

Lu Chunsheng

陆春生



Carlin 1-4, Photo, 2005
126x126cm

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Water, Photo, 2000
78x90cm

A particularly generative aspect of Lu Chunsheng's work is the way it breaches the boundary between documentary and fiction. His conceptual and methodological coherence broaden and extend the inquiry into everyday life rather than merely illustrate it. Having graduated from the Department of Sculpture at the China National Academy of Fine Arts, Lu Chunsheng is now focusing on photography and video art. In his work he articulates a surrealistic and neutral attitude in his videos. Using fixed camera positions, endless drawn-out shots and unprofessional shooting techniques, he documents human behavior in bizarre situations. But unlike many of his fellow artist emerging from the same generation he does not focus on the estrangement following an accelerated urbanization (including its stream of rapidly moving images and perplexed inhabitants). Instead, he has developed an oeuvre where the characters depicted - either photographically or on video - find themselves in undoubtedly weird situations. The absurdity takes its form in a series of photos entitled *Water* (2000) where we witness a man standing motionless in a nightgown while an increasing sea of water is accumulated at his feet. This occurrence is documented in progressive stages without any recognizable plot and without further explanation. A correspondingly absurd situation is articulated in the large-scale photo *I Want to Be a Gentleman* (2000) that depicts 9 men standing on tall plinths in front of a run-down industrial building as if they were statues on display on a pedestal in a museum.

In a recent series of photographs entitled *Carlin* Lu Chunsheng strikes a balance between documentary's reality effect and an aesthetic encounter – an unlikely combination. The suggested quasi-documentary directness is created consciously with respect to a given site. These pictures are beautifully composed with a strictly demarcated horizontal line resembling traditional landscape photography, playing on foreground and background. However, this reading is subverted by a human figure riding a broom, as if it was an imaginary horse. The interpretive process is thus one of deferral or unraveling.

Lu Chuncheng has exhibited widely in China and abroad. Today he lives and works in Shanghai. Recent exhibitions include *China Contemporary, Art, Architecture and Visual Culture* at Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, Rotterdam, The Netherlands (2006), *The Thirteen: Chinese Video Now*, P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, Long Island City, NY, USA (2006), *Out of Sight*, De Appel Foundation, Amsterdam, The Netherlands (2005), *Double Vision*, 1st Lianzhou International Foto Festival, Culture Square Lianzhou, China (2005), and *Zooming Into Focus: Chinese Contemporary Photography and Video* from Haudenschild Collection at the National Art Museum, Beijing, China (2005) and subsequently in Mexico City and Shanghai.