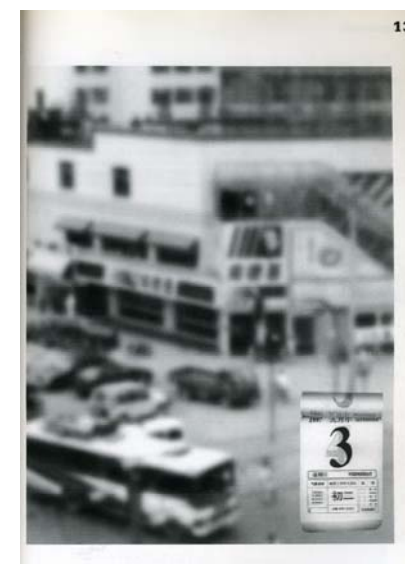
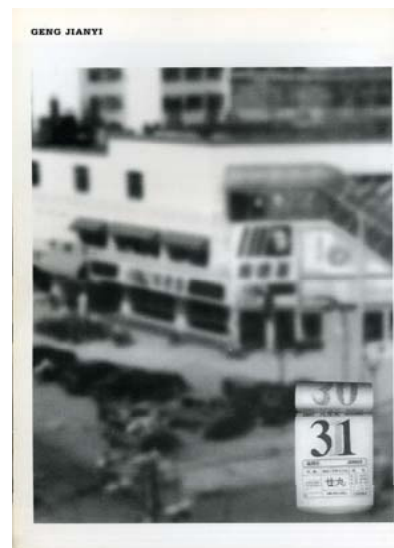


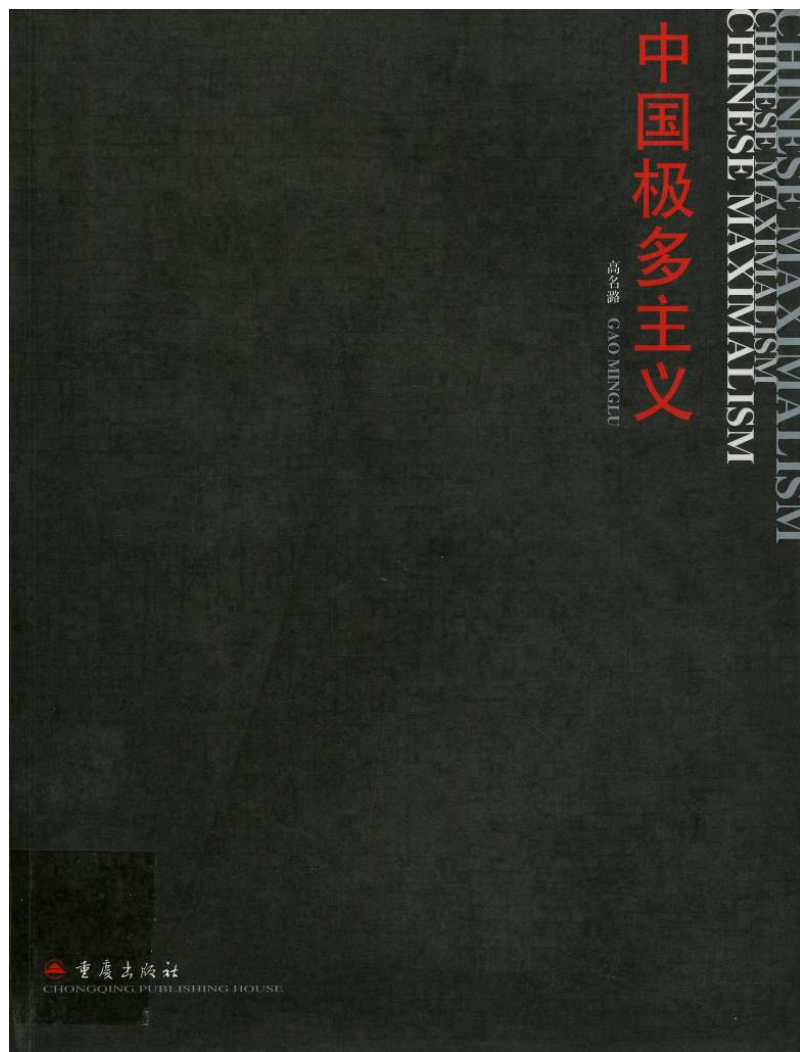
Publications



Cities on the Move | 移动中的城市

Verlag Gerd Hatje 1997





耿建翌及张培力的“定量灰色幽默”

但是，定量和“数数”也可以是一种非常“无聊”的事，特别是用在艺术创造中。过度用它，不但不能引向极多和无限，反而会走向荒诞虚无。张培力和耿建翌在20世纪80年代就已经开始用数字定量和重复的方法创作他们的“灰色幽默”艺术。他们往往选择灰色或无色去表示“去煽情”。他们在1987-1988年时的“池社”艺术活动中，将数字和重复作为“阻断”意义的具体手段，通过麻木、乏味枯燥的条例和数码去“折磨”观众，故意在观众与作品之间制造漫长的无意义的过程，以打击观众的被动接受习惯。^②

张培力画了一系列称之为《X? 系列》的油画作品，作品中的基本图像是诊所 椅子以及手术手套。在开始绘画之前，他写下他将严格遵守的创作步骤以及规则，他临摹诊所的椅子以及手术手套的照片，创作了大约100幅巨大的油画。在画布上的物体形象的不同部位上，张培力标上了许多数字符号。它们没有任何意义，只是显示重复与规则[图33]。张培力还专门为观看他的这些作品制定了一系列的规则。这些规则为展览和观看作品《X? 系列》制定了一些极为严格但又非常荒诞的条条框框。比如参观者不能低于4.3英尺，不能高于5.8英尺；穿黄色、红色家庭便装的观众、恋人以及夫妇都不能参观这个展览；参观者必须按特别指定的路线参

观展览，且禁止私下讨论。^② 在接下来的另一件被张培力称之为《艺术计划二号》的观念艺术作品中，他专门不厌其烦地创造了一整套展览规则。这是一份长达二十页的大约 270 条规则的方案计划。方案的每一部分都被精确到细小的、极为乏味的细节。只有在这些条件下观众才会被允许参观艺术展览。观众不能说话，遵循一个具有数学精确性的有标记的路线参观。这方案当然从未实现过。

在这一时期，“池社”的艺术家都创作了系列性的、重复形象的作品。耿建翌画了几十幅“第二状态”的有光头形象的油画。不少人会从《第二状态》中看到“煽情”。其实，四个“歇斯底里”的头像反现实的，是耿对宋保国的四个不同的脸部肌肉的变化的写生，然后它们被系列化并放在抽象的背景中。它们既没有时空，也无叙事，也不是连续的表情，而是“科学解剖”。是为“煽情”的创造来源所做的陷阱。

耿建翌在 20 世纪 90 年代趋于“隐退”状态，部分地是因为他发现了不论艺术家创作何种（前卫的，或者保守的）作品，他都难逃体制的陷阱。正如他在 1992 年就指出的：“我过去认为一个完成的艺术作品，就像撒尿一样——当它结束的时候，它也就结束了——你不需要带走你周围的夜壶的内容。但是现在情形不同了，你不再能在你任何喜欢的时候撒尿了，并且你不能处置它了。特殊的洗澡间就像博物馆和美术馆一样，它们想把你暴露在你最基本的行为里，但是现在不是每个人都将这种环境作为一种常规来接受吗？人们走进来，看一看，都非常有兴趣地去比较谁的大、谁的小。我是怎样出生在这样一个制度化的时代里的？以及我是怎样企盼被宣布为冠军的？这真是一种耻辱”。^③

所以，耿建翌 20 世纪 90 年代的“灰色幽默”不再鞭鞑观众和平民的麻木，而将关注点转向了自身的“麻木”状态，即对时尚的麻木。由此又找到了较他先前更为灰色的、不痛

不痒的、枯燥乏味的“定量”形式^④ [彩页 92]。

在他的《光明的一面与黑暗的一面》的“摄影”作品中，他将几个人的脸部受光面和背光面的面积进行精确计算后，转换为相同面积的方形来分别对应显示那背光的和受光的面积。作品中没有数字，但以数为基础。这种“计算”将“人像”这生命肌体物质化了，就像我们量一块大理石的面积，或称一块黄油的重量一样。同时，黑白分明的人脸也去掉了最能表现人微妙表情的中间灰色地带，阻断了观众对他（她）的任何生理与情感的联想，就像面对一幅医学解剖图。浪漫精神被彻底地物质化了 [彩页 93-94]。同样的道理被耿建翌运用到另一件叫做《好一个“”字了得》作品中。这题目立即会让我们想起某种情绪，如李清照的“怎一个‘愁’字了得”。但耿建翌在作品中做的是枯燥至极之事，将一本书除“的”字外，全部用墨水涂掉。然后，又用白纸按原书尺寸装订成一本新“书”。将所有的留下的“的”字按面积大小换算成正方形，并按它们原来的位置，准确地将这些正方形画到那本新“书”中 [彩页 95]。这种“无聊”的、重复的、无意义的、纯数学式的“劳动”，可以看作是对大量运用定语“的”的书写和煽情表现的再现和嘲讽。

Inside Out: New Chinese Art | 蜕变与突破：中国新艺术

The Asia Society Galleries/The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art/The University of California Press 1998

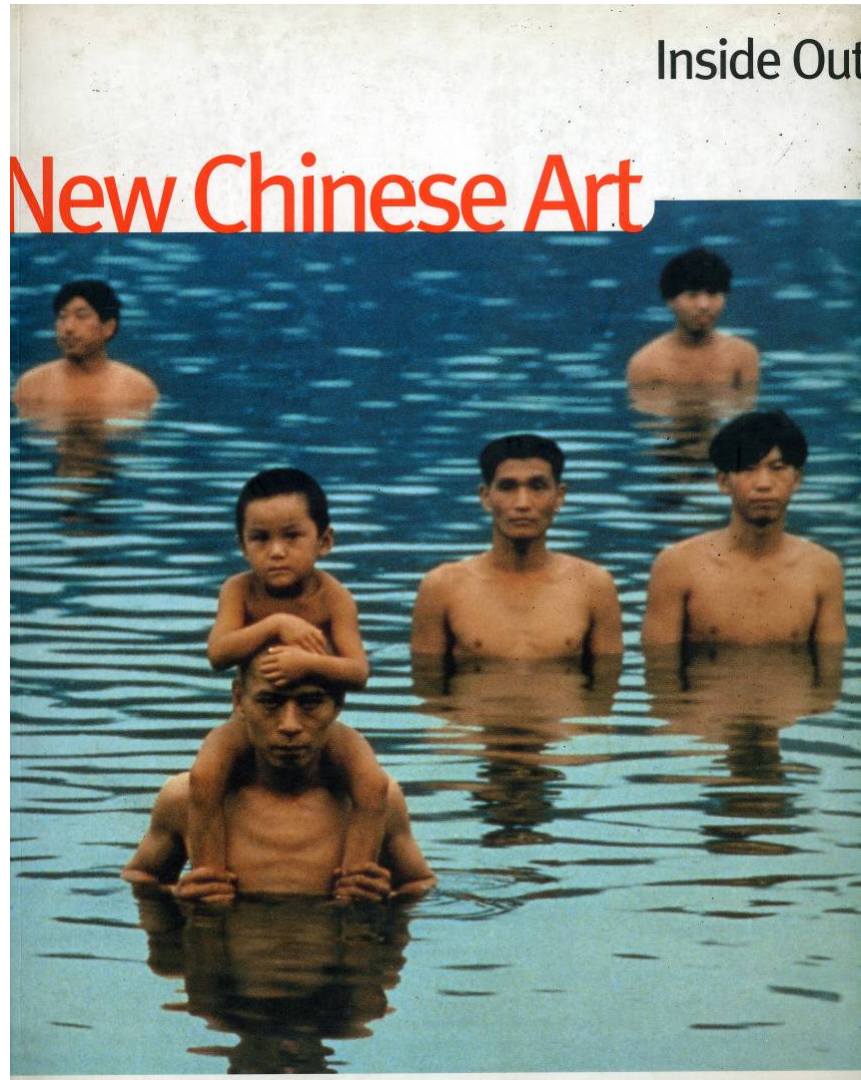


Fig. 21
GENG JIANYI
The Second Situation,
Nos. 1-4, 1987
Private collection

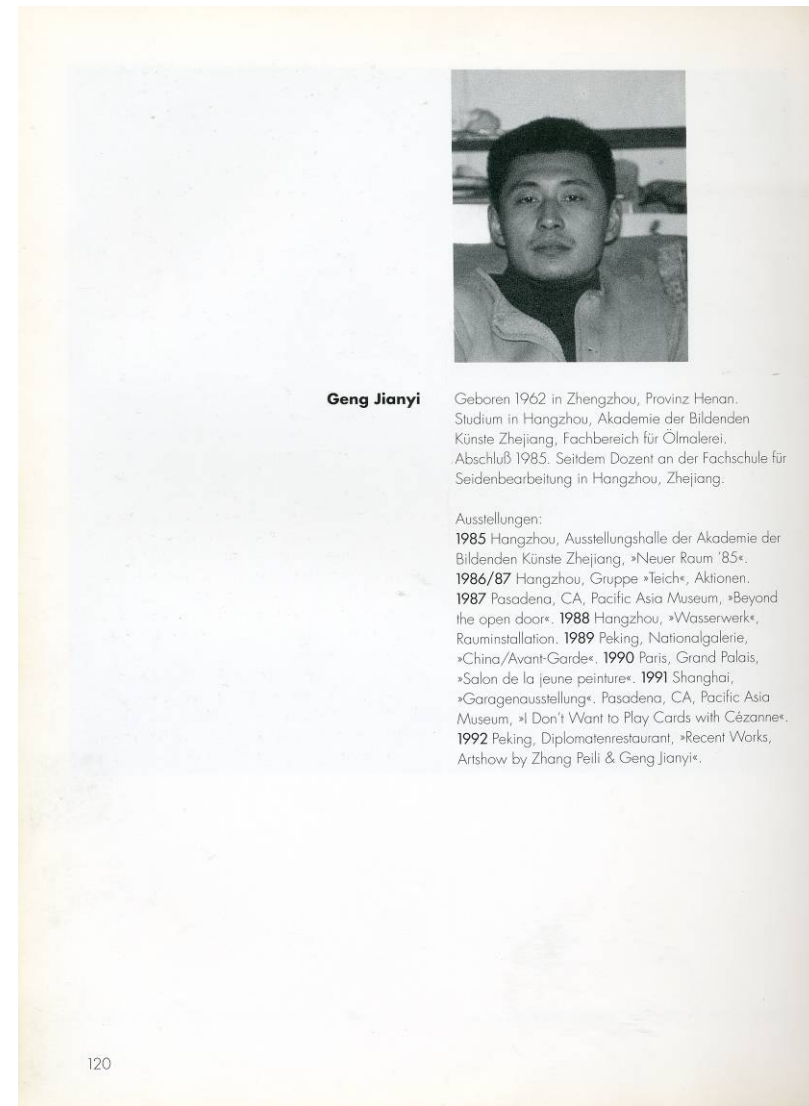
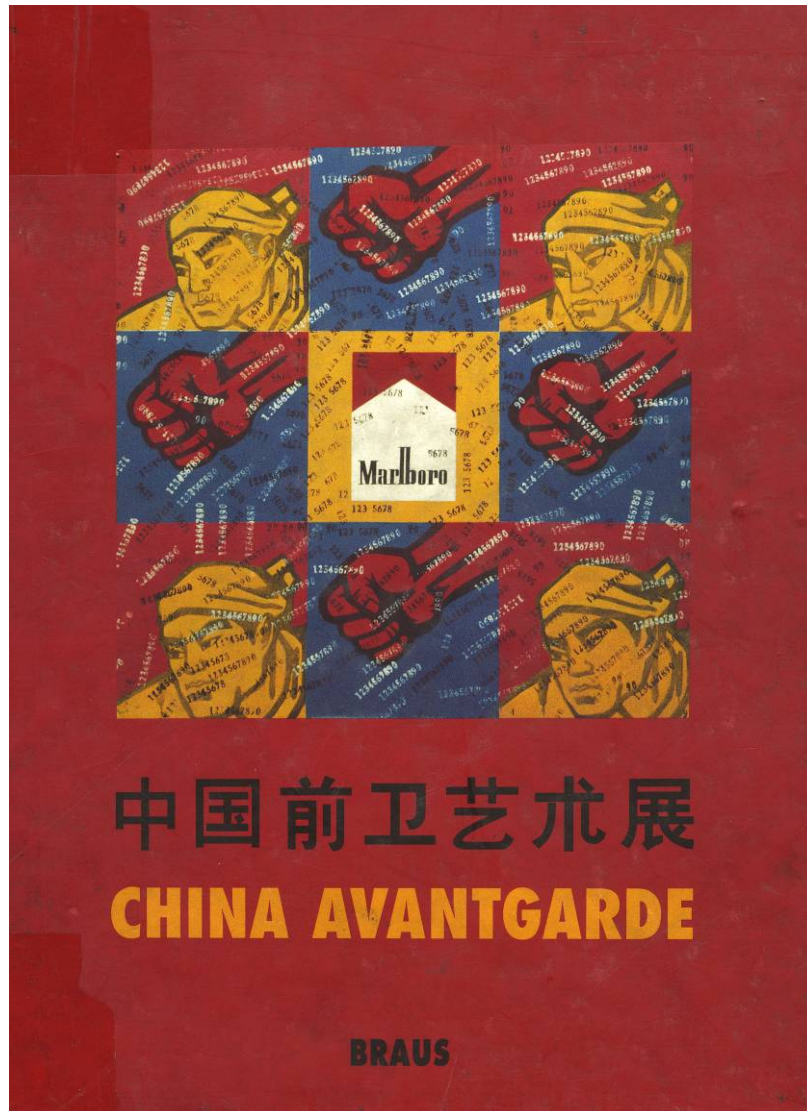
1990s there was a shift in meaning (pl. 27). The men might refer to the artist himself in a gesture of indifference, self-mockery, and powerlessness—as a figure called a *pizi*, or “riffraff.”

Cynicism can be traced back to the “gray humor” paintings of artists in the Pool Society led by Zhang Peili and Geng Jianyi in the mid-1980s. Reacting to an inevitable but unfamiliar urban modernization, they presented a neutralizing attitude and a new realistic technique that duplicated the referent, not to represent but rather to project it into a decontextualized frozen moment. Then the real, the original referent—whether Zhang’s industrial rubber gloves (pl. 18) or Geng’s emotional faces (fig. 21, pl. 22)—becomes the unreal and a distance is produced between artist, image, and audience.

Gray humor edged in the direction of Cynicism, which had a more allegorical tone, in the late eighties; after the Tiananmen Incident, Cynicism became one of the major avant-garde trends. In *Taking a Picture in Front of Tiananmen*, 1990, Wang Jinsong arrays a group of citizens as if taking a commemorative picture (pl. 36). Since 1949, when Mao Zedong stood on Tiananmen, the Gate of Heavenly Peace, to announce the founding of the People’s Republic of China, it has been customary for Chinese people to have their picture taken in front of this revolutionary monument. The people in Wang’s painting exhibit the relaxed, casual attitudes and quotidian pleasures of modernization—the women wear fashionable suits, the young men are dressed appropriately for jobs with foreign companies, and a newly urbanized worker fresh from the countryside retains his ruddy complexion. Against the backdrop of the monument of the Revolution, the banality of middle-class pleasures provokes a cynical smile, for the picture is to record not a revolutionary memory but a tourist one.

A Transcendental Realm of Ink Painting: Scholar Painting and Universal Current
Traditional-style Chinese painting was revitalized after the Cultural Revolution as both an aesthetic investigation and a rebellion against the propagandist ink painting of the Maoist era. In the late seventies and early eighties,

China Avantgarde | 中国前卫艺术展
Braus 1993



Geng Jianyis Arbeit ist nach seinen eigenen Worten der Versuch, bei einem »kurzsichtigen Publikum« eine »Reaktion zu erzwingen«. Mit unterschiedlichen Ausdrucksmitteln wie Ölmalerei, Installationen, konzeptionellen Werken und Collagen erforscht er auf sehr individualistische Weise die ambivalenten Beziehungen zwischen Künstler, Kunstwerk und Publikum. Zwei Ölgemälde, die jeweils ein ernst blickendes Paar zeigen und die Geng 1985 als Abschlußarbeiten an der Akademie der Bildenden Künste Zhejiang abgab, trafen bei der Prüfungskommission auf heftigen Widerstand, weil sie keine »positiven« Inhalte vermittelten. In Reaktion auf diese Kritik malte er daraufhin zwei Serien riesiger Porträts, die er »Der zweite Zustand« und »Doppelte Glückseligkeit« nannte. Beide Serien zeigen hysterisch lachende Köpfe in fast photorealistischer Manier.

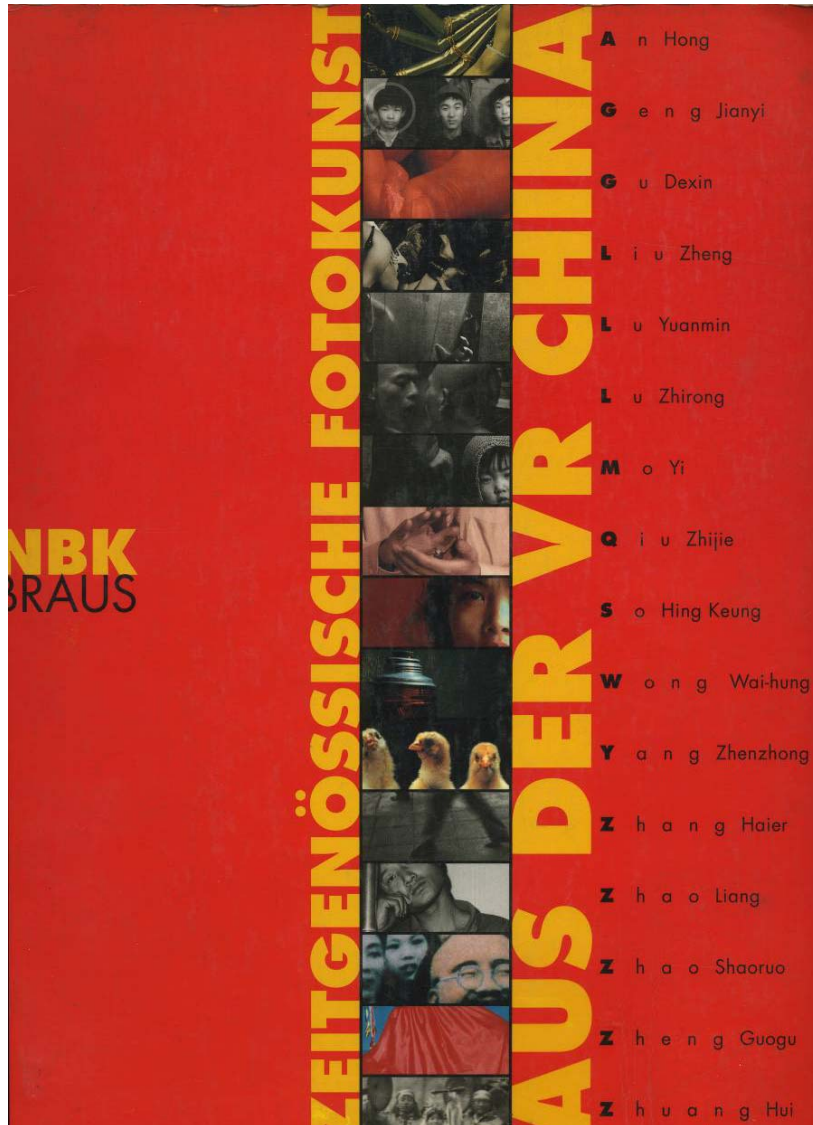
Seit seiner Teilnahme an Aktionen der Gruppe »Teich« (1986-1987) beschränkt sich Geng nicht länger auf die Malerei, sondern schafft auch Collagen, Konzeptkunst und Installationen.

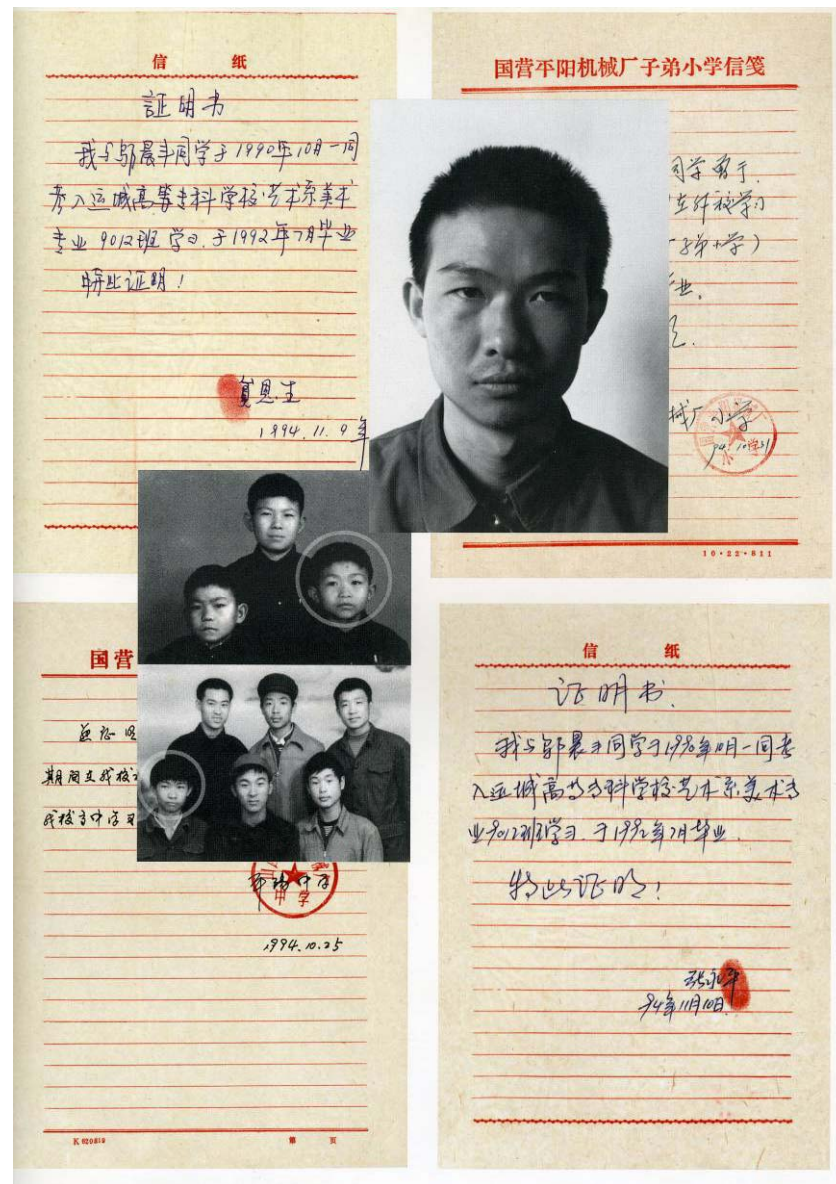
1988 veröffentlichte er in »Bildende Künste in China« die Beschreibung des Konzepts einer Installation mit dem Titel »Wasserwerk«, die er in einem Modellaufbau mit seinen Schülern und Kollegen zum Zweck der fotografischen Dokumentation realisiert hatte. Die Installation sieht einen großen rechteckigen Raum mit zwei Meter hohen Wänden vor, durch den sich ein mäanderförmiger, dunkler Gang windet. In Kopfhöhe befinden sich Fensteröffnungen, durch die die Besucher einander, mal in Goldrahmen gefaßt, mal wie durch ein Passepartout, anschauen können. Für das Publikum war dieses Wechselspiel von indiskretem Blick und gleichzeitiger öffentlicher Zurschaustellung eine verwirrende und Verlegenheit hervorrufende Situa-

tion. Auf diese Erfahrung und ihre reinigende Wirkung spielt auch der Titel Wasserwerk an. Eine ähnlich konzeptuelle Grundlage bestimmt Gengs Arbeit »Das Formular« aus dem gleichen Jahr. Er sandte ein offiziell aussehendes Formular an insgesamt 50 Künstler, die sich zur Teilnahme an der Ausstellung »China/Avant-Garde« angemeldet hatten. Das Formular erbat detaillierte Information über Gesundheit, Schulbildung, Familiensituation, persönliche Neigungen, kulturelle und politische Orientierung, sozialen und professionellen Status, Klassenzugehörigkeit, polizeiliches Führungszeugnis usw. Am Ende des Formulars wurde versichert, daß die abgegebenen Informationen nicht in Regierungsakten über den Bewerber aufgenommen, sondern als private Information gespeichert würden. Manche der Künstler glaubten an die Echtheit des Formulars und schickten es ausgefüllt und mit dem angeforderten Foto versehen zurück. Während des Auswahltreffens im Oktober präsentierte Geng die ausgefüllten Formulare als seinen Ausstellungsbeitrag. Er bot den Künstlern eine Bescheinigung an, in der ihnen für ihre Kooperation gedankt und ein Platz in der Kunstgeschichte versprochen wird. Die Urkunde trägt das Motto: »Fleisch schmeckt besser als Gemüse«. Kunst als Handlungsform bestimmt auch das Thema einer 1991 entstandenen Serie von Collagen mit auf Holz geklebten Photos. Alltägliche Handlungen wie z. B. eine Jacke anziehen oder lachen werden in rhythmische Einzelsequenzen zerlegt und mit schriftlichen Anleitungen versehen.

Insgesamt betrachtet ist Gengs Werk nicht nur ein Ausdruck des Verschwindens etablierter Rollen und Gebräuche einer Gesellschaft im Übergang, sondern vor allem deren Infragestellung durch die Bloßstellung ihrer Konventionen innerhalb des Mediums der Kunst.

Zeitaenossische Fotokunst aus der Volksrepublik China
 BRAUS, Berlin 1997





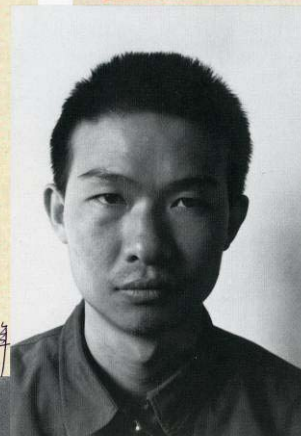
信 纸

证明书

我与郭晨丰同学于1990年10月一同
考入运城高等专科学校艺术系美术
专业9012班学习,于1992年7月毕业
特此证明!

贾思王

1994.11.9



同学郭晨丰
在校期间学习
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国营

证明

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1994.10.25

信 纸

证明

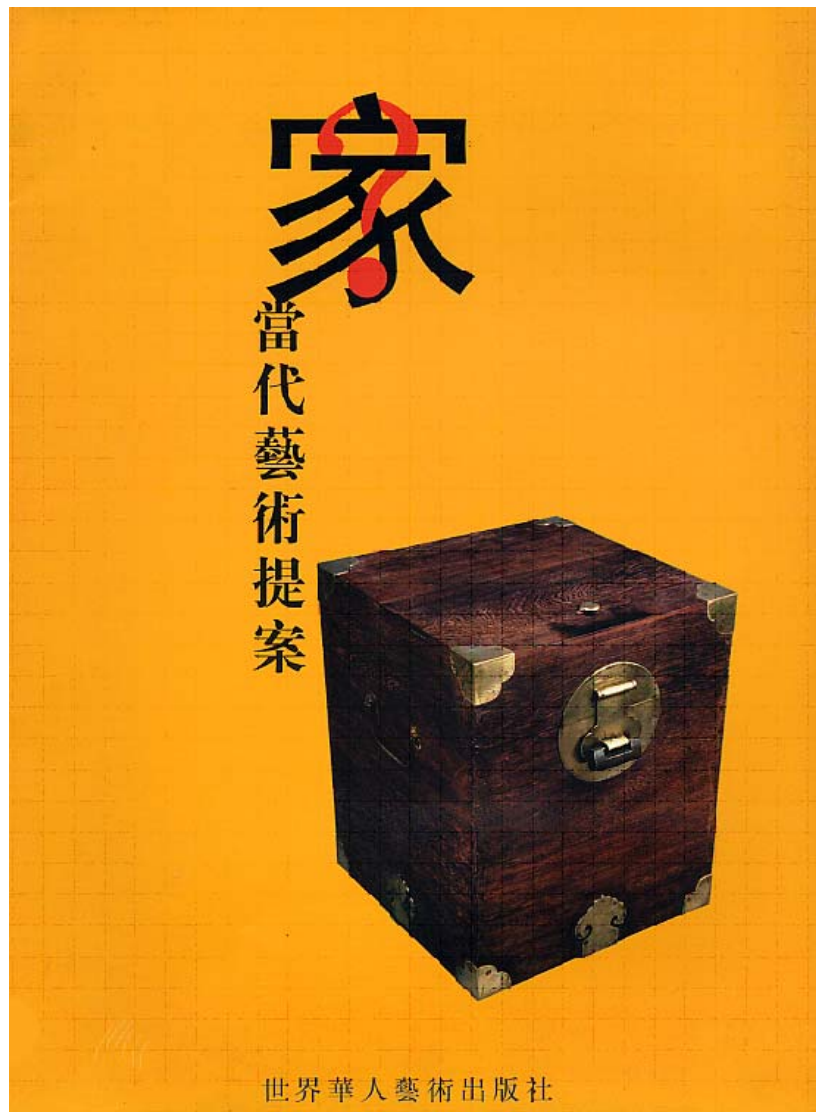
我与郭晨丰同学于1990年10月一同考
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9012班学习,于1992年7月毕业

特此证明!

郭北平
94年11月10日

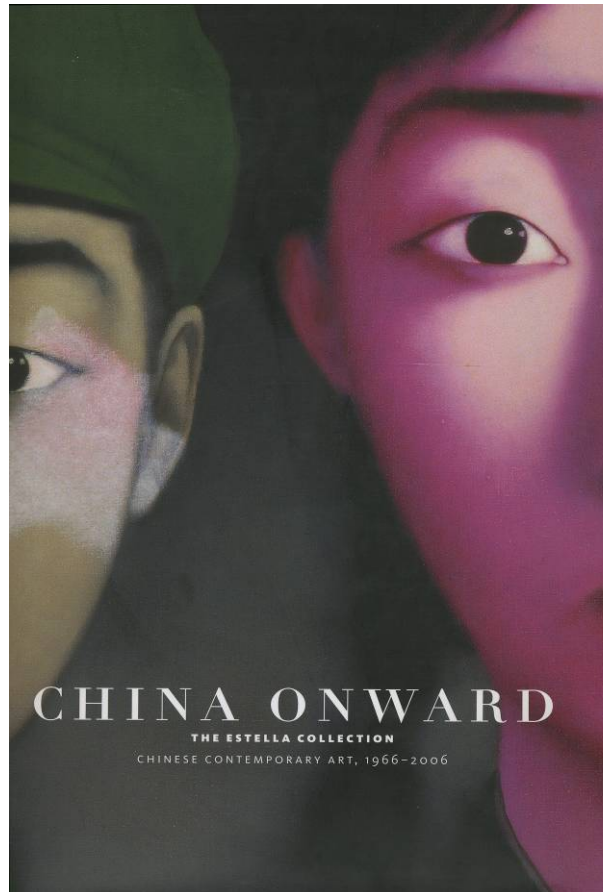
Home? Contemporary Art Project | 家? 当代艺术提案
Shijie Huaren Art Publishing House | 世界华人艺术出版社

2000



China Onward: The Estella Collection Chinese Contemporary Art, 1966-2006

Louisiana Museum of Modern Art 2007



b 1962, Zhengzhou
Conceptual artist; graduated, Oil Painting
Department, Zhejiang Academy of Fine
Arts (now National Academy of Fine Arts),
Hangzhou, 1985; lived in Beijing and
New York State, 1995-1996;
lives in Hangzhou

GENG JIANYI
耿建翌

Throughout his career as one of China's most consistently thoughtful and innovative artists, Geng Jianyi has focused on the slippage between perception and reality, particularly in regard to social relationships. Even his early paintings, done as a student at the Zhejiang Academy of Fine Arts, challenged the accepted relationship between viewer and subject. Rather than presenting a theatrical vignette à la Socialist Realism, he painted unemotional figures in undefined spaces: social limbo. As a member of the Pond Society artists' group, in the mid-1980s Geng Jianyi participated in the creation of some of China's first outdoor installations. The artists hoped to provoke a reaction from passersby but were disappointed: as the installation was outside people's realm of experience, they did not know how to react. Years of social conditioning had resulted in discomfort with unfamiliar situations.

From the late 1980s Geng Jianyi produced interventions that highlighted the extent of social conditioning in China, testing responses to authoritative presentations

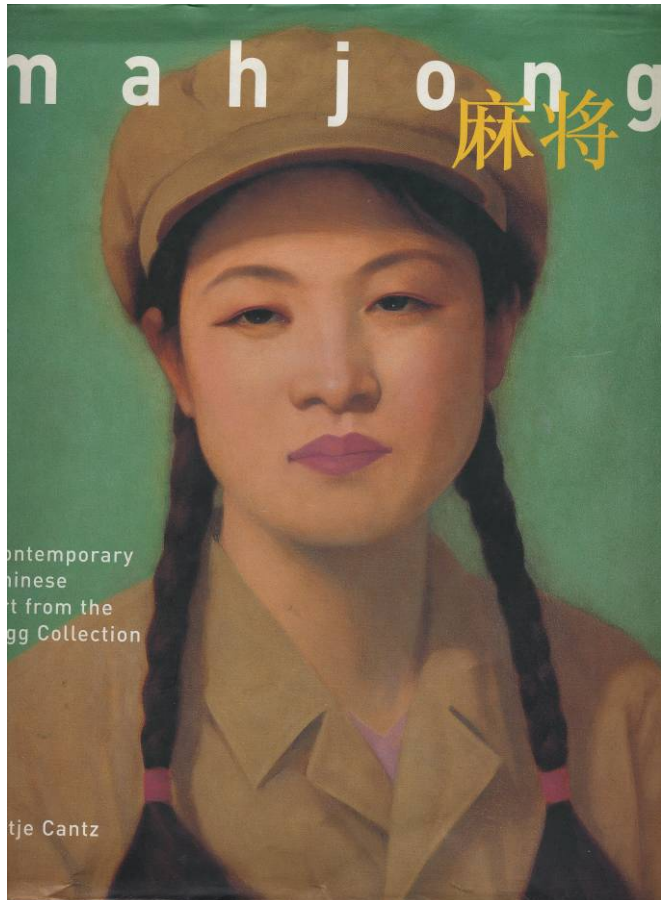
in the forms of questionnaires (*Investigative Forms*, 1988) and of documentary-style texts and photographs (*Who Is He?*, 1994). Including ID photos (*Identity Cards*, 2000). Interested in the limits to the recognizability of the face, including the human brain's ability to reconstitute a face given minimal information, he created a series of paintings and photocuts that reduce the face to areas of flat color (*Interchange of Light*, 1996). Around the same time he began experimenting with photography, playing with light-sensitive paper, manipulating developer, and in general welcoming chance-generated abstract effects. Combining these experiments with his interest in portrait photographs, Geng Jianyi produced a group of works suggesting loss of identity: a centered portrait photo dissolves or is obscured via manipulation of the photographic chemicals; see, for example, *Visible Face/Head and Face Dripping Away* (both 2001).



Face Dripping Away

2001
photographs without negatives, black
and white printing paper, dipper, fixative,
set of 4
16 x 11 1/4 in. each, 32 x 23 1/2 in. overall
41 x 30 cm each, 82 x 60 cm overall

Mahjong: Contemporary Chinese Art from the Sigg Collection | 麻将: 希克收藏的中国当代艺术
 Hatje Cantz Verlag, Ostfildern-Ruit, Germany 2005



Geng Jianyi

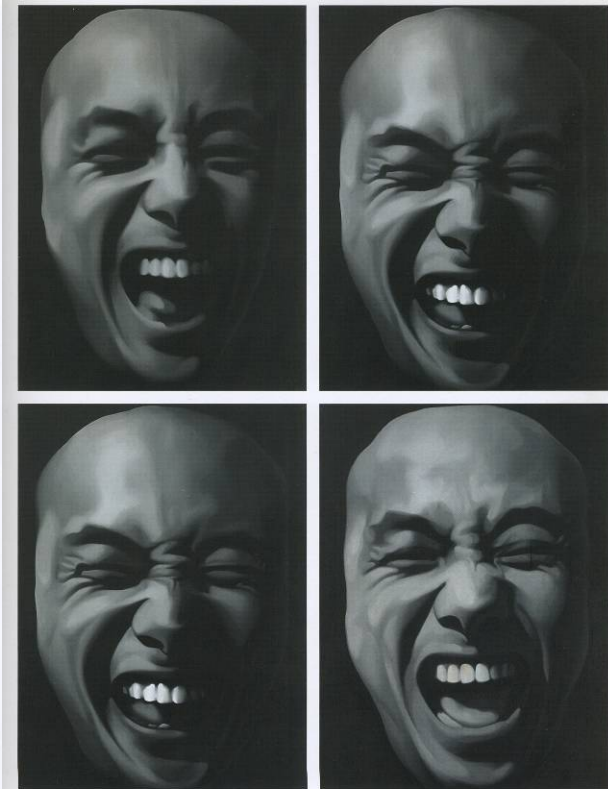
耿建翌

Geng Jianyi was born in Zhengzhou, Henan Province, in 1962, and completed his studies in oil painting at the Zhejiang Academy of Fine Arts in Hangzhou in 1985. Zhejiang is one of the leading art academies in China, and its graduates include Huang Yong Ping, Wang Guangyi, Wang Jinsong, and many other well-known artists. Along with Zhang Peili, Geng Jianyi, who lives and works in Hangzhou, was an important member of the Pond Group, which in 1986/87 endeavored to rouse their local community with aggressive "actions" in public spaces. Geng Jianyi originated his now-stereotypical laughing figures as an act of opposition. The images have since been appropriated by painters such as Jue Min Jun or Zeng Fanzhi, and quickly became a trademark of contemporary Chinese art. Contemporary observer Hans van Dijk was a witness to this "invention": "Two oil paintings, each showing a serious-looking couple, which Geng submitted as graduation works at the Zhejiang Academy in 1985, got a hostile reception from the exam panel because they did not convey any 'positive' content. Reacting to this criticism, Geng thereupon painted two series of giant portraits, which he called *The Second Situation* and *Double Bliss*. Both series show heads laughing hysterically in an almost photo-realistic manner."¹ Thus, although the motivation for painting them was anti-academic, they nonetheless relate to macro-social problems. The four paintings from the *Second Situation* series originated at the same time as the large *Gloves* by Zhang Peili, likewise painted as a series in grisaille. It seems as though one of the pair focused on the human face while the other concentrated on the hands. At least in painting, these are the most expressive parts of the body.

The result is masks and gloves—coverings as symbols of the hypocrisy of human relationships. Geng Jianyi's bright faces stand out against a dark background almost like reliefs. The gray-on-gray technique enabled him to give the faces impressive plasticity, but at the same time removed all breath of human life from them. The outside faces are reminiscent of death masks—an association that is immediately countered by the forced laughter. The ambivalence in Geng's pictures certainly makes its mark. What remains in the mind is the impression of petrification, which is further intensified by repetition, which, of course, creates redundancy, but that has a purpose here. The artist does not use a mechanical system to produce a series of pictures as economically as possible, because each picture is painted by hand. With the insistence that this generates, Geng underlines the value of the individual in the collective. The faces in the *Second Situation* are all anonymous. They have no identity, but they do have individuality—in painting.

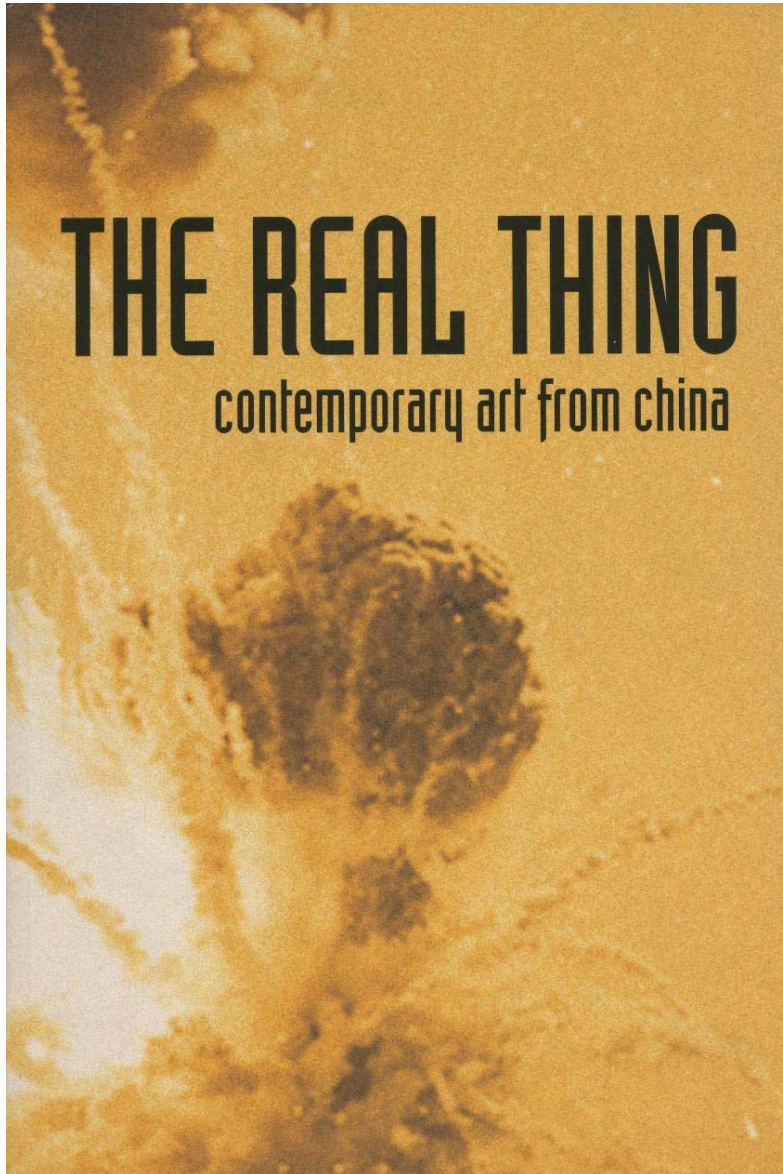
Bernhard Fibicher

¹ Hans van Dijk, *China Avant-Garde*, cat. *Hans der Kulturen der Welt* (Berlin, 1993), p. 121.



Geng Jianyi, *The Second Situation*, 1987, oil on canvas, 4 parts, 170 x 132 cm each

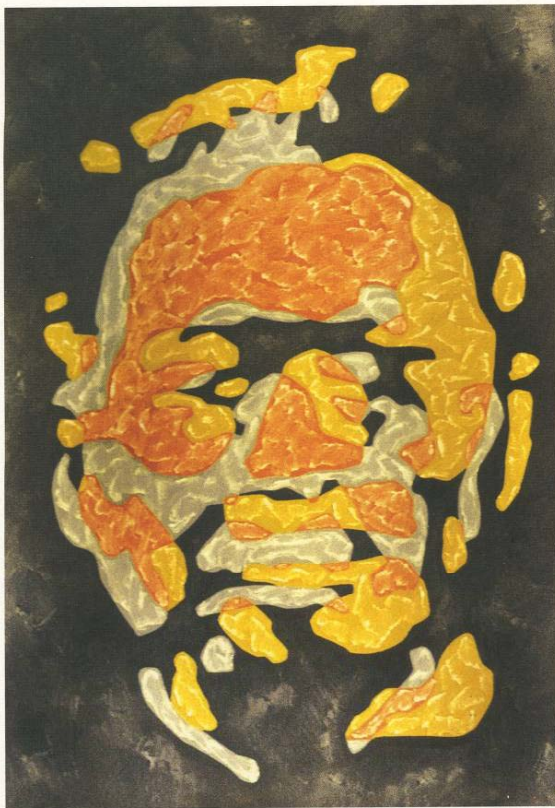
The Real Thing: Contemporary Art from China | 真的：来自中国的当代艺术
Tate Liverpool, U.K. 2007



Geng Jianyi remains one of the most interesting conceptual artists at work in China today. He's been at it a long time, having emerged in the 1980s, when, as a final year student of the oil painting department at Zhejiang Academy in Hangzhou, his work set a small revolution in motion. The sombre content of his oil paintings were one of the sparks that set the New Art movement alight in 1985-6. They would also precipitate an entire school of followers, and forge a style of painting that remains popular even today. Geng Jianyi, however, has never stood still, and constantly seeks new challenges. He also operates with complete disregard for the recent commercialisation that has consumed the Chinese art world with tidal force. For Geng Jianyi, the market is irrelevant to his practice, and more irritatingly, a mental distraction.

Geng Jianyi is all about art: a purist through and through. He is the first to acknowledge a sense of uncertainty as to what qualifies as art or not, but one senses that, for him at least, that is the challenge, and what his explorations aim to determine. For this reason, he has never stuck to a particular approach, or formed an allegiance to a specific medium. He sees his role as being to challenge perceptions, of the social environment as much as of art. He has a particular fascination with the nature of individual consciousness: a person's cognitive awareness of the social reality in which they exist, which lies outside of the value judgements framed by the socio-political system, which everyone absorbs passively. Geng Jianyi's interest focuses on an individual's active capacity for observation. To highlight the debilitating nature of indoctrinatory systemic structures (especially prevalent in those environments devoid of democratic freedoms), Geng Jianyi has made much of bureaucratic red tape, the documents and forms of processes and procedures so familiar to Chinese society. In his work, this play on the familiarity with such tangible objects of social reality that are not usually associated with art, is always satirical in nature; not as obviously cynical as the vision offered by Cynical Realist painters, but without doubt the blackest form of humour visible in contemporary Chinese art.

Geng Jianyi would not deny this element of darkly humorous intent, but reiterate that his inspiration arises from a sombre reality, and that it is, in fact, identity that concerns him most. Through the 1980s and 1990s in China, the issue of identity was the most serious subject confronting artists. It is a theme he has systematically analysed now for almost two decades, employing a multitude of forms as conduits for doing so. These



Untitled (Portrait) 1995
oil on canvas

range from the deconstruction of physiognomies through painting, or in collages of paper cut-outs, to large format photographic portraits designed to confuse the eye, and further explored in photographic drawings created directly in the darkroom, in which he feels his way around features that he cannot actually see. His various experiments with the layering of faces to create a 'portrait', subject physiognomy to a psychological probing of



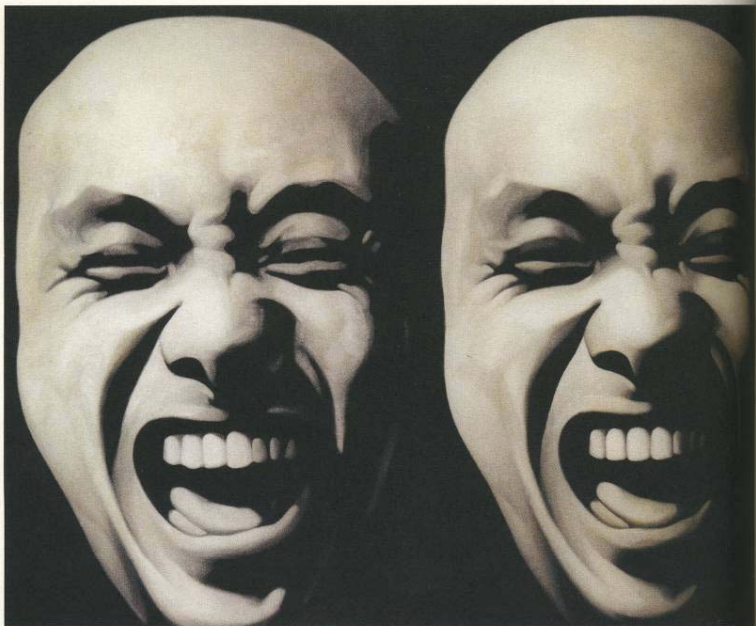
Untitled 2001
b/w photograph with
drawing

personality, manipulating external façades like the projected image of Mao — a symbol that stands for an actual person in the way that the reduction in a Warhol portrait signifies a persona — to understand how features acquire visual associations that the mind recognises before any active reading is required by the eye.

From static to moving images, Geng Jianyi deploys the human form as an anatomical armature, as a puppet he directs as the parameters of each psychological study dictate. In approaching the same question from every conceivable angle, he questions if identity exists if an individual has no conscious awareness of it. Do job titles, words describing relations in the family structure, or one's place within the social framework, ever equate to identity? Are we what we do? Can we own the 'condition of being oneself' without having a real 'sense of self'? Is it enough to be recognised by a 'set of behavioural or personal characteristics which distinguish the personality of an individual'? (*American Heritage Dictionary*, 2000 edition.) This subtext is primarily motivated by the blurred, shifting, and indeterminable nature of identities within a Chinese socio-political context that, in Geng Jianyi's experience — having been born in the early 1960s — habitually imposes absolute definitions upon everything and everyone. Coming to contemporary art,



How to...put on a jacket 1992
paper collage on board



The Second State (detail) 1997
oil on canvas, four-panel work
Sigg Collection, Switzerland

with all the attendant aspirations for individual innovation, in its earliest incarnation in the 1980s, his generation has firsthand experience of the complexities of overcoming a profound absence of self-awareness and perception; Communism relieved individuals of all such burdens.

A further element that has played a role in shaping Geng Jianyi's aesthetic was his intuitive, reactive response to the tenets of art extolled by the State, which subjugated all expression to the socialist cause. This meant that Art was understood to present the ideal vision of social reality, but that ultimately the reality it depicted was defined by a political ideology to which all forms of expression, and subject matter had to conform. As a response, in all his work, Geng Jianyi deliberately subverts the idea that art can faithfully imitate or encapsulate something as subjective as reality: a direct challenge to those who would pretend otherwise.

An Unapologetic Act of Sabotage 2007

Geng Jianyi likes to tell simple stories to illustrate the nature of the issues he explores, which serve as particularly useful aids in helping people from his own cultural background to engage with his works. In the context of describing the work he created for *The Real Thing*, the stories shed light on the philosophical nuances of ingrained Chinese attitudes such that point to the inspiration for the work he chose to produce, as well as the nature of the thought process that shape Geng Jianyi's particular approach.

'A grandfather possesses a magnificent beard of which he is extremely proud. One day, his grandson asks him, "Grandpa, when you sleep, do you put your beard inside the quilt or outside." Such a question had never occurred to the grandfather, but that night, when he retired to bed, the question perplexed him so much that he was unable to sleep. The next night was the same. Inside did not feel right, but outside was equally uncomfortable: the natural process of sleep was entirely disrupted by questioning something that he had had no previous need to consider. The issue was decided with the removal of the beard, which resolved the problem, allowing the grandfather to sleep soundly once again.'

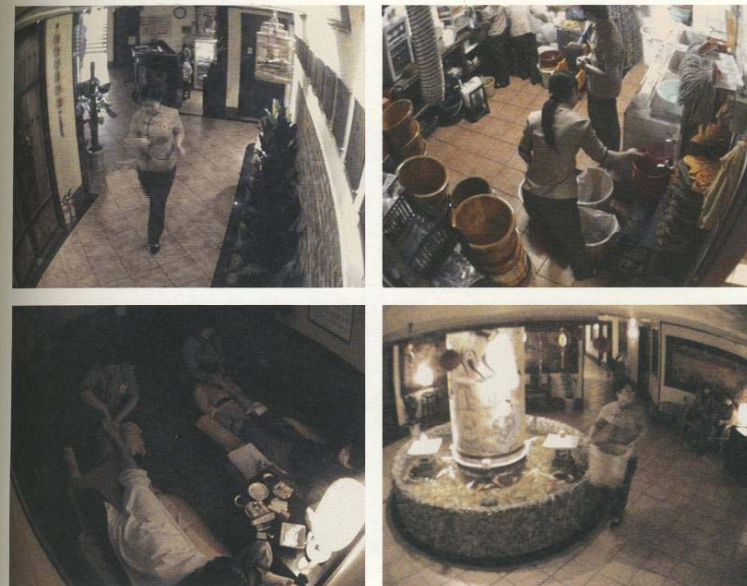
This matter of consciousness is explored in *An Unapologetic Act of Sabotage*, as Geng Jianyi puts a similar question to a couple of unsuspecting bystanders. In a pilot programme, produced in the spring of 2006, the artist filmed a road sweeper at work in a street in Hangzhou. Geng Jianyi then approached him, and having assured the man of no mal intent, invited him into a studio at the China National Academy where Geng Jianyi teaches. Here, he showed the road sweeper the video recording of himself in action. Geng Jianyi asked if the man could repeat his actions, acting them out 'exactly as he had done in the street'. As the road sweeper contemplated his own image, the conscious mind attuned to the motion of the self in the most unexpected of ways, his earnest attempt to be natural demonstrates a marked degree of discomfort in common with the grandfather's attempts to sleep naturally with his beard.

An Unapologetic Act of Sabotage returns to this subject. Initially, the concept pivoted on a simple comparison as established with the road sweeper. But, as he thought about developing the idea, Geng Jianyi began to feel it might be too simple. He considered informing a chosen 'actor' of the concept before filming began, but realised that this would erase the element of

innocence that underscored the success of his first attempt with the road sweeper. His first thought had been to place surveillance cameras in multiple locations within a participant's home, so they could have no idea of exactly which period of their daily activities Geng Jianyi might select as the focus of the work. He would then write the actions in the form of a script. The actor would then have to act out the scene according to the script, and not from studying the filmed sequence of their actions as he had done previously.

Geng Jianyi soon realised, however, that if he wished to place cameras in a person's private space, he would have to leave them there for a long time in order for that person to become completely used to them. This forced him to reconsider the idea of working in an anonymous public space. The location he finally settled upon was a foot massage parlour, which by the nature of the activities it housed, lent itself to a rich range of cinematic possibilities, both in terms of scripting the scenes, and of the largely predictable interaction that would take place between his 'leading actors'. The clockwork regularity of the workers' routine at the parlour naturally suggested a masseur for one of these roles — each day as they arrive, they are required to sign in before changing into their uniform, taking breakfast, heating the water and replenishing the preparations they need in the course of their work. Then they wait until clients start to arrive, at which point they go through the motions of their soothing massage programme, in which even the sequence of actions is performed to a fixed choreographed format. The second role was logically claimed by one of these clients: where people go for a foot massages in order to relax, Geng Jianyi decided they would be completely at ease, and oblivious to the cameras he had set up in the intimate confines of a private room. And as people are usually in the habit of going to a foot massage parlour with a friend, the final work focuses on four people, two clients and two masseurs.

A total of seven CCTV cameras were set up at various points in the parlour. This allowed for a switch between locations that helps build a sense of narrative in the final work. Having recorded adequate footage, Geng Jianyi used the chosen sequences as the basis for a script, which he then presented to each of the four individuals, instructing them to learn their part for the re-enactment that would then be staged. And, as Geng Jianyi hoped, as exact in the measure of manner and expression seen in the original footage as was humanly possible.



An Unapologetic Act of Sabotage 2007
video installation

An Unapologetic Act of Sabotage is presented in two parts, as a 'before' and an 'after', each section comprising the range of different camera angles to represent the four characters. These two groups of images are divided in the middle by a separate screen across which the script rolls like an auto-prompt. For Geng Jianyi, the coercion of four individuals to participate in this type of project, and the fact that their performances occur simultaneously, is both more interesting and more challenging than his initial approach. The participants are not only made aware of themselves in front of themselves, but also themselves in front of other people. The quality of acting also exposes a layer of unconscious social attitudes between those serving and those being served. But this is not the only inevitable shift in attitudes emerging in tandem with social change. In *An Unapologetic Act of Sabotage*, we understand the degree to which all people are being forced to see themselves anew.

85 New Wave: The Birth of chinese Contemporary Art | 85 新潮：中国第一次当代艺术运动

Shanghai Century Publishing Group | 上海世纪出版集团 2007



《第二状态》系列的4幅画都是以灰色装饰画手法绘成。看起来似乎其中一部作品关注人的脸，而另一部作品则把重点放在手上。至少在绘画方面，这些都是人体中最令人印象深刻的部分。创作出的《手套》——这种覆盖物象征人际关系中的虚伪。耿建翌在黑色的背景中突出明亮的脸部，看起来很像浮雕。他使用灰色层叠的技法让脸部具有强烈的可塑性，同时也把所有有关人的生命都从它们身上剥离。特大号的脸让人想起死人面部模型——勉强的笑容却让人很快忘了这一联想。耿建翌的绘画作品中的矛盾感让他一举成名。让人留在脑海中的就只是茫然若失的感觉，这种感觉又通过不断重复得到进一步的强化，然后无疑会产生不必要的重复，但这正是目的所在。画家并没有使用机械系统创造系列画作来尽可能地节省金钱，因为每一幅画都是他亲手绘制的。耿建翌通过画作中的坚持主张，强调了个人在集体中的价值。《第二状态》中的脸都是匿名的。他们没有身份，但是却有个性——在画里面。

Bernhard Fibicher: "幕布：来自希客的中国当代艺术收藏", Hatje Cantz, 2005, p. 74.

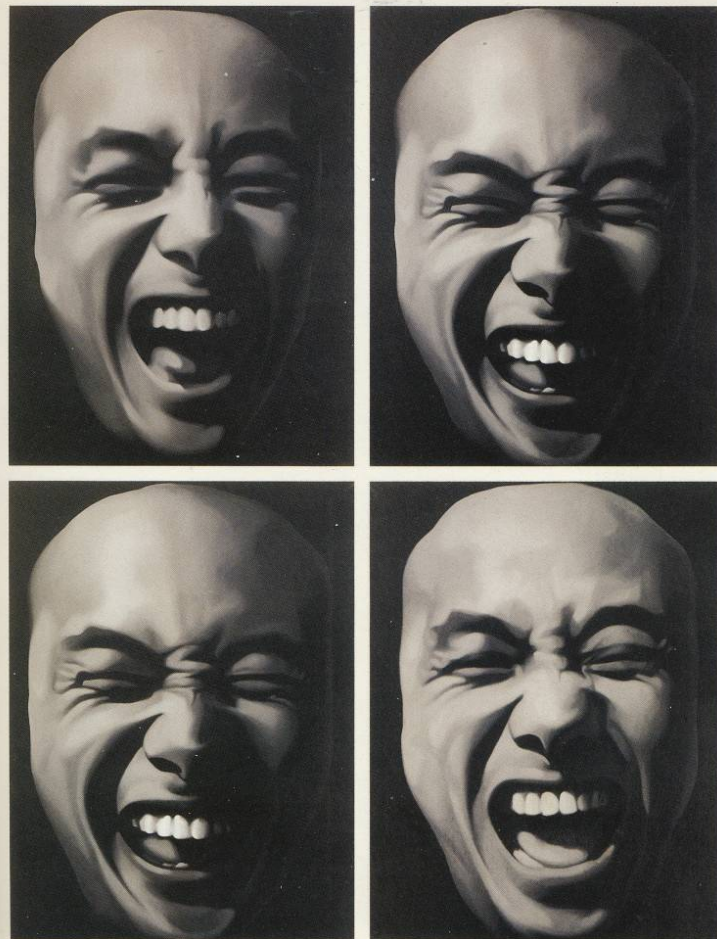
简历=

1962年8月出生。17岁开始跟随河南新乡市少年宫老师曹新村学画。19岁考入浙江美术学院油画系，四年后创作“灯下的两个人”1985年底创作理发系列“1985夏季的流行样式”“1985年夏季的清谈”“1985年夏季第一个坐在美容室里的女人”“1985夏季的又一个老头”，并参加“85新空间画展”。1986年伙同张培力等创办“池社”5月创作“茅=状态”并参与集体创作，作品有：“初云万松系列”“绵色空间的行者”“理”“两个被旧报纸裹着的人”等。1988年初创作“自来水厂”8月创作“打扫一间与自己无关的房间”12月完成“表格”并参加“萧山会议”展出作品。同月参与组建浙江国际美术研究会、创办“世界美术信息报”。

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第 页



《第二状态》 布面油画 170cm×132cm×4幅 1987年（马里·希蒙收藏）

“池”社 Pond Society

1986年5月成立于杭州。主要成员为张培力、耿建翌、宋陵、包剑斐、王强、关颖等。



《“池”社作品1号——《杨氏太极》系列》 1986年

《“池”社作品2号——绿色空间中的行者》 1986年

“池”社宣言

1986年5月

- 艺术是一个池。
- 我们的生存有赖于碳水化合物。
- 不是想要这样才这样，而是不得不这样才这样。
- 我们的肌体覆满了灰尘。
- 艺术是利可图的吗？
- 艺术是赏心悦目的吗？
- 我们渴望恰当的净化。
- 我们的思维是流动的、模糊的。
- 我们渴望潜能的挥发。
- 艺术的异化是学究的、机械的或被功利制约的重复生产。
- 我们渴望疲惫而令人心醉的庄严时刻。
- 重要的是“浸入”。
- 有谁见过理性的冲动？
- “浸入”的瞬间令人陶醉，复苏的瞬间大彻大悟。
- 对于法则，我们通过一种“较高的服从”，给予“严正的注意”。
- 结果是次要的，种子在不断发芽。
- 真谛不可言说。

“池”社简报

- 第一号○
- 1986年6月○

- “池”社于1986年5月27日成立○
- “池”社成员○王强○包剑斐○关颖○宋陵○张培力○耿建翌
- 自举办“‘85新空间画展”后○我们觉得已有的表现手段不能全面反映我们的观念及愿望○我们渴望最大限度地揭示内在空间○
- 我们寻求更为直接的体验○以达到不可名状的状态○凡能体验冲动的一切手段我们都将尝试○过去的或现在的○单一的或综合的○我们所关心的是具有个性的全体的参与的过程○而非结果○
- “池”社旨在通过艺术这个池中的体验进入这样的一种状态○
- “池”社真诚期待各界人士的支援和协助○
- “池”社联系人○关颖○浙江杭州杭大新村28幢64号○

“池”社简报

第二号

1986年6月10日
杭州

- “池”社首次活动于6月1日上午9时至次日凌晨4时进行。
- 集体创作“作品一号——杨氏太极系列”。
- 该系列由12件相互关联的作品组成，每件高3米，依次张贴于杭州南山路绿荫路边的青砖墙，墙高4米，张贴总长60米。
- 作品参照杨氏太极拳套路图解，外形剪影，采用拼贴手法。
- 材料：木炭条、报纸、晒图纸、浆糊。
- 参与者：“池”社全体成员。

- 这次活动达到了预期的效果。
- 它表明体验的过程乃是思考与操作、疲惫与陶醉的瞬间结合。
- 它表明无功利的艺术活动是充满活力的。
- 它为全体参与者提供了信心。

- 参与者谈感受：
- 张培力：这并非是非标新立异的游戏，也不是苦心经营的实验，它是一次别样而实在的对话。
- 耿建翌：经历了紧张、疲惫之后是庄严和快乐。
- 宋陵：它生命虽短，但意味深长。
- 王强：这是一种全身心的不能自我控制的活动，它几乎像是受洗。

“‘池’社”简报

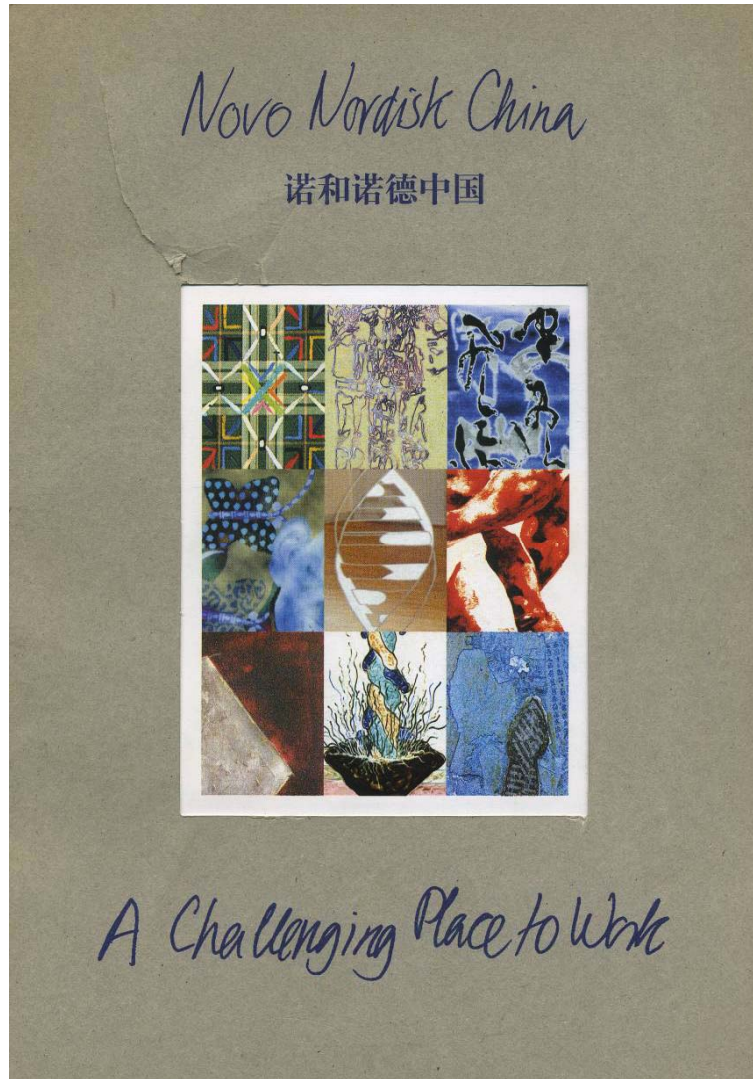
第三号

- “‘池’社”耿建翌、张培力、宋陵、包剑斐于11月2日、4日二天在杭州完成了题为“作品2号——绿色空间中的行者”的系列。这一系列由9个高3米相同姿势的“人形”组成，纵横交错地悬挂在一片树林中。它与6月初完成的“作品1号——杨氏太极系列”有某种相同之处，为“‘池’社”整体计划的一部分。
- 由张培力撰写的“关于‘新空间’和‘池’社”一文最近脱稿，文章系统、翔实地记述了从“新空间”到“‘池’社”的变迁和发展，并阐明了“‘池’社”的新的构想。

联系人：张培力
地址：杭州朝晖新村六区
49幢602室



Novo Noraish China | 诺和诺德中国
1999



Geng Jianyi

Geng Jianyi studied at the Zhejiang Academy of Fine Art in Hangzhou, an institution which was the first to invite overseas lecturers. Its curriculum was closely linked to that of the *Ecole des Beaux Arts* in Paris and most of its professors had studied abroad. In their manifesto "Society for the development of the Arts", they proclaimed: "Those who are still attached to the values of Traditional Chinese Art are running into a dead-end street. Those who are dedicated to creating a new age of art are our friends." The Academy's president Ling Fengmian, educated in France himself, was an admirer of post impressionist art, and in this he stood diametrically in contradiction to the realistic art style of the Central Academy of Fine Art in Beijing. Hangzhou, Nanjing and Wuhan were considered the epicentres of the earthquakes that shook the art world in the Avant-garde movement of the 80's in China.

Although he was studying at a progressive institution, Geng Jianyi's art work was strongly criticized for "lack of positive attitude" - he therefore only just passed the graduation examination in 1985. As an immediate reaction he decided to draw (in almost photo-realistic style) two series of huge portraits entitled "The Other Attitude" and "Double Happiness" depicting hysterically laughing humans!

His art includes oil paintings, installations, conceptual work as well as collages. In 1988, Geng Jianyi, together with his students, built a big model exhibition room containing a dark, winding, steel corridor with golden framed openings shaped like windows enabling visitor(s) to secretly observe each other. Geng Jianyi wanted to create confusion and embarrassment through the "Being-Caught-Watching-Effect", which he hoped would be a revelation for people, a "cleaning" experience; hence the title "Water Work".

Another conceptual work created that year was entitled "The Form": He sent an entirely official looking form to about 50 artists who had applied to participate in the "China Avant-garde Art Exhibition" to be held in Beijing the following year. The form contained detailed personal questions about health, education, family background, personal preferences, political views, social status, police record ... The bottom line asserted the applicants of the secrecy of the data. Some artists believed in the authenticity of the document, filled it out, sent it in, and included all photographs. In October that year, when the actual participants were to be selected, Geng Jianyi presented "The Form" as his contribution to the exhibition, thanking each one of the artists for their participation and guaranteeing them a name in the history of Modern Chinese Art. He did this in the form of a new document entitled: "Meat tastes better than vegetables"...

Group Photo

Oil on canvas
(120 cm x 120 cm)

Geng Jianyi



About Putting on Clothes

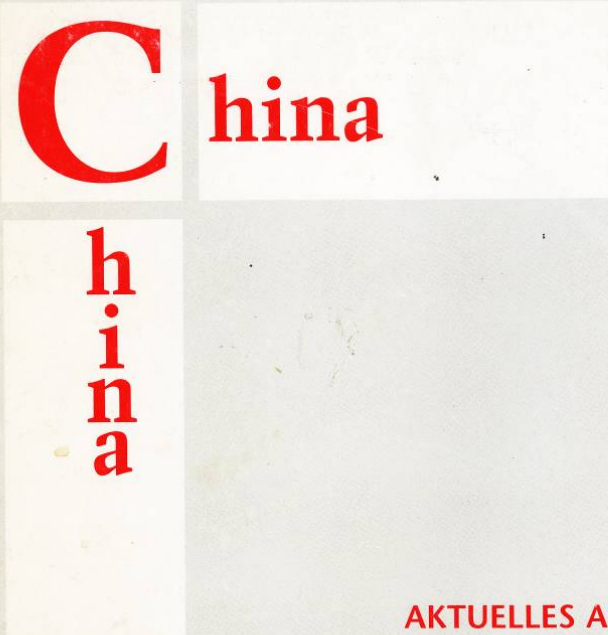
Oil on canvas
(114 cm x 146 cm)



"I deliberately try to provoke a reaction from potentially short-sighted viewers".

China: Aktuelles Aus 15 Ateliers

Herausgeber Hahn Produktion, Germany 1996



**AKTUELLES AUS 15 ATELIERS
PERFORMANCES
INSTALLATIONEN**

GENG JIANYI

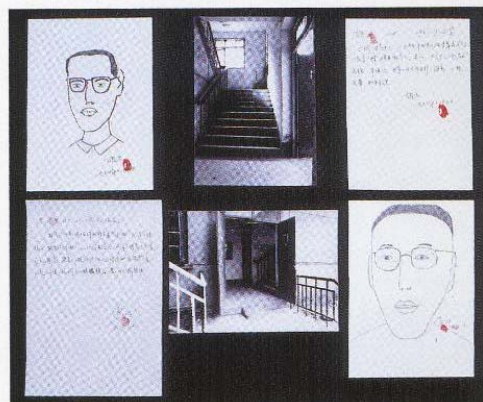
1987 malte Geng Jianyi zwei Reihen von riesengroßen, hysterisch lachenden Gesichtern. Sie trugen den Titel „Der zweite Zustand“ oder „Doppelte Glückseligkeit“. Er reagierte damit darauf, daß seine Abschlußarbeit an der Kunstakademie von Zhejiang, zwei Bilder von ernst blickenden Paaren, von der Prüfungskommission als nicht positiv genug abgelehnt worden war. Seither setzt er in seinen Arbeiten immer wieder gesellschaftliche Normen und Verhaltensweisen außer Kraft, indem er sie überbefolgt. Ein wichtiges Material bilden dabei die Verordnungen und Regelwerke, die gesellschaftliches Verhalten bestimmen oder zu bestimmen bestimmt sind. So verschickte Geng 1988 ein offiziell wirkendes Formular an alle Künstler, die sich für die Teilnahme an der Ausstellung „China/Avant-garde“ beworben hatten, die 1989 in der Pekinger Nationalgalerie stattfand. In diesem Formular wurden die Künstler sehr detailliert zu verschiedenen Aspekten ihres Lebenslaufes befragt, zu ihrem Lebenswandel, aber auch zu wichtigen künstlerischen Einflüssen wie der Lieblingsfarbe oder dem Lieblingstier. Anbei schickte er einen Brief mit der Versicherung, daß diese Datenerhebung nur zu privaten Zwecken stattfände und nicht an offizielle Stellen weitergeleitet würde. Die ausgefüllten Formulare, waren teilweise ernsthaft und wahrheitsgetreu beantwortet, zum Teil wurde in ihnen auch das Spiel mit dem Formular weitergespielt. Das Ergebnis dieser „Umfrage“ lag also in der Hand der Befragten. Diese Zusammenarbeit mit „Versuchspersonen“ hat Geng Jianyi auch in mehreren anderen Arbeiten durchgeführt. Dabei überprüft er, inwieweit Normen und Kontrollmechanismen sich durchgesetzt haben und wie weit man sie kreativ verändern kann. 1994 legte er einer Gruppe von „Prüfungskandidaten“ den lückenhaften Text des chinesischen Ehegesetzes vor, den sie in einer Klausur vervollständigen mußten. Eine andere Arbeit entstand, als ihn einmal ein Bekannter aufsuchte, während er nicht zu Hause war, und er selbst nur durch die Nachbarn davon erfuhr. Kurzerhand bat er alle Personen, die diesen Besucher gesehen hatten, dessen Aussehen schriftlich und in einer Zeichnung festzuhalten, - und er erhielt eine Reihe privater „Steckbriefe“.

Diese Form, das private Umfeld zu politisieren, weitet er auch auf seine eigene Person aus. Es entstanden Selbstkritiken, in denen er früheres Fehlverhalten gegenüber Freunden analysiert, kritisiert und Besserung gelobt. Dabei greift er auf ein bewährtes Mittel zur politischen Erziehung zurück, das in der Volksrepublik China noch in den letzten Jahren angewandt wurde, wenn jemand einen politischen Fehler machte. Geng Jianyi bedient sich hier wie in vielen anderen Arbeiten dem offiziellen Sprachduktus der Volksrepublik, aber dadurch, daß er ihn in scheinbar persönlichen Briefen, in der Beschreibung von absurden Vorgängen und in überzogener Form einsetzt, steigert er ihn ins Groteske.

Juliane Noth



GENG JIANYI Ehegesetz (Marriage Law), 1994 (Detail aus einer Serie, Drucksache mit handschriftlichen Eintragungen 25,2 x 18,5 cm



Wer ist er? (Who is He?), 1994 (Detail aus einer Serie), handschriftliche Texte, Zeichnungen, Photographien



Nachweis einer Existenz (Proof of Existence), 1994 (Detail aus einer Serie), Dokumente, Reproduktionen, Photographien