

PRESS RELEASE

Attn Art Editors

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Beijing Performance Artist, Cang Xin, licks his way to Hong Kong for his retrospective show “Existence in Translation” at 10 Chancery Lane Gallery, Hong Kong

Hong Kong Oct/Nov. 2006---One of China’s most controversial groups of artists, The East Village Artists of 1994, which included Ai Wei Wei, Zhang Huan, Ma Liuming and **Cang Xin** is showing his first one-man show in Hong Kong at 10 Chancery Lane Gallery. The exhibition, entitled EXISTENCE IN TRANSLATION 1993-2006, will show his evolution as a one of China’s leading performance artists. Known for his works of licking, where he has licked a myriad of objects around the world and his famed tongue has been photographed licking the grounds of the Tiananmen Square, the Sydney Opera House, the Coliseum in Rome, etc. he will create a performance in Hong Kong with 50-100 local artist’s participation along Chancery Lane. A 276-Page book has been published for this exhibition.

“Licking: Making Contact with Kindred Souls”*

Born in Manchuria, Cang Xin is a Shaman. Shamans believe that the living spirit exists in everything, in both animate and inanimate objects. “Shamans are seen as mysterious spiritual envoys who can transverse the boundaries of life and death, going in and out of different bodies.” In his work he wants to become the other object or person. His famed tongue series of works entitled, Communication Series, began in this way. He wanted to communicate by licking things with his tongue with both living and inanimate objects. He started doing this in 1996 and continues until now.

“Identity Exchange: Entering the Bodies of Others”*

The communication series continues however from 2000 he started the Identity Exchange series, where he asked workers of different professions if he may wear their clothes while they stood next to him in their underwear. He exchanged dress with a factory worker, an opera singer, a policeman, a rubbish collector, a waitress, a nurse and many others. The work at first glance seems frivolous. “...but it is through clothes, that Cang Xin seems to have entered into the bodies of others through a symbolic act, a modern approach to the traditional concept of souls traveling between bodies”, reflects Zhu Qi from the book *Cang Xin*.

“Heaven and Man as One: Trying to Transcend the Limitations of Performance Art”*

“Heaven and Man As One” is set in nature the hills of Tibet and the Ice blankets of Manchuria. The work sets Cang Xin, himself, naked in the midst of the most profound beauty of nature and immediately the theme rings with meaning. He also lies naked in the freezing ice plains in Manchuria and lights a ring of fire around himself. ‘Heaven and Earth as One’, inspires deep thought; it is intimate and moving and the passion and strength in Cang Xin’s heart as well as his unique personality as both Artist, Shaman and Scientist ring clearly for that which makes him unique.

“The Shamanic Vision: Becoming a Part of Them.”* The Drawings

Cang Xin’s most recent works are a commissioned group of pencil drawings that are, as he says, filled with black humor. “Cang Xin’s recent works are transcendent, imaginative images inspired by Shamanism. He envisions himself hanging from the branches of a tree like fruit, or as the stamens of water lilies covering a pond. ...or a giant crocodile has already swallowed the lower half of his body while he remains absorbed in his writing. He imagines that his head is separated from his body, that he is encircled by a tribe of natives engaged in a magic ritual,” Zhu Qi states. This group of drawings are shocking to look at but when Cang Xin’s conceptual and spiritual roots are understood they are obviously a normal progression of this artist’s breaking of the boundaries between both Western and Eastern conceptual art.

For Interviews with the artist, please contact Cleo Lam at 2810-0065.