

Beijing Inside-Out Art Museum has been revisiting the historical landscape of Chinese contemporary art since 2017. By focusing on specific historical periods or individual artists, we seek to explore ideological impetus behind evolution of creation and individual careers, uncover interaction between them and their times, and illustrate the complexity and richness of both historical and personal narratives. The forthcoming two solo exhibitions, Analysis: New Measurement, from 1988 to 1995 and Stipulated Amount and Free Fall: Qian Weikang, from 1990 to 1996, serve as significant art historical case studies. New Measurement Group is comprised of Beijing artists Wang Luyan, Chen Shaoping, and Gu Dexin (ordered by numbers of surname's stroke), and Qian Weikang was born and based in Shanghai. Their conceptual creation during that brief period attracted certain attention and aroused discussion, with long-lasting impact. Both of them wrapped up their artistic endeavors in late 1995 and 1996 respectively. As a result, awareness and understanding of their work became largely restricted to artists and critics of that era. Destruction or loss of most of their artworks and documents after they ceased their practices has hindered subsequent generations from fully grasping and valuing their work. This deficiency significantly contributes to the obscurity surrounding emergence of conceptual art in the early 1990s within contemporary art history.

Exhibition

“Conceptualism and 1990s” Series

Stipulated Amount and Free Fall: Qian Weikang, from 1990 to 1996

Exhibition Dates: December 23, 2023 - April 14, 2024

Curators: Liu Ding, Carol Yinghua Lu

Assistant Curators: Rory Guan, Na Rongkun, Yanan Zhu

Exhibition Design: Liu Ding

Graphic Design: Qu Ying

Exhibition Installation: Fang Yongfa

Note: This exhibition recreates the artist's work and the artistic context in which he was working through the restoration of all of Qian's works from the period in which he was engaged in the visual arts, and the presentation of his programs and documents. Qian stayed true to his principles and did not participate in the execution of any of the works in this exhibition, nor did he make any judgments or decisions. In addition to the artwork proposals, all the creations in this exhibition were copied and reproduced from photographs by the Inside-Out Art Museum without the artist's participation, and will be destroyed at the end of the exhibition. The entire staff involved in copying and reproducing Qian Heykang's works include:

Fang Yongfa, Gao Fei, Gao Yuhui, Han Wei, Jia Fengming, Li Yuhong, Liu Hai Xian, Liu Yixuan, Liu Yuqiang, Wang Chunling, Wang Guoli, Zhang Yuesu, Yanan Zhu

*Listed in alphabetical order

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Exhibition Guide

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定量 与随机

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Stipulated Amount and Free Fall

錢喂康的1990年至1996年
Qian Weikang, from 1990 to 1996

策展人：刘鼎、卢迎华

Curators: Liu Ding, Carol Yinghua Lu

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Stipulated Amount and Free Fall:

Qian Weikang, from 1990 to 1996

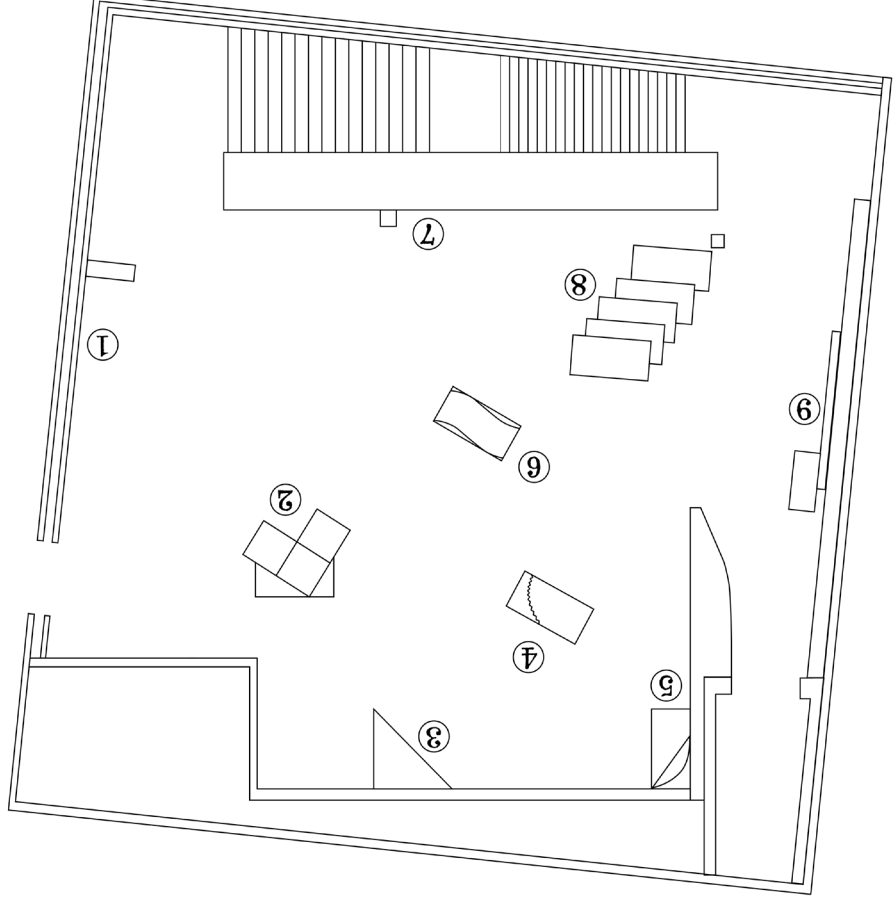
During five year working as a boiler worker at Shanghai's Dalong Machine Factory, Qian Weikang immersed himself in literary societies, and was introduced to avant-garde art and modernist thought through literature, particularly by its modernist and avant-garde movements. In 1990, within the confines of his 20-square-meter apartment on the outskirts of Shanghai, Qian embarked on an experimental literary journey, creating what he termed "ladder poems." As Qian shifted towards visual arts, his Ladder Poem experiment waned. However, the principles of self-imposed rules and restraint persisted in his work from 1993 to 1996, where he developed artworks that utilized measurement tools to objectively quantify emotions, experiences, and the subjective process of creation.

Qian's artistic endeavors, which involve "surrendering" himself and the outcomes of his actions to external elements like gravity, wind, rules, and quantitative relationships, are highly symbolic. This approach unveils an inherent paradox in his philosophy: the act of self-imposition of constraints necessitates an elevated level of self-awareness. This dichotomy lies in an unspoken truth - that the artist, while appearing to cede control, maintains mastery over his own thoughts and actions. By deliberately placing himself in situations that seem beyond control, Qian paradoxically demonstrates a transcendent state that navigates the realm of thought.

About Qian Weikang

Born in 1963, Qian Weikang worked the furnaces at the Shanghai Dalong Machinery Factory from 1982 to 1987. During this time, he took part in literary community groups, where he grew fond of modernist poetry and radical compositions. It was through literature that he first encountered avant-garde art and modernist ideas. After 1989, his interactions with artists increased, and he began his own attempts at artistic creation. At the October Experimental Art Exhibition in 1993, he released his first official artwork, made with chalk. Before this, he had been creating art with chalk in his home for over a year. As he saw it, "Material does not always exist within the social ideological hierarchy. It is free, light and reliable."

After this, Qian Weikang focused on a series of artworks in which fixed quantities of plaster powder were poured through a sieve from a fixed height. Between 1994 and 1996, Qian Weikang created a series of artworks that used measurement tools to quantify perceptions, experiences and subjects. In this period, Qian Weikang and the Shanghai artists with which he frequently interacted, including Song Haidong, Shi Yong and Hu Jianping, placed the question of artistic language at the center of art, carrying out increasingly complex, or increasingly simple, experiments in artistic creation while keenly responding and reflecting to the emerging creative trends of the turn of the 1980s and 1990s, particularly the popular methods of social criticism and the various literary themes that emerged from them. Qian Weikang ceased his artistic experiments in 1997, never again to take part in the activities of the art industry.



① Ladder Poem 1990

② Intersection: White Quantity 15 Grams December 1993

③ One Divided into Two is Still Not Enough October 1993

④ Constiction: White Quantity 345 Grams December 1993

⑤ Imitation: White Quantity 54 Grams May 1994

⑥ An Example: Involving Length, Width, Height and Thickness December 1993

⑦ Human Bio-energy Input/output Physics Experiment November 1994

⑧ Wind Direction: White Quantity 205 Grams December 1993

⑨ Documents of Other Works 1994-1995