

 Wang Jianwei: Cambrian

2018 West Bund Art &amp; Design | 2018.11.07-11.11 | Booth A110

2018 Art021 Shanghai Contemporary Art Fair | 2018.11.08-11.11 | Booth C05

Long March Space is proud to announce Wang Jianwei's latest solo exhibition "Cambrian", to be held in Shanghai in early November 2018. For the past few years the artist has been developing an entirely new conceptual direction for his work, re-locating our technologically advanced present in its mineral origins back in the Cambrian Period. Offering the first comprehensive look at this new strand in his practice, "Cambrian" may be considered Wang Jianwei's next major statement after his 2014 solo exhibition at the Guggenheim in New York, and his 2015 solo exhibition at Long March Space in Beijing. Breaking away from the conventional practice of staging an exhibition at an art museum or gallery, "Cambrian" will be held at Long March Space's booths at West Bund Art and Design (November 7th to 11th, Booth A110) and Art021 Shanghai Contemporary Art Fair (November 8th to 11th, Booth C05). The single solo exhibition will be divided into two halves, with the structure of the two booths and the works within serving as mirror images of each other.

For Wang Jianwei, the Cambrian Period is a still slumbering state of geological time. When a brown chunk of ore or black rare earth becomes part of a high speed railway track or transmission tower carrying electrical cables for thousands of kilometers, it is not only connected to the physical reality of metal or energy, but also to a sort of geological integrity. Geological time is not reducible to geological science. It is about the residual knowledge held in the tension between vertical and horizontal orientations, the direct encounter between vertical stacks and technique (algorithms) redefining individuality and the forms it can take. A new complex is formed, and as "users" we serve this system through a vertical interface, one which is only completed through our very presence, creating a new way of being. At this time, the minerals behind our infrastructure and their physical sources can no longer be defined merely by the geological level they exist within. Eventually, this leads to the emergence of a paradoxical present and future.

"Cambrian" showcases Wang Jianwei's recent work concerning geological energy, production at overcapacity, economic expansion, and the new geopolitical relationships that arise when these phenomena collide. In the exhibition one may find unadorned and cold imagery from the process of microchip formation, sharp stainless steel installations made from minerals originating in Cambrian geological strata, and paintings of engine turbines powered by shale oil. In the words of Wang Jianwei, discussing the images and environments that surround us, "algorithms determine the clarity of mountains, and filters add a 'natural' reality... The distant past determines our now, and what is underground controls the sky. Because of their presence we must not get too confident."

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### About the Artist

Born 1958 in Sichuan Province, China, Wang Jianwei has been a pioneer in the Chinese contemporary art scene since the 1970s. Academically trained as a painter, he dedicated much of his time as a student at the Zhejiang Academy of Fine Arts (now the China Academy of Art) to reading about Existentialism and Chinese history. This led him to years of experimentation in conveying complex ideas through painting. Since the 1990s Wang Jianwei has continuously explored how comprehensive knowledge and multi-disciplinary studies can inform contemporary art, thus creating a new vocabulary for himself through different methodologies from multiple fields. From these diverse relations and layers of knowledge he establishes and develops the possibility of a new subjectivity. Based on this comprehensive knowledge, his philosophical inquiries invoke an interdisciplinary way of seeing. For this reason, his artworks include a wide variety of forms, spanning video, theatre, multimedia work, installation, painting and text.

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