Preface to "Chinese Contemporary Art Series"

The world's present interest in and focus on China is related to the great changes that have taken place in China over the last 30 years. The alterations in many phenomena actually allow us to observe the changes in China. Historically, transformation of a closed localized area does not immediately and directly evoke a chain reaction in neighboring areas. Today, however, that is not the case, especially for a country like China that has the largest population in the world, that at present has a huge manufacturing capacity and capability, that consumes vast amounts of natural resources, and that exhibits an unprecedented environmental impact. When these kinds of changes occur in China, the world cannot but feel their existence and impact.

This is a necessary result of today's globalization and a phenomenon that cannot be avoided as the world has entered into the true meaning of the term "global village." It does not matter whether one opposes globalization, favors localized cultural diversity, or favors a kind of "you are within me and I am within you" concept often referred as "glocalization" by the neologism. Because of its historical transformation, China is *per force* a focus for the whole world and, moreover, is a top priority focus. Today, there are more and more research studies produced about China, while institutions established to undertake research on China are becoming more prevalent in the world. This is both the continuation of traditional "Chinese studies" and also, at the same time, the start of a new worldwide proposition: as a country that maintains its historical continuity, as a country that has endured more than a century of chaos after which it weakened and declined, can China truly become a modern state of significance and democracy for the world? This has become both a historical challenge and a practical issue.

Viewing the matter from China internally, the Chinese also have a historical curiosity about the events that have occurred, and they are eager to know what, after all, is the significance of these transformations. Although they are directly involved in their own desire for more answers, they know that these answers will not be obtained in the short term. In the field of art, the stories that appear and emerge have research value and require study because they are the results and visual symptoms of this historical transformation. The hope in editing and presenting this collection of writings is that, by means of publication, these literary works will observe, record, and reflect China's contemporary art stories and their significance. Publication will allow these articles and essays to reveal the development of art during a time of special temporal and spatial conditions. Searches for relevant scholarship reveal much historical baggage and an entangled history. Most of all, they provide a history of visual movements that requires special recognition and that represents the struggle and rebirth of art during a time when history is being remade.

As the embodiment of spiritual expression and real existence, China's contemporary art is rife with contradictions and strivings. Overall, however, contemporary art in China is quite different from that of any other historical period. It transmits the effects of the propagation of foreign concepts and values. China's artists, as the inhabitants of the piece of earth called "China", have an unprecedented variety of experiences. Chinese discussions and arguments about art, in both the modern and contemporary periods, have differed entirely from the dia-

logues and debates in other countries but, nonetheless, still show the impact of the times. Some of these arguments are about large topics such as a comparison of the west and China, cultural identity, and modernity, while some are about small topics such as styles of language, image generation, and even whether traditional brush and ink painting always reflects the psychology of a national culture. In fact, many of these issues are temporary, and many more are pseudo issues. Some of these issues are of a profound nature, while some involving rediscovery and recreation inspire new cultural and artistic entities. No matter what, the main problem of art in China today is that of putting art into practice. If there is no large quantity of creative art that is put into practice, then academic research could become specious. If art is not advanced uninterruptedly, it is difficult to continue with research that shows promising results.

This series focuses on what happens to Chinese art in the present and includes monologues, studies in art history, case studies, movements, critical discourses, and so on. This, after all, is work for the long term. By means of the publication of this work, we hope to build a worldwide research network on contemporary Chinese art, to pass on China's research and tradition of "Chinese studies", and to fuse together China's inquiries with those of interested audiences throughout the world.

http://www.springer.com/978-3-662-44928-8

Jizi and His Art in Contemporary China
Unification
Brubaker, D.; Wang, C.
2015, XI, 155 p. 91 illus., 53 illus. in color., Hardcover
ISBN: 978-3-662-44928-8