

PRESS RELEASE

"Long March Project: Building Code Violations II"

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'Building Code Violations' is a conceptual metaphor....

The concept of a "Building Code Violation" comes from the legal lexicon of modern urban planning and management targeting those specific individual actions that are in contravention of a normalized and unified social system. In this exhibition, "Building Code Violations" is a cultural approach directed at a "universal" modernity. This type of "top down" approach, while revolutionary in nature, has resulted in not only overturning local epistemological systems, but also a displacement of nature and space, a distortion of bodily experiences, and a heightening of class tensions. The expression of "violations" is built upon offshoots of individual needs, and underneath the surface of these acts resides a critique towards the construction of a particular idealist aesthetic or social construction.

The definition of a 'Building Code Violation' is officially classified a 'fact' in China, a breach of civil code. What is crucial to this understanding of a 'building code violation' is that what may be considered a violation one year, may be approved

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in the next, and vice-versa. Building code violations, constructed in daily life should be understood as a process in the society, rather than the basis for social statistics. Such violations can be formless, hidden or undetectable; it could be an individual experience or an unconscious collective perception accumulated in the process of an action. Are we "building" in response to a "violated code"? Or are we consciously "violating code" in response to the "building" around us. Such conundrums are at the heart of this project. This exhibition interprets the concept of "Building Code Violations" as a conflict between social reality and aesthetic ideals. It highlights the contradiction between globalization's advancement of a single cultural value system, and the reality of societies whose functional systems of existence are thrown apart by its imposition.

The creation of a 'building code violation' responds to an existing situation that is deemed dysfunctional or inherently opportunistic in its approach to cultural, social, or political value - hence individuals and collectives are seeking to pose new methods of action and in turn propose new methods of existence. Consequently, "Building Code Violations" reflects the power of the "self-built" environment, it points to a necessary force motivated by local contexts, which cannot be overruled by global standards. The existence of such violations, in a cultural sense, demands that we ask what conditions brought about this breach of code; what circumstances drove an individual or group to take a situation into their own hands in an attempt to improve or adapt; why did they feel so compelled to act in this way? In other words, the shape of the 'violation' matters.

'Building Code Violations' will be an exhibition that presents a series of solutions which are in progress, created in response to the reality of social frameworks of today.

In this global world, there are numerous actions and creations that could be considered violations within the fabric of society and social behavior. These various violated codes possess the power to change what may be considered temporary circumstances into permanent and functional entities. This is a never-ending cycle of intervention and approval.

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