

The Summon of the Age

“The summon of the age” is an art project based on the practices by young generations of Chinese artists. The title comes from the broadcast gymnastics that has been highly promoted by the Chinese government for primary and secondary school students after 1998.

As a compulsory activity among public schools, its name shows the countries’ high hopes for the young generation who were born from mid-1980s to 1990s. On one hand, the existing collective mission of building the nation was projected to them; on the other hand, however, the time when the broadcast gymnastics became popular was when the collectivism gradually vanished from people’s horizons - the time after reform and opening up (1978) in China was somehow “condensed”, bringing a huge change to the society - the economy development, urbanization, and globalization reshaped the reality in a rapid way and the way young generation understand the world around them.

These artists from this project had grown up in this cultural and social context the floating reality, which generated by the historical phantom and the current phenomenon, and has become the source of their creation, by which is in return as their ways to rethink and react to the changing society.

No matter if it’s Zhang Yongji and Lin Aojie’s ironical criticism to the pop culture, Yang Yuanyuan and Sun Yitian’s observation of consumerism and globalization, or Hu Wei’s research of the square in a socialist tradition, all of which respond to the “summon” of the age, which is far from a utopian landscape that was designed by the government.

In the process of hitting the reef with the reality, or with the flood of the urbanization and rapid-spreading of information, some hidden individuals and historical memories have spread like tides in their art works, and these may be the “summon of the age” that they are more inclined to seek.

Sincerely yours,

Sun Tianyi, independent curator and producer at CAFA Museum, Beijing & **Karl Patric Näsman**, artist and initiator for *Projekt Bastugatan*, Stockholm

2020-01-10

Invited five Chinese Artists

Zhang Yongji

Zhang Yongji (b.1989) was graduated from China Central Academy of Fine Art with a master degree in experimental art. Zhang Yongji's work is based on moving images. His work includes installation and video. He uses moving imaging and photo editing software such as Photoshop, Premiere and After Effects to manipulate the found materials. His recent work centers around the concept of the impact of popularization on video making. Zhang is also the founder of On Space in Beijing from 2014.

The Generation is Screaming

2018

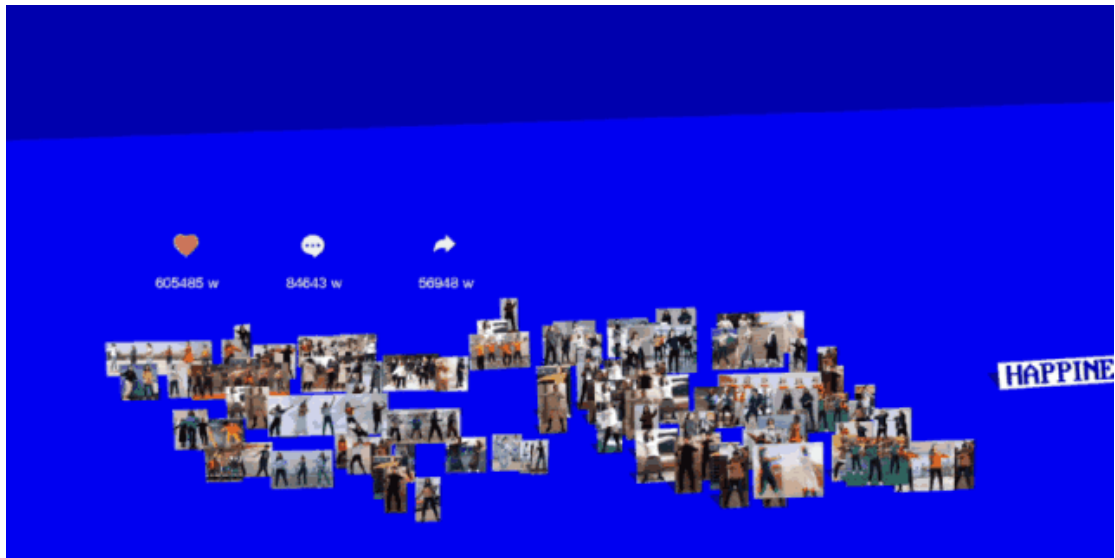
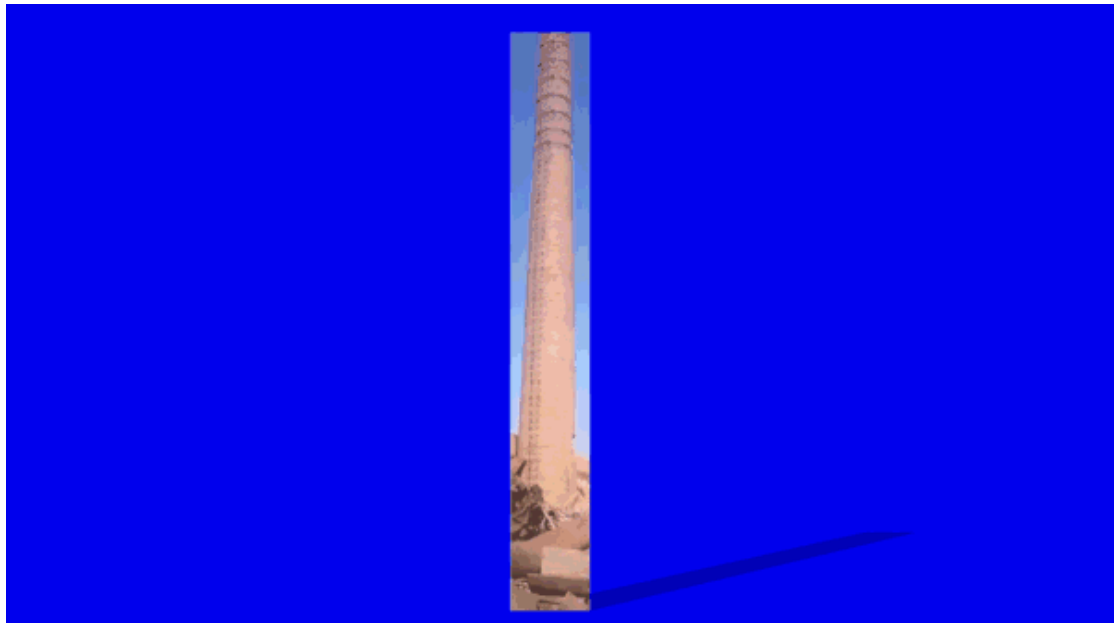
<https://vimeo.com/311380934>

In "The Generation is Screaming", he collaged found video materials that aim for entertainment and selected viral music with strong beats to function together as a brainwashing tool. When viewed singly, each found video material is full of characteristics and individuality. However, when viewed as a whole, it shows the sense of unity and collective consciousness. In a carnival with socialist characteristics, Is the man individualistic or faceless? Are they celebrating or being controlled?



时代在召唤，2018，3屏高清影像，5927px x 1080px，04'31 © Zhang Yongji

时代在召唤



Hu Wei

Born in 1989. Currently works and lives in Beijing. Graduated from Painting Department of CAFA, 2012, and obtained an MA at Dutch Art Institute in 2016. His practice takes various media, such as video, installation, performance, and writing, to establish an artistic relationship between the reality (non-artistic gesture) and “art tales”. Combining the observation of individuality and social realism, recently he is exploring the mediation or irreconcilable phenomenology between technology and the human condition, and in which the emerging political, economic, ethical issues are embedded.

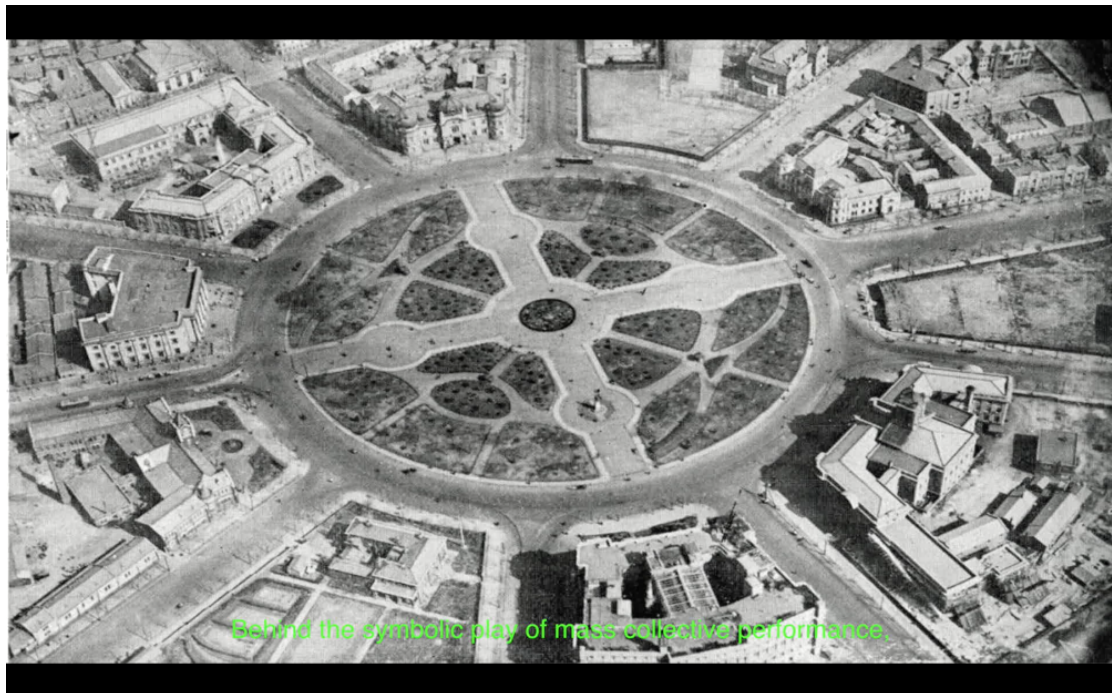
The recent exhibitions Hu once participated include: Towards the Emergence of Resistance (Taking Space, 2016), Collective Disorder / After Speaking (Greylight Projects, Brussels), Shanghai Projects-Qidian (Himalayas Museum, 2016), Songs For A Deaf Ox (Arnhem, NL), Break The Floor (RabbitHole, NY), Invitation to the Blues (Punt WG Space, Amsterdam), Beginnings of Conversations (Sazmanab Center for Contemporary Art, Tehran) etc. He also participated artist-in-residency in Portugal, Netherlands and Mexico.

Proposal for Public Assembly/Encounter

2018-2019

<https://hu-wei.com/Proposal-for-Public-Assembly-Encounter>

In this project, with a departure of being interested in examining the role of images and memories in the post-revolutionary moment, the look into the de-politicization of public sphere (phantom public), and think about the question of the public through the prism of performance, and address the historical question of what is called post-colonialism and used to be called internationalism once (maybe). Particularly looking at some sites in his hometown - a northeastern harbor city called D in China, with its historical context of transformation from ‘colonial hell’ – ‘socialist heaven’ to neoliberal economy present, he primarily focuses on square as a public sphere at this stage. Square is a ‘grey zone’ where its functionality is located between political symbolic meaning and public amusement and consumerism. Therefore, this in-between state has provided a potential of performativity, linking the historical and future and meanwhile shaping but also breaking down our shared political memories, identities and public life.





Yang Yuanyuan

Born in 1989 in Beijing, China. Yang Yuanyuan graduated from London College of Communications, University of the Arts London with a BA (hons) in photography. She currently lives and works in Beijing, China.

Most of the time, Yang Yuanyuan's projects take the research and collected historical materials as the departure, and they evolve along with individual experiences relate to specific places. By creating narratives where facts and fiction coexist, she challenges the rigid and conventional interpretation of history and gives voices to subjects that have been forgotten, silenced, and misinterpreted. Yang creates visual narrative through photography, writings, video, artist books and performance, these mediums intertwine with each other within her projects. In 2018 Yang was the artist-in-residence at Art in General in New York supported by Asian Cultural Council. Yang was shortlisted for the Huayu Youth Award in 2016. In 2015 she was shortlisted for Author Book Award at Rencontres d'Arles and Best Photobook of 2015 at Fotobook festival in Kassel, and she received second prize at Gucang Dummy Award Martin Parr Edition in the same year. She was shortlisted for the first round selection at Bloomberg New Contemporaries in 2014; she was one of the UK winners of the Magenta: Flash Forward award in 2013; she received the Tierney Fellowship at Three Shadows Photography Award in 2012, and she received third prize at the Bar-Tur Award in 2011.

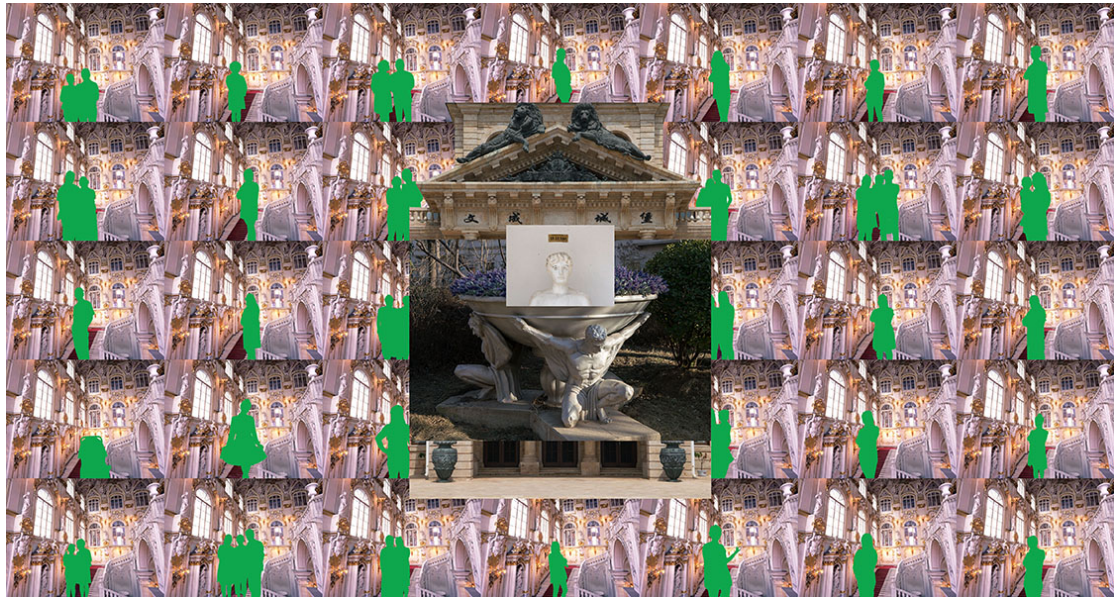
Blue Window, Two Roses

2016 - Ongoing

<http://www.lukayangworks.com/index.php?/projects/blue-window-two-roses/>

“Green screen photo studio” has been a new type of business mode with low budgets that appears in China within past ten years. Two main elements of the store simply consist of a green background and a machine with inserted camera. The costumer could choose more than 10 thousands types of background images: from worldwide tourist sites to photos of celebrities, from cartoon characters to 3D images of hi-end estate. Facing their illusionary ideal places on screen, costumers happily stand and pose in front of a green screen, get a photo to be taken as if they were really there. Images of worldwide famous tourist sites and sceneries with ‘European characteristics’ are most popular choices among all types of backgrounds, whereas in reality, same type of landscape also became a common scene all over Mainland China in past ten years. These two types of constructed realities both reflect an ideal lifestyle that people with different backgrounds generally yearning for in this era, they are something resplendent yet unreal, shining like gold in giant bubbles.





Lin Aojie

Lin Aojie was born in Guangzhou in 1986 and graduated from Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts, Oil Painting Department in 2010. He currently lives and works in Guangzhou.

Presented through video, photography, painting, text, etc., Lin Aojie's artistic practice departs from his personal experiences. The artist has a keen and delicate record of the trivial details of daily life or deliberately planned events with strongly improvisatory and humorous images, while a seemingly dispassionate tone threads the whole narrative structure. By beating around the bush he tries to question, ridicule and criticize the capitalist mode of production, artist's survival predicament and the relationship between artists and other art professionals.

Recent exhibitions include: Light Pavillion Project: The Comfort Zone at a Distance, Taikang Space, Beijing (2018); Emerging Curators Project 2018, Power Station of Art, Shanghai (2018); The New Masses, Art Museum of Nanjing University of the Arts, Nanjing (2018); Shared Narrative(s), ShanghART S-Space, Beijing (2018); The 7th edition Bi-City Biennale of Urbanism \ Architecture, Shenzhen (2017); If You Throw Enough Mud at the Wall, None of It Will Stick, A+ Contemporary, Shanghai (2017); 11th Shanghai Biennale, Power Station of Art, Shanghai (2016); Rhythm-analysis, OCAT Shenzhen, Shenzhen (2016), etc.. He was nominated for the 2016 Art Sanya Huayu Youth Award.

Aojie 's book

2018

This book is a collection of Lin Aojie's computer drawings. He draws many pictures that he found from the Internet without any reference texts. Most of the images are about the rebellion, but were presented in a humors way. For Lin, this work is also a performance for him. He put the book on the bookshelf of ShangART Beijing, one of the most famous galleries in China. To the left are the artists he doesn't really like, and the right side shows those who he admires. By this way he shows his rebellion to the art system.





Sun Yitian

Sun Yitian (b.1991) is a young Chinese contemporary artist based in Beijing. Educated in the China Central Academy of Fine Arts, Sun is known for a bright and colorful style that has a distinctive cartoonish quality. Her work has been exhibited internationally at venues including The Metropolitan Pavilion in New York, the Macau Museum of Art and the Lion Pallas in Berlin.

Let Me Hug You

2015 - 2018

Painting on canvas

Sun Yitian's photo-realistic paintings depicting plastic objects examine the tenuous relationship between nature and man-made expressions. *Let Me Hug You* presents contrasting functions of plastic dolls – one, named after the earth goddess in Greek mythology, is an object for seduction, the other, a familiar childhood toy conveys the desire for affection. It is an object of consumption, not only revealing the extensive scope of artificiality in our lives, but also the desires that drive consumption.

