

Xiaoze Xie

Amplified Moments

1993 - 2008



March-April 2003, L.T., 2003, oil on canvas, 60" x 86"

Curated by Dan Mills

A prospectus for the exhibition national tour
Organized by the Samek Art Gallery, Bucknell University

Xiaoze Xie: Amplified Moments, 1993-2008 will premiere at the
Samek Art Gallery, February 1 – April 1, 2010.
A tour of select municipal and university museums is planned through 2011.

Xiaoze Xie: Amplified Moments, 1993 - 2008

Since the mid nineties, artist Xiaoze Xie has created an impressive body of work. His sumptuously painted and conceptually rigorous paintings of stacks of newspapers, decaying books, museum libraries, and media images of current events have been exhibited throughout the US and internationally with increased frequency and critical acclaim. Since the mid 1990s, Xie has also created and exhibited conceptually well-realized installations, photographs, videos and prints that relate to and expand upon the focus of his paintings.

Xiaoze Xie: Amplified Moments is the first major exhibition to include significant works from each of Xie's painting series: the "Library Series" (Western books, 1993-), "Chinese Library Series" (1995-), "The Silent Flow of Daily Life" (newspaper stacks, 1998-), "Fragmentary Views" (1999-), "Museum Libraries" (2005-), Chinese ink and wash paintings based on news images (2005-), and recent work from as yet unnamed series (see checklist/image list). It will also include a select group of work in other media. The exhibition will include work from collections and galleries throughout the US, and from the artist.

Xiaoze Xie: Amplified Moments will present a remarkable breadth of work in media including paintings in oil, ink and wash on paper, photography, installation and video. Since the mid 1990s, Xie has produced a substantial body of work that, on one hand, focuses on the inextricably intertwined contemporary news and the media, and on the other, is a meditation on time, memory and history. And during this period, he has created many powerful and iconic images.



January - April 2004, M. N., 2004 oil on canvas, 44" x 80"

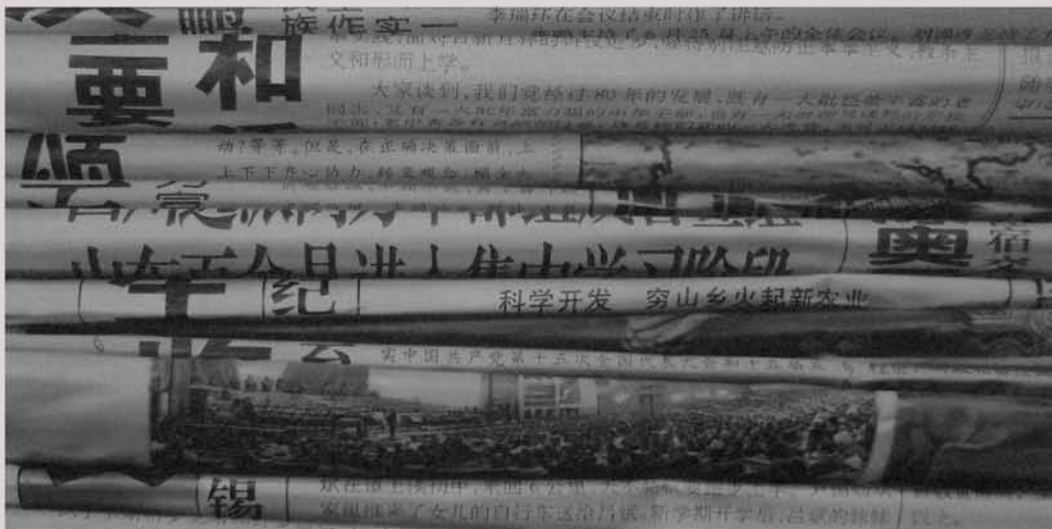


May 18, 2003. W. P., 2006, ink on rice paper, 41 3/4" x 74"

Xiaoze Xie: Amplified Moments, 1993 - 2008



Chinese Library No. 1, 1995, oil on canvas, 30" x 42"



April-May 2001, People's Daily, 2005, oil on canvas, 42" x 84"

The “Chinese Library” paintings focus on old and decaying books languishing on shelves, reminding us of the vulnerability of history, knowledge and memory. In contrast, the paintings of newspapers record slices of recent history through the fragmented pieces of the edges of stacks of newspapers that parallel how contemporary life is often experienced—fragmented, through all-at-once simultaneous and multiple sources. In the “Museum Libraries,” Xie applies painterly--dare I say it--beauty to work that seems to both embrace and cast a critical gaze upon Modernism.

Related works in other media will include the installation *Flags & Banners: A Century of Student Movements in China* (1994), photographs from *Untitled (Western Books)* (2007), the video *October - December 2001* (2001-2002), and a small group of prints. In the other works, Xie is adept at utilizing various media to sharpen his critical focus and also investigate different aesthetic issues. See the checklist for a complete list of works in the exhibition.

Xiaoze Xie: Amplified Moments, 1993 - 2008



Flags & Banners: A Century of Student Movements in China, 1994
oil and acrylic on wood, 117" x 141" x 26"



Untitled (Writings by Borges No. 1)



Untitled (Nietzsche in Turin)
all 2006, digital print, 23 5/8" x 35 3/8" each



Untitled (Being and Nothingness)

Quotes on Xiaoze Xie's work:

The aftermath of September 11, the war in Afghanistan, the anthrax scare, the conflicts in the Middle East...people go about their life with their hearts suspended in the midst of anxiousness and fear. Perhaps before mass communication became so developed, the world was just as troubled as today, but the tranquil life of bygone days has disappeared because people have never been as influenced by the news as now. This is just the way Xie Xiaoze uses his realist skills, enlarging the facts told to people through painting gigantic piles of newspapers; stack after stack, one after another, the incidents they narrate are all but frightful to the ear, and the gathering of this shocking news in the huge pile of newspapers, replaces life itself, and becomes today's reality as well as people's psychic reality.

Li Xianting, "The 'Regeneration' of Three Traditions," *Regeneration: Contemporary Chinese Art from China and the US* catalog, Samek Art Gallery, Bucknell University, Lewisburg, PA

Xiaoze Xie: Amplified Moments, 1993 - 2008

Xiaoze Xie has long been interested in books and newspapers as carriers of cultural memory. As more information is disseminated via the internet, these exemplars of "old technology" begin to take on the aura of antique relics, resembling ancient parchments full of fragmentary messages from a half forgotten past. Unlike their digital kin, they are physical objects that suffer the ravages of time. Thus they provide a haunting metaphor for the gradual decay of human knowledge and recollection.

Eleanor Heartney, Xiaoze Xie, *Both Sides Now* exhibition brochure, Zolla/Lieberman Gallery, Chicago

In his pictures, one may detect the long figurative tradition of Chinese painting as an inclination merged with a contemporary aesthetic, in particular the slightly out-of-focus, photo-based production of Gerhard Richter. Like Richter, Xie's realism is more conceptualized than mimetic. Ultimately, his images are subsumed by the materiality of paint, the textures those of fine brushwork rather than verisimilitude. His paintings are as much portraits of time as portraits of the times, the subjects modern memento mori as well as specific critiques of the violence, civil disruption and other calamitous events that dominate our media and also the artist's own experiences.

Lilly Wei, *On Time, The Works of Xiaoze Xie* exhibition brochure, Dowd Fine Arts Gallery, SUNY Cortland, NY



April 2004, T.P., 2007, oil on canvas, 48" x 78"

Based on photos from late 2001 to 2003, these seven large canvases reproduce bundles of American newspapers that were published in the wake of the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks and throughout the months of the ongoing military campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq. Some of the newspapers are tied with twine and tagged with the dates of the gathered editions. Most are viewed from the side and at close range, so that the folded ends of the newspapers fill the canvases in horizontal registers. From this vantage point, one glimpse only fragments of color photographs and bits of legible headlines and copy.

Matthew Guy Nichols, *Xiaoze Xie* at Charles Cowles, Art in America

*By stripping the subject of its context--an approach common to Conceptual artists--he wants to force the viewer to look again, to do a double take. In one of the works, "March-April 2003, L.T.," the top issue of *The Times* of London shows part of a large and dramatic picture of outstretched hands. "It is the hands of Iraqis reaching out for relief materials," Mr. Xie said. "For me, it's a strong image about suffering."*

Below it, in other issues of the paper, more shards of war are laid on top of one another: guns, soldiers, a fireball and a plume of black smoke rolling over a roll of palm trees. The staccato burst of images gives the painting a kind of jazzy rhythm.

Ted Loos, "Fish Wrap, Bird Cage Liner, Still Life," *The New York Times*, Sunday March 21, 2004

Xiaoze Xie: Amplified Moments, 1993 - 2008

In Xie's work, delicately balanced social and aesthetic issues merge in a resistance to perfection. His paintings draw on various Modernist styles and tendencies without becoming hostage to any single doctrine. They hover between abstraction and realism; they bring together a photographic way of looking with richly descriptive brush strokes; they embrace poetry while keeping to hard facts. The paintings relate, on one hand, to conceptualism's focus on the image as a text and the text as a possible substitute for the image. But here these ideas are embodied in gorgeously painted canvases whose beauty undermines conceptual art's self-proclaimed anti-aestheticism.

Eleanor Heartney, "The Certainty of Uncertainty: History and Memory in the Work of Xiaoze Xie," *Xiaoze Xie: 2001-2003 Fragmentary Views* catalogue, Charles Cowles Gallery, New York



The MoMA Library (1390p), 2005, oil on canvas, 54" x 90"

Occasionally one catches a fragment of a title or author or date—"Charlo," "Benn," "Käthe." The one piece of information that typically appears intact or functionally so, is the indexing label. A few are crisp, white and new; most are yellowed, frayed and scuffed with use. Painted as they are with a gray undercoat (in the past, Xie has tended toward a warmer red), the overall illumination is decidedly fluorescent, bearing a greenish, somewhat pallid cast.

The implied tension between Modernism and tradition, like the tension between the analytical and the romantic, is something that distinguishes, I believe, the MoMA series from Xie's earlier library paintings. That is not to say the tension is inoperative in the works, but that here it is sharpened to a finer point.

Roger Rothman, "The Ruins of Modernism: Xiaoze Xie's *The MoMA Library*," *Xiaoze Xie, The MoMA Library* catalogue, Charles Cowles Gallery, New York

Xiaoze Xie: Amplified Moments, 1993 - 2008



November 5, 2004. N.Y.T. (Bush Cabinet 2nd Term), 2008, oil on linen, 70" x 110 1/2"

Biography:

Xiaoze Xie was born in Guongdong, China. He earned a Bachelor of Architecture from Tsinghua University, Beijing, in 1988; Master of Arts degree from the Central Academy of Arts and Design, Beijing, in 1992, and Master of Fine Arts from University of North Texas, Denton, in 1996.

Selected Solo Exhibitions:

- 2008 Charles Cowles Gallery, New York, NY
- 2008 *Quotidian Truths*, Morono Kiang, Los Angeles, CA
- 2008 *Both Sides Now*, Zolla/Lieberman Gallery, Chicago, IL
- 2007 *Legacy*, Gaain Gallery, Seoul, Korea*
- 2007 *The Museum Libraries*, Nicholas Metivier Gallery, Toronto, Canada
- 2007 *Transient Memories, Works on Paper by Xiaoze Xie*, dART ex, the Danish Cultural Center, Beijing, China*
- 2007 *Xiaoze Xie, Works on Paper*, Modern Chinese Art Foundation, Ghent, Belgium*
- 2006 *The MoMA Library*, Charles Cowles Gallery, New York, NY*
- 2005 Nicholas Metivier Gallery, Toronto, Canada
- 2004 *2001-2003 Fragmentary Views*, Charles Cowles Gallery, New York, NY*
- 2003 *History: A Microscopic View*, China Art Archives & Warehouse, Beijing, China
- 2002 Charles Cowles Gallery, New York, NY
- 2000 *Order: An Installation and Paintings by Xiaoze Xie*, Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art, Scottsdale, AZ
- 2000 *The Gold Paintings*, Davidson Galleries, Seattle, WA
- 1999 Devin Borden Hiram Butler Gallery, Houston, TX

Selected Group Exhibitions:

- 2007 *Just Words: Xu Bing, Hong Hao, Xiaoze Xie*, Morono Kiang Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
- 2006-07 *Shu, Reinventing Books in Chinese Contemporary Art*, China Institute Gallery, New York, NY, and Seattle Asian Art Museum, Seattle, WA (curated by Wu Hong)*
- 2006 *What War?*, White Box, New York, NY
- 2005-06 *The Daily News*, Salt Lake City Art Center, UT (traveled)*
- 2004-06 *Regeneration: Contemporary Chinese Art from China and the US*, Samek Art Gallery, Bucknell University (traveled nationally)*
- 2004 *Texas Vision: The Barrett Collection*, The Meadows Museum, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, TX*
- 2003-04 *Natural Forces: Earth, Air, Fire and Water*, Boise Art Museum, Boise, ID

* Catalogue

Xiaoze Xie: Amplified Moments, 1993 - 2008

Specifications:

Xiaoze Xie: Amplified Moments opens at the Samek Art Gallery February 1 – April 1, 2010. A tour of select municipal and university museums is planned through 2011. *The exhibition* will consist of 32 works of art including 17 paintings, 3 prints, 8 photographs, 2 installations and 1 video. (See checklist.)

Space Requirements: 4,000 - 4,500 square feet, 350 or more linear feet..

Security: Medium-high. Museum or gallery attendants must be present at all times. Other Requirements: a flat screen monitor or digital projector and DVD player for ongoing screening of a video. Medium light levels are required, and will be specified in the contract. A Facilities Report and Certificate of Insurance will be required.

Fee: \$15,000, one-way pro-rated domestic shipping via fine art movers, and insurance while at your institution and during transit to the next. For 8 weeks. Venues interested in extending the exhibition may do so on a pro-rated basis.

Catalogue: A profusely illustrated, 100+ page four-color exhibition catalogue published by Bucknell University Press will support the exhibition. Four writers including Li Xianting, Karen Smith, Britta Erickson, and Dan Mills will contribute to the catalogue, which will include color plates of works in the exhibition and other important works, a checklist and biography. Each venue will receive 25 catalogues, and may purchase additional copies at a reduced rate.

Contributors: **Britta Erickson** is curator of numerous important contemporary Chinese exhibitions, and author/contributor of many important books and catalogues including *The Art of Xu Bing*, Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution (Freer/Sackler, Washington, DC, 2001), and *On The Edge*, Iris & B. Gerald Cantor Center for Visual Art at Stanford University (Cantor, Stanford, CA, 2004). **Li Xianting** is often referred to as the "godfather of Chinese avant-garde art." In addition to contributing to numerous books and catalogues, Li curated the seminal exhibition *China/Avant Garde* at the National Museum in Beijing in 1989; and the Chinese Pavillion, *The 45th Venice Biennale* in 1993, and among many others. **Karen Smith** is an art historian specializing in Chinese contemporary art. She is a curator, and author of the critically acclaimed *Nine Lives: The Birth of Avant-Garde Art in New China* (Scalo, Zurich, 2005) and *Ai Weiwei* (NAI, Rotterdam, 2008); and recently curated Liu Xiaodong's exhibition at Mary Boone Gallery. **Dan Mills** organizes and curates exhibitions for the Samek Art Gallery, and museums and universities throughout the US. He has contributed to numerous exhibition catalogues including *LOOK AT ME! The Performative Impulse in Recent Chinese Photography* (2008); and *Regeneration: Contemporary Chinese Art from China and the US* (2004-06); *Agnes Denes: Projects for Public Spaces* (2003-05).



February 3, 2007, L.G.D.S. (No. 2), 2008, oil and acrylic on canvas, 80" x 60"

Xiaoze Xie: Amplified Moments, 1993 - 2008

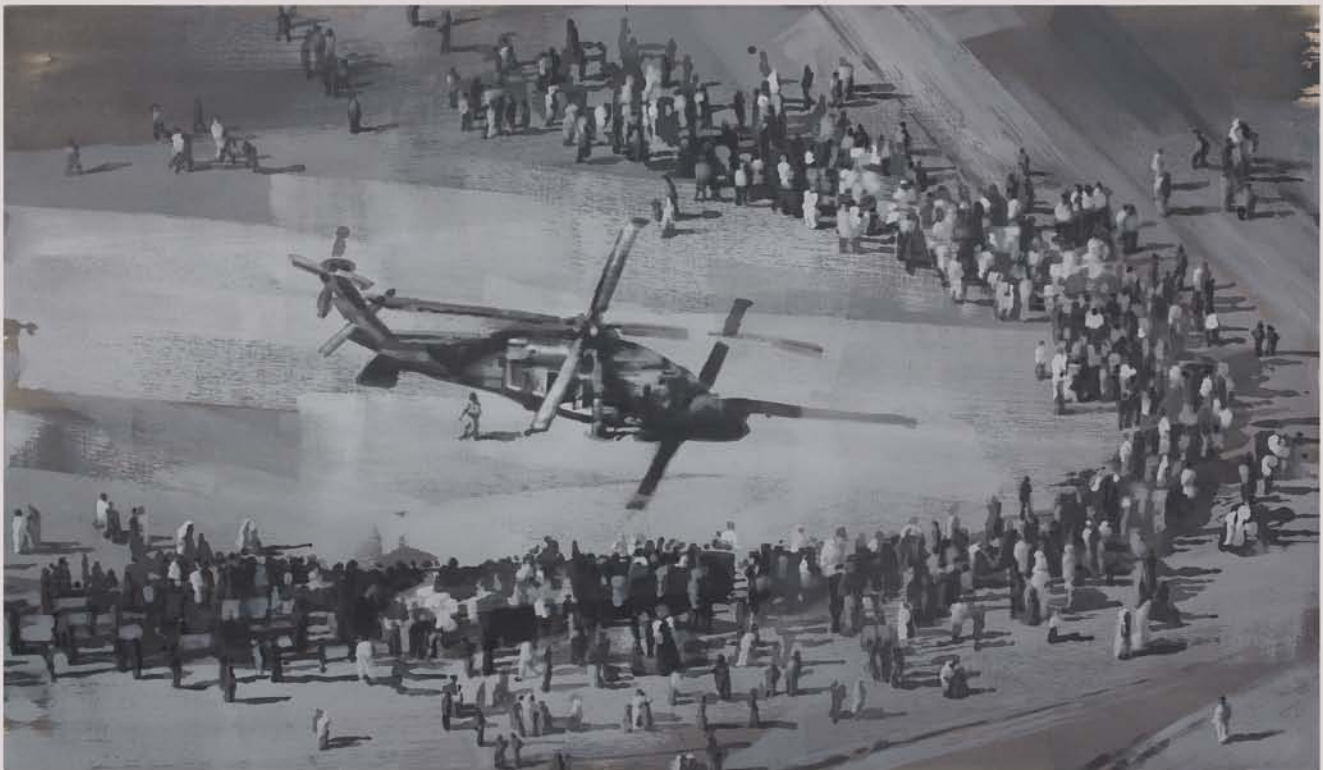
The Samek Art Gallery has traveled a number of exhibitions nationally, and to China, in the twenty first century. Traveling exhibitions include: *Lewis deSoto Paranirvana (self-portrait)*; *Agnes Denes: Projects for Public Spaces*; *Regeneration: Contemporary Chinese Art from China and the US*; and *Misleading Trails*. Each was supported by a scholarly exhibition catalogue. Selected venues include: Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego; Chelsea Art Museum, New York; Naples Museum of Art, Florida; Williams College Museum of Art; ASU Art Museum, Arizona State University; University of Virginia Art Museum; China Art Archives and Warehouse, Beijing; Bell Gallery, Brown University; Ben Maltz Gallery, Otis College of Art & Design, Los Angeles; University Galleries, University of California at San Diego; Lehigh University Art Galleries; Vanderbilt University Fine Arts Gallery; Ewing Gallery, University of Tennessee; NIU Art Museum in Chicago; and Harn Museum, University of Florida.

Itinerary:

Exhibition Schedule: *Xiaoze Xie: Amplified Moments* opens at the Samek Art Gallery February 1 – April 1, 2010. A tour of select municipal and university museums is planned through 2011. Tentative dates (subject to change):

Spring 2010	Feb. 1 - April 1	Samek Art Gallery, Bucknell University, Lewisburg, PA
Summer 2010	[Mid-May - July]	Available
Fall 2010	[Mid-Aug. - Mid-Oct.]	Available
Fall 2010	[Nov. - Dec.]	Available
Spring 2011	[Mar 1 - May 15]	Knoxville Museum of Art, Knoxville, TN [Tentative]
Summer 2011	[Mid-June - Mid-Aug.]	University of Wyoming Museum of Art, Laramie, WY [Tentative]
Fall 2011	Sept. - Nov.	Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR

For additional information, contact: Dan Mills, Director, 570.577.3213, dtmills@bucknell.edu



May 18, 2003, W.P. (*Black Hawk*), 2008, oil on linen, 64" x 110"