

DOUBLE INFINITY

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“Today, tomorrow, but not too far”

Double Infinity

Shanghai 29/04 – 23/05/2010

On the 29th of April *Double Infinity*, a joint initiative by the Van Abbemuseum and Arthub Asia, will open at the Dutch Culture Centre in Shanghai, parallel to the World Expo 2010. *Double Infinity* is a collaborative encounter between a north-western European art museum and an Asian art initiative and comprises of an exhibition, a performance series, a lecture programme and a publication. *Double Infinity* marks the first time that a European museum opens itself and its collection to the responses of artists living and working in China – responses that form a host of enriching, humorous and critical insights. The festive opening of the programme on the 29th of April 2010 will be conducted by Eric Verwaal, the Consul-General of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Shanghai and will feature a performance by the Chinese artist Zhou Xiaohu and Thai artist Surasi Kusolwong and a special work by Comfortable Collective artist Maya Kramer. On the 15th and 16th of May an extensive public programme with discussions and performances by Julika Rudelius and Surasi Kusolwong, and others, will be held at the theatre in the Dutch Culture Centre, Shanghai.

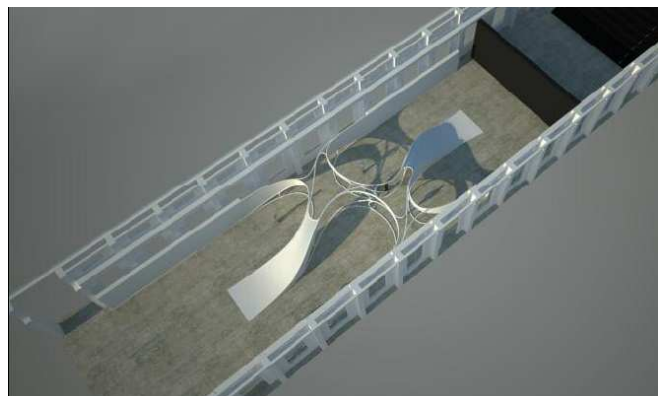
Exhibition and Performances

The *Double Infinity* project loops around and crosses over itself time and again. It is at one and the same moment an exhibition, a performance series, a lecture programme, a publication, a promotional tool, a celebration, a collaboration and a playful look at international relations.

The project is organised on occasion of John Körmeling's design of the Dutch Pavilion, *Happy Street*, at the 2010 Shanghai World Expo. It seeks to bring two states and cities – China and the Netherlands, Shanghai and Eindhoven – into an imagined dialogue with each other, drawing on their everyday realities and uniqueness. Equally, *Double Infinity* focuses on artists' visions of cities and citizenship, real and imagined architectures and the claims of cosmopolitanism made by world exhibitions through history and across continents.

Double Infinity is the result of a collaborative encounter between a European museum, the Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven, the Netherlands, and the Shanghai-based art initiative, Arthub Asia. The works exhibited are in part drawn from the Van Abbemuseum collection and in part produced by artists at the invitation of Arthub Asia.

The original inspiration for *Double Infinity* lies in the artistic approach of John Körmeling. His wide-ranging, cross-disciplinary, unconventional stance towards architecture, urban planning and design has led to a particular selection criteria for the works from the Van Abbemuseum collection and from the participating artists from China and rest of Asia.



Wang Zhenfei, exhibition design sketches *Double Infinity*, Dutch Culture Centre, 2010.

The work of Thai artist, Surasi Kusolwong, for example will transform the exhibition space into a playground for a peculiar “treasure hunt”. The back of the gallery is filled with tonnes of thread waste, into which a gold necklace with the Chinese symbol for *Double Happiness* will be

hidden every week – made available only to lucky members of the audience who find it. Kusolwong uses the current world economic crisis as the underlying motive for developing this installation, which connects the traditional value of gold and Chinese culture, to the shifting the focus of the media from economic affairs to art.

Another example is Comfortable Collective, an artist collective based in Shanghai set up by young Shanghainese artists and in this edition includes Gao Mingyan, Jin Shan, Li Mu and Maya Kramer. Together, they focus on the cultural conflict that is inherent to artistic methods of working site-specifically, inciting viewers to participate by physically experiencing the works of art. Comfortable is concerned with relational aspects of art-making and the role of the collection within an art system. In this case, the group has responded to the Van Abbemuseum's collection by manipulating, copying, moulding and dropping works from the collection, laboriously adding further layers to the finished art objects. How can an artist's attitude influence the perception of an entire collection?

Lectures and performances

The performance and lecture programmes present a mix of European and Asian responses to the project's main conceits.

Performances during opening on the 29th of April :

- ◆ **Comfortable Collective**

In this work, Maya Kramer, one of the members of Comfortable Collective, collaborates with candy makers to dazzle visitors to the exhibition opening with blown sugar versions of works museum collection which were not selected for the exposition.

- ◆ **The Party Camp Project by Zhou Xiaohu**

During the opening of the exhibition Zhou Xiaohu invites all local and international guests as well as party waiters and technical staff to join the opening, if they follow a series of orders made by the artist.

- ◆ **Golden Ghost (Double happiness comes to the door) by Surasi Kusolwong**

Thai artist, Surasi Kusolwong installs a whole room full of waste thread material in which a golden necklace is hid every week and can be found by lucky visitors. The finder is able to keep the necklace, making the "game" a truly worthwhile experience, playing with the extremes of value within society.

The weekend of the 15th and 16th of May (11 am - 5 pm) is dedicated to the extensive public programme *Last Two Decades Revisited*, which takes its inspiration from the alternative timeline of Chinese art history and the historical significance, but also current fragility, of cultural exchanges. Participants include: Zhang Peili, Charles

Esche, Li Zhenhua, Alexander Brandt, Hu Jueming, Song Haidong, Carol Lu, Jin Shan, Chen Shaoxiong, Pieter van Wesemael, and more.

During this weekend performances take place on several occasions:

- ◆ **15 May - Rites of Passage by Julika Rudelius**

Originally conceived as a film, Rudelius will organise a live performance around the notion of translation. Her work will be simultaneously translated into Chinese, Dutch and English, in the live context of the performance, creating a continuous shifting of meaning in the work.

- ◆ **16 May, film screening from Asia Archive's film *From Jean-Paul Sartre to Teresa Teng: Contemporary Cantonese Art in the 1980s***

Based on primary research, rare film footage and personal interviews with key artists, AAA's documentary bears witness not only to the "reading fever" that gripped the Chinese art world in the 1980s. It also highlights the experimentalism and verve of artists and critics in South China whose contributions to the development of contemporary art have been long lasting and deep.

- ◆ **16 May - Golden Ghost (Double happiness comes to the door) by Surasi Kusolwong**

Same performance as performed on 29th of April.



Xijing Men, *I Love Xijing*, 2009, performance. *The Urban Planning of Xijing*.
Courtesy of the artists

The publication

The publication, designed by Dutch designer, Joost Grootens, seeks to map a world of crossovers and collisions between art and urban design starting from both Shanghai and Eindhoven. Through photographic essays Jiang Jun and Ingmar Swalue conceptually and aesthetically locate these strange but close sites for our comparison. The book includes contributions by the artists and curators of *Double Infinity* and an interview with Pieter van Wesemael, an urban designer and Professor at the Technical University Eindhoven in Architectural Design and Urban Culture. "Today, tomorrow, but not too far" is a quote by Van Wesemael, which he considers a more pragmatic realism in the 21st century World Expo than the

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focus on history in the 19th and the focus on the future in the 20th century.

Participating artists

Lara Almarcegui, Johanna Billing, Stanley Brouwn, Comfortable Collective (Jin Shan, Gao Mingyan, Li Mu, Maya Kramer), Cao Fei, Alicia Framis, Liu Gang, HHD_FUN (Wang Zhenfei & Wang Luming), Job Koelewijn, John Körmeling, Surasi Kusolwong, El Lissitzky, David Maljkovic, Julika Rudelius, Speedism, Xu Tan, Zhou Xiaohu, Xijing Men Collective (Chen Shaoxiong, Gimhongsok, Tsuyoshi Ozawa).

Performances

Surasi Kusolwong, Julika Rudelius, Zhou Xiaohu.

Publication

Joost Grootens (design), Clare Butcher (editor), Ingmar Swalve (photography), Jiang Jun (text and photography), texts by the curators Charles Esche, Defne Ayas, Davide Quadrio and Remco de Blaaij.

Curators

Charles Esche, Defne Ayas, Davide Quadrio, Remco de Blaaij.

Location

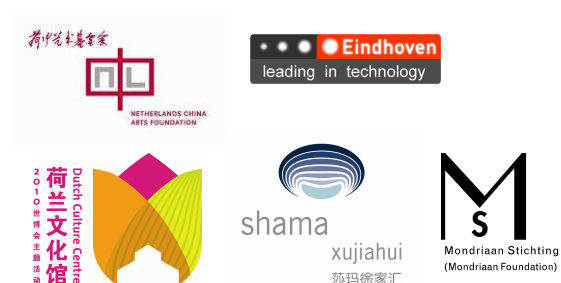
Dutch Culture Centre
800 Show, 800 Changde Road
200040 Shanghai, China.
More information on www.2010dcc.com.

Opening hours:

Tuesday - Sunday: 11 am - 7 pm.

Partners

Netherlands China Arts Foundation, Gemeente Eindhoven, Dutch Culture Centre, DutchDFA (Dutch Design Fashion and Architecture), Shama Xujiahui, Mondriaan Foundation. Chinese artists and Surasi Kusolwong productions are made possible thanks to Far East Far West Ltd.



dutch ▶ design ▶ fashion ▶ architecture

art hub
art hub



John Körmeling, *Hot Spring*, 2002. Photo Peter Cox

Press preview

Thursday 29 April 2010, 2 pm

Arthub Asia is a multi-disciplinary organization devoted to contemporary art creation in China and rest of Asia, founded in 2007. In collaboration with museums and other public / private spaces and institutions, it initiates and delivers ambitious art projects through a sustained dialogue with visual, performance, and new media artists. Arthub Asia is committed to furthering experimentation, knowledge-production and diversity among dedicated artists, art professionals, scholars, and arts organizations in the region.

Arthub Asia is a Network Partner of Prince Claus Fund 2008-2010.

For the editors

Contact: www.arthubasia.org or press@arthubasia.org.

The Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven is one of the first public museums for contemporary art to be established in Europe. The museum's collection of around 2700 works of art includes key works and archives by Lissitzky, Picasso, Kokoschka, Chagall, Beuys, McCarthy, Daniëls and Körmeling. The museum has an experimental approach towards art's role in society. Openness, hospitality and knowledge exchange are important. We challenge ourselves and our visitors to think about art and its place in the world, covering a range of subjects, including the role of the collection as a cultural 'memory' and the museum as a public site. International collaboration and exchange have made the Van Abbemuseum a place for creative cross-fertilisation and a source of surprise, inspiration and imagination for its visitors and participants.

For more information, please visit www.vanabbemuseum.nl.

For the editors

For more information and photographs, please visit: www.vanabbemuseum.nl/press.

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