



LYU Zhiqiang: A Long Way

essay by James Elaine

“Sound is an abstract material for me.” Lyu Zhiqiang

Sound follows us everywhere, fills our spaces, our lives, our memories, and although it cannot be seen or held it creates or defines the images we see in our minds or with our eyes. Sound also “takes us on journeys to different places in different times, and even to other dimensions,” Lyu states. In Lyu Zhiqiang’s recent work sound has been a major focus and is interdependent with the visual, in fact it is just another material and color in the artist’s installation palette. **A Long Way** is a sound installation within a specific architectural setting and in certain aspects, represents the trajectory of Lyu’s creative life. In 1995, during his 3rd year of elementary school, he began painting and drawing and in 2000 “chose” art as his “life’s direction.” “I seem to have taken many detours in life on the road to this exhibition,” states Lyu, “it’s been a long time and a long way.”

Based on the artist’s childhood memories of the 1980’s in northeastern China, the main exhibition space has been transformed into a waiting room; a railway or bus station, an elementary school, a hospital or public government building, etc. A blue Wainscot band of paint covers the white walls, and pale yellow wooden benches line the room for sitting, waiting, and listening. Sheer white see-through curtains cover the windows sealing off the outside world and its distractions. In the middle of the room a display pedestal holds an anonymous ‘travel’ book of random photos of unknown places for the waiting ‘passengers’ to view. On one wall is a strange lone ‘work of art,’ an abstract perspectival drawing of some misplaced and

unknown dimension, a journey without beginning and without end. Perhaps it's the Twilight Zone destination of those waiting for their train. The room has a "socialist" décor of that period; simple, no frills, and almost devoid of any feeling except for the rich layered sounds that fill the air with a continuum of aural images from distant places and times.

In the adjacent room is a single video work seen through the windshield of a car traveling down a highway. This is a 9 hour unedited video made by an automobile data recorder of a journey Lyu made from Jiagedaqi in Inner Mongolia to Mohe, Heilongjiang, his hometown, in northeast China. The video camera is never 'paused', he records everything that happened along the way capturing the music he listened to and him cleaning the windshield of his car at a gas station. It is less of an independent work of art to Lyu and more of a continuation of the ambience of the entire exhibition.

Lyu is not only an artist but also a DJ and a university teacher of experimental art. Sound and music infuses all that he does. The 'soundtrack' for this exhibition is not just a field recording but also a brilliantly composed and paced piece of experimental music. It goes beyond the borders of just sound into an unearthly voice that delves deep into the spirit and the soul, and if one has the ears to hear it can awaken the eyes and open the doors of memory, create new worlds, break open old wounds, and then suddenly heal them, it can take the listener on a journey through the time and space of their own lives. Music has a way of doing this and when coupled with the visual, it is as uplifting as it is dangerous.

吕智强：长路漫漫

撰文：林杰明 (James Elaine)

“对我而言，声音是一个抽象材料。”——吕智强

声音无处不在，它占据着我们的空间、生活与记忆；尽管看不见也摸不到，它却创造或形塑着我们内心或双眼所捕捉到的画面。声音还“把我们带去不同的时间与空间，甚至是其他维度”，吕智强这样说到。在吕智强的最新作品中，声音成为了他关注的焦点，并与视觉相互依存；事实上，它不过是艺术家所掌握的装置语汇中的另一种材料和色彩。《长路漫漫》是基于特定的建筑环境而产生的一件声音装置作品，在某种意义上，它体现出艺术家的创作生涯全貌。1995年，当时上小学三年级的吕智强开始了绘画和速写，然后他在2000年“选择了”以艺术作为他的“人生方向”。“我似乎是在生命之路上兜兜转转才最终抵达这次展览”，吕智强表述到，“长路漫漫，时间绵长。”

展览主展厅以艺术家1980年代在中国东北的童年生活为出发点，呈现了一间等候室，一条铁轨或公共汽车站，一所小学校，一间医院或政府行政建筑等视觉元素。蓝色的护壁板覆盖在白色墙面上，浅黄色的木质长凳排布于空间之中，供观众就坐、等待和聆听。窗前挂着轻薄的白色透明窗帘，阻隔了外面的世界及纷扰。在展厅正中央的展示柜上，一本不知名的“旅游”书展示了随意拼凑的陌生地点的图片，以供在此等候的“旅客”浏览。在其中一面展墙上，一件奇怪的“艺术作品”孤零零地在那儿，这件抽象的透视画描绘了错位且未知的维度，有如一段没有起点和终点的旅程。这些或许就是候车旅客们的“恍惚地带”。整个展厅内充满了那个特定年代的“社会主义”装饰风格——简朴、毫无虚饰，几乎排除了任何感觉——只有丰富的声音在房间内回荡，持续召唤着那来自遥远时空的声觉图像。

在隔壁展厅中，一件单频影像作品呈现了从一辆行驶在高速公路上的汽车的挡风玻璃拍摄的画面。这件影像长达9个小时，并且未经任何剪辑，是艺术家从内蒙古加格达奇到他的老家——中国东北黑龙江省漠河的旅途中用行车记录仪拍摄完成的。在拍摄过程中，拍摄器材从未“暂停”过，这使得艺术家可以记录下旅途中的一切——从他开车时听的音乐，到他在加油站清理挡风玻璃的情景。对吕智强而言，这支影像与其说是一件独立的作品，不如说是整场展览之氛围的延续。

除了艺术家的身份之外，吕智强也是一名DJ和大学实验艺术系的老师。声音和音乐贯穿于他所有的创作实践。此次展览中的“背景原声”，并不仅仅一段实地采样的录音，同时也是一件精心编曲及剪辑的实验音乐作品。它跨越了声音的边界，并转化为一个超自然的声

部，它深入到我们的精神世界与灵魂。倘若，你恰好也有一对敏锐的耳朵，那么它将同时唤醒你的眼睛，并开启记忆之门；它创造出崭新的世界，拂过旧有的伤疤又将其治愈；它引领聆听者进入到他们各自的生命与时间之旅程。音乐有其独特的能量；当与视觉并置，它将是一股令人振奋又略带危险的气息。

Installation views



