

ULLENS CENTER FOR CONTEMPORARY ART 尤伦斯当代艺术中心

Apichatpong Weerasethakul: *For Tomorrow For Tonight*

Editorial contact:

Sybella Chow
+86 10 5780 0253
+86 186 1115 7030

sybella.chow@ucca.org.cn

Exhibition dates:
Nov. 26, 2011 – Feb. 10, 2012

November 26, 2011. Beijing

The Ullens Center for Contemporary Art presents *For Tomorrow For Tonight*, the first exhibition in China of art work by renowned Thai filmmaker and artist Apichatpong Weerasethakul. This will be a wholly unique installation, produced with a combination of video, photography and sound. This work by the highly-respected Asian film director exhibits Weerasethakul's exquisite understanding of different artistic forms and their collective use. The work presents both memories of Thai and Asian past, meditation on contemporary society while at the same time incorporating the various Western perceptions of Asia.

Darkness and night have been long-running themes in Weerasethakul's films, from *Tropical Malady* (2004) through *Syndromes and a Century* (2006) to *Uncle Boonmee Who Can Recall His Past Lives*, his 2010 Palme d'Or winner. Says Jérôme Sans, director of UCCA, "In this exhibition, he takes us on an extraordinary journey through the twilight world of the Mekong Delta. Along the way, we make the acquaintance of some interesting characters and denizens of the night. There is Jenjira, a seamstress recovering from surgery on her legs, injured years earlier in a motorcycle accident; Power Boy, who illuminates the landscape with his dazzling suit of lights; and Mekong Mud Man, a mysterious figure who appears in various settings and guises."

For Tomorrow For Tonight takes us on a journey through the night; night, as recounted by the Thai film director, is a time for sleep, darkness and stillness; a space belonging to dreams and desires. As Weerasethakul puts it, "When you cannot see, your thoughts rule it all." Through subtle hints Weerasethakul leads us to contemplate a real world that is the compressed creation of direct memory and the limitless land of dream. In *For Tomorrow For Tonight* images, stills and sound

from three films and a voice piece are mixed together in an emotionally-charged setting. The photographs are enlargements of film stills, the voice an incisive commentary on the contrasts of contemporary Thailand. Weerasethakul eschews narrative thread, instead concentrating on using the force of feelings and abstract concepts, allowing his audience to share in the dreamscape memories of his films.

Here Weerasethakul's work attenuates cinematic sense, staging, and the role of the actors. Often incorporating non-linear narrative and a powerful sense of dislocation, his works encompass dreams, Nature, sex and the Western view of Asia into each of the fictional films, film shorts, art-works and installations. Long-running themes for the director-artist include modernity, identity and explorations of social questions. Jérôme Sans says, "Through his haunting and lyrical images, Weerasethakul beckons us into the darkness, allowing us to peer into the lost corners of the night and to imagine what might lie on the other side of night-time, what might become visible in the first pale light of dawn. Perhaps day has always been merely a blind-spot of the night."

Weerasethakul's *Syndromes and a Century* was the first Thai film to be submitted to the Venice Film Festival. His short film *Vampire*, for Louis Vuitton, was shown for the first time at the fashion house's gallery in Paris. He was one of twenty-two artists to produce a short film for the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in 2008 as part of the celebration of the sixtieth anniversary of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. In addition to his own film and installation work, Weerasethakul supports independent film-making in Thailand through his own film company Kick the Machine, which he founded in 1999.

This exhibition is presented in collaboration with Tang Contemporary Art.

Related Events at UCCA

Art Cinema: In Conversation With Apichatpong Weerasethakul

Guest: Apichatpong Weerasethakul

Time: 16:30-18:00, November 27 (Sunday), 2011

Venue: UCCA Auditorium

Language: English with Chinese translation

Art Cinema: The Films of Apichatpong Weerasethakul

Time: November 27, (Sunday) – December 11 (Sunday), 2011

Venue: UCCA Auditorium

Language: Chinese and English subtitles

About Apichatpong Weerasethakul

Born in Bangkok in 1970, Apichatpong Weerasethakul is an internationally-renowned independent film director, screenwriter, film producer and artist. He grew up in Khon Kaen, in northeastern Thailand, and holds a degree in Architecture from Khon Kaen University and an MFA in Filmmaking from the Chicago Institute of Art. He currently lives and works in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

His works in art and film have won him widespread international recognition and numerous awards, including two prizes from the Cannes Film Festival, a prestigious Silpatorn Award for Visual Arts (2005) and the French Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres (2008). His films include *Mysterious Object at Noon* (2000), *Blissfully Yours* (2002), *Tropical Malady* (2004), *Syndromes and a Century* (2006), *Uncle Boonmee Who Can Recall His Past Lives* (2010) and *Utopia* (in development).

About UCCA

The Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (UCCA) is a non-profit, comprehensive art center founded by collectors Guy and Myriam Ullens in November 2007. UCCA presents exhibitions of established and emerging artists and develops a trusted platform to share knowledge through education and research.