

MAGICIAN SPACE  
魔金石空间

**Art | Basel**  
**Basel**  
Statements 2021

**Liu Yefu**

***Hehemeimei***

September 21 to 26, 2021  
Booth | N 13

## Liu Yefu: *Hehemeimei*

Liu Yefu (b.1986, Beijing) focuses on video and mixed material creations. Influenced by Chinese folk culture, Liu is interested in the expression of black humor with a stream of consciousness style, playfully comments on the chaos and restlessness of social realities. By shooting daily life scenes, combined with carefully selected ready-made products in line with his fictional plot, Liu mapping the ideology and stereotypes brought by history, nationality, and memory. In *Hehemeimei* ("hehemeimei" originates from Chinese "和美美", which means a beautiful vision of harmonious relations in Chinese traditional culture.), Liu made up a future landscape which based on scenes of street life in Beijing, about globalization, geopolitics, and economy. Liu envisions the notion of "global-local" in secular and matter-of-fact language that poignantly points out the existing conflicts between the conservatives and liberals, the elites and the grassroots, as well as the reflexivity of ideology and their unanimous idleness in reality.

By they the fake turtle, massage walnut, clay and other materials, or through the Beijing street life scenes to imagine the future of territorial and political structures, all these senses imply the meaning of Harmony is Beauty. In video artwork *Hehemeimei* (2019-21), Liu not only made up the conflict between the Ja Lama (Danbiiantsan, 1862-1922) and Sven Hedin (1865-1952) in history, the boasting of old men playing chess but also penetrated the metaphorical and ambiguous relationship between the Chinese pond turtle and the policy of "hide our capabilities and bide our time". The artist visualizes the imaginations where war rages over the Indian Ocean; the Malacca Straits is controlled by pirates; the seaway that transports crude oil to the Middle East is cut off, so it detours via Pakistan to arrive at the ports of Kashgar and the Small-scale peasant economy has been revived in Yellow River basin; China's intervention on the Qinghai-Tibetan plateau brought in the warm the wet airflow from the Indian Ocean to Tarim Basin, and Xinjiang once again has become China's oasis in Central Asia; a large number of immigrants from Asia crossed the Bering Sea, turning the Americas the new "East". The mixing of people's life and material objects has staged a tea party about the plates drift of geopolitics.



MAGICIAN SPACE  
魔金石空间

*Hehemeimei* (videostill)  
2019-21  
Single channel HD  
video, color, sound  
13'52"  
[Click here to view video](#)

At the scene of *Hehemeimei*, the clay figurine plays the bamboo flute on the side of the turtle leisurely. Liu Yefu quixotic metaphors highlight how collective consensus can serve as political manoeuvring, allowing individual pursuits to permeate into the cynical realist expressions. On the other side of the space, the word VE RI TAS, handwritten on a sand pile, comes from the artist recalling of the Harvard school motto while playing in the Taklamakan Desert. Slowly disappearing as an electric fan blows wind onsite ("*V*" for *Veritas*, 2021), this cross-cultural and trans-regional imagination accurately conveys Liu's skepticism on the standard of universal civilization and value.

In the installation *Ja Lama singles out Sven Hedin* (2021), Liu Yefu echoed the scene of Ja Lama randomly encountered the Swedish archaeologist and explorer, Sven Hedin at the beginning of the 20th century with props such as walnuts and plates. By juxtaposing the original properties and symbolic meaning of materials, Liu guides the relationship between personal value and national mission. These physical material objects that preserve ideologies not only show revolution, resistance, and struggle but also prominent the detour, compromise, and negotiation of survival that coexist with them. By blurring the boundary on the notion of region and time, it demonstrates the core values and violent essence of the emergence of a modernization process serving the rule and national development.



MAGICIAN SPACE  
魔金石空间



*"V" for Veritas*  
2021  
Mini fan, sand  
Size variable





*Ja Lama singles out Sven Hedin*  
2021  
Clay, pottery plate, ceramic walnuts,  
rice paper strips, 3D printing turtle  
sculpture  
Size variable



#### About the Artist

Liu Yefu (b. 1986, Beijing) currently lives and works in Beijing. Liu adopts video art, installation, and mixed media, whose practice influenced by popular culture and Chinese folk culture, playfully comments on the chaos and restlessness of social realities. By appropriating everyday life scenes, readymade, inexpensive materials, Liu presents the ideologies, clichés, and bias drawn from history, ethnicity and personal memories.

Liu's solos include *Hehemeimei*, 2021 Art Basel Statements Sector, Basel, Switzerland (2021); *No Easy Symbolism*, and *Episode 1* were shown at Magician Space, Beijing (2018, 2016); his works also have been exhibited at *Performing Society: The Violence of Gender*, Tai Kwun Contemporary, Hong Kong (2019); Guangzhou Airport Biennale, Guangzhou (2019); *Shards from the Mirror of History*, Gene Siskel Film Center, Chicago (2019); *Frontier: Re-assessment of Post-Globalisational Politics*, OCAT Institute, Beijing (2018); *The Ecstasy of Time: Reframing the Medium of Knowing*, He Xiangning Art Museum, Shenzhen (2017); *The New Normal: Art and China in 2017*, Ullens Center of Contemporary Art, Beijing (2017); *VIDEOBOX*, Le Carreau du Temple, Paris (2017); *Digitale Körper in der Screen-Landschaft III - Projekte von Liu Yefu*, Goethe-Institut China, Beijing (2017); *OverPop*, Yuz Museum, Shanghai (2016); *No Dice (I)*, Kimberly-Klark, New York (2015), etc.

Liu got BA from Capital Normal University in Beijing (2009) and MFA from Maryland Institute College of Art in Baltimore (2014).

MAGICIAN SPACE  
魔金石空间

+86 10 59789635  
[magician.space](http://magician.space)  
[info@magician-space.com](mailto:info@magician-space.com)  
798 Art Zone Beijing