Liu Sheng
刘声

Liu Sheng grew up in a rural farming village in Suixi County in Zhanjiang, an area stricken by poverty located in the southwest of Guangdong province in China. Liu studied oil painting at the Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts where he received a bachelor’s degree in 1994. He currently lives in Beipo Village of Suixi County.

Liu Sheng's recent solo exhibition include Potato Man's Quest (Galerie du Monde, 2024), Floating Firewood (Bonacon Gallery, 2019). His works have been included in exhibitions at institude of Times Museum, Guangdong Museum of Art, Bi-City Biennale of Urbanism\ Architecture, etc. His social practice project includes HB Station (2023-2024); Return to Sweet Potato Farming, (2019-2024); "Residents" (2017).

Born in 1971, Liu Sheng experienced China's industrial revolution and the drastic social transformations of rapid urbanization. As the first university graduate and breadwinner of the family, Liu took on jobs in design and manufacturing to lift his family out of poverty, from 1994 to 2014. This survival experience of marginalized people hustling in changing cities, made Liu very different from artists that start practicing professionally straight out of art school.

A migrant worker was Liu Sheng's identity for two decades, but he never stopped questioning the boundary of art and society. In 2014, he no longer wanted to be a mere observer and started documenting his daily encounters. From 2014 to 2016, Liu Sheng delved into the social landscape of 'urban villages' in the Pearl River Delta. Through depicting the state of existence of these migrants, the artist attempts to document how China's economic revolution transformed the country's domestic sphere.

Late 2019, Liu Sheng returned to his home village and rented two acres of farmland from his cousin which began his life as a 'Potato Man'. Liu explores the intimate choices of village families in the face of larger forces of modernization, showing how these negotiations shape the configurations of daily village life — from power structure, communal superstitions, individualism vs collectivism, to resources distribution and inequalities.

Long-durational social practice is not only a way for Liu Sheng to transcend his own observation and perception, to generate artistic expression in the joint relationship with others, but to expose critical issues within existing systems and catalyze social exchange.

Date. No.

一物克一物 臭草治蚊毒

Date. No.

2020-7-8

上午去镇上买各种小种纸条，最后挑了"隆品香粘、隆品优8129"五斤，回来用清水泡上。

2020-6-12

番薯卖完，0.9元/斤。[redacted]每天[redacted]六畦，每天由于被蛀了一部分，1.8亩挖只卖自己去挖。收获的感觉总是喜悦

这是种地与"打马"[redacted]不同的地方在于：快感核心是"不劳而获"，但两者的风

（我相信很多乡亲们在投注前都[redacted]或多或少产生[redacted]幻觉）

上

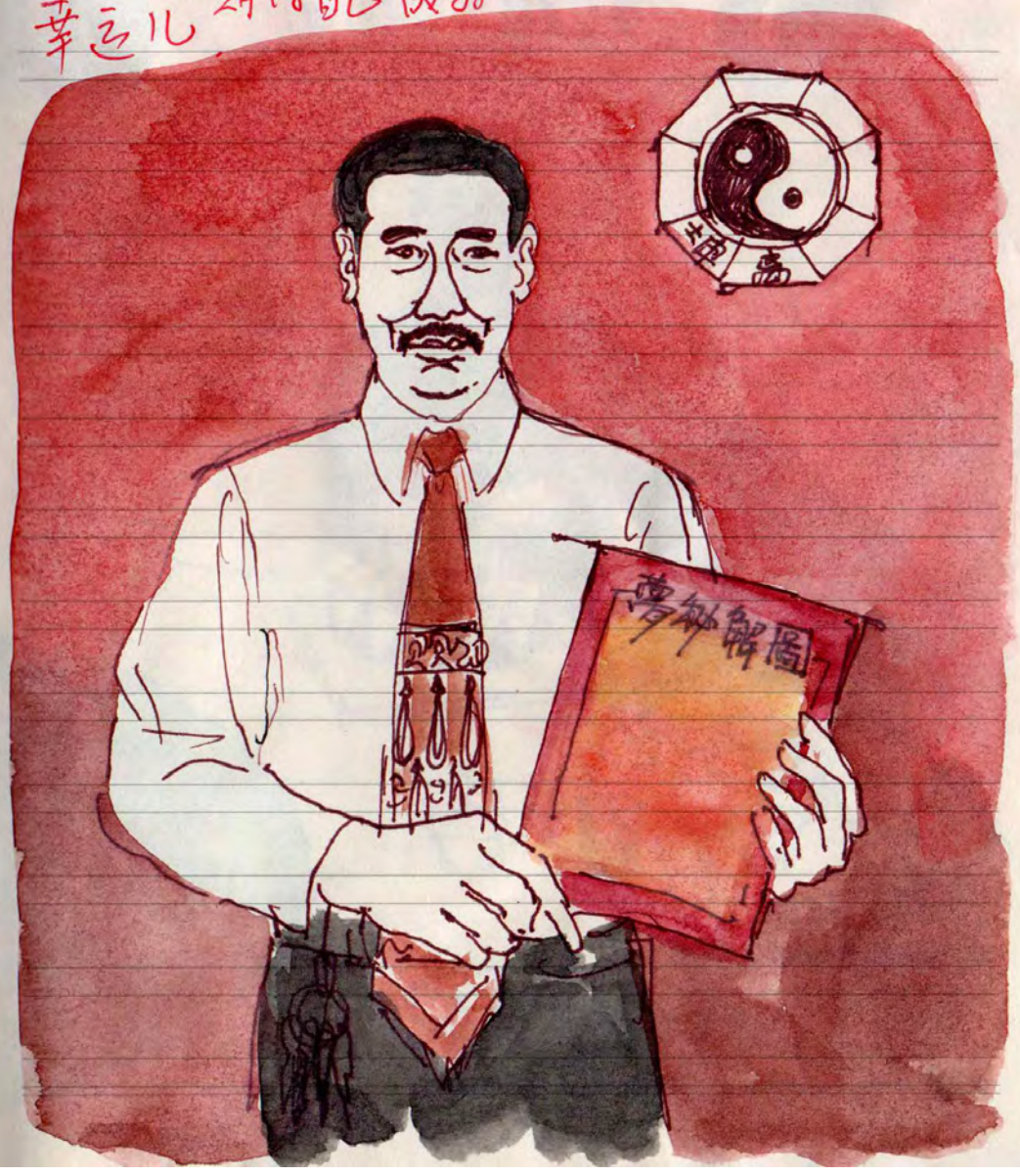
早六点至九点收工。[redacted]

得468元。第一畦[redacted]，谁想吃就吃，这与中马的感觉是不一样的。[redacted]种地是靠付出汗水与技术，而"打马"的险是一样的

Date. No.

2020-7-19

在这[redacted]里，一切的遭遇与生活细节都可以转换成一组数字码，再通过投注私彩的方式[redacted](博彩)不劳而获的幸运儿期待自己成为



In Beipo, Liu Sheng observed the villagers' ways of survival, where individuals cannot alter deeply rooted traditions. He documented how scorching sun, lightning, and torrential rains wore on their bodies and minds, and how unstable harvests bred a gambling mentality that coexisted with folk beliefs. "Here, there is silence and solitude, futility intertwined with desire," Liu Sheng wrote. Through physical labor, he sought to internalize the perspective of rural life, allowing his paintings to become an extension of his sensory connection to the land.

Engaging with Liu Sheng's art and writings helps recalibrate our romanticized notions of rural idylls: the "authentic" emotions stirred by gazing upon the countryside are, in fact, manifestations of the resilient tension born from life's struggle against the land. Meanwhile, the seemingly "absurd" or "magical-realist" narratives often dismissed as fiction are, paradoxically, the truest reflections of rural existence.

The Second Day of the Lunar New Year
2025
Oil on canvas
200 x 150cm

Bajie
2025
Oil on canvas
150 x 120cm

Running in the Rain
2025
Oil on canvas
150 x 120cm

Kidnap a Pig
2025
Oil on canvas
150 x 200cm

Comrade
2025
Oil on canvas
120 x 150cm

Capture the Thunder God
2025
Oil on canvas
150 x 200cm

Sweet Potato Harvester
2024
Oil on canvas
150 x 120cm

A Brutal Winter
2024
Oil on canvas
150 x 120cm

Summer Retreat
2025
Oil on canvas
150 x 120cm

Autumn Dusk
2025
Oil on canvas
150 x 120cm

A Cat's Claw Farmer
2024
Oil on canvas
80 x 60cm

The Village Shaman
2024
Oil on canvas
75 x 75cm

Fight the Landlord
2024
Oil on canvas
150 x 200cm

Noon Haze
2024
Oil on canvas
150 x 200cm

Red Bull
2024
Oil on canvas
150 x 200cm

Watch a Popular Series II
2024
Oil on canvas
150 x 200cm

He Returns to the Land Again
2024
Oil on canvas
150 x 200cm

Dog-headed Deer
2024
Oil on canvas
120 x 150cm

Summer Breeze
2024
Oil on canvas
120 x 150cm

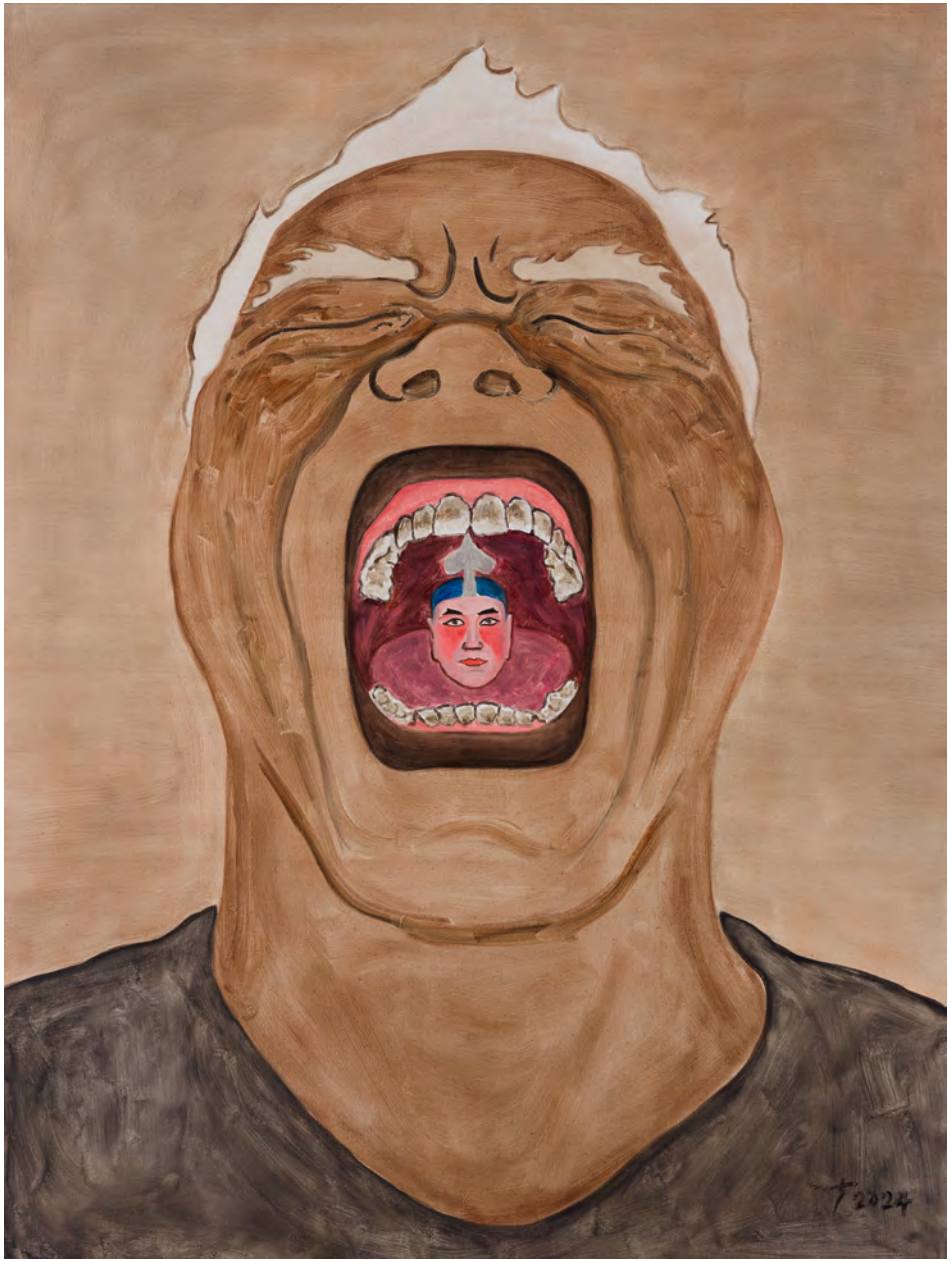
Fighting the Tiger
2024
Oil on canvas
120 x 150cm

Against the Wind
2024
Oil on canvas
150 x 120cm

Woman with a Sickle
2024
Oil on canvas
120 x 90cm

Salty Fog Water
2024
Oil on cavnas
120 x 90cm

A Farm Mover
2024
Oil on canvas
80 x 60cm



Self Portrait
2024
Oil on canvas
120 x 90cm

A Successful Man
2023
Oil on canvas
150 x 200cm

Impermanent Like Clouds
2023
Oil on canvas
90 x 120cm

Burning Cane Stalks
2023
Oil on canvas
90 x 120cm

A Drunk Village Chief
2023
Oil on canvas
90 x 120cm

Picking up a Gold Moon
2023
Oil on canvas
90 x 120cm

Loose Traces
2023
Oil on canvas
90 x 120cm

The Wind is Formless
2023
Oil on canvas
150 x 120cm

One "Look" Sugarcane
2023
Oil on canvas
100 x 75cm

The Cold Within
2023
Oil on canvas
120 x 90cm


忘在无
遗浪的
法流地
天
当年
甘蔗
数个黑夜

Cunning Water Pump
2022
Oil on canvas
150 x 200cm

Rest in the Field
2022
Oil on canvas
150 x 200cm

Let it Turn to Ashes
2022
Oil on canvas
80 x 60cm

Mission of Chilli
2022
Oil on canvas
120 x 90cm

Xidi
2022
Oil on canvas
60 x 50cm

Sweet Potato Man
2022
Oil on canvas
50 x 40cm

Liu Sheng: Beipo, Beijing Dangdai Art Fair 2025, exhibition view

Liu Sheng: Beipo, Beijing Dangdai Art Fair 2025, exhibition view

Liu Sheng: Beipo, Beijing Dangdai Art Fair 2025, exhibition view

Potato Man's Quest, Galerie du Monde, exhibition view, 2024

Potato Man's Quest, Galerie du Monde, exhibition view, 2024

Potato Man's Quest, Galerie du Monde, exhibition view, 2024

Floating Firewood, Bonacon Gallery, exhibition view, 2019

Floating Firewood, Bonacon Gallery, exhibition view, 2019

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