The Enrico Navarra Gallery, in collaboration with the Hanart T Z Gallery of Hong Kong, presents a selection of 14 Chinese contemporary artists. “Made by Chinese” is a series of seven exhibitions that will be held in our space located 16, avenue Matignon 75003 Paris, from April 2001 to March 2002.

The death of Mao Zedong in 1976 and the opening of China on abroad contribute to the opening out of the Chinese contemporary art, which, during the eighties, will be influenced by the West. In 1989, the repression of Tiananmen’s movement gave an abrupt stop to this evolution. Nevertheless, since 1992, Chinese artists that go part of important politics reforms, tended towards more originals and more engaged researchs and creations showing aspirations of a new generation faced with its Chinese identity. Today, the Chinese contemporary art plays an essential part on the international artistic scene. Providing a new lease, new prospects to the whole art world, this was easy to see, for example, last year during the Venice Biennial or the Biennial of Lyon.

Throughout this series of exhibitions, we will inform you by press releases which will be specific to each of them.
You could also consult the website that our partnership Pariscope.fr will spare to different events: www.pariscope.fr/MadeByChinese.

MADE BY CHINESE #2, Gu Wenda
Opening wednesday May 30th, 2001 from 6.00pm
Exhibition until July 12th, 2001

Others exhibitions will continue for the chinese new year 2002
Gu Wenda was among the first radical artists in post-Mao China to exploit the power of calligraphy for avant garde art, Gu has changed calligraphy into an explosive, threatening contemporary means of expression. He has explored the power of calligraphy as a public language, inspired by the example of Cultural Revolution 'big character posters' (political statements written and disseminated by the masses but tacitly sanctioned by the ruling faction of the day).

His art has highlighted the provocative authority of public announcements and prohibitions. In the Sky Dynasty series, large character words loom out of clouds suggesting supernatural apparitions. The presence of words amidst landscapes makes them more than signs, and allows them to take their place among the natural elements as another, and perhaps more potent element.

Reviewing Gu’s works from his word paintings to installations incorporating body parts such as menstrual blood, hair and placenta, it becomes apparent that his creative power is derived from the breaking of taboos. In 1984, Gu started to experiment with error words, challenging the sacred ground of correct word forms which represent stability and order.

His later use of body parts likewise evoked deep-rooted taboos as they suggest an interference with the human life cycle. The power generated from amassing hair from anonymous donors is comparable to the threat of the sheer volume of humanity: each strand of hair carries a person’s full DNA code. The hair, shaped into words (or pseudo-words), gives an identity and a humanity to these otherwise anonymous masses. In Gu’s art, culture and nature merge to present something larger than either one alone, and restores to the word its primal cultural power of giving meaning to life.

Chang Tsong-zung

Extract of the catalogue "Made By Chinese"
Biographic References

1955  Born in Shanghai, China
1976  Entered the Shanghai School of Arts and Crafts, China
1981  MFA, China National Academy of Arts, China
Currently lives and works in New York, USA

Selected Solo Exhibitions

- “United Nations-Babel of the Millennium”, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Francisco, USA
- “United Nations-Chile Monument”, Foundation of America, San Diego, Chile
- “Fusion-Mythos of Lost?”, a cultural wedding performance, Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, San Francisco, USA

1998 - “United Nations-Vancouver Monument: The Metamorphosis” installation, Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada
- “Confucius Diary-Vancouver”, performance, Vancouver, Canada

Selected Group Exhibitions

2000 - “The 3rd Kwangju Biennial - Asia Section”, Kwangju, Korea; Utsunomiya Museum of Art, Utsunomiya, Japan
- “Power of the World”, Faulconer Gallery, Grinnell College, Grinnell, Iowa, USA
- “Sharing Exoticisms - Contemporary Art Lyon Biennial”, Lyon, France

1999 - “Power of the Word”, Taiwan Museum of Art, Taizhong, Taiwan
- “Conceptualist Art: Points of Origin 1950s-1980s”, Queens Museum of Art, New York; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, USA
- “Transience - Chinese Experimental Art at the End of the Twentieth Century”, The David and Alfred Smart Museum of Art, The University of Chicago, Chicago; University of Oregon Museum of Art; The Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College, USA, until 1999

1998 - “Inside Out: New Chinese Art”, Asia Society Galleries, New York, P.S 1 Contemporary Art Center, New York; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, USA; Contemporary Art Museum of Mexico, Mexico / Mexique; Tacoma Art Museum and Henry Art Gallery, Seattle, USA; National Gallery of Art, Canberra, Australia / Australie; Hong Kong Museum of Art, Hong Kong until / jusqu’en 2000
- “The 1st Shenzhen Ink Painting Biennial”, Guanshanyui Art Museum, Shenzhen, China
- “Beyond the Form”, Cork Gallery, Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center, New York, USA
- “The 2nd Shanghai Biennial”, Shanghai Art Museum, Shanghai, China

- “United Nations-USA Monument: Dreamerica”, Sonje Museum of Contemporary Art, Korea

- “The 1st Shanghai Biennial”, Shanghai Art Museum, Shanghai, China / Chine

Reproductions

Following transparencies are available at the gallery. We ask you to aside mentions quoted:

A  Gu Wenda
© Rights reserved
courtesy galerie Enrico Navarra, 2001

B  United Nations - Hong Kong Monument: The Historical Clash, made for the Hong Kong Handover, 1997, Hanart T Z Gallery, Hong Kong
© Gu Wenda
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C  United Nations - Man and Space, 2000, human hair, installation for 3rd Kwangju Biennial, Korea
© Gu Wenda
courtesy galerie Enrico Navarra, 2001

D  Art Performance, Hong Kong Museum of Art, Hong Kong, 2000
© Gu Wenda
courtesy galerie Enrico Navarra, 2001
On the occasion of a series of exhibitions “Made by Chinese”, The Enrico Navarra Gallery publishes a book of 272 pages with many reproductions, showing the 14 selected artists’ works and biographies with a text spared to Chinese contemporary art, written by Chang Tsong-zung and an essay by Michel Nuridsany. The book will be available at the Gallery Enrico Navarra.