



**Born in Shanghai**  
**in Brazil, student**  
**Louvre in Paris, ow**  
**New York and inte**  
**of the arts. Her gr**  
**passion: art, in all**



SARINA  
TANG



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05INTERVIEW

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Sarina's life is one of continuous movement, and not just from one continent to another. What really gets her heart beating is forming bonds with artists, feeling their emotions, sharing their thoughts. It's her mission to give them a voice and a space, to create situations where they can meet each other and get their work shown. She strives to bridge the distance between the artistic world and the real world in which most of us live. Her desire is to provide an opportunity to those who wouldn't normally have the chance or inclination to take their level of existence to a higher, more universal one: that of art.

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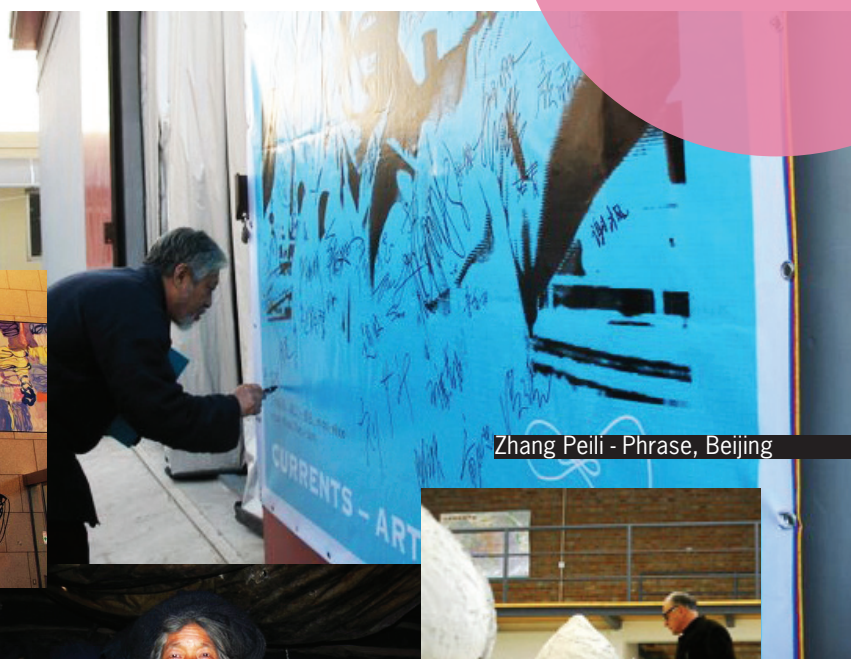


## THE PROJECTS

Atrium of the Shiodome City Center in Tokyo



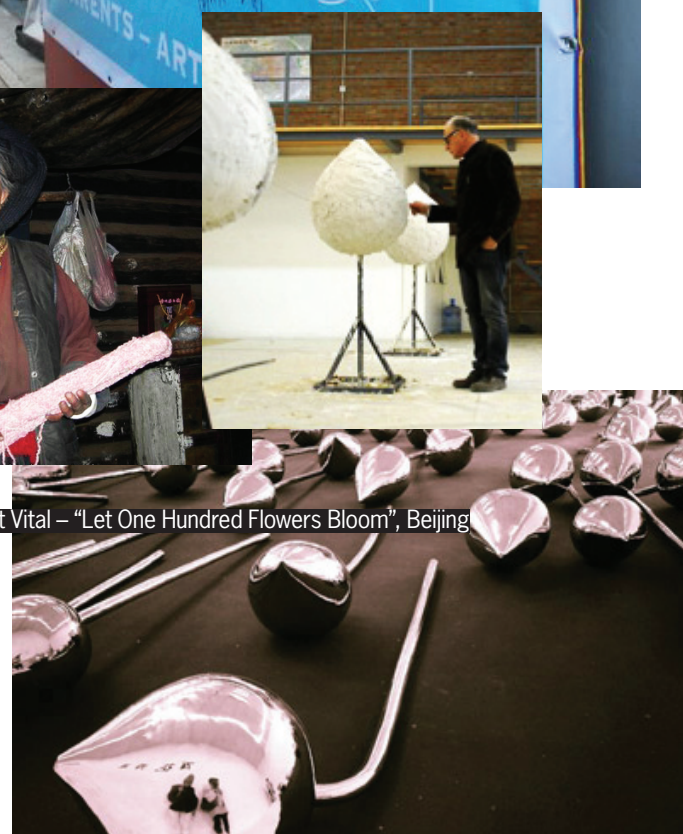
Zhang Peili - Phrase, Beijing



Mathilde ter Heijne - Mosuo Fireplace Goddess, Beijing



Not Vital - "Let One Hundred Flowers Bloom", Beijing



### 2003 - Atrium of the Shiodome City Center in Tokyo

A Chinese artist, Zhan Wang did the sculpture; a British artist, Matthew Ritchie, made the wall sculpture, and an American painter, Melissa Meyer created a pair of murals for the atrium.

**2006 - Zhang Peili - *Phrase*, Beijing.** Sarina Tang presents Zhang Peili's first solo exhibition - *Phrase*. This is also the first exhibition at Currents - Art and Music.

**2007 - Mathilde ter Heijne - *Mosuo Fireplace Goddess*, Beijing.** Transposition of a 200-yr old house from a small matriarchal society in a remote village in Yunnan, to Beijing (2,000 kilometres away), for an exhibition which included bronze sculptures and video projections.

**2008 - Not Vital - *"Let One Hundred Flowers Bloom"*, Beijing.** Not Vital is an artist from Sent, Switzerland, who created 100 sculptures in stainless steel for the exhibition.





**“M**other hid her jewels inside our dolls when we took the train to Hong Kong”. That’s how Sarina Tang remembers leaving her home town of Shanghai with her family after Mao’s rise to power in 1949. Art historian and consultant, organizer of events which bring together international art communities, Tang remembers how, after being in Hong Kong for a year, her father Yeh Chu decided it was just too crowded and took the family elsewhere. Yeh Chu manufactured fabrics and thought it would be too hard to start up an activity in Europe, but, at the same time, he thought it would be just as hard for a mother to raise six children in the United States. Therefore, the Tang family moved to Brazil, a country that was welcoming immigrants from all over the world at the time. Yeh Chu possessed a considerable collection of Chinese paintings, but, of all the siblings, only Sarina would spend hours with her father studying and choosing which works would be put on display from season to season. When she was around ten, Sarina decided that she wanted to learn how to paint and her one desire was to study under a famous master of Chinese painting who lived in San Paolo: Chang Dai-Chen. But he was too famous to take on a novice, so she started painting under another professor. By the time she felt her work was good enough to show to the master, Chang Dai-Chen had just left for the United States. A friend introduced her to Livio Abramo, a well-known Brazilian artist of Italian background, and this is how Sarina entered the world and lives of other artists. After studying Art History in San Paolo, she decided to come to Europe, to the renowned *École du Louvre* in Paris. *“It was a dream come true to live in Paris and study at the Louvre. It was extremely exciting to be in Paris in the ‘60s.”* But Sarina was really not enthralled with bohemian life, so off she went for a 3-week trip to New York. She fell in love with the city and decided to call it home. She opened a modern art gallery which, after several years, became a meeting point, a place where the Eastern and Western artistic worlds were brought together. Sarina deftly organized exhibits of contemporary talents working in the entire gamut of art: sculpture, painting, music and dance. But art is not Sarina’s only love; in fact, studying art history was often distracting to her. Instead, her approach toward music was much more free: *“I’m really passionate*



Chang Dai-Chen.

THE  
LIFE



## THE LIFE

about music. At an art show, I'll be thinking about what a given piece reminds me of and it might entice me to try and establish relationships with other Chinese painters. But with music, being that I didn't study I don't analyse it and I can let myself absorb all it has to say to me without all the intellectual filters". Sarina Tang even produced an opera, *The Bonesetter's Daughter*, based on Amy Tan's novel. The opera debuted in San Francisco on September 13, 2008. Mrs Tang is also quite active with the Peking National Theater: last December she got involved with hosting the Martha Graham Dance Company during their visit to the Chinese capital. "In my opinion, there's a close relationship between music, dance and art. Artists are extremely sensitive and somehow are able to envision what our future will look like. That's why I enjoying being inside the art world, because it gives me a better understanding of the world we live in. For example, Beethoven, at the home of Count Razumovsky; one of his benefactors, was told by a critic that his music would only have been understood a hundred years later. It seems that what we read in books or see in the movies is always twenty or fifty years ahead of us common mortals, and that's really exciting to me!". As a member of the guiding committee of Independent Curators International dedicated to the promotion and the organization of traveling exhibitions of contemporary art on an international level, Sarina is currently working on a cultural and artistic exchange project between China and Brazil for the Shanghai 2010 World Expo. Her idea is to have a group of Brazilian artists live in China while a Chinese delegation lives in Brazil, providing them a change of atmosphere in which to create their works. In the end, both delegations would meet up at the World Expo.

But how does she feel about belonging to such diverse cultures and living in faraway places like China, Brazil, the United States, and Italy, where she just purchased a house in the countryside near Lucca. Where does she feel most at home? "Well, for years this was quite a dilemma for me. I suffered a lot when I was young, thinking that I really didn't belong to any specific culture. But I was always very curious and now I'm very happy to be able to communicate in so many languages with so many different people, learning more and more about the world; this is what makes me feel so alive!".



**Sarina with her artist friends (from the top):**  
Shen Shao Min in Daxing, Heilongjiang; Zhao Bandi in his studio, Beijing; Italian friends Germano and Miuccia; opening of Michelangelo Pistoletto exhibition at Continua, Beijing.