



UCCA Remembers Founder Guy Ullens (1935-2025)

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BEIJING, China—UCCA is deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Baron Guy Ullens, visionary patron of the arts, philanthropist, and founder of UCCA Center for Contemporary Art. He died peacefully at his home on April 19 at the age of 90.

Born in 1935, Guy Ullens had a lifelong interest in international cultural exchange and dialogue. After a successful career in business, he devoted himself to the arts and philanthropy, including an engagement with China's contemporary art scene that began in the 1980s.

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In 2007, Guy Ullens, with his late wife Myriam, founded the Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (now UCCA Center for Contemporary Art) in Beijing, building on their deep engagement with contemporary art in China. As one of the earliest international collectors active in China, Ullens played a pivotal role in supporting a generation of Chinese artists and fostering global recognition of their work. His commitment laid the foundation for UCCA to grow into China's leading contemporary art institution, and one of international significance. In 2017, the Ullens family transferred ownership of UCCA to a new group of patrons, but remained valued members of the UCCA community, serving on the UCCA Foundation Council.

"Guy Ullens believed above all in the power of art to enrich lives and create connections across cultures. By founding an art institution in China, he put that belief into action, doing something wildly original and generous. UCCA, which he conceived and nurtured through its first decade, has highlighted hundreds of artists, inspired millions of visitors, and launched countless careers. With gratitude, we remember his kindness, passion, and cosmopolitanism, as we carry forward the project that he began," states UCCA Director and Chief Executive Philip Tinari.



尤伦斯当代艺术中心
Center for Contemporary Art

In addition to founding UCCA, Guy and Myriam Ullens were active philanthropists, with their non-profit efforts including, among others, the Fondation Guy & Myriam Ullens, the Ullens School in Nepal, and the Mimi Foundation in support of cancer patients, reflecting their shared belief in education, creativity, and cultural exchange as forces for good. For his philanthropic contributions, Ullens received numerous honors including the French Legion of Honour and the Belgian Order of Leopold II.

UCCA remembers Guy Ullens with the deepest respect and gratitude for his remarkable contributions, to UCCA, to the history of Chinese contemporary art, and to promoting global cultural exchange. His legacy endures—in the institutions he founded, the artists he championed, and in the communities he helped build—and will continue to shape and inspire UCCA's work and mission.