



Saamlung

Chen Chien-jung, Gao Weigang,
Frank Havermans, João O, John Powers,
Piers Secunda, Yaohua Wang,
“No One to Hear You Scream”
17 February - 31 March

Press

ARTFORUM

“No One to Hear You Scream”

SAAMLUNG

26/F Two Chinachem Plaza, 68 Connaught Rd. C. Central

February 17–March 31

View of “No One to Hear You Scream,” 2012.

Explorations of space—physical, liminal, temporal—provide the unifying theme for this ambitious group exhibition. Curated by Robin Peckham, it is the first official show at Saamlung, a commercial space that opened last November. Here works by Chen Chien-jung, Gao Weigang, Frank Havermans, João Ó, John Powers, Piers Secunda, and Yaohua Wang transform seemingly familiar buildings, architecture, or objects into something altogether otherworldly. This feeling is underscored by the show’s title, a reference to the 1979 Ridley Scott film *Alien*, which was promoted by the tagline: “In space, no one can hear you scream.”

The Macau-based Ó offers photographs from the “Threshold” series, 2011. *Sakura Cemetery 2*, for instance, is a stark image of an interior burial space with graves stretching from floor to ceiling. The lines draw the eye in, making the room seem inviting despite its function. The three paintings by Taipei’s Chen are perhaps the strongest in the exhibition, with *Landscape 50*, 2010, and *Landscape 65*, 2011, presenting unidentifiable dreamlike structures through vivid color and lines.

In contrast, Beijing-based Gao’s painting *The Third Interior View*, 2008, is a realist depiction of a room filled with equipment that is at once familiar and foreign, and ironically the sharp quality of the image does not make it easier to identify the setting. The black cardboard models in Havermans’s “TOFUD # Amsterdam Zuidas” series, 2010, appear to be truncated infrastructure lifted from a futuristic landscape; the inclusion of these sculptural pieces broaden the scope of the show. Overall, the juxtaposition of the various works on view has a discombobulating effect, making the future seem like a vision of the past and a reimagination of the present.

- Doretta Lau

香港

"没人听见你尖叫"

SAAMLUNG

26/F, Two Chinachem Plaza, 68 Connaught Rd. C., Central, Hong Kong

2012.02.17–2012.03.31

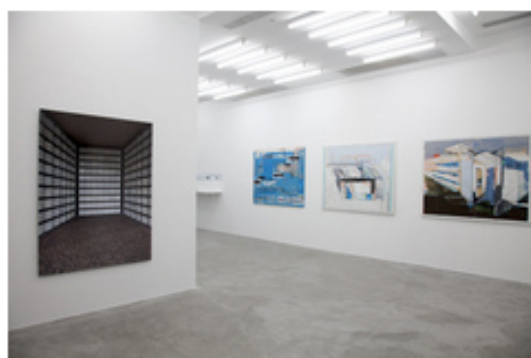
ENGLISH VERSION

对太空的探索（无论是物理上的，意识上的还是临时性的实践）形成了这场群展独特的主题。展览由岳鸿飞（Robin Peckham）策划，是在去年十一月开放的商业空间Saamlung举办的首场正式展览。艺术家陈建荣，高伟刚，弗兰克·哈弗曼斯（Frank Havermans），苏约翰（João Ó），约翰·鲍威斯（John Powers），皮耶斯·塞康达（Piers Secunda）和王耀华等人的作品，将我们熟悉的建筑或物体，变成了超于尘世的非同寻常之物。展览的题目更是强调了这种感觉，它源自雷德利·斯科特（Ridley Scott）1979年的电影《异形》（Alien），其中有个知名的标语：“在太空中，没人能听到你的尖叫。”

澳门艺术家Ó展出了“初始”（“Threshold”，2011）系列中的摄影作品。如《樱花墓园2》（Sakura Cemetery 2），直白

地展现了一个室内安放骨灰盒的地方，这里的骨灰盒码的整整齐齐，从地板一直堆到天花板上。井井有序的场景吸引了人们的视线，让人瞬间忘记了这里是用来干什么的。台北艺术家陈建荣的两幅画《风景65》（2011），通过生动的色彩和线条表现了无法识别的梦幻般的场所。

相比而言，来自北京艺术家高伟刚的画作《室内景之三》（The Third Interior View, 2008），则以写实的手法描绘了一个装满设备的房间，看起来既熟悉又陌生，画面的犀利让人一下无法认出空间里的设备究竟是什么。哈弗曼斯的“TOFUD # 阿姆斯特丹 泽伊塔斯”（“TOFUD # Amsterdam Zuidas”）系列，2010，里面都好像是从未来主义景致中截取的一些设施；这些雕塑作品扩大了展览的观看范围。整体而言，这些作品的排列布置，产生了令人困惑的效果，未来似乎成为了过去的幻想和对现在的再想象。



"没人听见你尖叫"展览现场，2012.

— 文/ Doretta Lau, 译/ 王丹华

A Real Fiction

“No One to Hear You Scream,” Saamlung, Hong Kong

March 19, 2012

by Xue Tan

Saamlung, a new addition to Hong Kong's art world, opened its inaugural group show “No One to Hear You Scream” this month. Featuring a wide range of works from paintings to digital prints, photography, and sculpture, the exhibition structures a latent discussion on space generated by objects through the appropriation of science fiction aesthetics. This series of objects compiled therefore acts as proposals on philosophical issues raised by the production of space.

The exploration begins with Chen Chien-Jung's abstract architectural paintings with industrial palettes. The sequence starts with “Burning,” a bright blue painting that contrasts sharply with the wall, with color fields covering up dark lines and suggesting the overlap of typical urban spaces. This juxtaposition together with its rich texture and rhythm contrasts with a flatness interrupted only by the lines that add a slight degree of perspective to the composition. The two other paintings from the series have an unfinished look but display an equally strong sense of spatial construction. The negative space, sketched lines, and dripping paint drive the viewer to create a variety of visual associations and to recognize multiple forms, while the solid colors and determined brush strokes on the front plane evince a certain sense of completeness. The series serves as a dedicated study of architectural forms and space, which examines the beauty of sketching and the flickering imagery of urbanism.

These are followed by sculptures from the Dutch artist Frank Havermans (“TOFUD # Amsterdam Zuidas – Model No.3,” black cardboard, 65.5 x 33 x 17.5 cm, 2010), which can hardly be regarded as architectural models. The complex layers and enigmatic forms are almost impossible to analyze as functional. Instead, one can view them as a futuristic spatial fantasy, like Wang Yaohua's “Buffer” prints, which belong to a more speculative formal universe. Nevertheless, Havermans's sculptures bring a strong dynamic into the space, and somehow they manage to provide elasticity to the whole show. Made of well-crafted cardboard and wooden structures, the work bears a material fragility which has been camouflaged by black paint, thus creating an unrecognizable solidity. The biggest structure is placed on a white triangular base in the center of the gallery, while three small intricate insect-like pieces are planted on unexpected corners.

Above one of these sculptures is a shelf containing the works of John Powers who presented four architectural proposals for public spaces in different cities. While some of the plans tend to criticize the present political situation ironically, others actually function as possible proposals of city planning. The most remarkable pieces are the proposal for Tiananmen Square (“Non/Space,” three-dimensional lithograph model, ca. 10 x 10 cm, edition of 4, 2001/2011), where a group of radio towers functions as a symbol of freedom but at the same time takes up the space normally reserved for demonstrations and public meetings. In a different vein, Powers creates a proposal for the Manhattan waterfront, where in order to connect the city's downtown with the Hudson river, a highway is erased. (“Invulnerable Space: Penn Station,” three-dimensional lithograph model, ca. 10 x 10 cm, edition of 4, 2001/2011).

There are also three large photographs by Joao O that document empty symmetric industrial spaces in Southeast Asia. Unlike the other works, these photographs depict reality directly, adding some ethnographic charisma to the show. However, the silent emptiness in these quasi-geometric compositions gives off a sense of staged abandonment that lingers in this ambivalent virtuality. Elsewhere, Gao Weigang's realistic painting of a complex electronic device ("The Third Interior View," oil on canvas, 180 x 220 cm, 2008) manages to blur the boundaries of reality and fiction by depicting a non-existent machine. Finally, out of all the works in the exhibition, Piers Secunda's bullet-hole cast reliefs are the only ones that bear the indexical traces of human action. The cratered explosion holes somehow break the silence of the other unpopulated works, suggesting an organic element of danger and violence.

The curatorial framework of the show narrates a space where the artists create or witness an event. Whether the initial space is real or not, its presence cannot be denied; one can see that it was persuasively fully perceived, documented and imagined.

Note:

Saamlung, founded by Robin Peckham, a young and prolific critic, is located on top of an office building in central Hong Kong, which makes the unexpectedly high ceilings a pleasant surprise. The gallery space itself is surrounded by white walls that shut out all external light, while dozens of fluorescent lights bear down from the ceiling to produce maximal lighting, allowing for the microscopic examination of any line, shape, or edge.

The gallery aims to fill a certain gap between Hong Kong's high-end international galleries and the local galleries through its insightful curatorial focus and research-driven programs.

While aiming to give continuity to the focus of the three previous pre-opening exhibitions, "No One to Hear You Scream" does not conclude the ongoing spatial research that has been taking place at Saamlung. The exhibition belongs to the "Post-City" section of their yet-to-be-announced parallel research programs. Together with other writings and sketches from various sources they are part of Saampao-1, a book that will be published this October.

REVIEW

No One to Hear You Scream

Saamlung

A small gallery with outsized ambitions, Saamlung's latest show "No One to Hear You Scream" brings together photography, painting and three-dimensional works by seven artists from the United States, Britain, the Netherlands, Taiwan, Macau and the mainland. These artists position themselves at the intersection of art, architecture and urbanism.

Curated by Saamlung founder Robin Peckham, who has been an assertive presence in the contemporary art scene since moving here from Beijing in 2008, the show takes its name from the tagline of the 1979 horror classic *Alien*: "In space, no one can hear you scream." Peckham has taken this as a chance to marry a futuristic sci-fi aesthetic with some big questions about the relationship between space and objects.

The exhibition's theoretical starting point is object-oriented ontology, a movement that rejects the anthropocentrism of Western philosophy and posits that objects are capable of creating their own space and meaning independently of how we perceive them.

This is something Peckham calls a "democracy of objects". It's weighty stuff, and potentially quite intimidating, but Peckham's curatorial finesse makes "No One to Hear You Scream" engaging.

Taiwanese artist Chen Chien-jung's architectural paintings are bold in palette but ambivalent in form, with straight lines partially erased or obscured. Another painting, by mainland artist Gao Weigang, depicts a clinical interior of



Taiwanese artist Chen Chien-jung's *Landscape 50* at the "No One to Hear You Scream" exhibition

indeterminate purpose. It is echoed by a series of works by Macanese photographer João Ó, which transform public spaces around Asia into mechanical abstractions; devoid of people, the spaces take on unexpected meaning.

Architectural renderings by Los Angeles-based architect Wang Yaohua propose a new building typology based on nests, with strands of carbon fibre weaved together by robots – an eerie junction between the organic and artificial.

American John Powers' contribution is an attempt to rehabilitate the reputation of vast public gathering spaces with three proposals: one calls for the construction of nine bomb-proof Freedom Towers – the World Trade Centre's controversial replacement – in the middle of Tiananmen Square. It's more wry than the rest of the exhibition, but it best captures the essence of what it is trying to say.
Christopher DeWolf

26B, Two Chinachem Plaza, 68 Connaught Rd, Central. Tue-Fri, 11am-7pm, Sat, 12pm-6pm. Inquiries: 5181 5156. Ends Mar 31

FOCUS / Saamlung Gallery

FUTURE SPACE

AS HONG KONG BECOMES A HUB FOR INTERNATIONAL CONTEMPORARY ART, ONE AMBITIOUS GALLERY STANDS OUT FROM THE REST.

WORDS JJ ACUNA



Spring this year marks a hinge point in Hong Kong's cultural renaissance. In May, the city hosts the fifth edition of Art HK, which has quickly become Asia's largest art fair. February saw the opening of a new home for the local branch of the Asia Society, marking the start of a museum boom that will usher in a new contemporary art centre at the former Central Police Station, and the M+ museum of contemporary visual culture at the West Kowloon Cultural District.

Hong Kong's museum building culture is different from that of neighbouring cities: while it recognises the need for world-class cultural institutions, it also understands that form is nothing without substance. Over the past year, substance is exactly what has been brewing. International galleries like Gagosian and White Cube have opened in Hong Kong, aimed at presenting both Chinese and international artists to an eager audience. Ahead of the pack is Saamlung, Hong Kong-based American curator Robin Peckham's new commercial exhibition space for emerging Hong Kong and international artists, whose cross-cultural and collaborative group shows are focussed on generating new dialogue unique to the city.

Before its official opening in February, Saamlung mounted three solo shows by Hong Kong-based artists — João Vasco Paiva, Charles LeBelle and the late graffiti artist Tsang Tsou-choi — which explored the intersection of art, architecture, and urbanism. The subject matter and narrative of each show gave strong



hints as to the gallery's overall direction, which continues apace with Peckham's curation of No One to Hear You Scream, Saamlung's inaugural group show, featuring works by Chen Chien-jung, Gao Weigang, Frank Havermans, João Ó, John Powers, Piers Secunda, and Yaohua Wang. Inspired by Peckham's interest in science fiction, especially the 1979 American film Alien, and his own studies of Object-Oriented Ontology and Feminist New Materialism, the show was a meditative response to trends in pop culture and post-structuralist art theory, representing a different approach to how an exhibition can be formulated on an elevated level for a local audience with a voracious appetite for the "new" when it comes to the city's contemporary art offerings.

Some of the works, like the architectural models and essay by American artist John Powers, or the

architectural paintings of Taiwan's Chen Chien-Jung and China's Gao Weigang, deal with the question of their own aesthetics and the effect their work has on the creation of its surrounding space. "We're using objects gleaned from architectural discourse and art theory to reframe the more sculptural objects and images in the exhibition," says Peckham. "The principle is always using the art world to launch whatever broader projects Saamlung takes us to."

Peckham's process-based narrative is novel in Hong Kong, but it draws reference to a number of galleries in China, including Boers-Li, Long March, and ShangART, and New York galleries like David Zwirner and Frederick Petzel, which position themselves simultaneously within research- and commercial-orientated circles. Peckham is cognisant of Hong Kong's current cultural zeitgeist, and since its launch, Saamlung has been a regular stop for buyers and curators, including the curatorial team of M+. Peckham is quick to point out that the gallery is primarily a commercial venture, whose interdisciplinary approach to exhibition and the engagement of global emergent artists, ideas, and concepts, reflect the city's position as one formulated by economic and cultural cross-pollination.

Despite his stance, he understands that to remain engaged with the Chinese market, being "small and boutique is not an option," unlike his counterpart galleries. Over the next few months Saamlung will participate in Art HK's Art Futures section with an exhibition by Nadim Abbas and Jon Rafman. It will also play host to at least five research programmes composed of lectures and commissioned writing, on top of its own planned exhibits. "We aren't just a gallery on the common mold," says Peckham. "Saamlung is a way to explore what's happening in contemporary art and culture in greater China now, and by extension the rest of the world in the next half century. We're not here to fill a niche. We're here to create a culture." At this stage, Hong Kong is ready for whatever Saamlung has to offer. saamlung.com



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HK's Unique Architectural Identity, Reflected and Inspired

March 18, 2012

James Acuna

For a city with so many iconic towers (both by big name international and homegrown architects) and residential towers like no other in the world (as justly photographed by Michael Wolff), Hong Kong never has had enough time to really be able to reflect the state of the built environment because frankly, it's all around us. I was watching Christopher Nolan's *The Dark Knight* the other day (not the first time i've seen it), and one scene that always leaves its mark on me is the way Batman's silhouette glides effortlessly above the city's forest of glass structures, a stark contrast from his version of Gotham City in the same movie (filmed in Chicago).

The way the shot was filmed it was as if he was descending over an alien landscape, which is funny because there's nothing more alien than a man in a batsuit. That said Christopher Nolan always aims for "the real" and "the authentic" which is why his version of Gotham is as banal as any American 2nd tier city, the opposite of Tim Burton's highly stylized versions in the 90's. But I suppose one cant blame Nolan for taking advantage Hong Kong's very uniquely iconic skyline that could basically pass for any thing that could have been sketched in the world of Anime. This scene in the *Dark Knight* was quite authentic but something only conceptual artists in the past could dream of at the time, say when a movie like *Akira* was created.

Hong Kong as a landscape of architectural gems is mature at this point and the envy of every other city, including Chicago (the birthplace of the modern tall tower... but now the set for Gotham City). So where does Hong Kong go from here? Maybe the questions are not so direct as mine, but a few exhibitions and programmes in the city this Spring have begun to go back and re-question space, scales, history, density, and of course architecture and the built environment with Hong Kong as both a direct and in-direct inspiration.

+ SAAMLUNG Launch: No One Can Hear You Scream



Above (l-r); Piers Secunda, Frank Havermans, and João Ó, at SAAMLUNG's Inaugural Show.

Saamlung finally opened its doors last month with a group show by artists, global and local, titled No One Can Hear You Scream, now on exhibit until March 31st in their Central Gallery. The show is a collection of works which deal with the creation and depiction of architectural space, with strong narrative threads that are a tad bit Science Fiction (something that could be associated with HK's current Hyper-real state).

Large scale paintings by Gao Weigang and Chen Chien-jung, photography by João Ó, sculptures by Frank Havermans, John Powers, and Piers Secunda, and an architectural thesis by Yaohua Wang has gallerist Robin Peckham giving Hong Kong more than enough to chew on for its first show. My feeling about the show is mixed, ie. the show was a bit like a book of first chapters, but that said, a gallery proposing multiple propositions about the built environment in every one of their shows thus far is completely welcomed, especially for this city.

As a whole, the show is not really site specific, ie. the works were not made to be presented for each other or with Saamlung's gallery in mind, although they were displayed specifically after the fact to interact with another artist's work for this exhibition. I personally would have been okay to see each artists' work in context with itself, ie. all of Frank Havermans' Amsterdam insects playing with each other for example of Piers Secunda's bullet hole sculptures adjacent to the other one, maybe because scale is such a big deal, especially for "spatial" shows. That said, the collection is impressive, and alluring, with a bit of forewarning I suppose. João Ó's machine-like robotic spaces and Haverman's insects are actually a spatial by-product of the collective human "DNA" beyond itself. And that's something you can see in every sci-fi Anime I believe.

+ Frank Havermans and LWK at the Wanchai Visual Archive

Frank Havermans is actually in Hong Kong for the second time to show AGAIN at the Hong Kong / Shenzhen Architecture (HKSZ) Biennale, this time on the roof of the ACTS Building / Wanchai Visual Archive adjacent to the Historical Blue House. Above is another one of his urban insects, a work that is a creation of its place, sited specifically to be perched on top of this roof in Wanchai and built with materials sourced and found within the block.

I had the pleasure of checking out Haverman's piece on the roof of the Visual Archive two days after the Saamlung opening. It was also my first time to go to the Archive itself which was located in the very-design oriented ACTS serviced apartment building which will be torn down in a couple of years to be replaced by a high-rise hotel.

**“All Space is Future Space, and All Space is Fiction.” Saamlung Proclaims, as it Opens This Friday.
February 14, 2012**

James Acuna

The title of this post is from gallerist and curator of Saamlung, Robin Peckham, and pretty much sums up the theme of THE inaugural interdisciplinary group show that is No One To Hear You Scream which will celebrate its opening night this Friday, February 17th 2012. The show will feature the work of Taiwanese artist, Chen Chien-Jung, Chinese Gao Weigang, Macanese Photographer João Ó, Dutch Sculptor Frank Havermans, American Sculptor John Powers, LA-Based Yaohua Wang, and English artist Piers Secunda.

As with previous Saamlung exhibitions, it's obvious Robin's interest in the point where design, architecture, art, and urban disciplines intersect will be further explored in this exhibition via science-fiction motifs and current studies of Object-Oriented Philosophy and Feminist New Materialism. Namely works will address issues of “Space” in different ways, either in its composition of it, or the creation of the “Space” around the work, which was already explored a bit via exhibitions by João Vasco Paiva and Charles LaBelle as soft-opening shows for the gallery.

Don't let this scare you, in fact let it entice you further to witness a new collection of works by a group of artist, some who are exhibiting in Hong Kong for the first time. And these guys are big where they come from. Gao Weigang was the winner of the ArtHK Art Futures prize last year and Frank Havermans has shown recently in the Shenzhen/HK Biennial Exhibition of Art and Architecture is known mostly for his provocative architectural installations. Chen Chien-jung's architectural paintings (visual collages?) were recently exhibited via a solo show at the Taipei Fine Arts Museum.

In true Saamlung fashion, I expect this show to be as tight and as focused as the rest of them, and no less engaging.

Chen Chien-jung, Gao Weigang, Frank Havermans, João Ó, John Powers, Piers Secunda, Yaohua Wang:
“No One to Hear You Scream” / 17 February - 31 March 2012 / Opening: 17 February 18:00-21:00 /
Saamlung, 26F Two Chinachem Plaza, 68 Connaught Rd. C (135-137 Des Voeux Rd. C.), Central, Hong
Kong / Tues.-Fri. 11:00-19:00, Sat. 12:00-18:00 / gallery@saamlung.com / www.saamlung.com

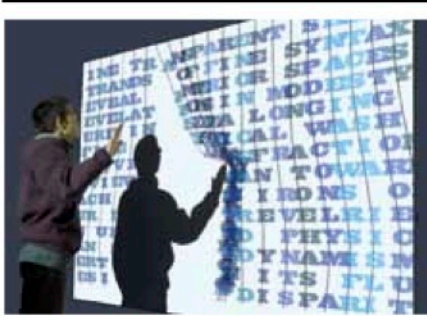
Link: <http://www.wanderlister.com/post/17555454940/no-one-to-hear-you-scream-saamlung>

PIPELINE

Hong Kong | China | Taiwan | Issue 28 | April 2012 | HK\$ 35

THE HONG KONG ISSUE





Text curtain by Daniel C. How, 2006. Courtesy the artist.

cleverly deconstructing the terms and conditions of hire of the Hong Kong Cultural Centre. Playfully presented in the form of a free-verse poem, the piece borders on being a political statement in light of Hong Kong's current plans for investment/involvement in its cultural infrastructure.

Engine of Engines by Daniel C. Howe and Bill Seaman is a visual representation of the building and its occupants that charts the network activity of the 1,000 computers in the School of Creative Media in real time. A cluster of small screens depicts a changing array of metaphoric techno-aesthetic images that I failed to de-code, but which indicate the busy hive of activity at the core of the department.

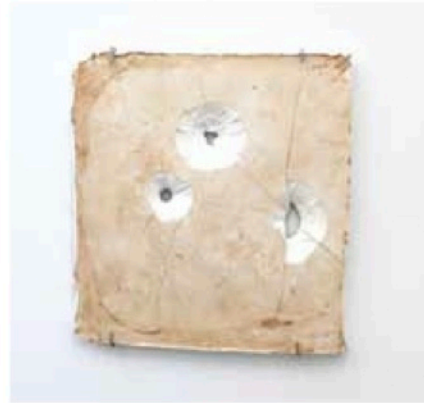
A third section called "Bodies in Motion" acknowledges the human element required to activate space; be it architectural or filmic. Phoebe Man's collaborative project, *___ing@CMC* literally addresses the experience of the body in architecture through a collaborative series of photographs taken by students and other everyday users of the CMC building. The resulting group of digital prints presents individuals using the clean bright institutional spaces of the CMC in "productive and provocative" ways. The project's power is in its capturing movement - spring and pop - and a sense of imagination, diluting the erasure of possibility so often embedded in institutional minimalism.

As a snapshot of the diverse and complicated points of view at the School of Creative Media at the City University of Hong Kong, the exhibition successfully calls attention away from the space in which it is housed and towards its manifold and possibly conflagrantly possibilities. ■

HARD SCIENCE

By David Boyce

No one to hear you scream, Saamlung, February 17 - March 31



Chinese Army Bullet Holes by Piers Secunda, Industrial floor paint shot by PLA soldier, 34 x 31 cm, 2009.

In the crisp, modernist, cool white space that is Saamlung - after a series of pre-opening projects - the first official show of the gallery: Where many would start off with a big-name artist or a sock-you-in-the-eye show, Saamlung has chosen a group show of artists that are not well known to the Hong Kong public.

At a simple level there are paintings, sculpture and photographs. Pause and you see that one of the sculptural series might be a painting. Or is it something else? These works start you questioning, thinking...

With careful attention to placement, the works function as groups. Large photographs balance small insect-like sculptural objects that

seem to be about to skitter around the walls. Constrained hard-edge yet still gestural paintings by Chen Chien-jung (b.1972, Taiwan) sit next to paint-cast traces of bullet holes by Piers Secunda (b.1976 US/UK). On a shelf are small, yet strangely robust-looking architectural models. The insects reveal themselves as Frank Haverman's (b.1967, the Netherlands) representations of intersections and interchanges in a possible utopian urban plan (Haverman's work can also be seen, on a much larger scale, on the roof of the Wan Chai Visual Archive). The small models are John Powers's (b.1970, US) proposals for interventions in public and commercialised semi-public spaces. A painting of an anonymous indus-

trial space by Gao Weigang (b.1976, China), viewed from an oblique angle, transports me to a suspended animation chamber. It is also, potentially, a comment on today's consumer-focused world.

Photographs of unpeopled spaces by João Ó (b. 1977, Macau) give the impression of cold, cyber structures. It is at the same time both devoid, and strangely redolent of, people who might be just outside the frame, either about to arrive or having recently departed.

Travelling home late one night I looked at the Blade-runner like Hong Kong skyline and thought it was the perfect background for the show. ■



Landscape 50 by Chen Chien-jung. Acrylic and mixed media on canvas, 130 x 162 cm, 2010. Courtesy Saamlung.

“The Works” Programme on RTHK



Screenshots

“In space, no one can hear you scream.” That was the chilling tag line used in the ads for the 1979 Hollywood science-fiction film “Alien”. At the Saamlung Gallery “No one to Hear You Scream” has become the title of an exhibition of works by seven artists from different places, working in different media.