

Time Out

Beijing

新旅行

KNOW MORE. DO MORE.
WWW.TIMEOUTBEIJING.COM

FREE
NO. 90
April
2012



Reviews



Art

Inside a Book a House of Gold: Artists' Editions for *Parkett*



UCCA Until Mon 9

The 212 intimately scaled works housed under the UCCA's vast, slanting ceilings are the sum (thus far) of collaborations between Swiss art journal *Parkett* and 192 artists from around the world. Over the course of 28 years, for each printed edition, a piece was specially commissioned. These incorporate print, installation, painting, photography and all variety of media, with the journals themselves piled into a single reading room, separate from the rest of the gallery.

Words for different areas of a typical, bourgeois household – 'playroom', 'studio' and so on – appear on the brightly coloured walls, with a 'city' area bringing

this conceptual house into an urban context. The result is an ordered cacophony that continues to unfurl in your mind long after you leave.

Though many works were intended to be handled, from Jeff Koons's inflatable flower to an orange trussed-up doll of a Guantanamo Bay prisoner by Jon Kessler, take note that, for visitors, there are glass cases to keep our hands off. The decision to divide the works from their corresponding journals is less understandable, though. Yes, they are allowed the freedom to stand on their own merits, but it would be interesting to see them displayed in the context of each *Parkett*, to give a bigger picture of the world it came from.

Nevertheless, this is a wonderland of sometimes-fantastical treasures. These include the last work by Andy

Warhol, whose career began with magazine illustrations and, fittingly, reached its endpoint in another publication, with *memento mori* black-and-white photographs of skeletal figures.

A plaster cast, 'Switch', by Rachel Whiteread, was designed for hanging on a wall. At first glance, it's just another light switch. But the indentation made by the lever and two small screws are just shadows of the original's function, transformed into pure form.

This exhibition can be a lot to take in – the works are broad and cover a multitude of eras and ideas. But the scope and quality of what is on display, not to mention the artists involved (from Ai Weiwei to Damien Hirst and Sophie Calle), make this show one of the strongest so far this year. Clare Pennington