

NGV NEWS

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National
Gallery of
Victoria

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Wang Gongxin: Video Artist

NGV International | 11 April – 28 September 2014 | Free entry



Image caption: Wang Gongxin born Beijing 1960 *Relating - it's about Ya* 2010 nine channel video installation, sound, 60 min Collection of the artist © Wang Gongxin

The National Gallery of Victoria will present the large-scale, immersive video works of Wang Gongxin, one of China's most respected video artists, in a solo exhibition to open on 11 April 2014.

Wang Gongxin: Video Artist will present three works that reflect upon contemporary and traditional Chinese culture, displaying Gongxin's characteristically subtle humour and subverting viewers' expectations by turning seemingly ordinary situations upside down.

Tony Ellwood, Director, NGV, said: "This exhibition extends the NGV's focus upon international new media through the work of pioneering and influential Chinese contemporary artist Wang Gongxin. Gongxin is a driving force of China's avant-garde movement and was among the first to create a site-specific video installation in that country. The NGV is pleased to exhibit his captivating video works."

Wang Gongxin: Video Artist is dominated by the major nine-screen installation *Relating – it's about Ya*, 2010, an exuberantly filmic experience that deals with Beijing's relentlessly fast pace of life in an intense display of sound, colour and movement. *Basic colour*, 2010, is a five channel video installation that depicts extreme close-ups of a naked body in which the human form is gradually hidden and abstracted by continuously-snowing powdered pigments. The third work, *Dinner table*, 2006, is a recent NGV acquisition which depicts a Chinese

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banquet laden with carefully presented dishes – projected onto a steeply tilted white table – defying gravity to slide slowly and impossibly upwards.

Born in Beijing in 1960, Gongxin trained as an oil painter in a socialist-realist style before his first encounter with video art in New York, where he lived from the late 1980s to mid 1990s. Back in Beijing, he and his artist wife Lin Tianmiao helped pioneer the Chinese video art movement, turning their home, and later a corner of a relative's restaurant, into a gallery where fellow artists could meet and show their work. During this time he began to produce video art and became one of China's earliest and most influential video artists with works that explored the diffusion of ideas between the West and China. Gongxin now lives and works between Beijing and New York.

A full-colour 32-page publication will be available for RRP\$19.95 from the NGV Shop.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a series of public programs including a free panel discussion titled 'New Media - New China' on Saturday 12 April at which the artist will speak, co-hosted by the NGV and Asialink. Visit ngv.vic.gov.au for further details.

Wang Gongxin: Video Artist will be on display at NGV International from 11 April to 28 September 2014. Open 10am–5pm, closed Tuesdays. Free entry.

The exhibition is generously supported by Sony Australia.

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