

Yang Mushi

Illegitimate Production

Exhibition in Beijing: 3.9. – 16.10.2016

Opening: Saturday, September 3, 2016, 4–7 pm

Galerie Urs Meile is pleased to announce the opening of *Illegitimate Production*, the first solo exhibition by young emerging Chinese artist Yang Mushi (*1989) at our gallery. The exhibition will focus on a series of works using industrial raw materials such as processed wood, foam, and sawdust. By shaping the materials into sculptural forms and covering them with black lacquer, the artist converts the ordinary materials into something violent, fragile and sharp. Through exerting repetitive and long-lasting industrial labor including grinding, subtracting, cutting and eroding on a massive amount of raw materials, Yang Mushi realizes the large scale works conveying a suppressing visual experience and a peculiar feeling of solitude. It triggers contemplations on the legitimacy of industrial production emerging along with the extreme urban development of China in the context of globalization, as well as the oppression and crisis confronted by individuals in the rapidly changing society.

Under the title *Illegitimate Production*, Yang Mushi presents groups of works dealing with different types of industrial labor and their influences on various materials. Among the nine works are:

Grinding (2013–2016, wood, aluminum plate and black spray lacquer, 50 × 453 × 750 cm) was realized in three consecutive years through a constant process of cutting, sharpening and grinding until it reaches its ultimate and dignified forms. The black aluminum plate on which the sharp-edged and polished objects are placed intensifies the sense of extremity of the space. The artist condenses the living experience of human bodies into the heavy, sharp and aggressive space after the abiding and adversarial process of “Grinding”.

Subtracting - Pole (2015, wood beam, black spray lacquer, 200 × ø 9 cm each) extends the usage of materials to abandoned wood beams which refers to the abandoned “us”*, being sharpened and forced to change the shape into attacking weapons. The alienation of the objects reflects the regression and deformity coming along with the social maturation.

In the work *Cutting in - Pillar* (2015, solid elm wood board, black spray lacquer, 173 × ø 50 cm each), the artist attempts to examine a group of human-sized pillars in a simple way: he cuts the edges of the objects to different extent and leaves the seemingly flat, decisive or even perfect marks on the surface. What lies behind every single cut and each neat “scar” is the persistent pain brought on by the brutal reality.

Eroding (2016, polystyrene foam, black acrylic, 300 × 121 × 63 cm each) explores another kind of common industrial material—foam. The artist applies the corrosive liquid to the polystyrene foams in order to “re-shape” the material in a destructive and violent manner. The erosion dissolves the original texture of the material, while the black acrylic seals away the traces of corrosion and cuts off the outburst of any emotions.

Yang Mushi was born in 1989 in Jiangxi Province, China and currently lives and works in Shanghai. In 2014 he graduated from the Sculpture Department at the Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing. During an exchange program abroad in 2013, he held his solo show *Rien* at Cité Internationale des Arts Exposition in Paris. His most recent group exhibitions include: *Turning Point: Contemporary Art in China Since 2000*, Minsheng Art Museum, Shanghai, China (2016) and *WE – A Community of Chinese Contemporary Artists*, chi K11 Art Museum, Shanghai, China (2016).

* In Chinese, the word “Beam” carries a metaphorical meaning referencing the pillars or elites of a society.