

HUANG YONG PING

Amoy/Xiamen

**PRESS
RELEASE**

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Inauguration

Thursday, february 14 2013 at 6:30 pm
in the presence of the artist

Opening Hours

Wednesday - Sunday, from 11 am to 6 pm

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Huang Yong Ping, *Mille bras de Bouddha*, 2012
Installation. Shanghai Power Art Station, Shanghai Biennial
© Huang Yong Ping
Courtesy the artist and kamel mennour, Paris
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With support of Musée des Confluences - Rhône
department
and kamel mennour Gallery, Paris

THE EXHIBITION Amoy/Xiamen



Huang Yong Ping constructs his œuvre on the possible encounter of blocks that are often considered to be antagonistic and globally hermetic; what are generally referred to as communities, cultures and civilizations.

The integration of an "outside thought" (an expression borrowed from philosopher and sociologist François Jullien), whether it comes from "here" or "elsewhere" constitutes the main framework around which the artist structures his work, a framework that consists of undoing and reconstructing because for Huang Yong Ping, there are only **processes** and **changes**. In short, there is only **history** and mobile ideas, contexts, structures and consequences, exchanges and mutations. **There are no such things as fixed identities or enclosures.**

/« **ALONG WITH CHINESE PHILOSOPHERS, I HAVE STUDIED THE WRITINGS OF WITTGENSTEIN AND LATER HONEGGER, KANT, NIETZSCHE, FOUCAULT OR BARTHES. THESE READINGS ALLOW ME TO UNDERSTAND AND ANALYZE A WORK IN A NEW LIGHT. THIS NOTION IS KEY TO UNDERSTANDING MY WORK. MOREOVER, THE TITLES OF MY WORKS MUST ALSO BE SUGGESTIVE AND GUIDE THE VISITOR. PUNS ARE ALSO ESSENTIAL.** »/

HUANG YONG PING

Amoy/Xiamen

Amoy/Xiamen combines the old and current name for this port city, connected together and distinguished by a simple slash mark. Xiamen was formerly known as Amoy and witnessed some of the city's first European travellers.

***Amoy/Xiamen* is therefore the association of yesterday and today, of the past and the present.**

Inspired by a unique collection of statues from the Chinese province of Fujian (representing a pantheon of gods popular in China, collected in the late 19th century by Johannes Jacobus Maria de Groot, now on deposit by the Musée national des arts asiatiques Guimet), preserved at the musée des Confluences, Huang Yong Ping has designed a new exhibition, that is both autobiographical and self-fictional. Autobiographical because the artist comes from the Fujian Province and has always seen these statues in «situation» before discovering «ethnographical» and coloured replicas; self-fictional, because for the artist, this is the illustration of the permissiveness of cultural fields and their floating meanings (History? Ethnography? Art? Heritage? Replica? Exoticism? etc.). They demonstrate the mechanism of constructions and the homogenization of cultures.

The layout of *Amoy/Xiamen* plays with diagonal lines and perspective. There are no right angles here; the artworks are placed on an open set or stage, punctuated by the presence of several oblique walls that allow for a fluid movement through the exhibition, which doesn't impose a pre-determined circuit on the visitor.



Model of the exhibition, project by Huang Yong Ping

For the exhibition, Huang Yong Ping makes use of the 1000 m² space of the second floor of the macLYON. The exhibition consists of a shift between biography, anthropology, recycling and creation – each œuvre designates what could be referred to as a new "start".

Reptiles is based on a fusion of cultures, it "recycles" the book and oblivion, history and fiction, for critical purposes. Here, the artwork has been re-edited and produced by the macLYON.



Huang Yong Ping, *Reptiles*, 1989
Papier mâché, washing machines- 700 x 400 x 300 cm
View of the exhibition, musée des Confluences de la terre, Grande Halle de la Villette, Paris
© Adagp, Paris 2013

A parallel could also be drawn to *Mille bras de Guanyin* [*The thousand arms of Guanyin*], a tribute to the "bottle-carrier", that is both a Duchamp icon and the Buddhist goddess with a thousand arms: Guanyin. This sculpture was originally designed by the artist for a contemporary art project in Munster, Germany in 1997 but now old and damaged, has been dismantled. The artist however, has kept the partially destroyed arms that are shiny with age. The raised fist, symbolic of the labour force, a votive object, uniformization, globality, display? The museum produces a new version of this monumental structure in the shape of a bottle holder.

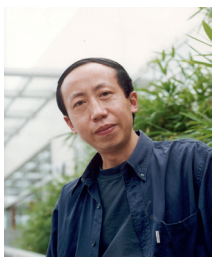
We are here at the very heart of a very "modern" phenomenon: the "patrimonialisation of memories and consciences". Such therefore, is the case with these Fujian statuettes that are for this exhibition part of his work, based on the artist's decision, after being initially just a childhood memory for him, then an ethnographical object and finally a museum heritage characteristic of colonial cultural practices of a western society looking at the "Other".

The ancient and the contemporary: a creation or an exhibition of previously seen relics? Ready-made and already-made? On the contrary, this is a new departure in a constantly evolving world, full of interconnections: a global, complex, powerful and poetic creation.

Forthcoming catalogue

This exhibition will be accompanied by a catalogue, which includes views of the exhibition and texts by Deirdre Emmons, curator of the Musée des Confluences, Doryun Chong, assistant curator of the MoMA New York and Donatien Grau, professor at the Université Paris-Sorbonne. The catalogue also includes an introduction by Thierry Raspail, director of the macLYON.

THE ARTIST



Huang Yong Ping's portrait, 2009
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Huang Yong Ping was born in Xiamen where his first group exhibition took place in 1983. A major figure of what is referred to as the "overseas" art movement by the Chinese authorities in reference to those artists of his generation who have left the "Middle Empire" due to censorship at the time of Tian'anmen, Huang Yong Ping has been the founder of the "Xiamen Dada" movement whose motto was "*Zen is Dada, Dada is Zen*". Huang Yong Ping displays

a taste for the paradox and deconstruction, generated through the assembly of heterogeneous meanings.



Huang Yong Ping, Xiamen Dada Event, 1986
Group performance
Palace of Culture Xiamen, Fujian, China, November 24, 1986
© Photo Wu Yi King
Courtesy the artist and Kamel mennour, Paris
© Adagp, Paris, 2015

/« CIRCA 1983, I HELD BETWEEN MY HANDS A COPY OF A MARCEL DUCHAMP BOOK, INTERVIEWS FROM THE 1960s ACCOMPANIED BY SOME VERY POOR QUALITY REPRODUCTIONS. THANKS TO DUCHAMP, I LEARNED TO «REDISCOVER» EVERYDAY OBJECTS ; TO LOOK DIFFERENTLY AT ALL THAT HAD APPEARED TO ME AS «USUAL» BEFORE THEN. THE ORDINARY SUDDENLY BECAME A SOURCE OF INSPIRATION FOR ME. DUCHAMP ALLOWED ME TO REDISCOVER ART. »/
HUANG YONG PING

Huang Yong Ping settled in France in 1989 at the time of his exhibition *Les Magiciens de la Terre* [The Magicians of the Earth] at the Centre Pompidou and the Grande Halle de la Villette (the inauguration of which took place on the same day as the Tian'anmen Square Massacre). This exhibition didn't go unnoticed: it was the first time in France that the French and Europeans as a whole became aware of another form of globalism. Asian, Indian and African contemporary art exploded onto the western art scene, leading to a change in western perceptions of art in general.

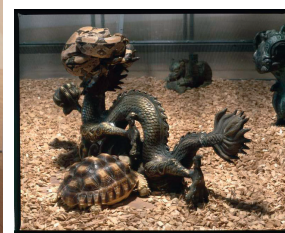
In 1989, Huang Yong Ping presented *Reptiles* in Paris as part of the exhibition *Les Magiciens de la Terre*. He uses the three washing machines to wash books on Chinese and western art and exhibits the result: the paper pulp. Can the mix between Asia and the West only result in a shapeless, dirty mush? The artist likes to underline that dirtiness is as essential to the world's order, as chaos. Reptiles operates a fusion of cultures, "recycle" the book and forgetting, history and fiction, for criticism.

In 1993 Huang Yong Ping created *Le Théâtre du Monde* [The Theatre of the World]. The artwork appears as a closed space, a glass display case in the shape of a turtle, out of which grasshoppers, cockroaches, tarantulas, lizards and scorpions are released. Through their fighting, the species highlight the impossibility of cohabiting.

In 1999, Huang Yong Ping represented France along with Jean-Pierre Bertrand at the 48th Venice Biennale.



View of the exhibition *Troubler l'écho du temps*
at macLYON 08/03 - 06/05 2001
© Photo : Blaise Adillon
© Adagp, Paris, 2013



In 2001, le macLYON presented works from his collection as part of the exhibition *...troubler l'écho du temps* [disturbing echo time]. These included *Le pont* [The Bridge], 1993-1995 by Huang Yong Ping, an artwork that was on deposit at the museum: the piece consisted of snakes and turtles, placed within an environment of bronze animal sculptures, thereby hinting at the paradoxically chaotic yet peaceful relations that may exist between cultures and beings.

In 2004, Huang Yong Ping created *Tête d'Or* for the roof of the macLYON as part of the exhibition, *Le Moine et le Démon*. A pagoda-like sculpture, this work overlooked the nearby Parc de la Tête d'Or. It was a fine-gold reproduction of a pavilion belonging to the Song Dynasty. The gold leaves of the pagoda link up with a Lyon urban legend that tells the story of a Jewish settler who buried a gold moulding of the head of Christ in the Parc de la Tête d'Or in 1853.

Tête d'Or was re-installed for the 2009 Lyon Biennial. This work was produced with the support of the Ullens Foundation and has since been included in the foundation's collection.



Huang Yong Ping, *Tête d'Or*, 2004
© Photo : Blaise Adillon
© Adagp, Paris, 2013

In 2007/2008, a large Huang Yong Ping retrospective took place at various venues across the globe: the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, the MASS MOCA (Massachusetts, USA), the Vancouver Art Gallery (Canada) and at the Ullens Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing (China).

In France in 2012, Huang Yong Ping installed an immense sea snake at St-Brévin as part of the *Estuaire* Exhibition. The sea snake appeared with the rise and fall of the tides. For *Fantastic Lille 3000* at the Hospice Comtesse, Huang Yong Ping presented four artworks, including *Arche* [Ark] with its stuffed animals and *Zu Wei*, a gigantic octopus.

THE ARTIST (2)

SELECTION OF EXHIBITIONS :

2012 - 2013

L'Estuaire, Nantes, France
Fantastic, Musée de l'Hospice Comtesse, Lille, France
Bugarach, galerie kamel mennour, Paris, France

2010

Wu Zei, exposition *Méditerranée*, Musée océanographique de Monaco, France

2009

Mapping the Studio: Artists from the François Pinault Collection Punta della Dogana, Venice, Italy
Arche, Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux arts, Paris, France (solo)
Tower Snake, Gladstone Gallery, New York, USA (solo)
Caverne, Kamel Mennour, Paris, France (solo)
3rd Moscow Biennale, Russia

2008

Frolic, Barbican Art Gallery, London, GB (solo)
Ping Pong, Astrup Fearnley Museum, Oslo, Norway and Kunsthallen Brandts, Odense, Denmark (solo)
House of Oracles, Ullens Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing, China (solo)
Traces du sacré, Centre Pompidou, Paris, France

2007

Airs de Paris, Centre Pompidou, Paris, France
Bernier and Eliades, Athens, Greece
From C to P, Gladstone Gallery, New York, USA
House of Oracles: A Huang Yong Ping Retrospective, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MASS MoCA, Massachusetts, USA; Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver, Canada (solo)
10^e Biennale d'Istanbul, Turkey

2006

Pantheon, Centre international d'art et du paysage de l'île de Vassivière, France (solo)
Ovunque andiamo Wherever We Go, Spazio Oberdan, Milan, Italy
China Power Station: Part 1, Serpentine Gallery, London, GB
Les Mains de Bouddha, Galerie Anne de Villepoix, Paris, France

2005

Mahjong, Kunstmuseum Bern, Bern, Switzerland
On the Edge, Cantor Arts Center, Stanford University, USA

2004

Lingchi : Yan Pei Ming et Huang Yong Ping, Musée Denon, Chalon-sur-Saône, France
Galerie Beaumont, Luxembourg
Le Moine et le démon, mac^{LYON}, France
3^e Biennale de Liverpool, GB

2003

Left Wing, Left Bank Community, Beijing, China
New Zone: Chinese Art, The Zacheta Gallery of Contemporary Art, Warsaw, Poland
Yankee Remix: Artists Take on New England, MASS MoCA, Massachusetts, USA
Z.O.U.: Zone of Urgency, 50^e Venice Biennale, Italy
Un cane Italiano, Galerie Beaumontpublic, Luxembourg (solo)

Beacon Project Space, Beacon, New York, USA

Arte y naturaleza II, Montenmedio Arte Contemporaneo, Spain

2002

Xian Wu, Art & Public, Geneva, Switzerland (solo)
Om Mani Padme Hum, Barbara Gladstone Gallery, New York, USA (solo)
Reinterpretation: A Decade of Experimental Chinese Art (1990-2000), Guangdong Museum of Art, Guangdong, China
Art Unlimited, Art 33 Basel, Basel, Switzerland
Biennale de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brasil
2^e Triennale de Guangzhou, Guangzhou, China
Iconoclash, ZKM Center, Karlsruhe, Germany

2001

Huang Yong Ping & Shen Yuan, Centre d'art contemporain, Quebec, Canada
International Triennial of Contemporary Art Yokohama 2001, Yokohama, Japan
Re-Configuration: Work on Paper, The Courtyard Gallery, Beijing, China et Modern Chinese Art Foundation, Gand, Belgium
Troubler l'écho du temps, œuvres de la collection, mac^{LYON}, France

2000

Paris pour escale, Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris, France
Biennale de Shanghai, Shanghai Museum of Art, China

1999

Taigong Fishing: Willing to Bite the Bait, Jack Tilton Gallery, New York, USA (solo)
Crane's legs, Project Gallery, CCA, Kitakyushu, Japan (solo)
Pavillon Français, Venice Biennale, Italy

1998

Cities on the move 2, CAPC, Bordeaux, France

1997

Pharmacie, Jack Tilton Gallery, New York, USA (solo)
Huang Yong Ping, De Appel, Amsterdam, Pays Bas (solo)
Da Xian: The Domsday, Art & Public, Genève, Switzerland (solo)
SkulpturProjekte, Munster, Germany

1994

Hors-Limites, (L'art et la vie 1952/1994), Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, France
A collection, (Fondation Cartier pour l'Art Contemporain), National Museum of Contemporary Art, Seoul, Korea.
Huang Yong Ping et Matej Kren, Fondation Cartier pour l'Art Contemporain, Paris, France

1989

Métissage, Croisement, FRAC Marseille, France.
Magiciens de la terre, Grande Halle de la Villette, Paris, France.
China Avant-Garde, China National Art Gallery, Beijing, China

1986

Events, Museum of fine Arts of Fujian, Fujian, China.
Xiamen Dada, House of Culture Xiamen, China

J.J.M. DE GROOT'S COLLECTION at Musée des Confluences, Lyon

Extracts from the *Gods of China* catalogue, the popular pantheon Fujian from J.J.M. de Groot, under the direction of Deirdre Emmons, Editions Un, Deux... Quatre, October 2003

Johannes Jacobus Maria de Groot (1854-1921) was born, as his names indicate, into a pious Catholic family but already as a student broke with the "tyrannical Church" in which he had been brought up, becoming a militant anticlerical agnostic who, paradoxically enough, devoted, as we shall see, most of his subsequent scholarly life to what already at the time was called "Science of Religion".

[...]

Immediately on arrival in Amoy (February 1877 – at about the time when Guimet returned from China via India to France) de Groot made it his business to observe, study, and participate in, the religious activities of the population, following the order of the annual cycle of festivals and observances.

His aim was the description of the actual religious life of ordinary folk.

It appears that de Groot had little difficulty in persuading Guimet to avail himself of the "unique" possibility offered to him. Here we are at the cradle of the musée Guimet collection* of "cult objects" of Chinese (more especially Amoy and Fujian) popular religion.

De Groot went straight to the workshops of the artisans and god-carvers that he knew so well, and ordered effigies of the deities that were being produced all the time for use in temples and on domestic altars. The de Groot statuette, having been made to order and coming straight from the god-carvers' workshops, may lack the "patina" of deities that have stood for years on altars exposed to incense smoke, but their pristine freshness is all to the advantage of the collection, especially in view of the quality of the workmanship.

When the collection was assembled by de Groot for Guimet in the 1880's, neither could foresee the value and significance it would have a hundred years later. The 20th century saw much destruction of religious artifacts both at its beginning and even more during the Maoist Cultural Revolution, and the popular art of making these images has greatly declined. The collection was made just at the right time and at the right place.

[...]

The statues are all painted in the traditional way with vegetable and not with modern, often gaudy, chemical colours and are made of painted, lacquered and gilded wood.

[...] The size of the statuettes varies from 15 to 35 cm tall. Their general appearance is highly coloured; some of them, however, are readily distinguished by their gilt surface. This colour is the special prerogative of a category of important personages: Buddha and his disciples, gods, emperors, generals, commanders...

[...]

One of the most widespread cults throughout China as well as Japan is that of the "Goddess of Mercy", Guanyin. She hears all prayers and more especially blesses women with offspring and acts as protectress of infants and patron of childbearing and childbirth.



Details of the Guanyin goddess
28.5 x 18 x 13.5 cm
de Groot's collection
© Musée des Confluences/Rhône department
© Photo: Patrick Ageneau

Some of whose 33 canonical manifestations are clearly due to the influence of Tibetan ("lamaïste") esoteric Buddhism. One of the best known of these is Guanyin-with-a-thousand-arms-and-a-thousand-eyes.

[...] The "Goddess of Mercy", Guanyin, is not only the protector of children, the patron saint of pregnant women and births, but also the goddess "who gives children to mothers" too (Songzi Guanyin).

Here we wish to underline two other points relative to goddess Guanyin.

The first one is that in Tibet, this divinity became the most important expression of Buddhism. Indeed the Dalai Lama is considered as the reincarnation of the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara known in China under the name of Guanyin. It must be remembered that in China, this divinity changed sex becoming a goddess.

Second, the similarity of representation between the goddess Guanyin carrying a child and the Christian representations of the Virgin to the Child is sometimes surprising.

According to some authors, this representation, which appeared to Fujian in XVIth Century, is influenced by the Christian model despite the theoretical differences. In fact, the child in the goddess Guanyin's arms symbolizes the kindness she gives to women whereas the Virgin although mater misericordiae, carries the child she gave birth to but she is not considered as the one who gives children neither a protector of birth.

The statuettes in Amoy/Xiamen:

At the mac^{LYON}, Huang Yong Ping chose to display these statuettes from the Chinese pantheon as he had seen them in the storeroom of the Musée des Confluences: on shelves, wrapped in plastic film, and labeled, just like a kind of cabinet of curiosities.

* The de Groot Collection is now on deposit by the Musée national des arts asiatiques Guimet at the Musée des Confluences.

VISITOR INFORMATION

The exhibition

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Thierry Prat

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Opening Hours

Wednesday - Sunday, from 11 am to 6 pm

Access

By car:

- Along "Quai Charles de Gaulle,"

Lyon Parc Auto - Carparks P0 et P2,

special rate for museum visitors:

40 minutes free of charge

By bus, stop Musée d'art contemporain:

- Line C1, Gare Part-Dieu/Cuire

- Line C4 Jean Macé/Cité internationale

change with metro Foch line A or

metro Saxe-Gambetta lines B et D

- Line C5, Bellecour - Terreaux/Rillieux-Vancia

By bike:

- Several Velo'V stations are loca-

ted around the Museum.

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Concessions: 4 euros

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