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“人间指南” 在魏征设立五刑排字印刷所 (在魏征排字印刷所) 的街景, 1992。
“Up to the Streets and Down to the Factories” 从魏征排字印刷所拍摄的街景, 1992。

人间指南

Society Guidance

上

陈劭雄
任戡和新历史小组
王晋

Part I 2019.5.18 – 2019.8.18

Chen Shaoxiong
Ren Jian and New History Group
Wang Jin

下

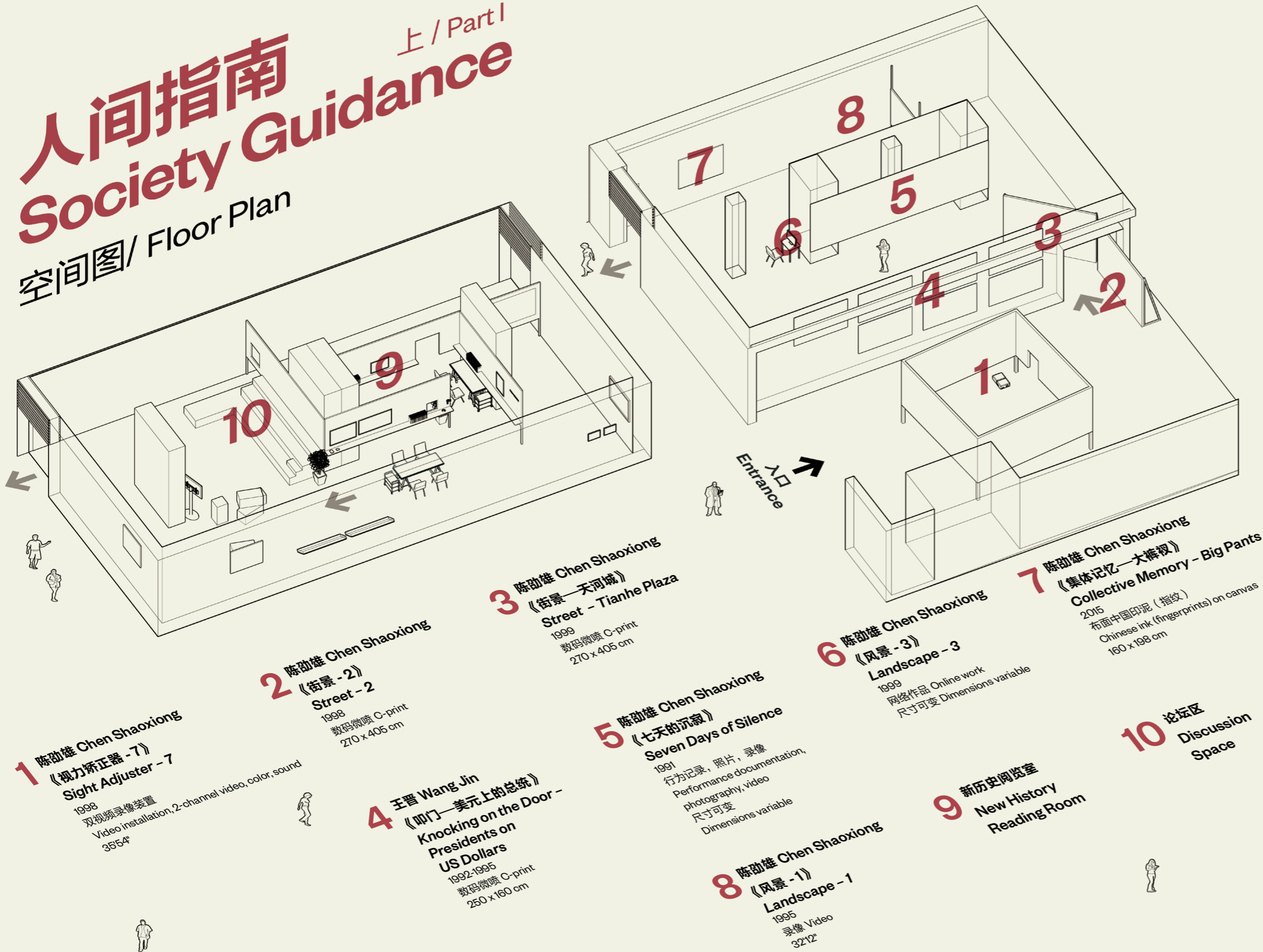
Part II 2019.8.31 – 2019.11.24



人间指南 Society Guidance

上 / Part I

空间图 / Floor Plan



1 陈劭雄 Chen Shaoxiong
《视力矫正器 - 7》
Sight Adjuster - 7
1998
双视频录像装置
Video installation, 2-channel video, color, sound
35x54"

2 陈劭雄 Chen Shaoxiong
《街景 - 2》
Street - 2
1998
数码微喷 C-print
270 x 405 cm

4 王晋 Wang Jin
《叩门 - 美元上的总统》
Knocking on the Door -
US Dollars
1992-1995
数码微喷 C-print
250 x 160 cm

3 陈劭雄 Chen Shaoxiong
《街景 - 天河城》
Street - Tianhe Plaza
1999
数码微喷 C-print
270 x 405 cm

5 陈劭雄 Chen Shaoxiong
《七天的沉寂》
Seven Days of Silence
1991
行为记录, 照片, 录像
Performance documentation,
photography, video
尺寸可变
Dimensions variable

8 陈劭雄 Chen Shaoxiong
《风景 - 1》
Landscape - 1
1995
录像 Video
32'12"

6 陈劭雄 Chen Shaoxiong
《风景 - 3》
Landscape - 3
1999
网络作品 Online work
尺寸可变 Dimensions variable

9 新历史阅览室
New History
Reading Room

7 陈劭雄 Chen Shaoxiong
《集体记忆 - 大裤衩》
Collective Memory - Big Pants
2015
布面中国印泥 (指纹)
Chinese ink (fingerprints) on canvas
180 x 198 cm

10 论坛区
Discussion
Space

人间指南 (上)

何种动机使我们把现在的情境和过往的某个时刻联系在一起? 如何让我们的言论不会变成“油腻”的“回顾”? 在我们试着回答这样的问题时, 一个出发点是: 旧的问题在今天依然成为问题; 我们今天面临的文化困境, 可以在并不久远的过去找到它的源头或者是某个节点。今天的艺术家和研究者们, 不论年青或年长, 都不同程度地在思考该如何更好地与这个世界共处, 以及当艺术或文化无法扮演我们所处时代的精神先锋时, 我们是否能和公众共同构建起另一种文化。

上世纪九十年代从某种意义上来说, 正是一个艺术褪却灵晕、坠入凡尘的时刻。九十年代的社会进程形成了一种外力, 制造出快速和强制的流动和驱动性, 人们必须将自己纳入现实的洪流, 人人都是现实中无法驻足的他者。艺术家任戡(1965年出生于辽宁) 游走于不同城市, 每到一处都积极主动地进入城市的文化和生态系统; 他既是一个“身体”的“放逐者”, 也是精神的“建构者”。陈劭雄(1962-2016, 出生于广东) 则主动展开一场自我的流放, 他生活在广州却主动置身世外, 将自己看作是这座城市的“游客”。1996年, 王晋(1962年出生于山西) 在河南郑州一家商场门前的广场砌起一道三十米长的冰制墙体, 里面冻结着昂贵的消费品, 这些商品最后被哄抢一空。在更早的1992年, 王晋的另一件作品也和墙有关: 他把旧城墙砖画上了美元的图案。“墙”或者“砖”作为最坚实的象征物在世俗中瓦解, 这便是九十年代的社会驱动力带来的后果——一种内在的权力消解, 坚固之物烟消云散。

九十年代社会进程带来个体危机的同时, 却也蕴含了对即将到来的新时代的憧憬, 世纪末这一时间节点令人更加期待未来世代。风靡九十年代初的情景喜剧《编辑部的故事》中的一集令人意外地近似于科幻:《人间指南》编辑部来了一个与真人无异的“人工智能机器人”, 她被介绍为新时代办公自动化产品的一部分, 这使得剧集仿佛变成了室内喜剧版的《银翼杀手》。然而结尾部分, 剧情又发生了逆转——原来这个“机器人”其实是由真人假扮的, 而她发现编辑部里的这些知识分子其实也是和她一样的凡夫俗子。这集喜剧映射出了那个时代的文化想象和世俗化现实, 以及技术与人性的辩证关系。理想、世俗、技术伦理的多重矛盾延续至今, 而今天的未来主义式幻想与彼时相比有过之而无不及。作为剧中杂志的名称, “人间指南”也暗示了那个价值流变的时代里个体的茫然。本次参展的新历史小组成员之一, 野牛的文长《横渡世纪末》曾希望藉由勾勒现代主义的宏大图景, 构建出整体性的指向, 但最终也难免流于虚无。

展览“人间指南”以艺术家作品作为特定时间点的参照物, 在过去和今天的语境间建立关联。这有助于我们重新体验上世纪九十年代以来文化的“放逐感”, 在对这段简短当代史的回溯中形成更清晰的认知轮廓, 并在时间轴中纵向检视文化的方位。当艺术无法获得先锋性身份的时候, 时空错乱的艺术家和研究者也许需要一本针对自己的“指南”。

Society Guidance (Part I)

What compels us to link the present situation with a past moment? How do we prevent such a discourse from becoming maudlin retrospection? Our attempt to answer these questions must proceed from a single premise: yesterday's problems are also today's problems. More specifically, the cultural dilemmas we now face are rooted in the not-so-distant past. Artists and researchers today, both young and old, must consider how to better coexist with the world. When art and culture no longer operate at the spiritual vanguard of the era, is it possible for us to work alongside the public to build another kind of culture?

In a certain sense, the nineties in China were a time when the work of art lost its aura and began to take up more worldly concerns. During this decade, societal progress was an external force, driving rapid and coercive mobility. People had to immerse themselves in the overwhelming currents of this reality, from which all individuals were also estranged. Ren Jian (b. 1955, Liaoning province), for one, wandered between different cities, throwing himself into the cultural milieu of each urban landscape—a physical exile dedicated to spiritual construction. Chen Shaoxiong (1962-2016, Guangdong province) purposefully banished himself: though he lived in Guangzhou, he also alienated himself from it, styling himself as a tourist. In 1996, Wang Jin (b. 1962, Shanxi province) erected a thirty-meter-long wall made of ice outside the entrance to a store in Zhengzhou, Henan. Within the ice, he embedded expensive consumer products; all were eventually stolen. Earlier, in 1992, Wang created another wall-themed artwork: he took bricks from Beijing's old city wall and painted images of American dollars onto them. “Walls” and “bricks,” symbols of sturdiness, thus crumbled within this new, profane context. Propelled by the social forces of the nineties, all that was solid melted into air, an internal dissipation of power.

While the nineties brought about an acute crisis of individuality, they also incubated a sense of longing for the new era. An episode of the popular early-nineties sitcom *Stories from the Editorial Board*, for example, had an unexpected science-fiction plotline: the editorial team of the magazine *Society Guidance* welcomes a humanoid “robot with artificial intelligence” into their ranks. She is introduced as part of a new generation of office automation, and the script plays out like a comedic version of *Blade Runner*. But the episode has a twist ending: all along, the “robot” was merely a human impersonator, one who has come to the realization that the intellectuals of this editorial department are just ordinary people like her. This comedic touch reveals the era's cultural imagination, its practical realities, and the dialectical relationship between technology and humanity. Ideals, the quotidian world, technological ethics—these overlapping contradictions remain today, when futurist fantasies are even more relevant. As the name of the magazine, *Society Guidance* also hints at the feeling of uncertainty that beset individuals in this decade of shifting values. In his essay “Crossing the Century's End,” New History Group member Ye Niu wrote that the collective hoped to sketch out a grand program akin to that of the Modernists—a united direction for all society. In the end, it was unavoidable that such an endeavor would come to naught.

The working methodology of the exhibition “Society Guidance” is to see these works as a frame of reference for a specific time. They connect present with past, allowing us to experience the mood of exile so prevalent in the nineties. They clearly outline the brief period of contemporary Chinese history under consideration here, offering a set of temporal bearings to review the cultural orientations of this era. Finally, they raise a key question: If art is deprived of its vanguard cultural status, what new “guides” to the self might artists and researchers require?