

Chen Qiulin: *One Hundred Names*

Exhibition Dates: 16 January – 27 February 2016

Exhibition Opening: Saturday 16 January 2016, 3-5pm

To be launched by Edmund Capon, AM, OBE

Media Preview: Thursday 14 January 2016, 11:00 – 11:45am



Chen Qiulin, *The Garden No. 4* (2007), Giclee print. 82 x 100cm. Courtesy the artist and A Thousand Plateaus Art Space, Chengdu.

4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art presents first Australian solo exhibition by leading female Chinese artist Chen Qiulin

One Hundred Names offers a rare survey of over a decade of work by one of China's most acclaimed contemporary artists, Chen Qiulin, focusing on the central issues of migration, displacement, ancestry, urban development and its disruption of traditional Chinese culture and way of life.

'Chen belongs to a generation of Chinese artists whose work articulates the social repercussions of China's continual push for development.' Says 4A curator Toby Chapman.

'Using a combination of photography, video installation, performance and other mediums, Chen investigates the many contradictions inherent in contemporary life in a country where the tensions and conflicts between tradition, ritual and development are constantly tested.'

Chen was born in Hubei Province and currently works in Chengdu, an important metropolitan hub in southwest China. She has remained working in the same area of China throughout her career, drawing inspiration from the socio-political issues affecting everyday life around her.



Left: Chen Qiulin, *The Hundred Surnames in Tofu (Chen)* (still) (2004-2014), video installation. Courtesy the artist and A Thousand Plateaus Art Space, Chengdu. Right: Chen Qiulin, *Old Archway* (2009), Giclee print, 154 x 124cm. Courtesy the artist and A Thousand Plateaus Art Space, Chengdu.

She was raised in Wanzhou District which was partially submerged by the construction of the massive Three Gorges Dam on the Yangtze River, and her celebrated *Migration* (2007 – 2009) project addressed the physical and psychological upheaval caused by the construction of the dam, which forced more than one million people from their ancestral homes.

The exhibition features a series of early photographic works from the *Migration* series including *The Garden* (2007) and *Dawning Bell* (2009), which see the artist stage theatrical performances against the backdrop of Chen's home city of Wanzhou, collaborating with local workers as both cast and crew.

Chen will also present a newly commissioned video installation, *A Hundred Names for Kwong Wah Chong* created specifically for 4A in response to the history of Sydney's Haymarket, exploring the complex histories of early Chinese migration to Australia.

The work continues the artists' 10 years of ongoing interest in tofu as an artistic medium and its symbolism within Chinese culture. In this new iteration, *A Hundred Names for Kwong Wah Chong* commemorates the history of early Chinese migration to Australia through a series of one hundred videos of the artist inscribing family names of early migrants into blocks of tofu, which are then documented throughout their process of disintegration and decay.

Chen also presents a series of short documentaries which attempt to create psychic connections between contemporary China and early migrants to Australia through shared family names and well-known traditional tofu recipes.

The artist will be available for interview and photo opportunities. Please direct media enquiries to: Joanna Bayndrian, joanna@creative-asia.net +61405933896 or Hannah Skrzynski hannah@creative-asia.net +61412825586

4A

EXHIBITION OPENING: Saturday 16 January 2016, 2-4pm

EXHIBITION DATES: 16 January – 27 February 2016

VENUE: 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art, 181 – 187 Hay St, Sydney NSW

4A OPENING HOURS: Tuesday – Saturday, 11am – 6pm, closed on public holidays.

One Hundred Names travels to Shepparton Art Museum from 4 May - 31 July 2016.

www.4a.com.au

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ABOUT 4A

From early beginnings as an independent space on Sussex St incorporated in 1996 to its present location on Hay St in Sydney's Chinatown, 4A has come a long way to being recognised as one of Australia's foremost contemporary art organisations. 4A is committed to creating opportunities for artists, developing platforms to exhibit and encouraging critical discussion along the way. 4A is known both within Australia and internationally as an authority on the contemporary art from the Asia Pacific Region.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Chen Qiulin (b. 1975, Yichang, Hubei Province) belongs to a generation of younger artists whose work articulates the social repercussions of China's ever-constant push for political and economic reform. Visualising the many contradictions inherent to the condition of contemporary living in a country where the tension and conflict between tradition, custom and ritual are consistently challenged, Chen Qiulin's carefully considered photographic and video compositions are powerful provocations of progress and ambition.

Chen Qiulin has presented solo exhibitions including 'The Empty City' (2008), Honolulu Museum of Art, USA; 'Chen Qiulin: Selected Works' (2012), Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum, USA and has participated in numerous exhibitions in China and abroad, recently featured in 7th Gwangju Biennale, Gwangju, Korea, 2008; 'Displacement: The Three Gorges Dam and Contemporary Chinese Art', David and Alfred Smart Museum of Art, University of Chicago, USA, 2008; 'China Power Station II', Astrup Fearnley Museum of Modern Art, Oslo, Norway, 2007; 'THIS IS NOT FOR YOU - Sculptural Discourses', Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary, Vienna, Austria, 2006-2007; and 'The Wall: Reshaping Contemporary Chinese Art', Millenium Art Museum, Beijing, China and Albright-Knox Art Gallery, New York, USA (touring), 2005.