

Harper's BAZAAR 芭莎

人物篇

品位文化价值 国际化艺术杂志
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艺术云 ART

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徐冰 × 西川
中国该上场了
给世界一个白眼
俸正杰讲八大山人

Lu Zhengyuan

The Dangerous Journey

他是当代雕塑界的青年才俊，
他的作品继承了20世纪以来中国美术激烈变化的命运特征。
他是卢征远，他不是雕塑家，他是艺术家。

(He is the young genius of the contemporary sculpturing world and his work has inherited 20th century Chinese art's legacy of drastic changes. He is Lu Zhengyuan--he is not sculptor, he is an artist.)



BATHE IN AESTHETIC REVOLUTION

沐浴“改革”春风

WHAT I AM LOOKING FOR

创作与追寻

SPIRITUAL ADVENTURER

精神探险者

LU ZHENGYUAN

卢征远

The Dangerous Journey

He is the young genius of the contemporary sculpturing world and his work has inherited 20th century Chinese art's legacy of drastic changes. Tradition and innovation. Succession and subversion. He utilizes abundant artistic techniques to explore the spirit and the physical body, the soul and modernity..... He is Lu Zhengyuan--he is not sculptor, he is an artist.

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Once, outside of Beijing's northeast 5th ring road, a group of contemporary Chinese artists assembled at their core: the Cuigezhuang Xiangbeigao village. Beginning in 2006, they successfully established a presence here. On December 9th, 2009 though, individuals in the Beigao district, the Shengbang art district, the Man truck club, and people involved in the art industry, one by one, received the same notification: Due to demolition, everyone must relocate by the end of February, 2010.

"At that time, I thought for certain that I was finished. I didn't expect that the demolition would suddenly stop in front of my building," said artist Lu Zhengyuan standing on his rooftop and pointing at his studio, just a little over 20 meters away.

Even though the sun is out, due to the smog, the sky above Lu Zhengyuan is a thick, heavy white. To this day the ruins left behind by the demolition are still solitarily void. Several miles away, an extremely expensive development is already under construction. Lu Zhengyuan stands on the wide roof of his studio, the sunlight framing the silhouette of his body, his shadow cast upon the nearby wire netting. The "perimeter" is like a city, warning the about the scale of all things. With a height of six feet, a well-proportioned figure, round eyes, and a buzzcut, Lu Zhengyuan can always be seen wearing a baseball hat. The 32-year-old Lu is young and brimming with vitality. This sun soaked boy seems like the leader of the Academy of Fine Arts' basketball team.

In regards to being a sculptor, the scale of Lu Zhengyuan's studio is clearly not that expansive. A small selection of artwork from every period, ranging from his 2006 undergraduate graduation until now, is piled up here and there.

The pens, brushes, paint, and picture frames, bricks, lacquer barrels, wooden rods, and miscellaneous tools undeniably indicate the professional status of the artist himself.

Bathe In Aesthetic Revolution

In 1982, Lu Zhengyuan was born in Dalian into a middle class household. His father was an engineer. His mother worked in finance. When attending elementary school, Lu Zhengyuan would trade drawings for homework assignments with his classmates. "I would draw five images of Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles or Transformers to give to them, and in return they would help me write my homework." This negative attitude towards study produced immediate consequences; mainly, Lu Zhengyuan's school grades were rather poor.

Since childhood, despite his embarrassing grades, Lu Zhengyuan had a remarkable capacity for visual memory. Every time when Lu drew, he would look at an image and immediately copy it down on paper, purely from memory. Stemming from an intense sensitivity to design and shape, Lu Zhengyuan relied on his ability to recall text from memory in order to study and recall course materials during examinations.

After graduating middle school, Lu Zhengyuan had ample self-confidence in his drawing ability. He wholeheartedly wanted to break away from his parent's control, so he went to Beijing and enrolled in the Wu Zuoren Fine Art Academy. In the three years of his high school career, Lu spent half his time taking academic classes and used the rest of the time taking specialized art courses.



Lu Zhenyuan "Chronic 6," Black Marble
36x40x45cm, 2013



(Lu Zhengyuan "Heaven No. 1 (Part)," Bronze, 2006)
卢征远《天堂No.1(局部)》，铸铜，2006年



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Lu Zhengyuan "0.8 Degrees of 15/16" Oil on Canvas in Resin Frame, 30x30cm, 2013

In 2001, Lu Zhengyuan obtained a scholarship for exceptional grades and entered the model-making school at the Central Academy of Fine Arts. In his second year, he entered the department of sculpture. "When I went to art high school, I was in the first group of students that by chance came across a reformative academic initiative. When I took the examination to enter the department of sculpture, I once again ran into educational reform." Bathing in the new winds of change, Lu Zhengyuan was high-spirited throughout his entire journey. After graduating college, he was admitted into the famous modern sculptor Sui Jianguo's post-graduate student program and, furthermore, joined the faculty of his alma mater upon graduation—working as a teacher there to this day.

What I Am Looking For

During the period of his graduate studies at the Central Academy, Lu Zhengyuan complied with his teacher Sui Jianguo's request to carry out the practice of "100 days of creation, 100 works of art." This would establish a solid foundation for his future "84 days, 84 works of art." Furthermore, his exhibition at the Ullens Center for Contemporary Art also allowed him to gain a certain amount of recognition in the field of contemporary art. Lu Zhengyuan's philosophy lies in eradicating the boundary between art and life, attempting to decipher the relationship between art and the self. If art is an occupation, then it has no difference with any other profession. It also needs a vocational plan. "Everyday I complete one work of art, in this sense of the idea of occupational imitation, one needs to make a concrete plan. Artists have a need for self-expression, and want to achieve a kind of spiritual pursuit through art."





"It can only be described as a kind of uneasy feeling, I often
feel I might be in danger"

—— Lu Zhengyuan



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Consequently, seemingly outgoing, the vivacious Lu Zhengyuan is actually sensitive and frail. "My life has always been in a state of smoothness, but it is actually very easy for me to enter 'that kind' of state," he exclaimed. Regarding 'that state,' Lu Zhengyuan attempted to use language to provide interpretation and elaboration, yet, in the end, he gave up his attempt at description. "It can only be described as a kind of uneasy feeling, I often feel I might be in danger" A strong degree of sensitivity to external stimuli authenticates Lu Zhengyuan's exploration into the spiritual realm. With his hand grasping a creative scepter, Lu Zhengyuan wantonly wanders.

Unruly in the framework of arts, Lu Zhengyuan maintains the original impetus for creation with immense enthusiasm. In the creation of every work of art, he wants to investigate several issues. In the work entitled "Lies," the piece seems like a classical painting at first glance. The background is a black curtain. A bright light shines on the gorgeously colored fresh flowers and fruit, which constitutes the main scene. "Lies" is actually composed of two photographs, but these two works—in terms of composition, lighting, pictorial elements, and all other elements—maintain a high degree of consistency. Lu Zhengyuan is extremely cunning. He wants the audience to judge which of these photos is true and which is false. It is not hard to see that here, Lu Zhengyuan is probing into the relationship between fictional works and reality itself, leading the audience into a story behind the work of art.

"I feel no need to differentiate a sculptor from a painter." As a proud disciple of Sui Jianguo, Lu Zhengyuan is "an artist constantly trying to achieve a breakthrough." As a non-conformist, Lu

Zhengyuan is "an artist constantly trying to achieve a breakthrough." As a non-conformist, Lu Zhengyuan does not rigidly adhere to any one mode of creation or art media: painting, installation, performance, etc. he has involved all in his artistic scope.

Lu Zhengyuan instinctively maintains alertness is "focus." In creation, he only chooses the most suitable means of expression. Any general trend or common practice in Lu Zhengyuan's eyes is viewed as a total failure. "I use a variety of media to extend my topical investigations. Style and symbol are not that important." Lu Zhengyuan states, his tone suddenly serious, "I want to create a more complex state of affairs, so that others cannot grasp the entire system. To me, that is more fascinating."

Spiritual Adventurer

However, in his line of work – the world of sculpture, Lu Zhengyuan's innovative way of thinking frequently gives viewers a pleasant surprise. "Heaven" was his graduation work. According to his recollection, he had a friend who suddenly learned that he was suffering from mental illness. Hence, Lu began to focus on the spiritual world of contemporary society. Lu Zhengyuan spent half a month in the mental hospital accompanying his sick friend morning and night. During his process of creation, he used realistic work by others to investigate reality, exposing the correlation between developed materialism and spiritual fragility.

In his work "Rib," Lu Zhengyuan employed beautiful shapes and compositions to direct a highly dramatic soap opera. Two women holding weapons—ribs—pin a man to the ground. They are sculptures made of white resin, glossy and exquisite; Lu



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On the site of "Brightly-Colored Symphony" - Lu Zhenyuan's 2013 Solo Exhibition

Zhengyuan does not portray the women and man in the scene realistically. Their bodies are concise and slim. The women and man are representations. In "The Holy Bible," God took the rib of Adam to create Eve. Here, the artist has "Eve" utilize a rib to wrestle "Adam." As far as investigating the relationship between people is concerned, Lu Zhengyuan uses a sharp and calm sense of drama to provoke the thoughts of the viewer. In "She-Wolf," "Kiss," and other such works, Lu Zhengyuan does not rush to give the audience the answer; yet, the works seem to still have a penetrating effect.

Breaking with tradition, Lu utilizes the most expert art methodologies to express the innermost human doubts. Nowadays, Lu Zhengyuan has the capacity to travel between different media and materials to chal-

lenge traditional thinking and the natural ecology of China. The bounding character of his thinking allows Lu to be brave enough to attempt everything fresh and new, "I want to know about everything that I can try artistically in this life." Lu Zhengyuan explained, "To penetrate deeply, one does not necessarily need to have this so-called sustained attention. Changing one's perspective, changing one's way of life, can often provide a glimmer of hope."

The difference between Lu Zhengyuan and other artists is even though his work contains a banter-like rebellion, Lu Zhenyuan, from childhood to maturity, has not overstepped the bounds of what is proper. In life, Lu Zhengyuan is gentle, humble, and, humorous. In order to pursue the effect of realistic photography, Lu



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对画家之所见，对在场的敬畏，对存在的物种状态的魅力保持单纯沉默。

Lu Zhengyuan "Lie," Photograph, 100x90cm, 2007

Zhengyuan treats his time shooting with the ultimate perfectionism. He completely inserted himself into a black plastic bag and reminded his assistant to tightly seal it. "As tightly as possible, or else the feeling won't be right."

With no suffering and no thorns, the smooth sailing Lu Zhengyuan feels anxious and terrified when creating. Similar to brandishing a knife, one must learn how to master the blade to prevent being "cut." Some time ago, he was listening a radio broadcast when driving alone. All of a sudden, the radio issued the phrase: "When you feel the most secure is in fact your most dangerous time."

After hearing this, Lu Zhengyuan was frightened for quite a long time.



(Lu Zhengyuan "Chronic Series," Black Marble, 2011)

卢征远《慢性系列》，黑色大理石，2011年