

GALLERY4A

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for a Chinese Language media release, more program information,
hi-res images or media interviews.

MEDIA RELEASE

QIU ANXIONG 邱黯雄 乡愁 NOSTALGIA

Solo exhibition

NOSTALGIA QIU ANXIONG
28 January – 28 February 2009
Gallery 4A
181-187 Hay Street, Sydney

Cinema Alley

Screening of Qiu Anxiong video artworks
Friday 30 January, 830PM
One night only, Parker Street, Haymarket
FREE EVENT - Bookings required

Image: still image from *Nostalgia*, 2008.



Gallery 4A is proud to present **Nostalgia**, a solo exhibition of recent work by Shanghai-based artist QIU ANXIONG. Internationally acclaimed, QIU is considered to be one of the most exciting artists who has emerged amongst a new generation of contemporary Chinese artists. *Nostalgia* is a key element of Gallery 4A's program of international contemporary Asian art and is an event of the City of Sydney Chinese New Year Festival, which in 2009 coincides with the Australia Day celebrations.

Nostalgia consists of a major solo exhibition at Gallery 4A and a special one-night only screening of key animated 'brush and ink' video works in Gallery 4A's *Cinema Alley* an offsite street 'cinema' initiative for contemporary video art.

In *Nostalgia*, QIU illustrates the passing of time against the frenetic movements of the contemporary world with a heightened sense of yearning for time past. The work was filmed in Sichuan province prior to the earthquakes in 2008. *Nostalgia* illuminates the plight of the human condition in the artist's characteristically meditative style and is presented as a multi-channel video projection.

On Friday 30th January at 830PM, Parker Street, Haymarket (adjacent to Gallery 4A) will be transformed into a temporary 'street cinema' for a special one night only screening of Qiu Anxiong's animation-based video art work. The screening will include *The New Sutra of the Mountains and the Seas* based on the ancient Chinese manuscript, *Classic of the Seas and Mountains*. This work, which was presented to critical acclaim at the Shanghai Biennale in 2006 consists of over 6000 of Qiu's own original ink-wash drawings. His depiction of a world in transition - of destruction and construction is aptly themed for the New Year period, a time for consideration of the world in renewal.

Qiu Anxiong will be in Sydney and is available for media interviews.

Currently based in Shanghai, Qiu Anxiong was born in Sichuan, the south-western region of China in 1972. He graduated from the Sichuan Art Academy in 1994 and undertook further training at the University of Kunsthochschule, Kassel, Germany in 2003. Qiu has had solo exhibitions both in his native China and in Switzerland and Japan. In recent years he has attracted serious curatorial attention, in 2007 he was selected to participate in group exhibitions at the Kunsthaus in Zurich, Switzerland, the Museum of Modern Art in Oslo, Noga Gallery in Tel-Aviv, Israel, and Yokohama Zaim Art Centre, Japan and the Contemporary Art Centre of South Australia, Adelaide. In 2006, he was awarded an Honourable Mention at the biannual Chinese Contemporary Art Awards placing him among the ranks of artists such as Cao Fei and Zheng Guogu.

QIU ANXIONG / CINEMA ALLEY is an official event of the 2009 City of Sydney Chinese New Year Festival .

CINEMA ALLEY is an initiative of Gallery 4A and has been sponsored by the City of Sydney and the NSW Government through ARTS NSW. The project has been made possible by the generous support of Geoff and Vicki Ainsworth and ARTCELL



Qiu Anxiong

Born 1972 in Sichuan, China
1994 Graduated from the Sichuan Art Academy, China
2003 Graduated from University of Kunsthochschule, Kassel, Germany
Currently lives and works in Shanghai

Solo Exhibition

2007

3rd Lianzhou International Photo Festival, Lianzhou
"Staring into Amnesia" Universal Studio, Beijing
Qiu Anxiong Exhibition, Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo, Japan
"Minguo Landscape", Grace Li Gallery, Zurich, Switzerland

2006

"Animation and Painting by Qiu Anxiong", Hanart TZ Gallery, Hong Kong
Qiu Anxiong selected works, 37SECONDS PROGRAMME SEVENTEEN,
Big Screen Liverpool, UK

2005

"Decoding Time-Shredding Narratives", mixed median exhibition, Bizart
Art Center, Shanghai

2002

"Painting by Qiu Anxiong", Hanart TZ Gallery, Hong Kong

Selected Group Exhibitions:

2007

"Video Lounge", Kunsthau Zuerich, Switzerland
"China Power Station Part2", Arstrup Fearnleys Museum of Modern Art,
Oslo, Norway
"Animation Painting" San Diego Museum of Art, USA
"Animated Histories" Noga Gallery, Tel Aviv, Israel
"Chinese Ink Painting", Guan Shanyue Museum, Shenzhen, China
"Contemporary Visual Art Project SA 2007", The Contemporary Art Cen-
tre of South Australia, Australia
"Art Lan@Asia" Yokohama ZAIM ART CENTER, YOKOHAMA, Japan

2006

China Independence Film Festival, Paris, France
"China Power Station" Battersea Power Station, Serpentine Gallery,
London, UK
"restless", Museum of Contemporary Art, Shanghai
6th biennial Shanghai, Shanghai Art Museum
Entry Gate: Chinese Aesthetics of Heterogeneity Moca Shanghai
Twelve CCAA Contemporary Art Awards Shanghai Zhengdai Museum of
Modern Art
Yellow Box- Contemporary Art in Chinese Space Shanghai Qingpu Xia-
oximen

2005

"Gift", Modern Art Gallery of Hangzhou Normal college
"East Wind - West Wind", The Creek Art Center

2004

"Four Corners" Singapore Tyler Print Institute
"Exhibition of Celebrating 20 Years of Hanart TZ Gallery" Hongkong Arts
Centre
"24 Artist from Germany and China", Alexander Ochs Gallery, Beijing
"Mensa", Alexander Ochs Gallery, Beijing

2003

"New landscapes, New Portraits- Shen Xiaotong, Qiu Anxiong" Hanart TZ
Gallery Hongkong
"From China with Art", The Exhibition of Contemporary Chinese Painting,
Galeri Nasional Indonesia, Jakarta

2001 "Chengdu Biennial", Chengdu, China

About Gallery 4A

Gallery 4A, the Asia-Australia Arts Centre was founded in 1997 as an initiative of the Asian Australian Artists Association Inc. (4A, a non-profit organization established to present and promote the work of Asian-Australian artists and a greater understanding of diverse cultures through the arts.

Our exhibition program focuses on contemporary art practice. Our exhibition program is culturally diverse, and many of the projects and artists who exhibit here reflect this diversity. The exhibition program has played a significant role in the cultural development of this region. We also run regular public programs including video art screenings and artist talks.

The Asia-Australia Arts Centre provides a vital cross-cultural dialogue through an innovative and comprehensive program of exhibitions, conferences, seminars and workshops. Over the past 10 years we have exhibited over 300 artists from around Australia as well as from India, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Vietnam, China, the USA, the UK and New Zealand.

MEDIA CONTACT

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images and to arrange interviews.

QIU ANXIONG

邱黯雄 乡愁

NOSTALGIA

28 January - 28 February 2009
Gallery 4A

and the one night only 'Cinema Alley' screening of
Qiu Anxiong's video works.
Friday 30 January 2009,
830PM Parker Street, Haymarket

LIST OF WORKS

Groundfloor

Flying South (2006)
Animation
soundtrack: Ou Bo
9 minutes 18

Level one

Nostalgia (2008)
Six channel digital video installation with 5.1 surround sound
soundtrack: Ou Bo



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ARTCELL

QIU ANXIONG Nostalgia and Cinema Alley are official events of the 2009 City of Sydney Chinese New Year Festival.

Cinema Alley has been sponsored by the City of Sydney and supported by the NSW Government through ARTS NSW.

The project has been made possible by the generous support of Geoff and Vicki Ainsworth, ARTCELL and Gary Carsley.

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The Australian Arts Foundation is supported by



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Australian Government



Australia Council for the Arts

CITY OF SYDNEY

Gallery 4A gratefully acknowledges its Principal Patrons Geoff and Vicki Ainsworth, Daniel and Lyndell Droga and Dr Dick Quan; Patrons Johnson Pitton Walker, Richard Funston, John Lam-Po-Tang, Kerr and Judith Neilson; Benefactors Peter Talbot, Steensen Varming and Dr Gene and Brian Sherman AM and Friends Ari and Lisa Droga, Phillip Haw, David Droga, Richard and Margie Holden, VisAsia, Annika Droga-Susskind, Isabella and Sam Droga, Ann Lewis and Peter Fay. The assistance of the Commonwealth Government through the Australia Council, its funding and advisory body, the NSW Government through Arts NSW and the City of Sydney.

QIU ANXIONG
邱黯雄 乡愁
NOSTALGIA

Qiu Anxiong's *Nostalgia* unfolds at a slow meditative pace. Over 40 minutes of simple vistas of fields, abandoned factories and forests are shown across six channels of near-monochromatic video. Built up with moody tones of grey snow, wind and rain, this large-scale video installation evokes both grand Chinese landscape painting and pictorial traditions of the black and white photographed landscape. The wide-angled format captures things unfolding in the camera's vision such as animals on a hill, mosquitos buzzing or smoke billowing from a small fire in a field. Qiu's videos seem endless and ongoing. Accompanied by a metered soundtrack which samples the natural world, the tempo reinforces the video's sense of infiniteness.

In this work, Qiu plays on our expectations that something should happen, that some narrative or drama should unfold. When asked about the six channel construction of *Nostalgia*, Qiu is adamant that the films slowness, or its wide-angled, 'spectator-on-a hill'-view is not about capturing a cinematic realism. Instead, he asks us to watch and take time to consider the unique ordinariness of the world. He remarks: "as modern human beings, we are always looking for something more and something new. We are not really sensitive to our surroundings. We want to see many things, and hear many sounds". Like much of his work, there are Buddhist precepts which inform it – that we do not encounter the world with just our eyes, or only our ears, but with all five of our senses.

Most of Qiu's work refers back to Chinese classical texts and philosophy, which may be influenced by the artist's 5 years spent at university in Germany. During this time he describes being culturally disconnected from the western culture of his surrounds. This experience of isolation and disconnection allowed Qiu to delve into these texts, which up to that point he had never read. It was through the cultural distance between Germany and China, that Qiu realized how Chinese he really was. It is from here that his major work *The new book of the mountains and seas* (part 1) was initially conceived. This three screen digital video animation was constructed from over 6000 original brush and ink paintings, depicting a world of fantasy and of curious places undergoing dramatic transformation. Qiu's work was based on the classic text *Classic of Mountains and Seas* (山海经) a book of mythology and geography. Using the mythology of the original text, which depicts a fantastic world of strange, almost alien creatures, Qiu was able to develop a narrative, which drew parallels with the transforming world in which we live. This overlap of literary history and alien universes, read in the context of the contemporary world, unfolds through the slow-moving format of hand-constructed brush painting.

Nostalgia was filmed in and around Qiu's hometown in Chengdu, Sichuan province at the beginning of 2008. Returning to Chengdu after five years of living in Shanghai, Qiu was struck by the great differences between the two cities – Shanghai is international and always moving, while Chengdu is rural and relaxed. Filming *Nostalgia* allowed him the opportunity to stop and think of how the world has changed, he wanted to evoke the feeling of remembering what it might have felt like as a child, playing with natural things like sand, water, earth and the trees. He admits that "I am not interested in presenting a wistful, melancholic state, I do not live in the past. This work is really about stopping and looking back, taking the opportunity to consider the things that might be overlooked, not necessarily to relive it or to venerate it. It is also interesting that after I filmed this work, the earthquakes of 2008 occurred, so this place no longer exists like this. We can never return to the past, I filmed it and one year later everything has already changed."

In certain sections of the work, Qiu's conception of the past is amplified by the introduction of images of abandonment, for example factories from the 1980's, or paths lined with detritus of domestic situations. He is suggesting to us, that while we can't return to a single moment in time, history continues to reverberate – it appears as ruins on the landscape. Remnants of the past which exist within the present haunt this work, for example the juxtaposition of old factories and new cities; farmland and new development. In *Nostalgia*, Qiu doesn't give us a sense of the world in transformation, as much of the discussion about contemporary China points out to us. If anything, *Nostalgia* acts as an antidote to the continual forward momentum of progress. He is more interested in considering the human impact of change, and asks us to consider the present not just in the context of the recent past, but within a much longer narrative, encompassing both the historical and the literary. He is interested in the possibility of a human history. His is a poetic and intellectual position, which understands history as being defined beyond the narrative of the contemporary situations in which we find ourselves.

Aaron Seeto

All quotes are from an interview with the author, with assistance and translation by Zhang Yanping

GALLERY4A

QIU ANXIONG

Nostalgia

Gallery 4A presents *Nostalgia*, a solo exhibition of recent work by Shanghai-based artist Qiu Anxiong. Born in 1972 in Sichuan in the south-west of China, Qiu is considered one of the most exciting artists to have emerged in the wake of the new generation of Chinese contemporary artists.

An event of the 2009 City of Sydney Chinese New Year Festival



Coinciding with the 2009 Chinese New Year celebrations, Gallery 4A will present a solo exhibition of recent work by Shanghai-based artist Qiu Anxiong.

Qiu is considered one of the most exciting artists to have emerged in the wake of the new generation of Chinese contemporary artists.

Nostalgia, Qiu's solo exhibition at Gallery 4A, will consist of a series of new work presented in a multi-channel video installation as well as photographic lightboxes that will occupy both levels of the gallery. The artist moves fluidly between his black and white ink-wash sketches in a style recalling traditional scroll painting, and the use of new media such as animation, real time video and installation. In *Nostalgia*, Qiu will illustrate the passing of time against the frenetic movements of the contemporary world, heightening our sense of yearning for time past. *Nostalgia* will illuminate the plight of the human condition in the characteristically meditative quality of the artist's work.

Qiu's work will also be presented at an off-site venue in Haymarket, as part of Cinema Alley, Gallery 4A's street-cinema project for next year. Scheduled for screening is Qiu's critically acclaimed *The New Sutra of the Mountains and the Oceans*, a mythological depiction of the evolution of the industrial world. Based on the ancient Chinese manuscript, *Classic of the Seas and Mountains*, the animation consists of 6000 of Qiu's own original ink-wash drawings, many of which ominously depict the invasion of idyllic villages by high-rises and monstrous machinery. Screened for the first time in Australia, the work was previously exhibited at the Shanghai Biennale to wide appeal and critical success.

Qiu Anxiong was born in Sichuan, the south-western region of China in 1972. He currently lives and works in Shanghai. Graduating from the Sichuan Art Academy in 1994, the artist undertook further training at the University of Kunsthochschule, Kassel, Germany in 2003. Qiu has had solo exhibitions both in his native China and in Switzerland and Japan. In 2007 alone, he was selected to participate in group exhibitions at the Kunsthaus in Zurich, Switzerland, the Museum of Modern Art in Oslo, Noga Gallery in Tel-Aviv, Israel, and Yokohama Zaim Art Centre, Japan and the Contemporary Art Centre of South Australia, Adelaide. In 2006, he was awarded an Honourable Mention at the biannual Chinese Contemporary Art Awards placing him among the ranks of artists such as Cao Fei and Zheng Guogu.