

“Play and Loop II”

Curated by Nick Yu

Featured artists: Sophia Al-Maria, Patty Chang, Luke Ching Chin Wai, Hao Jingban, Isaac Julien, Jiang Zhi, Lai Lon Hin, Leung Chi Wo, Nira Pereg, Shen Xin, Victoria Sin, Angela Su, Pilvi Takala, Eason Tsang Ka Wai, Wang Bing, Wong Kit Yi, Ming Wong, Wong Wai Yin

30 June – 22 August 2020

Venue: Blindspot Gallery (15/F, Po Chai Industrial Building, 28 Wong Chuk Hang Road, Wong Chuk Hang, Hong Kong)
Opening Hours: Tuesday to Saturday, 10:30 am to 6:30 pm (Sunday and Monday by appointment only); closed on public holidays

WEEK 8: Progress | Wang Bing, Jiang Zhi

Week 8 is titled “Progress”, and features Wang Bing’s *Crude Oil* (2009) and Jiang Zhi’s *The Nail* (2007). Using contemporary China as a case study of rapid economic growth, this week’s screening traces the many sides of progress, its many promises and disillusionment. To move forward and to develop are innate human desires, but when these individual aspirations conflict with each other, or contradict institutional and systemic teleology, the question arises as to whose values win over and whose ideology prevails in the construction of history. What one party touts as progress, another sees transgression. When one sees forward movement, another experiences a damning entrapment. Revealing the underbelly of capitalism, “Progress” documents the experiences of those left behind, trampled on, or exploited by the grand forward movement of history.

Wang Bing’s *Crude Oil* is a 14-hour long documentary depicting scenes of oil well sites in the Gobi desert in Qinghai province, China. The camera shoots from 8am to 10pm, without breaks, and each day covers a new shooting location or another job site. Originally commissioned for the Rotterdam Film Festival in 2008, the film installation plays 7 hours per day, and the whole film takes two days to complete. A hybrid of cinematic and moving image installation, Wang earnestly conveys the authentic and unembellished reality of the setting. Troops of all-male red-uniform-clad workers operate bulky apparatus, rest and idle in a shanty shack, and chitchat about daily life, ambitions and other topics to pass time. In one of many memorable scenes, against the slow humming of heavy machinery and oil drills, the sky brightens and the sun slowly edges above the horizon, in real time, oblivious to the progress of labour. The temporal cyclicity of the film is in contradistinction to the linear teleology in the dialectical conception of progress.



Unlike the monotony of so-called progress in *Crude Oil*, Jiang Zhi’s *The Nail* shows an oppositional movement that pits itself against formidable force and is doomed to fail from the start. *The Nail* documents a sensational and controversial episode in the urban development of Chongqing, dubbed the “Nail House”. When developers knocked on their door, Wu Ping and her husband refused to sell their house, and the husband moved back into the house in fierce resistance. The court case dragged on from 2003 to 2007, and whilst the couple refused any settlement offer from the property developer, the land surrounding the house turned into a construction site, and water and electricity were cut off, while the “nail house” stood tall and alone like a fortress under siege. Nearing the final days of final official appeal, hordes of journalists and locals gathered around the site, while the protagonist, Wu Ping, valiantly defended her property rights under the rule of law. The “Nail House” was ultimately demolished.



About Play and Loop II

"Play and Loop II" is the second iteration of an eight-week screening programme at Blindspot Gallery, featuring works by 18 regional and international artists. Each week, video works by two artists will be featured and played continuously on loop during the opening hours of the gallery. The selected works congeal into weekly themes pertinent to our current state of affairs and being. Sedimenting, speculating and fantasizing, these weekly artwork pairings become navigation points between an unruly past and an uncharted future.

Screening Schedule:

Week 1 27.6 – 4.7	Heavy Hands	Pilvi Takala Leung Chi Wo	<i>The Stroker</i> (2018) <i>Sign</i> (2008)	15'16" 13'00"
Week 2 7 – 11.7	Still Dancing	Ming Wong Hao Jingban	<i>Next Year L'Année Prochaine 明年</i> (2016) <i>An Afternoon Ball</i> (2013)	17'40" 24'21"
Week 3 14 – 18.7	Daily Phobia	Patty Chang Nira Pereg	<i>Milk Debt Hong Kong, Jun 8, 2019</i> (2019) <i>67 Bows</i> (2006) <i>and Melancholy</i> (2009)	13'11" 5'51" 3'02"
Week 4 21 – 25.7	Going Away	Patty Chang Wong Kit Yi	<i>Shangri-La</i> (2005) <i>A River in the Freezer</i> (2017)	40'00" 25'25"
Week 5 28.7 – 1.8	Exile	Wang Bing Shen Xin	<i>Traces</i> (2014) <i>Strongholds</i> (2016)	29'00" 71'00"
Week 6 4 – 8.8	Chase	Isaac Julien Jiang Zhi	<i>Baltimore</i> (2003) <i>In the Woods</i> (2018)	11'56" 22'31"
Week 7 11 – 15.8	Stellar Contagion	Angela Su Sophia Al-Maria + Victoria Sin	<i>Cosmic Call</i> (2019) <i>BCE</i> (2019)	12'43" 9'43"
Week 8 18 – 22.8	Progress	Wang Bing Jiang Zhi	<i>Crude Oil</i> (2009) <i>The Nail</i> (2007)	14 hrs 85'15"
Also on view		Luke Ching Chin Wai Lai Lon Hin Eason Tsang Ka Wai Wong Wai Yin	<i>Screensaver: Sunsets</i> (2014) <i>Black Dream</i> (2019) <i>Music Box</i> (2018) <i>Housework No.3</i> (2016) <i>Clearing ten thorns</i> (2016)	39'07" 6'22" 8'16" 11'34" 1'33"

About Blindspot Gallery

Set up in 2010, Blindspot Gallery is a Hong Kong-based contemporary art gallery. The gallery began with a primary focus on contemporary photography and image-based art, and has evolved to include diverse 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. May Wong at 2517 6238 or by email info@blindspotgallery.com

Image Caption:

Wang Bing, *Crude Oil*, 2009, single channel video, 14 hours (Image courtesy of artist, Magician Space, and Blindspot Gallery)
Jiang Zhi, *The Nail*, 2007, single channel video, 85'15" (Image courtesy of artist, and Blindspot Gallery)