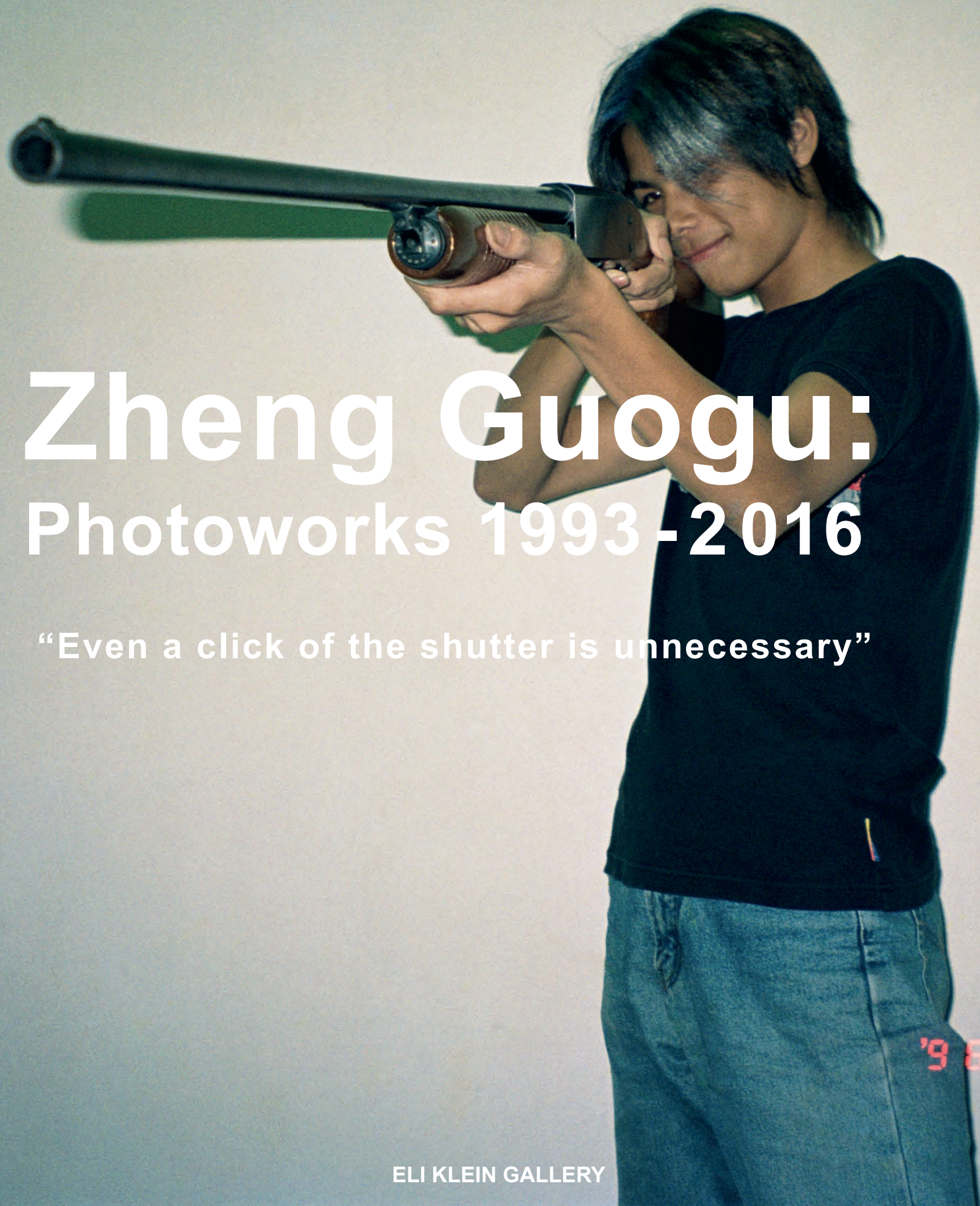


Curated by Christopher Philips



Zheng Guogu: Photoworks 1993-2016

“Even a click of the shutter is unnecessary”

郑国谷：相片作品 1993-2016 连接快门都是多余的

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398 West Street, New York, NY 10014

The Photoworks of Zheng Guogu

by Christopher Phillips

Here is Zheng Guogu, one of China's most irrepressibly inventive artists, describing himself: "I always fashion myself as a member of the opposition party. I have dissenting views of painting, calligraphy, photography, architecture, even performance. So I end up forever unsuccessful, almost useless."^[1] He is an artist who specializes in unorthodox career choices. As an ambitious young artist in the early 1990s, he decided not to move to a bustling art metropole like Beijing and Shanghai, but to establish his base in his remote home town, Yangjiang, in southern Guangdong province. Rather than making himself a master of a single medium, he has jumped constantly between painting, photography, sculpture, installation, calligraphy, architecture, landscape design, and even fireworks. And in place of the nonstop self-promotion that seems to come instinctively to many Chinese artists, he has repeatedly submerged his own artistic identity in collaborative efforts, such as the experimental Yangjiang Calligraphy Group that he founded in 2002. Although his persistent disregard for conventional success has won him a reputation as an artist's artist—he was awarded the prestigious Chinese Art Prize in 2006—his artworks themselves remain notoriously elusive and hard to pin down. Trying to define his artistic range and style is like struggling to piece together an extremely difficult jigsaw puzzle. Jigsaw puzzles, as it happens, are a key motif in Zheng Guogu's photoworks of the 1990s. It was these early photographic pieces that first won him attention in China and abroad, and—as the current exhibition demonstrates—they remain one of the best entry points to his idiosyncratic artistic universe.

Zheng Guogu was born in 1970 in Yangjiang, a third-tier coastal city that lies several hours south of the mega-cities of Guangzhou and Hong Kong. He studied printmaking at the Guangzhou Academy of Fine Art, graduating in 1992. The key event of his school years took place not in the classroom but through his discovery of a group of kindred spirits: the slightly older members of the experimental Big Tail Elephant art group, Chen Shaoxiong, Lin Yilin, Xu Tan, and Liang Juhui. Their preference for using everyday materials as the starting point of their art, their amused scrutiny of China's new urban and consumer culture, and their transformation of marginal city spaces (unoccupied apartments, commercial basements) into temporary exhibition spaces—all of these

[1] Zheng Guogu in conversation with Jérôme Sans, in *Sans, China Talks*, Beijing, Timezone8, 2009, p. 197.

attitudes and practices resonated strongly with Zheng Guogu. At their invitation, he took part in their Guangzhou group exhibitions in 1994 and 1996 as a guest artist.

By that time Zheng Guogu had moved back to Yangjiang and set up shop as an independent artist. He continued to make visits to Guangzhou, however, and to widen his circle of art acquaintances. At a Guangzhou bookshop he met art-world figures like Beijing-based Hans van Dijk, a peripatetic Dutch art scholar and art dealer who became one of Zheng Guogu's early champions. Another early supporter was the Guangzhou experimental fiction writer Hu Fang, who by the mid-1990s was publishing sharp-eyed appreciations of Zheng Guogu's work.^[2] Hu Fang was the first to see Zheng Guogu as emblematic of the generation of South Chinese experimental artists born around 1970. The Guangzhou-born curator Hou Hanru later summed up this early view of the artist as a generational standard-bearer: "Zheng Guogu belongs to a generation which grew up with Coca-Cola, Kung Fu films, pop music, and video games. This generation differs from the older ones which lived through the dramatic Cultural Revolution and the Utopian 1980s . . . The artists of this generation don't carry any historical ideological burden. They actively appropriate the situation created by the new consumer society and make it an essential part of their artistic language."^[3]

From 1993 to around 2000, Zheng Guogu's art ideas manifested themselves largely, though by no means exclusively, in photographic works. It was during this period that many of China's young experimental artists, who had typically trained as painters, printmakers, or sculptors in the country's art academies, embraced photography as part of their dramatically expanded art practice. The resulting works were often impressive examples of creative energy, imaginative power, and formal inventiveness. Artists such as Song Dong and Ai Weiwei, for instance, created visually compelling photographic documents of their own pioneering performance events. Zhang Dali's photographs responded to the era's relentless demolition and breakneck reconstruction

[2] Many excerpts from Hu Fang's early writings on Zheng Guogu can be found in *Zheng Guogu, Cross Back and Forth Quickly*, Beijing, Timezone 8 and Shanghai Art Gallery, 2003

[3] Hou Hanru, quoted in *Quickly Cross Back and Forth*, unpaginated.

of China's urban spaces. Wang Qingsong restaged historic Chinese scroll paintings as well as Communist propaganda posters to provide an ironic commentary on China's new consumer culture. Hong Hao, Hai Bo, and Zhuang Hui photographically charted the dissolution of older forms of personal and collective identity in a breathlessly modernizing society.[4]

Zheng Guogu participated in the 1990s photofrenzy that swept the Chinese contemporary art world, yet he simultaneously stood apart from it. To suggest his disdain for those artists who paraded costly photographic gear, he regularly used the kind of cheap point-and-shoot camera favored by amateurs and family snapshooters. His early photoworks of 1993-96, which often record events that he staged or directed, usually take the form of simple documents, awkward snapshots, or bland commercial studio photographs; they manifest a blithe unconcern with anything resembling "artistic quality." In the later 1990s, as Zheng Guogu became fascinated with the ubiquitous presence of photographs in mass media, he gradually introduced more complex printmaking procedures and dizzyingly elaborate visual forms. While his early photo pieces were never particularly easy to understand, his later photoworks, often comprising 500 or more tiny, negative-size images, became increasingly a challenge just to see. Displayed in countless group exhibitions of contemporary Chinese art, Zheng Guogu's photographic works of the 1990s gradually acquired an air of familiarity without ever shedding their essential inscrutability.

My Teacher, made in 1993, was Zheng Guogu's first real photographic work, and it has become one of his signature pieces. The photograph shows him squatting in the street in Yangjiang next to a shirtless young man of about the same age; they are both roaring conspiratorially with laughter. Zheng Guogu has recalled, "I noticed this guy a few days before, squatting in the road out in front of my studio, so I wanted to see who he was, and once I did I thought he was really interesting, so I decided to make a photo." [5] Zheng Guogu

[4] For a detailed examination of Chinese experimental art in the 1990s, see Wu Hung, Wang Huangsheng, and Feng Boyi, eds., *The First Guangzhou Triennial. Reinterpretation: A Decade of Experimental Art 1990-2000*, Guangzhou, Guangdong Museum of Art, 2002.

[5] Sans, *China Talks*, p. 195.

[6] Sans, *China Talks*, p. 195.

felt that his new friend, a homeless vagabond, had much to teach him. "He has a lot of knowledge that I will never have. He's crazy. When he walks, he turns somersaults. For dinner, he picks mostly scraps from the trash, and then smiles and laughs as he eats them." [6] For a year the two continued to run into each other, until the vagabond disappeared, leaving behind the lesson of a life unconstrained by everyday social conventions.

It was Zheng Guogu's "teacher" who gave him the idea for the photo series and video *Planting Geese* (1994), when he remarked that if a goose is buried up to its neck in the ground, it will quack. After locating a flat, cleared field that was part of a disused construction site, the artist and his assistants drew a large pentagram on the ground. Along the five arms of the pentagram he marked off 30 nodes where geese were to be "planted." When the geese were buried up to their necks, he dripped black ink on each goose, and poured black ink along the outline of the pentagram—an action that, with a bit of imagination, might be seen as his first experimental calligraphy performance. [7] Looking back, Zheng Guogu has remarked, "I like geese because once I heard a physics teacher or someone else say that a goose's eyes miniaturize everything it sees, so a goose fears nothing. Geese represent my boldness and defiance. So it was like my manifesto when I was first engaged in art." [8]

After using photography to document this intentionally baffling performance, *In My Bride* (1994) Zheng Guogu demonstrated that the camera could also be employed to create a seemingly truthful image of a completely fictitious event: in this case, his "marriage" to a young woman he barely knew. Over the course of three months during the summer of 1995, he "courted" a young Yangjiang woman, seeking to persuade her to pose with him in a set of wedding portraits at a local commercial photo studio. The young woman, who had no connection to the arts, was initially dubious of his intentions. "It took me a long while," he recalls, "to court and

[6] Sans, *China Talks*, p. 195.

[7] See Lu Mingjun, "Liao Garden and Bodies of Energy: Everyday Madness and Temporal Magnetic Fields in the Work of Zheng Guogu," *Journal of Contemporary Chinese Art*, Vol. 5, No. 1, 2018, pp. 93-106.

[8] Zheng Guogu quoted in *Cross Back and Forth Quickly*, unpaginated.

[9] Zheng Guogu quoted in *Cross Back and Forth Quickly*, unpaginated.

persuade the ‘bride’ to be my bride. . . . I remember how my heart pounded when we were taking wedding pictures. Or perhaps my heart pounds like that whenever I create works. The bride beside me was scared and anxious. The whole thing was finished in a tasteful way, which kept the bride delighted for a few days. She thought that the fictitious wedding was a very beautiful and happy moment in her life.”[9] Of the eight color photographs in the series, three are absolutely typical wedding portraits that show Zheng Guogu and his “bride” dressed in elaborate, Western-style wedding costumes, holding a bouquet of flowers or lifting wine glasses in a toast. In the five remaining images, the camera pulls back to reveal the stagecraft that went into the making of the wedding photos. We see studio assistants fine-tuning the outfits worn by the “bride,” the “bride and bridegroom” adjusting their out poses in front of colored backdrops, and more studio assistants standing on chairs and positioning portable spotlights. The cumulative effect is to reveal the enormous effort and stylization that goes into producing a seemingly natural image of any newlywed couple.

The following year, Zheng Guogu followed up *My Bride with Honeymoon*, a series of eight photographs that similarly unfolded on the borderland between real life and fiction. In this case, he did have romantic feelings for the young woman, Luo La, who accompanied him for a supposed “honeymoon” stay in an upscale hotel in Guangzhou. Some of the resulting photographs are casual, snapshot-like images that show the young couple shopping in Guangzhou; others, made selfie-style, show them blissfully snuggling on the hotel bed. The shadows of shopping bags are visible in the hotel room, for Zheng Guogu wanted to suggest the way that Chinese honeymoon trips were increasingly taking on the trappings of a shopping excursion—a reflection of the growth of Chinese consumer culture in the 1990s. Two of the photographs in the series show a related tabletop installation that Zheng Guogu made for a Big Tail Elephant exhibition titled “Possibility.” In it, two dolls representing a tiny newlywed couple stand in a field of Lucky Stars and colorful ribbon bouquets—an echo of the real-life adventure of Zheng Guogu and Luo La. The same dolls reappear, along with other plastic and cloth dolls, in his 1998 photo series *The Sky over Tokyo*, where an airborne puppet theater plays out a fairytale scenario high above the Japanese capital.

The *Vagarious Life of Yangjiang Youth*, also made in

1996, is darker and more anarchic. The series came about when Zheng Guogu noticed the growing obsession of his younger brothers and their friends with violent East Asian action movies like *Young and Dangerous*, a Hong Kong gangster film that was one of that year’s biggest hits. Such foreign films had become increasingly available in south China in the form of bootleg videotapes and VCD discs smuggled in from Hong Kong. It took him little effort to convince these young men and women to dye their hair, assemble an arsenal of guns, swords, and knives, and act out violent episodes from their favorite movies. Of the 16 images in the photowork, twelve take place in a bare, modern apartment, where young men and women with blue, copper, and pink hair gleefully throw themselves into scenarios of sheer mayhem. The young men brandish knives, swords, pistols, and rifles, using them to threaten each other and the young women who accompany them. Four other images take place outdoors at night, in what appears to be a parking lot. There we see young gang members ferociously battling “soldiers” clad in camouflage gear. Frozen by Zheng Guogu’s flash, the swirling physical action is punctuated by the expressions of ecstatic laughter on the faces of the young participants.

With its cool, nonjudgmental portrayal of Chinese teenagers happily engaged in gang-war combat, *The Vagarious Life of Yangjiang Youth* provoked wide comment. One of the most perceptive observations came from the art critic Hu Fang, who argued that Zheng Guogu was not particularly interested in the sociology of Yangjiang’s troubling new youth culture. [10] Instead, what attracted his attention was the power of imported mass-media products, which had persuaded the young people of Yangjiang to cast off their own cultural identity and adopt alarming new attitudes and styles of behavior. This moment signaled a decisive turn in Zheng Guogu’s photoworks, and prepared the way for the increasingly media-saturated works that followed. The key transitional work is perhaps *Life and Dreams of Youth from Yangjiang* (1996-98), which consists of a single grid containing 832 tiny images, each the size of the original camera negative. In addition to the images already seen in *The Vagarious Life of Yangjiang Youth*, it contains many alternate takes from

[10] Hu Fang, “In a Flash: From My Home to Your Museum,” in Jean-Marc DeCrop, Zheng Guogu, Hong Kong, MAP Book Publishers, 2008, p. 106.

that series. It also features a host of studio photographs of toy animals, snapshots of people posed in parks, informal fashion images, and portraits of unidentified young men and women—a puzzling, apparently random mosaic. Because of the enormous number of images and the small size of the individual frames, viewers find it almost impossible to grasp the work as a whole, much less make sense of it. It is hard to overlook the parallel with the ceaseless, undifferentiated flow of mass-media images that we all encounter in everyday life.

From 1997 on, Zheng Guogu composed his photoworks primarily by arranging hundreds of small, intentionally hard to see images on single sheets of paper. Sometimes, as in *Life and Dreams of Youth* from Yangjiang, he arranged the images in rows, suggesting a kind of movie storyboard. At other times the photographic images appear on jigsaw-puzzle pieces, as do the casual portraits by Zheng Guogu and others in *An Age Flooded with Images-Dolls Acting Everywhere* (1999) and the fashion shots rephotographed from magazines in *Flash, Flash, Flash It Away* (2000). Occasionally the photographs are presented as circular forms displayed in a grid, as in the *Sun Shine* works of 1998. The erotic work *Woman is the First-Class Toy of Man* (1998) employs a mixture of minute circular and rectangular images, filled with mostly unrecognisable bits of porn imagery. Zheng Guogu describes the 1998 work *Consume Is Ideal* a “model” of contemporary global consumer culture. The top 16 rows of this grid-format work contain an array of the artist’s photographs of toy animals, action figures, and human dolls, as well as shots of actual product bottles, boxes and jars. The lower 17 rows present a host of unidentifiable faces and scenes photographed from a TV or computer screen a mediascape suggesting that images of people and the world have now become consumable, disposable items, too.

In 1997 Zheng Guogu began his most ambitious and also most audacious photographic series, *Ten Thousand Customers*. In the event that it is ever completed, the series will consist of 10,000 unique works, all sharing a similar size and grid format, and all dealing with one aspect or another of the contemporary media environment. Most of the photographic images contained in the 200+ works executed so far are double exposures; they ingeniously overlay Zheng Guogu’s photographs of model cars, toy tanks, and human dolls with media images captured from TV or computer

screens. An extreme twist on the idea of “variations on a theme,” *Ten Thousand Customers* is also designed to place maximum stress on the art market’s standard approach to print editioning. A collector intrigued by the prospect of acquiring a unique work—the holy grail of collecting—is guaranteed to have second thoughts upon realizing the potentially gargantuan size of the series to which it belongs.

Since around 2000, Zheng Guogu’s attention has turned increasingly to calligraphy as his involvement with the Yangjiang Calligraphy Group has deepened. He has also devoted more and more time to creating his own idealized landscape and architecture in his enormous “Liao Garden” project on the outskirts of Yangjiang. It’s possible to make a case for photography’s continuing conceptual importance to him, however, by considering the continuing series of paintings called “Computer Controlled by Pig’s Brain” that he began in 1999.

The series started, he says, as an exasperated response to the omnipresence of bad painting in the Chinese art world. [11](Note, Sans p. 197). He decided to make paintings with no pictorial content, consisting entirely of text and simple graphics that he appropriated from mass-media sources such as the Hong Kong teen lifestyle magazine *Yes!* He reworked these graphic materials on the computer (the reference to a “pig’s brain,” he says, refers to his own uncertain mastery of digital techniques), and then printed them out as rubber relief characters that were stitched or adhered to canvas and other supports. As the series developed, he moved away from arranging his textual materials on blank backgrounds and instead set them on fabrics printed with computer-altered photographs. The images that he used eventually came to include his own casual urban snapshots, scenes from the annual Art Basel fair, and views of the forests of the Liao Garden, as well as appropriated media images of scattered news events. The photographs, which always seem to be set in the present tense of the artist’s daily life, highlight the surprising “antiquity” of the late-1990s teen-culture texts which Zheng Guogu continues to scatter around the paintings, like relics from the dawn of China’s absorption into the global circuits of consumer culture.

[11] Sans, *China Talks*, p. 197.

《郑国谷的相片作品》 克里斯托弗·菲利普斯 著

郑国谷，中国当代艺术家中最不缺乏灵感的一位。他曾这样描述自己：“我是那种总喜欢去反对别人的人。因为我不认同绘画、不认同书法、不认同摄影、不认同建筑、甚至不认同行为艺术，所以我永远无法成功，一无是处。”他这几句略显讽刺的自白足以展示他在艺术家这条道路上偏离传统与常规的选择。在九十年代初期，年轻气盛又抱负不凡的郑国谷决定不随波逐流去北京和上海这些繁华大都市发展，而是在他那远离喧嚣的家乡——位于广东省南部的阳江市，建立自己的艺术基地。他决定不成为某一种特定艺术形式的专家，而是在绘画、摄影、雕塑、装置艺术、书法、建筑、景观设计、以及烟火设计这些不同的媒介中循环往复地探索。不同于那些不断自我推销的中国艺术家们，郑国谷反复地投入到许多合作项目中，比如在2002年他成立了阳江书法小组并与组员一同创作实验性艺术。郑国谷长久以来对传统定义上成功的不屑和他特立独行的行事风格给他带来了“艺术家中的艺术家”这一称号，并使他在2006年赢得了业内极赋声望的中国当代艺术大奖。即便如此，他的作品却依旧带着些许晦涩的色彩，难以用直白的语言去定义和理解。拼图游戏是郑国谷90年代摄影作品中一个突出的主题，而尝试去勾勒出他那广阔的艺术版图与那捉摸不定的艺术风格就好比完成一幅及其复杂的拼图。曾经为他带来许多国内外关注的这些早期摄影作品将会在本次展览中进行展出，它们是走进郑国谷充满个人色彩的艺术宇宙的最佳切入点。

郑国谷1970年出生于阳江市，一个距离广州和香港几小时车程的三线沿海小城。他1992年毕业于广州美术学院版画专业。在广州美院的这些年，正统课堂对他的影响远不及能够找到与其志同道合的“大尾象”艺术组合。这个艺术组合的组员包括陈勋雄，林一林，徐坦，梁钜辉。他们的艺术理念，比如对日常材料的运用、对中国新都市文化和消费者文化的戏谑与见解、以及将边缘城市空间（闲置公寓、商务楼地下室等等）转型成临时展览空间的做法，方方面面皆与郑国谷的

想法产生了强烈的共鸣。而郑国谷也在“大尾象”的邀请下，作为嘉宾艺术家参与了他们1994年和1996年在广州举办的群展。

此时的郑国谷从广州回到了阳江自立门户，成为了一名独立艺术家。但是，他与广州的联系并未就此中止，他持续往返于阳江与广州之间以拓宽他的社交圈并接触更多的艺术家。在广州的一间书店内，郑国谷遇到了曾居于北京且享誉世界的荷兰籍艺术学者、艺术经纪人戴汉志。戴随后成为了支撑着郑国谷早期艺术生涯的伯乐之一。另一位从郑国谷早期就不断给予他支持的是广州实验小说家胡昉，独具慧眼的他对郑国谷的艺术十分欣赏，并在九十年代中期开始定期发表关于郑国谷作品的艺术评论。正是胡昉这位伯乐最早将郑国谷视作了70后中国南方实验艺术家代表人物。同为广州出生的知名策展人侯瀚如对胡昉的见解这样总结道：“郑国谷属于在可口可乐、功夫电影、流行音乐、电动游戏等新鲜事物的影响下长大的一代人。这代人与经历了文化大革命和80年代乌托邦思想浪潮的老一辈不同……这一代的艺术家没有历史思想包袱，他们积极适应由新消费文化支配的社会现状，并将其融合成为自己艺术语言中不可分割的一环。”

1993年至2000年间，郑国谷的艺术理念大多通过摄影作品呈现给观众。也正是在这个时期，许多曾经接受过系统美术教育后成为画家、版画家、亦或是雕塑家的中国年轻实验艺术家们，选择了摄影作为他们扩张艺术版图的媒介。这一新的尝试与转变所带来的艺术成果很好地体现了这群艺术家的创造力和想象力。其中，宋冬和艾未未创作了许多视觉冲击力极强的摄影作品，用镜头记录了他们先锋的行为艺术。张大力的摄影作品反映了当时大规模的拆迁与中国新城市惊人的发展速度。王庆松通过对中国古代卷轴画与公共宣传海报这两种艺术形式的重读，表达了他对中国新消费文化的讽刺。洪浩、海波、庄辉用摄影记录了在令人窒息的现代化进程中个人与集体身份认知的解体。

郑国谷经历了90年代那席卷中国当代艺术社会的摄影狂潮，置身其中的他却同时展现了一种超然物外的眼界。与那些追求高级又昂贵的摄影器材的艺术家不同，郑国谷倾向于使用受业余摄影爱好者和家庭摄影爱好者青睐的傻瓜相机。他1993至1996年期间的早期摄影作品通常以简易的构图、不寻常的捕捉、或是平淡无奇的商业影棚形式，记录了由他亲自安排、设计、导演的事件。他们所透露出的即时性和随机性仿佛大声诉说着郑国谷对传统理念中艺术家普遍追求的艺术性和精致性不屑一顾的态度。在90年代后期，正当郑国谷开始为大众传媒中照片的泛滥这一现象着迷时，他逐渐开始尝试更为复杂的照片冲印形式与更炫目的视觉表达。如果说他早期的摄影作品难以理解，那么他后期由500张甚至更多更小的照片组合而成的摄影作品则变得几乎肉眼难见了。最终，郑国谷1990年代的摄影作品在无数中国当代艺术群展中“抛头露面”后，他作品中那股略显晦涩难懂的特质成为了大众所接受并逐渐熟悉的一枚标签。

《我的老师》（1993）是郑国谷第一件真正的摄影作品，也是他的代表作。在这幅作品中，郑国谷和身边一位年龄相仿、上身赤裸的男人蹲在阳江街头，开怀大笑。他回忆道：“我几天前就注意到这个男的了，在我画室前的街边蹲着，所以我想看看他是谁。而当我接触他以后，我认为他太有趣了！所以我决定去拍一张照片。”郑国谷觉得能够从他的新朋友——一个无家可归的流浪汉身上学到很多东西。“他的知识面是我一生难以企及的。他是个疯子。他会一边走路一边翻跟头。他会从垃圾里面找些吃的当晚饭，每当他找到些残羹剩饭，他会一边吃，一边笑，放声大笑。”郑国谷和这个流浪汉在接下来这一年总是能遇到对方，直到有一天流浪汉消失了，留下了这堂没有上完的课——一堂有关无拘无束人生的课。

也正是这位郑国谷的人生“老师”给了他《栽鹅》系列作品（1994）的灵感，因为流浪汉曾说，如果一只鹅被埋进土里，只剩下头露在外面，它

一定会嘎嘎叫。于是，在郑国谷找到了一片废弃且光秃秃的平地后，他和助理们在那块地上画了一个巨大的五角星。沿着五角星的五条线上，他标记了三十个点用来栽鹅。当这些鹅的身体被埋进土里只剩下脖子和头伸出地面时，他先是往鹅身上滴了些黑色墨水，再沿着五角星的每条线倒了更多黑色墨水。这一举动，在一些想象力的驱使下，仿佛是他的初次实验性书法表演。回顾当时的过程，郑国谷表示：“我喜欢鹅因为我曾经听说一个物理老师或是别的什么人说过，一只鹅的眼睛会缩小任何它所见的物体，所以鹅不会惧怕任何东西……鹅代表了我的勇气和无畏的心态，所以它们就像我刚接触艺术时的艺术宣言。”

在用摄影记录了这个有些匪夷所思的表演之后，郑国谷通过《我的新娘》（1994）展现了相机可以被用来捕捉一个看似真实却全然虚拟的事件。画面中他的新娘并非他真实的另一半，而是由一位他几乎不认识的女子扮演的。在1995年夏天的三个月间，他“追求”了这位年轻的阳江姑娘，试着说服她在一个当地的摄影棚与他一起拍摄一组结婚照。一开始，这个与艺术毫无瓜葛的年轻姑娘对郑国谷的初衷和动机表示怀疑。“我花了挺长一段时间，”如今郑国谷回忆起当时的场景，他说，“去追求和说服这个姑娘当我的新娘……我记得我们拍结婚照的时候，我的心砰砰直跳，也许就像每次我开始创作新的作品时的心跳一样。在拍摄过程中，站在我旁边的新娘十分害怕和焦虑。然而最后因为完成的结果非常不错，她也跟着开心了好几天。她觉得那场虚拟婚礼是她人生中非常美丽、快乐的时刻。”这个系列八张彩色照片中的三张是毫无疑问极其典型的结婚照，它们捕捉了郑国谷和他的新娘身穿精致的西式结婚礼服，拿着捧花又或是举着酒杯、说着祝词的场景。而另外的五张照片则包含了拍摄这个系列的器材与道具等，展现了这场虚拟婚礼的制作过程。其中，通过相机镜头的视角，我们作为观众仿佛身临其境，看到了当时郑国谷的助理们在对“新娘”穿着的礼服进行最后的微调、“新郎

和新娘”站在影棚里的彩色背景前调整着姿势角度、更多的助理们则站在椅子上固定着灯具调整光线。这五张照片放在一起，便是向我们展示了郑国谷和他的团队为了使这组结婚照如同一对真的新婚夫妻结婚照一般自然所投入的精心设计与巨大付出。

《我的新娘》系列完成后的下一年，郑国谷紧接着拍摄了《度蜜月》系列的八张照片。该系列虽与《我的新娘》系列拍摄时的初衷相似，都是对虚拟和真实之间界限的定义与探究，但其过程有所不同。郑国谷对配合他一起去广州某高档酒店“度蜜月”的年轻姑娘，罗拉，确实有好感！其中几张照片像是随意地按下快门，记录着这对年轻夫妻在广州购物的几个瞬间，另外的几张则是以自拍的形式，展现了他们相互依偎在酒店的床上，十分恩爱幸福的模样。值得注意的是，酒店房间的照片里可以看见购物袋的影子。在此，郑国谷将它们喻为九十年代中国新消费文化的缩影，想向观众表达中国人度蜜月的形式正受到消费文化的驱使，逐渐悄然改变的现象。蜜月不再是“蜜月”，而是一趟“购物旅行”。这个系列的两张照片背景中也能看到郑国谷为“大尾象”一次名为“可能性”的展览所制作的相关题材的桌面装置艺术。像极了一对新婚夫妇的两个玩具娃娃站在幸运星和五彩缤纷的丝带花束中，与郑国谷和罗拉之间真实发生的故事相呼应。同样的一对娃娃与其他一些布偶、塑料娃娃被郑国谷运用到了《东京上空的故事》（1998）系列中。照片里，东京的天空为这些小人偶搭建了一个舞台，上演了一幕又一幕宛如童话故事里的浪漫篇章。

《阳江青年的越轨行为》（1996）相较郑国谷之前的几个系列，更为黑暗、更加放肆。当时，他发现他的弟弟和朋友们对《古惑仔》这一类以香港黑帮或者暴力为题材的流行动作片产生了浓厚的兴趣。这些进口电影在90年代的中国南方城市普及度非常高，年轻人可以轻易买到从香港走私的盗版录像带和VCD碟。以年轻人对电影中的暴力和帮派元素的痴迷为灵感，郑国谷几经周折说服了一组年轻男女来成

为作品的主角。他们染了发、组装了一批枪和刀剑、并将自己最喜爱的电影桥段演了出来。16张照片中的12张拍摄于一间现代公寓的毛坯房，记录了那些染了蓝色、棕色、粉色头发的年轻男女兴奋地沉浸在混乱之中。男人们挥舞着刀剑、手枪、来福枪等，用武器威胁着对方以及在他们身边的女人。另外四张照片拍摄于夜晚的室外停车场，其中几个帮派成员正与身着迷彩服的”士兵“进行激烈的对抗。这些混乱的动作通过郑国谷的镜头被定格在一个个瞬间，一帧帧只属于这些年轻参与者的狂欢时刻。

以冷静、非主观的角度描绘90年代的中国青年，郑国谷的《阳江青年的越轨行为》引来了许多人的关注与评价。艺术评论家胡昉对郑国谷的作品有着深刻的理解，他认为郑国谷其实并非对阳江青年文化的社会现状与问题感兴趣。实际上，吸引了郑国谷目光的是外来文化产品对中国文化压制性的力量，这力量大到迫使年轻人丢弃他们原本的文化身份，从而选择令人忧虑的新态度与为人处事的方法。郑国谷这个时期的作品标志了他摄影道路上的一个转折点，且为他后来的作品中所出现的越来越多的新媒体元素作了铺垫。最具转折性的作品也许就是他的《阳江青年的生活与梦幻》（1996-98）。这幅作品由832张迷你照片组成，每一张的大小均等同于原始的相机胶卷底片。除了在《阳江青年的越轨行为》中已有的照片之外，这832张照片中还包含了许多这个系列的周边摄影作品。此外，它还包括了影棚拍摄的毛绒玩具照片、人们在公园活动的快照、以及陌生男女的人物肖像照等等，五花八门，眼花缭乱。由于小照片的数量众多，观众通常很难将这一整幅作品尽收眼底。若观众尝试去理解小照片之间的联系又或是每一张照片与完整构图之间的关系，那更是难上加难。这些困难，就好比日常生活中的信息过剩，在21世纪的今天，与我们依旧息息相关。

从1997年起，郑国谷的作品通常将上百张小到难以辨别的照片排列组合于单页纸上。例如在《阳江青年的生活与梦幻》中，他模仿电影故事版的形式，将照片一行行地排列。而在《影像

泛滥的时代——到处都可以看到玩偶在表演》（1999）与《炫耀，炫耀，再炫耀》（2000）中，他将一些随意的人像快照和翻拍自杂志的时装照组合成了拼图。有时，他会把照片通过格子排列成圆形图案，如《太阳照耀》系列作品（1998）。而在《女人是男人的最高级玩具》（1998）里，他将圆形和长方形的略带色情元素的图片进行了混合。郑国谷曾将《消费就是理想，消费更解恨》（1998）描述成当代全球消费者文化的一个“范本”。其中最顶上的16行包含了一组有关动物玩具、动作人物、和人偶的照片，以及一组瓶子、罐子、和盒子的照片。《消费就是理想，消费更解恨》中的后17行展现了一组翻拍自电视荧屏或电脑屏幕中陌生人脸与无法辨认的场景照片，隐射了媒体飞速发展的当下，不管是人像还是世界都可以成为被消费与被丢弃的那一个。

也正是1997年郑国谷开始了他最大胆、最雄心勃勃的作品——《一万个顾客》。当这个系列完成之时，它将由一万张独版的照片组成，每一张大小均等，格式相同，每一张都意图表现当代媒体环境的某个特质。在现有的200多幅该系列作品中，绝大多数照片都有经过双重曝光的处理，它们巧妙地将郑国谷所拍摄的模型车、玩具坦克、和人偶覆盖在从电视和电脑中截取的图像上。《一万个顾客》是对“主题多样性”这个想法的极端挑战，力图掀翻艺术市场对作品版数的传统定义和标准。当一名追求作品独特性的收藏者得知《一万个顾客》系列未来的潜在庞大规模时，一定会对它的独特性产生怀疑，出手购买前定会有所顾忌。

从2000年开始，郑国谷与阳江书法小组的交往变得更为密切，他的关注点逐渐从摄影转向了书法。他将越来越多的精力投入到创作自己理想的风景和建筑之中，尤其是他那位于阳江郊区规模庞大的“了园”建筑项目。然而摄影对郑国谷观念的影响已然在他心中生根，他1999年

开始创作的《猪脑控制电脑》系列虽然表面上是绘画作品，但是摄影的概念却在这些绘画中体现得淋漓尽致。

郑国谷说，《猪脑控制电脑》系列激烈地抨击了中国艺术界中劣作泛滥的现象。他决定创作不带任何传统绘画元素的作品，仅仅由他从大众媒体的资源中取得的文字和简单的图案进行创作。比如在种种媒体中，香港青少年生活时尚杂志《Yes!》为这个系列的创作提供了许多资源。郑国谷先用电脑重新编辑他选中的图像（他说标题中的“猪脑”指的是他对自己的编辑技巧掌握度的不确定），然后将它们打印成橡胶浮雕，用缝合与粘贴等形式固定在画布上。在整个系列的发展过程中，郑国谷决定用印着编辑过的照片的布料来取代空白的平面，作为他排列组合文字材料的背景。布料上的照片包含了他拍摄的城市街景、每年巴塞尔艺术节的场景、了园中的植物景观、以及一些新闻的媒体图片。这些照片用现在进行时记录了郑国谷个人当下的日常生活，使得跃然其上的那些代表着90年代后期青年文化的文字“古迹”显得格外突兀。这些郑国谷不停撒入画面的历史遗迹仿佛宣告着在中国被卷入全球消费文化旋涡的过程当中，每时每刻的当下即刻就会成为这种当下的历史。



My Teacher, 1993

ZHENG GUOGU

In My Teacher, my teacher and I squatted in the center of the street. I found him enjoying life, though he had had no education. I like to observe this salient figure. He was like a living statue. I followed him and started to record his life with photos. Gradually I found that photos themselves could carry ideas. We can put all we want to say into a photo. I can take the photo and point, this is My Teacher.

Zheng Guogu

I like geese because once I heard a physics teacher or someone else say that a goose's eyes miniaturize everything it sees, so a goose fears nothing; but the ox is the opposite, its eyes enlarge everything it sees. So you can see in traditional Chinese paintings that even children could herd oxen. Geese represent my boldness and defiance. So it was like my manifesto when I was first engaged in art. I didn't have much experience, but we were fearless, and had enough courage to fight no matter what. And that is it.

Zheng Guogu



Planting Geese No. 1, 1994

C-print. 23 5/8 x 39 3/8 inches (60 x 100 cm)



Planting Geese No. 2, 1994

C-print. 23 5/8 x 39 3/8 inches (60 x 100 cm)

ZHENG GUOGU



Planting Geese No. 3, 1994

C-print. 23 5/8 x 39 3/8 inches (60 x 100 cm)

It took me a long while to court and persuade the “bride” to be my bride. I think I had enough patience and ability from the beginning. I remember how my heart pounded when we were taking wedding pictures. Or perhaps my heart pounds like this whenever I create works. The bride beside me was scared and anxious. The whole thing was finished in a tasteful way, which kept the bride delighted for a few days. She thought that this fictitious wedding was a very beautiful and happy moment in her life. I see it as a lively, interesting, happy party. But in some people’s eyes it lacks characters of a work of art.

Zheng Guogu



My Bride No. 1, 1995

C-print. 39 3/8 x 23 5/8 inches (100 × 60 cm)

My Bride No. 2, 1995

C-print. 39 3/8 x 23 5/8 inches (100 × 60 cm)





My Bride No. 3, 1995

C-print. 39 3/8 x 23 5/8 inches (100×60cm)

ZHENG GUOGU



My Bride No. 4, 1995

C-print. 39 3/8 x 23 5/8 inches (100 × 60 cm)

ZHENG GUOGU



My Bride No. 5, 1995

C-print. 23 5/8 x 39 3/8 inches (60 x 100 cm)

My Bride No. 6, 1995

C-print. 23 5/8 x 39 3/8 inches (60 x 100 cm)



My Bride No. 7, 1995

C-print. 23 5/8 x 39 3/8 inches (60 x 100 cm)



My Bride No. 8, 1995

C-print. 23 5/8 x 39 3/8 inches (60 x 100 cm)



Honeymoon No. 1, 1996

C-print. 23 5/8 x 39 3/8 inches (60 x 100 cm)

Wishes of the Bridegroom on Honeymoon

During the few days following Luo La's disappearance from Yangjiang (during the exhibition of "Possibility"), her parents were anxious and restless like ants on a hot pan at home. They inquired everywhere about the whereabouts of their "disappeared" daughter. If they had known before we went to Guangzhou that Luo La was going away with their "good son-in-law," then the result would be the realization of my fear that the work On Honeymoon would not be realized. Under the circumstances, the only thing that could keep them from knowing was probably Luo La's lies that she made to avoid this difficult problem, for lies can be used against reality. We decided to tell her parents the truth when fat was in the fire.

In Guangzhou, Luo La and I played the couple Sha Yeya and Gao Weibi, trying to live a real sweet dream of honeymoon. I transferred all the love I could not expect to obtain from "my bride" into the honeymoon trip. The idealized newly weds I installed in the exhibition hall (symbols of Luo La and I) – the work showing the romantic scene of us taking our honeymoon in a rectangular environment among lucky stars, colorful bunches of flowers and neon tubes, supplies more realistic contents. So the work On Honeymoon consists of two simultaneous parts: the comprehensive materials in the exhibition hall and the episodes of our life as "newlyweds" in Guangzhou.

Zheng Guogu in Yangjiang, March 1996



Honeymoon No. 2, 1996

C-print. 23 5/8 x 39 3/8 inches (60 x 100 cm)

Honeymoon No. 3, 1996

C-print. 23 5/8 x 39 3/8 inches (60 x 100 cm)



Honeymoon No. 4, 1996

C-print. 23 5/8 x 39 3/8 inches (60 x 100 cm)

Honeymoon No. 5, 1996

C-print. 23 5/8 x 39 3/8 inches (60 x 100 cm)



Honeymoon No. 6, 1996

C-print. 23 5/8 x 39 3/8 inches (60 x 100 cm)

ZHENG GUOGU



Honeymoon No. 7, 1996

C-print. 23 5/8 x 39 3/8 inches (60 x 100 cm)

ELI KLEIN GALLERY



Honeymoon No. 8, 1996

C-print. 23 5/8 x 39 3/8 inches (60 x 100 cm)

ELI KLEIN GALLERY



The Vagarious Life of Yangjiang Youth No. 1, 1996

C-print. 24 x 39 3/8 inches (61 x 100 cm)



The Vagarious Life of Yangjiang Youth No. 2, 1996

C-print. 24 x 39 3/8 inches (61 x 100 cm)

ZHENG GUOGU



The Vagarious Life of Yangjiang Youth No. 3, 1996

C-print. 24 x 39 3/8 inches (61 x 100 cm)

The Vagarious Life of Yangjiang Youth No. 4, 1996

C-print. 24 x 39 3/8 inches (61 x 100 cm)



The Vagarious Life of Yangjiang Youth No. 5, 1996

C-print. 24 x 39 3/8 inches (61 x 100 cm)

The Vagarious Life of Yangjiang Youth No. 6, 1996

C-print, 24 x 39 3/8 inches (61 x 100 cm)



The Vagarious Life of Yangjiang Youth No. 7, 1996

C-print. 24 x 39 3/8 inches (61 x 100 cm)

The Vagarious Life of Yangjiang Youth No. 8, 1996

C-print. 24 x 39 3/8 inches (61 x 100 cm)



The Vagarious Life of Yangjiang Youth No. 9, 1996

C-print. 24 x 39 3/8 inches (61 x 100 cm)



The Vagarious Life of Yangjiang Youth No. 10, 1996

C-print. 24 x 39 3/8 inches (61 x 100 cm)



The Vagarious Life of Yangjiang Youth No. 11, 1996

C-print. 24 x 39 3/8 inches (61 x 100 cm)



The Vagarious Life of Yangjiang Youth No. 12, 1996

C-print. 24 x 39 3/8 inches (61 x 100 cm)

ZHENG GUOGU



The Vagarious Life of Yangjiang Youth No. 13, 1996

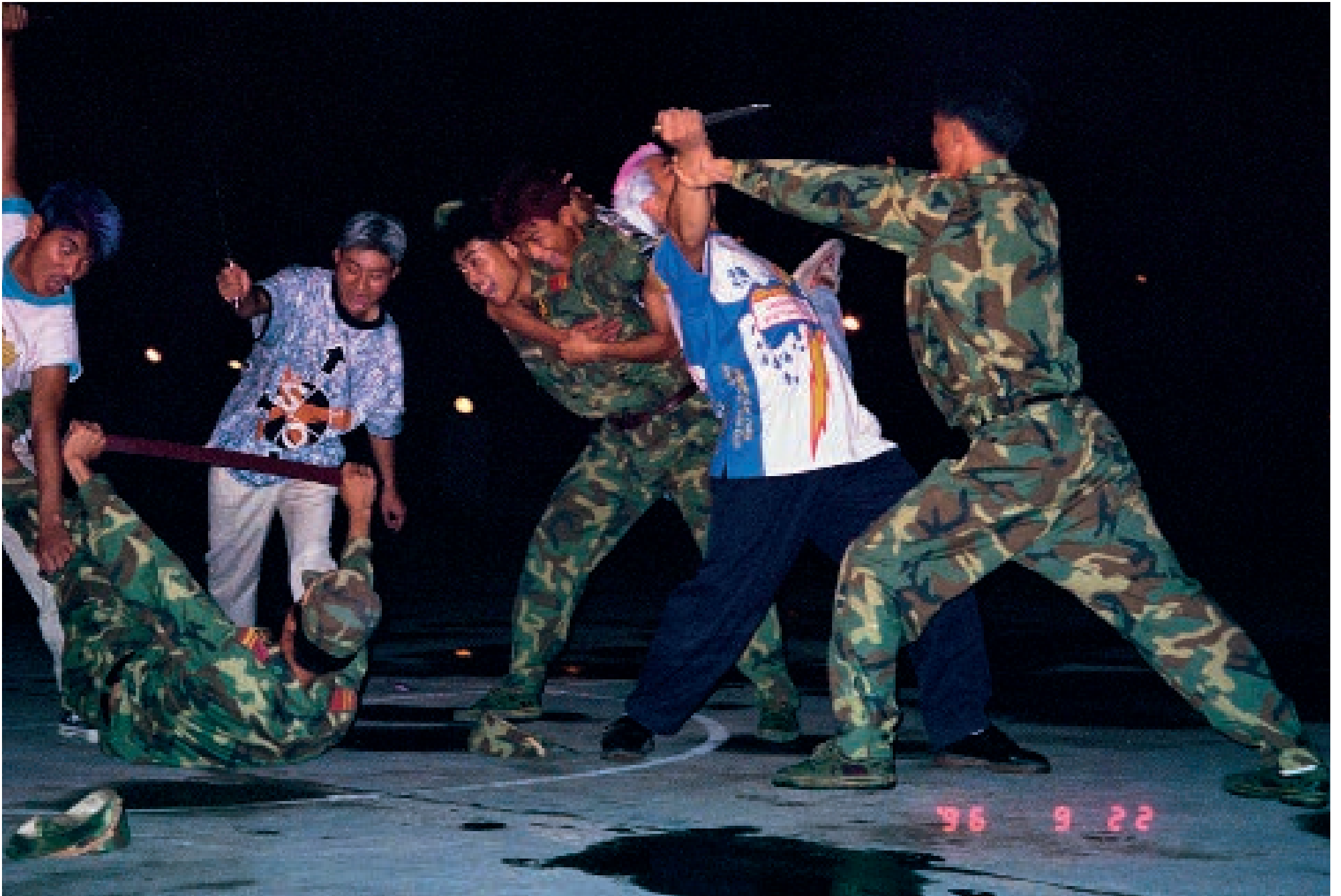
C-print. 24 x 39 3/8 inches (61 x 100 cm)



The Vagarious Life of Yangjiang Youth No. 14, 1996

C-print. 24 x 39 3/8 inches (61 x 100 cm)

ZHENG GUOGU



The Vagarious Life of Yangjiang Youth No. 15, 1996

C-print. 24 x 39 3/8 inches (61 x 100 cm)



The Vagarious Life of Yangjiang Youth No. 16, 1996

C-print. 24 x 39 3/8 inches (61 x 100 cm)

ZHENG GUOGU



Life and Dreams of Youth from Yangjiang, 1996-1998

C-print, and handmade paper-carving on photographic paper. 23 5/8 x 39 3/8 inches (60 x 100 cm)

Today, we are already used to photographs around us. Since 1994, I've been playing games with photographs, which have become my favourite after my Honeymoon work. To me, it holds a special charm -- games are a kind of practice, and thinking does not waste film. I know it is a matter of time for me to think in this way.

When I came back from Guangzhou where I finished *On Honeymoon*, some magazines offered to publish it. At that time magazines required two photos from each artist, but my work was a process, and I wanted the reader to understand my work in a comprehensive way. So I put the negatives together and developed them on a piece of printing paper, in the hope that the reader could read my whole work instead of seeing a fragment. I believe this way of arrangement can contain more things. Later I put more and more negatives together. There's neither focus nor composition. I think this is what I'm interested in. People understand my work by reading, and that's the only way to understand the whole process.

My photographic works cannot be enlarged or reduced. The negatives are developed on a scale of 1:1. A work contains a lot of information, like microchips. I think it is close to the computer age. We can hold more and more information, so I make my photos as compact as possible, so as to put the world into a thin piece of printing paper.

Zheng Guogu in Yangjiang, March 1996

I use the media as a model to communicate and show something to people.
That is, the model is a reference that they can check with their own eyes...
I document images projected by the media, illustrations and photographs.
From magazines, I also have understood the culture of the entire world
through the limited information contained in the media (foreign television
Programs, VCDs, CDs, [and] magazines).

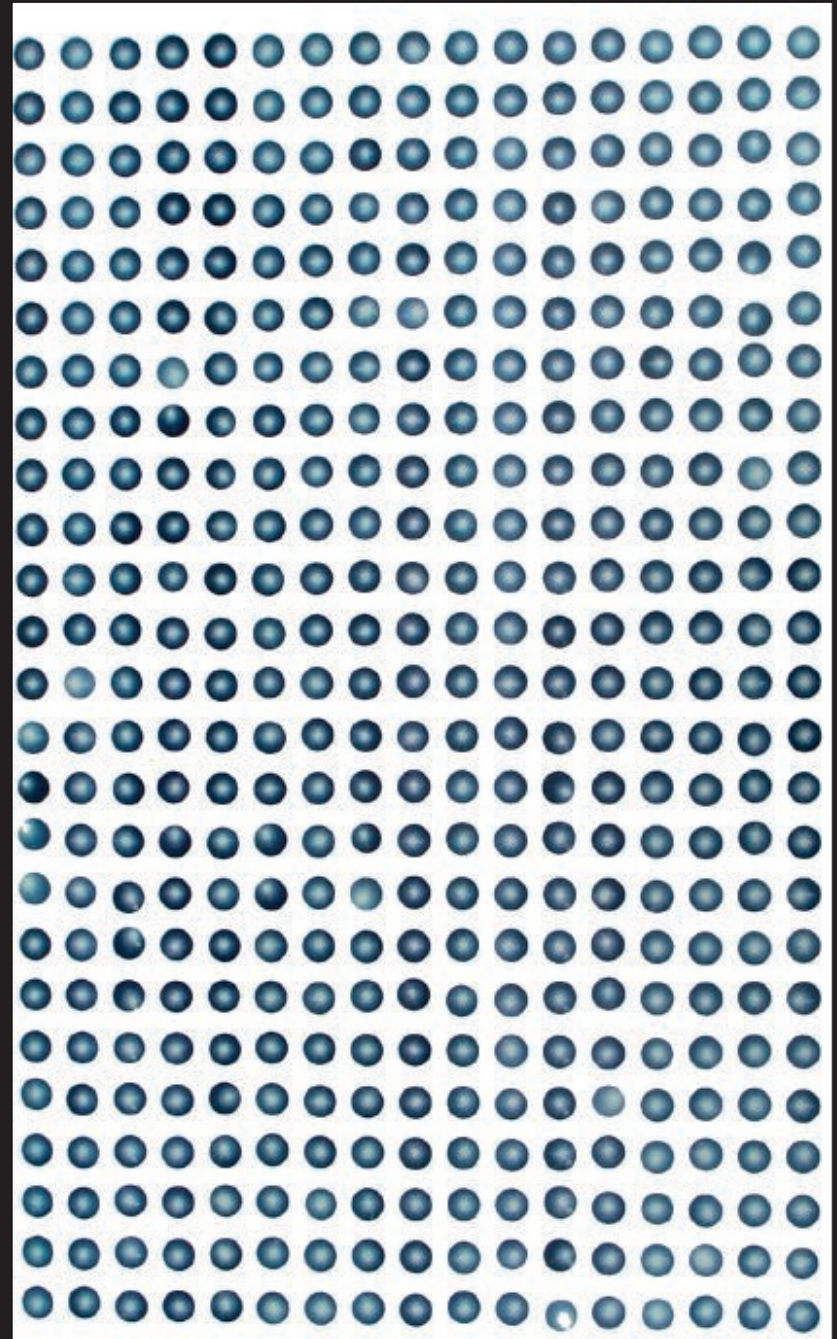
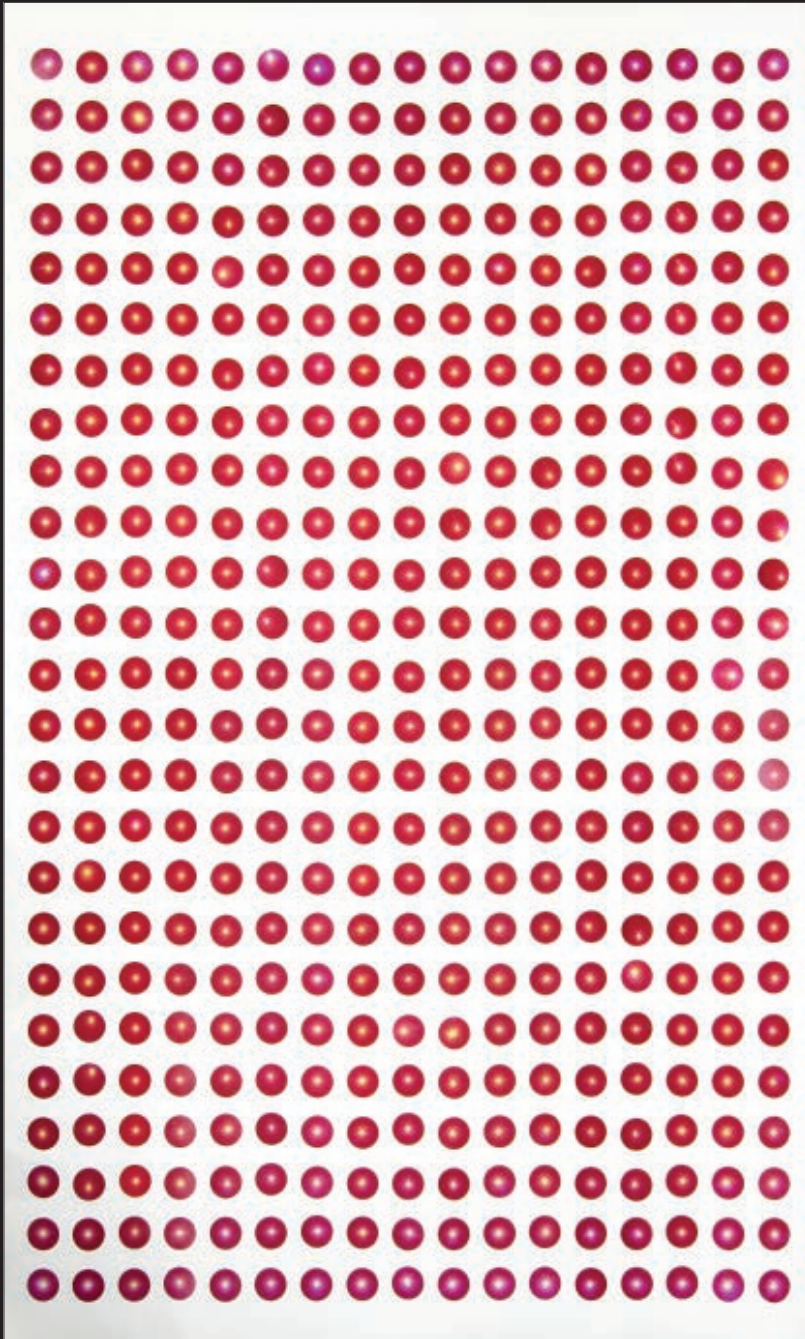
Zheng Guogu in Yangjiang, March 1996



Consume is Ideal, to Consume Dispels Despair, 1998

C-print, handmade paper-carving on photographic paper. 23 5/8 x 39 3/8 inches (60 x 100 cm)

ZHENG GUOGU

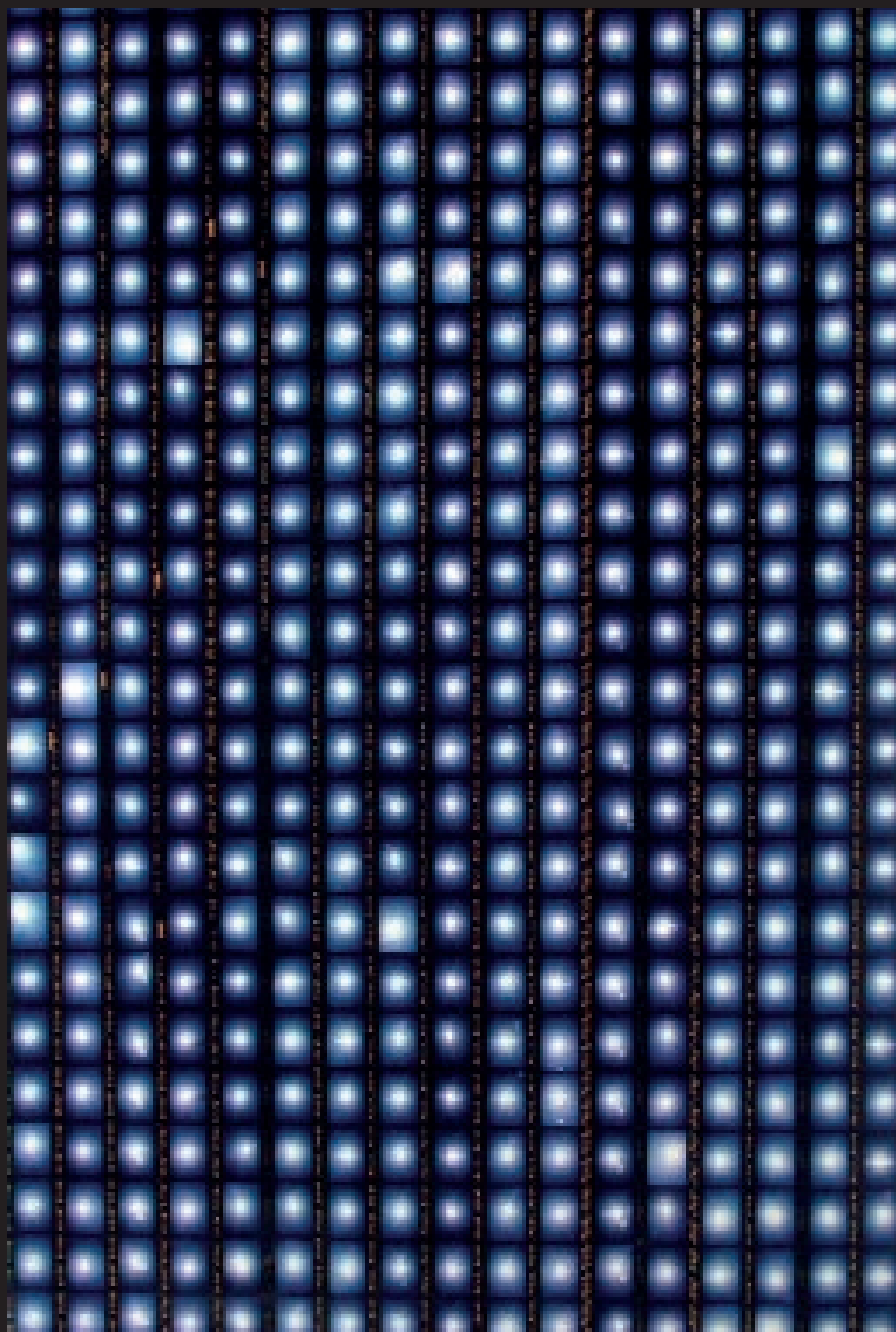


Sun Shine No. 1, 1998

C-print, handmade paper-carving on photographic paper. 43 3/0 x 39 3/8 inches (110 × 60 cm)

Sun Shine No. 2, 1998

C-print, handmade paper-carving on photographic paper. 43 3/0 x 39 3/8 inches (110 × 60 cm)



Sun Shine No. 3, 1998
C-print, handmade paper-carving on photographic paper. 43 3/0 x 39 3/8 inches (110 × 60 cm)

ZHENG GUOGU



Tokyo Sky Story No. 1, 1998

C-print, 23 5/8 x 39 3/8 inches (60 x 100 cm)

A Theater in the Sky over Tokyo

Today, we are already used to photographs around us. Since 1994, I've been playing games with photographs, which have become my favorite after my Honeymoon work. To me, it holds a special charm -- games are a kind of practice, and thinking does not waste film. I know it is a matter of time for me to think in this way.

This time I was building a "theater in the air" over Tokyo. The hero and heroine are a couple of "newly weds" who have to take their honeymoon in Tokyo. Between the game and non-game, the record in the photographs separates the transient "performance element" from reality, thus achieving a precise, fairytale-like existence.

Except the one of collision of two passenger plane models in the sky over Tokyo, which looks like a news photo (although people think only news photos are free of lies), all the photos show obvious "charm of fantasy" with the "performance element." They bring an important basis for imagination to my artistic expression in Tokyo.

The process of implementing the plan and the result on the printing paper neither disclose nor create any truth. Unlike before, doing the work in Tokyo gave me a mixed feeling of excitement and loss. It was fun.

Zheng Guogu



Tokyo Sky Story No. 2, 1998

C-print. 24 x 39 3/8 inches (61 x 100 cm)

Tokyo Sky Story No. 3, 1998

C-print,. 24 x 39 3/8 inches (61 x 100 cm)



Tokyo Sky Story No. 4, 1998

C-print. 24 x 39 3/8 inches (61 x 100 cm)

ZHENG GUOGU



Tokyo Sky Story No. 5, 1998

C-print. 24 x 39 3/8 inches (61 x 100 cm)

Tokyo Sky Story No. 6, 1998

C-print. 24 x 39 3/8 inches (61 x 100 cm)



Tokyo Sky Story No. 6, 1998

C-print. 24 x 39 3/8 inches (61 x 100 cm)

ZHENG GUOGU



Tokyo Sky Story No. 8, 1998

C-print. 24 x 39 3/8 inches (61 x 100 cm)



Tokyo Sky Story No. 9, 1998

C-print. 24 x 39 3/8 inches (61 x 100 cm)



Tokyo Sky Story No. 10, 1998

C-print. 24 x 39 3/8 inches (61 x 100 cm)

ZHENG GUOGU



Tokyo Sky Story No. 11, 1998

C-print. 24 x 39 3/8 inches (61 x 100 cm)

ELI KLEIN GALLERY



Tokyo Sky Story No. 12, 1998

C-print. 24 x 39 3/8 inches (61 x 100 cm)

ZHENG GUOGU



An Age Flooded with Images - Dolls Acting Everywhere, 1999

C-print, handmade paper-carving on photographic paper. 36 5/8 x 22 1/2 inches (93 x 57 cm)

They cannot tell the distinction between the auxiliaries “D (的),” “De(得)” and “Di(地)”. They use their eyes, ears, mouths and noses all at the same time. In this border city in southern China, just like other places, there are games, parties, grand weddings and brawls. One can see puppet shows everywhere; the more frenzied the more interesting.

Zheng Guogu



Ten Thousand Customers 250, 1997-2016

C-print, handmade paper-carving on photographic paper. 23 5/8 x 39 3/8 inches (60 x 100 cm)

ELI KLEIN GALLERY

About Ten Thousand Customers

Ten Thousand customers is a image project that I always desire to finish but cannot finish doing. The project is to permeate my thought and life with photography so that the photography throbs with my pulse, changes with my interests and ends with me.

Ten Thousand Customers begins with color changes, each (photo) has a distinct color, after that came the image changes and each has a different TV image as a whole_ I captured images that I found interested on the television, double exposed them on original negative prints and present them to the audience. Like a mirage disappearing here and reappearing elsewhere, the images from the TV everyday are covered by a new day, like human history itself being a history of time covering, at the same place, where many things that happened in the past are overlapping, or at the same time, different things happen at different locations, I hope to overlap these records in this photographic work.

Ten Thousand Customers is an assemblage of photos, which may change with the changes of space. When multiple photos from the Ten Thousand Customers are juxtaposed and shown together, you will find something very amazing from them, like staging a drama with photographic paper, one scene after another. Through the show of these pictures, you will find the whole world the more intricate scene, It is like a spinney that the branch is overflowing and there is a miscellaneous stone clump too nearby, like the image broadcast in the television channel every day, like the cityscape with high buildings and large mansions, like china enters the consumption time, the merchandise of the street peddler and the supermarket -- It is together to synthesize these being seen, it is a world view. An extraordinary experience of killing the image, the image of the world events that suddenly happened which disappear there, reappear here.

Zheng Guogu

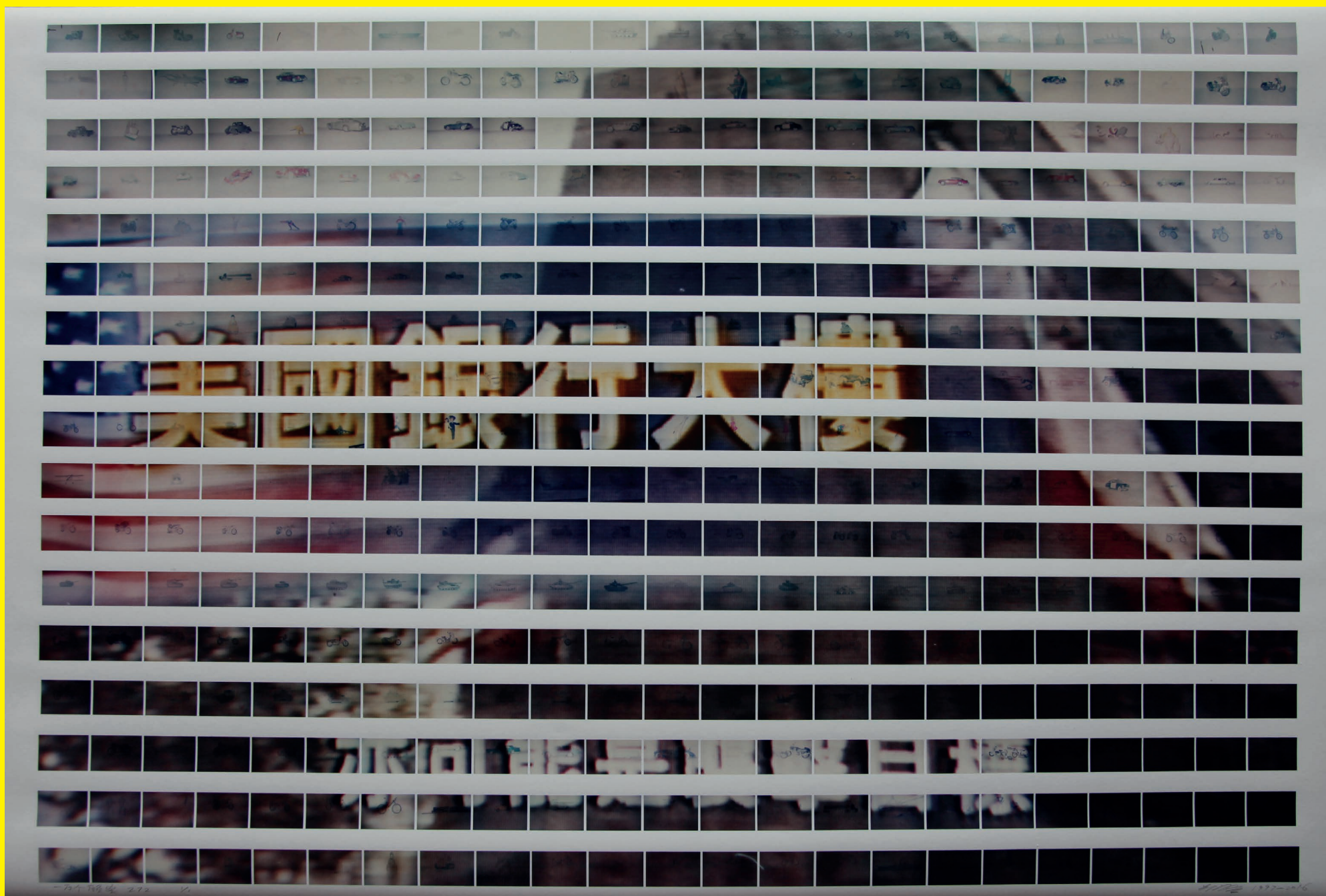
ZHENG GUOGU



Ten Thousand Customers 270, 1997-2016

C-print, handmade paper-carving on photographic paper. 23 5/8 x 39 3/8 inches (60 x 100 cm)

ELI KLEIN GALLERY



Ten Thousand Customers 272, 1997-2016

C-print, handmade paper-carving on photographic paper. 23 5/8 x 39 3/8 inches (60 x 100 cm)

ZHENG GUOGU



Ten Thousand Customers 277, 1997-2016

C-print, handmade paper-carving on photographic paper. 23 5/8 x 39 3/8 inches (60 x 100 cm)

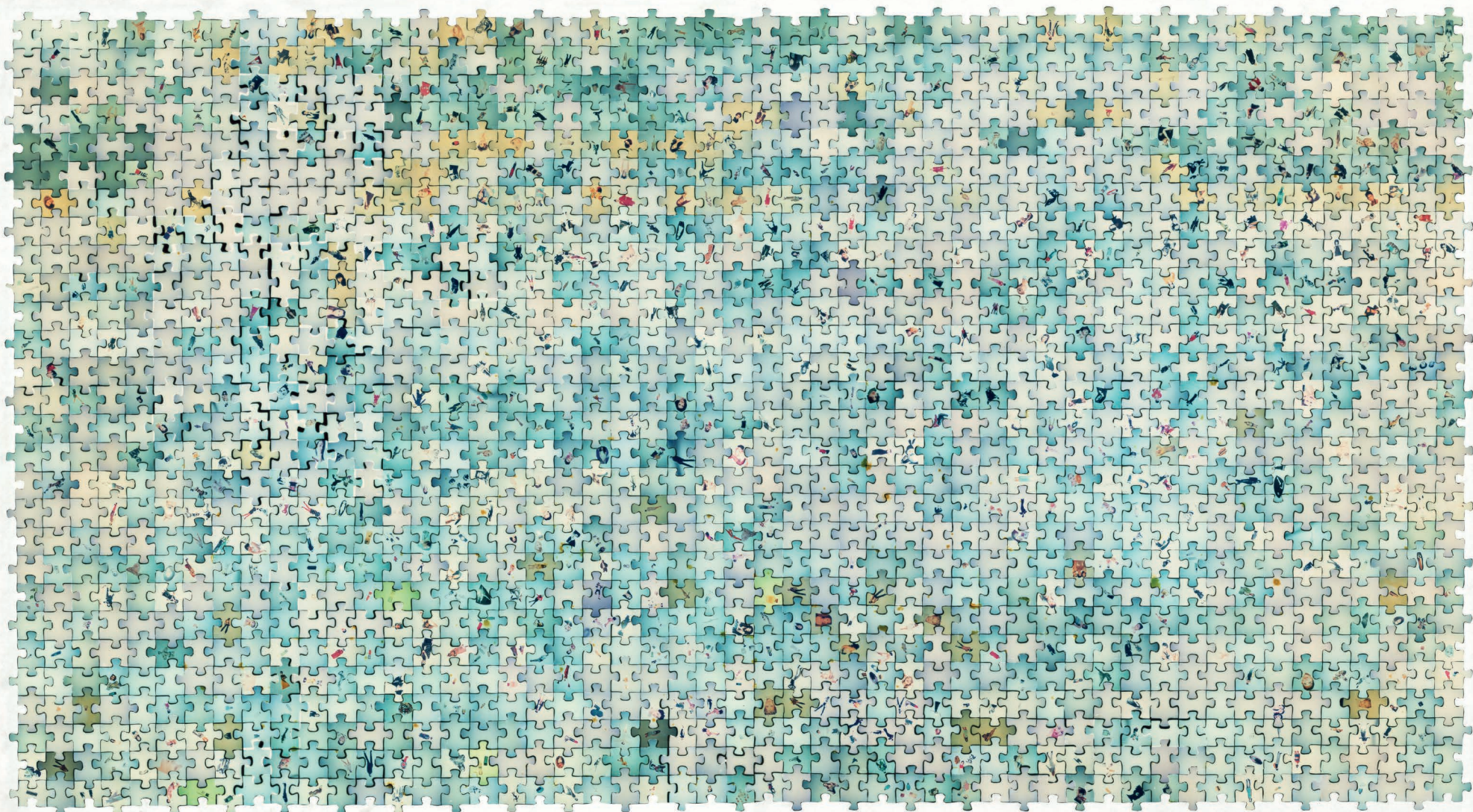
ELI KLEIN GALLERY



Ten Thousand Customers 278, 1997-2016

C-print, handmade paper-carving on photographic paper. 23 5/8 x 39 3/8 inches (60 x 100 cm)

ZHENG GUOGU



Flash, Flash, Flash It Away, 2000

C-print. 23 5/8 x 39 3/8 inches (60 x 100 cm)

ELI KLEIN GALLERY

Curriculum Vitae

Education

1992

Guangzhou Academy of Fine Art

Solo Exhibitions

2019

Zheng Guogu: Visionary Transformation, MoMA PS1, New York, USA (Forthcoming)

Zheng Guogu: Photoworks 1993-2016, Eli Klein Gallery, New York, USA

2017

Zheng Guogu: The Winding Path to Trueness, Mirrored Gardens, Vitamin Creative Space, Guangzhou, China

2016

Zheng Guogu: Where energy inhabits?, Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris, France

2015

Zheng Guogu: Visionary Transformation, VW (VeneKlasen/Werner), Berlin, Germany

Zheng Guogu: Dialogue of Infinite Dimensions - Mandorla, FIAC, Paris, France

Zheng Guogu: Ubiquitous Plasma, OCAT Xi'an, Xi'an, China

Zheng Guogu & Yangjiang Group: The Writings of Today are a Promise for Tomorrow, Palazzo Morozini, Venice, Italy

Action for Tomorrow (with Yangjiang Group), 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art, Sydney, Australia

2013

Fuck off the Rules: Yangjiang Group (with Yangjiang Group), Minsheng Art Museum, Shanghai, China

2006

Mouse Cow Tiger Hare Dragon Snake (with Yangjiang Group), Taikang Top Space, Beijing, China

This is a Solo Exhibition - Zheng Guogu's solo exhibition, BizArt Art Center, Shanghai, China

2000

Zheng Guogu: More Dimensional, Chinese Archives and

Warehouse, Beijing, China

Zheng Guogu: More Dimensional in Shanghai, BizArt Art Center, Shanghai, China

1998

Sixteen of the Ten Thousand Customers and other Works - Zheng Guogu photographic works, Beijing Photo Gallery, Beijing, China

Selected Group Exhibitions

2019

Chinese Whispers: New Art from the Sigg Collection, MAK Vienna, Austria

Art and China after 1989: Theater of the World, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, USA

Other lives of the alternative spaces, Taikang Space, Beijing, China

Extreme Mix - Guangzhou Airport Biennial 2019, Guangzhou airport resort, Guangzhou, China

2018

Art and China after 1989: Theater of the World, Guggenheim Bilbao, Spain, Guggenheim Museum, New York, USA

The 9th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art, The Queensland Gallery of Modern Art, Australia

Life and Dreams: Contemporary Chinese Photography and Media Art, The Walther Collection, Neu-Ulm, Germany

2017

Canton Express: Art of the Pearl River Delta, M+, Hong Kong

Frontier: Re-assessment of Post-Globalisational Politics, OCAT Shanghai, Shanghai, China

Three Shadows 10th Anniversary Special Exhibition: 40 Years of Chinese Contemporary Photography, Three Shadows Photography Art Centre, Beijing, China

Post-sense Sensibility: Trepidation and Will, Shanghai Ming Contemporary Art Museum, Shanghai, China

2016

Mountain Sites: Views of Laoshan, Sifang Art Museum, Nanjing, China

Digging a Hole in China, OCAT Shenzhen, Shenzhen, China

Unwritten Rules Cannot Be Broken (with Yangjiang Group),
Guggenheim Museum, New York, NY, USA

2015

Nonfigurative, Shanghai 21st Century Minsheng Art Museum,
Shanghai, China

The System of Objects, Minsheng Art Museum, Shanghai, China

Back Home, Run Away: A Sample of Artistic Geography, Taikang
Space, Beijing

2014

'Social Factory' - 10th Shanghai Biennale, Power Station of Art,
Shanghai, China

15 Years Chinese Contemporary Art Award, Power Station of Art,
Shanghai, China

Landscape: the Virtual, the Actual, the Possible?, Times Museum,
Guangzhou, China; Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco,
USA

COSMOS, Shanghai 21st Century Minsheng Art Museum,
Shanghai, China

Hans van Dijk: 5000 Names, Ullens Center for Contemporary Art,
Beijing, China

Hans van Dijk: 5000 Artists, Witte de With Center for Contemporary
Art, Rotterdam, Netherlands

Omnipresent Concrete, Hunsand Space, Beijing, China

Advance through Retreat, Rockbund Art Museum, Shanghai, China

2013

Zizhiqu - Autonomous Regions (with Yangjiang Group), Times
Museum, Guangzhou, China

DUCHAMP and/or/in CHINA, Ullens Center for Contemporary
Art, Beijing, China

Pessimism or Resistance?, Taikang Space, Beijing, China

New Framework: Chinese Avant-garde Photography 1980s-90s,
Blindspot Gallery & Annex, Hong Kong, China

2012

Rites, thoughts, notes, sparks, swings, strikes. A Hong Kong spring,
Para/Site, HongKong, China

Face, Mingsheng Art Museum, Shanghai, China

2011

Local Knowledge, The Dowse Art Museum, Lower Hutt, New
Zealand

Museum on Paper: 12 Chinese Artists, Iberia Center for
Contemporary Art, Beijing, China

Start from the Horizon - Chinese Contemporary Sculpture Since
1978 (with Yangjiang Group), Sishang Art Museum, Beijing, China

Shanshui - Poetry Without Sound? Landscape in Chinese
Contemporary Art, Kunstmuseum Luzern, Switzerland

2010

ACT VIII of 'MORALITY': Nether Land, Witte de With Center for
Contemporary Art / Dutch Culture Center, Shanghai, China

Reshaping History - China Youth New Art Invitational Exhibition,
Today Art Museum, Beijing, China

Jungle - A Close-up Focus on Chinese Contemporary Art Treads,
Platform China Contemporary Art Institute, Beijing, China

Glass Factory - Art in the New Financial Era (with Yangjiang
Group), Iberia Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing, China

2009

Breaking Forecast: 8 Key Figures of China's New Generation Artists,
Ullens Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing, China

Images Recalled / Bilder auf Abruf, 3rd Fotofestival Mannheim-
Ludwigshafen-Heidelberg, Germany

The Shop at China International Gallery Exposition, Beijing, China

The State of Things: China-Belgium Contemporary Artistic
Exhibition, Centre for Fine Arts, Brussels, Belgium / the National
Art Museum of China, Beijing, China

Time versus Fashion, Kunstverein Nürtingen e.V., Nürtingen,
Germany

The Spectacle of the Everyday - 10th Lyon Biennial (with Yangjiang
Group), Lyon, France

2008

It Is I Too, Photographic Self-portraits by 21 Chinese Artists, A
Thousand Plateaus Art Space, Chengdu, China

Sprout from White Nights, Bonniers Konsthall, Stockholm, Sweden

Farewell to Post-Colonialism - 3rd Guangzhou Triennial,

Guangdong Museum of Art, Guangzhou, China

China Gold, l'art contemporain chinois, La Fondation Dina Vierny-Musée Maillol, Paris, France

Our Future: The Guy & Myriam Ullens Foundation Collection, Ullens Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing, China

“Insomnia” Photo Exhibition, BizArt Art Center, Shanghai, China

2007

Brave New Worlds, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, USA

Documenta 12, Kassel, Germany

China Welcomes You...Desires, Struggles, New Identities, Kunsthaus Graz, Graz, Austria

The Real Thing: Contemporary Art from China, Tate Liverpool, Liverpool, UK

2006

It's all right, Contemporary Art Exhibition, China Academy of Art, New Media Department & BizArt Art Center, Hangzhou, China

5th International Ink Painting Biennial of Shenzhen, He Xiangning Art Museum (with Yangjiang Group), Shenzhen, China

City in Progress / Live from Zhang Jiang, Shanghai Gallery of Art, Shanghai, China

The Twelve: Chinese Contemporary Art Awards (CCAA) Exhibition, Shanghai Zendai Museum of Modern Art, Shanghai, China

The 2nd Contemporary Ink-wash Space: Infiltration - Idylls and Visions, Guangdong Museum of Art, Guangzhou, China

Project Space, University of Central England (UCE), Birmingham, UK / Plan B Gallery, Cluj, Romania /Singapore

Vistors Centre, a project for Singapore Biennial 2006, Singapore

Guangzhou – Cantonese Artists in the Sigg Collection, Kunstmuseum Bern, Switzerland

2005

2nd Guangzhou Triennial - BEYOND: An Extraordinary Space of Experimentation for Modernization, Guangdong Museum of Art, Guangzhou, China

Black - Extreme - Vigorous - Figurative, Shenzhen Fine Art Institute, Shenzhen, China

Out of Sight, De Appel Arts Centre, Amsterdam, Netherland

Follow me! Chinese Art at the Threshold of the New Millennium, Mori Art Museum, Tokyo

Mahjong - Contemporary Chinese Art form the Sigg Collection, Kunstmuseum Bern, Switzerland

Zooming into Focus - Chinese Contemporary Photography from the Haudenschild Collection, National Art Museum of China, Beijing, China

Between Past and Future: New Photography and Video from China, Seattle Art Museum, USA

2004

Zooming into Focus - Chinese Contemporary Photography from the Haudenschild Collection, University Art Gallery, San Diego State University, USA; Shanghai Museum of Art, Shanghai, China; Centro Cultural Tijuana, Mexico; Institute of Contemporary Art, Earl Lu Gallery LASALLE-SIA, Singapore

All under heaven, MuHKA, Antwerp, Belgium

Past in Reverse, Contemporary Art of East Asia, San Diego Museum of Art, USA

Between Past and Future: New Photography and Video from China, International Center of Photography (ICP), NY and the Asia Society Museum, NY; Smart Museum of Art, University of Chicago and Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, USA

À l'ouest du sud de l'Est / à l'est du sud de l'Oues (with Yangjiang Group), Centre Régional d'Art Contemporain de Sète, Sète, France

Dial 62761232 (Express Delivery Exhibition), Contemporary Art Exhibition, BizART, Shanghai, China

2003

Fabricated Paradises (with Yangjiang Group), Le Parvis Centre of Contemporary Art, Pau, France

Second-hand Reality, Today Art Museum, Beijing, China

Playing at home/Playing away: The Maze of Reality, Canton Express in Zone of Urgency (curated by Hou Hanru), 50th Venice Biennale, simultaneous projection at Vitamin Creative Space, Shenzhen, China

The Fifth System: Public Art in the age of “Post-Planning”, He Xiangning Art Museum, Shenzhen, China

2002

Urban Creation, 4th Shanghai Biennale, Shanghai Art Museum, Shanghai, China

Paris-Pekin, Espace Pierre Cardin, Paris, France

Too Much Flavour, 3H Art Center, Shanghai, China

Asianvibe: Contemporary Asian Art, Espai d'art Contemporani de Castelló, Castellón, Spain

P_A_U_S_E, Borges Libreria/China, 4th Gwangju Biennale, Gwangju, Korea

2001

Hot Pot, Kunstnernes Hus, Oslo, Norway

Photo Festival Naarden, Naarden City, Netherlands

City Slang, HeXiangning Art Museum, Shenzhen, China

Chinese Photography Show, Passage de Retz, Paris, France

Cross Pressures, Oulu Art Museum; Finnish Museum of Photography, Helsinki, Finland

Hangzhou New Medium Art Festival, China Fine Art Academy, Hangzhou, China

Living in Time - 29 Contemporary Artists from China, Hamburger Bahnhof, Museum für Gegenwart, Berlin, Germany

Yangban. Jiashang - the 1st Chengdu Biennale, Chengdu Contemporary Art Museum, China

2000

CLASH! 100 artists, Canvas International Art, Amsterdam, Netherlands

Individual and Society in Art - A Collection of Works of Art by eleven Chinese Artists, Guangdong Museum of Art, Guangzhou, China

Beijing, Shanghai, Shenzhen: Cities of the 21st Century, Bauhaus Dessau, Germany

The Sun Rises in the East - the current artistic scene in Asia, Rencontres Internationales de la Photographie d'Arles, France

Portraits, Figures, Couples and Groups from the Modern Chinese Art Foundation, BizArt, Shanghai, China

1999

Post-Sense Sensibility Alien Bodies & Delusion, Basement Third ring road, Beijing, China

Innovations (Part I), China Art Archives and Warehouse, Beijing, China

Concepts, Colors and Passions, China Art Archives and Warehouse, Beijing, China

Changing Views, Kunsthal Hof 88, Almelo, Netherlands

IX Bienal Internacional de Fotografía, Centro de la Imagen, Mexico City, Mexico

Cities on the Move 4, Hayward Gallery, London, UK

Cities on the Move 5, Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art, Helsinki, Finland

Love, Chinese Contemporary Photography & Video, International Arts Festival Tachikawa, Japan

Modern Chinese Art Foundation, Caermersklooster, Gent, Belgium
1998

Biennial de l'Imago Paris 98, Centre national de la Photographie, Paris, France

Site Art Project, Walking Museum in Takashimaya, Tokyo, Japan

Site of Desire, Taipei Biennial, Taipei Fine Arts Museum, Taiwan

Confused, KunstRAI, Amsterdam, Netherlands

Photography as Concept - 4. Internationale Foto-Triennial Esslingen, Germany

Cities on the Move 2, CAPC, Musée d'Art Contemporain de Bordeaux, France

Cities on the Move 3, P.S.1 Contemporary Art Centre, New York, USA

The Corruptionists, Basement Third ring road, Beijing, China

Images Telling Stories: Chinese New Concept Photography Art [Beautiful Like Materialism (Part of Photography)], Art College of Shanghai University, toured in Shanghai; Beijing; Nanjing; Changchun; Shenzhen; Hong Kong

Unveiled Reality, Centers of Academic Resources, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand

1997

Contemporary Photo Art from P. R. China, Neuer Berliner Kunstverein, Berlin; Städtische Kunstsammlungen, Chemnitz; Kunsthalle Darmstadt, Germany

Cities on the Move 2, Wiener Secession, Vienna, Austria

1996

Possibility – Installation Exhibition with The Big Tail Elephant Group, Guangzhou, China

1994

The Third Exhibition of Chinese Contemporary Art, Documentation Library of East China Normal University, Shanghai, China

No Room - with The Big Tail Elephant Group, Guangzhou, China

Awards

2006

Best Artist Award by CCAA (Chinese Contemporary Art Awards)

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Translation: Phil Cai
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KLEIN

