

For immediate release
Aug 24th, 2015

LIU SHIYUAN: FROM HAPPINESS TO WHATEVER

September 7th through October 10th, 2015
Opening reception: Monday, September 7th, 5-8pm

LEO XU PROJECTS is proud to announce that the gallery will be hosting the solo exhibition of Chinese young female artist Liu Shiyuan, *From "Happiness" to "Whatever"*. Working and living in Beijing and Copenhagen, this is her first solo show in Shanghai. *From "Happiness" to "Whatever"* will display representative photography and installation works of Liu Shiyuan within the past 3 years, and a series of new works created for this exhibition and tailored to the gallery space.

The exhibition *From "Happiness" to "Whatever"* originates with the artist's confusions, such as "what is a good life", "how can one be balanced", "what is the right value system", "what kind of social system can provide the best for the progress of human's wisdom", among others. The exhibition is a process of questioning and answering with the artist's engagement by way of visual production and performance, and a quest that begins at the question "what is happiness" that extends to the mentality of various individuals.

The experience of living, travelling, and working in Beijing, Copenhagen, and New York during the last several years urges Liu Shiyuan to explore new aesthetics and values among the clashes and conflicts amongst different societies, cultures and languages. "I started to pay tax, hoping it could be of help to the poor. I stopped purchasing cheap clothing produced in quantities, knowing that tragedies happen all the time in countries like China, India and others. I started buying organic meat in that the cheap ones are produced in farms where the animals are not respected. I only buy organic vegetables, against the pollution that cheap ways of planting would do to the environment.

This exhibition opens with sound installation piece of the same title. "*From 'Happiness' to 'Whatever'*, is a radio station that I've been dreaming to operate", Liu Shiyuan wrote in one email when curating the show. This work occupies the space of main room on the first floor, composed of pieces of carpets spreading out the whole space. Kaleidoscope of cultures and image fragments surround the audience in a world composed of mixed feelings --- the radio recorded by the artist falling from the sky, showering the audience like a voice of a saint in church. A series of radio shows are recorded with voices of various accents, North American, North European, English, and Chinese, with contents covering fields from reading to tourism. Dating back to the sensual experiences since pop and hippie culture of the 70s, this explores the edge of "happiness" in a style in-between serious, funny, and sarcastic, just like what the title suggests, from "happiness" to whatever. Hope in this way, the audiences would be guided to "happiness".

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In another piece created for this space *OMG, Welcome*, Liu Shiyuan drips curtains weaved with large amount of red crystal balls, filling an entire floor of narrow stair passage. Treading among these endless red curtains, one would experience the aesthetics and style of decoration, of what the artist calls “overly perfect and overly delicate”. By separating experience and appearances, the artist created some other pieces in this show as well. Inspired by NASA’s pictures of the universe, *Extreme Deep Field* (2013) attempts to show a standardized perception of light and universe—perfect, but not real, or even accurate. *You Can Add Anything to This* is scenery embroiled on a piece of black cashmere fabric with white cotton lines. The scenery is standard, two hills, a small road, a mountain afar, two trees and clouds; simple, pure and a place everyone would long for. It is a place where hypnotic would lead patients to with language, where perfections parts way with reality.

Besides, this exhibition would recreate the classic installation *As Simple As Clay*, shown in exhibition *Local Future* (Hexiangningart Museum, Shenzhen, 2013). This installation spreading over 3 floors in the gallery consists of thousands of color pictures arranged in strict grids. All the pictures have a background of neutral blue, exhibiting materials visually or metaphorically related to the material clay. This installation reminds people of practical photography, like the pictures in product catalogues with the manner of grids that resembles typology, blurs the real quality and purpose of those objects.

Born in Beijing in 1985, Liu Shiyuan graduated with a bachelor in digital media arts from Central Academy of Art in 2009, and an MFA in photography from School of Visual Arts, New York. Her works investigate the distance between representation and reality, as well as the interplay amongst life, existence and perception under the influence of new media culture by way of photography, collage, installation and video. Her works have been frequently shown at Chinese and international museums, galleries, and biennales. Her recent show and projects include *CAFAM Future, Moving in time B3 +Beijing Moving image exhibit* (Central Academy of Art Museum), *Now You See* (White Box Art Center, New York, 2014), *Local Future* (Hexiangningart Museum, Shenzhen, 2013), *Alternatives to Ritual- case of OCAT* (OCT-Contemporary Art Terminal, Shenzhen, 2013), *The 7th Shenzheng Sculpture Biennale* (OCT-Contemporary Art Terminal, Shenzhen, 2012), *Stillspotting* (Guggenheim, New York, 2011), just to name a few. Her recent shows include *Lost in Export* (White Space Beijing, Beijing, 2015), *Beyond the Pale* (Andersen’s Contemporary, Copenhagen, 2014), and so on.

Liu Shiyuan currently lives and works in Beijing and Copenhagen.

For further information, please email the gallery info@leoxuprojects.com or phone +86-21-3461 1245.