

PRESS RELEASE

"Zhang Hui: 21st Floor and a Half"

2009.4.25 - 5.31

Long March Space, Beijing

As a significant member of the post-89 generation of Chinese artists trained in set and theatre design, Zhang Hui (b. 1967) is particularly sensitive to the physical and abstract languages of natural and constructed spatial experiences. In this solo exhibition "21st Floor and a Half" Zhang Hui confronts his suspicions of domestic accepted realities by presenting an arrangement of six large-scale oil on canvas works inspired by his local neighborhood in Beijing, offering particular insight into the experience of conventional suburban spaces in China.

In *'Exit'*, the artist depicts his ground-floor garage as a haunted, dark abyss from which a pair of feet protrudes forward. The tiled wall above the garage door glistening in colorful outline, reflecting the summer hue of a Beijing sky. In another painting, the viewer looks up into the inner nave of his apartment block, this narrow communal space to which residents share access to the natural world is here rendered abstract and distorted, Zhang Hui's choice of color throwing this familiar space into an eerie dimension of surreality. Where one expects to look up into a pin-hole of blue sky, it is dead black and emphasized by a rim of bright orange. The direction of the gaze, whether looking up, or looking down, looking under or within, whether it is the act of performance itself, or human interrelationships evidenced through painting and the construction of sculptural installation, Zhang Hui's practice makes continual reference to theatricality, as a sense of physical awareness, but also as a mental space through which we further understand our relationship to ideas of lived and imagined realities.

Zhang Hui (born 1967 in Heilongjiang Province. Lives and works in Beijing) graduated from the Central Drama Academy in the early 90's and was a key figure, alongside prominent artists such as Liu Wei, Zhu Yu and Qiu Zhijie, in the collaborative artistic activities of the 'Post Sense: Sensibility' Group active in the late 1990s. Zhang Hui was most recently featured in 'Farewell to

Address: 798 Art District, 4 Jiuxianqiao Rd, Chaoyang District, Beijing

Mailing: Long March Space. Mailbox 8530, Beijing. P.R. China 100015

地址：北京市朝阳区酒仙桥路4号798艺术区 | 邮址：北京市8503信箱长征空间 邮编 100015

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Postcolonialism: the Third Guangzhou Triennial, Guangdong Museum of Art, Guangzhou, China, 2008; 'Partial Zones', Long March Space, Beijing, China (solo), 2007; 'Buzz...,' Multimedia performance, Taipei Museum of Art, Kao-Chung Museum of Art, Taipei, Taiwan, 2005 and Shanghai Biennale, China, 2004; . His performative explorations have taken place extensively across China, throughout Asia and the USA.

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