

Collecting Chinese Contemporary Art at the Crossroads of Beijing Dangdai Art Fair

f g+ t in



Heiner Wemhöner
Herford, Germany

Do you travel often to see Chinese contemporary art?

My enthusiasm for contemporary Chinese art was kindled in the early 2000s. During this time, I travelled to the People's Republic much more frequently than before to find a suitable location for our Chinese mechanical engineering company.

The starting point for my trips was usually Shanghai. I always took the time to look at and acquire art while I was there. However, travelling specifically for art is a luxury that I allow myself only to a limited extent. This year, however, I went to Art Basel Hong Kong for the first time in a while and last autumn to Asia Now in Paris. Fortunately, most international galleries now also have Chinese works in their programmes. A few days ago, for example, I visited Zhang Enli's exhibition at Xavier Hufkens in Brussels.

What would you recommend visiting during Beijing Dangdai?

Unfortunately, I haven't been to Beijing for far too long. The Ullens Centre for Contemporary Art (UCCA) is certainly always worth a visit. But what I would always recommend to anyone visiting a fair is to take at least two days to visit it.

Can you give a piece of advice for non-Chinese collectors who'd like to start collecting Chinese Contemporary art?

The motivations for developing a collection focus are so diverse and personal that it is difficult for me to give recommendations or advice here.

On the one hand, it helped that I was lucky enough to be given a pre-selection of potentially interesting positions by good gallery owners (such as Lorenz Helbling, who was one of the pioneers of the art market in China). On the other hand, it was always important for me to be guided by my curiosity. You will only ever find the right art for you if you follow your instincts.