

Press Release

**Long March Independent Project | Steadfastly Revise for the Standards in Nonproductive Construction
(Part II: Liquid Circulates)**

Curator: Evonne Jiawei Yuan

Artists: Shuyi Cao, Julian Junyuan Feng, Hu Wei, Liu Chuang, Liu Yujia, Nabuqi, Pu Yingwei, Zhang Ruyi, Vivien Zhang

11 March 2023 – 7 May 2023

Long March Independent Space, West Street, 798 Art District, 4 Jiuxianqiao Rd, Chaoyang

Inspired by the architectural text “Steadfastly Lower the Standards in Nonproductive Construction” (1955), which informed the counter-narrative coined for the previous iteration of “Steadfastly Raise the Standards in Nonproductive Construction” (2018), curator Evonne Jiawei Yuan addresses the canonical forms of “productivity” anchored by the two architectural typologies – monument and skyscraper – as well as its dialectics of “productive” and “nonproductive,” with artworks by eight artists (-duo)s including Chen Wei, Cui Jie, Liu Ren, Liu Wei, Lu Lei, Inga Svala Thorsdottir & Wu Shanzhuan, Joey Xia, Zeng Jiahui in Long March Independent Project, “Steadfastly Revise for the Standards in Nonproductive Construction, Part I: Solid Molds.” The notions of monuments bind people's will to social production, and the skyscrapers' pursuit of height and speed in the context of the social output are mutually supportive and reliant on one another.

For instance, juxtaposed diagonally, the two large-scale installations by Inga Svala Thorsdottir & Wu Shanzhuan, *Cause in Projection* (2017) and *Cause in Perspective* (2017), highlight their intertextual connections. They were primarily devised for an architectural idea entitled “Cause and Examples Projected from It” as a pair of library models. “Cause,” as an abstract “origin” or “reason,” suggests an infinite spindle structure through two opposing processes of construction, namely, “projection” and “perspective,” where the vanishing point of focal-point perspective and the starting point of projection overlap, as the myriad of worldly things split and multiply in-between. Likewise, if the notion of “(non-)productivity” is considered a “cause,” then “projection” and “perspective” would best correspond to “lowering” and “elevating,” and any single construction would institutionalize this very “cause.”

In addition, Joey Xia's *Terrestrial Echo of Solar Energy (No.1–10)* (2022), commissioned by the Long March Independent Project for this exhibition, responds to Georges Bataille's association between surplus solar energy and “unproductive” consumption, as mentioned in *The Notion of Expenditure* (1933) and *The Accursed Share* (1949). His images, incarnated by ten flags hanging beneath the skylights on the elegantly jagged roof, provide a fresh view of the significance of architecture as objects and a means of conditioning.

“Steadfastly Revise for the Standards in Nonproductive Construction, Part II: Liquid Circulates,” which opens on 11 March, focuses on the other two architectural genres, civic squares and frontlines, that encourage the mobility of “productivity.” Civic squares are public spaces where the exchange of opinion and social integration occur, undifferentiated in both the physical and virtual worlds. Instead, frontlines are dedicated to regional activities as part of the infrastructure network. Eleven (sets of) works of art by Shuyi Cao, Julian Junyuan Feng, Hu Wei, Liu Chuang, Liu Yujia, Nabuqi, Pu Yingwei, Zhang Ruyi, and Vivien Zhang are included in this exhibition, investigate architectural projects, urban narratives, natural spectacles as attributes of “productive” or “nonproductive” architecture, and the political order concealed in their “standards.” The artists adopt “revision” as their creative approach, attempting to heal the land damaged by “production” and construction.

Shuyi Cao is a New York-based artist whose practice explores alchemical approaches to object making and knowledge osmosis. Through archeological speculation and ecological fiction, she contemplates the plurality of relations between technoscience, mythology, and cosmology. Her multi-medium installation synthesizes various organic and inorganic materials, natural and artificial processes. Combining hand-crafted and digital artifacts, moving images, and sounds, the assemblage suggests heterogeneous material temporalities.

Julian Junyuan Feng is an artist and writer based in Shanghai. He received his B.S. in physics from Fudan University and M.F.A. in fine arts from the University of Pennsylvania. He was a finalist for the 2018 Huayu Youth Award. His recent projects and exhibitions include “An Impulse to Turn” at Inside-Out Art Museum, “Building Code Violations III: Special Economic Zone” at Times Museum. Feng co-curated the exhibition “Whatever works, whatever it takes” with Zhihui Zhang at Goethe-Institut China in 2019. In 2021, he co-curated the exhibition “Liquid Ground” with Alvin Li at Para Site in Hong Kong. In 2022, he co-founded independent art space and curatorial office *totalab* with fellow curator and writer Evonne Jiawei Yuan.

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Hu Wei, lives and works in Beijing. He graduated from CAFA (2012) and obtained an MA at the Dutch Art Institute (DAI), Netherlands (2016). His recent practice travels through different geo-contexts and silenced histories and materials, investigating the dynamics, fragmentation and synthetic alienation of human, non-human and material in the process of historical and natural transformation. Combined with moving image and essayistic aesthetics, his works also unfold the precarious relationship between invisible labor, affect, and value judgments in different political and economic environments.

Liu Chuang, born in Tianmen in 1978, currently lives and works in Shanghai. In 2001, he received his BA from the Hubei Institute of Fine Arts. Liu Chuang works primarily with film, sculpture, readymade and installation. His works often integrate long-term history and ecological arc for imagination, tracing the social, cultural and economic transformations of contemporary China. Weaving narratives that connect the micro and macro, past and present, fiction and reality, Liu Chuang explores how vast and complex changes in nature, tradition, demographics, cutting-edge technology, and socio-economic systems affect individuals and their engagements with the world as a whole.

Liu Yujia, currently lives and works in Beijing. She graduated from Sichuan Fine Arts Institute and obtained her master's degree from London College of Communication, University of the Arts London. The artist shoots the "real life" scenes in a documentary way, meanwhile, the private and invisible dimension of "real life" could be revealed by her fictional or "fake" figures. Her recent practice reveals the fictional and illusory aspects of social reality, allowing the audience to experience reality as pure fiction.

Nabuqi, born in Inner Mongolia in 1984, lives and works in Beijing. Focusing on both the physical and psychological nature of objects and materials, Nabuqi's work deals with the relationship between the sculptural objects and the bodily, and explores human perceptions in either confrontational or immersive spatial contexts.

Pu Yingwei, born in 1989, Lives and works in Beijing, China. Pu received his BFA from Sichuan Fine art Institute in 2013, DNSEP (MFA with Félicitation du jury) from École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Lyon in 2018. As an active contributor to the new generation of political conceptual art, Pu Yingwei has creatively inherited and developed the visual and ideological lineage of socialist art and early Chinese avant-garde art, with his practice spanning painting, writing, designing, curating and lecturing, thus forming the unique language system and historical perspective.

Zhang Ruyi, born in 1985, currently lives and works in Shanghai. Zhang Ruyi's artistic practice unfolds around everyday logic. Her work occupies a unique space which reconciles artifacts, the industrial experience, and urban life. The artist finds inspiration in everyday materials. In her main narrative approach, she begins with inner intuition and explores the hierarchical interactions between individuals, material, and place.

Vivien Zhang, born in Beijing in 1990, grew up in China, Kenya and Thailand, and currently lives and works in London. She received her MA in Painting from the Royal College of Art (London) in 2014, after completing her undergraduate degree at the Slade School of Fine Art, UCL (London) in 2012. Zhang's paintings present a cultural and geographical fluidity, which interrogates the palimpsest nature of contemporary culture and the paradoxes of our information age. As a digital native, Zhang explores being a passive recipient in a growing digital world and makes apparent the fragmented and sporadic ways in which we consume information.

About the Curator

Evonne Jiawei Yuan is a writer and curator based in Shanghai. She graduated from Fudan University with B.A. in Museology, The Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London with M.A. in History of Art, and the Architectural Association School of Architecture with M.A. in History & Critical Thinking. Recent curations include "Shanghai Dandy" (Don Gallery, Shanghai, 2017), "Steadfastly Raise the Standards in Nonproductive Construction" (Don Gallery, Shanghai, 2018), "Going Viral: Zombies, Pluribiosis, and Love of the Living Dead" (totalab, Shanghai, 2022), "Steadfastly Revise For the Standards in Nonproductive Construction (Part I: Solid Molds; Part II: Liquid Circulates)" (Long March Independent Space, Beijing, 2022–23), "Entangled, Ensnared, Entwined – Carol Bove, Hu Xiaoyuan, Alicja Kwade" (Longlati Foundation, Shanghai, 2023), etc. Contributing articles also featured in artforum.com.cn, ArtChina, LEAP, etc. Current research interests include the architectural media in-and-of contemporary art, (post)modern spatial concepts, border aesthetics and its geopolitics. She has been Guest Curator of Longlati Foundation and Head of its Writers' Acquisition Committee (Shanghai) since 2021, producing solo exhibitions "Ma Qiusha: The Mirror(-scape) of Your Skin" (2022), "Laure Prouvost: Theatergarden and A Be(a)stuary of the Anthropocene" (2022), etc. In 2022, she co-founds totalab, an independent curatorial office and art space in Shanghai with artist-curator Julian Junyuan Feng.

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