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## Jiang Shuo- Red Guards Today

**May 11 - 21, 2005**

Plum Blossoms Gallery Hong Kong is pleased to present *Red Guards Today*, an exhibition of recent sculptures by Jiang Shuo, an Austria-based Chinese sculptress. Featuring nearly 30 pieces of bronze sculptures produced in these two years, *Red Guards Today* is the sculptress's second solo exhibition in Hong Kong and will be on view at the gallery from the 11 through the 21st of May 2005.

In the two years since Jiang Shuo first introduced us to her Red Guards series of small delicate sculptures cast in the ancient lost wax technique, that each sculpture is an original and not an edition, she has continued to bear witness to the irony of her generation's situation within Chinese society straddling the extremes of revolution and the extremes of economic development. The Red Guards work follows in her folk art style but with the injection of a political theme to grab people's attention. The almost faceless guards with their wide-open mouths recall that period of turmoil in China when the spouting of slogans and mindless indoctrination was the path to survival. The sarcasm continues for the material desires that those guards criticized during the Revolution, have now become their goals to be pursued today. Portrayed with cola cans, french fries, mobile phones...the guards have now engaged in trade and could hardly withstand the indubitable influence of popular culture. While examining that cultural juxtaposition faced by her generation she has challenged herself as a sculptress to work with variations of scale and technique in order to enable her practice and fulfill her vision. Recently she has created a pair of 2.6 metre and 2 metre tall Red Guards commissioned by Hong Kong's Great Eagle Hotel Group for their landmark Langham Place Hotel in Hong Kong. In "*Red Guards Today*", not only the original small sculptures are on display, there are also some larger in size. Moreover, she has collaborated with her husband Wu Shaoxiang, also a famous sculptor, on a wonderful sculpture "To be Rich is Glorious".

Born in 1958 in Beijing, Jiang Shuo studied sculpture at the Central Academy of Arts and Design, which is now under Tsinghua University. Jiang, as the first female sculptor in China, completed her master degree in 1985 and started her career in teaching sculpture at the Central Academy until 1989. Jiang, with her husband Wu Shaoxiang, emigrated to Austria and worked at their joint studio there. Jiang's works have been widely exhibited around the world, especially in Europe, and are regularly sold in Beijing through The China Guardian auction.