



YANG FUDONG

Ye Jiang / The Nightman Cometh, 2011

35mm film on HD video, 19 min 21 sec

Born in 1971 in Beijing, China lives and works in Shanghai, China.

Yang Fudong's films, photographs and video installations are born out of an interest in the power of the moving image to explore subjectivity, experience and thought. He draws stylistically on different periods in the history of Chinese cinema to create open ended existential narratives that interweave quotidian ritual with dream and fantasy states. Yang trained as a painter in the China Academy of Fine Arts in Hangzhou. In the 1990s, he started to work in the medium of film and video. He is known for his cinematography and mastery of cinematic style, using 35mm film to produce powerful and poetic works about the human condition with its malaise and fantasies of everyday life. He possesses a sensitivity to the traditions of Chinese art, cinema and the place of the intellectual (the literati). Each of his films is philosophical and open-ended, engaging questions around both history and contemporary life, mostly depicting the lives of young people from his own generation, albeit with historical resonances that sometimes span many centuries. Through vignettes staged with classical precision, yang's works propose a poetics of place and a critique of time that is determined through the interaction of individuals rather than by political doctrine. Yang has produced a range of film and photographic works which capture besuited men practicing military exercises with toy swords (*Backyard - Hey! Sun is Rising*, 2001), track the chronic hypochondria/boredom of a young Hangzhou intellectual (*An Estranged Paradise*, 1997-2002), and cite the glamour of 1930s Shanghai (*Ms. Huang at M. Last Night*, 2006). The five-part series of black-and-white films, *Seven Intellectuals in a Bamboo Forest* (2003-07), shown in its entirety at the 52nd Venice Biennale in 2007, is an adaptation of the traditional Chinese tale known as *The Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove*, about a group of third century Chinese scholars and poets living in exile to escape political unrest. Using a consciously romantic framework that is both contemporary and slightly out of time, yang examines China through the eyes of young urban intellectuals as they try to establish what they really think and feel.

THE NIGHTMAN COMETH / YE JIANG, 2011

The single screen work shown here, unfolds in the realm of historical fantasy. An ancient warrior is seen wounded and forlorn after battle, in conflict about his path in life. Three ghost-like characters appear as emblems of feelings and thoughts that surface and clash within the warrior's heart and mind as he has to decide whether to disappear or continue fighting. Yang has preferred to describe this film as 'neo-realistic' rather than historical or allegorical: *Neo-realism* is a history theatre where current and contemporary social conditions come to play. Who exists realistically, the warrior baron in his period costume or the ghost in a modern outfit? When the ancient battlefield scene and other historical events appear and reappear, where do they belong, in the past, the present or the night-falling future?... There is hope nonetheless. The body is full of desire whereas the soul is more precious. His spirit is what backs him up in life. How should we live our lives now? How do we identify ourselves with neorealistic historical events and continue to search for spiritual meanings? What do we really want?" [DAVID ELLIOTT]

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2012** *Yang Fudong: Fifth Night*, Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver, Canada
2011 *Yang Fudong: Utopia and Reality*, Espoo Museum of Modern Art, Tapiola, Finland
One Half of August: Yang Fudong Solo Exhibition, Parasol Unit Foundation for Contemporary Art, London, UK
Yang Fudong, Marian Goodman Gallery, Paris, France
2010 *Seven Intellectuals In the Bamboo Forest*, Kunsthaus Baselland, Basel, Switzerland
Yang Fudong Solo Exhibition, Kino Kino, Sandnes, Norway
2009 *Yang Fudong: The General's Smile*, Hara Museum, Tokyo, Japan
Useful Life, MuHKA, Antwerp, Belgium

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2011** *Wanxiang: China Art Academy Photography Exhibition*, China Art Academy, Hangzhou, China
One World Exposition / Fifth Night, Spring Workshop, Hong Kong, China
2007 *Seven Intellectuals In the Bamboo Forest*, 52th International Art Exhibition, Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy