

Van Abbemuseum collection in Chinese village

Li Mu, *A Man, A Village, A Museum*

19.09-2015 – 10.01.2016

In the video installation and book *A Man, A Village, A Museum*, the Chinese artist Li Mu shows how he brings the inhabitants of Qiuzhuang, his hometown, in contact with famous artworks in the collection of the Van Abbemuseum. He did this by reproducing artworks of amongst others Sol LeWitt, Dan Flavin, Andy Warhol and John Körmeling together with the villagers and placing them in the houses and streets of the village. For more than a year he worked on this and he not only documented the history of the project but also the history of the people in the village, their lives and stories in the film and book. From 19 September, *A Man, A Village, A Museum* is on show on the second floor of the new building, as part of the collection exhibition *The Collection Now*.

During the opening on Saturday 19 September there will be an artist talk at 3 pm between Li Mu and Charles Esche, director of the Van Abbemuseum.



Li Mu, *A Man, A Village, A Museum: Qiuzhuang Project*, 2010 – 2015.
Reproduction of John Körmeling's *HI HA*, 1992.

The project started in 2010, when the Van Abbemuseum received an unusual request. Li Mu wanted to organise an exhibition in his hometown of Qiuzhuang, with works of art from the Van Abbemuseum's collection. Qiuzhuang is a village with around 1,000 inhabitants, about 7,500 km from Eindhoven and 800km south of Beijing. Organising an exhibition there is very expensive, simply because of the cost of insurance and transport. The access roads aren't paved, in the summer the temperature in the village can reach 35° C and in winter it freezes below -15° C. There is no central heating or air conditioning, let alone an air-conditioned premises for art.

During a trip to Eindhoven, Li Mu came up with the idea of reproducing the original artworks in China, rather than taking them there. For a year he worked with people in the village on reproductions of works by artists like Sol LeWitt, Richard Long, Dan Flavin, Andy Warhol, Daniel Buren, Carl Andre, John Körmeling and Ulay & Abramovic. Li Mu wanted to use this project to bring his family and acquaintances in the town into contact with Western European and American art. At the same time, he asked himself how the works of art would function in this new

environment, and what meaning they would take on there. Life in the village, the production of the artworks, the reactions of residents and interested visitors were all recorded on video. Li Mu turned this footage into a video-installation that will be on display at the Van Abbemuseum.

Publication *A Man, A Village, A Museum*

The presentation includes a 288-page book about the project, featuring entries from Li Mu's diary, conversations with residents from the village, interviews, correspondence, and dozens of photographs and drawings. The book is published by Onomatopée, the design is done by Studio Joost Grootens. The publication was made possible with the help of Stichting Promotors Van Abbemuseum.

Curators

Charles Esche, Davide Quadrio, Christiane Berndes.



Li Mu, *A Man, A Village, A Museum: Qiuzhuang Project*, 2010 – 2015.
Reproduction of Sol LeWitt's *Untitled (Wall Structure)*, 1972.

Subsidisers

The presentation *A Man, A Village, A Museum* is part of the exhibition *The Collection Now*. This exhibition is made

Press release
September 2015

possible in part by BankGiro Loterij, Mondriaan fonds,
Stichting Promotors Van Abbemuseum and VSB Fonds.



For the editors:

For further information and photographs see: www.vanabbemuseum.nl/pers

Or contact

Ilse Cornelis, Communication & Press
Telephone: +31 (0)40 238 1019
Mobile: + 31 (0)6 12995794
Email: i.cornelis@vanabbemuseum.nl

Van Abbemuseum

The Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven is one of the leading museums for contemporary art in Europe. The museum has an intensive international collection of more than 2,700 works of art, including key works by Lissitzky, Picasso, Kokoschka, Chagall, Beuys, McCarthy, Daniels and Körmeling. Questions in the field of art and society are raised by the museum in an experimental way. An open attitude, hospitality and the exchange of information are important for the Van Abbemuseum and we encourage both ourselves and the visitors to think about different subjects, for example about the role of the collection as a cultural "memory" or about the museum as a public space. As a result of international cooperation and exchange, the Van Abbemuseum is also a place where cultural cross-pollination takes place. It is a source of wonder, inspiration and imagination.

Van Abbemuseum,
Bilderdijklaan 10, Eindhoven.
www.vanabbemuseum.nl

Opening hours

Tuesday to Sunday 11.00 – 17.00. Thursday 11.00 - 21.00.

Admission

Adults: € 12.00 / Groups of 10 or more: € 9.00 / Young people 13-18 years old, students, CJP holders, Eindhoven city pass (stadspas) holders: € 6.00 / Children under 13 years of age, Museum card: free / Family pass (2 adults and max. of 3 children until 18 years): € 18.00.
Tuesday 15.00 – 17.00.: free.