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NEWS

PHILIP TINARI talks about the group show “The Los Angeles Project” at UCCA

LA in Beijing. Why?

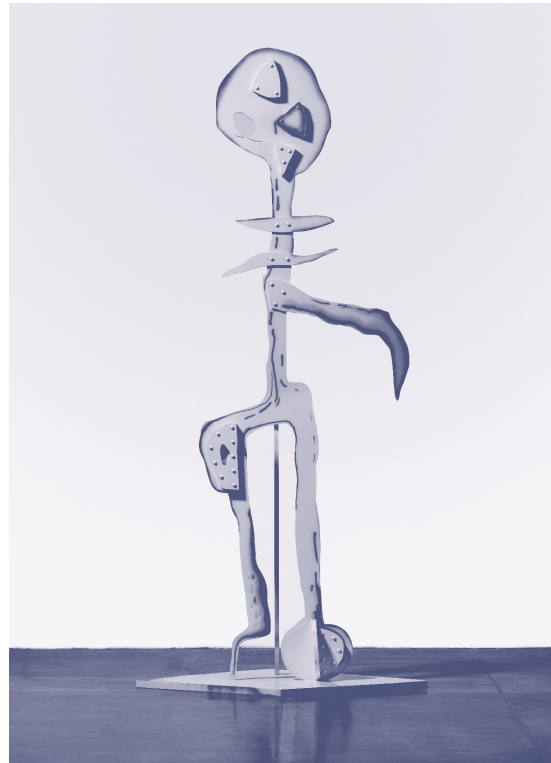
The two cities have similarities that speak to each other. Even just starting with smog, sprawl and traffic, three basic elements of the urban condition that both cities have either encountered or are now encountering, we thought there was something there. Add to this the notion, dear to Americans, that the West Coast is part of the “Pacific Rim,” even though specific connections between these particular cities on the level of contemporary culture have been more or less absent. We thought LA offered one possible model of what Beijing might be as a global artistic capital — both have great schools and institutions, artists from all over their respective countries, and ample (relatively) affordable studio space.

How will the show question and stimulate the very different local art scene?

There is a general shortage of major international art exhibitions in China and Beijing specifically. While institutions like the NAMOC and NMC often do high-profile exchange exhibitions with major foreign museums, it is extremely rare for institutions on the ground in China to commission new shows with living, working artists. This means that hopefully our exhibition will be seen as something new and fresh, presenting in detail a group of artists who have largely not yet had the opportunity to exhibit in China.

This is not a thematic group show, rather a group of individual exhibitions.

We were not interested in doing a research-based “summary” of the LA scene similar to the many “China shows” that have



Above: Aaron Curry, *Mr Machine Gun Bodymind* (2013); courtesy of the Artist and Fondation Guy & Myriam Ullens

been mounted around the world in the last two decades. We know how inevitably partial such shows end up being. For this reason we decided to embrace specificity by choosing seven artists whose work we thought occupied different places on a continuum of artistic practices in LA today and gave each of them enough breathing room to be fully exhibited. —PS

“*The Los Angeles Project*” features Kathryn Andrews, Aaron Curry, Alex Israel, Matthew Monahan, Sterling Ruby, Ryan Trecartin and Kaari Upson. It is on view until November 9, 2014. Read the full interview at “LA talks...” on flashartonline.com.