

by MIGUEL A. LOPEZ

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David Zink Yi's "Ángel, ¿Eres tú?"

80M2 LIVIA BENAVIDES, Lima

November 14, 2012–January 13, 2013

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"Ángel, is it you?" is the second solo show in Lima by David Zink Yi, the Berlin-based Peruvian artist. Although his work has been shown in small group exhibitions since 2008, Zink Yi's practice was virtually unknown in Lima, given that his artistic production and training happened abroad. It was only nine months ago that he was properly introduced to the Peruvian art scene through the exhibition "Oxidación/Reducción" [Oxidation/Reduction] at the Lima Art Museum – MALI. It's a detail that is relevant as Zink Yi's show signals the gradual transformations in Peru's cultural infrastructure and art-market dynamics after two decades of violence and dictatorship. Exhibitions of artists such as Fernando Bryce (Lima, 1965) and Milagros de la Torre (Lima, 1965) are clear indicators that local institutions and galleries are increasingly willing to actively participate in the contemporary art scene.

Zink Yi's MALI exhibition featured older pieces, but for his show at 80m2 Livia Benavides Gallery, the artist has not only produced new work (which departs from his usual investigations centered on music and the body) but also made an architectural intervention on the second floor of the gallery. The exhibition takes its title from the eponymous series of photographs produced by the artist in 2010, in which one can see the feet of two men, one of whom is elevated—or is he levitating? Indeed, the mysterious, uncertain, or unsolved are evoked throughout the exhibition as a way of demonstrating how cultural constructions are eminently spatial: "constituted through spaces and as spaces," as the artist says.

A new series of photographs displayed on the first floor, *Untitled* (2012), shows patched up highway fragments from the artist's journey from Lima to Peru's southern highlands. The markings not only function as odd, abstract images, but also as traces of one of the most active routes of the mining trade, whose repairs allegorize the fragility of an economy burdened by social conflicts only partially and superficially solved.

But the strongest part of the show is the installation on the gallery's second floor. By eliminating the paint from the walls, Zink Yi turns the entire space into a polished cement container from which a series of geometric figures protrude in stuccoed, dark grey cement. Each of these shapes can be seen as direct citations of the exterior wall ornaments frequently found throughout Lima city, which combine modern architectural rationalism with the experience of peripheral urbanism and self-guided construction. In the same room is the video *Pulsar PG-520* (2012), showing an uncertain journey through a eucalyptus forest where the camera runs rampant, rustling through the trees. When it comes to a halt a brief silence ensues, interrupted by a voiceover reciting fragments from Jorge Luis Borges's short story "The Immortal" (1947), which describes an ancient and infinite city. The contrast between the colorful video and the gray walls estranges the viewer: the landscape's artificial labyrinth and its abundant nature collide with the dryness of the polygonal cement reliefs, making the gallery space seem like a façade turned inside-out. Zink Yi has created an anomalous experience which, through simple formal games and repetitions, summons an uncomfortable memory, placeless—or perhaps where perfect symmetry and harmony have emerged as deranged, broken fragments of modern utopia's rationale.

(Translated from Spanish by Max Hernández Calvo)

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1 View of David Zink Yi's "Oxidation/Reduction," Lima Art Museum – MALI, Lima, 2012.



2 View of David Zink Yi's "Ángel, is it you?," 80m2 Livia Benavides, Lima.



3 David Zink Yi, *Ángel, is it you?*, 2010.



4 David Zink Yi, *Untitled*, 2012.



5 View of David Zink Yi's "Ángel, is it you?," 80m2 Livia Benavides, Lima, 2012.



6 David Zink Yi, *Pulsar PG-520*, 2012.



7 David Zink Yi, *Untitled*, 2012.

1 View of David Zink Yi's "Oxidation/Reduction," Lima Art Museum – MALI, Lima, 2012. Courtesy of Lima Art Museum. All photos by Paul Zink Yi.

2 View of David Zink Yi's "Ángel, is it you?," 80m2 Livia Benavides, Lima.

3 David Zink Yi, *Ángel, is it you?*, 2010. Color photographs, each 71 cm x 92 cm. Courtesy of 80m2 Livia Benavides, Lima; Hauser & Wirth, Zurich; and Johann Koenig, Berlin.

4 David Zink Yi, *Untitled*, 2012. Inkjet print on cotton paper, 195.27 cm x 150 cm. Courtesy of 80m2 Livia Benavides, Lima; Hauser & Wirth, Zurich; and Johann Koenig, Berlin.

5 View of David Zink Yi's "Ángel, is it you?," 80m2 Livia Benavides, Lima, 2012. Courtesy of 80m2 Livia Benavides, Lima.

6 David Zink Yi, *Pulsar PG-520*, 2012. Still from single-channel HD video installation, 12:03 minutes. Courtesy of 80m2 Livia Benavides, Lima; Hauser & Wirth, Zurich; and Johann Koenig, Berlin.

7 David Zink Yi, *Untitled*, 2012. Architectural intervention and polygonal cement relief, detail. Courtesy of 80m2 Livia Benavides, Lima; Hauser & Wirth, Zurich; and Johann Koenig, Berlin.

Clement Greenberg's "Bertolt Brecht's Poetry"

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