

PRESS RELEASE

“They Co. Ltd.: Therefore It’s Them and Surely It’s Them”

Lai Sheng, Yang Xiaogang, Yuan Xin

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Long March Space, Beijing

“Therefore It’s and Surely It’s Them” is an exhibition jointly created and participated in by three graduates from the Central Academy of Fine Arts School of Engraving, Lai Sheng, Yang Xiaogang, and Yuan Xin. The trio fictitiously registered “They Co. Ltd.,” in which they pretend to be a new high-tech enterprise, whose main focus is to produce new conceptual art, as an entry point for their joint artwork. After accepting, recognizing, and utilizing real market operating systems and procedures, the group uses fiction, simulations, ridicule, interaction, and humor to engage in a performative discourse. They also utilize the operating models of the commercial businesses of today – with its worker evaluation processes, recruitment methods, and award banquets – along with interactive networks to plan and perform a real, fake, and absurd “stage performance.” In this “as if real, as if imaginary” process of amusing revelry, “They Co. Ltd.” expresses their views and attitudes as young and future artists towards issues such as, the current cultural situation, the pedagogical processes of Fine Arts Academies, as well as the existent state of affairs in art circles.

The exhibition is composed of three parts, “The 2004 Contemporary Art ‘They’ Golden Award” award ceremony is this particular exhibitions primary content. Following the format of current day evening award ceremonies, nomination processes, as well as audience voting participation, they will simulate the grand occasion of the artists walking up on stage to accept their awards and display their represented, works by “subbing-in” for these artists.

After the awards ceremony will be the artist job fair portion. Simulating today’s widely used job fair methods, and according to test topics formulated by their

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company, they will earnestly look to use audience members to fill such positions as: chief inspector of propaganda planning, artists, and chief inspector of client management.

The exhibition emphasizes audience interaction; the presentation of a pictorial chat-room provides an opportunity for artist and audience exchange. The already construction pictorial chat-room uses digital video and spray-paint methods to display itself in the exhibition space. In this background and atmosphere, the audience can participate on-site by using images from the pictorial chat-room to engage in conversation. Taken as a whole, the work manifests audience participation with a completed visual work.

During the exhibition, "They's" attitude towards traditional order is not just a type of cynical rebellion, but rather based on current values. Furthermore, in the midst of personally experiencing simulation and mimesis, the group employs a stance of direct acceptance and utilization, and in this scene of emphasizing oneself, joy, fashionableness, and role playing, they reveal their own existence. The group uses the unique experiences and strength of young artists whose lives span across two centuries, to try, in a "meaningless meaningful" way, to demonstrate the decadence of past artists and their imaginations.