

Zhou Documents

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1995

## Exhibition Document: Congregation of Century 世纪的集会

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CONGREGATION OF THE CENTURY

1995

38" x 142" x 61"

wood, bamboo, photos, sound

Jian-Jun Zhang

Approaching the year 2000, we will soon witness the twentieth century, as well as the millennium, becoming history. My work "Congregation of the Century" attempts to survey the historical landmarks and personalities of the past one hundred years.

The installation includes a large conference table (29" x 123" x 42") and ten chairs (each 38" x 18" x 19"). The ten chairs symbolize ten major figures in twentieth century politics, culture, economics or warfare. All ten have had worldwide impact on the process and progression of history: Einstein, Lenin, Hitler, Oppenheim, Marilyn Monroe, Picasso, Mao Tse-Tung, Gorbachev, Pope John Paul II, and Franklin D. Roosevelt.

The table and chairs, constructed in the geometric style of the Bauhaus, reflect the impact of Western modernity and modernism on the cultural, economic and political situation of this century. For Mao Tse-Tung -- the only non-Westerner among them -- I especially designed a Chinese bamboo chair.

The installation also includes a soundtrack with the voices of these ten figures, each emanating from their place at the table. They sometimes speak in monologue and at other times talk simultaneously.

The table and chairs are covered by thousands of black and white photographs of anonymous individuals from different age groups, genders and nationalities. They confront us with the expressions of either joy or sorrow, and represent the environment of "Congregation of the Century".