

**Tatu Tuominen and Tuomas Laitinen's**  
*Museum of Oblivion*



**Tatu Tuominen's**  
*Unrecognizable*



**Tuomas Laitinen's**  
*Stills from Rising*

## Pick and Choose

Selective memory gets the **Finnish treatment** at Art+Shanghai

▶ We live in an era in which large-scale disasters are part of our communal narrative. Non-stop news frames and filters world events: 9/11 unfolding on CNN, the toppling of Saddam Hussein on Fox News, the funeral of Lady Diana on the BBC. Our memories are chosen for us and stored away so we can continue with our lives. Even the most horrific of happenings become yesterday's news soon enough. It is in "Museum of Oblivion" that Finnish artists Tuomas Laitinen and Tatu Tuominen seek to investigate this selective memory, and discuss the place of human beings within their environments.

Laitinen deals mainly with light boxes, neon and video, bringing an element of surrealism flecked with horror to "Museum of Oblivion." His black and white video sequence *Rising* is an unsettling journey through subterranean realms in which a man and a woman clad in white body suits and bowler hats pick their way through discarded shopping trolleys and ski equipment. A threatening ambience prevails, but the menace itself is never revealed.

Two of Tuominen's most striking pieces are fashioned from acrylic, enamel, cut paper and epoxy on aluminum composite. *Local* depicts an elaborate gateway seen from below, opening into a room decorated with lavish carvings. A lantern hangs just out of view, and the scene is a claustrophobic wash of red, referencing Cao Xueqin's book *Dream of the Red*

*Chamber*, about a similarly crimson-hued room. The snowy forest scene of *Unrecognizable* is made from the same materials and inspires an oddly voyeuristic response, as do the collaborative dioramas featured in the exhibition, such as that of two rotund women sunbathing on a beach, seemingly unaware of the derelict building behind them. Their brightly hued bathing suits provide the only dashes of color in an otherwise monochrome landscape, making them all the more conspicuous.

The piece embodies the exhibition's focus on the human ability to compartmentalize disaster and re-order memories, as well as musing on humans' place in their environment. The piece's focus is left up to the viewer; the sunbathing women are overshadowed by the ruined building, a confusion central to many of the exhibits in "Museum of Oblivion."

Finnish art may not figure hugely on Shanghai's stage, but these two artists come from a long tradition of fine sculptors and painters. "Museum of Oblivion's" collaborative dioramas echo the spareness seen in the work of other Finnish sculptors like Lucien den Arend, while referencing the absurdity of Miina Äkkijyrkkä's cows made of car parts.

### ■ Susie Gordon

"Museum of Oblivion" at Art+Shanghai, House 2, 22 Fumin Lu  
富民路2弄22号, through Mar. 6, Tel: 6248-4388

## Opening

FROM SATURDAY, FEB. 19

### Banggang and Blackandwhite

This group show from Chongqing showcases the works of a selection of young artists. Look for abstract paintings, sculpture and installations that question the nature of contemporary Chinese society. The opening reception is Feb. 19 from 5-9pm.

ifa gallery > Changde Lu 6256-0835,  
www.ifa-gallery.com

### Ren Zhitian: Elegant & Empty

For his third solo show at Art Labor, Beijing artist Ren Zhitian showcases his newest ink paintings. He creates the ink from car exhaust and paints on silk in eye-tricking patterns reminiscent of wallpaper. Zhitian was featured in last year's Hong Kong Art Fair. The opening reception is Feb. 19 from 5-8pm.

Art Labor 2.0 3460-5331,  
www.artlaborgallery.com

### ★ Daniel Burkhardt: Urban Roundabout

German artist Burkhardt's video works pull from both his travels and his everyday life. He records in public spaces, capturing urbanity, and in nature, filming white birches and breaking waves. The opening reception is Feb. 19 at 6pm.

Zendai Contemporary Art Exhibition Hall 3521-0988, <http://dca.zendaiart.com>

## Closing

THROUGH MONDAY, FEB. 14

### Azure Dragon, Vermilion Bird, Yellow Dragon, White Tiger and Black Tortoise

The creatures in this show's title all correspond to the five Chinese elements. Hu Ke, Zheng Jing, Xuge, Ba Dan and Dai Guangyu's sculptures all contain associations with nature—fire, wood, earth, metal and water.

ifa gallery > Changde Lu 6256-0835,  
www.ifa-gallery.com

THROUGH SUNDAY, FEB. 20

### Karl Lagerfeld: Photographies

Chanel's ubiquitous, sometimes androgynous fashion designer is also a photographer. The pictures are moody and in black and white; some are self-portraits while others are shots of supermodels Helena Christensen and Linda Evangelista, and fellow photographer Adnan Taletovic.

18Gallery 6323-7066 ext. 3102,  
<http://artatbund18.com>

### Small Works

Thirteen local and international artists, including Greek artist Yorgos Papageorgiou, whose solo show was held in November, showcase a selection of small oil paintings. Look for faces, places and some abstract scenes.

Stir Art Gallery 2635-9535,  
www.stir-art.com