

Zhou Documents

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Artist Statement: ZHANG Hong-Tu

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MY NEW WORK AND THE MATERIAL MAO SERIES

The first time I used a hole in my work, I was so excited, I felt as if I was facing a well.

The hole which I made, either by cutting or by building, is not an abstract geometric shape, it is more than just a new concept of space for me, it is a real hole, but at the same time it is the image of an icon.

It questions the significance of the image through the empty image, and plays between presence and absence.

I believe in the power of the image, but I don't believe in the authority of the image.

Mao's image was the most powerful image to me during a certain period, as well as an icon to the people both inside and outside China.

If you stare at a red shape for a long time, when you turn away, your retina holds an image of the shape and you will see a green image of the same shape. In the same way, when I lived in China, I saw the positive image of Mao so many times that now my mind holds a negative image of Mao. In my art I am transferring this psychological feeling to a physical object.

"Material Mao" is a series with more than 50 pieces of work using the same profiled image of Mao cut out of different material.

Sometimes the hole in my work might remind you of the Nothingness of Taoism or the negative space of traditional Chinese ink painting, but the visual inspiration of my work comes directly from a bagel.

Zhang Hongtu