Symposium

How to be an artist without making artworks?

Panels: HOU Hanru (Roma MAXXI artistic director)

Anthony YUNG (Hong Kong Asia Art Archive senior researcher)

DONG Bingfeng (Beijing OCAT INSTITUTE Artistic Director)

CHEN Tong (Founder of “ Libreria Borges Institute for Contemporary Art” and “Video Bureau”)

Nikita CAI (Guang Zhou Times Museum curator)

Moderator: YU Hsiao Hwei (Art journalist)

Time: April 25, 2015, 15:30 – 16:30

Venue: Red Brick Art Museum Entrance Hall

Language: Chinese

Organizer:  Red Brick Art Museum

Thematic:

Abandoning the decision making for images, as a form of non-cooperation with the power system, leads to a further level of non-production. Yan Lei insists that there is no difference between art and other real-life activities, in particular, commercial ones. He declares: “I think making art and doing other business are the same thing”. This not only brings about the elimination of the ego of the artist; the self, or the subjectivity, of the artist no longer counts.

Of course, the concept of the death of the author has been explored and debated for a long time in contemporary art and culture. The old concept of the author as an individual creator expressing his absolute subjectivity and ingeniousness through hands-on realization of his work seems to be long-gone. The author can only be seen as a plural “inter-subjectivity”, the one that can no longer escape from influences and mingling with others.

Who is the real author of art – not specific art works but the system of power via processing art as industrialized and commoditized products – is now the vital, and perhaps, at the same time, fatal, question. This is a final position to be obtained: is the artist a predictor of the system? Or is he simply its victim?

-- HOU Hanru