

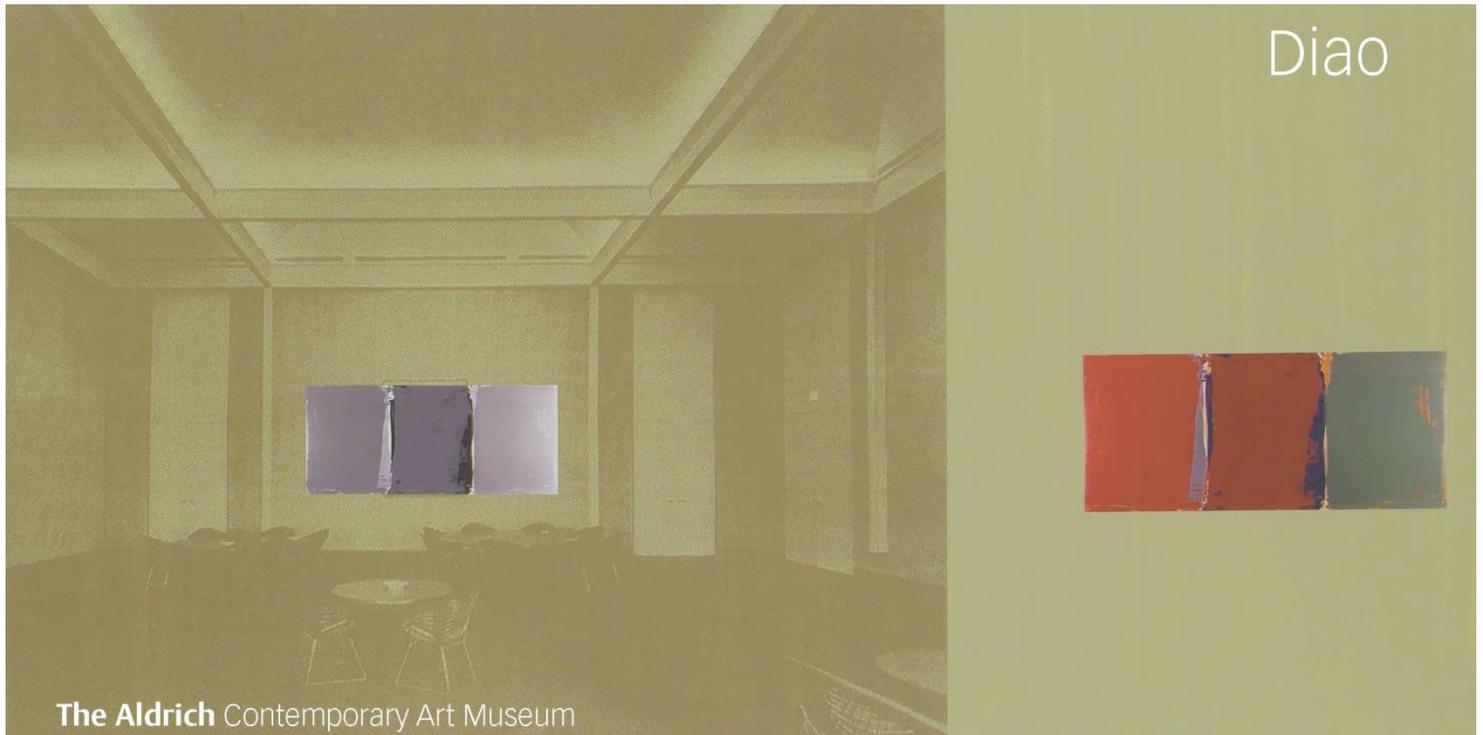
The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum

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Diao

The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum

David Diao, Double Rejection, 2012
Collection of Frank F. Yang, Hong Kong

David Diao Exhibition Continues 50th Anniversary Celebration at The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum

The second installment of The Aldrich Contemporary art Museum's 50th Anniversary exhibitions program will commence with a free opening reception to celebrate *David Diao: Front to Back* on Sunday, July 13, 2014.

This presentation brings together a selection of paintings that span the years 1971 to 2012, demonstrating a timeline of Diao's sustained dialogue with Modernism, as well as his relationship to the art world and the critical establishment.

David Diao: Front to Back is the latest in a series of solo exhibitions that acknowledge artists whose early careers are closely connected with the history of the Museum. Larry Aldrich, the

Museum's founder, purchased one of David Diao's paintings in 1969 and his work was featured in exhibitions at the Museum in 1971, 1987, 1992, and 1996.

Exhibitions director Richard Klein said, "The artist's response to this history is an exhibition that references the idea of a retrospective, but casts it in the unique light of the body of work Diao has done that focuses on his own career as well as the nature of the art world in which he finds himself embedded. The title *Front to Back* implies a chronological read, and the exhibition does indeed include works from the beginning of the artist's career as well as from the recent past; but the reference goes deeper, speaking of Diao's ongoing interpretation of Modernism and, since 1984, the extensive use of text in his paintings."

Klein continues, "Usually, art that is based in either the social or the political is ineffectual because the finger pointing is directed out towards the morally obvious. Diao, through his recent work, has held a mirror up to himself and the community he inhabits and the results are complex, nuanced, and often uncomfortably self-conscious—just like the truth."

Reception

The free opening on Sunday, July 13, will start with a private meet and greet for Aldrich members with David Diao at 1 pm. From 2 to 3 pm, the public are invited to join the members at a panel discussion between Diao and Richard Klein; seating is limited, so reservations are required. The opening reception from 3 to 5 pm will include a docent-led tour at 4 pm and family activities all afternoon. Visitors are invited to purchase picnic fare from Green Grunion, Danbury's San Diego-style burrito truck, and picnic on the grounds. The Museum is open from 12 noon to 5 pm to view the exhibitions and admission is free all day. For information about the event or how to become a member, please call 203.438.4519 or visit www.aldrichart.org.

The Aldrich at 50

David Diao: Front to Back is part of The Aldrich's 50th Anniversary celebration, which highlights not only the Museum's legacy, but also the relationship between the era in which it was founded and our current social, political, and cultural landscape. With perspective gained through five decades, The Aldrich's formative years of 1964 to 1974 are being examined through a contemporary lens. The presentation includes three overlapping series which will be mounted over the course of a year:

A two-part exhibition—*Standing in the Shadows of Love: The Aldrich Collection 1964–1974*—of iconic, historical works that are representative of The Aldrich's early collection acquired by founder Larry Aldrich (through September 22: Robert Indiana, Robert Morris, Ree Morton, Robert Rauschenberg, Robert Smithson; opening October 19: Richard Artschwager, Eva Hesse, Ellsworth Kelly, Agnes Martin, Richard Serra); a group of new projects by contemporary artists whose work reflects the continuing influence of both art and culture from the 1960s and 1970s,

in juxtaposition with the historical works (through September 22: Taylor Davis, Jessica Jackson Hutchins, Michael Joo, Michelle Lopez; opening October 19: Kate Gilmore, Ernesto Neto, David Scanavino, Cary Smith); and solo exhibitions of current work by established artists who were included in significant exhibitions during the Museum's first decade (through July 6: Jack Whitten; opening July 13: David Diao; opening October 19: Mary Beth Edelson, Jackie Winsor).

Artist

David Diao was born in 1943 in Chengdu, Sichuan, China. On the eve of the Liberation on October 1, 1949, Diao escaped with his grandparents to Hong Kong. His mother and siblings were left behind. At age 12 he was able to join his father in NYC. He earned his AB from Kenyon College, Ohio, in 1964 and then studied briefly at Cooper Union, New York. Diao first gained attention with his solo exhibition at Paula Cooper Gallery, New York, in 1969. Two-person exhibitions followed the same year at Leo Castelli Gallery, New York (with Peter Young), and at Carmen Lamanna Gallery, Toronto (with Brice Marden). Since then, his works have been shown internationally and can be found in collections such as those of Albright-Knox Art Gallery and Whitney Museum of American Art in New York, and the Museum of Modern Art of Saint-Etienne, France. In fall 2012, Diao mounted a two-person exhibition with Walid Raad at Paula Cooper Gallery; he was also included in the 20th anniversary presentation of *Conceptual Abstraction* at Hunter College, where, alongside earlier work, Diao presented his updated version of *Barnett Newman: Chronology of Work* (2010). He was included in the 2014 Whitney Biennial in New York and in March 2014 Universite de Strasbourg organized a colloquium on his work. His many honors include grants from the Guggenheim Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts. David Diao lives and works in New York and has shown regularly with Postmasters since the opening of the gallery in 1985.

Museum

Founded by Larry Aldrich in 1964, The Aldrich is celebrating its 50th Anniversary in 2014 with a series of exhibitions and programs highlighting not just the Museum's legacy, but also the relationship between the era in which it was established and the current cultural landscape. It is one of only twenty museums in Connecticut and only 318 art museums in the country to be accredited by the American Alliance of Museums. The Museum, located at 258 Main Street, Ridgefield, CT 06877, is dedicated to fostering innovative artists whose ideas and interpretations of the world around us serve as a platform to encourage creative thinking. All exhibitions and programs are handicapped accessible. Free on-site parking. Regular Museum hours are Tuesday through Sunday, noon to 5 pm. For more information call 203 438 4519 or visit aldrichart.org.

Sponsors

The Aldrich is supported, in part, by the Department of Economic and Community

Development, Connecticut Office of the Arts, which also receives support from the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency. Major support for Museum operations has been provided by members of The Aldrich Board of Trustees and by the Anna-Maria and Stephen Kellen Foundation. The official media sponsors of exhibition openings are HamletHub, Morris Media Group, publishers of *Ridgefield Magazine*, and WSHU Public Radio.