

Carriageworks and 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art in association with Sydney Festival present *Song Dong: Waste Not* and *Song Dong: Dad and Mum, Don't Worry About Us, We Are All Well*

Sydney, Australia: This summer Carriageworks and 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art in association with the Sydney Festival will present two exhibitions by one of China's pre-eminent artists, Song Dong.

Presented at Carriageworks, *Waste Not* is a monumental installation occupying the entire public space of the multi-disciplinary arts institution. Conceived by the artist following the death of his father, the work represents the artist's mother's process of mourning and remembrance. Consisting of the entire contents of her house *Waste Not* reflects a journey of hardship and grief, resulting in a display of personal resilience and ultimately a celebration of life.

Presented at 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art, *Dad and Mum, Don't Worry about Us, We are All Well* is an important survey of Song Dong's work from the past two decades. The exhibition contains video, photographic, neon and installation work and reinforces the power of simple actions and the process of remembering. Song Dong's work evokes the experience of social and cultural dislocation as well as the compelling connections between parents and children.

Beijing-based artist Song Dong has been at the forefront of conceptual art in China for more than two decades and has become known for his personal performances and installations.

Recently presented to high acclaim at MoMA (New York) and the Barbican (London), *Waste Not* will be presented exclusively in Australia at Carriageworks, as part of the official Sydney Festival 2013 program. Combined with 4A's survey show *Waste Not* also represents Song Dong's first solo exhibition in Australia.

First created in 2005, *Waste Not* has been described as one of Song Dong's most powerful and poignant works. The work consists of more than 10,000 domestic objects and family items collected by the artist's mother over five decades, ranging from household pots and pans, to blankets, bottle tops, toothpaste and toys. Through the work, Song Dong sought to give his mother "space to put her memories and history in order."

"Through this work I wished to reconnect my mother with people and give her a new start in life," Song Dong explained about *Waste Not*.

Whilst the installation was originally conceived to assist his mother in her grieving for her late husband, the work took on additional meaning when Song Dong's mother passed away suddenly in 2009. Today, the artist sees the installation as a tribute to his parents, as well as a meditation on family life.

The title of the work *Waste Not* makes reference to the Communist saying hailing from the Chinese Cultural Revolution 'wu jin qu yong', which literally translates to 'waste not'. This adage encouraged citizens to save and reuse objects: an essential life practice during periods of social and political turmoil in China.

Carriageworks Director Lisa Havilah said: "Carriageworks is proud to present this major installation by renowned international artist Song Dong for the first time in Australia. *Waste Not* continues to strengthen the breadth and quality of the Carriageworks contemporary visual arts program and is a high-note to commence our 2013 artistic program."

4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art Director Aaron Seeto said: "*Waste Not* is quite literally a once in a lifetime work. 4A is proud to be bringing this work to Australian audiences, and to be presenting a selection of art historically important works to contextualise the significant role that Song Dong plays as a leading conceptual artist whose influence and impact on global contemporary art is well understood."

Ends

SONG DONG: WASTE NOT

Exhibition dates: 5 January – 17 March 2013
Carriageworks
245 Wilson Street, Eveleigh, NSW
Free entry

SONG DONG: DAD AND MUM, DON'T WORRY ABOUT US, WE ARE ALL WELL

Exhibition dates: 5 January – 30 March 2013
4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art
181-187 Hay Street, Sydney NSW
Free entry

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ABOUT THE ARTIST:

Song Dong (born 1966) lives and works in Beijing and has been at the forefront of conceptual art in China since the 1990s. Known for combining aspects of performance, video, photography, sculpture, and installation, Song Dong's works are often ephemeral and utilize modest materials that explore notions of transience and impermanence in personal, local, and global spheres. He has long been part of a traditional, tight-knit Beijing community, and his work reflects the everyday concerns and realities of his neighbors. Song Dong graduated from the Normal University in Beijing in 1989 and has exhibited widely in Asia and abroad. Recent exhibitions include *Song Dong* (2008) at the Zendai Museum of Modern Art in Shanghai; *Between Past and Future: New Photography and Video from China* (2004-2006) at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago; and *Oalors, a chine: Chinese Contemporary Art* (2003) at the Center Pompidou in Paris. His work was presented at the 2004 Sao Paulo Biennale in Brazil and at the 2003 Istanbul Biennale. He was also shown in the exhibition *Inside Out: New Chinese Art Exhibition* (1998) at P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center.

ABOUT CARRIAGEWORKS

Carriageworks presents a contemporary multi-arts program that engages artists and audiences with contemporary ideas and issues. The program is artist led and emerges from Carriageworks' commitment to reflecting social and cultural diversity. The Carriageworks artistic program is ambitious, risk taking and unrelenting in its support of artists. Carriageworks is a cultural facility of the NSW Government and is supported by Arts NSW. The Carriageworks program can be viewed at <http://www.carriageworks.com.au>

ABOUT 4A CENTRE FOR CONTEMPORARY ASIAN ART

4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art is Australia's peak national body for contemporary Asian art and cultural thinking. 4A is a highly regarded pioneering organisation that fosters excellence and innovation in contemporary Asian and Australian culture through research, documentation, development, discussion and presentation of contemporary visual art. 4A's aim is to ensure contemporary visual art plays a central role in understanding the dynamic relationship between Australia and the Asia-Pacific region. 4A occupies a unique position in the Australian contemporary art world and in the contemporary art discourse of the Asian region. Its position is based on its long-term focus on living Asian cultures (as opposed to traditional arts); its support of Asian-Australian artists; its close relationship with artists; its curatorial innovation and commitment to excellence and its program that leads the national discussion of the Asian-Australian context. <http://www.4a.com.au>