

Media Release. July 21, 2008

888. AN EXHIBITION COINCIDING WITH THE BEIJING OLYMPICS

China Heights Gallery, Darlinghurst. Opening 08.08.08 and showing until 13.08.08

This August, China hosts the world's largest event, yet behind the spectacle and glamour exist countless other stories.

Launching at China Heights gallery a few hours before the Beijing Olympic Opening ceremony, 888 explores the complex and often controversial nature of contemporary Chinese society. At a time when the world's gaze will be fixed on China, the artists of the 888 exhibition offer Sydney audiences a spectacle of a different nature by providing a striking juxtaposition to the commercial publicity and hype surrounding the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

Bringing together the work of 17 artists from around the world, 888 offers a glimpse into the many untold stories of China. Predicated on a desire to stimulate balanced and provocative conversation throughout and beyond the Olympics, 888 will consist of an array of works, from painting and drawing, to installation and video documentary. Works will examine the struggles of living in a budding global superpower, to meditations on China's human rights record and allegations of political corruption, the artists of the 888 exhibition will provide a timely and necessary alternative commentary in their exploration of contemporary Chinese identity, politics and culture.

"China is colossal, so diverse and provocative in its social, cultural, economic and political make-up. We aim to look through its glossy Olympic veneer to explore its multiplicity and stimulate discussion among our viewers" says Mark Gerada, artist and curator of 888. With currency central to the ethos of 888 "artists will look to China and respond to the surge of news images and events as they emerge right up until the opening ceremony commences in Beijing."

The exhibiting artists are;

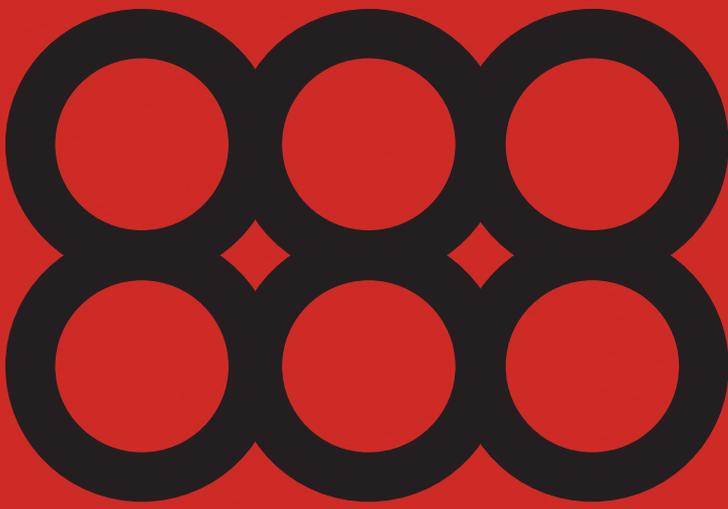
Melody Willis and Chaina Productions (both working from China)
Zanny Begg, Keg de Souza and Aris Prabawa (working from Indonesia)
Spat and Loogie (working from Finland)
Georgia Wallace-Crabbe
Deborah Kelly and Wei Lai
Pmyk and Syan
Bruce P
Locust Jones
Diego Bonetto
Mickie Quick
Sumugan Sivanesan
Sarah Ball
Jacqueline Gothe
Andrew Barnum
Lissa Barnum
Mark Gerada (curator)

888

Opening 6-9pm, Friday, 08.08.08. Closing 13.08.08
China Heights Gallery
257 Crown Street, Darlinghurst, Sydney
Gallery open Friday to Wednesday 12-5pm
www.chinaheights.com

For more information, or to arrange an interview, please contact:
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WWW.888EXHIBITION.COM



Mark Gerada (the curator of 888) is an Australian painter, illustrator and teacher with a background in architecture, ceramics and design. He worked as an architectural designer and as a designer on a leading magazine, *Interior Architecture*, before graduating in Architecture with first class honours at the UTS in 1993. Supporting his painting practice, Mark ran a successful ceramics business for many years, worked as an illustrator for magazines and newspapers, and produced commissioned paintings. He has taught in architecture, illustration and visual communications at UTS. He is currently writing a screenplay called *X'inti Taghmel?* (*What Are You Doing?*) Mark has exhibited work in Sydney, Melbourne, London, Brussels and China, and in June 2007 had his *Generation* solo show in Malta. In March 2008, he exhibited his thirteenth solo show, *Mounds and Caves*. For 888, he is exhibiting two series of paintings, *Sponsorship Censorship* and *Red Colour Means Happiness*. (www.markgerada.net)

Deborah Kelly and Wei Lai are creating *DIY Tiananmen Square Memorial Kits*. (www.boat-people.org & www.bewareofthegod.com & www.gbk.com.au/available/DK/dk.html)

Georgia Wallace-Crabbe (acclaimed documentary maker) is editing a trailer for a feature length documentary titled *New Beijing - Reinventing a City*. (www.filmprojects.com.au)

Brian P has created a series entitled *It's Mao or Never*. "China embraces McMaoism, with great leaps forward in designer sneakers. The long march is a short trip to the shopping mall. Serving the people is serving burgers with fries. Maoist slogans are corporate slogans. Statues of the beloved leader are replaced by brand characters. Revolutionary activity is the spinning CD providing backing tracks to Chinese Idol contestants selling consumer culture. Consumption is patriotic. The iron fist is clad in corporate colours. The new Cultural Revolution doesn't need little red books, it offers credit cards." (www.artofbrianp.com)

Zanny Begg has made a video titled *Don't Say Goodbye*, which explores spatial politics by examining the destruction of the Queen's Pier in Hong Kong to make way for massive redevelopment. This production gets really close to the people that oppose the over development of public space. (www.zannybegg.com & <http://www.theregoestheneighbourhood.org>)

Pmfk and Syan (working from Hong Kong) have created a video entitled *Tricontinental*. "Speaking is one of the methods for communication. In history, it became a powerful tool for a man who leads his people and speaks for his country." (www.nsbq.org)

Melody Willis (working from Beijing) is creating a painting that reflects on Beijing's long-term use of cloud-seeding technology as a method for controlling weather patterns and promoting or thwarting rainfall. (www.melodywillis.com & www.officialsydney.com)

Chaina Productions (based in Chengdu, China) is creating drawings on paper (*Turning Chinese: Big Nosed Beauty Series*) based on the style of ubiquitous good luck couplets that are hung on either side of front doors, and feature Chinglish off t-shirts she has seen worn by people around Chengdu, translated back into Chinese.

Spat and Loogie (working from Finland) are making a video titled *Four Pests*, a high energy video battle based on the Chinese Government's newly identified social pests - spitting, swearing, queue jumping and smoking. (www.spatnloogie.com)

Sarah Ball has created smithed crocheted vessels that represent the people of China being fed false information by the State run press.

Locust Jones is creating a large political drawing (www.locustjones.com)

Aris Prabawa (working from Indonesia) has created a painting titled *Worry Glory*, which is about the glory of China and the Olympics, and the state's power over the Tibetan people. (www.aiaa.org.au/gallery/aris/aris.html)

Diego Bonetto, the trans-cultural critic, is creating an installation of Chinese weeds. (weedyconnection.com & www.nobodys.info)

Keg de Souza (in Indonesia) is creating drawings on paper based on her visit to Beijing last year. (www.wherisesky.com)

Sumugan Sivanesan is creating a time based object. (www.sivanesan.com)

Mickie Quick (www.squatspace.com & www.bigfagpress.org)

Jacqueline Gothe (Senior Lecturer in Visual Communications, Design, UTS) is creating a series of gouache maps on paper. Titled *Thinking Through the Past into the Present and Wondering about the Future*, the work explores traditional knowledge of China and the manifestation in Qi.

Andrew Barnum (Head of Billy Blue Design School) is creating a word play painting, *Changing Conditions*, which seeks to 'flag or warn' of conditions ahead imposed by the 2008 Olympic host nation.

Lissa Barnum (Senior Lecturer at UTS and Billy Blue) is creating a series of China inks on paper titled *Recycling*.

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