



Davidoff Art Initiative Hosts Davidoff Art Dialogues in Beijing  
“Art Collecting in China”

*In collaboration with Beijing's Ullens Center for Contemporary Art  
Attended by Artists, Collectors, and Museum and Gallery Professionals.  
Saturday, May 10, 2014*



Michael Downs, Emma Karasz, Pascal Meccariello and András Szántó  
‘Collector As Patron’ - Wan Jie, Qiao Zhibing, Sean Lu and Philip Tinari. Photos: Mao Zhengi

Beijing / Basel, Switzerland, May 12, 2014 – The Davidoff Art Initiative is pleased to announce that it has hosted its first-ever **Davidoff Art Afternoon** on **Saturday, May 10, 2014**, at **Ullens Center for Contemporary Art in Beijing**.

The Davidoff Art Initiative and the Ullens Center for Contemporary Art hosted two Davidoff Art Dialogues, part of a series of talks in locations worldwide for the benefit of art experts and enthusiasts. Collectors, artists and gallery professionals were among the attendees.

The first of the two dialogues took place between **Pascal Meccariello**, the Davidoff artist currently in residence at Red Gate Gallery Residency, **Emma Karasz**, program coordinator at the Red Gate Gallery Residency, and **Michael Downs**, a former resident and former Head of Graduate Studies at the National Art School in Sydney. **András Szántó**, the New York-based Chief Consultant to the Davidoff Art Initiative and a member of Davidoff’s Art Advisory Council, moderated the discussion.

The second dialogue titled “Collector as Patron” was moderated by **UCCA** Beijing-based **Director Philip Tinari**, an internationally recognized expert on Asian art and art markets. **Sean Lu**, Co-Founder of the Sifang Art Museum in Nanjing, which opened in November 2013 showcasing work by leading Chinese and international artists; **Qiao Zhibing**, one of China’s best known art collectors, who is currently constructing the Oil Tank Contemporary Art Center on Shanghai’s West Bund, the city’s newest arts district; **Wan Jie**, Founder, Chairman and President of Artron Art Group, the leading printer and provider of art-related data and analytics of China, who is also a member of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference National Committee, and the Founder and Director of the Forbidden City Cultural Heritage Conservation Foundation.

"We are proud to collaborate with such a renowned institution as the UCCA, and we are delighted that they welcomed Davidoff at the Museum for the third Davidoff Art Dialogue, the second in China in collaboration with the UCCA" said **Paloma Szathmáry**, SVP Corporate Communications, Oettinger Davidoff AG.

"The Davidoff Art Dialogue is a key platform for international discussions about the state of the art market," said **András Szántó**. "With this second series of dialogues in China, we are continuing the engagement with our colleagues from around the world, and particularly in this increasingly essential market, to speak to the current and future issues of collecting contemporary art."

The Davidoff Art Dialogue at the Ullens Center for Contemporary Art in Beijing was the second installment of the two-part series of conversations focusing on Chinese collectors, emerging trends in collecting in China, and the evolving dynamics of the art market in China. The first session took place at Duddell's in Hong Kong in September 2013, with the participation of the leading Chinese art collectors Thomas Shao, She Yong and Yan Bing. The events were open to the general public.

The Davidoff Art Dialogue offered the assembled audience in-person access to renowned collectors and other key figures in the Chinese and the international art scene, to explore different facets of art collecting. "This second conversation was an opportunity to put three Chinese art experts together before the public, and to explore the questions facing them," said **UCCA Director Philip Tinari**.

#### **About the Davidoff Art Dialogues**

Davidoff Art Dialogues encourage an open exchange of information and ideas among artists, collectors, professionals, and newcomers to the world of art. From the current landscape in Caribbean or Latin American art, to the evolution of art markets in various countries, to art collecting and investing, these events address timely questions in contemporary art. Where possible, the dialogues are organized in collaboration with recognized museums and cultural institutions worldwide which have active links to the art community and the general public in their respective regions. Future occasions will take place in Davidoff's own facilities, including the company's lounges and stores, which are located in major cities around the world. Transcripts of all Davidoff Art Dialogues are available online.

#### **About the Speakers at the Davidoff Art Dialogue**

**Pascal Meccariello** (b. 1968, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic) is the first Dominican artist to take part in the Davidoff Art Residency Program at Red Gate Residency in Beijing (until 30 June 2014). Meccariello is a multidisciplinary artist working in installation, drawing, ceramic, video art, photography and performance. He has exhibited his work in numerous solo and group exhibitions inside the Dominican Republic and abroad, and is the recipient of multiple awards and honours, including a Fulbright Scholarship, a UNESCO-Aschberg Bursary for Artists, and Grand Prize at the XV National Biennial of Visual Arts in Santo Domingo. Meccariello's work focuses on deconstructing abstract concepts such as freedom and justice in contemporary society.

**Philip Tinari** has been Director of the Ullens Center for Contemporary Art in Beijing since 2011. There he oversees an exhibition program devoted to established figures and rising talents both Chinese and international, aimed at UCCA's annual public of 700,000 visitors. Prior to joining UCCA he was Editor-in-Chief of LEAP, the international art magazine of contemporary China,

which he founded and ran from 2009 to 2011. Since the early 2000s, he has written and lectured widely on contemporary art in China, for publications including Artforum (where he is a Contributing Editor), Parkett, The New York Times Magazine, and Dushu. He has edited and translated numerous articles and catalogues, taught criticism at the Central Academy of Fine Arts, and curated exhibitions of artists including Gu Dexin, Yun-Fei Ji, and Kan Xuan. Tinari, who speaks, reads, and writes Mandarin fluently, holds a Masters in East Asian studies from Harvard, a BA from the Literature Program at Duke, and was a Fulbright scholar at Peking University.

**András Szántó**, New York-based, Budapest-born writer, researcher, has advised the Davidoff Art Initiative since its inception in 2012. The co-author and editor of five books, Szántó is a contributing editor for The Art Newspaper and co-founder of ArtworldSalon. His writings on art markets and institutions have appeared in The New York Times, The Los Angeles Times, Artforum, and many other publications. He had been the director of the National Arts Journalism Program and the NEA Arts Journalism Institute at Columbia University, and has lectured on art business and marketing at the Sotheby's Institute of Art. He advises leading museums, foundations, and corporations worldwide on cultural strategies. He is the moderator of the Global Museum Leaders Colloquium and a frequent moderator of the Art Basel Conversations series.

**Emma Karasz** was born in 1989 in New York City and came to China for the first time when she was 15. Shortly after completing her liberal arts degree in the United States, she moved to Beijing on a Fulbright language scholarship. Over the last two years in Beijing, she has devoted much of her time to promoting cultural exchange between China and the rest of the world. She became Program Coordinator of Red Gate Residency in 2013.

Since graduating from England's Bath Academy of Art in 1976 (where he was taught by the modern masters Frank Auerbach and Howard Hodgkin) **Michael Downs** has exhibited his striking and unusual shaped paintings in over 30 solo shows and 200 group shows in twenty countries around the world, including the Pompidou Centre, Paris, the Centro de Cultura Contemporanea, Barcelona, the Barbican Centre, London and the Osaka Triennale of Painting in Japan. In 1990, Michael Downs moved to Australia where he gained his MFA at the University of New South Wales and, soon after, became Head of Drawing and then Head of Postgraduate Studies at the National Art School, Sydney.

**Sean Lu** is Co-Founder of the Sifang Art Museum in Nanjing, a dramatic building designed by Steven Holl in the Sifang Parkland formerly known as the China International Practical Exhibition of Architecture, which contains buildings by many of the world's leading architects. Sifang opened in November 2013 and aims to show work by leading Chinese and international artists a stunning natural context.

**Qiao Zhibing** is one of China's best known art collectors with interests in practices ranging from Zhang Enli and Yang Fudong to Olafur Eliasson and Antony Gormley. He is currently working to build the Oil Tank Contemporary Art Center on Shanghai's West Bund, the latest in a cluster of private initiatives in that city's newest arts district.

**Wan Jie** is the Founder, Chairman and President of Artron Art Group, which is the leading printer and provider of art-related data and analytics of China. He is also a member of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference National Committee, founder and director of the Forbidden City Cultural Heritage Conservation Foundation, and a leading voice for the arts among entrepreneurial circles. Artron's annual Art Awards of China is among China's most prestigious art prizes.

### **About Beijing's 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.

### **About Red Gate Gallery**

Red Gate Gallery was founded in 1991 by Australian, Brian Wallace, who first traveled to China in 1984. He returned staying to study and to work then entered the Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing to study [Chinese Art](#) History. Through 1988-9 he organized exhibitions with friends at the Ancient Observatory. The contemporary art scene was in its infancy. Wallace established Red Gate Gallery in the Ming Dynasty Watchtower at Dongbianmen. The inaugural exhibition of July 1991 showcased the works of Zhang Yajie, Dagong, Wang Lifeng and Wang Luyan. In 2011 Red Gate Gallery celebrated it's 20th year with an exhibition in Beijing, Shanghai and a tour of Australia in 2012.

### **About the Davidoff Art Initiative**

The Davidoff Art Initiative supports contemporary art and artists in the Caribbean, strengthens art organizations in the Dominican Republic, shares knowledge and expertise about contemporary art, and fosters cultural engagement between the Caribbean and the rest of the world.

The Davidoff Art Initiative aims to make a contribution to the cultural community of the Dominican Republic, where much of the company's production and many of its employees are based, bringing opportunity and visibility to the art and culture of the Caribbean region and extending the company's long-standing commitment to artistry, craftsmanship, community, and quality.

The Davidoff Art Initiative's four global program areas are: Davidoff Art Residency, Davidoff Art Dialogues, Davidoff Art Grants, and Davidoff Art Editions.

For more information, please visit: [www.davidoffartinitiative.com](http://www.davidoffartinitiative.com)

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