

HAMMER

Telescope: China | Deng Tai, Walking

FEBRUARY 17, 2015 – BY JAMES ELAINE

Deng Tai's second solo exhibition at Telescope entitled, *Shadow*, focuses on two specific nighttime performances. See previous blog for *Shadow* performance.



Walking is a series of over 1,300 photos and a video animation made over a three to four year period of time, in different cities, always at night, using only the street and shop lights for illumination. It is simply the recording of a journey, walking on an endless road, without a map, to some distant and undefined destination. The darkness of night obscures the details of place, incandescent and neon lights alter the colors and shadows creating a soft and unearthly landscape without a horizon. We often spend our lives not really knowing what we are doing or where we are going. We walk by faith believing that, step-by-step, life will take us where we need to go, but each step is fraught with struggles and doubts. We feel translucent or alien in a world of substance. We cannot understand the pictures of each individual day or appreciate their intrinsic beauty for fear of the future. They are abstract to us. We focus on the moment and later when we look back at our lives, each day is only a whirr of colors and shapes in our memories. *Walking* is a simple travelers passage down streets, over bridges, up

stairs, around corners, past buildings, glass, trees, and lights. Each photo, or each frame, is a painting of a day in the life, but all together it represents a bigger story, a journey without beginning and without end.

Photos from *Walking* taken by James Elaine.

Music for *Walking* video by William Basinski.

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