

For Emily

When I was first invited to exhibit at the Asia-Australia Arts Centre, I conceived of this show as a dialogue with the works of an artist who at that time represented Australian culture for me – Emily Kame Kngwarreye. To me, Australia was a totally strange land, somehow beyond imagination, but these paintings spoke to me with a strong and familiar voice. This was in 1998.

Five years have passed since then and the world has changed dramatically, so that I felt it necessary to modify the exhibition concept. I still wish to dedicate this show to Emily. I think it is even more vital to do so now. Yet, now I rather think of the exhibition as a kind of homage. Homage to a person, who for me represents certain values that I feel are endangered just now.

First, for me Emily stands for the transgressing of borderlines, not only of "categories of gender and race" as Judith Ryan wrote in her essay for the catalogue of Emily's exhibition in the Queensland Art Gallery in 1998, but also of prejudice and fear. Hence, since September 11, 2001 – like during the Cold War – the polarisation of ideologies/religions again plays an important role in political discourse. Attributes such as "good and evil"; "right and wrong" are again implemented and prejudice and fear anew have become mighty agents in the redefinition of a world of clearly defined borderlines.

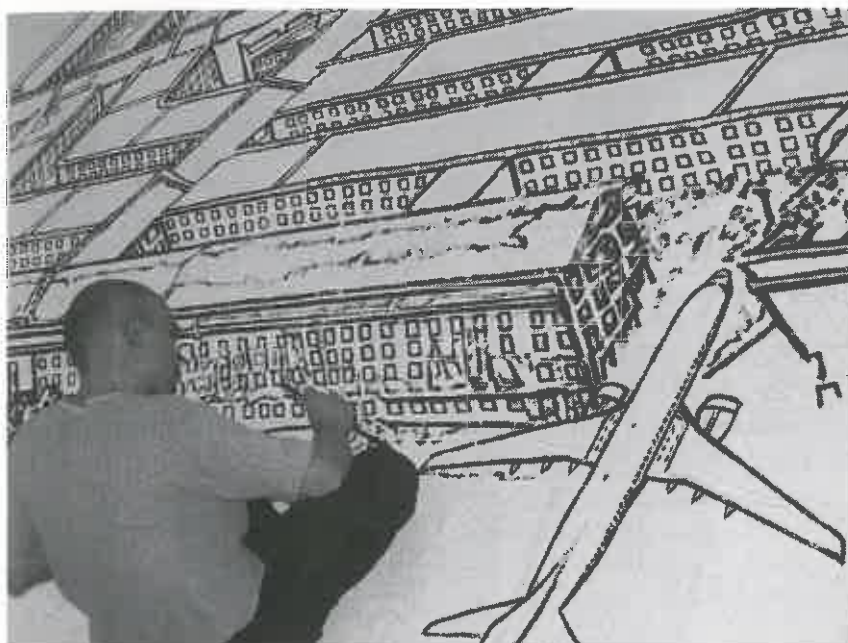
For me Emily represents a kind of spiritual freedom. This kind of freedom is indispensable to look at the events from a critical distance.

I feel familiar with Emily's work because it is simple, direct and strong, embracing the world, in which she lived, intuitively. Similarly I am using a simple and direct language. The calligraphy I show is vigorous and crude, the line drawing of the aircraft is as simple and direct as the image of the crushed Pentagon is strong and my recorded shouting voice shocking.

My homage to Emily is the demand to protect what is a treasure to every human being – spiritual freedom – and this particularly because we are not living in Utopia.

Yang Jiechang

20.03.2003



Yang Jiechang working on *Double View* (2003), ink on canvas, 280 x 800cm

Yang Jiechang

Born 1956 in Foshan, China

Yang Jiechang's oeuvre consists of a variety of artistic media: painting, collage, installation site-specific works, performance and sculpture. Painting for him, is a way of contemplation, not a means of representation. The concepts inspiring his painting, such as repetition and the overlapping of images, reoccur in his works and in other media, such as his multi media installation *Zai zao Dong Cunrui* (*Recreate Dong Cunrui* (1999-2002), or *I saw it in the Sky* (2002). The artist was trained in the techniques of paper mounting, calligraphy and traditional Chinese painting at the Fine Arts Academy Guangzhou (1978 – 1982), where he taught until 1988. Living in Paris and Heidelberg (Germany) since 1989 he participated in numerous exhibitions around the globe. Next to Gu Dexin and Hung Yong ping he was one of the Chinese artists participating in the exhibition *Magiciens de la Terre* (Centre Pompidou, Paris) in 1989. Other exhibitions include *Chine Demain Pour Hier* (France 1990), *Silent Energy* (MoMA Oxford, 1993), *Shenzhen International Ink Biennial* (1998, 2000, 2002), *Pause – Gwanju Biennial 2002* (Korea) and *Zone of Urgency – Venice Biennial 2003*. In Yang's works Chinese tradition and contemporary art form a stirring coalition and how to implant Chinese traditional painting, aesthetics and thought into a contemporary context is one of his main concerns. Daoist thought, post-structuralist deconstructive strategies and an iconoclast attitude, which Yang kept from his times as a Red Guard, are important means to attempt this integration.

Yang Jiechang For Emily

Multi-media installation with calligraphy, computer, website, painting and sound

28 March - 19 April 2003

This project has been presented by the Asian Australian Artists Association Inc.

The curator would like to thank Yang Jiechang, Martina Koppel-Yang, John Clark, George Poonkhin Khut, Natalie Seiz, Melissa Chiu who initiated this project and the NSW Ministry for the Arts Gunner Studio Complex.

asia-australia arts centre
gallery4a

181-187 Hay Street
Sydney NSW 2000
Tel + 61 2 9212 0380
Fax + 61 2 9281 0873
info@4a.com.au
Gallery hours: Tuesday - Saturday, 11am - 6pm
Closed public holidays

Director: Linda Goodman
Director of Public Relations: Jennifer Kwok
Curator: Aaron Seeto
Intern: Rebecca Jaffe
Volunteers: Owen Leong, Evelyn Liang, Monte Pakham



The Asian Australian Artists Association Inc gratefully acknowledges its principal sponsors James Fairfax AO and Chintia Ria, the assistance of the Commonwealth Government through the Australia Council, its funding and advisory body, the NSW Ministry for the Arts and the City of Sydney.

The big lie: no plane
hit the Pentagon
the plane finished its
mission on 9/11
structure collapsed
by 10:28 AM
the plane was
seen on the
11th floor, it managed
to do all this with
no damage to the
pentagon. Despite its
weight (100 tons) and
its speed, the plane
just slipped in the
air and did not
hit the Pentagon.
Luckily (if that can
be said at all) the
plane hit a section
of the Pentagon
which was not
occupied at that
time. A half-hour
later the plane was
seen to have
crashed outside
the Pentagon.
If the plane was
seen to have
crashed outside
the Pentagon, it
would necessarily
have left a hole
in the Pentagon.
The hole was
not taken in the
first minutes: the fire

20.03.2003

Yang Jiechang
For Emily

Gallery 4A
Asia-Australia Arts Centre

28 March - 19 April 2003

Yang Jiechang

Yang Jiechang, *For Emily* (2003), detail, ink and acrylic on Xuan paper, 250 x 600cm