



Ullens Center for
Contemporary Art
尤伦斯当代艺术中心

Editorial Contacts:

Emily Pei, UCCA
+86 10 5780 0256
+86 185 0020 2816
emily.pei@ucca.org.cn

Dylan Shuai
Sutton PR Asia
+852 2528 0792
dylan@suttonprasia.com

Exhibition Dates:

14 January – 13 March 2016

Exhibition Venue:

Long Gallery and Nave

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Peter Wayne Lewis & Frederick J. Brown

Peter Wayne Lewis: Boosters

Frederick J. Brown: Memories 1988

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From 14 January to 13 March, 2016, the Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (UCCA) presents two parallel exhibitions showcasing the works of Peter Wayne Lewis and Frederick J. Brown (1945-2012), two artists of the African diaspora whose expressive paintings draw inspiration from their respective cultural backgrounds and shared interest in jazz and spirituality. Both artists' curious connections with Beijing—for the past decade Lewis has made most of his work here, while Brown became in 1988 the first American artist to show at the institution now known as the National Museum of China—are also reflected on their canvases. Exploring distinct modes of abstraction, the two groupings of works create a dialogue through vibrant collisions of brushwork and color, rhythm and melody.

Peter Wayne Lewis: Boosters

Since 2006, Peter Wayne Lewis has painted from a studio he calls The Oasis on Beijing's northern fringes. This exhibition centers on two major suites, each comprising fifteen paintings, in which his particular language of abstraction takes new and unexpected turns inspired by sources as varied as quantum physics and the music of Thelonious Monk. "There is an idea in string theory that all matter exists as vibrating strings moving in multiple dimensions. This idea links physics to my great love, music. The vibration of the strings creates harmony...the universe is a symphony of color and light and different time signatures," Lewis has said. Titled "Monk Time Suite" (2013) and "Buddha Plays Monk" (2012-2015), they were produced across Lewis's repeated and extended sojourns in China. This exhibition, the first time these works have been shown publicly, makes use of the high walls of UCCA's Nave to display the groupings in massive grids. They are complemented by further recent works, particularly a cycle of six paintings titled "False Vacuum" (2015) inspired by the ideas of MIT physicist Alan Guth.

Frederick J. Brown: Memories 1988

Working in a loft in SoHo during the artistic renaissance of the 1970s and 1980s, Frederick J. Brown collaborated with jazz musicians like Ornette Coleman, Thelonious Monk, and Anthony Braxton, as well as Abstract Expressionist painter Willem de Kooning. This grouping of works



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presents a range of painterly investigations embodying religious themes (*Easter at Dinner Time*, *Easter Morning*) tinged with early childhood memories (*School Yard*). When Brown exhibited at the Museum of the Chinese Revolution (now the National Museum of China) on Tiananmen Square in the spring of 1988, his work was eagerly received and debated by artists and students for its vivid expressionistic sensibility. Revising these works in the same city nearly thirty years later helps to shed light on a little known moment of exchange during the artistic awakening of the Chinese 1980s.

About the Artists

Peter Wayne Lewis (b. 1953, Jamaica) is professor of painting at the Massachusetts College of Art and Design. He lives and works between Beijing, Boston, and South Orange, New Jersey. His solo exhibition “Beijing Booster” was held at MOCA North Miami in 2015. Lewis’s recent exhibitions include: “Latin American Art Today” (Promo-Arte, Tokyo, 2014); the 5th Beijing International Art Biennale (National Art Museum of China, 2012); and “Seeing Jazz Exhibition” (Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., 1997). His works are part of major public and private collections internationally.

Frederick J. Brown’s (1945–2012) work is in public and private collections throughout the world, including the Smithsonian’s National Museum of American Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the New Orleans Museum of Art. Born in Georgia and educated in Chicago, he was influenced by an early exposure to Modern masters and taught at the Central Academy of Arts and Crafts, Beijing, from 1985 to 1987. Best known for a series of portraits depicting jazz and blues legends, Brown remains an influential figure in American painting.

About the Ullens Center for Contemporary Art

The Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (UCCA) is an independent, not-for-profit art center serving a global Beijing public. Located at the heart of Beijing’s 798 Art District, it was founded by the Belgian collectors Guy and Myriam Ullens and opened in November 2007. Through a diverse array of exhibitions with artists Chinese and international, established and emerging, as well as a wide range of public programs, UCCA aims to promote the continued development of the Chinese art scene, foster international exchange, and showcase the latest in art and culture to hundreds of thousands of visitors each year.

798 Art District
No. 4 Jiuxiangqiao Lu
Chaoyang District
Beijing, P.R. China 100015
T +86 10 5780 0200
F +86 10 5780 0220
www.ucca.org.cn

北京市朝阳区酒仙桥路4号
798艺术区
邮编100015