

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

“After Party: Collective Dance and Individual Gymnastics”

Curator: Leo Li Chen

Featured artists: Chen Wei, Hao Jingban, Hu Weiyi, Jen Liu, Lu Yang

14 January – 4 March 2017

Opening Reception: 14 January 2017, Saturday, 4 - 6:30pm

Artist talk starts at 4:30pm

Venue: Blindspot Gallery (15/F, Po Chai Industrial Building, 28 Wong Chuk Hang Road, Wong Chuk Hang, Hong Kong)

Opening Hours: Tuesday to Saturday, 10am to 6pm (Sunday and Monday by appointment only); closed on public holidays

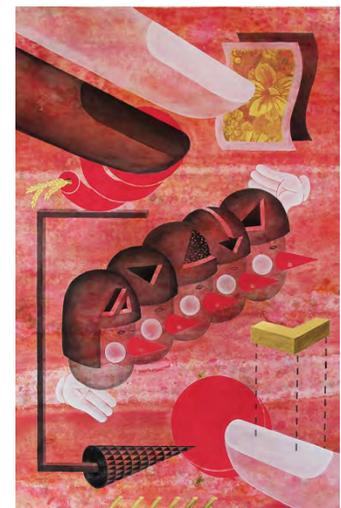


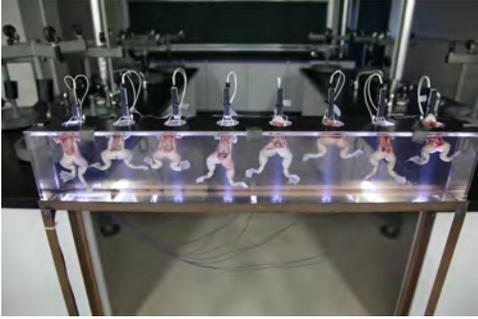
Blindspot Gallery is delighted to present “After Party: Collective Dance and Individual Gymnastics”, a group exhibition curated by Leo Li Chen, featuring works by 5 artists to explore the role of dance in the context of the rapid social changes of China.

“After Party: Collective Dance and Individual Gymnastics” originates from Roland Barthes’ visit to China in 1974. Throughout his month-long journey, Barthes analyses through post-structuralist paradigm the performances and political manifestation of the communist ideology; one of

the objects of his critique were dances in schools, factories, town squares and public parks. The hysterical yet complete lack of affectation in the “collective dance” led Barthes to describe it as “infantilisation” of civilisation, which stands as dialectical opposite to the inconspicuous “individual gymnastics”.

Starting with the dichotomy between collective dance and individual gymnastics, this exhibition attempts to reveal the complex political tension between ideological control and the expression of individual will, through the interpretation of different terpsichorean forms, bodies and cultures. While the era of formal collectivism has declined, its remnants can still be traced in the daily life of the Chinese masses. In this process, the performativity and real-life meaning of dance are continuously redefined and reconfigured. Although dance in its myriad forms has become ready-made pop genres in mainstream narratives of pop culture, traumatic historical memories still persist in its inheritance, slowly overshadowed by the ossifying dynamics of the social reality. This exhibition focuses on the transformation and variation of collectivism in dance, the resistance and dysfunction of the individual will, as well as the afterlife of the carnivalesque revelries.





Hao Jingban's most recent video work *Off Takes* originates from the discarded footages from her *Beijing Ballroom* project. Through the reorganisation and reactivation of these once deselected fragments, Hao meditates on the semiotic and affective relations between image and message. In *The Pink Detachment*, Jen Liu demonstrates the homogeneity between political propaganda and neoliberal economics by reinterpreting *The Red Detachment of Women* (1970), a ubiquitous model opera ballet from the era of the Cultural Revolution in China. In *Reanimation!Underwater Zombie frog ballet!*, Lu Yang

animates and synchronizes a dance of dead frogs by passing electricity through corpses of dead frogs from medical dissection. A similar fascination with corporeal and mind control also appears in the photographic work of Chen Wei, who has staged night clubs and dancing crowds in a certain state of psychedelia and void, visualising the frailty of the human body in the teleology of modernization. In the photographic installation *Flirt*, Hu Weiyi threads and stitches a luminous line across different human body parts and objects, undoing and reconstructing intimate relationships between the subjects by external force.



This exhibition forms part I of Leo Li Chen's multi-part research project "After Party".

Artists will be present at the opening reception. Interviews are welcome and can be arranged.

About the Curator

Leo Li Chen is a curator and researcher based in Hong Kong. Chen is a research fellow at the Department of Public Policy in City University of Hong Kong. His main research interest focuses on spatial and aesthetic politics, and artistic intervention in Chinese cities. Chen is also a long-term contributing writer for *LEAP*, *Art World*, *Art China Magazine* and *TANC*. He was the curator of "Adrift" (OCAT Shenzhen, China, 2016), "Powerless" (Blindspot Gallery, Hong Kong, 2016), "That has been, and maybe again" (Para Site, Hong Kong, 2016) and "Unlimited Space: The Reimagination of Everyday Life" (starprojects, Hong Kong, 2016).

About Blindspot Gallery

Set up in 2010, Blindspot Gallery is a Hong Kong-based contemporary art gallery, with a primary focus on contemporary photography and image-based works amongst other media in contemporary art. The gallery represents both emerging and established artists, mainly from Hong Kong and the region but also beyond.

For enquiries and media interviews, please contact Ms. Lesley Kwok at 2517 6238 or by email info@blindspotgallery.com

Image Captions:

Hao Jingban, *The First Take*, 2016, Digital inkjet print, 80 x 139 cm, Edition of 6 + 2AP, (Image courtesy of artist and Blindspot Gallery)

Jen Liu, *The Pink Detachment: Principle of Plenty for All*, 2016, Acrylic ink, acrylic gouache, gesso and watercolour on paper, 129.8 x 84.3 cm, (Image courtesy of Blindspot Gallery and Upstream Gallery, Amsterdam)

Lu Yang, *Reanimation!Underwater Zombie frog ballet!*, 2011, Single channel video, 6'06", Edition of 6, (Image courtesy of Blindspot Gallery and Beijing Commune)

Chen Wei, *Night Paris*, 2015, Archival inkjet print, 150 x 187.5 cm, Edition of 6 + 2AP, (Image courtesy of artist and Blindspot Gallery)

Hu Weiyi, *Flirt* (detail), 2014, Inkjet print on fine art paper, size variable, Edition of 10, (Image courtesy of artist and Blindspot Gallery)