

Press Release

Li Xiaofei Assembly Line

Kunstraum München
March 19 – April 26, 2020

Opening: Wednesday, March 18, 2020, 7:00 p.m.

Artist Talk: Sunday, March 22, 2020, 3:00 p.m.

Film Screening at Werkstattkino: Sunday, March 29, 2020, 4:00 p.m.

Exhibition Tour with the Curator: Sunday, April 26, 2020, 5:00 p.m.

Curated by Alexander Steig

Assembly Line is an ongoing series of videos that Chinese artist Li Xiaofei has been producing since 2010. Working directly at the source of commodity production, Li employs film to examine processes of social change—primarily in China but also on a global level. To date, there have been two phases of his project. The first took place between 2010 and 2013 and is marked by his use of video as both a form and a tool for analyzing assembly line work. During this period, Li filmed in the Yangtze and Pearl River deltas, Sweden, Norway, the USA and New Zealand in over 100 different factories and engaged in dialogues with people from different positions within the production process.

Also during this time, Li employed a “real time” recording technique, combined with others borrowed from documentary filmmaking, in order to fragment, weave and ultimately illuminate the relationship between man and machine through processes of reconstruction and transformation. He himself speaks of an “illusory reconstruction of reality” that he adapts to the exhibition space through video installations and multi-channel projections.

In Li Xiaofei’s opinion, the production line is driven by capitalist desire—it is repetitive, continual, mechanical, emotionless. At the same time, it is highly efficient and useful in expanding production volume to achieve maximum net value. His observation of the seemingly monotonous repetition and uniform consistency of the “assembly line” refers not only to the machines but also the people “in between” and, ultimately, the products themselves.

In this, his first institutional solo exhibition in Germany, Li Xiaofei is presenting nine videos from the second phase of the project that are also representative of his most recent work. Since 2013, Li has been exploring what lies outside the orders of the assembly line, the capitalist factory, consumer society, social progress and social “guidelines,” namely: the reality of the people who live and operate within a highly systematic and institutionalized environment. Over the last four years, he has pursued various artistic approaches including “everyday moments” and a non-narrative method. In addition to working environments, Li also gives attention to landscapes and buildings and depicts people from different angles ranging from detailed close-ups to longer shots and full views. As always, his cinematic images seem to have been produced inconspicuously and have the appearance of everyday scenes but in their shifting perspectives and amplification, his empathy for the workers and producers shines through—and the question of the social circumstances of his “protagonists” gains a new importance.

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The Kunstraum München is pleased to present the most recent videos from Li Xiaofei's **Assembly Line** project. On March 29, a further selection of the artist's films will be screened at the Werkstattkino (Fraunhoferstr. 9) followed by a discussion with the audience.

Li Xiaofei was born in 1973 in the Chinese province of Hunan. He lives and works in Shanghai and New York. After graduating from the Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts, he received several scholarships and awards including the Iaspis International Residency Grant, Stockholm, Sweden (2013) and the Sovereign Foundation Fellowship of the Asian Cultural Council, New York, USA (2011). In 2010, he initiated *Assembly Line*, an ongoing project that records industrialized social change in China and internationally. Li's work has been shown internationally in both solo and group exhibitions including: *Seven Necessities—An Assembly Line Project by Li Xiaofei*, OCAT Xi'an, China (2017); 5th Mediations Biennial Poznań, Poland (2016); Bi-City Biennale of Urbanism/Architecture (2013, 2017); *OVERTIME: THE ART OF WORK*, Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York, USA (2015); Barents Spektakel 2015, Kirkenes, Norway; 10th Mediations Biennial (2011); Shanghai Biennale (2014); 8th Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art (2014); 60th International Short Film Festival Oberhausen (2014); *Descriptive Acts*, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, California, USA (2012); and *Melancholy in Progress*, 2012 Taiwan International Video Art Exhibition.

The exhibition is sponsored by the Munich Department of Culture.



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In cooperation with the Confucius Institute, Munich, Werkstattkino, Munich and KINO DER KUNST.



慕尼黑孔子学院
Konfuzius-Institut München

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Press Contacts:

Nina Holm, holm@kunstraum-muenchen.de

Alexander Steig, mail@alexandersteig.de

Kunstraum

Holzstraße 10 Rgb., 80469 München

t +49 (0)89 54 37 99 00

f +49 (0)89 54 37 99 02

info@kunstraum-muenchen.de

Opening times during the exhibition:

Wednesday through Sunday, 2:00 – 7:00 p.m.

The Kunstraum München is an independent not-for-profit art space supported by the Munich Department of Culture.