

Hu Jieming

胡介鸣



Raft of the Medusa, 2002, Photo
124x177 cm

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Hu Jieming is one of the pioneering artists of digital media and video installation art in today's China. One of his main focuses is the simultaneity of the old and the new: A theme he constantly comments upon and questions in a variety of media ranging from photography, video works, digital interactive technology, and architectural juxtapositions with musical comments.



In his highly acclaimed photo-manipulated images *Raft of the Medusa* (2002) he references to Theodore's Gericault's seminal and allegorical image, the *Raft of the Medusa* (1819). The historical painting serves as a mytho-poetic memorial of the 150 lost souls onboard the raft after a fatal shipwreck, from which only 15 survived. The painting very elegantly undermines the traditional heroic 19th century historical painting, and, instead, conveys a society in sinking collapse. Hu Jieming parallels this historic occurrence to the regime of the Cultural Revolution with all its sinister cruelty. His *Raft of the Medusa*, thus, is more than just a reference to the past: The photos are composed of today's excessive amount of consumer goods and advertisement imagery. Additionally, Hu Jieming juxtaposes pictures of today's youth in gestures of self-indulgent hedonism with monochrome grey pictures of the suppressed people in traditional mao-uniforms. These compositions made of images appropriated from different socio-political realities signify a strong critical engagement with both history and the present - it is a concern ranging beyond pure private considerations.



*Installation shots of UP! UP!
Unspecified Media/ Various dimensions, 2004*



Hu Jieming was born in 1957 in Shanghai. He graduated from the Fine Art Department of the Shanghai Light Industry College in 1984. Today he lives and works in Shanghai. Hu Jieming has exhibited widely. Recent shows include *The Thirteen: Chinese Video Art Now*, P.S.1, Center for Contemporary Art, Long Island City, NY, USA (2006), *Between Past and Future: New Photography and Video from China* at Museum for Contemporary Art and the Smart Museum of Art, Chicago: Seattle Art Museum; the Santa Barbara Museum; V&A, London, and Haus der kulturen der Welt, Berlin (2006/2005), *Zooming into Focus*, National Art Museum Beijing, Beijing (2005), *In their 40's*, ShanghART Gallery H-Space, Shanghai (2005), and *Techniques of the Visible*, 5th Shanghai Biennale, Shanghai Art Museum, Shanghai (2004).

