



Advance Program Notes

BeijingDance/LDTX

Saturday, November 15, 2014, 7:30 PM

These Advance Program Notes are provided online for our patrons who like to read about performances ahead of time. Printed programs will be provided to patrons at the performances. Programs are subject to change.

BeijingDance/LDTX

Willy Tsao, *artistic director*

LI Han-zhong, *deputy artistic director*

Choreographers:

LI Han-zhong, MA Bo, SANG Ji-jia, SONG Ting-Ting, LIU Bing, and XU Yi-ming

Dancers:

MA Bo, XU Yi-Ming, QIAN Kun, ADIYA, GAO Yang, LIU Xue-Fang, DU Yan-Hao, TANG Ting-Ting, LIU Yin-Tao, XIE Xin, GONG Xing-Xing, LI Ke-Hua, and FAN Lu

GAO-Jie, *lighting designer*

ZHANG Meng, *stage manager*

YIN Peng, *tour manager*

Standing Before Darkness 40 minutes

Intermission (15 minutes)

October 6 minutes

Waiting Alone 9 minutes

Treading on Grass 30 minutes

Program Notes

STANDING BEFORE DARKNESS

Choreography: SANG Ji-Jia

Music: Dickson Dee

Lighting: GAO-Jie

Costume: WANG Yan

Dancers: XU Yi-Ming, QIAN Kun, ADIYA, GAO Yang, LIU Xue-Fang, DU Yan- Hao, TANG Ting-Ting, LIU Yin-Tao, XIE Xin, GONG Xing-Xing, LI Ke-Hua, and FAN Lu

"How much can we know about those around us..."

Standing Before Darkness is the second work created for BeijingDance/LDTX by the company's resident choreographer, SANG Ji-Jia. This work demonstrates the artist's unique style, in which he ruminates on the capacity of dancers' bodies and combines their technical and pedestrian movements to evoke extreme psychological tension. The performance is accompanied by live electronic music composed by accomplished Hong Kong musician Dickson Dee.

OCTOBER

Choreography: SONG Ting Ting and LIU Bin

Music: *Octobre* by Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Lighting: GAO Jie

Dancers: LIU Xue-Fang and GONG Xing-Xing

October is a quirky, elegant, and innovative duet by LIU Bin and SONG Ting-ting, two of China's emerging young choreographers.

WAITING ALONE

Choreography: XU Yi-Ming

Music: *Moon*, performed by AJ Alex

Lighting: GAO Jie

Dancer: XU Yi-Ming

"May already have, maybe it does not exist. But I still wait alone....."

The dancer/choreographer presents a very unique style of movement in the piece. Fearlessly throwing himself into the random spaces on stage, the hysterical and stumbling movements conveys a strong feeling of loneliness and helplessness.

TREADING ON GRASS

Choreography: LI Han-zhong and MA Bo

Music: Igor Stravinsky

Lighting: GAO Jie

Sound: MAO Liang

Costume: WANG Yan

Dancers: QIAN Kun, ADIYA, GAO Yang, LIU Xue-Fang, DU Yan- Hao, TANG Ting-Ting, LIU Yin-Tao, XIE Xin, GONG Xing-Xing, LI Ke-Hua, and FAN Lu

Treading on Grass was specially created for the opening performance of the Beijing Dance Festival 2013. The work is inspired by a rare piano rendition of Stravinsky's *Fire Bird*, and indulges in the dialogue between the traditional and the innovative. The movement develops from relative simplicity to extreme complexity, only to return to the purest form of dance movement, the discovery of a new form of existence as suggested in the music.

About BeijingDance/LDTX

BeijingDance/LDTX (Lei Dong Tian Xia, literally translated as “Thunder Rumbles Under Heaven”) was founded in September 2005. LDTX is the first officially registered independent professional dance company outside of the China government system. Under the artistic direction of Willy TSAO, China’s foremost figure in modern dance, and executive artistic director Li Han-Zhong, the company boasts an ensemble of technically exquisite dancers with diverse creativities and strong discipline from all over China.

The company aims to create a free platform for contemporary dance artists in China and to promote the conception of modern dance as a multi-faceted form of arts, with emphasis on each artist’s distinctive personality, modernity, and originality.

LDTX has produced numerous works of different scales and styles, including *All River Red*, *Cold Dagger*, *One Table N Chairs*, *Pilgrimage*, *The Pseudo Eagle*, *Unspeakable*, *Standing Before Darkness*, *First Ritual*, *Sorrowful Song*, *Layer Code*, *Treading on Grass*, *A place*, and more. These excellent works showcase the vigorous and unconstrained creativity of Chinese dancers, and reveal the earth-shaking development of the Chinese culture in the past decade.

LDTX has toured extensively over five continents with overwhelming response from audiences in the United States, Canada, Austria, France, Italy, Korea, Germany, Israel, Australia, Mexico, Sweden, Switzerland, Latvia, Poland, Algeria, and Costa Rica, making LDTX an important cultural ambassador from China to the world.

LDTX is also committed to various exhibition projects. In 2008 the company hosted the first Beijing Contemporary Dance Festival. In 2012, the event developed into the two-week-long Beijing Dance Festival and has since emerged as the grandest in scale and the most influential modern dance activity in China.

LDTX works hard on advocacy of modern dance by running a well-equipped theatre and studio setup and a training center that offers dance courses of various levels to the public. LDTX also collaborates with brands like Porsche, Mont Blanc, Mercedes-Benz, and Cartier on commercial projects.

“BeijingDance/LDTX, with its sublime artistic vision and strong dancing ensemble, confirms its irreplaceable position in China’s modern dance development.”

—China Cultural Journal

“The Company doesn’t merely dance splendidly, it dances ferociously.”

—Los Angeles Times

Biographies

WILLY TSAO, *artistic director*



Willy TSAO has been an influential figure as choreographer, educator, modern art curator, manager, and director in China's modern dance development. Born and educated in Hong Kong, Tsao received modern dance training in the U.S. from 1973 to 1977 and graduated from the University of Hong Kong with a master's degree in business administration in 1979.

Tsao has promoted China's modern dance on three fronts: Hong Kong, Guangdong, and Beijing. Firstly in Hong Kong, he founded the City Contemporary Dance Company in 1979 and has been its artistic director since 1989. In Guangdong, Tsao was the teacher and the advisor for the modern dance program at the Guangdong

Dance School from 1987 to 1992 and became the artistic director for the Guangdong Modern Dance Company when it was founded by the Guangdong Provincial Government in 1992. He left Guangdong in 1998 but subsequently was invited back to the position by the Guangdong Cultural Bureau in 2004. In Beijing, Tsao served the Beijing Modern Dance Company as its artistic director beginning in 1999; he resigned in 2005 and established the BeijingDance/LDTX in the same year. Tsao is presently the artistic director of the three major modern dance companies in China: Hong Kong City Contemporary Dance Company, Guangdong Modern Dance Company, and BeijingDance/LDTX.

Tsao has devoted incessant effort to promoting modern dance in China. Since 1987, he has given lectures in universities and art troupes in many cities including Beijing, Shanghai, Wuhan, Fuzhou, Kunming, Taiyuan, Daqing, Nanning, Nanchang, Hefei, Changsha, Xining, Urumqi, and Guangzhou. He has set up a series of innovative and collaborative platforms to support local outstanding dancers, excavate emerging artists, develop contemporary culture, and explore sensible operational strategies for dance companies in China.

Tsao choreographs works in various styles. Between 1980 and 2014, he created more than 60 major works, including *Bird Songs*, *Kunlun*, *China Wind-China Fire*, *Wandering in the Realm of Lightness*, *One Table N Chairs*, *Sexing Three Millenniums*, *In Search of the Grand View Garden*, *Warrior Lanling*, *Dao: Extraordinaire*, and *Conqueror*. These works have been presented in the United States, Canada, Korea, Japan, Israel, Germany, and France, as well as in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, and Taipei. Tsao's contribution to dance has been widely recognized. In 1999, he was awarded the Bronze Bauhinia Star by the Hong Kong Government for his significant contribution to the development of local arts. Other awards and honors include the Dancer of the Year Award from the Hong Kong Artists' Guild (1988), the Ten Outstanding Young Persons Award (1990), the Badge of Honor from Her Royal Highness Queen Elizabeth II (1993), the Louis Cartier Award of Excellence—Outstanding Choreographer (1998), and the Dance Award of the Year—Outstanding Achievement Award from the Hong Kong Dance Alliance (2014). In July 2000, Tsao became the Honorary Fellow of the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts.

Biographies, continued



LI HAN-ZHONG, deputy artistic director and choreographer

An internationally acclaimed choreographer, LI Han-zhong was born in Kunming, Yunnan province. He joined the Beijing Song and Dance Ensemble of the National Defense and Technology Commission in 1979 and the Guangzhou Military Region Song and Dance Troupe in 1982. LI entered the Beijing Dance Academy's Division of Chinese Ethnic Dance in 1987 and graduated with a bachelor of arts degree in 1991. He joined the Guangdong Modern Dance Company as a dancer in 1991, serving in the capacity of artistic assistant and choreographer. He was invited to be the deputy artistic director of Beijing Modern Dance Company in March 1999. In September 2005, LI collaborated with Willy TSAO to found the BeijingDance/LDTX, and has served as its deputy artistic director since. LI has choreographed more than

30 works, including *The Sounds of Heaven*, *All River Red*, *Undetermined Domain*, *Concerto Rhapsody*, *Rear Light*, *The Cold Dagger*, *The Thirteenth Singletons*, *Rehearsal and Performance: At Odds*, *Between Lines*, *First Ritual*, and *Sorrowful Songs*. LI's important choreographies have been performed in many countries on five continents, including the U.S., Canada, France, Brazil, Germany, Switzerland, Sweden, Italy, Austria, Korea, Singapore, Australia, Poland, Latvia, Mexico, Algeria, and Costa Rica. His choreographic talent is recognized internationally and has been invited to stage works for various dance institutes, including the Adelaide Center for the Arts in 1998 and 2000, the Cloud Gate Dance Theater, and the International Choreographers Showcase of the American Dance Festival in 1999. LI has also been engaged as producer, director, and choreographer for many large-scale dance dramas and musicals, such as *Song of Movie* in Beijing, *The Impression of West Lake* in Hangzhou, *The Song of Everlasting Sorrow* in Xian, *MAO Zhedong* in Hunan, *Nursery School of Red Capital* in Yan'an, and *The Three Kingdoms* in Chongqing.



MA BO; choreographer, assistant artistic director, and dancer

This passionate choreographer was born in Mizhi, Shanxi province. She graduated with a bachelor of arts degree from the Beijing Dance Academy Division of Chinese Ethnic Dance in 1991 and was invited by the academy to be the faculty member. She joined the Guangdong Modern Dance Company in 1993 and Beijing Modern Dance Company in 1999, before becoming one of the founding members of BeijingDance/LDTX in 2005. MA has been collaborating with her husband LI Han-zhong in numerous creative projects and has produced over 30 choreographic works since 1992. As a dancer and a choreographer of BeijingDance/LDTX, she has performed and presented her works in over 20 countries including the U.S., Canada, France, Germany, Switzerland, Sweden, Austria, Korea, Singapore,

Australia, Poland, and Mexico. Among them, the dance *All River Red* has been toured and performed over 300 times around the world, acclaimed as a milestone in the progress of Chinese modern dance. MA Bo has been invited to work with international art ensembles, including Wright College of Art, Australia in 1998 and 2000; Taiwan's Cloud Gate Dance Theatre; and the American Dance Festival International Choreographers Showcase in 1999. MA Bo has choreographed and directed a number of large-scale productions, including *Song of Movie*, *The Impression of West Lake*, *The Song of Everlasting Sorrow*, *MAO Zhedong*, *Nursery School of Red Capital*, and *The Three Kingdoms*. MA Bo's major choreographic works include *Variation of Red*, *Helpless*, *Garden of Memory*, *All River Red*, *The Cold Dagger*, *Rear Light*, *The Thirteenth Singletons*, *Rehearsal and Performance: At Odds*, *Between Lines*, *First Ritual*, *Sorrowful Songs*, *Treading on Grass*, and *Speeding*.

Biographies, continued



SANG JI-JIA, choreographer

An ethnic Tibetan born in Gansu province, SANG Ji-jia was a dancer with the Guangdong Modern Dance Company from 1993 to 1998. He won various awards at international dance competitions, including the gold medal at the Paris International Modern Dance Competition in 1996. SANG was named Star Across the Century by the Guangdong Province in 1997. He was awarded the Asian Cultural Council Scholarship and the American Dance Festival Scholarship in 1998. He joined Hong Kong City Contemporary Dance Company in December 1999. In 2002, under the auspices of the Rolex Mentor and Protégé Arts Initiative Program, SANG studied choreography under William Forsythe and stayed with the Forsythe Company as choreographer and dancer until 2006. SANG Ji-jia returned to China in 2007 and became the resident artist of BeijingDance/LDTX. SANG's works have been presented around the world at Chang Mu Dance Festival (Korea), Taipei Arts Festival, International Computer Music Festival (Hong Kong), Manila Art Festival (Phillipines), and Swiss International Dance Festival. His major works include *1979, As if to nothing, Not here/Not ever, Layer Code, Comrades, Unspeakable, Sticks, Standing Before Darkness*, and *Sway*.



LIU BIN, choreographer

LIU is a founding member of BeijingDance/LDTX. He was born in Shanxi province and studied at the Provincial Arts School in Shanxi, later continuing his studies at the Folk Dance Division of the Beijing Dance Academy Affiliated High School. In 1998 he joined the Fujian Provincial Song and Dance Company and in 2002 began his modern dance career with the Beijing Modern Dance Company. In 2005 he became a founding member of LDTX. LIU's works have been presented in the Hong Kong Arts Festival, Dance Salad Festival (U.S.), China Today Festival (Austria), and the Singapore Art Festival. His major works include *Play with You, Twi and Twa, The Snail, Lost, October, See, Dream-Maker*, and *A place*.



SONG TING-TING, choreographer and dancer

SONG Ting-Ting is a founding member of BeijingDance/LDTX. A Shanghai native, she trained at the Shanghai Educational University in the Department of Dance. After graduation, she taught at the Affiliated High School of the Shanghai Educational University. Song Ting-ting joined the Beijing Modern Dance Company in 2002 and became a founding member of BeijingDance/LDTX. Her choreography includes *Play with you; Comma; Fried to Eat, or Boiled to Eat?; The Snail*; and others.



XU YI-MING, choreographer and dancer

XU is a founding member of BeijingDance/LDTX. XU Yi-Ming was born in Zhangjiakou, Hebei province. He studied at the Beijing Runliang Dance School and joined the Guangzhou Song and Dance Company in 2001. Six months later, he joined Beijing Modern Dance Company. He danced with BMDC until 2005, when he became a founding member of LDTX. He has performed in more than 20 countries around Asia, Europe, America, and Australia. He has choreographed many works, including *Dad, Twi and Twa*, and *The Snail*. XU participated in the Zawirowania Dance Theatre Festival as an independent artist in Poland in June 2013. His latest creations include *Waiting Alone* and *Head Against Earth*.

Biographies, continued



TANG TING-TING, *dancer*

TANG Ting-Ting was born in Wuxi, Jiangsu province, and began her training at the Affiliated High School of Beijing Contemporary Music Institute from 2006 to 2010. She became a student of the Beijing Music Institute in 2006 and joined BeijingDance/LDTX as a dancer in 2010. She has toured in Germany, Mexico, Sweden, Australia, Poland, Latvia, Algeria, and other countries. Her major choreographies are *Transcendence* and *The Beam*.



LIU YIN-TAO, *dancer*

LIU Yin-Tao was born in Xichang, Sichuan province. She studied dance at the Chengdu Culture and Arts School from 1998 to 2004. She enrolled in the dance department at Sichuan University in 2004 and continued her post-graduate study from 2008 to 2011. She received a master of fine arts degree in 2011 and joined LDTX the same year. She has toured in Germany, Sweden, Australia, Israel, Poland, Latvia, Algeria, and more. Her major choreography includes *South Street* and *Original Color. Peach Color*.



XIE XIN, *dancer*

XIE Xin was born in Jiangxi province and graduated from the Jiangxi Art School in 2002. She began her modern dance training at the dance program jointly organized by the Guangdong Dance School and the Sun Yat-sen University in 2004. She taught at the Training Center of the Guangdong Modern Dance Company from 2004-2005. In 2005 she joined Jinxing Dance Theater, Shanghai, and later joined Tao Dance Theater (Beijing) in 2011 as a dancer. In October 2012, she joined BeijingDance/LDTX. She has toured in various countries such as the U.S., Canada, Germany, France, Sweden, Australia, Poland, Latvia, and Algeria. Her major choreography includes *Green, Impression, Fragment, and Fall*.



GONG XING-XING, *dancer*

GONG Xing-Xing was born in Xinjiang and received her training at the PLA Art Academy from 2000 to 2006. In 2009, she became a student of the Beijing Dance Academy, in their choreography department. After graduation, she became a dancer at Beijing Dance Company and Tao Dance Theater (Beijing). In August 2013 she joined BeijingDance/LDTX as a dancer. In 2011 she toured Canada, Israel, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Korea, Algeria, and more. Her major choreography includes *The Letter, 3'26", Quicksand, Elegant City*, and others.

Biographies, continued



LI KE-HUA, *dancer*

Li Ke-Hua was born in Jinan, Shandong province, and trained at Secondary School of Shandong Art Academy in 2009. She became a student Minzu University in 2009 and joined BeijingDance/LDTX as a dancer in 2013. She has toured in the U.S. and other countries.



QIAN KUN, *dancer*

QIAN Kun was born in Zoucheng, Shandong province. He began his dance training at the Qingdao School of Arts in 1998 and enrolled in the Shandong Art School's Dance Department in 2005. He joined BeijingDance/LDTX in 2009. He has toured worldwide in countries such as the U.S., Canada, Germany, Mexico, Sweden, Australia, Israel, Poland, Latvia, and Algeria. His major choreographic works include *Hypnotize*, *Cause*, *A Sudden Happening Monks* and *Secular Life Regret*, *Hear Say*, and *Return*.



ADIYA, *dancer*

ADIYA, of Mongolian ethnicity, was born in Erdos in Inner Mongolia. He began his dance training at Inner Mongolia Yi Meng Arts School in 1998. In 2002 he became a member of the Inner Mongolian Military Dance Company and joined Beijing Tenggeli Tala Arts Ensemble in 2004. In 2012 he joined BeijingDance/LDTX. He has toured in Germany, Australia, Israel, Algeria, and more. His major choreography includes *Take a step*.



GAO YANG, *dancer*

GAO Yang was born in Xianyang, Shandong province. He graduated from the dance department of Nanjing University with a degree in choreography in 2013 and then joined BeijingDance/LDTX as a dancer. He has toured in Algeria and other countries.

Biographies, continued



LIU XUE-FANG, *dancer*

LIU Xue-Fang was born in Hejiang, Sichuan province. He began his dance training at the Sichuan School of Arts in 2004. In 2008 he became a dancer of the Chengdu Military Dance Company and joined BeijingDance/LDTX in 2014. He has toured to Costa Rica and the U.S.



FAN LU, *dancer*

Fan Lu was born in Taiyuan, Shanxi province. She studied dance in Shanxi Xi Ju Zhi Ye Xue Yuan from 2000 to 2005; studied dance education in Minzu University of China in 2006, continuing her post-graduate study from 2010 to 2013; and received a master of fine arts degree. In September 2014 she became an intern with BeijingDance/LDTX.



DU YAN-HAO, *dancer*

DU Yan-hao graduated from the Affiliated High School of the Beijing Dance Academy in 2005 with a concentration in classical dance and furthered his studies in the New Zealand School of Dance with a degree in dance performance. DU Yan-Hao was engaged as a dancer for the Beijing dance company, New Zealand's Black Grace Dance Company (2012), and worked with many other renowned international choreographers and dance companies, including Jiri Kylian, Paul Taylor's Company B, Janis Claxton Dance Company, and Malia Johnston. He joined BeijingDance/LDTX in 2014 and has toured in Algeria, the U.S., and many other countries.

Engagement Activities

Thursday, November 13, 2014, 11:15 AM-12:45 PM

Traditional Chinese Folk Dance Class with Members of 15-50 Dance Group

Cube

Members of the 15-50 Dance Group explore the techniques of traditional and Chinese folk dance and creative expression through these techniques in this traditional Chinese folk dance class with contemporary influences.

Thursday, November 13, 2014, 2-3:30 PM

Contemporary Dance Class with Student Dancers

Cube

BeijingDance/LDTX artists work with student dancers, teaching contemporary techniques in this dance class.

Thursday, November 13, 2014, 4-5:15 PM

Class Visit with Students in the Virginia Tech Department of History's Revolutionary China Class

Torgerson 1050

Members of BeijingDance/LDTX visit Virginia Tech's Revolutionary China class, taught by Helen Schneider, associate professor in the Department of History and a specialist in modern Chinese history.

Friday, November 14, 2014, 3-5 PM

Friday Tea with University Honors, BeijingDance/LDTX Artistic Director Willy Tsao, and BeijingDance/LDTX Artists

East Ambler Johnston Hall

University Honors students are joined by Willy Tsao, artistic director for BeijingDance/LDTX, and company dancers for Friday tea.

Saturday, November 15, 2014, 6:45 PM

Pre-show Performance by the 15-50 Dance Group

Cube

The 15-50 Dance Group is a group of Blacksburg Chinese women, ages 15 to 50. Members are all students, Virginia Tech employees, or spouses of employees. Many of the members are also teachers or parents of at the Blacksburg Chinese School. They all have certain things in common: they love life, their families, and their friends, and they are deeply committed to the community. During this performance and demonstration, members of the 15-50 Dance Group will share a variety of different Chinese ethnic dances, including Han, Mengu, Dai, Zang, and Weiwuer pieces.

Free

Saturday, November 15, 2014, 9:30 PM

Post-performance Discussion with BeijingDance/LDTX Artistic Director Willy Tsao

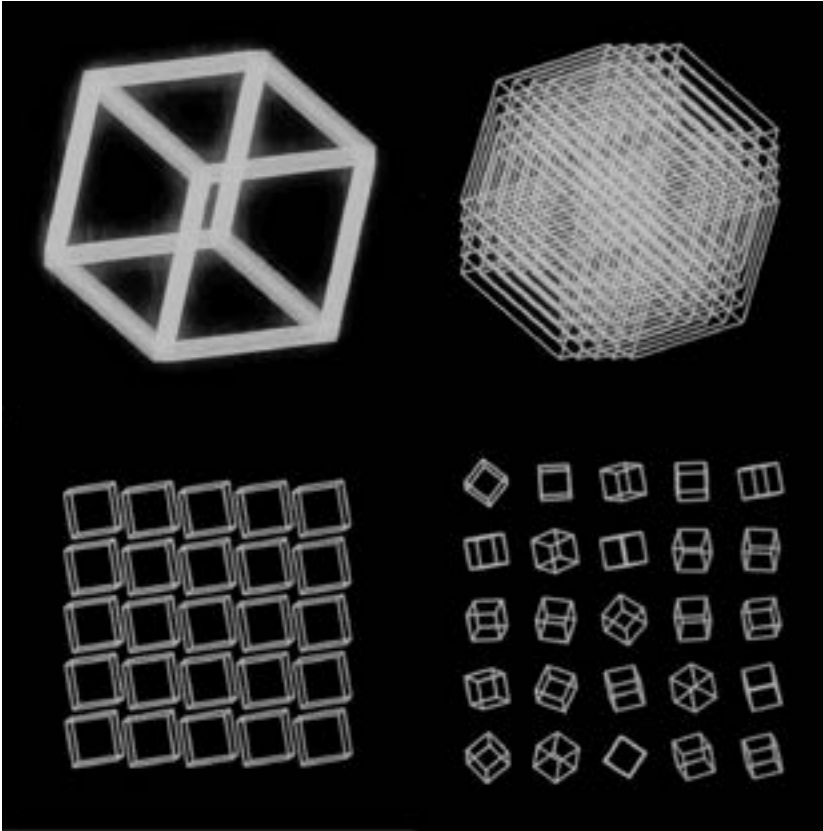
Cube

Following the performance by BeijingDance/LDTX, interact with Artistic Director Willy Tsao when he speaks and answers questions on the development of contemporary dance in China. Moderated by Helen Schneider, associate professor in the Department of History at Virginia Tech.

Free

Special thanks to Helen Schneider, associate professor in the Department of History at Virginia Tech and a specialist in modern Chinese history.

In the Galleries



Manfred Mohr

Stills from *Cube Transformation Study*, 1972

Digitization of original 16mm film

Programmed in FORTRAN IV

Explore CONNECTIONS between works of art, artists, and viewers; between art past and present; and between ideas and their aesthetic manifestation.

Evolving Geometries: Line, Form, and Color

Thursday, September 25, 2014-Thursday, November 20, 2014

Hours: Tuesday-Friday, 10 AM-6 PM/Saturday-Sunday, 10 AM-4 PM

Three one-person exhibitions by renowned artists Manfred Mohr, Patrick Wilson, and Odili Donald Odita, who inventively explore geometry from multiple perspectives.

This exhibition features an audio guide available via cell phone. To hear a sample, call (540) 209-9027 and press 7, followed by the pound (#) key. The full guide is available in the galleries.