

Xiaoze Xie: Amplified Moments (1993 – 2008)

Curated by Dan Mills, travelling nationally

January 21 – March 18, 2012

Upper and Lower Galleries

Supported by an illustrated 92 page catalogue with three informative essays.

Since the mid nineties, Xiaoze Xie has created an impressive body of work. His sumptuously painted and conceptually rigorous paintings of stacks of newspapers, decaying books, museum libraries, and media images of current events have been exhibited extensively throughout the US and abroad. During this period, Xie has also created many works in other media including installations, photographs, and videos. *Xiaoze Xie: Amplified Moments (1993 –2008)* is the first exhibition and publication to look closely at work from each series of paintings and works in other media.

Although Xie intended to pursue a career in architecture, the violent military crackdown on student protesters at Beijing's Tiananmen Square in 1989 compelled him to shift his energies. He left the People's Republic of China three years later after completing his training as a painter, and began using symbolic imagery derived from newspapers, decaying books, museum libraries, and media images of current events. For Xie, stacks of printed pages represent not only cultural memory and the passage of time, but the ways in which history is interpreted and recorded according to various belief systems and political agendas.

Xie's labor-intensive paintings consist of successive layers of pigment applied over several weeks. Working largely from photographs, the artist paints in a manner that is influenced by his camera. Some imagery appears cropped, blurred, and hazy, as if viewed through a photographic lens or perhaps through the filter of memory. The resulting compositions reach near-photographic precision without losing the evidence of the artist's masterful brushwork.

Curricular connections: (Depts) Art and Visual Culture; Asian Studies; Philosophy; (GECs) Asian Art and Literature; Beauty and Desire; Chinese Language; Chinese Society and Culture; Color: Sight and Perception; Chinese language, Conflict and Threat; Culture and Meaning; Material Culture; Philosophy; Producing Culture; and courses that include the study of aesthetics, war, media, current events, among others, may find the exhibition a useful resource.



(L) *Flags & Banners: A Century of Student Movement in China*, 1994, oil and acrylic on wood, 117 x 141 x 26 inches
 (R) *Untitled (Chinese Leaders in the 1980s)*, 1995, oil on canvas, 72 x 61 inches (Theatre of Power Series)



(L) *March – April 2003, L.T.*, 2003, oil on canvas, 52 x 76 inches (Fragmentary Views series)
 (R) *April 2004, T.P.*, 2007, oil on canvas, 48 x 78 inches (Fragmentary Views series)



(L) *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Library (Dürer)*, 2006, oil on canvas, 48 x 72 inches (Museum Library series)
 (R) *Untitled (Being and Nothingness No. 1)*, 2007, digital print, 23 5/8 x 35 3/8 inches (Untitled [Modern Books])



June 13, 2003. W.P. 2007 ink on rice paper 41 3/4 x 57 inches (Theatre of Power Series)
May 23, 2003. C.T. 2007 ink on rice paper 41 3/4 x 68 1/2 inches (Theatre of Power Series)

"Xiaozhe Xie has long been interested in books and newspapers as carriers of cultural memory. As more information is disseminated via the internet, these exemplars of "old technology" begin to take on the aura of antique relics, resembling ancient parchments full of fragmentary messages from a half forgotten past. Unlike their digital kin, they are physical objects that suffer the ravages of time. Thus they provide a haunting metaphor for the gradual decay of human knowledge and recollection." -Eleanor Heartney