



趙剛，無題（哈爾濱），攝影，2018

## 趙剛回顧展

April 12 – May 18, 2019

開幕：April 12, 2019 | 7 – 9 PM

亞紀畫廊很榮幸宣布將展出中國藝術家趙剛個展。此展將展出趙剛最新作品，包含了兩組觀念性系列：描繪歷史的水彩與油畫、以及於哈爾濱創作的攝影與油畫。展覽取名為「趙剛回顧展 **Diluted Retrospective**」，以反轉「回顧展」成為觀念藝術本身，謔而不虐地同時回溯中國之為國家、趙剛之為藝術家的歷史。兩組觀念作品將在兩個不同的樓層呈現，回顧且揭示與故事、土地、幻想連結的身份，並在最終由趙剛結合創造。

趙剛的藝術生涯始於 18 歲時參與了北京星星畫會的展覽。在 1983 年，趙剛離開了北京，前往荷蘭馬斯垂克讀書並最終落腳在了紐約。身為在主導藝術的「政治官方」現實主義結束後的「非政治官方藝術」一部分，趙剛的早期作品可以說是建立了一個拒絕舊形式的新中國文化標竿。

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在 90 年代的紐約，趙剛的創作回顧了古代中國。透過粗糙與直接的筆觸描繪了中國古畫中的房屋與異國畫面，剝離了歷史背景的形式，揭示了形狀和顏色的內在身份。

趙剛在 2006 返回北京並創作了一系列關於現代中國歷史與身份的作品。在他的作品中經常見到的中國革命歷史人物面孔，時常表述了趙剛身份的另一面。在此，身份的呈現是來自我否定。回到中國後，趙剛仍使用熟悉的技法在描繪這些主題，這也讓他的作品呈現出了一種雜交的樣貌，在西方與傳統中國的視角下都能有不同的解讀。



趙剛，無題（年輕斯大林），紙本水彩，2019

在「趙剛回顧展」中，趙剛的水彩系列探討了一個內外變化的敘事；轉移、人物、形式，三者的抒情匯聚呈現在了藝術家身上。趙剛將這個故事直接地推向了哈爾濱：一個即使都會性已在世代間超前，但仍離我們認知的「中心」遙遠的城市。



趙剛，無題（哈爾濱），布面油畫，2018

水彩與油畫組成了一樓的展覽。這一系列描繪了俄國的十月革命，並在其中加入了中國歷史與趙剛自身。透過與中國歷史、十月革命、與當代藝術使得連結，趙剛闡述了自己的身份。在本質柔軟的水彩作品中，趙剛畫出了盧齊歐·封塔納「Spatial Concept. 'Waiting'」、菲利克斯·岡薩雷斯-托雷斯的糖果堆、端坐的末代皇帝溥儀、與惡名昭彰的格里戈里·葉菲莫維奇·拉斯普丁畫像。這些看似相異的圖像在趙剛的創作中交融，歷史與當代藝術成為了觀眾回顧趙剛的稜鏡。

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二樓所展出的作品則啟發自中國的哈爾濱。油彩作品與大型絹印印樣描述了這個曾在十八世紀末到十九世紀初期被數個世代的猶太裔俄國難民為逃避暴力而當作棲身之所的城市。透過趙剛自身的滿族身份，也就是從中國東北移居別地的滿人，外來文化也形塑著現代中國。

在中國古代的歷史中，滿人與漢人的衝突不曾停歇。十二世紀時，由滿州女真族創建的金朝侵略了北宋，並在東北佔地為王。十六世紀時，滿洲又再次侵略中國，滿清推翻了明朝。如同當年的女真金朝，清朝也同樣的被吸收漢化。

在兩個土地和文化的狹窄空間，以及俄羅斯所建造中國東方鐵路中心節點，趙剛用攝影記錄下了他所想像的哈爾濱，並透過在印樣上的文字探索了一個近乎烏托邦的空間。趙剛的作品中的哈爾濱與個人敘事共鳴，點綴著轉移、移民、與越境。再一次，趙剛邀請觀眾一起探索這些歷史敘事，就如同這些故事是如何與他緊緊相扣。

即使兩組系列作品皆與趙剛慣有的藝術創作模式不同，它們仍保持著他的一貫；平淡地闡述歷史，而身份在歷史中外化。

## 關於趙剛

趙剛，1961年生於北京，生活與創作於紐約、北京、台北。他的藝術生涯啟蒙於在18歲時加入的星星畫會。隨後在歐洲與紐約攻讀藝術，先後畢業於荷蘭馬斯垂克州立藝術學院、美國波啟浦夕瓦薩學院、美國哈得遜河畔安嫩代爾巴德學院藝術創作碩士，趙剛於海外生活超過了20年，並發展出了一系列複雜的作品。在2006年回到中國北京後，趙剛的創作專注在了私人歷史與中國歷史的關係上。他獨特的本地與外地特質影響了他近年來的創作。重要的美術館展覽有：2016年智利聖地牙哥當代美術館「通往奴役之路 II」、2015年中國蘇州蘇州美術館「偶園」、2015年中國北京尤倫斯當代藝術中心「通往奴役之路」、2011年中國北京今日美術館「病夫：趙剛」。重要聯展有：1990年美國紐約PS1藝術機構／Blum Helman Gallery「門」、2017年美國紐約索羅門古根漢基金會「1989後的藝術與中國：世界劇場」、中國北京長征空間「原地前進」、2018年中國上海龍美術館「轉捩點—中國當代藝術四十年」。重要雙、三年參展則有：2008年「廣州雙年展」、2007年紐約「PERFRMA 雙年展」、2005年「橫濱三年展」。2019年五月，「趙剛：歷史畫」將於美國邁阿密佩雷斯美術館展出。



Zhao Gang, Untitled, gelatin silver print, 2018

## Zhao Gang

### *Diluted Retrospective*

April 12 – May 18, 2019

Opening Reception: April 12, 2019 | 7 – 9 PM

Each Modern is pleased to present *Diluted Retrospective*, an exhibition of new works by Zhao Gang comprised of two conceptual series; one of historical watercolors and paintings, and one of photographic works on paper and canvas made in Harbin. The exhibition, deceptively titled a “retrospective,” reverses the retrospective exhibition into a conceptual presentation that traces the history of China as a country and Zhao Gang as an artist through new works. Presented on two different floors, the so-called “retrospective” looks back through history to reveal an identity



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that is connected through lost narratives, land, imagined territory, and ultimately crafted by Zhao.

Zhao Gang's artistic practice began when he was 18 with his participation in the Stars exhibition in Beijing, which kicked off his career. In 1983 Zhao left Beijing to study in Maastricht in the Netherlands, and would eventually relocate to New York City. As part of the "unofficial" art which emerged after the end of the "official" realism dominated practices of that period, Zhao's early work maps a new Chinese cultural landscape that rejected old forms.

In New York City in the 90's, Zhao's practice looked back towards Chinese antiquity. Houses and erotic sceneries found in historical Chinese paintings are rendered with harsh and direct brush strokes, stripping the forms of their historical context and revealing an interior identity of shape and color.

After returning to Beijing in 2006, Zhao marked his semi-homecoming with a series on modern Chinese history and identity. Familiar faces from Chinese Revolutionary history are often found in Zhao's artwork, frequently used as foils to himself. In this way, identity is presented through self-negation. His approach to these subjects continued in his familiar style, though after returning to China his work took on a hybridized perspective which can be read differently in the Western or local Chinese contexts.

The watercolor series in Diluted Retrospective is a narrative of change from within and without; "Movements," figures, and forms come together in a lyrical presentation that remains tethered to the artist. The second series pushes off from this story perpendicularly, to Harbin, a city far off from our "center."

The watercolors and oil paintings make up the first floor of the exhibition. The series frames Russia's October Revolution in a context that includes Chinese history and Zhao himself while addressing identity through links between China, communist revolutions, and also Contemporary Art history. In muted watercolors, Zhao renders Lucio Fontana's "Spatial Conceptual. 'Waiting,'" Felix Gonzalez-Torres' mound of candy, a seated PuYi, the last emperor of China, and an infamous portrait of Grigori Rasputin. These disparate images intersect through Zhao's practice. History and Contemporary Art become prisms through which we look back at the artist.



**Zhao Gang, Untitled (Puyi),  
watercolour on paper, 2019**

Complementing this is the second floor Harbin, China series. A set of oil on canvas with enlarged silk screen contact sheets depict the city that was once a refuge for generations of Jewish Russian immigrants fleeing the violent pogroms of the late 18th and early 19th century. Through Harbin, Zhao contemplates his own Manchu identity, the Manchurian migration out of Dongbei (Northeast China), and the role this outsider culture played in shaping modern China.

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Through out Chinese antiquity, the Manchu people were in conflict with the Han Chinese. The Jurchen Manchu's of the Jin Dynasty invaded the Northern Song territories bordering their Dongbei homelands throughout the 12th century. In the 1600's the Manchu's would again invade China, conquering the Ming Dynasty and establishing the Qing Dynasty. But like the Jin before them, the Manchu Qing would assimilate and Sinicize.



Zhao Gang, Untitled, oil on canvas, 2018

A liminal space between two lands and cultures, and the central node of the Russian-built Chinese Eastern Railroad, the imagined Harbin is captured in Zhao's unique photographic artworks. It is a near-utopian space, historically tied to migration and dotted with movements, border-crossings, and stories of assimilations. Again, Zhao invites us to uncover a narrative as much tied to history as it is to himself.

Both series represent a departure from the familiar modes of Zhao Gang's art making, though they both orbit the concerns of his oeuvre; history addressed with levity, and identity externalized in the historical.

## ABOUT THE ARTIST

Zhao Gang (b. 1961, Beijing) currently lives and works in New York, Beijing, and Taipei. His artistic career began as a member of the Stars Group in Beijing when he was 18 years old. Shortly thereafter he pursued an art education in Europe and New York; graduating from State Academy of Fine Art, Maastricht, the Netherlands; Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, USA; MFA, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, USA. Zhao Gang lived for over two decades overseas, developing a complex body of work. After returning to Beijing in 2006, Zhao Gang has focused his practice on his personal past with Chinese history. His unique position as a native and a

foreigner has influenced much of his recent artworks. His selected museum solo exhibitions include: The Road to Serfdom II, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Santiago, Chile; 2016 Paramour's Garden, Suzhou Museum, Suzhou, China, 2015; The Road to Serfdom, Ullens Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing, China, 2015; Sick Man: Zhao Gang, Today Art Museum,

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Beijing, China, 2011. His selected group exhibitions include: The Door, P.S.1 Institute of the Arts/Blum Helman Gallery, New York, USA, Art and China after 1989: Theater of the World, Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, New York, USA, 2017; Marching in Circles, Long March Space, Beijing, China, 2017; Turning Point - 40 Years of Chinese Contemporary Art, Long Museum West Bund, Shanghai China, 2018. He participated in important biennial/triennial exhibitions such as Guangzhou Triennial, 2008; PERFORMA 07, New York; and Yokohama Triennial, 2005. Zhao Gang: History Painting will be exhibited at the Pérez Art Museum Miami, in May 2019.

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