

Zhou Documents

1997

Exhibition Introduction: Niu Bo - Buddha-Coitus

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Z GALLERY

CENTRAL

FINE ARTS,

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NIU BO
Buddha-Coitus

opens

Central Fine Arts - Z Gallery
September 11 through October 15, 1997

Niu Bo, known for his Space Atelier Project 1993, which involved using a zero gravity plane at 20,000 - 25,000 ft to produce art in a weightless state, exhibits at Central Fine Arts - Z Gallery a large scale installation named: **Buddha-Coitus**. In the Tibetan plateau making love with god is considered a divine practice. Mortals could become immortals by means of this practice. This specific practice is physically done by monks and nuns in their cells. Instead of feeling sensual pleasure, they directly attain a lofty realm of unity of Heaven and man.

Niu Bo's environment displays two temple-like tents (one is intact; the other demolished) connected by a hallway. These tents contain male and female deities and other ritualistic objects designed by the artist but executed and produced by Tibetan craftsmen, carvers, who claim to obtain their craftsmanship through reincarnation. Although very detail oriented, the deities do not depict or represent a specific god or Buddha: they basically incorporate a universal concept of a Buddha which unifies all aspects and types of god in one. The wood used to create these deities was taken from old and abandoned, sometimes destroyed, Tibetan temples which is an important aspect because it is believed that the old wood has absorbed the essence of human meditation, and traces of contact with the deities through the course of hundreds of years.

In contradiction to these ancient but still practised rituals, Niu Bo has painted on the outside of the tent modern instructions and tools for sexual intercourse, derived directly from our realm of mass consumerism. A statement concerning the fundamental loss of our basic senses and sensuality, the estrangement of ourselves and our alienation from nature. As Niu Bo states this loss is an inevitable one caused by the *process of progress* within the material world: "We have gradually lost our creative ability to face the world and ourselves. At first we lost contact, lost the ability to feel and then to respond. Our response is not a natural one: instead we follow instructions, we are read like instructions, and we become instructions". At the end of the twentieth century the possibility of cloning human beings themselves without sexual intercourse is put on the agenda of today.