
Huang Zhiyang: Peripheral Vision

February 21 - April 30, 2009

Artist Statement

"In my view, it's always important to consider matters from the vantage point of a bit of time and distance. Consequently, I tend to view life from the sidelines, deliberately maintaining some distance from the mainstream, seemingly "drifting away" from the main currents of every day life. "Drifting away" for me, usually means questioning my surroundings and the status quo. You could say I've developed an attitude towards life that I adhere to, where I intentionally keep some distance from the mainstream and from what might be considered central to others.

For most, contemporary art is widely accepted as integral to every day life. However, this does not mean that trends in contemporary art can solve all of life's problems nor become part of the mainstream. Most so-called "Contemporary Art" is no more than a by-product or phenomenon needed to meet the demands of the marketplace and our endless appetite for the latest consumer products and spectacle. Today, much of "Contemporary Art" never goes beyond creating faint shadows of societal reality, images so far removed from reality that they often appear fake and vulgar. Unlike "Modern Art" of the past, which sought to depict the heavy weight of reality and flesh-and-blood activities, today's "Contemporary Art" often lacks meaning and substance, typically conforming to what is popular -and superficial - in every day life. So in my view, it is time to find a more appropriate term for what passes these days as "Contemporary Art".

Admittedly, I am also engaged in "Contemporary Art" production. In the past I thought I was an art creator, but now I regard myself as an art producer. To my surprise, I feel happier with the title of "Art Producer" rather than "Art Creator", and I am more determined than ever in realizing my art works. This shift in my attitude and self-consciousness arose following my change in my living environment. The past two years living in Beijing have made me accustomed to my current status as a person on the periphery looking at life's events from the sidelines. Thanks to my marginal status, I now enjoy more freedom and less anxiety. I can observe all the hustle and bustle and turmoil around the centre of activity, as an outsider, and occasionally butt in if I wish. But for most of the time, I stay away from this phenomenon of so-called "Contemporary Art" related activities. Having said all of this, one may rightfully ask whether I am more than a little ambivalent toward the art world of today.

In <Peripheral Vision> I attempt to present the main focus of my most recently completed Art Work; Art Works that came out of my status living on the periphery with an attitude of ambivalence. Maintaining this marginal status reinforces my feelings of ambivalence toward many of life's realities. And the Art Work that is born of this tension between a life on the periphery and the inevitable attitude of ambivalence resulting there from, has inspired the title of this exhibition. In Chinese, the term is literally translated as "Always on the Periphery".

Huang Zhiyang
September 30, 2008
Beijing

Huang Zhiyang: Zoon - Beijing Bio

May 26 - August 15, 2007

Artist Statement

Nonstop, night and day, Beijing is a unique place imbued with motionless tension and tension-lled motion. At the same time, Beijing is also alive with energy and activity, all under-ried with the awesome strength of human power, hovering always on the brink of disturbance or crisis.

All of us, resident in Beijing, local or expatriate, early arrival or latecomer, are joined together by this sense of perpetual motion and swirling activity. This constant non-stop intermingling of new comers and residents, can only serve to increase the tension and rhythm of this city.

ZOON—Beijing Creature is no more than one man's attempt to observe and to respond to this continuous whir of urban energy and activity that is unique to Beijing. In this series, I attempt to create new hybrids of living creatures as they co-exist within the same space, resulting in strange and new combinations. Here the macro and the monumental are no longer the opposite of the micro and the miniscule, nor is the inferior meant to be any different from the superior. All are mixed and living together under one roof without discrimination or rejection of any one group by another.

Huang Zhiyang
May, 2007
Beijing

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