

Hive Center for Contemporary Art is thrilled to announce the opening of Hive Shanghai, located in the heart of Shanghai's historic Bund area. The inaugural exhibition, entitled *Row the Boat as You Wish*, presents a group show featuring iconic post-70s artists, including Bu Di, Huang Yuxing, Jia Aili, Liu Xiaohui, Ouyang Chun, Qin Qi, Song Fun, Tu Hongtao, Wei Jia and Xie Nanxing. This exhibition is curated by Xia Jifeng, founder of Hive Center for Contemporary Art. The exhibition, which takes its Chinese title directly from Werner Herzog's film *Fitzcarraldo*, attempts to draw on the activism and symbolism of the term to present the most dynamic and influential scene of the post-70s artists.

Herzog's film *Fitzcarraldo* tells a fantastical story set in the early twentieth century. Driven by his passion for opera, the film's protagonist, Fitzcarraldo, devises a bizarre plan to build a magnificent opera house deep in the Peruvian Amazon Basin and invite his idol, the Italian tenor Caruso, to perform here. Thus, epic scenes would unfold in a wild land with thousands of natives slowly and painstakingly towing a four-storey steamship over a mountain and, as they entered another river, into the immortal cinematic history.

If contemporary Chinese art is also regarded as a steamship, beginning with the '85 New Wave and moving forward, each and every artist is both Herzog himself and Fitzcarraldo who steers the ship.

The post-70s artists are fortunate in that they are the generation that has inherited from the past and carried into the future, and that with the most comprehensive knowledge of the world outside. They have benefitted from China's economic reform and opening up and the transformation of its social structure. The omnipresent radical and aggressive humanistic energy of the 1980s imbued them with a new idealistic individualism; simultaneously, they also experienced the baptism of the capitalist market, witnessed the emergence and rise of a new materialism, and acknowledged and embraced the advent of globalisation in a rational and pragmatic manner. When they stopped viewing the world from the narrow, traditional perspective of culture over commerce, and instead consciously conformed to the prevailing mechanisms of contemporary society, this generation of artists became truly immersed in the contemporary society, and the values imparted in their work were universally recognised. Fitzcarraldo may have been a hopeless idealist, but he understood that it was only by adapting to the rules of the game in the existing world would the opera house in the rainforest not remain a mere castle in the air.

The exhibition exemplifies the post-70s artists, tantamount to a fragment of the development of Chinese contemporary art. It introduces the most vibrant and significant art scene of the moment while reflecting the evolution and trends of the art ecology in contemporary society. *Row the Boat as You Wish* is an attitude and a formidable metaphor. For artists, there will always be mountains to climb, both figurative and intangible, as far as they journey along the artistic path. These may be particular people and events, or they may be an era.