

# Press Release

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ELI 藝萊 KLEIN  
畫廊

## Eli Klein Fine Art

462 West Broadway  
New York, NY 10012  
Gallery Hours:

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Daily, 11am - 7pm

## Material → Object

May 29, 2012 - July 19, 2012

Opening Reception: Tuesday, May 29, 2012 from 6 - 9pm

Eli Klein Fine Art is pleased to present *Material → Object*, a six-person show exhibiting works by Gao Rong, Li Hongbo, Li Hongjun, Wang Liwei, Wang Lei, and Ye Sen. The artists work with various media such as paper, cloth, wood, and leather, and employ techniques that allow them to explore the possibilities of their craft, bringing traditional handicrafts to a unique level of artistic value.

Rediscovering neglected objects, questioning reverence for history and tradition, and contesting society's restrictions on internal and external expression, *Material → Object* examines societal issues in China through the reconceptualization of chosen techniques. Although they start from individual points of investigation, the artists use their unique artistic processes to recontextualize and reimagine contemporary China.

Gao Rong's work updates the conventional function of embroidery and uses it as an instrument for memory preservation. Weaving together cloth, sponge, and iron creates a juxtaposition of fragility and endurance. She infuses her embroidered pieces with meticulous details that scaffold the conceptual foundation of her work. Gao Rong uses visually delicate materials to produce signs of rust and wear, revealing her feelings of nostalgia towards neglected objects, along with addressing the anthropomorphic nature of memories.

Li Hongbo explores the adaptability of his medium by playing with the concept of the children's toy called 'paper gourd'. This toy is made from a stack of interconnected sheets of thin paper that can be stretch to form new shapes. Li Hongbo's paper figures challenge the human form. Resembling human bodies, they rebuild the idea of what the human form can project. The flexibility of these sculptures allows for a hyper-extension of the limbs, creating abstraction from realism. These elongated limbs, which have the ability to tumble out from the figure's barely distinguishable core, allow us to find a new, playful and anomalous aesthetic.

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Similarly, Li Hongjun works with thinly cut sheets of paper to compose his anthropomorphic sculptures. These surreal renderings of human heads use compression and distortion to comment on the deforming influence culture imposes on the minds of the public, which can threaten creativity, and originality. Li Hongjun's appreciation for this medium stems from his experience with folk art, paper cutting, and his view that paper brings the truest representation of any subject. Through consideration of the practical object and the renegotiation of space, the artist explores human emotion, self-identification, and ideology.

Through the suppleness of the material and irregular composition of figures, Wang Liwei depicts fluidity of the human form. Through the use of leather, Wang infuses tactility and mutability. The subtle renderings of emotional gesture lead the viewer to reimagine the relationship between what is felt and what is expressed.

Material → Object also includes work by Wang Lei, who uses xuanzhi, a high-quality rice paper utilized for traditional Chinese calligraphy and brush painting. The paper is twisted into long, delicate threads that are then woven into reproductions of Chinese imperial robes. The manipulation of this tough-textured paper into the composition of such an exquisite style of garment plays upon the layers surrounding the relationship between viewer perception and reality. Wang Lei also draws attention to the often-disputed interconnectedness between traditional and contemporary art, focusing on the reverence for history and tradition as a central obstacle that also acts as a hindrance in regards to acceptance of contemporary art in China.

Ye Sen's works are sculptures of visual trickery at its best. Interconnecting and descending wooden chains have been carefully carved to resemble metal, forcing the viewer to reexamine their own perception of the work. As much as Ye Sen's experimentation with material causes the viewer to reconsider the true composition of the work, the conceptual basis for his art similarly allows multiple interpretations. While the chains can be read as literal critiques of the restrictions imposed by society upon the individual, they can also be viewed as an embodiment of connectivity, symbolizing the relatedness of individuals.

Material → Object will be on view at Eli Klein Fine Art from May 29th through July 19th, 2012 and is accompanied by an illustrated catalogue. For further information, please contact the gallery at (212) 255-4388 or [info@ekfineart.com](mailto:info@ekfineart.com).