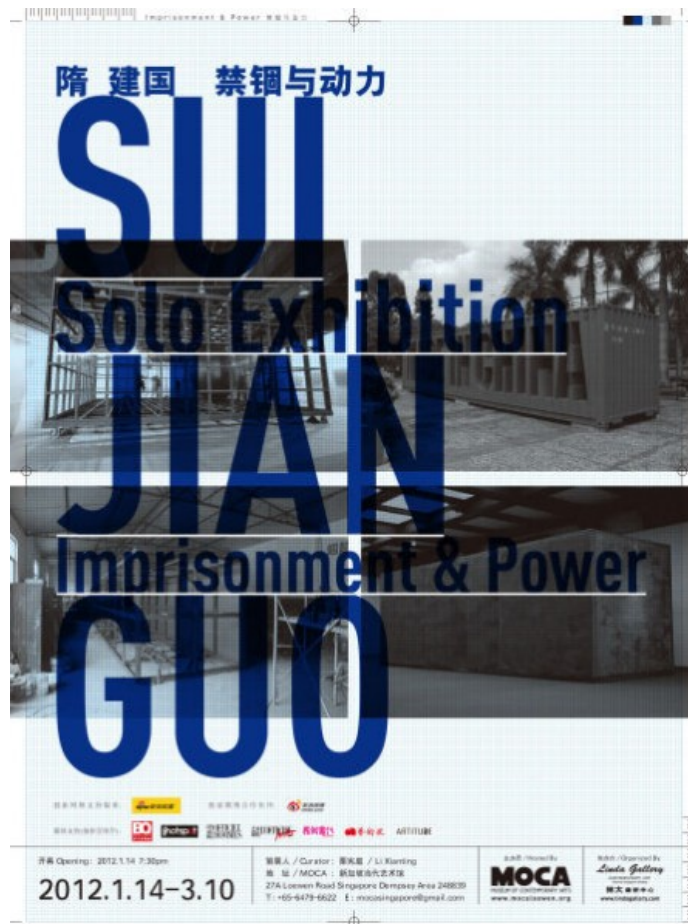




## Imprisonment and Power: Sui Jianguo Solo Exhibition

by SUE WANG on Jan 5, 2012 · 3:06 pm



Sui Jianguo, Professor and Chairman of the Department of Sculpture, Central Academy of Fine Arts, Beijing, is one of the most important and influential artists working in China today and has been the recipient of numerous awards for his work which includes the recent 2011 Martell Artist of the Year award. Exhibiting extensively in many countries, he is considered by many to be within the top ten Contemporary artists in China today. Organized by the MOCA in Singapore and curated by the renowned critic Li Xianting, Sui Jianguo's new solo exhibition entitled "Imprisonment and Power" is going to open on January 14th, 2012.

This exhibition "Restrained Power" is a darkened room which stands as a hulking steel

structure with a total weight of 8 tons and is a 2.5 meters high, 2.5 meters wide and 15 meters long sealed box with a wall thickness of 5 mm and an iron ball 2 meters in diameter. The entire space occupies a considerable proportion of a metal cargo container and from the iron ball the audience can hear the continuous constant rattle from the associated power device drivers, and every 27 seconds or so, there are deafening percussive noises in the metal cargo containers. From within the structure escapes the crashing sound of steel-on-steel collisions that send reverberations through the floor. When looking through one of the two viewing ports in the structure, the viewers catch fleeting glimpses of the huge steel ball rolling about within.



Sui Jianguo- Restricted Motion 02, 2010; 250 x 250 x 800cm



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Made in China 02, 2011; Steel container, 1200x270x240cm



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The metal cargo brings an impression to the audience: the iron curtain or the black box, strong and cold. No matter what has been placed in this metal cargo, it must be powerful, the impact from the deafening sound demonstrates this power. Thus there must be drastic restrictions and collision relations between the metal container and the driving force inside. Entitled “Restrained Power”, the work is a metaphorical device representing imprisonment and struggle. “It’s both the self-expression of Sui’s inner feelings and his allegory of the living environment,” Curator Li Xianting comments.

Sui Jianguo has written in his *The Clues of My Art Development*, “the social background factors can be clearly found in each of my work, but I still try to look for a self-supporting artistic approach which will endow my experience of life and the world I’m facing with some kind of structure, although I know I’m still removed from it. Actually I doubt it’s too unreal to be realized in contemporary China and the world under the shadow of the complex background of reality.

The sensitive and anxious experience Sui felt for the race of time has made his “method” of time and space prominent in his works. The introverted, introspective and anxious personality of the artist impels him to create works with obvious time factors such as Tension of Movement, Limited Movement. His strong confrontation of “confined and struggling” constitutes the most breathtaking elements of his creations. Even in his humorous series of works, the magnified scale of scary, the powerful iron cage still reminds people of his consistency in his expression of art. Therefore, it’s natural to comprehend his new piece—Restrained Power exhibited at MOCA in Singapore as the audience can see into his personality within his works. It no longer stands for the Iron Curtain but implies the inner experience of “imprisonment and struggle” which almost everyone has experienced. The exhibition will continue until March 10.

**Title :** Imprisonment and Power

**Date:** January 14th–February 28th, 2012

**Venue:** MOCA Museum, 27A Loewen Road (Dempsey Area), Singapore 248839