

**GOEDHUIS CONTEMPORARY**

*Presents*

**The first exhibition in the West of 20 paintings and one installation by**

**LU HAO**

**16<sup>th</sup> November – 5<sup>th</sup> December 2005**

Private View:                   Tuesday, 15<sup>th</sup> November 2005, 6-8pm  
  42 East 76<sup>th</sup> Street (between Park and Madison Avenues)

Lu Hao graduated from the Chinese Ink Painting department of the Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing in 1992. He had become recognized as an accomplished ink painter by 1997 when he began to explore other ways in which to express his concern about the clash between the legacy of China's great classical civilization on the one hand and the drive to modernity propagated by the Chinese government on the other. It was important to him furthermore to express his views in ways that could be readily understood. He is not interested in producing work of the teasing opaqueness so favored by some of his contemporaries in the West.

He grew up in a typical courtyard house and, as a young man, became increasingly horrified by the brutal demolition of the city by the bulldozers that were clearing space for the nondescript high-rise buildings that now mark the landscape. His concerns were accentuated by the miserable physical environment of dust and noise enveloping the city year after year. Moreover, his growing pride in the status of China vis à vis the outside world was neutralized by his embarrassment at the mediocrity of the architecture that was supposed to represent the capital of the new China.

After his successful career as an ink painter, he laid aside his brush, ink and rice paper and embarked on the grand series of architectural models that has occupied him ever since. It took him more than a year to complete his first four works, meticulously rendered in plexiglass, entitled *Flower, Bird, Insect and Fish*, which are intricately detailed models of important cultural and historic sites in Beijing.

Into these "sculptures," he actually put the living flowers, birds, insects and fish of the title, thus conflating the brashly modern buildings with the four traditional loves of the classical Chinese scholar, namely the keeping of crickets and the nurturing of birds, fish and potted plants – all now increasingly out of place in the modern city.

This exhibition, his first in America, contains another of his most notorious works – a model of the "Marble Boat" anchored in Kunming Lake at the Summer Palace. The satire inherent in this sculpture relates to the destruction of the original Summer Palace by the Europeans in 1862, which resulted in the emergence of a ferocious Chinese patriotism in response to this perceived humiliation.

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Much of this exhibition is devoted to the presentation of the beautiful charcoal drawings and paintings that are related to his sculptures and installations. These are not working drawings for the final product, but rather are designed to provide a means of subsequent reflection on them. They embody a commentary, always equally ironic, on his sculptural installations.

Lu Hao, in short, is one of a brilliant new generation of artists which represents a new direction of thinking in China today. Its focus is an engagement with the social evolution of society in contemporary China. He aims to provoke us, and more importantly China's new leaders, to take care not to allow the legacy of China's great civilized past to be extinguished by the careless drive for a suspect and spurious global prestige.

**For further information and images, please call Michael Goedhuis,  
Christine Barberi or Vanessa Lee at 212.535.6954**

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