

MIT Dedicates Monumental Sculpture by Internationally Renowned Artist Cai Guo-Qiang

***Ring Stone* joins MIT Public Art Collection as artist's first work for a university campus**

Public Program

MIT China Forum | May 10, 2012

5:30pm Keynote speaker: Cai Guo-Qiang

Dialogues: Between Different Cultures | [MIT Wong Auditorium, Tang Center](http://whereis.mit.edu/?go=E51) (MIT Building E51), 2 Amherst Street, Cambridge, MA (<http://whereis.mit.edu/?go=E51>)

6:30pm *Ring Stone* dedication | [North Garden, MIT Sloan School of Management](http://whereis.mit.edu/?go=E62) (MIT Building E62), 100 Main Street, Cambridge, MA (<http://whereis.mit.edu/?go=E62>)

Free and open to the public. Please reserve seats for Forum at:

<http://caiguoqiangmit.eventbrite.com>



Cambridge, Mass, April 5, 2012 – The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) announces the dedication of *Ring Stone* (2010) by internationally renowned artist Cai Guo-Qiang. The monumental white granite sculpture is the artist's first public work of art for a university campus. Located in the north garden adjacent to the MIT Sloan School of Management, the artwork celebrates the Sloan School's educational and cultural ties with China and will be on permanent display.

A public dedication of *Ring Stone* will take place May 10, 2012 at 6:30PM at the site of the sculpture, where artist Cai Guo-Qiang will be in attendance. Preceding the dedication, the artist will be the keynote speaker for the MIT China Forum at 5:30PM in the MIT Wong Auditorium.

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Ring Stone was commissioned for the MIT Sloan School of Management as part of the MIT Percent-for-Art, a program overseen by the MIT List Visual Arts Center. An initiative begun in 1968, the MIT Percent-for-Art allots funds from each new building project or major renovation to commission or purchase art for a public space. In addition to funding by the MIT Sloan School of Management, the work was made possible through generous donations from the Annie Wong Art Foundation and the Robert D. ('64) and Sara-Ann Sanders family.

Cai has stated that the MIT Percent-for-Art provided him a perfect platform to bring his first public work to a university campus, "I have a close relationship with MIT. I was an Ida Ely Rubin Artist in Residence at MIT in 2003–04, so I am glad to have a chance to work with MIT for my new creation."

Cai Guo-Qiang's MIT China Forum keynote lecture, entitled *Dialogues: Between Different Cultures*, is free and open to the public, and includes photos and videos of his recent projects in the Ukraine, Qatar and at MIT, as well as his past explosion events and gunpowder drawings. The artist will provide insight into how he creates a dialogue through his artworks by integrating the culture and history of the country in which he works, with the goal of exploring new possibilities in art.

About Cai Guo-Qiang's sculpture *Ring Stone*

Ring Stone is composed of twelve individual but indivisible links cut from a 39 1/2-foot-long single block of white granite weighing approximately 14 metric tons. The massive stone block was quarried from the caves of Zhangbanzhen, Hui An County, near the artist's hometown of Quanzhou in southern China's Fujian Province, which also is where artisan stonemasons carved the work. Seven graceful Japanese Black Pine trees, reminiscent of images found in traditional Chinese landscape painting, are planted inside the rings and nearby.

The interlocking, inseparable granite links of *Ring Stone* form a chain, representing the individual's relationship to society. The rings are simultaneously symbolic of both wholeness and emptiness. The twelve inextricably linked rings also refer to the twelve months in the Chinese lunar calendar as well as the twelve animals in the Chinese zodiac. The pine trees, which retain their green foliage even in a severe winter, represent longevity and endurance in the face of adversity. While the stone timelessly grounds the work, the seven pines will slowly grow over time and change with each season.

Cai has placed *Ring Stone* in its location on the Sloan School lawn according to the exacting principles of *feng shui*, the Chinese understanding of how *qi* (energy) flows throughout the universe. Based on the concept that man and nature must exist in harmony, the artist has studied this complex belief system extensively, which has been practiced in China since 1100 BCE. In siting *Ring Stone*, Cai has used *feng shui* to bestow beneficial *qi* on the Sloan School by blocking the inauspicious energy created by traffic converging from Broadway and Main Street.

About Public Art at MIT

The MIT Public Art Collection contains over 50 works of art by internationally-renowned artists of the 20th and 21st centuries, including Jennifer Bartlett, Martin Boyce, Dan Graham, Anish Kapoor Sol LeWitt, Henry Moore, Louise Nevelson, and Sarah Sze. These works are sited in public spaces across campus, and exemplify how the finest visual art explores and reflects complex social, scientific, and technological issues. http://listart.mit.edu/public_art

About the List Visual Arts Center

The MIT List Visual Arts Center is highly respected as one of the most significant university art galleries in the country for its innovative, provocative, and scholarly exhibitions and publications. Just as MIT pushes at the frontiers of scientific inquiry, it is the mission of the List Visual Arts Center, located on the campus of MIT, to explore challenging, intellectually inquisitive, contemporary art making in all media. In addition to presenting 4-6 exhibitions annually, the List Center is responsible for maintaining and developing the MIT Permanent Collection of art; commissioning new works for the MIT Public Art Collection through the MIT Percent-for-Art; and organizing the Student Loan Art Program, which lends over 500 works of art annually to MIT undergraduate and graduate students. <http://listart.mit.edu>

About the Sloan School of Management

For sixty years, the MIT Sloan School of Management, based in Cambridge, Massachusetts, has been one of the world's leading academic sources of innovation in management theory and practice. With students from more than 60 countries, it develops effective, innovative, and principled leaders who advance the global economy. <http://mitsloan.mit.edu>

About the China Forum

The MIT China Forum is part of a broader MIT effort to look at new ways of fostering ties with China. The Forum was created by the MIT-Greater China Strategy Group, which is charged with identifying new initiatives and collaborations with China over the next 20 years. <http://global.mit.edu/initiatives/china/china-forum/>

About the Arts at MIT

The arts at MIT connect creative minds across disciplines and encourage a lifetime of exploration and self-discovery. They are rooted in experimentation, risk-taking and imaginative problem-solving. The arts strengthen MIT's commitment to the aesthetic, human, and social dimensions of research and innovation. Artistic knowledge and creation exemplify our motto — *mens et manus*, mind and hand. The arts are essential to MIT's mission to build a better society and meet the challenges of the 21st century. <http://arts.mit.edu>

About the Artist Cai Guo-Qiang

Cai Guo-Qiang was born in 1957 in Quanzhou, Fujian Province, China. Trained in stage design at the Shanghai Theater Academy, his work has since crossed multiple mediums within art, including drawing, installation, video and performance art. While living in Japan from 1986 to 1995, he explored the properties of gunpowder in his drawings, an inquiry that eventually led to his experimentation with explosives on a massive scale and to the development of his signature explosion events. Drawing upon Eastern philosophy and contemporary social issues as a conceptual basis, these projects and events aim to establish an exchange between viewers and the larger universe around them, utilizing a site-specific approach to culture and history. Cai was awarded the Golden Lion at the 48th Venice Biennale in 1999, the 7th Hiroshima Art Prize in 2007, and the 20th Fukuoka Asian Culture Prize in 2009. He was Director of Visual and Special Effects for the opening and closing ceremonies of the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing. In 2008, he was the subject of a retrospective at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York. In Fall 2010, Cai created *Odyssey* for the Museum of Fine Arts Houston. Installed as one of the museum's ongoing Portals Project, it is one of his largest gunpowder drawings to date. He currently lives and works in New York. <http://www.caiguoqiang.com>

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