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Contributors

Bao Dong is an art critic and independent curator based in Beijing. He graduated from the Sichuan Fine Arts Institute in 2006 with an M.A. in Art History. Since 2003, he has curated exhibitions in many art organizations as well as contributed essays on contemporary Chinese art to many academic forums and research programs. He has been invited to give lectures at many art institutions and joined the work team of the A4 Contemporary Arts Center in an advisory capacity in 2013. He is a contributing editor to the bilingual magazine *LEAP* and a writer for *cn.NYTimes.com*. His articles have been published in journals such as *Dushu*, *Yishu: Journal of Contemporary Chinese Art*, *Art World*, *Art China*, *Art Today*, *Arts Criticism*, *Fine Arts Literature*, *Rong Bao Zhai*, and *Jiangsu Pictorial*. Recently he curated *Conception as Enzyme* (A4 Contemporary Arts Center, Chengdu, 2010), *Wordscape/Horizon: The Inaugural Exhibition of Contemporary Art and Poetry* (The OCT Art & Design Gallery, Shenzhen, 2011), *Fresh Eyes 2011: Framework Growing Inside Out* (He Xiangning Art Museum, Shenzhen, 2011), and *Wang Peng: One Man As Group* (Today Art Museum, Beijing, 2013). Other exhibitions he co-curated include *Is This World Real?* (Lianzhou Foto, Lianzhou, 2010), *Jiang Zhi: If This Is a Man* (Guangdong Times Museum, Guangzhou, 2012), and *ON | OFF: China's Young Artists in Concept and Practice* (Ullens Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing, 2013).

Michele Chan was an investment banker before establishing her career in the arts, which appeals to her aesthetic senses. She is currently a researcher/writer in the Contemporary Asian Art Department at Sotheby's Hong Kong while continuing to pursue independent research on the intersections among language, temporality, and visual culture. She is particularly passionate

about giving a voice to contemporary art from Hong Kong and hopes to expose Hong Kong art to a wider audience. She contributes regularly to *Art Asia Pacific*, *Art Radar*, and the Sotheby's blog. She holds a B.B.A. in Law from the University of Hong Kong (2006–09) and an M.A. in Contemporary Art Theory from Goldsmiths, University of London (2013–15).

Chen Tong is an artist, curator, writer, editor, and the founder of Libreria Borges Bookshop and Libreria Borges Institute for Contemporary Art in Guangzhou. From 1979 to 1983, he studied in the Chinese Painting Department of Guangzhou Fine Arts Academy, where he has continued to teach since 1986. In 1992, he launched the *Encyclopedia of Experimental Art* (EALS), a series of publications about contemporary art, film, photography, and theory. In 1994, he established Libreria Borges, where he organized events relating to contemporary art and culture. In 1998, he co-established (with Lu Yi) a publishing studio, Collection Minuit, where he introduced works from a French publishing house, Les Éditions de Minuit (Midnight Press), especially works of the *nouveau roman*, and introduces and translates them into Chinese. In 2009, he received Chevalier des Arts et Lettres from the French Ministère de la Culture. His work has been presented in exhibitions such as the 2nd and 3rd Guangzhou Triennial (2006, 2008), the 50th Venice Biennale (2003) and the 4th Gwangju Biennale (2002).

Julie Chun is an independent art historian and lecturer who has been based in Shanghai since 2011. She serves as the Art Convener of the Royal Asiatic Society China in Shanghai, where she delivers monthly lectures at museums and galleries to widen the public's understanding of artistic objects, past and present. She lectures

frequently on art for the various foreign Consulate General offices in Shanghai and organizes art lectures at the Shanghai American Center. She holds an M.A. in Art History from San Jose State University and B.A. in Economics from University of California at Irvine. She also completed graduate studies in East Asian Modern History at Yonsei Graduate School of International Studies, Seoul, and conducted research in Modern Art at University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). She is a regular contributor to *Yishu Journal of Contemporary Chinese Art*, and her art reviews have been published in *Randian* and *LEAP* online.

Echo He is the founder and curator of Fou Gallery, an apartment gallery and creative lab in New York dedicated to promoting the young generation of Chinese contemporary artists. She also works at Pace Gallery as a research and archive associate. She received B.A. and an M.A. degrees in Business Administration from Peking University (2004–10) and an M.A. in Visual Arts Administration from New York University (2011–13). She has curated many exhibitions in China and in the United States, and regularly contributes to a variety of publications, including *The Art Newspaper (China)*, *Art 289*, and *Art China*, among others.

Carol Yinghua Lu is a Ph.D. student in art history at the University of Melbourne. She is a contributing editor of *Frieze Exhibitionist* and is on the advisory board of *The Exhibitionist*. Lu was on the jury for the Golden Lion Award at the 2011 Venice Biennale. She also served as the co-artistic director of the 2012 Gwangju Biennale and co-curator of the 7th Shenzhen Sculpture Biennale in 2012. From 2012 to 2015, she was the artistic director and chief curator of OCAT Shenzhen. Lu was the first visiting fellow in the Asia-Pacific Fellowship program at the

Tate Research Centre in 2013. In collaboration with artist Liu Ding, Lu has been working on research re-examining the lasting legacy of socialist realism in the contemporary art and intellectual practice and discourse in China.

Lu Mingjun has a Ph.D. in History from Sichuan University (2011). He is currently Associate Professor of Art History at Art College, Sichuan University. Lu's research interests include the history of modern and contemporary Chinese art and art historiography in Europe and America since the 1960s. His recent publications include *Writing and Narrating of Vision: The Vision of History and Theory* (Guangxi Normal University Press, 2013), *Visual Cognition and Art History: Michel Foucault, Hubery Damisch, Jonathan Crary* (Guangxi Normal University Press, 2014), and *On Meta-Painting: An Art Institution and Cognition of Universality* (Henan University Press, 2015). In 2015, he was the recipient of the Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Greater China Research Grant.

Lu Pei-Yi is a Taipei-based curator, researcher, and art critic. She received her Ph.D. in Humanities and Cultural Studies from the London Consortium, Birkbeck College, University of London. Her research interests are off-site art, museum studies, and curating in theory and practice. Recently, a research-based book edited by her, *Contemporary Art Curating in Taiwan (1992–2012)* was nominated for the 10th Award of Art China. She was an associate curator of the 8th Shenzhen Sculpture Biennale (2014); a curator of *Micro Micro Revolution* (2015) for Centre for Chinese Contemporary Art (CFCCA); and a co-curator of *Negative Horizon: The 5th Taiwan International Video Art Exhibition* (2016). She is currently an assistant professor of the Department of Cultural Creative Industry at the National Taipei University of Education.

Yishu Awards for Critical Writing and Curating on Contemporary Chinese Art

INTRODUCTION

Yishu: Journal of Contemporary Chinese Art is pleased to announce the recipients of the Yishu Awards for Critical Writing and Curating on Contemporary Chinese Art. The two awards for writing are now in their sixth year, while three new awards, two for curators and one for a senior writer or curator, are debuting in 2016, bringing the total number of annual awards to five. For 2016, we are delighted to present the Award for Senior Critic/Curator to Chen Tong, the Award for Critical Writing on Contemporary Chinese Art to Carol Yinghua Lu and Lu Mingjun, and the Award for Curating Contemporary Chinese Art to Echo He and Bao Dong.

The awards were established to encourage and recognize writers and curators who are making an outstanding contribution to understanding the history and current issues that surround the vast realm of contemporary Chinese art. There is no submission process, and recipients are given no prior notice that they are being considered. Recipients may live anywhere in the world. We select two highly respected individuals in the field of contemporary Chinese art to each recommend one recipient for emerging or mid-career critical writing and one for curatorial work. And we select one emerging or mid-career writer or curator to recommend one senior critic or curator who has had an important impact upon his or her work and contemporary Chinese art as a whole.

The recommenders for 2016 are Amy Cheng, a curator and writer based in Taipei, who, with music critic Jeph Lo, co-founded TheCube Project Space, which serves as an independent art space devoted to the research, production, and presentation of contemporary art in Taipei. She has curated many exhibitions, including the Taiwan Pavilion at the 54th Venice Biennale, as well as shows in Taipei Hong Kong, Manchester, Luxembourg, and Shanghai. Pi Li is a renowned art critic and curator of contemporary Chinese art, who has served since 2012 as the Sigg Senior Curator at the M+ Museum of Visual Culture, Hong Kong. He co-founded the Boers-Li Gallery, Beijing, in 2005, and has worked with major institutions in Europe such as the Centre Pompidou, Paris, and Tate Modern, London as well as written for various publications internationally. Eugene Y. Wang is the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Professor of Asian Art at Harvard University, where he received his Ph.D in 1997. His extensive publications range from early Chinese art and archeology to modern and contemporary art and cinema.

RECIPIENTS OF THE 2016 YISHU AWARDS

Chen Tong

For the senior critic or curator award, Amy Cheng recommended Chen Tong, an artist, writer, curator, editor, and founder of Libreria Borges, Guangzhou (1994), which also housed Liberia Borges Institute for Contemporary Art (2007 and now called CANTONBON), and co-founder of Video Bureau, Guangzhou and Beijing (2012). Amy Cheng notes:



Chen Tong, Award for Senior Critic or Curator. Photo: Chen Zhiqiang.

Chen Tong is an “inciter” of culture. He has vision and passion, allowing him to cross over different forms of cultural practices. Since the 1990s, Chen Tong has maintained a profound and consistent attitude while shuttling between different artistic realms and identities. His influences exceed pure writing or exhibition curating, and he initiated Libreria Borges Bookshop, the most significant independent art and culture bookshop in China. Its significance lies not only in the fact that it is a bookshop but also a base for multiple platforms of artistic activity.

Video Bureau, co-founded by Chen Tong, with Zhu Jia and Lu Fang, has focused on constructing an archive for contemporary Chinese video art. Walking through its doors, people will be able to understand the development of Chinese video art and contemporary art and access resources to nurture curatorial thinking about contemporary art. Chen Tong is a “curator living in the future” and an activist who unites social criticism and cultural thinking with action. For me, Chen Tong is undeniably a cultural crusader.

Bao Dong

Pi Li recommended Bao Dong for his curatorial work and Lu Mingjun for writing on contemporary Chinese art. About the two, he states:



Bao Dong, Award for Curating.

Bao Dong and Lu Mingjun have maintained the autonomy of their work as well as intensively continuing to develop their ideas with dedication. China’s complex environment has led the production, exhibition, and interpretation of art to evolve around the market and commercial galleries. On the other hand, the progression of globalization along with China’s political and cultural ecology has resulted in a commitment in engaging art and social realities using rational approaches. Even if artworks, exhibitions, and criticism are not directed towards commercial conventions, they still can be politicized as humanitarian and utilitarian

instrumentalist approaches. Bao Dong and Lu Mingjun's work is invaluable in resisting these tendencies. As curators and critics, they have deliberately dissociated their academic endeavours from both the art market and commercial forces, a position that is difficult to maintain in China.

In terms of exhibitions and research, Bao Dong refuses to use art as overstated news to declare simple or cheap political stances. Instead, he is committed to exploring the intricate relationships among art, artists, society, history, and individuals. He pays particular attention to how language is constructed around these relationships, and he examines alternative possibilities and transformations in the language of art that is influenced by museums, social media, art mediums, and their contexts.

Lu Mingjun



Lu Mingjun, Award for Critical Writing.

Lu Mingjun's criticism has kept a distance from the common sociological approach in Chinese art criticism. He aims to explore the relationship of humanist values to traditional art history methodologies and contemporary art practices as a means to expand the parameters of our perception of contemporary Chinese art. His research on Chinese art adeptly integrates methodologies in historical research and social criticism, giving a clear and emphatic quality to his writing. It is worth mentioning that despite Lu Mingjun's extensive use of Western methodologies through a rational approach to China's particular issues, he maintains the eloquence of the Chinese language in his profound and thought-provoking writing.

In their curatorial and theoretical practice, both Bao Dong and Lu Mingjun have sustained their independence from the at times shallow but exaggerated segregation between art and society, mainstream and alternative, left and liberal, China and the West, and positions their autonomy into alternative outcomes.

Carol Yinghua Lu

Eugene Y. Wang recommended critic and curator Carol Yinghua Lu for critical writing on contemporary Chinese art. He says:



Carol Yinghua Lu, Award for Critical Writing.

Carol Yinghua Lu has been active as an art critic and editor in China since 2004. What makes her art criticism distinct is a heightened sensitivity to the perceptual lens through which artworks are filtered and discussed. She is quick to identify and capture the dynamics

of emerging artworks that self-consciously establish new conceptual contexts unencumbered by clichéd discursive armatures. In articulating such conceptual frameworks, she participates in creating new paradigms and defining new critical-discursive contexts to frame art practices.

Her sensitivity to the discursive may stem from the art-historical self-awareness that informs her critical writing. For her, art criticism is not just rhetorical stances; often, it amounts to historicizing and “archaeological” projects of excavation and reenactment of past situations. Her art criticism also evinces an understanding of the big picture and puts forward a nuanced observation of changing states within individual artworks. She observes with her own eyes and puts on her own-devised thinking hat. That is a precious quality for a young critic.

Echo He

For curating contemporary Chinese art, Eugene Y. Wang recommended Echo He. He applauds her young career:



Echo He, Award for Curating. Photo: Yiyao Li, artwork ©2016 Zhai Liang. Courtesy Fou Gallery, Brooklyn.

Echo He is to be recognized for the distinct gallery she co-founded with Jiayi Yang. Fou Gallery is a gallery like no other. It creates an alternative space to showcase artworks that resonate with “grassroots” art communities and young art aficionados and collectors less entangled in

commercial motivations and investment-mindedness. It also doubles as a creative lab where attendants participate in art-related activities and aspirational events. Located in an ordinary apartment building in Brooklyn, Fou Gallery differs from the traditional white cube gallery space by offering high-quality exhibitions in a home. After it opened, the gallery soon gathered strong momentum and attracted a loyal following. Its success stems in part from the curator’s sensitivity to young generational aspirations and concerns.

Echo He’s curatorial zeal is impressive. In the past two and a half years, she has curated eleven shows in New York and Beijing, and organized over thirty events including lectures, salon talks, performances, afternoon tea parties, and film screenings. Fou Gallery has become a key platform for a new generation of Chinese artists. Echo He likely did not anticipate that Fou Gallery would become a notable and viable model for alternative exhibition spaces, a creative lab animated by communal enthusiasm and youthful ardor, and an ecology that thrives outside of mainstream gallery culture.

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