



**SYMPOSIUM**  
**Gender, Identity, and the Crossing of Cultures in**  
**Contemporary Chinese Art and Media**

**September 25–26, 2009**  
**Columbia College Chicago**  
**Film Row Cinema, 1104 S. Wabash, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor**

**Friday, September 25**  
**6:00pm – 8:00pm**

**Artist presentations & discussions**

**Introduction:** **Jane M. Saks**, Executive Director, Ellen Stone Belic Institute for the Study of Women and Gender in the Arts and Media, at Columbia College Chicago

**Chair:** **Elena Valussi**, Faculty, Department of Humanities, History and Social Sciences

**Artist Presentations:**

**Olivo Barbieri**, Milan-based photographer

**Fang Ling-an**, Chicago-based artist

**Shi Guorui**, Beijing-based photographer

**Speedism**, artist collaborative of Julian Friedauer and Pieterjan Ginckels based in Belgium

**Dan S. Wang**, Chicago-based artist, printer, and writer

**Discussants:**

**Natasha Egan**, Associate Director and Curator, Museum of Contemporary Photography

**Davide Quadrio**, independent curator, founder of Bizart and ArtHub, Shanghai & Bangkok

**Wu Hung**, Professor, Art History Department, University of Chicago, and curator

**Saturday, September 26**  
**9:00am – 10:30am**

**Panel I**

**Introduction:** **Elena Valussi**, Faculty, Department of Humanities, History and Social Sciences

**Chair:** **Wu Hung**, Professor, Art History Department, University of Chicago, and curator

**Presentations:**

**“Women documentary filmmakers in contemporary China”**

Paola Iovene, Asst Professor, Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures, University of Chicago

**“Gender Bender: A Discussion of Contemporary Art from China”**

Julie Walsh, Director of the Walsh Gallery, Chicago

**“The experience of curating *Cruel/Loving Bodies*, an exhibition of Chinese female artists”**

Sasha Welland, Asst. Professor in Women Studies, and Anthropology at the Univ. of Washington, Seattle

**Discussant:** **Dan S. Wang**, Chicago-based artist, printer and writer

**Saturday, September 26  
11:00am – 12:30pm**

**Panel II**

**Chair:** Wu Hung, Professor, Art History Department, University of Chicago, and curator

**Presentations:**

**"Critical Discourses: Debating the value of Chinese art in the 1990s."**

Peggy Wang, Ph.D. Student, Art History Department, University of Chicago

**"The necessary instability of hybrid cultures. New Silk Roads: repositioning the role of art activists in Asia at the end of the 1990's"**

Davide Quadrio, independent curator, founder of Bizart and ArtHub, active in Shanghai and Bangkok

**Discussant:** Dan S. Wang, Chicago-based artist, printer and writer

**2:00pm – 4:00pm  
Film Screenings, with Q&A**

***My Dear* by Gu Yaping**, featuring two women from Beijing's contemporary art world who struggle for personal and artistic integrity. (2007. 82 mins). Introduced by Paola Iovene.

***Wasted Feelings (Sprecare Sentimenti)* by Daria Menozzi**, a short video of people passing by during the Feast of the Republic in Tiananmen Square in October 1995. (1997. 17 mins). Introduced by Daria Menozzi.

***This symposium is organized by:***

**Elena Valussi**

Department of Humanities, History and Social Sciences  
Columbia College Chicago

***Presented by:***

**Department of Humanities, History and Social Sciences  
Ellen Stone Belic Institute for the Study of Women and Gender in the Arts and Media  
Museum of Contemporary Photography  
Columbia College Chicago**

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For more information about other related Focus: China programs, visit [www.colum.edu/focuschina](http://www.colum.edu/focuschina), [www.colum.edu/institutewomengender](http://www.colum.edu/institutewomengender), or [www.mocp.org](http://www.mocp.org).

**Columbia**  
COLLEGE CHICAGO

ELLEN STONE BELIC  
INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF  
**WOMEN&GENDER**  
IN THE ARTS AND MEDIA  
AT COLUMBIA COLLEGE CHICAGO



## Bios of Participants:

**Olivo Barbieri** is a Milan-based photographer whose works are in museums and private institutions worldwide. Barbieri chose China and its culture as inspiration more than 20 years ago, photographing its evolution in works that have appeared in numerous exhibitions: “Not So Far East,” “Virtual Truths,” and most recently, “Site Specific\_Shanghai.” His latest “Site Specific” series are large-format photographs and 35mm films, taken from a helicopter where the city is seen as an avatar of itself. Barbieri has exhibited his work at the Venice Biennale (1993, 1995, 1997), and in galleries and museums throughout Europe, North America, and China.

**Natasha Egan** is Associate Director and Curator of the Museum of Contemporary Photography, Columbia College Chicago. Egan serves as a member of the curatorial team and has organized more than a dozen international and national single artist exhibitions, such as Katarzyna Kozyra, Anne and Bernard Blume, Sophie Calle, Anna Fox, Oliver Boberg, Nikki S. Lee, Zwelethu Mthethwa, and Seydou Keta. One of her many larger thematic exhibitions was “Made in China,” focusing on the global impact of manufacturing in China. She holds an MA in Museum Studies and an MFA in Fine Art Photography from Columbia College Chicago, as well as a BA in Asian Studies from the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, Washington. The Museum’s concurrent exhibition “Reversed Images” is curated by Davide Quadrio in collaboration with Natasha Egan. [www.mocp.org](http://www.mocp.org)

**Fang Ling-An** is a Chinese-American artist born in Taipei (Taiwan) and now living in Chicago. She is a graduate of Temple University, Tyler School of Art (BFA, 2003) and the University of Illinois at Chicago (MFA, 2005). Her work has been exhibited in numerous national and international institutions, including Artspace (New Haven, CT), DIVA International Video Art Fair (Miami, FL), City of Nanjing Art Center for Painting and Sculptures (China), CAMAC Centre D’art (France) and the Media Art Festival at the Armenian Center for Contemporary Art (Armenia). She recently had a solo show at Hyde Park Art Center in Chicago during Summer 2009, entitled “The Whole World Celebrates Together.” [www.fang-ling-an.com](http://www.fang-ling-an.com)

**Paola Iovene** is Assistant Professor in Chinese Literature, East Asian Languages and Civilizations. Her interests are 20<sup>th</sup> century Chinese literature, cinema, criticism, and intellectual history; theory and practice of the avant-garde; modernism and postmodernism; theories of national and world literature; narratology; literature’s relationship to other media; and documentary film. She is working on a project about the aesthetics of contemporary Chinese documentary film, focusing on the ways in which Chinese documentary filmmakers engage with questions of cinematic time.

**Daria Menozzi** is an Italian independent filmmaker. She studied at the University of Bologna and founded VBR, a video-production company in Modena. She has made several short films and videos that have been screened nationally and internationally. Since 2004, she has also worked with Olivo Barbieri with his “Site Specific” series.

**Davide Quadrio** founded BizArt Art Centre in Shanghai, the first non profit independent creative lab in China for a decade, and Arthub, a platform to support artistic endeavors in Asia. With both organizations, Quadrio has organized hundreds of exhibitions, educational activities and exchanges in China and abroad since 2007. He has worked with Arts Council of England’s artist-in-residence project in Shanghai (Artist Links), and was Creative Director of Bund18. He has curated exhibitions worldwide such as “Olivo Barbieri: Site Specific, Shanghai” (2006), “Shanghype!, Museum of Cinema, Turin (2007), “eArt festival” in Shanghai (2008), and “China China China!!!” in Florence (2008) and the University of East Anglia, Norwich, UK (2009). Quadrio is the guest curator of the Museum of Contemporary Photography’s concurrent exhibition, “Reversed Images” in collaboration with Natasha Egan. [www.arthubasia.org](http://www.arthubasia.org)

**Jane M. Saks**, is Executive Director of the Ellen Stone Belic Institute for the Study of Women and Gender in the Arts and Media, at Columbia College Chicago. As a feminist activist, arts administrator, writer and educator, Saks has focused on arts and culture, women, gender, race, LGBTQ issues, and political, human rights and social justice movements. She has spoken widely at cultural and civic institutions and has produced original works across many disciplines. Recently, she was honored with a “40 Who’ve Made a Difference Award” by Business and Professional People for the Public Interest, in recognition of BPI’s 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2009.

**Shi Guorui** is a Beijing-based photographer who produces large-scale camera obscura photographs. He graduated from Nanjing Normal University’s Photography Department in 1992. Shi has completed more than fourteen large-scale projects, which have taken him across the globe from the base camp of Mount Everest to The Great Wall of China to Alcatraz in San Francisco. His works are in both museums and private collections internationally, and have appeared in numerous solo and group exhibitions around the world.

**Speedism** is the artist collaborative of architects Julian Friedauer and Pieterjan Gincjels based in Germany and Belgium. Their 3D animated videos border such fields as, architectural theory, visual arts, urban tactics, and scriptwriting. By randomly mixing materials together as if virtual DJs, their work becomes collages of information giving rise to diverse points of departure but never with a concrete conclusion. Their work in China reflects the way in which a city’s multilayered realities can clash.

**Elena Valussi** has a Masters and a doctorate from the University of London, School of Oriental and African Studies, on the intersection of religion and gender in China. She teaches East Asian Culture at Columbia College Chicago, and Chinese Religions at the Graham School of the University of Chicago. She has published on the subject of bodily images in a religious context in many international refereed journals and scholarly publications. She has been invited to speak at Harvard, Cambridge, Oxford, and London, as well as in universities in Germany, China, Japan, Taiwan and Bhutan. More recently, she has been interested in Chinese Contemporary art, and guided a group of Columbia College students to Shanghai with the course “Shanghai, History, Culture and Art”, which has a special focus on Contemporary Art.

**Julie Walsh** is Director of Walsh Gallery in Chicago, and a council member of the Asia Society in New York. Walsh's collection of contemporary art appeared in exhibitions in the U.S. and worldwide. Exhibitions from the gallery have been reviewed in many international publications. Walsh Gallery artists have appeared in Biennials and Triennials around the world. The gallery itself participates frequently in international art fairs including Art Dubai, Photo New York, Bridge London, Shanghai Contemporary and DIVA art fair in Paris. [www.walshgallery.com](http://www.walshgallery.com)

**Dan S. Wang** is an artist, printer, and writer. He recently curated an 18-month stretch for the Talking Points series at the Hyde Park Art Center. He is the author of the widely disseminated pamphlet *Downtime at the Experimental Station*, and recently participated as a featured visiting artist in the SOHO in Ottakring festival in Vienna, Austria. Other writings have appeared in the Journal of Aesthetics & Protest (LA), Art Journal (New York), SITE (Stockholm), WhiteWalls (Chicago), and in many on-line publications. He helped to co-found the experimental cultural space Mess Hall in Chicago.

**Peggy Wang** is a PhD candidate in Art History at the University of Chicago. She is currently writing her dissertation, titled "Responding to the World: Contemporary Chinese Art and the Global Exhibitionary Culture in the 1990s," about how the explosion of the global art scene in the 1990s prompted artistic, discursive, and exhibitionary responses inside of China.

**Sasha Welland** received a PhD in Cultural Anthropology from the University of California, Santa Cruz, and is currently Assistant Professor of Anthropology and Women Studies at the University of Washington in Seattle. Her first book was *A Thousand Miles of Dreams: The Journeys of Two Chinese Sisters*. Her current research project is "Experimental Beijing: Contemporary Art Worlds in China's Capital." In 2006, she curated "Cruel/Loving Bodies," an exhibition featuring work by Chinese, Hong Kong, and Chinese-British feminist artists. Her writing has appeared in many refereed journals.

**Wu Hung** is the Harrie A. Vanderstappen Distinguished Service Professor of Art History, East Asian Languages & Civilizations, at the University of Chicago, and Director of the University's Center for the Art of East Asia. He is also a Consulting Curator at the Smart Museum of Art at the University of Chicago. He grew up in Beijing, where he studied art history at the Central Academy of Fine Arts. From 1973-78 he was on the research staff at the Palace Museum in the Forbidden City, then moved to Harvard University, where he gained a doctorate in art history and anthropology in 1980. He is a pioneer in the field of American sinology in systematically comparing texts and visual signs. Since the 1980s he has significantly furthered contemporary Chinese art in the USA. Wu Hung has published many books, articles and exhibition-texts about contemporary Chinese art and visual culture. His recent publications include: *Remaking Beijing: Tiananmen Square and the Creation of a Political Space* (2005); and *Transience: Chinese Experimental Art at the End of the Twentieth Century* (1999). Most recently, Wu Hung curated the exhibition *Displacement: The Three Gorges Dam and Contemporary Chinese Art*, presented at the Smart Museum of Art.

**Columbia College Chicago** is an undergraduate and graduate institution whose principal commitment is to provide a comprehensive educational opportunity in the arts, communications, and public information within a context of enlightened liberal education. With more than 120 academic programs and nearly 12,500 students, it is the largest and most diverse private arts and media college in the nation. Columbia's intent is to educate students who will communicate creatively and shape the public's perceptions of issues and events and who will author the culture of their times. Columbia is an urban institution whose students reflect the economic, racial, cultural, and educational diversity of contemporary America. Columbia conducts education in close relationship to a vital urban reality and serves an important civic purpose by active engagement in the life and culture of the city of Chicago. [www.colum.edu](http://www.colum.edu)

**Ellen Stone Belic Institute for the Study of Women and Gender in the Arts and Media** was established at Columbia College Chicago in March 2005. It is recognized as a national and international creator, presenter, and collaborator of multidisciplinary programming on the discourse of gender, culture, creativity and community. Since 2005, the Institute has been offering a dynamic and innovative approach that merges applied arts and cultural production with critical theory and academic research. Within this framework, the Institute addresses ideas of access, representation, equity, and participation, as well as race and class, using the arts and media as a central means of research, engagement, public education, and advocacy. The Institute offers a wide range of public programs, including exhibitions, performances and panel discussions, and supports new research and creative work through its Fellowship Program. [www.colum.edu/institutewomengender](http://www.colum.edu/institutewomengender)

**Museum of Contemporary Photography** at Columbia College Chicago is the only museum in the Midwest with an exclusive commitment to the medium of photography. By presenting projects and exhibitions that embrace a wide range of contemporary aesthetics and technologies, the Museum strives to communicate the value and significance of photographic images as expressions of human thought, imagination, and creativity. Concurrent with this Symposium, the Museum is presenting the exhibition "Reversed Images: Representations of Shanghai and Its Contemporary Material Culture" in its galleries from September 25 – December 23, 2009. [www.mocp.org](http://www.mocp.org)