

## Contemporary Art and Radical Democracy in Asia (CAA Chicago, 13 Feb 14)

Chicago, Feb 13, 2014

Registration deadline: Feb 13, 2014

Sohl Lee, university of rochester

Contemporary Art and Radical Democracy in Asia  
as part of the 2014 College Art Association (Chicago, USA)

Time: 2/13/2014, 9:30 AM–12:00 PM

Location: Hilton Chicago, 2nd Floor, Boulevard C, 720 South Michigan Avenue

Chairs: Bo Zheng, City University of Hong Kong; Sohl Lee, University of Rochester

### Schedule

09:30-09:40 Bo Zheng and Sohl Lee, "Introduction"

09:40-10:00 Thomas J. Berghuis, Guggenheim Museum, "Contemporary Art through the Collective/Polemic Interventions in Radical Art and Democracy in Asia: With Focus on Indonesia"

10:00-10:20 Paul Gladston, University of Nottingham, "Polylectical Resistance: Contemporary Art and the Pursuit of Radical Democracy in "Reform Period" China"

10:20-10:40 Melissa Rose Heer, University of Minnesota, "Performance, Belonging, and Radical Democracy in Samudra Kajal Saikia's Disposable House Project (2012) in Guwahati, Assam"

10:40-11:00 Young Min Moon, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, "Failure, Trauma, and Radical Art in South Korea"

11:00-11:10 Rebecca Zorach, University of Chicago, "Response"

11:10-12:00 Q&A, Discussion, Announcements

How has the idea of democracy motivated radical art in Asia? How have Asian artists imagined radical forms of democracy? We will reflect on how artists in Asia have engaged with, reinvented, and radicalized the notion of democracy since the 1960s. This panel will not only cast a much-needed theoretical perspective to the study of contemporary Asian art; it will also enrich global discussions on critical art and the renewal of democratic ideals.

The question of political representation has always been one of the key driving forces behind artistic productions in Asia. Whether in authoritarian regimes or democratized states, art has provided

a fertile ground to imagine alternatives to existing political orders. We will consider these questions: How did Chinese artists work with the idea of daminzhu (mass democracy) during and after the Cultural Revolution? How have Indian artists conjured radical enclaves in the world's largest democracy? How did artists in South Korea contribute to minjung undong (People's Movement) in the 1980s, and how have they continued to reinvigorate the notion of publics after the country instituted a democratic system in 1987? What can we discern in the recent surge of activist art in Hong Kong, Indonesia, Taiwan, and Japan? And how are new media artists in Asia using online technologies to push the political and conceptual boundaries of democracy?

In recent years, the theory of radical democracy put forward by Chantal Mouffe and Ernesto Laclau in the mid-1980s has inspired lively discussions on "antagonistic art" (Bishop), "dialogical aesthetics" (Kester), and "social practice" (Esche, Sholette, Jackson) in Europe and North America. Building on these discussions, this panel also aims to draw insights from the writings by Asian theorists such as Dipesh Chakrabarty, Wang Hui, and Karatani Kojin.

Reference:

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