

PRESS RELEASE

"Liu Ding: Treasure"

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Long March Independent Space, Beijing

"Samples from the Transition" is a sequence of works I conceptualize as a way to continuously examine and contemplate the various aspects of contemporary society on a microcosmic level. They are the results from my attempts to re-interpret, represent and magnify the all kinds of contradictions, absurd events, bizarre phenomena, and outrageous concepts prevalent in the society today. As I carefully obscure the borderlines between the existing order and disorder, the logical and the incredible, and highlight the confusion, disharmony, complication, the out of place and the absurd in my projection of the reality from various perspectives, the audience is led to experience alienation, uneasiness and confusion over the common way of life that they are familiar to.

Along the same cultural vein, any type of living condition and social discourse are conditioned and shaped by the specific era they are in. The overall climate of an era also determines the style, attribute and tone of artworks produced in this timeframe. Especially in this chaotic and turbulent decade we are in today, the exclusiveness and importance of an individual are pushed aside to the margin by the different social currents of our times. Living in these rootless "troubled times," the insignificance of an individual stands out even more, constantly reminding us of our vulnerable position. The overall aesthetics, sentiments, ethical guidelines, value standards, and worldview of the era prevail over everything. It is impossible to distinguish bubble from reality. We have no way of escaping the bastion of iron made with false standards. On the other hand, artworks that sample from the reality and reflect on, question, and discuss relevant social practice and social issues bear the marks of our times in many aspects.

In many historical images and memories, the great person would always be standing on top of a mountain, overlooking and pointing out to the world under

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his feet. The mountaintop thus comes to be considered a synonym for power. In the world of Alibaba, the treasure is always hidden in the depth of the mountain. If you venture there and obtain the password, you can then get your hands on the treasure. Power and treasure seem to be out of reach but in the meantime, they might be just around the corner. In reality, many of us are fully committed to being a player in this Vanity Fair, full of ambitions and desires. We all hope that one day we could reach the peak of the mountain and we would do it at any cost, and by any means. Some people thus become workaholics; some become a visionary of the new age by making "flying machines;" some become profitable psychiatrists and gym bosses; some become artists who reflect on this mass "hiking" movement in the society. What would happen then once we reach the top of a mountain? Is there really priceless treasure or simply a fantasy of ours? Besides, there are always higher mountains beyond the ones we've conquered. Is there an end to this venture?

As clouds gather and wind grows stronger, it can get very difficult to steady oneself on a tiny bit of land on the mountaintop. But despite the constant changes of climate, the mountaintop is forever a source of temptation attracting people to surge there, as butterflies are drawn to fire. Perhaps there is really a lot of "visible" treasure!

Specifications and Materials

To find the central point on the floor of an independent rectangular space and dig a 250 cm deep opening. To install an ultra bright spotlight on the bottom of this opening so that the light can come out through the pile of jewelries placed on the top. The remains from the digging are kept around the opening.

Materials

Ultra bright spotlight and manmade gems.