

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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TAKING A CLOSER LOOK AT THE EVERYDAY

Song Dong: Waste Not, October 2, 2010 – January 16, 2011
Everything Everyday October 2, 2010 – January 16, 2011

VANCOUVER, BC – The Vancouver Art Gallery inspects the ordinary with the exhibitions *Song Dong: Waste Not* and *Everything Everyday*, both opening on October 2, 2010. With these two exhibitions, the Gallery puts a spotlight on quotidian life, challenging visitors to examine the too-frequently unexamined.

Song Dong: Waste Not is a monumental installation by internationally renowned Chinese artist Song Dong, tenderly constructed in collaboration with his late mother. The installation is made up of the frame of his family's house along with all of the everyday items that his mother gathered over the course of her lifetime: a collection of more than ten thousand worn and broken objects. The assembled materials – clothes, books, kitchen utensils, toiletries, school supplies, shopping bags, rice bowls, dolls – were used, recycled and saved. Meticulously arranged in careful groupings throughout the exhibition space, these objects form a miniature landscape that viewers can navigate around and through.

“This is an enormously moving and important work,” said Kathleen Bartels, director of the Vancouver Art Gallery. “Song Dong is one of the most inventive figures in contemporary Chinese art and the Gallery is extremely proud to bring this monumental installation to Canadian audiences for the first time.”

Waste Not was first shown in Beijing in 2005 and has since been exhibited in Korea, Germany, England, and at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. *Waste Not* – or *wu jin qi gong* in Chinese – describes the philosophy of life for an entire generation who grew up during China's Cultural Revolution with the experience of displacement, poverty and the constant shortage of goods.

The work stands as a record of Song Dong's mother's life, as well as his father's death. When Song Dong's father died unexpectedly in 2002, his mother tried to alleviate her grief by holding onto the myriad odds and ends accumulated in their lifetime together, bringing more and more things into the family home. In 2005, the artist convinced her to work with him to transform the mountain of possessions into a work of art. The result is an ambitious installation that not only illuminates how objects from life can be transformed, but is a tribute to both of Song Dong's parents. His mother passed away a few years after *Waste Not* was first exhibited.

Waste Not is the eleventh installment in *NEXT: A Series of Artist Projects from the Pacific Rim* and is curated by Daina Augaitis, chief curator/associate director, Vancouver Art Gallery. The series is presented by TD Bank Financial Group.

Featuring works from the Gallery's permanent collection and select loans from artists and private collectors, *Everything Everyday* is the parallel exhibition to *Waste Not*. The exhibition is organized around three themes: Everyday Actions, featuring works that consider simple, sometimes mindless tasks performed regularly; Everyday Objects, presenting “ordinary” items as subjects; and Everyday Encounters, an examination of common interactions that occur in daily life.



Song Dong, *Waste Not*, installation in the *Re-Imagining Asia* exhibition, The House of World Cultures, Berlin, Germany, 2007
Courtesy of the artist and Tokyo Gallery + BTAP
Song_Dong_4.jpg

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Curated by Bruce Grenville, senior curator, Vancouver Art Gallery, the exhibition includes works by, among others, Canadian artists Arabella Campbell, Aganetha Dyck, Gathie Falk, Laiwan, Khan Lee, Kelly Wood, and Robert Adrian X; as well as international artists Gabriel Orozco, Elspeth Pratt, Andy Warhol, and James Welling.

A media breakfast and exhibition tour with artist Song Dong and the curator of *Everything Everyday* will be held on Thursday, September 30, 2010, at 9am at the Vancouver Art Gallery.

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Attachments: Backgrounder on *Song Dong: Waste Not* (SongDong_WasteNot_PR.jpg) ; artist bio Song Dong (; backgrounder on *Everything Everyday* (VAG_BG_ETED).

Photographs for publication are available on request.

The Vancouver Art Gallery is a not-for-profit organization supported by: its members; individual donors; corporate funders; foundations; the City of Vancouver; the Province of British Columbia through the BC Arts Council and Gaming Revenues; the Government of Canada through the Canada Council for the Arts and the Department of Canadian Heritage. We thank everyone for their continuing generosity.