



EAST ASIAN VIDEO FRAMES: SHADES OF URBANIZATION

12 February – 23 August 2016 Wing



Artists:

AI Weiwei, Chim↑Pom, HAM Yang Ah, HAYAKAWA Yumiko, HUNG Keung, KATO Tsubasa, MAN Phoebe, MIYANAGA Akira, Okin Collective, WU Mali

Curator: Minna Valjakka

Urbanization in East Asia has had a sweeping impact in all spheres of visual art. The repercussions are evident in agency, aesthetics, languages, themes, styles as well as in the policies, production, evaluation, and consumption of art. The reciprocal relationship between the city and the visual arts has provided new realms to interpret, envision and assess the city. Since the 1980s East Asian artists have actively engaged in investigating transformations of the urban space and issues associated with urbanization, such as dislocation, social discrepancy and environmental deterioration. The new artistic practices developed by artists and artist collectives, also in collaboration with NGOs, NPOs and urbanites, allow new forms of civic agency to emerge. At same time, the diversity of socially engaged art projects is reshaping and reclaiming cityscapes through their critical commitment to the urban space and urban communities.

**Welcome to the exhibition opening on 12 February at 6pm.
The exhibition will be opened by Minna Valjakka, PhD, researcher**

Engagement with the city through participatory and community art practices has been a common feature in Euro-American art scenes for decades. Such practices were less prominent in East Asian cities up to the end of 1990s, although the first experiments did emerge in Japan by the Gutai group already in the 1950s. The history, styles and forms of such engagement vary greatly from city to city. The focus of this exhibition, however, is on video works and documentaries created in the 21st century in order to demonstrate how artists are examining new ways to understand everyday life and its challenges today in a situation in which more than half of the world's population lives in cities.

Balancing between the importance of solidarity for liveable cities and the threat of alienation and growing inequality, the artist address a variety of questions such as the horizontal vastness of Beijing, the vertical hierarchy of Hong Kong, the social norms of Tokyo, the competitive life of Seoul, and the environmental issues of Taipei and Fukushima. The multiple perspectives resonate and complement each other, illuminating the shared concerns and hopes of urban dwellers and artists alike in the midst of the growing demands of globalization. They respond to Henri Lefebvre's (1996: 173) call for the capability of art to serve the city not by prettifying the urban space with works of art but by becoming 'praxis and poesis on a social scale: the art of living in the city as work of art.' The exhibition elucidates the major themes of the previous three-year video project (started in January 2013) and is the final, additional part of it.

In co-operation: The Bamboo Curtain Studio (WU Mali)

For more information:

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