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Zhou Yilun: Ornament and Crime

January 12 — February 17, 2019
Los Angeles



Zhou Yilun, *Keep Rolling It In*, 2018

In today's world, does one have a practical evolutionary advantage over his competition if he can toss a ball through a hoop from great distance with accuracy? If he can kick a ball into a net while others try to stop him? Hit a tiny ball in a tiny hole with a tiny stick? As technology progresses and the human body becomes increasingly obsolete, physical feats of coordination, strength, and agility are less necessary for survival, and more decorative ornaments that harken back to an archaic economy when physical superiority could be directly translated into evolutionary capital. Still, though, these are among the few traits that translate seamlessly from culture-to-culture across the globe.

“Ornament and Crime,” the 1910 lecture by Adolf Loos, famously equates the post-construction adornment of objects to villainy. Ornamentation, to Loos, is an afterthought, diverting attention from the inherent beauty of an object's design and function; it is a superficial perversion of said object's structural logic, obscuring the utilitarian dignity of the base materials of construction. He believed that the goal of creation should not be to conceal or disguise the bones upon which a structure is built, but to celebrate and cast light upon their socio-cultural necessity.

Ornament and crime are not synonymous to Zhou Yilun, however. His influences begin with the Western, Judeo-Christian canons he studied and was trained to emulate in school, but skew more heavily to the laborers he saw building, tearing-down, painting, and repainting the structures in the city surrounding him,

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and the American basketball players, hip-hop stars, and black celebrities he grew up mythologizing and imitating. Zhou lifts and distorts techniques inherited from the Renaissance, Baroque, and Romantic eras, revisiting, perverting, and parodying their ideas for the new globalist regime. This is Raphael going Apeshit with The Carters, Goya crossing-over Allen Iverson, Delacroix sipping Cristal and smoking blunts with Weezy, all broadcast to the far east over WeChat.

Each of his artworks is formed from the same bricolage of identity—the sum of stretcher, wood, and canvases painted, deconstructed, and constructed again. Images of basketball heroes become deities, which in turn become the scaffolding and skin of his painted sculptures and often stretcherless paintings. Zhou's practice is alive with Chinese bones and Western sinew and flesh, torn down and built back up with the same materials again and again, so that the elements that once existed as ornament are now integral to the identity and essence of each artwork itself. His works are impossible monuments to the necessarily unnecessary, yet beautiful feats of the human machine. The only crime is existence itself, and it is one to be celebrated.

Zhou Yilun was born in 1983 in Hangzhou, China. He graduated in 2006 from the oil painting department at China Academy of Art. He currently lives and works in Hangzhou.

Opening Reception: Saturday, January 12, 6–8pm.

For more information, contact info@nicodimgallery.com.

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Zhou Yilun

° Born 1983, Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province, China
Lives and works in Beijing, China

Education

2006 Academy of Art, Hangzhou, China

Solo Exhibitions

- 2019 *Ornament and Crime*, Nicodim Gallery, Los Angeles
2017 *Marie Montana*, Beijing Commune, Beijing, China
2016 *The Monkey On Horseback*, Galeria Nicodim, Bucharest, Romania
2015 *Zhou Yilun*, Nicodim Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
GO■DFINDER, Platform China Contemporary Art Institute, Beijing, China
2014 *R3MP3*, Innart, Hangzhou, China
Who's Taking Us To The Outer Space?, Platform China, Hong Kong, China
2012 *If you were telling the truth*, LISTE, Basel, Switzerland
As There is Paradise in Heaven, Platform China Contemporary Art Institute, Beijing, China
2011 *Pay Back The Money That You Owe*, Fabien Frys Fine Art, Los Angeles, CA
We are Colorful, Platform China Contemporary Art Institute, Hong Kong, China
Don't Quit Colonialism, Fabien Frys Fine Art, Los Angeles, CA
2010 *Embrace The New, But Don't Discard The Old*, Andrew James Art, Shanghai, China
Where Is Here, Mind Set Art Consulting, Taipei, Taiwan
2009 *You Came Too Late!*, Platform China, Beijing, China
2008 *Enjoy It?*, Platform China, Beijing, China
Zhou Yilun, Art Statements, Hong Kong, China
Just Joking, Andrew James Art, Shanghai, China
2007 *Beauty, Weapon & Beast*, Andrew James Art, Shanghai, China
2006 *Fightout Out*, Dao Art Xpace, Beijing, China

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2018 *After Sunset*, Galeria Liusa Wang, Paris, France
The Post Southern Song Dynasty (curated by Martin Goya Business), KWM artcenter, Beijing, China

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- 2017 *Parallel Times*, Inna Art Space, Hangzhou, China
Jungle III - Common, Platform China, Beijing, China
- 2016 *No.1, Duel at Liu Xia*, Inna Art Space, Hangzhou, China
Omni Negru, Nicodim Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
- 2015 *The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly: Zhou Yilun + Liao Guohe*, Nicodim Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
Child Wants to be a King not an Artist, Inna Art Space, Hangzhou, China
My Generation: Young Chinese Artists, Tampa Museum of Art, Tampa, FL; Orange County Museum of Art, Newport Beach, CA
Small is Beautiful III, Art Seasons Beijing, Beijing, China
- 2014 *Beijing Voice: Unlived by What is Seen*, Pace Beijing, Beijing, China
Begin from Chaos, Inna Art Space, Hangzhou, China
Notes Coordinates, Inna Art Space, Hangzhou, China
Summer Day, Platform China, Beijing, China
Unlived by What is Seen, Tang Contemporary Art, Beijing, China; Galleria Continua, Beijing, China
- 2013 *The Light*, Inna Art Space, Hangzhou, China
- 2012 *Basement*, IAAB space, Basel, Switzerland
Re: Painting, Platform China, Beijing, China
D for Drawing, Platform China, Hong Kong, China
- 2011 *In a Perfect World*, Meulensteen, New York, NY
Ramble, F2 Gallery, Beijing, China
- 2010 *The Third Party - Act 1: How to Be Alone*, Platform China, Beijing, China
- 2009 *Generation Hangzhou 2.0*, F2 Gallery, Beijing, China
- 2008 *This is Asia?*, Andrew James Art, Beijing, China
- 2007 *Sweet & Sour Generation*, Kunstverein Museum, Mannheimer, Germany
- 2006 *Fresh Eye – The 3rd Nationwide Chinese Art Academies Excellence in Oil Painting Graduate Show*, Hexiangning Art Museum, Shenzhen, China