

## Press Release

### Zhan Wang: Objects of Idea

2020.7.25–10.18

### Long March Space, Beijing

On July 25, 2020, Long March Space presents the Zhan Wang solo exhibition *Objects of Idea*. This is the artist's fourth solo exhibition at Long March Space, after *86 Divinity Figures* (2008), *Form of the Formless* (2012), and *Morph* (2014). This exhibition selects 22 artworks covering the artist's practice back to 1990 to present his diverse explorations in material, technique and language throughout his creative career, and his methodology for integrating conception with production.

For Zhan Wang, the meaning of "idea" roams freely between such terms as "thoughts", "notions", "ideas" and "concepts," and represents the arrival of inspiration, the instance of thought, the thinking of the artist as individual. The "Object of Idea" is different from art that seeks "contemporariness" as its goal. Instead, it emphasizes the use of such processes and products as material, technique and language, with the "anti-readymade" methodology they encompass naturally preserving the artist's personality and nature in the objects. As the "idea" naturally emerges through the process of creating a new object, this "object of idea" arises as an integration of thought (idea) and action (experimentation).

The 22 artworks or "objects of idea" in this exhibition are laid out in equally distant pairs throughout the exhibition space, each artwork standing apart, speaking independently, and touching off dialogues with its different materials and expressive forms. The 1990 work *Underground* imagines a future intelligent species excavating the ground beneath the city to seek out material evidence of contemporary human existence—the overlapping pipes and lines of the city interspersed with fossils that our contemporary intellects will recognize as archaeological artifacts of the Anthropocene. The 2012 work *Concealed Rock* replicates a rock in transparent acrylic. This acrylic rock is polished and inserted into a likewise transparent material. In theory, the original rock should disappear, but due to the traces of manual production, the rock concealed within is just barely discernible under a faint light. This artwork comes together with such other featured works as *Shell of Mao Suit* (1994), *Six-Sided Artificial*

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*Rock* (2013–2019), and *Imprinting Terrain* (2015), to present a clear thread of the artist's longstanding interests, from his focus on the visible and invisible, to research on the identification of the boundaries of things, and on to the exploration of space from the level of object to the vastness of the cosmos. Three other works, *Forms in Flux* (2017), *Hippology* (2019), and *Taboo* (2007–2019) have been placed on intelligent robotic plinths to roam about the exhibition space, variously approaching and moving away from the other works to constantly construct dynamic dialogues and temporary constellations of meaning that are dismantled just as rapidly.

Setting aside a deeper analysis of the specific layers and elements of “objects of idea,” they are the “objects” that take shape through various materials and techniques after the sudden emergence of an “idea” from the artist's vast imagination and intuition. This exhibition goes beyond the usual focus of conventional sculpture, using use artworks dubbed “objects of idea” to present the true nature and working methods of a sculpture artist at this unique point in time, and thus commence a new dialogue.

During the exhibition, the Long March Space Artist Room will present an entirely new “object of idea” that is the product of a year of effort by Zhan Wang and the Long March Books team: *The Limit of an Object* (2020). This unique print encompasses the very first moments of many “objects of idea” in Zhan Wang's path of artistic experimentation stretching back to 1988. *The Limit of an Object* takes the form of tarot cards, inviting the viewer to engage and interact either by reading about a single artwork on a single card, or by freely arranging multiple cards to create a constellation of meaning between various “objects of idea.”

### **About the Artist**

Zhan Wang was born in 1962 in Beijing, China. In 1996 he graduated from the sculpture department of the Central Academy of Fine Arts (CAFA) and he currently lives and works in Beijing where he teaches sculpture at CAFA. Zhan Wang is considered as one of the most important contemporary artists whose artistic creations touch upon sculpture, installation, actions, photography and video. With his personal experience and intuition, Zhan Wang constantly cracks through the expressions by exploring materials, languages and concepts.

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