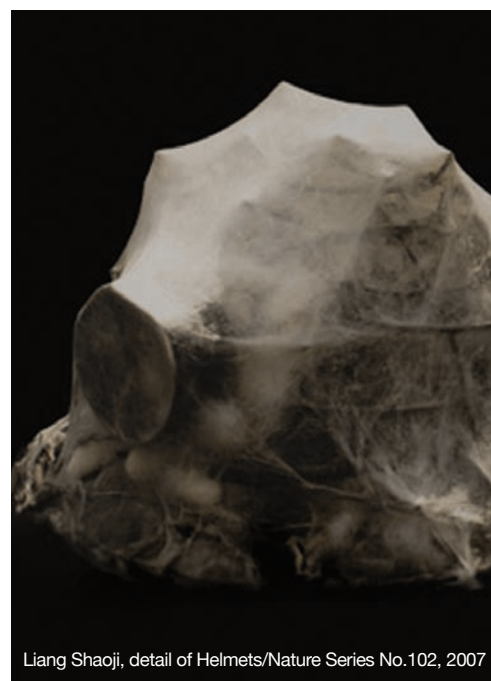


Liang Shaoji

梁绍基



Liang Shaoji, Helmets/Nature Series No.102, 2007



Liang Shaoji, detail of Helmets/Nature Series No.102, 2007

Liang Shaoji, *Chains: The Unbearable Lightness of Being/Nature Series No.79, 2003*, installation view of CLOUD, ShanghART H-Space, 2007

ShanghART 香格纳画廊

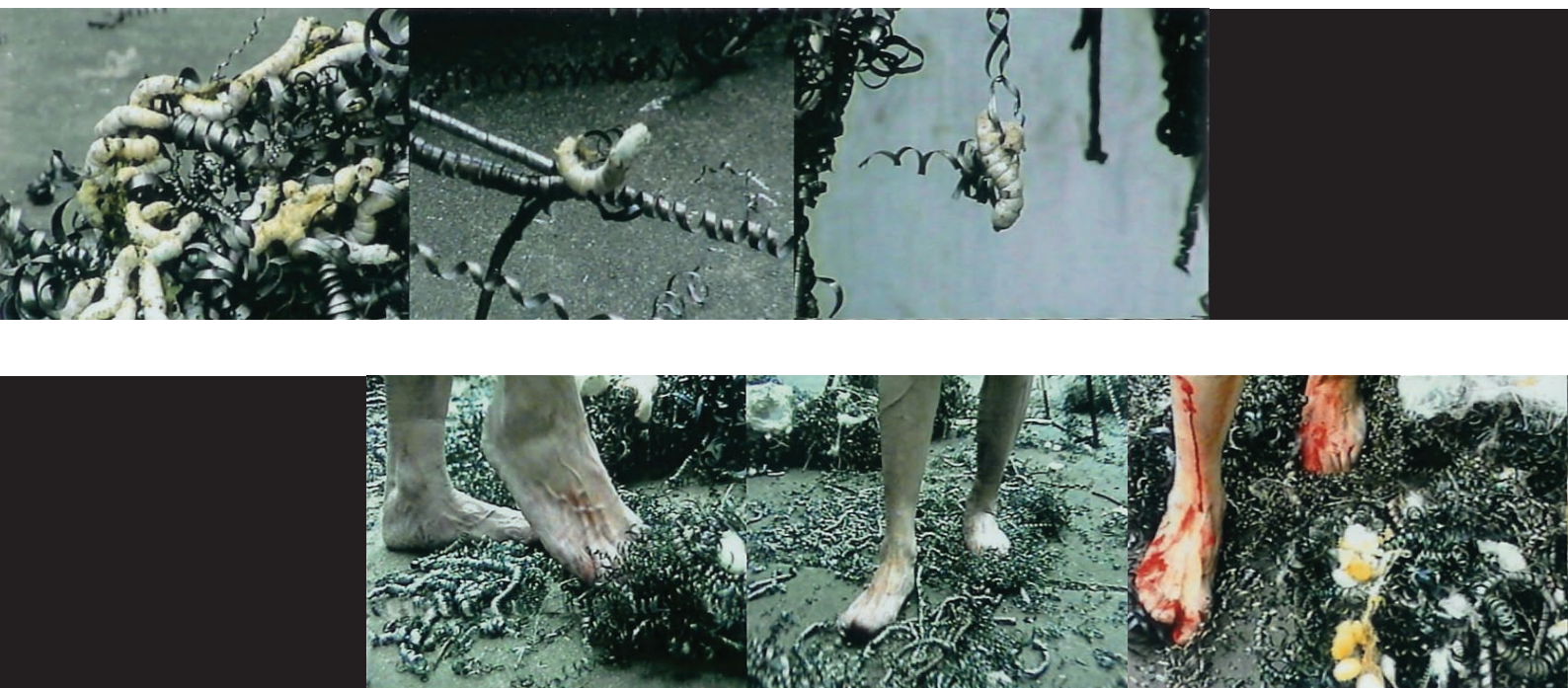
ShanghART Gallery & H-Space
50 Moganshan Rd., Bldg 16 & 18
Shanghai 200060, P.R. China
T: +86 21-6359 3923
F: +86 21-6359 4570
E-mail: info@shanghARTgallery.com
www.shanghARTgallery.com

Liang Shaoji is well known for working with animals and nature in his art. But to understand his work, we must understand something of the Chinese traditions he is referring to when he lovingly rescues fragments of China's architectural past from destruction, wraps references to the sadness and the strife of human life in raw silk thread, and atones for the unrest and the competition of the floating world by sitting on top of the sacred mountain of his village watching in a mirror how the clouds go by. We must know a little at least of the all-encompassing importance nature has in Chinese thought, and the ancient poetry that has canonized the images of silk and bamboo, candles and clouds, as symbols fleeting of life, of suffering and generosity. But even while referring to Chinese tradition and associative philosophy, Liang's works target the here and now, transforming those well-known references into thoroughly contemporary installations and performances. Demanding unusual expertise and extraordinary techniques, his works are slow in the making and difficult to interpret. His installations don't easily submit to commodification - they should be seen as the residue of actions and thought processes, indeed as markers of a chosen path of life, rather than as mere objects.

His early works consisted of serenely abstract hangings and installations made from textiles, often including bamboo as well. They made him a well-respected figure in international exhibitions of arts and crafts. But he felt that this was not enough to satisfy his desire to make art. In 1988 he started working with silkworms, breeding them and using them in his works. From that moment on, a whole new oeuvre emerged, in which he tries to combine biology, bio-ecology, weaving and sculpture, installation and action. Generally these works are entitled Nature Series, followed by a number and a date. He refers to them as sculptures made of time, life and nature, as "recordings of the fourth dimension". Many works consist of objects (often objects trouvées) wrapped in the silk threads he has his silkworms spin around them. The silkworm symbolizes generosity; its thread human life and history. Liang often makes use of this symbolism to soften or ease the violence, cruelty or sadness represented by the objects he uses.

Liang Shaoji was born in Shanghai in 1945, graduated from Zhejiang Fine Art School, and studied at Varbanov Institute of Tapestry in Zhejiang Academy of Art. Today he resides and works in Linhai. Liang Shaoji has exhibited widely in international Biennales and Triennales, the Venice (1999), Istanbul (1999), Lyon (2000) and Shanghai Biennales (2000 and 2006) among them. Recent exhibitions include CLOUD, ShanghART H-Space, Shanghai (2007), Mahjong: Contemporary Chinese Art from the Sigg Collection, Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg (2006).

Marianne Brouwer



Liang Shaoji, Nature Series No.25, video, 1999, 5,36', still images