

## **Fact and Fiction**

### **Recent works from The UBS Art Collection**

Guangdong Museum of Art, Guangzhou, 21 February - 22 March 2009

As events recede into the past and experiences are subtly transformed by memory and reinterpretation, the divide between fact and fiction can become slippery. Many artists are interested in halting this process by rescuing disappearing histories and reminding us of reality. Others are interested in exposing the slippage between fact and fiction by introducing a healthy dose of imagination and fantasy.

Susan Hiller commemorates the devastation of the widespread Jewish communities in Germany in World War II, whilst Óscar Muñoz refuses to allow the faces of the thousands of “disappeared” and murdered Colombians be effaced from history.

Regina José Galindo uses her own body in performances that are powerful metaphors for oppression and violence, past and present, both in her country, Guatemala, and beyond.

Qin Ga participated in the Long March Project of 2002 in which a group of curators and artists retraced the monumental route of Mao Zedong’s Long March, organizing exhibitions and events along the way to introduce contemporary art to remote areas of China. Qin Ga plotted their journey on a map tattooed upon his back. After the group ended their journey, Qin Ga continued it, this time tattooing his own route and resuscitating the memories of the public witnessing his progress.

Chen Chieh-jen presents a dignified portrait of women in a derelict clothes factory in a moving tribute to the contribution they made to Taiwan’s economic miracle of the ‘60s, and to the predicament of redundancy and old age.

Recalling Mexican murals of the 1930s and ‘40s, the large-scale satirical drawings by Daniel Guzmán demonstrate the twisting – or fictionalizing - of the truth for political ends. He mixes comic-strip superheroes with ancient gods and contemporary political caricature.

Like Guzmán, Qui Anxiong attempts to understand the present by linking it with mythologies of the past. Also working in ink, his video animation *The New Book of Mountains and Seas* references *The Classic of Mountains and Seas*, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Century BC-2nd Century AD Chinese narrative of mythical figures, traditional rituals, medicine, natural history and ethnic peoples. Qui’s fantastical video shows an often violent world that is threatened by ecological degradation, beginning in ancestral times and ending with a solitary figure staring into an unknown future.

With a humorous touch, Yang Zhenzhong also comments on the risks of unhindered urban expansion. He precariously balances a model of the Shanghai Telecom Tower on the tip of his middle finger as a metaphor for the misguided fantasy of a future that is light and easy and free of consequences.

Xu Zhen willfully plays with the verisimilitude of photography, creating a fantasy that appears to be fixed in reality, questioning our faith in the medium's documentary role. Did he really remove 1.86 metres off the top of Mount Everest?

Navin Rawanchaikul and Daniel Guzmán both delight in the fantasies of popular culture. Rawanchaikul writes and stars in his own Bollywood movie in which he seeks out a community of Navins to combat his solitude while pursuing love. Guzmán creates his own ironic music video, escaping the streets of Mexico City to the tune of an American rock song, *New York Groove*.

Tsuyoshi Ozawa invites women all over the world to host festive meals, bringing people together around food, breaking down barriers whilst celebrating difference. The cooks are photographed holding their ingredients assembled into the shape of a gun to humorously emphasize the futility of war.

And finally Hiraki Sawa immerses himself into the vivid yet disconcerting world of childhood fantasy, in which living-rooms and bathrooms are populated by fleets of silent airplanes or migrating herds of animals. *Airliner* is a deceptively simple video showing a flick book of airplane images. Do the images conjure up visions of travel and freedom, or more ominous thoughts of disaster? Once the innocence of our childhood imagination has left us, can it ever return?

Joanne Bernstein  
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Qui Anxiong (China)  
3-channel video projection

Chen Chien-jen (Taiwan)  
Single-channel video projection

Qin Ga (China)  
12 colour photographs, each 165 x 120 cm, plus 1 video monitor

Regina José Galindo (Guatemala)  
Single-channel video and 3-channel video installation  
2 framed photographs

Daniel Guzmán (Mexico)  
3 ink drawings, each 210 x 180 cm, plus single channel video projection

Susan Hiller (US)  
Two wall-mounted installations of 303 framed colour photographs and adhesive vinyl, each wall approximately 300 x 1000 cm

Óscar Muñoz (Colombia)

5-channel video projection plus wall-mounted steel discs, 20 cm diameter each

Tsuyoshi Ozawa (Japan)

4 C-Print photographs

Navin Rawanchaikul (Thailand/India))

Single-channel video projection plus billboard painting 270 x 900 cm

Hiraki Sawa (Japan)

Single-channel video projection

Xu Zhen (China)

23 colour photographs, from 63 x 89 cm to 150 x 106 cm

Yang Zhenzhong (China)

Single-channel video projection