

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Wang Du: Parade

Vancouver, BC – The Vancouver Art Gallery will be the first venue outside Europe for the exhibition, *Wang Du: Parade*, part of its summer series opening May 28, 2005 and continuing through September 12. This showcase of sculptural works by Wang Du will be the first presentation in Canada and the first outside of Europe. Wang Du is first and foremost a sculptor; he uses traditional sculpting and casting techniques to produce elaborate three-dimensional figures and forms. However, his subject matter is anything but conventional.

Wang Du was born in China in 1950 and as an art student he participated in a number of pro-democracy protests. In 1989 he was arrested and jailed. After his release he immigrated to Paris in June 1990 where he has lived and worked since. His primary subject of the past fifteen years has been the popular media and the images they produce (primarily magazines and newspapers, but also television and the Internet) and especially focusing on Chinese media and images. In each work he reproduces the original two-dimensional image but now in three-dimensional form, often utilizing the extreme foreshortening and cropping that are a part of media representation. In doing so, Wang Du creates a new kind of “reality,” so that our experience of those images is no longer one of unmediated consumption, but rather an intense encounter with a physical object.

Given the mass-media origins of Wang Du's subject matter, it is not surprising that the work addresses a variety of topical subjects including politics, the military, celebrity, ecology and sexuality. This exhibition consists of three major installations. *Défilé (Parade)* consists of thirteen monumental sculptures mounted on a single plinth. The images, all from Chinese media, depict the military as "politico-spiritual" force and its media representation as a powerful ideological tool. *Tapis Volant (Flying Carpet)* is a monumental flying carpet depicting the cover of *Time* magazine on February 10, 2003, which featured an image of the space shuttle *Columbia* disintegrating as it entered earth's atmosphere. Finally, *Enter!* is a work commissioned for this exhibition in which four identical monumental figures stand before a gigantic wall mural. The figure itself (taken from a pornographic website) is seen to be extracted from that site and returned to the three-dimensional world, but revealed to be no more “real” than its source.

Wang Du's work has been widely exhibited in solo and group exhibitions since the mid-1990s, most notably as part of Ho Hanru's *Cities on the Move* exhibitions, the Venice Biennale and the *Inside Out Chinese Art* exhibition organized by the Asia Society and SFMOMA.

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Wang Du: Parade, exhibition and publication, is organized by the Vancouver Art Gallery in collaboration with La Criée, Rennes; les Abattoirs, Toulouse; Le Rectangle, Lyon and Palais de Tokyo, Paris. Presentation of the exhibition is supported by l'Association française d'action artistique (AFAA / French Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and the Consulate General of France in Vancouver.

The exhibition is one of four exhibitions on display this summer in the *Body Slam* suite, an international convergence of recent contemporary work focusing on the human form. Comprising works by artists from Austria, France, the UK and Vancouver, *Body Slam* explores the human condition through the mediums of sculpture, photography and video. *Body Slam* is being presented in juxtaposition with an exhibition of historical works by the legendary sculptor Rodin, providing visitors with a unique opportunity to explore the human body in all its many dimensions.

All media are welcome to attend the opening celebration at 7pm on Friday, June 24, 2005.

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Images: Digital images for professional media use only are available at the Vancouver Art Gallery's FTP site <ftp://ftp.vanartgallery.bc.ca>. Contact 604 662 4722 for password access.

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