

31<sup>st</sup> August – 16<sup>th</sup> September 2017

# Chinese Proverbs

Chinese contemporary art exhibition in Geneva



Produced 出品 : March Art 三月空间

Curator 策展人 : Li Ningchun 黎宁春

up: photography, *Portraits*, 2003 - 2009, Han Lei 韩磊作品

# Project



Portrait /2003-2009/ Photography/ Han Lei

« Proverbes Chinois » (Chinese Proverbs) presents a selection of the work of five emerging or already established artists on the Chinese and international contemporary art scene. Some twenty artworks, from photography to video and installation, are presented exclusively in Geneva.

This collective exhibition is produced by March Art, the first independent association in Switzerland focusing on artistic collaborations and cultural development between China and Switzerland.

March Art was created in order to intensify the cultural exchange between China and Switzerland with a number of proposals including exhibitions, artist residencies and events in various formats. The objective is to create opportunities for new encounters and exchanges.

## Artist: ZHANG Peili 张培力



B. 1957 in Hangzhou, China.

Education: BA obtained from the Oil Painting Department, Zhejiang Academy of Fine Arts, Hangzhou

Considered the first Chinese artist to work in video, Zhang Peili manipulates perspective, close-ups, and framing to create astonishing recordings of banal repeated actions, such as breaking glass, reading, washing, shaving, and blowing bubble gum. He is a pioneering figure, experimenting with a video camera in the late 1980s, exploring digital formats in the early 2000s, and developing large-scale, immersive scenes today.

In 2003, the China Academy of Art in Hangzhou founded the first department of New Media Art under Zhang's direction, and his influence over subsequent generations is uncontested.

Recently Zhang Peili has a personal exhibition RECORD REPEAT in The Art Institute of Chicago in 2017, He has had solo exhibitions at Redcat, Los Angeles, Tilton Gallery, New York, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth, New Zealand, OCT Contemporary Art Terminal, Shenzhen, China, and the Museum of Modern Art, New York. Zhang has also been included in shows at the Ullens Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing, the Serpentine Gallery, London, Centre Pompidou, Paris, the Venice Biennale, the Queens Museum of Art, New York, P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, New York, and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

# Artist: CHEN Shaoxiong 陈劭雄



1962 - 2016 Guangdong, China

Education: graduated from the print department of Guangzhou Fine Art Academy

Chen Shaoxiong was born in 1962 in Shantou, Guangdong Province. He graduated from the Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts in 1984. He was one of the members of the 1990s Guangzhou conceptual art group Big Tail Elephant, a member of the Asian art collective Xijing Men and the Chinese artist group Project Without Space. He died in Beijing in 2016.

As one China's most multi-talented artists of the last few decades, Chen participated in underground art and experimental art in Guangzhou in the mid-1980s. Since the late 1990s, Chen has worked in a range of forms, including video, installation, photo montage, painting, performance, and collective action; his pieces have increasingly focused on the major challenges faced by Chinese society as a result of globalization. At the same time, he has also permitted the re-creation of the expressive forms of the past to enter his practice, and his ideas and actions have become even more open. He invites members of the public to participate in some of his works, which inspire and share collective memories and ideals related to urban and social change.

## Artist: HAN Lei 韩磊



b. 1980, Kaifeng

Lives and works in Beijing and Kaifeng

Education: Graduated from Central Academy of Craft and Design, Beijing, China.

Beijing-based artist Han Lei is credited as a pioneer of Chinese photography following the Cultural Revolution. During the late 1980s, Han documented village life in his hometown of Kaifeng, Henan, and, since then, he has developed an expansive and complex artistic practice working across media including sculpture, installation, and painting. Nonetheless, Han remains a photographer first, and is noted for the elaborate pageantry and low-saturation of his images.

Han is particularly interested in exploring contemporary notions of beauty, literary figures, and traditional Chinese arts. The models who appear in his work typically possess certain unique qualities and are not conventional beauties. Corpulent women, for instance, are precisely posed, so as to evoke historical Western works of art or to enact familiar Chinese narratives. These striking images upend engrained perceptions of beauty, as they emphasize the inner states and emotional depth of these models, in addition to their enchanting outward distinctiveness. Employing similar tactics, Han has also produced a well-known body of work in which circular landscape photographs recall traditional Chinese paintings and are infused with nostalgia and timelessness.

Han's work has been exhibited at the Kwangju Museum of Art, the Guangzhou Museum of Art, the Guangzhou Museum of Art, the Guangzhou Photography Biennial, and the Prague International Museum, among others places.

# Artist: WEN Fang 文芳



B.1976, Beijing  
Lives and works in Beijing  
Education: Photography and Sound Engineering School (ENS)  
of Louis-Lumière, Paris

WEN Fang graduated from college in 1996 during the period of China's Internet boom, and she became a website designer in Beijing. A Buddhist practitioner, she says she picked art and design, not so much as a calling but as a way to balance her personality; only later did her art develop into a true passion. Six years after graduating, and with an interest in learning more about art and the world, Wen went France where she studied photography at Louis Lumière College. In her own words, "The most important thing I learned in France was to be open minded...the experience made it easier for me to understand others and their differences."

Since her return to China, Wen has made a name for herself with her counter-traditional photography and her unique installation art. Not satisfied with simply creating two-dimensional images, her photography art can be found on bricks, knives, desks, and even hair. Her work describes her native culture, her Buddhist beliefs, and often explores the lives of some of China's most underrepresented people. More than other artists of her generation, she is able to make photography interactive and personal.

## LI Xiaofei 李消非



B.1973, Hu Nan  
Lives and works in Shanghai and New York  
Education: Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts

Li's work has been featured in exhibitions internationally, including: FUNDAMENTAL, 5. Mediations Biennale Poznań, Poland (2016); Barents Spektakel 2015, 5th Japan Nakanajo Biennale; "Social Factory: The 10th Shanghai Biennale" (2014), The 8th Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art (2014), "60th International Short Film Festival Oberhausen" (2014), the "2013 Bi-City Biennale of Urbanism/Architecture" Shenzhen; and "Descriptive Acts", San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, USA (2012).

The "Assembly Line" is an ongoing series of works, which was initiated in 2010 by Li Xiaofei. It is a practice which is related to the process of social change in not only China but on a global scale.

Currently there are two phases to the project. The first phase from 2010-2013 focused on video not only as a form but also as a tool to analyze the assembly line. During this period, Li worked successively in the Yangtze and Pearl River Deltas, Sweden, Norway, the US and New Zealand to shoot over 100 different kinds of factories, having dialogues and exchanges with people of different positions within the assembly line. He employed a "realtime" shooting technique which was difficult to control, mixed with the language of documentary and a fragmented interwoven approach to create a mutual restructuring and a transformation of the relationship between man and machine, in essence to reconstruct an illusory reality.

In Li Xiaofei's view, the assembly line is a mode of production driven by capitalistic desire—it is repetitive, consistent, mechanical and devoid of emotion. At the same time, it is highly efficient, and can expediently expand the volume of production to create maximum value. This kind of repetition and consistency not only refers to the machine, but also represents the people in between and finally the products themselves.

## Selected works



Photo *portrait* by Han Lei



Photo *portrait* by Han Lei



Installation *voice of the light* by WEN Fang

## Selected works



Video installation by CHEN Ran



Installation *cohabitant* by WEN Fang

# Organizer: March Art 三月空间



墨水历史/Ink History/2008-2010/Video (black and white, sound)/3 min, Cheng Shaoxiong

March Art is a non-profit association based in Geneva.

The goal is to promote and facilitate international communication and collaboration around cultural and artistic initiatives. Particular emphasis is on Sino-Swiss cooperation, around exhibitions, art festivals, exchange programs, publications and video art promotion.

March Art is the first association in Switzerland for art and culture exchanging program between China and Switzerland.

## **Upcoming projects:**

### **Geneva**

Chinese film project in CinéLux, 2017

Chinese video art screening in Centre d'Art Contemporain Geneva, 2018

### **Shanghai**

N-Minutes Video Art Festival, 2017

Swiss video art collection exhibition, Moca Shanghai, 2018

## Curator : Li Ningchun 黎宁春



B. Ningxia, China  
Founder and project manager, March Art Association

Ningchun graduated from University Paris I Pantheon-Sorbonne with a Masters in Curatorial Studies in 2007. She has been Founder and Chief-Curator of N-Minutes video art festival in Shanghai since 2011.

Her expertise is in contemporary art, and she specializes in video art, as well as public art. Amongst other projects, in 2011, Ningchun launched a series of activities called “Wall-Breaking”, in which she transformed Shanghai, one of China’s 1st-tier cities, as an open experimental space. Using public spaces — shopping malls and advertising screens — as her exhibition venues, she used the interactive nature of public art to create a dialogue between society, space and business.

Ningchun is the Founder of March Art Association, and manages its projects. She was born in Ningxia, and now lives and works between Shanghai and Geneva.

# 2017 Partners

## **Shanghai, Beijing, Guangzhou**

Minsheng museum in Shanghai  
OCAT museum in Shanghai  
K11 museum in Shanghai  
Chronus Art Center in Shanghai  
Long museum in Shanghai  
Times museum in Guangzhou  
CAFA museum in Beijing  
Tloymer in Taipei

CITIC square Shanghai  
Chi K11 art space (Shanghai)  
Shanghai World Financial Center

## **Geneva**

Fonds d'art contemporain of la Ville of Geneva  
CENTRE D'ART CONTEMPORAIN GENEVE  
Espace Témoin  
Cinélux  
Embassy of Foreign Artists

## **Media**

Cityweekend 周末画报, iweekly, Art China 艺术当代,  
Trueart.com, Urban China 城市中国, Touchmedia,  
asiaart archive, artlinkart, Mensuno, Raindian

# Contacts



喜悦/ Happiness /2006/Video /3 min, ZHANG Peili

**LI Ningchun**  
Founder and Project Manager

+41 77 482 31 32  
[ningchun007@gmail.com](mailto:ningchun007@gmail.com)

**Pierre-Yves Walder**  
Media Contact

+41 78 836 72 39  
[pywalder@yahoo.fr](mailto:pywalder@yahoo.fr)

## **March Art Association**

Geneva, Switzerland  
[marchartpro@gmail.com](mailto:marchartpro@gmail.com)  
[www.n-minutes.org](http://www.n-minutes.org)

# THANKS 谢谢

COPYRIGHT: this presentation and its content is copyright of “March Art” - © “March Art” 2015- 2017  
All rights reserved.

Any redistribution or reproduction of part or all of the contents in any form is prohibited;  
You may not, except with our express written permission, distribute or commercially exploit the content. Nor may  
you transmit it or store it in any other website or other form of electronic retrieval system.