
ART GALLERY NEWS RELEASE

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(press & tour inquires)

Tufts University Art Gallery

at the Aidekman Arts Center

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JUN YANG |

January 19— April 1, 2007

HERO—this is WE

In the Koppelman Gallery

Jun Yang and Soldier Woods

On the New Media Wall

PUBLIC OPENING RECEPTION

Friday, January 19, 5:30–8:30pm

ARTIST'S TALK

Thursday, February 22, 6:30pm

VOICE YOUR VISION! GUIDED TOURS

Saturdays, 2:30pm

(January 27; February 10; February 24; March 10; March 31)

MEDFORD, MA – The Tufts University Art Gallery proudly presents the U.S. debut of two video works by Vienna-based, Chinese-born artist Jun Yang from January 19 to April 1, 2007. In the Koppelman Gallery, we will feature Yang's two-channel video installation ***HERO—this is WE***. As a companion, we will exhibit Jang's short video ***Jun Yang and Solider Woods*** on the New Media Wall.

Jun Yang was born in Tientsin, China, in 1975, and immigrated to Vienna in 1979, at age 4. From an exile's perspective, and amid his struggle to determine his own place of belonging, Yang examines notions of cultural and personal identity and of globalization.

HERO—this is WE explores the concept of nationalism in historical, cultural, and political contexts. How are nations built and defined? How do we know if we belong to them and how do we express that feeling of belonging? The U.S. flag is an example of how a symbol defines a group as a 'we' and how the prosperity, power, and self-confidence of a group broadens the reach of its symbol. Yang then examines how the emerging superpower of China is constructing its nationalist ideals, defining its greatness, and positing itself in an international context. In one of the two videos, narrated by the artist, Yang appropriates mass media sources to illustrate China's political, economic, and cultural development since he left he country as a child. In the second video, in which footage from the 2004 Athens Olympics runs in slow-motion silently alongside the first, Yang renders various flags white to suggest one international people.

Jun Yang and Soldier Woods deals with the question of translation by exploring how the pronunciations, interpretations, and associations of the artist's name vary in different cultural contexts. A common name in China, "Jun Yang" was re-spelled, re-written, and re-spoken in numerous different ways after the artist immigrated. The name was alien to the Europeans he encountered, and their misuse of it rendered it alien to the artist himself. For every country in which the video is shown, Yang re-titles it by translating his name, "Jun Yang," from his original dialect into the native tongue of the exhibiting country. France gets "Soldat du Bois," in Austria they know it as "Soldat Holzer," and here we exhibit "Soldier Woods."

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The Tufts University Art Gallery animates the intellectual life of the greater university community through exhibitions and programs exploring new, global perspectives on art and on art discourse. The Gallery is located in the Aidekman Arts Center on the Tufts University Medford campus. The Gallery is fully accessible and admission is free. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Sunday, 11:00am to 5:00p.m; Thursdays until 8:00pm. Free daytime visitor parking is available in the two parking lots off Lower Campus Road. Parking passes must be obtained at the front desk of the Tisch Gallery and displayed on your dashboard. Free event parking is available without a pass in the lot behind the Aidekman Arts Center, off Lower Campus Road. Visit www.ase.tufts.edu/gallery or call **617-627-3518** for more information.