

# Qiu Zhijie

GALLERIA CONTINUA / BEIJING

Opening September 26, 2013

Galleria Continua is pleased to present in its Beijing gallery the solo exhibition of one of China's leading artists - Qiu Zhijie.

While contemporary art was hardly known in China in the 1990s, Qiu Zhijie already started making conceptual pieces in the southern regions of China. After the Reform and Opening in 1979, he was one of the youngest students who were influenced by the newly brought Western thoughts in the fields of Art, Philosophy, Political Science and Sociology. He was then influenced by thinkers such as Nietzsche and Wittgenstein, and quickly integrated his inspiration together with newly adapted methods of art making into his practice. As an artist, he has witnessed the rapid economical-social changes of China in the last two decades. Since being deeply rooted in China's cultural context and the land that he belongs, he questions the controversial political and social phenomena that he sees, and his works aim to be a comment on these phenomena. The changes of development and globalization in contemporary China intrigue him, especially the clashes of ideologies and different realities. Meanwhile, he also reflects on China's recent history in his works-how individuals' lives are affected by a state's destiny. In his exhibition, he generously delivers his contemplation to his audience.

The exhibition by Qiu Zhijie makes a reference to the book 'The Name of the Rose'. In the book, the Italian philosopher Umberto Eco tells a meaningful story: a series of bizarre murders happened in a monastery. As the detective investigated deeply into the case, the reasons were eventually uncovered : the cause of the murders was a book that resided in the library of the monastery. The book was the second volume of Aristotle's 'On Poetics'. In the first volume, Aristotle talks about tragedy; in the second volume, he talks about the meaning of comedy and the techniques of it-how to create laughter and to bring pleasure to lives and the society. A book like that was deemed to be intolerable for a medieval world that was under Christian rules. Because the 'evil, bore, shameless, stupid and dissolute laughter' would certainly subvert the order that has been built by the church, so did it for the authority that the church has created in the society. So the librarian guarded this 'forbidden' knowledge warily, therefore everyone that read the book was killed by the poison on the book pages. At the end of the story, 'Book of Laughter', the murderer and the whole library were all burnt to ashes.

In the exhibition, the artist Qiu Zhijie claims to 'own' a version of this forbidden book and to showcase some chapters from it. By 'presenting' this book to the audience, the techniques of comedy and laughter are opened for acquisition, therefore this forbidden knowledge can be gained freely. The 'laughter' in this exhibition is more than a simple cheerful one, it has a penetrating power and contains deeper implications. It aims to awaken.

Qiu Zhijie was born in 1969 in Zhangzhou, China, he now lives and works in China. He has shown extensively worldwide, with solo shows including the Fondazione Querini Stampalia, Venice, 2013; Pace Beijing, Beijing, 2011; the Chambers Fine Art, New York, 2009; the Venice Biennale (2009) and the Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (UCCA), Beijing, 2009. His most recent group shows include Saatchi Gallery, London, 2012; the Museo Diocesano d'arte sacra, Venice, 2013; the Minsheng Art Museum, Shanghai, 2012; the National Museum of Art, Osaka, 2011; The House of World Cultures, Berlin, 2009; Tate Liverpool, 2007; the National Gallery Moscow, Russia, 2007; Long March Space, Beijing, 2007; The Open Museum of Photography , Tel Hai, Israel, 2005; the National Gallery of Malaysia , Malaysia, 2004; the Musée d'Art Contemporain de Lyon , France, 2004; the International Center of Photography , New York (2004) and Queens Museum of Art, New York, USA, 2001. In 2012 he acted as the chief curator of the Shanghai Biennale.

GALLERIACONTINUA / Beijing 常青画廊 / 北京

# 8503, Dashanzi 798 Art Factory, 2 Jiuxianqiao Road, Chaoyang Dst. Beijing, 100015 China

中国北京市朝阳区酒仙桥路2号, 大山子798艺术工厂, 8503信箱, 邮编100015

tel +86.10.59789505 | fax +86.10.59789774 beijing@galleriacontinua.com.cn | www.galleriacontinua.com