

Li Jinghu

MAGICIAN SPACE
魔金石空间

Companionship

Li Jinghu

Curator: Leo Li Chen

Date: 2019.10.24 – 12.7

Magician Space is delighted to present artist Li Jinghu's solo exhibition, "*Companionship*", after a five-year hiatus since his last in Beijing.

For every one of us, all of our encounters, companionships, and separations have been fair. As much as we'd like to be irrevocably immersed in kindness and sweetness, we are also made aware of the responsibility and burden that come with intimacy. Furthermore, fortune, knowledge, class, health are often the quantifiable realities and external factors that determine an individual's turn of life, which do not necessarily command the prospect of an individual's emotional commitment. The question that motivates Li Jinghu's practice becomes, "How do we transcend these setbacks in reality, so we sense the passion and restrains of emotions, the pain and the unspeakable amid the barriers between people?"

Li Jinghu's practice has always attempted to dissolve those existing meanings and flat narratives, while seeking out the common yet at times, overlooked energy and desires in life. Like the mosaic tiles amassed from the market of construction supplies, some vibrant in colors, others plain and simple, some intricate and favorable, others broken and scratched, are all made of quartz regardless of their differences from each other. All of the tiles have been processed, colored, set, and lined up, whose values have been actualized in a standardized fashion regardless of whether its exterior matches its internal intent or not. What concerns Li Jinghu is the juxtaposition of the objects, and the ways in which companionship come together. And once the social identities of an object are removed, how will it live and survive?

When two pieces of entirely different tiles are placed next to each other, hence a personal and independent relationship becomes apparent. The piece of tile is no longer a member similar to the rest of the group, but an existing piece reliant of the others. They are not glued together seamlessly, instead, narrow crevasses are left between them. One would not be able to determine what's parting and approaching, which resonates with the independent individuals engaged in an intimate relationship, who at times embrace each other tightly, other times, part their ways. Intimacy is often inseparable from reticence, which is indeed its most honest trammel.

If two pieces of mosaic tiles, in each other's company, project the reality of the so-called intimate relationship, then bringing together jewelry and metal radium disk would emulate the clash of love and desire of adolescence. These cheap pieces of jewelry, often processed by women, are placed over the metallic radium disks, processed by men, are transformed into raindrops and fall into the water. They become one with each other while creating a crescendo of ripples. Industrial materials are often cold and rigid, but their encounter ignites passionate, unhinged desires, as well as irrevocable parting. Before the feelings of a previous love affair are fully fled, the raindrops from the next encounter have already fallen, as parting and encountering often happen simultaneously. Agreement and ethics often seem powerless and dismal in the confrontation of the irrational love and loathing, and faced with our desires and fate, we have to admit that the most wonderful things in life are ultimately destined for transience and fragility.

Throughout the inescapable life of the mundane, hope, frustration, depravity, and the subtle yet tangible kindness are tangled together. This has turned Li Jinghu into a scrounger, who hopes to excavate those precious things amid the numbness of reality. Those found objects, be they the cheap pieces of jewelry, quartz, or the mosaic tiles, embody the individuals who are assigned with symbolic social attributes, as well as, analogies of himself. In the course of being selected, eliminated, and rediscovered, the invisible surfaces from the visible - this is the desperate fight against the cruelty of reality. While the unexpected encounters, companionships, struggles, and separations are not necessarily pleasant at all, as they often come with suffering and unspeakable feelings, but this precisely manifests the most truthful desire of living.

About the Artist

Li Jinghu was born in 1972 in Dongguan, Guangdong, where he currently lives and works. Li Jinghu works primarily with sculpture and installation, which presents an intertwining and ongoing personal 'historiography' of a landscape in flux – his poetically charged work frequently utilize humble materials gathered from his everyday locale. His practice seeks to both capture and transcend the line between collectivity and personal forms of expression, through a constant rumination on society, industry, and capitalism.

Major solo exhibitions include: Companionship, Magician Space, Beijing, CN (2019); The Reunion, Nodal Contemporary Art Space, Dongguan, CN (2018); Encounters, Art Basel in Hong Kong, Hong Kong, CN (2017); Time is Money, Magician Space, Beijing, CN (2014); Efficiency is Life, Magician Space, Beijing, CN (2014); Snowman, Arrow Factory, Beijing, CN (2010); Li Jinghu: Forest, Observation Society, Guangzhou, CN (2009).

Important group exhibitions include: *Pantone*, HOW Art Museum, Wenzhou, CN (2019); *Night Tour of the Pearl River*, Guangdong Museum of Art, Guangzhou, CN (2019); *Front International: Cleveland Triennial for Contemporary Art*, The Akron Museum, Akron, USA (2018); *lei-pā*, ST PAUL St Gallery, Auckland, NZ (2017); *1st Yinchuan Biennale*, MOCA Yinchuan, Yinchuan, CN (2016); *11th Gwangju Biennial*, Gwangju, KR (2016); *A Beautiful Disorder*, Cass Sculpture Foundation, West Sussex, UK (2016); *There Has Been, And May Be Again*, Para Site, Hong Kong, CN (2016); *This Future of Ours*, Red Brick Art Museum, Beijing, CN (2016); *Digging A Hole in China*, OCAT, Shenzhen, CN (2016); *Trace of Existence*, UCCA, Beijing, CN (2016); *THERMO MATTER*, Shenzhen Art Museum, Shenzhen, CN (2015); *The System of Objects*, Minsheng Art Museum, Shanghai, CN (2015); *Institution Production – Ecology Investigation of Contemporary Art of Young Guangzhou Artists*, Guangdong Museum of Art, Guangzhou, CN (2015); *You Can Only Think about Something if You Think of Something Else*, Times Museum, Guangzhou, CN (2014); *The 8th Shenzhen Sculpture Biennale*, OCT Contemporary Art Terminal, Shenzhen, CN (2014); *Positive Space*, Times Museum, Guangzhou, CN (2014); *ON / OFF: China's Young Artists in Concept and Practice*, Ullens Center for Contemporary Art, UCCA, Beijing, CN (2013); *PAINT (erly)*, BANK, Shanghai, CN (2013); *Daily of concept: A Practice of Life - The 15th Shanghai Duolun Youth Art Exhibition*, Duolun Museum of Modern Art, Shanghai, CN (2012); *Pulse Reaction - An Exchange Project on Art Practice*, Times Museum, Guangzhou, CN (2012).



Companionship, 2019
Exhibition view

Companionship, 2019, mosaic, dimension variable

Since the 80s to 90s of the last century, when development is massively and swiftly spreading in southern coastal cities of China, mosaic as a cheap practical architectural material was broadly used to decorate the exterior surface of architectures that were built up in a short period of time, therefore the little square made of quartz became a significant symbol of the high-speed developing time. Just like a mosaic, off-farm workers at that time were showing in a huge number of groups.

I used to think of this group with the tag “off-farm worker” just like everyone else. But as communicating with individuals from this group more, I started to realize that they all have their different personalities, different trends of their lives, they share the same sorrow and joy with us. Since then the difference of each labor started interests me. There was one time, in an architecture material market, I saw a lot of different mosaics were spread all over the ground, at that moment, an idea came into my mind, aren’t those mosaics just like each off-farm workers who live around us? They are all different in terms of size, texture, color, even feel like they have their personalities. Mosaic is made of tones of small granules, just like the group “off-farm workers” is made of many individual labors. It has been 17 years since I moved back to Dongguan from Shenzhen, the place where I live is a sub-urban located in the center of that town. Countless families or couples who work in the near factories are live in rental houses around where I live. Because the dormitories are not very convenient for couples or families to live so they have no other choices but rent and live in those small spaces. They live together, supporting each other and face the pressure of life together without leaving. This reminds me of a saying—Companioning is the longest confession.

--Li Jinghu



Companionship, 2019
Mosaic, dimension variable



Companionship, 2019
Exhibition view

Lover, 2018, stainless steel, metal jewelry, 30 pc/ed

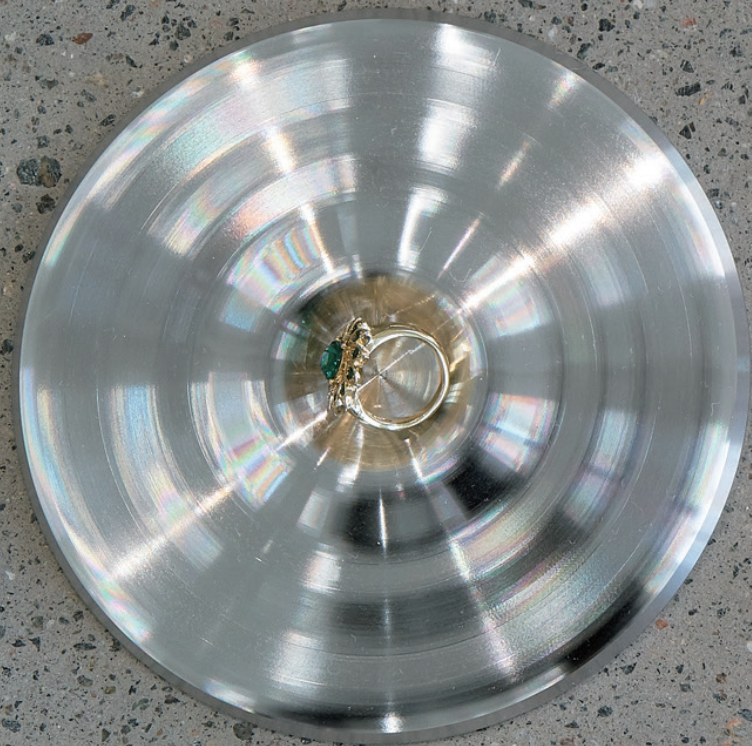
My born city-Chang' an-is one of the towns that are famous for its high economic rank in Dongguan the major industry is metal jewelry processing. It says the stainless steel accessories output is 70% of the entire world. In a metal jewelry processing factory, full of countless small manufactories and workshops, normally, the light handcraft such as inlaying rhinestone and jewelry is produced by female labors, while male labors mostly are doing the stainless steel product by using heavy machine tool. This splits factory in two worlds during the day time, male and female labors barely have a crossover. However, in the time after work, they meet each other on streets and alleys, quickly grouping up and starting relationships. The day time job bores and tires those young people, but in the night, sharing of their ebullient emotions and desires becomes a relief of the pressure of life. However, because of different ages, families, personal reasons and job location, etc. most of their relations are temporary. It forms a tacit agreement within this young group: once owned better than forever. The visual of this piece is mimicking the ripples on the surface of a lake in rainy. Ripple comes from rain dropping, it fades away, back to silence, waiting for the next dropping coming, just like the short-term love of those young people.

--Li Jinghu



Lover, 2018

Stainless steel, jewellery, dimensions variable



Lover
Exhibition view



Foundation #1
Exhibition view

Foundation#1, 2019, Concrete, metal, quartz, 1x1x1m

Dongguan, as the “factory of the world”, while providing tones of good quality merchandise, a big amount of inferior quality products are also produced. Unlike their qualified “brothers and sisters”, inferior quality products will be dumped or taken back to the factory to be melted and reproduced. The metal jewelry, accessories and raw materials of mosaic in this piece were found in scrap recycling station. I collect them because to me, these inferior quality products have some sort of similarities with people whose dreams and wishes are hard to come true for complex reasons. The development of this country is uneven and classes are gradually solidified, as “inferior-quality product” this group might be jammed at the bottom of society. The bottom of society is like a concrete foundation, those people are buried and dumped in there, but it is they who are caring the weight and keeping the balance of the society. In “Foundation#1”, I cut the top of 1 cubic meter concrete open just like archaeologist opens the ground, I want to let people see in there not just sand and mud, but as well those so-called “inferior-quality products”, people will see they are still shining, even though they are compressed, yet still have not given up their effort to struggle.

-- Li Jinghu



Foundation #1, 2019, concrete, metal, quartz, 1x1x1 m



Foundation #1
Exhibition view





Foundation #1
Exhibition view

Foundation #1
Exhibition view



Li Jinghu

1972 Born in Dongguan, Guangdong Province
1996 Graduated from South China Normal University, Fine Arts Department
Currently lives and works in Chang'an, Dongguan

Solo Exhibitions

2019 Companionship, Magician Space, Beijing, CN
2018 The Reunion, Nodal Contemporary Art Space, Dongguan, CN
2014 Time is Money, Magician Space, Beijing, CN
 Efficiency is Life, Magician Space, Beijing, CN
2011 Gie, Yangtze River Space, Wuhan, CN
2010 Snowman, Arrow Factory, Beijing, CN
2009 Li Jinghu: Forest, Observation Society, Guangzhou, CN
 Li Jinghu: One Day in Dongguan, J&Z Gallery, Shenzhen, CN
2006 No Problem, Shenzhen Sculpture Academy, Shenzhen, CN

Group Exhibitions

2019 A Turning Moment: Urban Narratives in Chinese Contemporary Art, 1995-2019, Shanghai Duolun Museum of Modern Art, Shanghai, CN
 Pantone, HOW Art Museum, Wenzhou, CN
 Night Tour of the Pearl River, Guangdong Museum of Art, Guangzhou, CN
 In this World, We, Hessel Museum, Bard College, New York
 UABB2019 Theme- Urban Interactions, Yantian Exhibition Hall, Shenzhen, CN
 The 4th Today's Documents- A Stitch in Time, Today Art Museum, Beijing, CN
2018 City Art Direction, Guangzhou, CN
 West Bund Art & Design, Shanghai, CN
 FIAC Art Fair, Paris, FR
 Crush, Para Site, Hong Kong
 Art Basel Hong Kong, Hong Kong, CN
 Front International: Cleveland Triennial for Contemporary Art, The Akron Museum, Akron, USA

2017 lei-pā, ST PAUL St Gallery, Auckland, NZ
 Encounters, Art Basel in Hong Kong, Hong Kong, CN
 Among Friends, Boers-Li Gallery, Beijing, CN

2016 11th Gwangju Biennial, Gwangju, South Korea
 NEW ORDER: ALTER MONDI ALISME, Just Space, Sanya Edition, Sanya, CN
 A Beautiful Disorder, Cass Sculpture Foundation, West Sussex, UK
 1st Yinchuan Biennale, MOCA Yinchuan, Yinchuan, CN
 More Than Friends, More Than Lovers, Center For Contemporary Art Futura, Prague, CZE
 There Has Been, And May Be Again, Pare Site, Hongkong, CN
 Chéng Shì Cí Dian, 33 Art Center, Guangdong, CN
 This Future of Ours, Red Brick Art Museum, Beijing, CN
 South by Southeast. A Further Surface, Guangdong Times Museum, Guangzhou, CN
 Digging A Hole in China, OCAT, Shenzhen, CN
 Exotic Stranger, Galerie Paris Beijing, Paris, FR
 Trace of Existence, UCCA, Beijing, CN
 Hong Kong Art Basel, Hong Kong, CN
 Asia Now, Paris Asian Art Fair, Paris, FR

2015 Display Distribute, Shanghai, CN
 THERMO MATTER, Shenzhen Art Museum, Shen Zhen, CN
 Back Home, Run Away: A Sample of Artistic Geography, Taikang Space, Beijing, CN
 The System of Objects, Minsheng Art Museum, Shanghai, CN
 Institution Production – Ecology Investigation of Contemporary Art of Young Guangzhou Artists, Guangdong Museum of Art, Guangzhou, CN
 Guo Hongwei Project, Leo Xu at Frieze London, CN
 Frieze London, London, UK
 Art Berlin Contemporary, Berlin, DE
 Hong Kong Art Basel, Hong Kong, CN

2014 # "HAMMER HAMMER PENG! ", A-307, Beijing, CN
 Stone, Wood and Paradise Syndrome, 1933 Contemporary, Shanghai, CN
 You Can Only Think about Something if You Think of Something Else, Times Museum, Guangzhou, CN
 Positive Space, Times Museum, Guangzhou, CN

	West Bund Art & Design, Shanghai, CN
	Shenzhen Public Sculpture Exhibition 2014, Shenzhen Public Arts Center, Shenzhen, CN
	The 8th Shenzhen Sculpture Biennale, OCT Contemporary Art Terminal, Shenzhen, CN
2013	PAINT (erly), BANK, Shanghai, CN
	ON OFF: China' s Young Artists in Concept and Practice, Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (UCCA), Beijing, CN
	Countryside Poetic, Gland, Beijing, CN
	The 14th OPEN International Performance Art Festival, Space Station, Beijing, CN
2012	Daily of concept: A Practice of Life - The 15th Shanghai Duolun Youth Art Exhibition, Duolun Museum of Modern Art, Shanghai, CN
	What is it about the end of the world that makes it so appealing? V-ART CENDER, Shanghai, CN
	Pulse Reaction - An Exchange Project on Art Practice, Times Museum, Guangzhou, CN
2011	Smile, Hemuse Gallery, Beijing, CN
	Something Will Inevitably Happen, K11 Art Village, Wuhan, CN
	The Border Show, Society for Experimental Cultural Production, HK
2010	THE THIRD PARTY - An Exhibition in Three Acts, Platform China Space B, Beijing, CN
	Arrow Factory: Collection Highlights, Arrow Factory, Beijing, CN
	2010 Get It Louder, Beijing Venue, Sanlitun SOHO, Shanghai Venue, 800show, CN
2009	Work-in-Progress: How Do Artists Work, Iberia Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing, CN
2008	Out of Love, Soka Art Center, Beijing, CN
	Homesickness, T Space, Beijing, CN
2006	In and Out, Shenzhen Sculpture Academy, Shenzhen, CN
	Dream a little dream, Para/Site Art Space, Hong Kong, CN
2004	Special Visual Zone - Shenzhen Youth Experimental Art Exhibition, Shenzhen Art Museum, Shenzhen, CN

MAGICIAN SPACE
魔金石空间

+86 10 5978 9635

magician.space

info@magician-space.com

Beijing798 Zone D