality and dream are also clearly present. The title *One half of August* refers to the Chinese Mid-Autumn Festival, which is about rites, tradition, art, poetry, everything that puts human beings to the fore. Usually starting on the 15th of the eighth Chinese lunar month, in 2011 the festival began on 12 September, the launch date of Yang Fudong's exhibition at Parasol unit. Yang Fudong highlights with his beautiful title a fine collaboration with Parasol unit and his second exhibition at the foundation.

The single-screen work, *Ye Jiang (The night man cometh)* unfolds in a snowy winter landscape. At first one might try to read the film as a linear narrative, but as images succeed one another it becomes clear that Yang Fudong is once more questioning the destiny of man. In it a wounded and forlorn warrior is seen after a battle, apparently now questioning his path in life. In this dramatic and hyper-realist film, three ghost-like characters appear to personify the chaos of feelings and thoughts that surface and clash within the warrior's heart and mind as he swings from enthusiasm and happiness to disappointment, grief and despair, thus revealing what takes place in a man who is required to demonstrate strength and courage in times of war and crisis.

Born in 1971 in Beijing, Yang Fudong now lives and works in Shanghai. Among his recent exhibitions are the Marion Goodman Gallery, Paris, France, 2011, and Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation, Sydney, Australia, 2011. Other solo exhibitions include the National Museum of Contemporary Art, Athens, Greece, 2010; Hara Museum, Tokyo, Japan, 2009; Museum of Contemporary Art, Denver, USA, 2009; MuHKA, Antwerp, Belgium, 2009; Zendai Museum of Modern Art, Shanghai, China, 2009.

Visitor information

Gallery opening hours: Monday by prior arrangement. Tuesday–Saturday, 10 a.m.–6 p.m. Sunday, 12–5 p.m.

Extended opening hours during FRIEZE week:

Monday 10 October, 10 a.m.–6 p.m. Saturday 15 October, 10 a.m.–9 p.m.

Admission: Free

Directions

Tube: Old Street and Angel

Buses: 43, 205 and 214 via City Road

Note to editors

For more information, please contact Anna Lehbruck on 020 7490 7373 or at anna@parasol-unit.org

Founded in December 2004, Parasol unit foundation for contemporary art is an educational charity registered in England and Wales, which operates purely for the public benefit. Central to the Parasol unit philosophy is a total commitment to artists and their creative endeavour, an attitude which leads to a singular relationship developing between each exhibiting artist and the foundation.

Every year the foundation organises four challenging and thought-provoking exhibitions in a variety of media and also sets up other artistic projects. Each gallery exhibition is accompanied by a publication and related educational events. The foundation does not bear the founder's name, and its exhibitions are not derived from the founder's own collection. Admission to all exhibitions is free of charge.

Parasol unit operates like publicly funded institutions in London. Currently about 60% of the funding is provided by the founder and 40% through a combination of charitable organisations, private donations, the sale of merchandise and Gift Aid. The exhibition space has been put at the disposal of the foundation free of charge by the founder. Thanks to this new model between private funding and public support one of London's most vibrant contemporary art spaces has come to exist. We thank you for your visit and support.

For more information go to www.parasol-unit.org

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