

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

RAN HUANG

AN EXPERIENCE SHAPED BY AN EXPERIENCE I NEVER EXPERIENCED

5 SEPTEMBER – 4 OCTOBER 2014

PRIVATE VIEW: THURSDAY, 4 SEPTEMBER, 6 - 8PM

Simon Lee Gallery is proud to present *An Experience Shaped by An Experience I Never Experienced* - Ran Huang's first solo exhibition in London. The exhibition includes an extensive body of new work including Huang's most recent film, *The Administration of Glory*, which was nominated in 2014 for the Short Film *Palme d'Or* at the *67th Festival de Cannes*. While the strategies they employ are diverse, the works in the exhibition share a playful interest in the deconstruction of the notion and mechanisms of history, the sublimation of violence and the expression of creative anxiety.

A young artist based in Beijing, Huang's practise encompasses various media including film, video, painting installation and performance. Employing by turns elemental directness, economy of means, deadpan absurdity or whimsical appropriation, his works point less to a place of authority or mastery than to a persistent sense of constraint and the conundrum of self-denial.

For *An Experience Shaped by An Experience I Never Experienced*, Huang has created a series of "self-portrait" paintings depicting Guinness World Record holders in their most famous appearances. The paintings draw on historical languages of figuration to re-imagine individual histories. Their status as fictive historical documents is made more uncertain by their titling as 'self-portraits'. Huang's appropriation is not a proficient imitation of the original but is clumsy rhetoric, flawed and revealing in its sublimation and consumption of self-deceiving notions of history.

Mute, a Trivision billboard, takes another approach to the same questioning of historiography. Like the figurative language used in the 'self-portrait' paintings, the 'period' technology of the billboard's three part rotating sections situates the work in its own fictive historical moment, at the same time as its slogan calls to mind the circular and self-fulfilling mechanism of the way in which histories are written. A monumental stone, a flag metronome, a tool cart filled with various DIY weapons are also attempts to formalise irrationality, to form a denial of the artist's own belief in conceptual practice.

Creating a swirl of conflicting emotions and subjugation of power, Huang's latest film *The Administration of Glory* brings together five parallel narratives covering themes of deception, theft and violation, both sacred and mundane. Working from an obscure personal and autobiographical perspective, the film asserts the latent possibilities of drama, often exhibiting tensions between surface and story, where the seduction of image and narrative serve as a façade for the artist's interrogation of the conditions of artistic practice and the possibility of historical credibility.

Ran Huang (b.1982 in Xichang) lives and works in Beijing. In 2004, Huang graduated from the Birmingham Institute of Art and Design with a First Class BA (Hons) Fine Art degree. In 2007, Huang gained his MFA Fine Art degree at Goldsmiths College, London. He has participated in numerous international exhibitions at leading institutions such as The Jewish Museum, NY (2014), Central Academy of Art, Beijing (2014), The Tampa Museum Of Art (2014), UCCA, Beijing (2013), Kino der Kunst, Munich (2012), the Contemporary Art Museum, Houston (2012) and Kunstmuseum, Bonn (2011) as well as international biennial and triennial exhibitions.

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