

POSTMASTERS

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WANG JIANWEI

After receiving his master's degree in oil painting at the Zhejiang Academy of Fine Arts and developing a career as a painter, Wang Jian Wei shifted his practice to performance works, video installations, playwriting, and documentary filmmaking. He applies an anthropological method to his work through which he builds a visual inventory of Chinese urban society and its evolution. Wang's documentaries are considered, skeptical reviews of microlocal phenomena, such as the increasingly brutal effects of contemporary urban development in Chinese metropolitan centers...

With roots in the works of Jean-Luc Godard or Chris Marker, Wang's practice reveals the need to document specific historical, social facts, a need for realism that only photography or film/video can provide. His urge to record matches a desire to write a history that would otherwise remain unknown, in the shadows where the light of the global media fails to reach. His voice is the voice of an alternative; his work advocates a greater public awareness and negotiates a path between the aesthetic and the political.

In 1997, Wang was the first Chinese artist to participate in Documenta in Kassel, Germany. His work has been featured in a number of group exhibitions, including the XXV Bienal de São Paulo, Brazil (2002); The State of Things (Part 1) at Kunst-Werke, Berlin, Germany (2001); My Home Is Yours/Your Home Is Mine, Rodin Gallery, Seoul, South Korea, and Tokyo Opera City Art Gallery, Japan (2000–2001); and the 2000 Shanghai Biennale, China.

—Philippe Vergne

Wang Jian Wei was born in China in 1958. Currently, he lives and works in Beijing. Jianwei has had solo exhibitions at the Hong Kong Art Center; the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; Chambers Fine Art, New York; and Beijing Today Art Center, Beijing. His work was included in the 50th Venice Biennale in 2003 and has been featured in group shows at Centre Pompidou, Paris; the Institute of Contemporary Art, London; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; MUMOK: Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig, Vienna; the International Center of Photography, New York; and numerous institutions all over China. In 2008, Jianwei received a grant from the Foundation of Contemporary Arts.

Sources: <http://www.wangjianwei.com/>

<http://latitudes.walkerart.org/artists/indexe27e.html>