

Edouard Malingue Gallery

馬凌畫廊

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Road Central, Hong Kong
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Exhibition
Ko Sin Tung
'underground construction: failed'

Dates
October 8 – November 26 2015

Opening
October 7 2015, 6 – 8 pm

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Beams of artificial fluorescent light, pixelated images of gray-scale sunrises, assembled screens of ad hoc roadside footage – these are but some of the elements in Ko Sin Tung's visual dialogue with underground zones of construction; those hidden major developments that are hinted at above earth yet not revealed till upon completion. Edouard Malingue Gallery is pleased to present the first major solo exhibition of Ko Sin Tung (b. 1987), an emerging Hong Kong artist and graduate from the Department of Fine Arts at The Chinese University of Hong Kong, who is concerned with the private states of living and investigates, through a myriad of mediums and materials, the psychological influences objects as well as environments project, and the idiosyncratic functions they are channeled to fulfill from the domestic to the urban.

For 'underground construction: failed' Ko Sin Tung develops from her consideration of domestic spaces to seemingly more public quarters – the future high-speed railway connecting Hong Kong to Mainland China near West Kowloon – and investigates, on a personal level, the reverberations of this concrete issue, dissecting its consequent yet currently secretive impact on social relations. At the entrance to the gallery the visitor encounters an archway; as if entering a domestic lair, the outline of an ordinary plastic carpet lies on the floor in front of the entrance – the remnant of the semi-circular shape of commonplace doormats. On the side wall hangs a small image of the Austin construction zone, covered in undulated shards of blue plastic – at once a hint of the exhibition beyond the gateway and a welcome sign, the curved shape echoing that of a rainbow and alluding to the hopes as well as aspirations of the infrastructural development.

Through the portal, one enters the exhibition space, lit solely by a series of fluorescent beams and the light emanating from a collection of stacked TV screens. As if entering the construction site itself, Ko Sin Tung creates an immersive environment for the examination of the very setting she is herself investigating. The visitor first encounters a sculptural installation displaying moving image sequences; a development on her previous piece 'Steady ground' (2014), presenting a set of screens that individually capture roadside footage, shot using an unstable handheld camera. Beyond these, one is lured to a series of gray scale images showing cropped photographs of indistinct sunrises. Aggrandised and pixelated, the counterintuitive scenes appear increasingly blurred upon approach and simulate zones of light at the end of a lengthy tunnel, finely computerised lines emanating from each corner narrowing on the circular spot.

Atypically stripped of colour, each anomalous sunrise is lit by various artificial fluorescent beams, the lighting of the underground coming into conflict with the specifically over-ground and supposedly dreamy settings. Passed this panoramic display, the visitor is faced with a film and setting that ties the lighting and context together. Projected onto the leftmost wall, two hands are shown holding a fluorescent beam – identical to the ones lighting the exhibition space – then letting them go, the immediate release solely being captured allowing your mind to compute the imminent fall; those that survived, now lighting the room.

It is thus revealed that these lights – their properties, continuance and use – are the defining elements of the exhibition and follow from Sin Tung's previous investigation of light. Here, Sin Tung continues to consider its physical and psychological implications in an industrial setting. More crucially though, she uses light to build a parallel with the characteristics of construction: how a site, non-visible to passersby, provides promises and illusions, whilst at the same time being a very fragile concept, one that can

shatter when reality becomes clear. This state of friability is echoed throughout the exhibition via Sin Tung's systematic methods of destruction and examination, processes that aim to reveal how vulnerable an image/an object, and so an individual, is. Senses of personal dissatisfaction and frustration are ultimately echoed by the term "failed" in the exhibition title, a term that equally refers to the expectations that have failed to be fulfilled for a better society and living environment.

Ko Sin Tung is a highly promising, emerging Hong Kong artist. She has previously been exhibited at the Central Academy of Fine Arts (CAFA) Art Museum, Beijing, 8th Vladivostok Biennale of Visual Arts, Vladivostok, Para Site, Hong Kong, and the Art Museum of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, amongst other locations. In 2012 she completed a residency at the Kunstnerhuset Messen, Ålvik, Norway and has been awarded multiple awards: Chu's Creative Award (2009), Cheung's Fine Arts Award (2009) and Professor Mayching Kao Fine Arts Fund (2012). Most recently she received two prestigious grants, one Project Grant (Emerging Artists Scheme) from the Hong Kong Arts Development Council (2014) and the Pure Art Foundation Grant 2013–2014 from the Pure Art Foundation, Hong Kong.