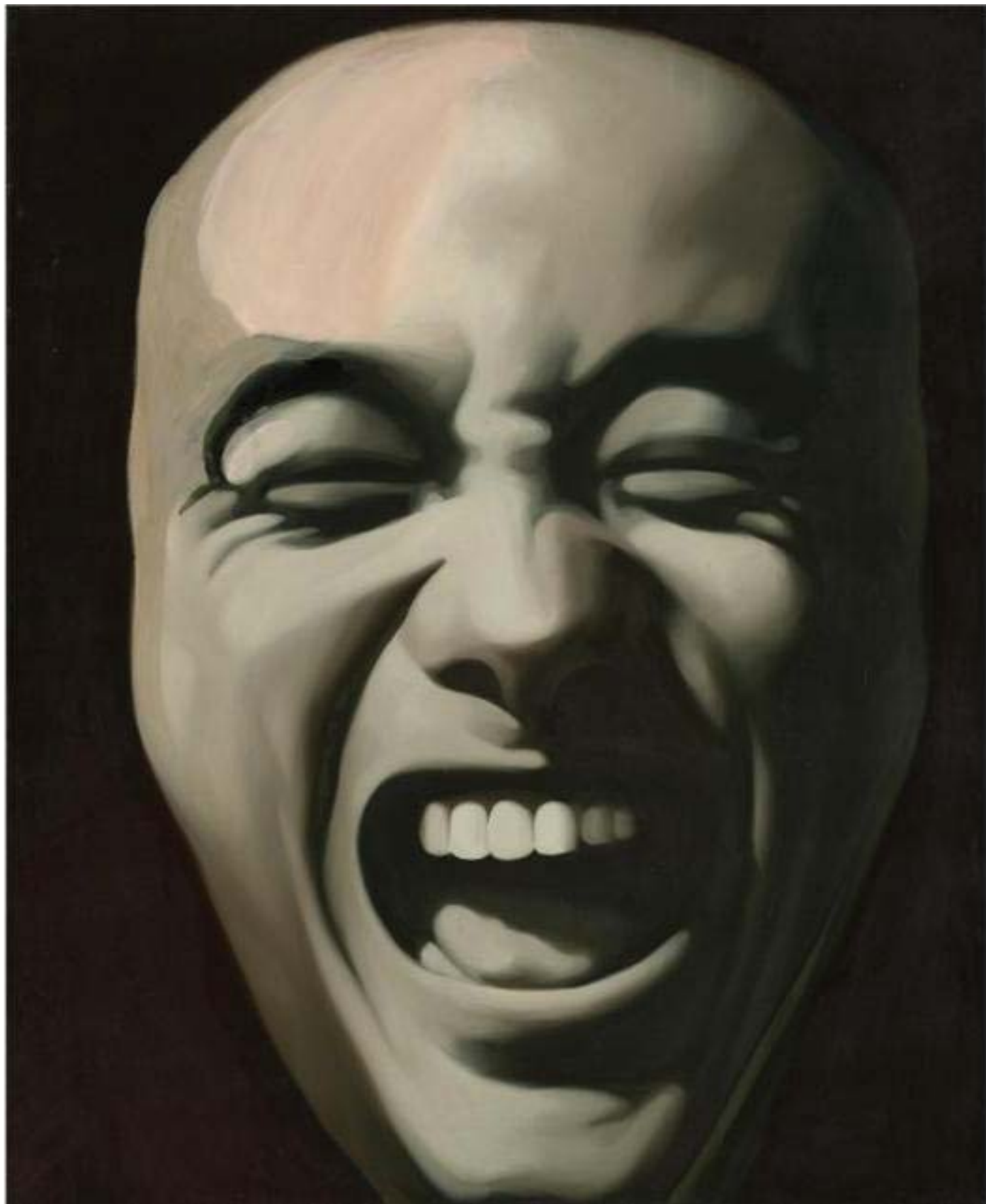


Geng Jianyi

耿建翌



The Second Situation 1989

ShanghART

香格纳画廊



Visible Face 2001

Forasmuch...Being the Classical 1997

A main focus of the extensive oeuvre of the artist Geng Jianyi is the issue of individual identity, that is, his own personal position in the context of the collective. Despite his highly diverse use of aesthetic and artistic media (ranging from activistic street art, oil painting, installation art to ink drawing) the artist never ceases to explore the questions of the 'self' in the world of today. His work can be described as 'after-images' that, continuously, veils and unveils fragments of the individual. Geng Jianyi demonstrates an intense concern about self-awareness, and the multitude of forms in which the individuality is expressed and represented. In a series of portraits entitled Face (2001), the artist uses photographic prints of portraits that he almost entirely covers with ink. Using a traditional Chinese brush technique, Geng Jianyi only lets spots of light shine through. The semi-transparency of the portraits corresponds to a notion of withdrawal or abandonment of individuality. These images oscillate between total abstractness and recognizable facial features. A similar approach is undertaken in an earlier series of portraits titled Impossible to Name. Here, the artist combine oil on canvas and paper-cuts to signify the diverse layers that constitute our beings, and the shifting ground that threatens our existence into dissolution. Other suggestive titles of work evolving around themes of existential identity include Who is He (1994) and Proving the Existence (1994).

Correspondingly, in the exquisite series Water the artist is concerned with phenomenon that appears and disappears. The pictures are composed by using light-sensitive paper to experiment with ways of directly capturing images from natural forms without using the lens of a camera. The black and white photos resemble the meta-physical abstractions of traditional ink and wash. Here, nature evolves around notions of pantheism and the sublime as understood by Kant. In Kant "the mind feels itself set in motion in representation of the sublime in nature. The point of excess for the imagination is like an abyss in which it fears to lose itself."

Geng Jianyi was born in Zhenzhou, Henan province in 1962. He graduated from Zhejiang Academy of Fine Arts, Oil Painting Department. Today he lives and works in Hangzhou. Geng Jianyi's works have been widely exhibited since his first show in 1989. Exhibitions include The Real Thing-Contemporary Art from China, Tate Liverpool, UK and IVAM, Spain (2007/08); Zooming into Focus, National Art Museum of China (2005); 5th Shanghai Biennale: Techniques of the Visible, Shanghai Art Museum (2004); Geng Jianyi - Useless, BizART (Shanghai, 2004); 4th Gwangju Biennale (2002); Living in Time - Contemporary Artists from China, Hamburger Bahnhof (Berlin, 2001); Inside Out: New Chinese Art Exhibition, New York (1999) and Cities on the Move, Secession Vienna (and other locations,1997); 45th Venice Biennale, Italy (1993) .

Biography:

- 1962 Born in Zhengzhou, Henan Province, China
1985 Graduate from Oil Painting Department, Zhejiang Academy of Fine Arts, Hangzhou

Solo Exhibitions

- 2008 Geng Jianyi [excessive transition], ShanghART Beijing 261 Cao Chang Di, Old Airport Road, Chaoyang District, Beijing 100015
- 2006 Happy Pool - Geng Jianyi's solo exhibition, 2577 Longhua Road, Xuhui district, Shanghai
Book without Words-Geng Jianyi New York Solo Exhibition, Chambers Fine Art, New York, U.S.A.
- 2004 Useless-Geng Jianyi Solo Exhibition, BizART Art Center, Shanghai
Works from the last 10 years, ShanghART Gallery, Shanghai
- 2001 Watermarks, ShanghART Gallery, Shanghai
- 1999 Impossible to Name, ShanghART Gallery, Shanghai
- 1998 Two Contemporary Artists from China-Geng Jianyi, Zhou Tiehai, Presentation House Gallery, Vancouver, Canada
- 1993 Marriage Law, Interactive Performance, Mogan Middle School, Hangzhou
- 1990 Building No.5, Hangzhou
- 1988 Forms and Certificates-Performance at the first Meeting of China's Contemporary, Huangshan (Yellow Mountain), Anhui Province
- 1987 Tap Water Factory-Installation, Hangzhou

Group Exhibitions

- 2008 The Real Thing-Contemporary Art from China, IVAM, Valencia, Spain
- 2007 85 New Wave-The Birth of Chinese Contemporary Art, Ullens Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing
The Real Thing-Contemporary Art from China, Tate Liverpool, UK
- 2005 Zooming into Focus (NAMOC)-Contemporary Chinese Photography and Collection, Video from the Haudenschild National Art Museum Of China, Beijing
- 2004 5th Shanghai Biennale-Techniques of the Visible, Shanghai Art Museum, Shanghai
- 2002 4th Gwangju Biennial, Gwangju, Korea
- 2001 Living in Time-29 Contemporary Artists from China, National galerie im Hamburger Bahnhof Museum fuer Gegenwartskunst, Berlin, Germany
- 1998 Inside Out-New Chinese Art, Exhibition of Art from China, Taiwan and Hong Kong Asia Society Galleries; PS1, New York; SFMoMA ,Asian Art Galleries, San Francisco; Museo de Arte Contemporaneo, Monterrey, Mexico;
- 1997-1999 Cities on the Move- Exhibition of Asian art, Secession, Vienna, Austria ; CAPC, Musee d'Art Contemporain, Bordeaux, France ; PS1 Contemporary Art Center, New York, USA ; Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Copenhagen, Denmark ; Hayward Gallery, London, UK
- 1993 45th International Art Exhibition Venice Biennale-Cardinal Points of the Arts, Venice, Italy

简历:

- 1962 生于中国河南省郑州市
- 1985 毕业于杭州浙江美术学院艺术系油画专业 (现在的中国美术学院)
- 2008 过度-耿建翌个展, 香格纳北京 北京朝阳区草场地 261 号
- 2006 开心池 - 耿建翌个展, 龙华路 2577 号 36 号楼, 徐汇区, 上海
无字书-耿建翌纽约个展, 前波畫廊, 纽约, 美国
- 2004 没用了-耿建翌个展, 比翼艺术中心, 上海
十年作品展, 香格纳画廊, 上海
- 2001 水印, 香格纳画廊, 上海
- 1999 无法命名, 香格纳画廊, 上海
- 1998 两位中国当代艺术家-耿建翌, 周铁海, Presentation House 画廊, 温哥华, 加拿大
- 1993 婚姻法活动, 莫干山中学, 杭州
- 1990 5 号大楼装置, 杭州
- 1988 表格和证书的演示-中国当代艺术的第一次会议 (黄山会议), 黄山, 安徽
- 1987 自来水厂-装置, 杭州

群展:

- 2008 真实的东西-来自中国的当代艺术, 巴伦西亚现代艺术中心, 巴伦西亚, 西班牙
- 2007 85 新潮-第一次中国当代艺术运动, 尤伦斯当代艺术中心, 北京
真实的东西-来自中国的当代艺术, 泰特美术馆, 利物浦, 英国
- 2005 聚焦-来自美国Haudenschild夫妇收藏的中国当代摄影和录像艺术展, 中国美术馆, 北京
- 2004 第五届上海双年展-影像生存, 上海美术馆, 上海
- 2002 第四届光州双年展, 光州, 韩国
- 2001 生活在此时-29 位中国当代艺术家作品展, 柏林汉堡火车站当代美术馆, 柏林, 德国
- 1998 蜕变与突破-来自中国大陆、香港、台湾的新艺术展, 亚洲协会美术馆; PS1 当代艺术中心, 纽约; 旧金山当代艺术博物馆, 旧金山; TACOMA美术馆; 亨利美术馆, 西雅图, 美国; 蒙特雷当代美术馆, 墨西哥; 香港艺术馆, 香港
- 1997-1999 移动中的城市, 亚洲当代艺术巡回展, 分离派美术馆, 维也纳, 奥地利; CAPC 当代艺术博物馆, 波尔多港, 法国; PS1 当代艺术中心, 纽约, 美国; 路易斯安那现代艺术博物馆, 哥本哈根, 丹麦; 黑瓦德画廊, 伦敦, 英国.
- 1993 第 45 届威尼斯国际艺术双年展-艺术的要点, 威尼斯, 意大利

At First Touch

Reflections on the Work of the Artist Geng Jianyi by *Paul Gladston* 2008

The work of Geng Jianyi attests both to a persistent desire on the part of the artist to arrive at significant forms of cultural expression and a simultaneous acceptance that absolute transparency/stability of linguistic meaning is always (and already) out of reach. As a result, while many of his contemporaries have sought to connect directly with an international audience through the re-working of highly recognizable images culled from China's recent revolutionary past in conventional painterly or sculptural form, Geng's far less predictable (and rather more self-effacing) artistic output has been characterized by an immanent vagueness of content and lack of formal completeness that would appear to play deliberately at the very margins not only of what might be thought of legitimately as 'art', but also of a readily recognizable Chinese cultural identity. This self-consciously evasive strategy can be traced back to one of Geng's earliest mature works, *The Second State* (1987), whose serial depiction of disingenuous laughter provided the iconic starting point for a glut of ostensibly similar works by other Chinese artists even as it marked the effective limit of Geng's own engagement with conventional forms of painterly representation. For Geng, the role of 'art' does not lie simply in its capacity to offer some sort of pictorial commentary on contemporary or historical events, but in its ability to intervene actively and obscurely in the formation of cultural discourse/identity.

Any attempt to understand the "vague and elusive" artistic enterprise upon which Geng Jianyi has embarked would have little substance without a consideration of his seminal contribution - along with the artists Zhang Peili, Wang Qiang and Song Ling - to the artistic collective Chi She (the Pool Association). This group - which coalesced in Hangzhou during the mid nineteen-eighties as part of what is now widely referred to as China's "'85 New-Wave" - was responsible for a small number of highly influential performance/installation works whose formal audacity in relation to the somewhat conservative Chinese cultural context of the time signified an insistent desire on the part of those involved to first open up and then immerse themselves in novel spaces of artistic/linguistic signification. In particular, two works made by Chi She involving the installation of large-scale paper cut-outs in public spaces - one set out opposite the Zhejiang Academy of Fine Arts on Nanshan Lu in Hangzhou entitled *No.1-Yang Style Taichi Series* (1986), and another in woodland near Hangzhou's West Lake - point well beyond the then stultifying (aesthetic) indebtedness of official Chinese art to the rustic charms of Soviet socialist realism (as well as its North American super-realist analogues) towards the possibility of more obviously hybrid, open-ended and socially/critically interventionist forms.

In the wake of his involvement with Chi She, Geng Jianyi has produced an extended, though quantitatively measured, body of work that is notable for what is an almost anaesthetic simplicity of means. Characteristically the artist has tended to deploy techniques - including frottage, collage-montage, the reproduction and manipulation of photographic evidence, questionnaires and automatic/chance mark making - through which he has habitually sought to register traces and fragments rather than to offer direct representations. In the 'paper installation' *Reading Manner* (2000), for example, the viewer encounters nothing more than a concertinaed book of blank paper pages stained at the margins by the innumerable red-inked fingerprints of invited 'readers'; a testimony not to the significance of what may or may not be read but to the uncertainty of the very

activity of reading.

As with many other examples of contemporary Chinese art, such works can, of course, be interpreted as having been heavily inflected by the prior activities of the Western avant-gardes and post avant-gardes; not least those associated with the legacy of Dada and Conceptualism. As such, it is therefore possible to read much of Geng's work through the mediating sieve of Western post-modernist theory as a self-conscious invocation of deconstructive action – the traces of a(n) (un)certain activity serving to proliferate rather than circumscribe the possibilities of meaning. That said, it is also necessary to recognize the enmeshing throughout Geng's work of strong Western cultural influences with a self-confessed wish to revisit vernacular Chinese cultural thought and practice (in particular the paradoxes inherent to Buddhist and Taoist teaching) and, what is more, by dint of that revisiting a re-engagement with Chinese cultural influences as previously mediated by the Western avant-gardes (pertinent examples of which include the explicit embracing of Buddhist and Taoist thought and practice by Western Dada and Conceptual art). In light of this inescapable parallax, what might be defined as merely 'deconstructive' from a Western theoretical perspective can also be viewed both as part of an extended tradition of Chinese vernacular thought and action and as the locus for a complex re-contextualization and re-motivation of Western and Chinese cultural identities – one that does not so much seek to arrive at a final synthesis of those identities as an inconclusive and potentially productive interaction working across their perceived boundaries. Consequently, it is insufficient to interpret Geng's work simply in Western postmodernist terms as a critical attempt to reveal the pervasive instability of linguistic meaning. Rather, following the established codes of Chinese cultural discourse, with its ingrained sense of dualistic deferral, it becomes necessary to see the pervasive non-rationalism of that work as a persistent – though ultimately inconclusive - striving towards some sort of provisional reciprocity (something which is, arguably, also an implicit aspect of Western deconstruction downplayed by its immersion within a still pervasive post-Enlightenment discourse of negative self-reflexivity as well as the attendant disappointments of Western post-modernity). To which extent Gang Jianyi can be understood to have engendered a series of artistic languages whereby the often becalming rigidity of the conventional Western divide between rationalism and irrationalism is eschewed in favour of a rather more pragmatically relativistic mobility between the two. And it is in relation to this shifting and problematic cultural interaction that we must arguably view Geng Jianyi's work and not its somewhat misleading positioning as part of a now purportedly internationalized postmodernism.

- Paul Gladston is a senior lecturer in cultural studies and director of the Institute of Comparative Cultural Studies at the University of Nottingham Ningbo, China

Artworks:

2006.

Happy Pool/开心池



Geng Jianyi is undoubtedly the artist of the Chinese contemporary art scene of the 80's which possesses the most opened mind. He continuously describes this kind of tolerance. His artworks often have some strong impacts. This time in his solo exhibition, Geng Jianyi, playing with daily details, unconsciously provokes our weak nerves. As we carefully observe the concept behind his artwork, the awareness of our existence and potentiality emerge.

毫无疑问，耿建翌是中国当代艺术之80年代以来涌现的最具有开拓精神的艺术家之一。他不断续写着这种自审式的开拓，他的作品常常具有某些冲击力。本次耿建翌个展的视角，一如日常玩乐的细节，在不经意间拨撩着我们脆弱的神经。当我们仔细体察他作品背后观念的同时，我们的存在和潜在的清醒意识开始浮现。

无数个老耿 文/陈晓云

耿建翌，大家都叫他老耿，他的老朋友他的新朋友，他的小朋友他的学生。我不知道他的儿子是不是也叫他老耿。老耿是那种任何人天生就会觉得他亲切的人，这是他的人格魅力，我想学也学不来。从最早的85新空间开始，老耿的艺术创作便被纳入中国当代艺术的每一个重要的进程中。对老耿的艺术经历的认识过程从另一个角度来说引证着当代艺术在中国的发展变化。我们总习惯去找一条线索去理解一个艺术家的创作道路，我找了，没找到。我不同意那种“老耿的艺术是对观念的修正做为一条主线贯彻始终”的说法。老耿的作品始终具有一种模糊和暧昧的美感，虽然他的作品总是以观念理性的方式呈现出来但我更多的时候是被那种抽离出观念之外的东西所着迷，那是建立在观念之后的人文关怀和对观念本身的怀疑，似乎在老耿的每一次创作中都是在挑战观看的未知，我不知道还有什么创作媒介没有被老耿使用着。他充满好奇地期待着自己从任何一点重新开始。

做为一个成功的艺术家，不是每一个人都能具有这样旺盛的颠覆感，这也印证着老耿实验艺术创作的纯粹性。我们无法判断以下哪个是真正的老耿，“池社”时期焦虑和压抑中被放大的理性思辩的老耿；94年-95年《他是谁》、《确有此人》、《不管哪边都可能看见》、《看得见的风景》中对身份确认双重判断的老耿；以及其后阶段作品中社会学潜意识对审美结构的瓦解和再造中的老耿；以及期间夹杂着版画摄影和平面媒介的多变使用、那种细腻和敏感的唯美主义老耿；99年后大量新媒体材料使用中对技术物语的可能性进行多样反刍的老耿；《5个半球》中对城市抑郁症的老耿；《会移动的地面》中禅中的老耿；还有在《没用了》和调查表系列计划中那种对个体如异化和抽象成为一种数据链中反智主义的老耿；在影像多媒体即时创作中影像行吟的老耿；我们不知道还有多少种老耿在他的作品中没有被我们发现。老耿似乎是那种掌握了某种神奇显影配方的魔术师，总是在不经意间让我们的感受在他的预谋中显影。

2006. Book Without Words/无字的书



前波画廊于9月7日至10月21日举办著名艺术家耿建翌在美国纽约的第一次个人展览《无字的书》。由世界知名艺术评论家和学者郑胜天策划，这次展览展出的作品以读书这一平常过程中的种种微小细节为主题。耿建翌为这次展览创作了一系列机械书，以引起观者对读书过程中物质方式的关注。书页被看不见的手反复翻动，观者在仔细体味作品的同时，也会暗暗想像自己翻书的各种细节。

许多中国艺术家，如吕胜中、徐冰、和黄永砷等用艺术品成功地对书本，传统语汇和书法进行诠释和颠覆。耿建翌对书的兴趣却在于人与书之间的关系，这次展览将呈现他对这一概念的探索进程。在他的早期作品中，书被看作传递知识和记载信息的工具。在1990年的《阅读方式》中，他邀请每一位到他家的来访者用双手蘸上印泥，然后按照自己的习惯，从头到尾翻阅一本空白书。最后书上沾满了各种颜色的手印。《无字的书》中展出的装置作品将对读书这一过程做出更新的诠释。

耿建翌的创作一直与书有关，但为他赢得国际声誉的却是他80年代创作的巨幅面带狂笑的油画。他所创作的笑脸已成为中国当代艺术的经典，但耿建翌却认为油画限制了自己的艺术创作，从而转向摄影、装置等观念艺术。他的艺术作品多次出现在国际大展上，包括威尼斯双年展，光州双年展，上海双年展，《问》（法国蓬皮度艺术中心）和《移动的城市》（澳大利亚）等。

此次展览的策划人郑胜天教授是中国和亚洲当代艺术的专家。他不仅在世界各地策划展览，还是世界上唯一一本以中国当代艺术为主题的英文杂志《艺术》的主编。郑胜天80年代时在浙江美术学院（现中国美术学院）任教，而耿建翌毕业于他所教授的最早的班级。这么多年来，老师与学生一直保持着联系。郑胜天总结说：“二十多年来，他（耿建翌）不间断的探索、怀疑、实验和超越，证明了一位前卫艺术家最为可贵的品质。”

2004.

Useless/没用了



After arriving in Shanghai, Geng JianYi collected almost 500 used articles in three days, exclusively from people he knew in Shanghai; including furniture, toys, kitchen appliances, bedroom settings and garments. Each article was labeled, specifying its history and its relation with the owner. Geng JianYi arranged them into four groups. He declared that only after the show, would these articles become truly useless.

耿建翌到上海，用三天时间收集了近 500 件大小物品，包括家具，玩具，厨房设备，床上用品，衣物鞋帽等等，都是他在上海认识的人捐赠的用过后的废弃物品。每件物品有一张卡片，填写了该物品的历史以及和主人的关系。耿建翌根据这些物品虚设了四个功能区，安排进所有物品，使之成为一个整体。他说那些物品经过他的手才真正彻底没用了。

2001.



shanghart.com



shanghart.com

Box with Walnuts/放核桃的盒子
wooden box, walnut /装置

Box with Watermelon Seeds/放西瓜子壳的盒子
Other Installation(wooden box, watermelon seeds)



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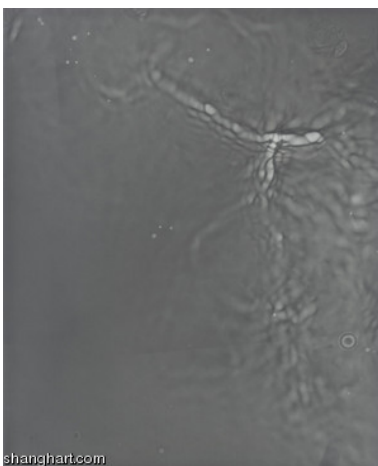


Face/脸
Reagent painting on photo paper/摄影

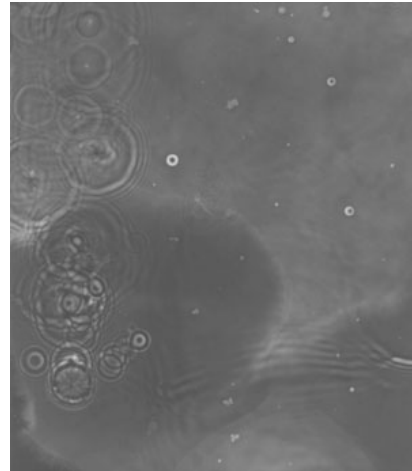
2001.



Face is washed away/流失的脸
Photography/摄影 C-print



Water Mark / 水印
Photography/摄影 c-print



The dark side and the bright side

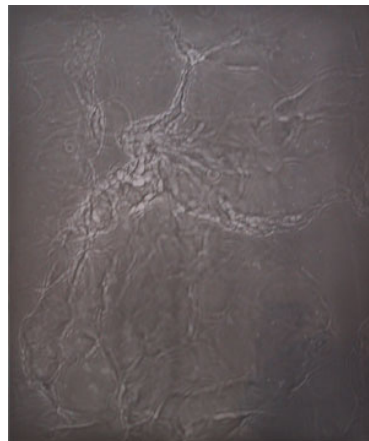


2000.



Water Mark / 水印

Photography/摄影 c-print



Cream

Photography/摄影 c-print



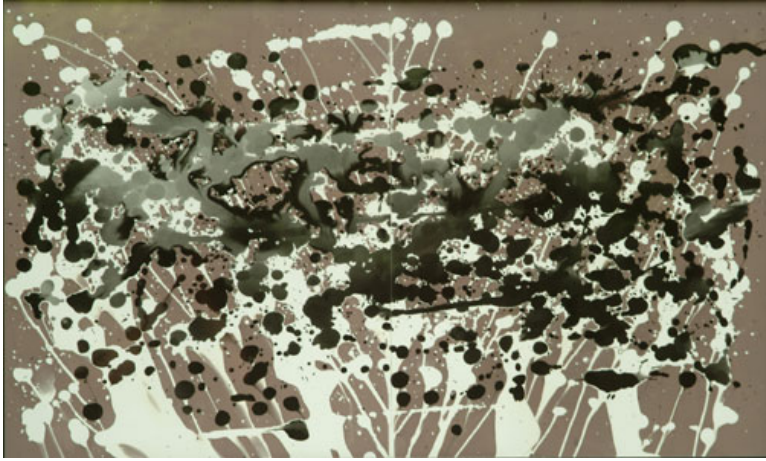
shanghart.com

Face / 脸 pencil on paper/绘画



shanghart.com

2000.



Body

Reagent painting on photo paper/摄影



Abstract Work

Reagent painting on photo paper/摄影



shanghart.com

Herbivory / 虫食

Other(41 leaves with blue cover, wrapped by brown paper)

1999.



Two Spots of Light / 两个受光部
Painting | pencil on paper/绘画



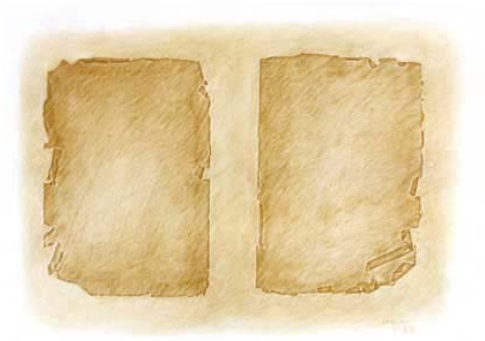
Group Photo
Painting | Oil on canvas/油画



Walking Man
Painting | Oil on canvas 油画



1998



Book Leaves

pencil on paper/绘画

5 seconds immersion 5 秒钟浸泡

25 leaves with blue cover

1997.



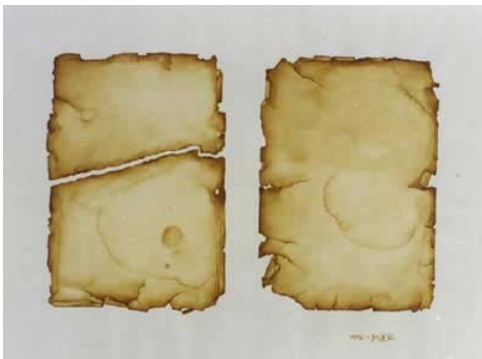
Forasmuch...Being the Classical/之所以为经典

75 leaves with beige cover, water color

Grinding Until It Is Getting Flat /直到磨平

folding book, ink, rice paper, 24 leaves with grey cover, flax packet

1996.



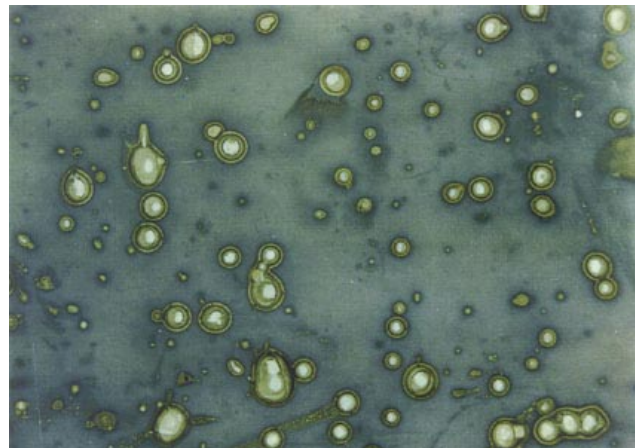
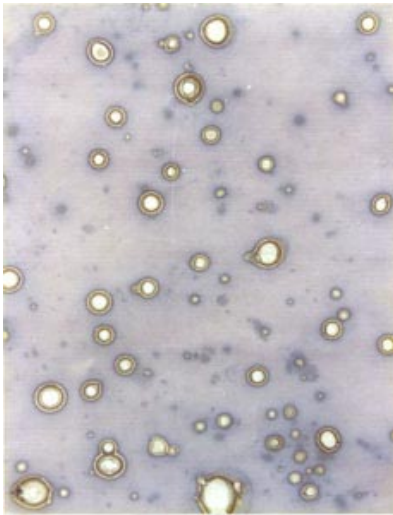
Book Leaves

watercolor on paper



Impossible to Name
Painting | paper cut

1995.



Light Distance Away

1994.



Hand
Painting | Drawings | silk screen

1993.



shanghart.com

Face

Painting | watercolor on paper



1992.



Decorative Edge

1989.



The Second State

1987.



Big red double happiness

1986.



《两个人在地灯下》 布上油画
Two People Under A Light



1985.



Shaved Head of Summer
洗头

Geng Jianyi Mid-1980's to 2000



Untitled Portraits