

ZHANG HUAN

I DO | 恒

艺 术 生 活 空 间

MAGIC PARADISE 魔幻天堂

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张洄：涅槃之后 轮回重生

ZhangHuan: After Nirvana, a New Life Begins

沈郁 | Micky



“宇宙的一切能量源泉竟然来自于‘爱’，这句话牛逼吧？”听到这句话一本正经地从张洄口中说出来，不由得让人心里开始犯嘀咕。这还是那个以一股狠劲儿著称，把自己的身体当作容器和载体来进行各种濒临极限的行为艺术创作的人吗？当然，那个如同为了报仇般玩命创作的时期，或许只是他 20 多岁到 30 多岁时无法遏制的一股荷尔蒙过刺激，如今的张洄一方面已经到了“知天命”的阶段，而另一方面，他对艺术的思考和表现则呈现出越来越超越现实的特征。从某个时期开始，他的作品进入形而上的精神层面，内容关于生命，也关于死亡。仿佛肉体已经无法承载他思考的结果，他追求的是死亡之后的东西，另一个开始。

生和死都是大事，但对张洄来说后者的重要性显然要远大于前者，这与他所信仰的藏传佛教有关，但又不止于此。在他的思考中，死亡可能不是一个结束，反而是一个开始，全然未知，充满无限可能性。有时候你很难分辨，宗教究竟是为人解决了问题，还是提出了更多的问题。但有一点毋庸置疑，宗教在某种程度上为生命的种种矛盾和悖论提供了一个出口——轮回或重生，这一世的所作所为是转世的铺垫。张洄对死亡和死后的世界有一种执迷，他一直在研究天葬、古代墓穴和与之相关的文物，似乎想从中找到什么秘密。因缘际会，后来他成了迄今为止世界上唯一的汉族天葬师。尽管目前尚未亲自主持过天葬仪式，可种种类似的事情无不营造出一种神秘氛围——对于那些隐没在日常生活背后的事物，他似乎了解得比旁人更多一些。包括他无比确信自己的前世是藏獒和秃鹫这两种动物里的一个：“藏獒只认死理儿，跟我的个性很像，就是一根筋走到底。而秃鹫有一种灵性的、神性的东西，所以它被称为火鸟。”

"At the end of day, all forms of energy in the universe originate from love. Amazing, isn't it?" Zhang Huan said solemnly. Observing the earnestness on his face, one could not help but wonder: is this man still that performance artist known for his assorted extreme experiences that threatened to harm his own body, the container and carrier of his art? Of course, in his twenties and thirties when he created art furiously as if he were avenging himself on his foes, it was largely due to an irresistible surplus of hormone during that period. While now, Zhang Huan is around 50, the age when a dignified person should "know the fate decreed of heaven" as claimed by Confucius. On the other hand, Zhang's thoughts and representations of art have increasingly demonstrated features transcending the reality. From a certain period, his works began to venture into the realm of the spirituality, exploring life and death. It looks as though the body alone could not carry the fruits of his thoughts and what he pursues is something beyond death. It is another beginning.

Both life and death are important matters, though for Zhang Huan, needless to say, the latter takes on greater significance. This has something to do with the Tibetan Buddhism he believes in, but there's more. He may not necessarily consider death an ending; instead, it may be a new beginning, known by nobody but full of possibilities. Sometimes, it's difficult to be sure whether religion helps solve problems or it just raises more. Yet, it's indubitable that religion provides an exit for the countless contradictions and paradoxes in life to a certain extent. That is, incarnation or rebirth, meaning what one does in the present life is the karma that will be carried forward to future lives. Zhang Huan is obsessed with death and the afterworld. He has been delving into celestial burial, ancient tombs and relevant cultural objects, as if trying to unveil some secret. It's not coincident that he later became the first and the only certified celestial burial master from the Han nationality in the world. Although up to now he hasn't had the chance to give a celestial burial, he seems to be enveloped in a mysterious atmosphere and knows more about the things hidden behind the daily routines than ordinary people. For instance, he firmly believes that in his past life, he must be either a Tibetan mastiff or vulture. "Tibetan mastiff is extremely obstinate, just like me, always sticking to my own way. Vulture is a spiritual and divine bird. That's why it's also called the fire bird," he explained.



为鱼塘增高水位 1997

To Raise the Water Level in a Fishpond 1997

北京东村八年，用身体冲出牢笼

时间回到 20 世纪 90 年代初，北京东三环和东四环之间还没有建立日后的朝阳公园，北京市行政地图上，这个地方名叫朝阳区东风乡大山庄。这是北京近郊一个贫穷和破败的村子，满地遍布垃圾和灰土，除了等待拆迁和收取低廉的房租，村民生活毫无指望。那一带最常见的工种是收废品，外来打工者、拾荒者和小部分艺术家组成了村里的住客。在荒地、平房和农田之间，有个零散的艺术家组织“北京东村”。这个名字是张洵为学习纽约东村的精神而取的。当时活跃在东村的一帮艺术家，后来都成了艺术圈里叫得上名字的人物。显然，他们是不属于大山庄的，他们身上的气质、他们的眼神和行为方式都跟这里的村民和拾荒者大为不同。而在当时，他们因为过于穷困潦倒而与周边的环境既十分和谐又格格不入。现实逼得张洵走投无路，据说当时他住的屋子甚至没有隔断，只能用画布充当门帘。所以，他将所有的情绪、对现实的抵抗以及对自身的思考转向身体体验式的行为艺术表演，以常人眼里夸张怪异的举动来博取关注——无论这样的理解是否正确，事实证明这一招的确奏效，铺天盖地的谩骂和猜测，很快将他推到了舆论的风口浪尖。但是，在那个连生存都要苦苦挣扎的年月，来自他者不乏恶意的误解比起内心的挣扎与煎熬来说，完全可以忽略不计。张洵说：“那时候一个河南人到北京，你不大声喊我来了，谁知道你。”

《12平方米》是为张洹的成名之路奠下第一块基石的作品，此后则成了他终生都无法避开的词条。多年以后，当他在自己的“艺术工厂”里指挥着近百名员工集体创作的时候，是否还会想起1994年那天，他赤身裸体，浑身涂满了蜂蜜和鱼的黏液，在北京东村一个肮脏的公共厕所里待了足足一个小时。根据记载，1994年6月2日中午11:30，行为开始。北京的夏天极其炎热，厕所被高温蒸腾，臭气熏天，粪便与混杂的腥臭让人难以呼吸，期间有村民走进厕所方便，很快惊慌失措地逃了出去。这是一次令人不安的行为，肮脏至极的公厕，空中飞舞着成千上万只苍蝇——其中很大一部分聚集在张洹身上的不同位置，盯着他的脸、耳朵、肩膀……但他始终一动不动，面部表情坚毅，似乎在完成一项重要的任务，而这个任务的目的是对自己生存的环境进行嘲讽。汗水不断从他的头上和身上流淌下来，其中所蕴含的对自身知觉的漠视形成了强大的反叛气场，而密密麻麻的苍蝇则加重了人的厌恶及恐慌。不用细想也知道，那一个小时无论在心理或生理上，都是一次艰难的极限体验。在场的其他人事后回忆，那天刚做完行为，张洹从厕所出来，走向湖里直到消失，这时候碰巧被村民看到，就报了案。这样脱光了衣服坐在公共厕所里的举动无疑是居心叵测的，在光天化日之下，将肉体化为容器，即使静默不语，也仿佛承载着对生活无声的控诉。在当时，频繁被举报是张洹等人生活日常的一部分，而北京东村仅存在了数年就销声匿迹。

《12平方米》完成一周后，张洹很快进行了下一次行为。他把自己赤身裸体悬空吊在天花板上，让血从脖子滴落到身体下方的盘子里，其底部同时用电炉加热。鲜血在盘子里滚烫、干涸、慢慢变为焦黑，期间不断散发出臭味。张洹把这件作品命名为《65公斤》，这是他当时的体重。后来他说，这次行为的过程让他知道了人体的重量超过三分之二是在肚脐以上的。平时都是两个肩膀扛一个脑袋，身体一旦平放，就会发现全部重量集中在上半截——这是无论绘画、装置、雕塑或所有其他艺术形式都无法带来的一种经验，也是张洹在早期行为艺术创作中最为看重的部分：过程与体验。他早期的初衷是只做与自己生活相关的作品，但对于一个一穷二白的“流氓无产者”而言，除了身体，再也没有什么是跟自己密切相关的东西。“其实这就是一种生活体现。我用身体来做的时候主要是注重体验、过程，这个过程我感受到了，我的身体跟这个环境、跟这些苍蝇、跟所有的这些东西，要发生关系，随后我才知道我是谁，我的身份是什么，我到底感受到什么。”经过张洹的上述解释，也就不难理解其通过濒临崩溃的极端体验，使生命被浓缩和提纯的行为了。尽管肉体遭受了重重虐待和压迫，但精神或许能在这个过程中达到一种类似于解脱的境界。因此，在公厕里的那一个小时，张洹所体验到的是另外一种人生内容。

同一时期，张洹还策划组织东村其他艺术家集体完成了一件作品《为无名山增高一米》，成为此后与《12平方米》齐名的、在艺术史上留下一笔的重要作品。东村的艺术家们跑到北京附近的一个山头上脱得精光，按照身高体重决定次序，然后全部面朝下一个接一个摆在一起。十具不着寸缕的年轻躯体，叠在一起刚好为附近的荒山增高了一米。这件作品无论在完成方式或表现形式上，都充满了巨大的荒诞

感，而这种荒诞在隐隐约约间，似乎又与社会现实有着千丝万缕的联系。让人在啼笑皆非的同时，心里像被人打了一拳似的紧缩起来。行为艺术之于现实，多半也是这种充满象征、欲说还休的关系。当代生活处处是隐喻。

1999年，张洵带着《为无名山增高一米》参加了第48届威尼斯国际双年展，首次面世后立即引起了轰动，创造了巨大的社会效应。不但在中国艺术史上留下一笔，也让北京东村及多位东村艺术家走上了国际舞台。这时，张洵刚刚移居美国一年。

创作《12平方米》时，张洵不到三十岁，他认为那是牛逼的、最好的年龄。当被问到对于这件作品的感受时，他的回答充满了由人生不可逆转所带来的大彻大悟：“其实我做完《12平方米》就应该歇菜了，就不应该再做艺术了，你看从1994年、2004年、2014年到现在，做了二十多年，如果是一个大悟的人，那个（《12平方米》）一结束就结束了，我就做其他行当去了。应该去拍电影，或者经商，或者我就应该从一个县长做起，做到七常委。”没有更深层的原因，就是觉得不应该继续做下去了，他补充道：“现在才知道艺术史上能接受你这一件作品就已经很牛逼了。”

如今人们提及张洵，首先必须要说《12平方米》，这既是他的成名作，后来又成了代表作，而五十岁的他说，“那个时候做完就应该结束了。”

如果结束能来得这么早，便不会有此后的《为鱼塘增高水位》，这是张洵去纽约的敲门砖。1997年8月，他邀请了四十多位从全国各地到北京打工的民工参与这件作品，给每人20块钱，让他们脱掉上衣，排队走进一个鱼塘。他们中有搬家公司工人、建筑工人、有养鱼和卖鱼的，年龄段从二十几岁到六十几岁。为了找到这些民工，张洵走访了很多他们居住的简易棚子，而用来进行行为的鱼塘离他当时住的地方不远，他有时候散步就能走到那儿。那些参与进来的民工并不能理解艺术家的意图，只是按照张洵的计划来实施整个过程。张洵觉得，当看到他们的时候，他们就像他童年生活印象里的叔叔、伯伯和兄弟。

《为鱼塘增高水位》最终以彩色影片形式呈现，片长6分12秒，整件作品分为三个部分。第一部分是参与者把鱼塘围住，每个人面向水，间隔五、六米，沉默看水；第二部分是增高水位，脱去上衣的男人们排队走进鱼塘里；第三部分他们组成一排人墙，将鱼塘一分为二。张洵肩膀上驮着一个小男孩，沉默地站在队伍里，看起来与其他人并无二致。

一年后，高名潞担任策展人的“蜕变与突破：华人新艺术”中国当代艺术展于9月在纽约举办，在此之前，中国各类的当代艺术展览已经在西方多个国家巡回了一圈。高名潞是中国艺术界颇富争议的艺术批评家及策展人，他曾因策划由于枪击事件和炸弹威胁等轰动一时的“八九现代艺术大展”后出走美国。高名潞是在北京与众多艺术家见面，回到纽约后，他打电话给张洵，问他能否将《为鱼塘增高水位》的作品照片作为该展览的海报和画册封面，张洵毫不犹豫同意了。同年他变卖家当，只身移民美国，这成了下一段人生的开始。



为无名山增高一米 1995

To Add One Meter to an Anonymous Mountain 1995

8 Years in East Village in Beijing, Forcing Out of the Cage Using His Body

It was in the early 1990s. At that time, on the map of Beijing, between East Third Ring and East Fourth Ring, Chaoyang Park was nowhere to find. The area was called Dashan Village, Dongfeng County, Chaoyang District. It was a poor and shabby village in the suburbs of Beijing, with garbage and dust all over the ground. The villagers lived on meager rent and waited for the day when their houses would be demolished and they could get compensated. Immigrant workers, garbage collectors and a handful of artists were regular residents. On the land of bungalows, wilderness and fields, a small group of artists formed Beijing East Village, named by Zhang Huan in an effort to draw upon the spirit of East Village in New York. Most of the active artists in the small community made their fame later. They looked like square pegs in round holes in Dashan Village. They were betrayed by their idiosyncrasies, the way they observed people, and the things they did, which contrasted with those of the garbage collectors. Yet, there was one thing in common: they were just as poor, which made them quite harmonious with the environment. The room that Zhang lived had no wall to separate it from the space occupied by another artist. And Zhang had to use canvas as the curtain. Zhang saw no way out. He translated his emotions, his rebellion toward the reality and his thoughts on life into experimental performance, using his body. His quirky behaviors, it proved, did attract people's attention – torrent of abuses and speculations, which immediately



张洹在创作中

Zhang Huan in the Process of Creation

put him on the cusp of heated discussions. However, during a time when survival was a struggle, vicious defamation was nothing to compare with the suffering within. "If you don't cry out, who would know you're a Henanese in Beijing at that time?" said Zhang. 12 Square Meters was Zhang's first performance art piece that paved his way to fame, also the label today's Zhang struggles to rip himself off, but to no avail. Many years later when Zhang was directing hundreds of employees to conduct collective creation in his "art factory", would he recall that one day in 1994, he stayed in a squalid public toilet, naked and smeared with a visceral liquid of fish and honey, for an hour in East Village in Beijing? It was recorded that the performance began at 11:30 on June 2nd, 1994. Beijing's summer is notoriously scorching. And the toilet was sweltering and unbearably stinking; the overwhelming stench of excreta made it hard to breath. During Zhang's performance, villagers who entered the toilet ended up escaping immediately, panic stricken. It was an upsetting scene. Thousands of flies occupied different areas of Zhang's body, feasting on his faces, ears, shoulders, while he remained motionless, his face tough and blank, as if he was undertaking an important mission, the aim of which is to mock at his living environment. Sweat was dripping from his head and body. The

indifference the he displayed toward his physical existence created around him an aura of rebellion, and the swarming flies aggravated the disgust of panic of observers. The one hour was a grueling extreme experience both mentally and physically for Zhang. As recalled by a witness, Zhang fled from the toilet after the performance into a lake, where he was submerged by water. A villager watching this reported to the police. Sitting in a public toilet naked in the broad day light was, needless to say, something done with an ulterior motive. Though Zhang did not say a word during the whole process, the act of treating his body as a container stood as a complaint against life. During that time, being reported to the police was part of the life of Zhang as well as the artist community he belonged to. The East Village merely existed for several years before it vanished.

One week after 12 Square Meters, Zhang staged his another performance. He suspended himself naked with chains from the ceiling of his home, allowing his blood to drip into a saucer heated by an electric stove from below. Blood boiled, dried and turned black on the saucer, emitting stench throughout the performance. Zhang named it after his body weight - 65 KG. Later he said that with this performance, he came to know that a 2/3 of a human being's body weight was above the navel, a fact that could hardly be noticed when walking. Also, this was an experience that could not be made possible by all other forms of art, be it painting, installment or sculpture. Process and experience were the core of Zhang's early creative life. In his early age, he just wanted to create something relevant to his life. But for a penniless "lumpen-proletariat", there was nothing more relevant than one's own body. "This is a manifestation of life. When I performed using my body, I focused on the process and the experience. My body needs to relate with the environment, the flies and all other things. After that, I come to know who I am, what my identity is and how I feel about it," he explained. Based on this explanation, it is not that difficult to understand why Zhang said through this extreme experience he felt his life was condensed and purified. While the body suffered and endured greatly, the spirit entered into the realm of freedom. Thus, it's fair to say that Zhang experienced another aspect of life during the one hour in the public toilet.

During that period, Zhang also curated and organized a performance together with some other artists in the East Village artistic community, called To Add One Meter to an Anonymous Mountain, which was acclaimed as having the same significance as 12 Square Meters. The participants climbed a mountain near Beijing, and one by one, the

artists shed their clothes. Then they lay on top of each other, face down, in the form of a pyramid by ascending weight. The two young naked bodies combined added one meter to the barren mountain precisely. The way this piece was completed and the form in which it was displayed reeked of a strong sense of absurdity, and yet it seemed to be tightly linked to the society and reality. While observers might laugh at it, they would also feel their heart tightened as if being hit by a punch. Performance art is symbolic of the reality in a subtle way, full of metaphors of the modern life.

In 1999, Zhang presented *To Add One Meter* to an *Anonymous Mountain* at the 48th Venice Biennale, which became a huge sensation, writing an important chapter in China's art history and introducing several artists from East Village to the international arena. That's just one year after Zhang had moved to the U.S.

Zhang created *12 Square Meters* before 30, the golden age of his life, as he so called. When asked how he felt about this art work, he gave a response full of wisdom, commenting on irreversibility of life: "Actually, after completing *12 Square Meters*, I should have withdrawn from the world of art. From 1994 to 2004 to 2014 to now, I've been continuously creating pieces for more than two decades. An enlightened person should not have persisted for so long. I should have tried my luck in other professions after finishing *12 Square Meters*, like shooting movies, doing business, or starting a political life from a county magistrate to a member of the CPC standing committee." He did not provide any further explanation on this comment, but added: "Now I realize that having one single work remembered in the art history is something worth celebrating." Every time the name Zhang Huan is mentioned, *12 Square Meters* is the first thing most people think of. It has earned him fame and become his magnum opus. Now at the age of 50, Zhang said: "I should have concluded my art career with *12 Square Meters*."

If the ending had come so early, *To Raise the Water Level in a Fish Pond* would not have been created, which served as a stepping stone for Zhang to go to New York. In August

1997, he invited 40 migrant workers in Beijing to participate in creating this piece. He gave each of them 20 Yuan and requested them to take off their clothes and walked into a fish pond by sequence. Aged from 20 to 60, the workers came from all walks of life, including home moving service, construction, fish farming and trading. Zhang found these participants in the rough shelters they lived in. The fish pond where he organized this performance was within walking distance from his living place. The migrant workers did not understand the intention of the artist, and they just did what they were told to do. Zhang was overcome by a sense of déjà vu: they were like his uncles and brothers in his childhood.

To Raise the Water Level in a Fish Pond was presented in a color movie lasting 6 minutes and 12 seconds, consisting of three parts. In the first part, the participants faced and surrounded the fish pond, with a 5 to 6 meters of spacing between each other, and gazed at the water silently. The second part was raising the water level. They took off their clothes and walked into the fish pond in a queue. In the third part, they formed a wall using their bodies and divided the water into halves. Zhang had a little boy sitting on his shoulder and looked like anyone else, silently standing in the water.

One year later, Chinese contemporary art exhibition titled "Inside Out: New Chinese Art" was curated by Gao Minglu in New York in September. Before this, various exhibitions of Chinese contemporary arts had been showcased in several Western countries. Gao Minglu is a controversial art critic and curator in China's art world. He went to the U.S. after curating the 1989 China Avant-Garde exhibition, which was closed due to gunshot and bomb threat. Gao called and visited many artists in Beijing before heading for New York where he called Zhang Huan, asking whether Zhang would like to have the photos of To Raise the Water Level in a Fish Pond as the poster of the exhibition and cover of the album. Zhang agreed without hesitation. The same year, Zhang sold his belongings in China and moved to New York alone, marking the beginning of another important period of his life.



大海 No.1 2014

Sea No.1 2014

纽约八年，把内心的石头扔进大海

张洵在美国的八年，是他将自己的行为艺术发展到极致的时期。他最初的想法是“到那边背尸体赚钱，攒个二、三十万人民币，再杀回北京，租个房子重操旧业。”然而美国带来了更多的机会与更大的舞台。抵达纽约的张洵看到了到处张贴着印有自己作品的海报——他肩上驮着一个小男孩，和其他一些男人一起站在鱼塘中。高名潞策划的华人新艺术展览大获成功，很快就有藏家收藏了张洵一些行为艺术作品的图片。他有了钱租个小房子安顿下来，开始逛美术馆和画廊，出席所有重要展览的开幕，开始在国际上崭露头角。在此期间，他的行为艺术创作即便依然立足于身体，但已经开始跨越个体感受局限，试图探讨更为广泛的社会问题和游牧文化中的个人身份问题。

1998年，张洵在纽约 P.S.1 美术馆进行了他在美国的第一场行为艺术表演《朝拜—纽约和风水》。他在美术馆的院子里赤身裸体，坦然俯卧在一张放置了巨大冰块的仿明式古榻上，做出藏传佛教信徒朝圣磕长头时伏地跪拜的姿势，周围拴着一群纽约的狗，在整个过程中不时于场地中走动。这件作品的形式令一些评论家想起了中国典故《卧冰求鲤》，两者似乎都具有某种因过于虔诚而自伤的氛围，不同的是张洵所卧的冰块之下没有鲤鱼，但有可能隐藏着更大的风险和机遇。作品名称直白地阐明了当时去往西方（特别是纽约）的中国艺术家的心态，首先点明了人与地点的关系，来自大洋彼岸的人面对陌生的环境与巨大的语言、文化隔阂，摆出了朝拜的姿势，试图用身体融化阻挡在两者之间的坚冰。结果是冰块没有融化，而张洵的身体很快就冻僵了。后来的事大家都知道了，张洵一炮而红，迅速受到关注。

自那以后，张洵开始在西方艺术世界顺风顺水，世界各地的美术馆频频邀请他去做行为表演。1999年：西雅图美术馆，《我的美国（水土不服）》；旧金山亚洲美术馆，《龙之梦》；纽约，《阳光》；迈阿密，《呼吸》。2000年：纽约，《家谱》、《水痘》；瑞典赫尔辛堡博物馆，《花》……在一长串作品名称背后，张洵经典的光头造型像一个来自中国的当代艺术符号，迅速席卷全球。那张他把生牛肉做成肌肉形状并裹在身上，在纽约街头行走、取名为《我的纽约》的行为照片，成为又一件著名作品，出现在各大艺术媒体和当代艺术展览画册的封面。初尝成功滋味的张洵，成为西方世界中一颗冉冉升起的 Art Star。工作邀约不断，不再缺少观众，他生猛的表现形式极为抓人眼球，具备强大的话题性，人们开始鼓掌喝彩，这又带来了更多关注……一次活生生的绝地大反攻。后来因为邀约过多，甚至还衍生出一个名为《我的……》的系列，作品包括《我的日本》、《我的悉尼》、《我的波士顿》、《我的罗马》、《我的瑞士》。

那些年里，有时张洵到达一个国家，在下了飞机去往美术馆的路上，都还没确定将要做的行为表演内容。但无论如何，他每一次都拿出了令人满意的演出，他就像一个天生的表演者，将当代艺术的理念、语境与符号，熟练地玩弄于股掌之间。相对于20世纪90年代依然十分保守的中国，西方国家显然更具备接受这一切的土壤，而所有的形式一旦玩过一次以后就不再新鲜了，因此张洵的成功无法被复制。至于这种行为究竟是哗众取宠，还是有话要说，行为艺术本身就是对生活夸张化的集中呈现，具有视觉冲击是必备要素，假使一次行为表演不是为着刺激观众并引发轰动效应。并且最后还未能实现上述结果，那么可以说根本就不值得做。毕竟，“行为艺术”只是当代人赋予这种艺术形式的一个名词，在中国叫行为艺术，在台湾叫行动艺术，而美国人则将其称之为“Performance Art”，不同的地方有不同的说法，其实人的行为本来就包含在生活之中。张洵从来没有把行为艺术提升到一个特别学术的高度，“我们回到几千年前，或者包括现在这些最原始的非洲也好、西藏也好，这些人的生活就是行为艺术。它过渡到今天的时候，我们开始有艺术家这样做，这本来就是生活，生活存在着很多东西，可以叫艺术也可以不叫艺术。”

在纽约工作和生活了八年，他最大的收获不是做了那么多作品，也不是在国外很成功，而是发现自己养活自己了。“我最大的收获是知道我是一个中国人了，原来对这个概念不清晰，一到地球那边看自己，你是从那块土地来的，你才知道你是中国人。知道自己是中国人那所有的问题就都解决了，身为中国人，就做中国人的事，这多简单。”命运把张洵带到了地球的另一端，在美国他感受到前所未有的孤独，像一个石头被扔到大海里就没了声音，再怎么呐喊都没人理你，那是另一种极端的处境。所以从那时候开始，他养成了独立思考的习惯，并且在人生最好的时候，三十多岁，彻底弄明白了自己是中国人。“我在那边是以一个背包者或者旅游者的过客身份在做 global（全球本土化）的东西，《My Boston》、《My NewYork》、《My……》都是我的、我的。它是一种主观的想法，我就把中心的和地方的，国际文化跟地域性的概念融在一起了。那个时候其实都是在做一些跟中国没关系的事情，却反而让我认清我是中国人。”如果没有纽约的八年，张洵认为自己回国之后会不会没有方向，不会像今天那么自信、那么如鱼得水。但他同时又坚信一切都有定数，就像生命中无法解释又的确存在的种种必然。



我的纽约 2002
My New York 2002

8 Years in New York, Throwing the Stone in His Heart into the Sea

The eight years in the U.S. was a period when Zhang pushed boundaries of what performance art could be. At the beginning, he just wanted to "do something crazy, earn some 200 to 300 thousand Yuan, then return to Beijing to pursue his career in a decent rented flat". However, the U.S. brought more opportunities and rendered a larger stage for Zhang. Upon arriving New York, Zhang found his art piece appearing on posters everywhere – he and other man standing in the fish pond, with he having a boy sitting on the shoulders. Gao Minglu's "Inside Out: New Chinese Art" was a huge success. Soon the photos of Zhang's art pieces were sought by several collectors. He rent a small house in New York, spending time in art museums and galleries and never missing any important exhibitions. His name began to be known by the art community internationally. During this period, while he still drew inspiration from his body, he also began to explore a variety of social problems and an individual's identity in a nomadic culture, transcending the narrowness of personal feelings.

In 1998, Zhang Huan staged his first performance in the U.S. at P.S.1, New York, titled Pilgrimage--New York and Fengshui. He lay naked and face down on a block of ice on top of a bed featuring a style from the Ming Dynasty in the courtyard of the museum, with a pack of dogs chained to the bed, which moved impatiently during the course of the performance. His posture was adopted from Tibetan Buddhists, who would kneel down and lie flat on the ground with their face down when worshipping their God. The form of this piece reminded some critics of the Chinese fable Lie on Ice for Carps, both depicting self-inflicted injury from excessive piety. Yet there were no carps under the ice block on which Zhang lay; instead, greater risks and opportunities lurked beneath. The piece explicitly expressed the mindset of Chinese artists who went to the West, especially New York. The relationship between people and the place was articulated. Chinese artists faced huge language and cultural barriers in a foreign land, so they adopted a posture of pilgrimage, attempting to melt the ice, but ended up getting themselves frozen. Zhang made a name for himself after this piece.

Since then, Zhang was increasingly accepted by the Western art world and frequently invited by museums around the world. 1999: My America (Performance: Hard to Acclimatize), Seattle Art Museum; The Dream of Dragon, San Francisco Asian Art Museum; Sunshine, New York; Breath, Miami. 2000: Family Tree, Chicken Pox, New York; Flowers, Helsingborg Museum...behind the long list of art works was an icon of Chinese contemporary art – Zhang Huan, who become internationally renowned with his bare headed style. In My New York, Zhang wrapped himself with raw beef and walked on the street of New York. The photo became another well-known piece, appearing on various media and cover of albums of contemporary art exhibitions. Zhang became an art star

in the Western world. Invitations for performance flooded in and a growing audience was captivated. His performance was eye-catching, stirring up heated debate among the public, which in turn brought more attention to him. His success in the Western world was in stark contrast to his near oblivion in China. He even had a series of works with *My* as the prefix, including *My Japan*, *My Sydney*, *My Boston*, *My Rome* and *My Switzerland*.

During those years, it was not uncommon that Zhang did not have a clue on what to perform even at the point of heading to the museum from the airport, yet at the end he always managed to present a satisfying performance. He was a natural performer, playing adeptly with the conceptions, contexts and symbols of contemporary art. Compared to the conservative China, the Western countries obviously had a better ground for accepting this form of art in the 1990s. Each form, once presented, quickly became obsolete and because of this, Zhang's success was not replicable. Whether Zhang did them merely to attract eyeball or really to express himself was not that important. Performance art in itself was a condensed and exaggerated expression of life. And what mattered most for this art form is the eye-catching factor. If a performance failed to excite the audience and sparkle sensation, it should not have been staged in the first place. "Performance art", a creation of people in the modern world, is known by different names in different parts of the world. Actually, act is part of life. Zhang never attempted to elevate performance art to a high level. "Back to thousands of years ago, or in more primitive places like Africa and Tibet, people's life is performance art. Now we artists are doing this. Actually this is life itself. Life has many manifestations. We choose to call them art or not."

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During the eight years in New York, Zhang found that his biggest reward was neither the numerous art pieces nor the huge success on a foreign land; it was that fact that he managed to make a living. "The biggest payoff is that I know I'm a Chinese. I was not clear about this identity. Only when in a foreign land did I realize that I am Chinese. This helps to clear away a lot of doubts. A Chinese acts in the way a Chinese should. Simple, isn't it?" Fate took Zhang to the other end of the globe, where he felt a sense of loneliness like never before, as if he was a pebble being thrown into the vast sea, making a sound that nobody hears, which sounds like an extreme experience of another kind. Since then, he started to form the habit of independent thinking. In his thirties, the golden age of his life, he utterly realized that he was a Chinese. "I was doing something global as a backpacker or traveler. *My Boston*, *My New York*, *My..My*' was an integral part of everything. Cultures and concepts of mainstream and marginal, international and national were fused together through my subjective thinking. The things I did had nothing to do with China. Yet they made me see clear that I was a Chinese." Without the eight years in New York, Zhang believed he would not have had the confidence and ease of mind after returning to China, knowing clearly in which direction he should be heading. At the same time, he believed that everything was predestined. There did exist inevitabilities in life that could not be explained.

回国八年，你一生的命局就是你的生命

2005 年对张洹而言是个分水岭，这一年他回到中国，定居上海；皈依了佛门，成为在家居士；还在上海松江买了一个占地面积 40 多亩的工厂，开始打造自己心目中的庞大“艺术工厂”。与此同时，他渐渐停止了行为艺术，原因是不想重复自己。“做了那么长时间以后感觉累了，对这种形式、这种状态累的主要原因是因为没法突破自己，觉得再做就开始重复自己的时候马上就停掉了。”张洹在这方面一直保持着敏感，包括做艺术也是。50 岁的时候他突然感觉不能再重复了，便马上将精力挪到电影上。这类人最为显著的性格特点，就是很难与过去的自我共存，他们需要不断改换生活形态和生活方式来满足对于个人极限体验的需求——这是一种近乎触底反弹的求生本能。因此，他们总是在不断地寻找，却又很容易感到厌倦，轻而易举将苦苦得来的东西抛弃掉。简单一句不想重复自己，或许还无法概括整件事情。张洹回国之后的变化，与从前相比是巨大且南辕北辙的。其中甚至还包括人物性格——尽管很少有人知道真正的他究竟是什么样子。他不再反叛，不再针锋相对，不再咄咄逼人，一种平滑而老练的处世技巧让他主流社会游刃有余（张洹工作室为上海世博会创作的永久雕塑《和和谐谐》在坊间获得了罕见的群体性高度赞誉“观众满意、官方满意、艺术家满意、评论界满意”，张洹平静地接受了赞美）。后来他甚至不太去谈早期的行为艺术，可以说，他从根本上抛弃了从前的自己，如同无法避免的地壳变动所造成的大陆板块分离。

这样的变化是如何发生？或许可以先从他回国后选择的居住地谈起。张洹曾经不止一次公开表示过他对上海的喜爱，而这个老牌的国际大都市也的确能带来很多不同感受。从淮海路上的梧桐树到老码头的霓虹灯，无论是数十年前的老克勒或当今的时尚新贵，无不显露出一种既带点慵懒又满不在乎的派头，张口闭口“最要紧吃相好看”。这与北京的粗犷生猛截然相反，某种程度上，也适合张洹这样在世界上单枪匹马闯了一圈、已经开始对过去心生厌倦的人。自从他移民美国后，网络时代飞速降临，很快地球变成了“平”的，人们见多了光怪陆离的现象，已经很难有什么事情能叫他们受到惊吓，从前仅仅因为看到有人裸体就要报警的往事，已经成为笑谈。现今中国是世界上的金钱霸主，认可、接纳并稍微地依附于主流价值观，才是聪明人的聪明之选。过去的愤怒青年动不动就头破血流、兵刃相见，很大程度上是因为穷困而七见，如今生活条件得到改善，人民生活水平大幅提高，再无事生非那就是瞎捣乱。简而言之，敌人已经被消灭，进入了和平年代，而 2005 年的上海，就是下一个即将到来的太平盛世的中心。

在这样的氛围之下，张洹率领工作室众人另辟蹊径，开始创作前所未有的香灰画。香灰是最轻的材料之一，作为宗教仪式的残余物，在此之前从来没有人将其引入当代艺术创作中。而张洹与香灰的缘分

开始于一次寻常的出行，在上海静安区最繁华地带的静安寺，看到许多人虔诚地敬香拜佛，那一刻他突然感觉进入了另一个世界，存在于日常社会之外的、饱含着祈愿与诉求的、中国人最为传统的精神世界。看着痴迷到显得行为异常的信徒们，张涓开始思考究竟是一种什么样的力量促使人们相信求神拜佛是有用的。而燃香、敬香和烧香过程似乎具有某种神秘力量，信徒们相信自己求祷的心愿正是通过烧香过程传达给了神明，香灰作为心愿燃尽后的残骸，突然在他眼里变得意义非凡起来。他把静安寺的香灰请回工作室，兴奋得三天三夜睡不着。他觉得找到了一种全新的材质，它一直在自己身边、在中国存在了几千年，却一直被漠视，与他在美国刚刚发现并确认的自己中国人的身份可谓珠联璧合。因为香灰是一个极其奇妙的符号，具备纯粹的东方神秘色彩与无法言说的宗教精神力量，而且还富含气味——它的味道可以令人迅速获得平静，进入另一个飘渺世界。对于中国当代艺术，特别是一个刚刚结束美国生活回到国内的艺术师来说，这种材料的发现确实难能可贵。

想让香灰成为一种创作材料，需要许多技术上的支持，首先要将香灰进行分类，其中往往会包含着许多杂物——钱币、祈愿的纸条布片、塑料残渣、没有烧尽的经书等等，都要先仔细筛选出来。而分类完成后的纯净香灰，还需要再次按照颜色进行分类，仍然保留着原本形状的灰烬则要想办法进行固化。乃至在作画时如何使用香灰、如何固定画面，都是没有任何经验可以遵循的，必须自己想出办法，整个过程十分复杂。最终，通过不断实验，张涓及其工作室用香灰创作出了各种各样的作品，其中不乏一些体量非常巨大的，他更为香灰画注册了专利。“对我来说，香灰不是材料，它是一个民族一个国家的集体记忆，集体灵魂与集体祝福。她是中国人的精神聚集，她具有核的能量场”。

有人曾评价说，这就像一个幸运的商人，无意中开发出了一种专利产品，从此就可以告别让自己功名就的老本行了。但是正如张涓一直坚信的那样，事物之间存在某种偶然或必然的关系，在一个恰当的时间、恰当的地点，几种原本八杆子都打不着的东西碰在了一起，产生了一个新的事物，除了“命中注定”，没有更好的解释。这种带有宿命色彩的论调一直贯穿在张涓的思想体系中，而他的生命轨迹，似乎也的确受到冥冥之中的力量所掌控。2005年回国之前，他其实并未决定从此要彻底放弃行为艺术，当时他仍计划接受世界级美术馆的邀请，前往表演和创作新的作品。但就在他回国后开始制作香灰画、牛皮佛头、大型装置等一系列作品之后，人到中年的张涓决定彻底放弃行为艺术。他身上渐渐开始有了一种冥想的气质，整个人从充满攻击性转而变得柔和、收敛，这种变化自然是由精神上的改变带来的。宗教和西藏，像以往每一个突然来临的契机那样，再一次改变了他的生命。

张涓皈依佛门成为居士，说起来也是一次偶然的经历。2005～2006年间，一次他与太太一起到上海一间叫枣子树的餐厅见面一位来自南方寺院的高僧。当天张涓随另外一对有心向佛的同修一起皈依，从此成为居士，这算是他与宗教结缘的开始。所以到后来，创作香灰画、牛皮佛头雕塑等一系列作品就变得更加顺理成章。

宗教思想和对生死的思考一直在张涓的作品中有所体现，早在2004年他就做过一件名叫《轮回》的装置，一尊佛像放置在一面镜子前，半个身子被埋在沙土里，顶上一盏射灯照着，像是某个明心见性的时刻，他又感悟到了什么。这之后，一直在研究天葬的他不断去往西藏，甚至还觉得将来有可能在西藏生活很长一段时间，对他而言，这又是另一种必然。听他花了很长时间讲述最近一次去西藏的经历，他完整地近在观看了一次天葬过程，同时拜了上师成为天葬师。一个汉族人能够如此近距离地学习并接触到藏族文化中最神秘的天葬部分，这都是前所未有的。也令人不得不认同他所反复强调的缘分一说。

西藏的冈仁波齐神山，也对张涓有着非凡的意义，甚至间接促成了他这次与I Do的合作，个中缘由也很玄妙。在他看到这座雪山时，心中感受到了生与死。同时冈仁波齐山的形态像一个人的头颅，受此启发，张涓创作出大型建筑装置作品《魔幻天堂》，放置在I Do | 涓艺术生活空间之中。



张焯在创作中

Zhang Huan in the Process of Creation

8 Years Back in China, Your Destiny is Your Life

The year 2005 was a threshold for Zhang Huan. That year, he returned to China and settled down in Shanghai; he was converted to Buddhism and became a lay Buddhist; he bought a 40-mu factory in Songjiang and started to build his art factory. At the same time, he refrained from performance art, the reason being that he did not want to replicate himself. He said: "I'm tired after years of devoting myself to this art form. The tiresomeness comes from the realization that I would not be able to make any breakthrough on the ground of what I've achieved. If I continue to do it, I would be replicating my past. So it's better to stop." Zhang had an acute sense, which applied to art also. At the age of 50, he suddenly felt that he could not replicate himself any longer. So he turned to movie immediately. Zhang is one of those people who share a most salient common feature: they can't bear to coexist with their past. These people are constantly seeking to change the form and style of their life to quench their thirst for extreme experience – an instinct for survival. They are restlessly seeking the things they desire, only to discard them once they get bored. Maybe the reason for this behavior pattern can't be simply stated as "I don't want to replicate myself". The changes

observed on Zhang are in stark contrast with his behaviors in the Western world, including his character, though only few people know his real face. He is no longer rebellious and provocative. His worldly wisdom serves him well in the mainstream society. His studio created the permanent sculpture Hehe Xiexie for Shanghai Expo, which was highly praised by the public, government, art world and art critics. Zhang accepted the compliment calmly. He does not like talking much about his early performance art. Or it can be said that he has cut off himself from the past, just like the splitting of two continents caused by inevitable crustal movement.

How did this change happen? It started from the place where he chose to settle down, perhaps. Zhang had publicly stated his love for Shanghai more than once. A metropolis with a long history, Shanghai indeed has its charm. From the lush of sycamore trees lining both sides of Huaihai Road to the shimmering neon on the old wharf, the atmosphere of laziness and lightness is everywhere. Whether they be gentlemen sticking to the old traditions or up-and-rising Y generation closely following latest fashion and fad, they both believe that "good behaviors matter". Shanghai has a character totally different from the coarse texture of Beijing, and it's more compatible with Zhang, who has got tired of fighting alone across the world and pulling all out to prove himself. The Internet has been developing rapidly after he moved to the U.S., and soon the globe will become flat. People can hardly be stricken by wired phenomenon nowadays. Before, a naked man would be reported to the police. Now, he would only be mocked at. In an affluent China, the smart choice for a wise man should be to accept or embrace with mainstream values. Where before young cynics resorted to violence recklessly largely due to material deprivation, now with the improvement of the living standards of the majority, if they continue to commit violence, they will be convicted as rioters instead of being hailed as heroes. To put it simple, it's a peaceful time and enemies have been defeated. Shanghai in 2005 was the center of another up-and-coming era of prosperity in China.

In this context, Zhang directed his studio to a path which had never been trodden – incense ash painting. Incense is among the lightest materials in our world. Zhang was the first person to adopt the residue of religious ritual for art creation. Zhang discovered it on an ordinary visit to Jing'an Temple, which is located in the most hustling and bustling district in Jing'an District, Shanghai. When he saw people paying homage to Buddha using incense sticks, he suddenly felt as if he had entered another world, the spiritual world of traditional Chinese people which is beyond the daily life and filled with wishes and expectations of people. Seeing the devout worshipers who were so absorbed in their prayers as not noticing that their behaviors would be regarded as abnormal by observers, Zhang started to ponder what was the force that made people believe in Buddha. The course of lighting, presenting and burning incense sticks appeared to contain a mysterious energy. Worshipers believed that their wishes were communicated to the divinities via burning the incense. The incense ash, residue of the wishes being burned out, suddenly acquired great significance in Zhang's eyes. He "invited" the incense ashes from Jing'an Temple to his studio and did

not sleep for nights out of excitement. He believed that he had found a new material, which had been existing for thousands of years in China, but ignored by most people. This discovery was as significant as his affirmation of his Chinese identity when he was in the U.S. Incense ash is a magic symbol, reeking of oriental mystery and unspeakable religious power. Its odor make people calm and drift to another world spiritually. For Chinese contemporary art, and especially for an artist who had just came back from the U.S., the discovery of this material is a marvel.

To apply incense ash for art creation, first of all, Zhang needed to purify it, removing foreign matters such as coins, paper slips and cloths carrying worshipers' wishes, plastics and residue of Buddhism classics. After this, he classified the purified ashes by color and cured its loose texture. There was no prior experience on how to use incense ashes to make a painting. Zhang had to figure out the whole process, which proved to be a very complex project. Fortunately, he succeeded after numerous experiments. He and his studio created various pieces using the incense ashes, some of which were very huge. He even applied for a patent for incense ash painting. "For me, incense ash is not just a material. It's a collective memory of a nation and a country. It's an aggregate of souls and wishes. It's the concentration of spirits of Chinese people and an energy field comparable to that of nuclear energy."

Some said Zhang was like a lucky merchant who happened to develop a patented product, thus waving goodbye to his old trade. However, as Zhang has always believed, everything is connected. At a right time and right place, things that seem to have nothing in common meet and give rise to a new thing. There is no better explanation for this than "destiny". The theory of fatalism has been part of Zhang's thoughts and it turns out that his life path seems to have been driven by this power. Actually, before he came back to China in 2005, he had not decided yet to abandon performance art. He still planned to accept invitations from world-class museums to perform his new pieces. However, after he returned, when he started to create incense ash painting, leather Buddha head and large installations, he made the decision to give up performance art totally. From this time, he started to take on a temperament of mediation. His aggressiveness has been replaced by tenderness and humbleness, a result of spiritual transformation. Religion and Tibet, just like the various "catalysts" he encountered



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before, changed his life once again.

Zhang's conversion to Buddhism and becoming a lay Buddhist was quite accidental. In 2005 -2006, he and his wife met an eminent monk from South China at a restaurant called Date Tree in Shanghai. On that day, he and another fellow devotee were converted to Buddhism and became lay Buddhists. This marked the beginning of his religious life. Hence, it was only natural for him to create various pieces referring to Buddhism including incense ash painting and leather Buddha head sculpture.

Religious thoughts on life and death have been a theme of Zhang's art works. Early in 2004, he produced an installation titled Reincarnation. The Buddha was made of incense ash, with half of its body buried in sand and a mirror placed in front of it. Hung above his head was a light, indicating the moment of enlightenment. After this, Zhang developed an interest in celestial burial and went to Tibet frequently. He even thought he would live in Tibet for a long time. For him, this was another inevitability. He described in length his recent experience in Tibet, where he closely observed the whole process of a celestial burial and became the apprentice of a celestial burial master. It was unheard of that a person from Han nationality would be able to get so close to the most mysterious ritual of the Tibetan culture. This seems to stand as a proof of the theory of fatalism Zhang has so often emphasized on.

The Mount Kailash in Tibet has a special meaning for Zhang, which indirectly facilitated his cooperation with I Do. He told that the time when he saw the mountain he felt life and death. The shape of the Mount Kailash resembles a human being's head. Drawing inspiration from this, Zhang created the huge installation Magic Paradise, which was placed at I Do | Huan Art Life Space.

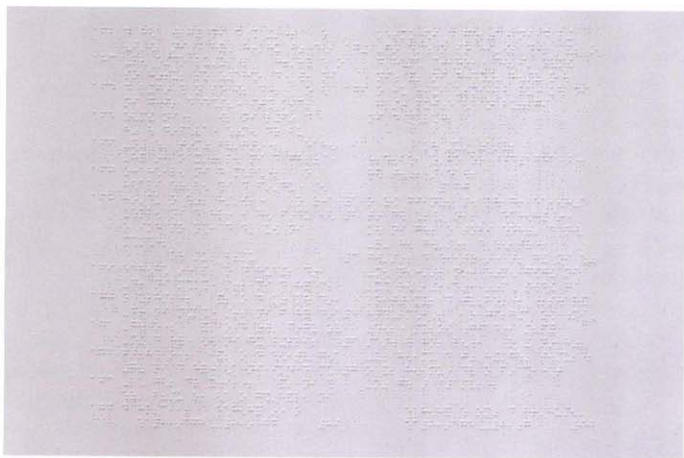
未来八年或许未知

张涓现在要说一句话“我特别不想聊艺术”，并且在50岁到来这一年，他决定逐步减少艺术作品的创作，兴趣向宗教和电影发生转移。在旁人看来，这样的举动多少有些“任性”，大半生都在做当代艺术，好不容易达到了所谓的巅峰，却又一下子从山顶上下来了。但在藏传佛教里，这一切并不难理解。就拿转山来说，信徒们年复一年跑到西藏阿里地区，就为了在冈仁波齐山完成转山。神山终年被白雪覆盖，自然环境极其恶劣，而转山不过是靠自己的双脚走完长达60公里的一趟路途。在宗教的语境之下，人生是没有顶峰可言的，更无所谓攀登或者跨越。一切都是过程，这辈子过完了，一切还远没有结束，后面还有轮回转世，下一世之后或许还有再下一世。生与死只是一种类似于季节变化般的更替，轮回是另一种形式的永恒涅槃。

所以当I Do品牌打算开始着手进行I Do艺术生活空间计划的时候，艺术总监米丘首先就想到了张涓。“爱与永恒”是这个项目的内核，自2005年回国后，张涓的艺术创作基本上都围绕着他对人性的终极理解展开。“轮回与生死”相较于“爱与永恒”，在某些方面不谋而合。当人们追问“何为永恒”的时候，其实他们在内心深处已经将死亡当成一种永恒。事实上，对于没有信仰的人来说，生命的终结即是最终的结束，没有了任何发展的可能性，就是永恒。而I Do与张涓的合作，将品牌试图探讨的生与死、爱与永恒的问题，通过一件改造自上海闹市中心老建筑的大型建筑装置作品全面展开。这座拥有百年历史的保护建筑，被张涓的《魔幻天堂》项目切割成两个空间。

这个前所未有的新颖构思开启了艺术与商业进行合作的另一种可能性，即：两者相互依存，形成整体，传递同样的意识，但又各自独立存在，并不互为附属。“爱与永恒”，“轮回与死亡”，既是人类有限的生命对无限世界的探索，也是在有限中开拓无限的尝试举措，I Do品牌的情感核心与张涓的艺术创作实现了惊人的一致，直面生死，同时又在囊括生死的茫茫宇宙中捕获了爱。

倘若你不曾深入张涓所拥有的、位于上海近郊的“艺术工厂”，你将不可能仅凭坊间的传说和隔空相望的打量，得以了解内部的巨大、丰富与庞杂。这次对张涓的采访亦是如此，整个过程在充满探索、未知、灵性与玄妙的氛围中开启，令到这位蜚声国际的艺术家之固有印象一再刷新。于是也就引申出一个问题：对于张涓这样很早就站在舆论风口浪尖上的艺术家，我们究竟能够通过作品来了解他多少呢？答案是极小的一部分。如果人所做的事是他内心世界的折射，毫无疑问，张涓有着超越常人的野心与决心，他所要到达的地方，远非仅仅靠艺术赚钱、出名，或能在艺术史上占据一席之地那么表面。他渴望抵达的，是一个凌驾于肉体之上的空间，在那儿，身体和精神或许能够得到最终的解放。涅槃之后，轮回重生。



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The Next 8 Years, Unknown, Perhaps

"I don't want to talk about art," Zhang has said this from time to time. And at the age of 50, he finally decided to spend less time on creating art works and devote more energy to religion and movie. From an outsider's view, this decision is somewhat incomprehensible. With continuous efforts for more than half a lifetime, Zhang reached the pinnacle of fame and now decided to start from scratch in a totally new field. Yet from the perspective of Tibetan Buddhism, this is understandable. Year after year, worshipers went to Ali to circumambulate around the holy Mount Kailash, which was covered in snow all year round. The worshipers would walk around the mountain - 60 kilometers - under the extreme conditions. In the context of religion, a human being's life has no peak. Everything is but a process, and there's nothing like climbing over one peak after another. But the ending of this life does not mean that everything had come to an end. Through incarnation, a next life begins. This circle comes to no end, like the changing seasons, Samsara is another form of nirvana.

When Mi Qiu, Creative Director of I Do, set out to plan I Do Art Life Space, Zhang Huan was the first person that came to his mind. "Love and Eternity" is the essence of this project. After his return to China in 2005, Zhang's art creation has been focused on his ultimate understanding of the human nature. "Samsara, life and death" resonates with "love and eternity" from a certain point of view. When people ask themselves "what is eternity", deep in their heart they actually believe death is the answer. In fact, this is true for a person without religious belief. I Do and Zhang Huan's cooperation focuses on transforming a large installation of an ancient building in the downtown area of Shanghai. The century-old protective building was divided into two spaces by the Magic

Paradise project of Zhang Huan.

This unprecedented creation presents a new possibility for art and business to cooperate, i.e., the two depend on each other and form a whole expressing a single idea, while at the same time maintaining their independence and remaining unattached to each other. "Love and Eternity" and "Samsara, life and death" stand as an attempt of exploration into infinity by human beings in their limited life. The core connotation of I Do brand matches echoes Zhang's art work in a surprising way: facing life and death fearlessly while pursuing love in the vastness of universe.

Anyone who hasn't been to Zhang's "art factory" in the suburbs of Shanghai would never be able to grasp its whole picture merely by gossips and snapshots picked up from here and there. The scale, richness and complexity of the art factory would take every witness in awe. The interview with Zhang was enveloped in an atmosphere of exploration, unknowingness, spirituality and mystery. Zhang was more than the image that he has established for himself internationally, commented by the reporter. Thus, this poses another question: how much can the public know about a star artist who enjoyed international reputation at an early age? The answer is, just a small portion. If it's fair to say a person's behavior reflects his inner world, then undoubtedly, Zhang has an ambition and determination unimaginable for common people. What he desires is far more than making money and gaining fame by art, or occupying a place in the history of art. His destination is a space transcending the physical body where both thy body and spirit have the ultimate freedom. After the nirvana is a rebirth and a new beginning.