



We are very Close to Nature, 2005
Oil/acrylic on canvas
114x146cm

ShanghART 香格纳画廊

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IN the highly colorful and over-loaded detailed imagery of Ji Wenyu, consumerism has become the new believe system. Revolution, market economy and art history are alienated and stripped of their original functions. In his emblematic paintings Ji Wenyu contrasts the communist propaganda images of workers and peasants in heroic poses with the logos of Western brand-name products. Here political propaganda enters new alliances with Western marketing's promises of happiness, which the artists (not without a pinch of irony) hold up to the public of a radically changing China. By juxtaposing images and iconographies of the stereotyped oriental and the assumed occidental, he questions the politics of cultural representation. Ji Wenyu's universe is full of surprises and references to both political occurrences and cultural productions, focusing on the precise distortion of today's 'society of spectacles'. De-contextualization enables the artist to take a humorous stand, as if trying to be even more realistic than our everyday lives of detached continuously flowing images. Irony is an essential ingredient for Ji Wenyu rather than an excuse to make the work more layered and open to interpretations. Between the use of mimesis, critical distance and narrative moments, Ji Wenyu's artwork reach a rare balance between surrealism, pop, and precision. Revisiting the dichotomies of modernist painting, he manipulates the boundaries between figure and ground, to produce an intense and comic baroque kitsch universe..

Refusing to bind himself to a single medium, he seems to consider art as an exploration with strong imagery, humorous intelligence and formal precision. This truly suggests 'integration of art' into the 'everyday life' represented by his expressive multiplicity and eclectic approach. In his images and amorphous sculptures (that he collaboratively creates with his wife Zhu Weibing), Ji Wenyu hits on that blend of ingenuous and aesthetic objects that makes his work so compelling all along.

Ji Wenyu was born in Shanghai in 1959. Here he graduated from Shanghai Art and Craft School and from the Decoration Department in Shanghai, Light Industry College in respectively 1980 and 1988. Ji Wenyu has participated in numerous exhibitions including Here the Scene is Better, H-Space ShanghART Gallery, Shanghai, China (2006), Dressing Up before Going Out, Museum 52, London, UK (2006), Infinite Painting, Villa Manin - Centre for Contemporary Art, Passariano, Codroipo (Udine), Italy (2006), Original, Shanghai Original Art Center, Shanghai, China (2004) and Money and Value, the Last Taboo, Expo 02, Switzerland (2002).

Top, 2006
 Linin, insulative packing
 materials, wood, latex,
 75x54x127 cm



The Dogs in the City do not Eat Shit, 2005
 Oil/acrylic on canvas
 114x146cm

American Ginseng, 2004
 Oil/Acrylic on canvas
 114x146 cm

