

REALITY CHECK

鬥法

Mountain River Jump!

山河跳！

Curated by Rui Lin

Translate and coordinate: Peiyuan Li

Mountain River Jump!, an artist duo of 21ST century Chinese psychic twins, comes to New York City to give America a REALITY CHECK.

June 10th – July 25th, 2017

Open to public for events and by appointment: sleepcenterny@gmail.com

Exhibition walk -through

**& Performative workshop - Cards of Chinese Animal Idioms: Legends in Human World
& Panel Discussion:**

Jun 11th, 1-3 PM

with Mountain River Jump! and Rui Lin

SLEEPCENTER, 9 Monroe St., Bsmt, New York

bài mã tou 拜碼頭：

Jun 14th, all day activity

with Mountain River Jump! and Rui Lin

1. The Divinity City of Penglai Also Appeals in the Other Side of the Ocean 海外有蓬萊 -

field research tour on Chinese (folk) religious sites in New York City's Manhattan Chinatown (Temple of Mount Tai, E. States Buddhist Temple of America Inc., Wong Tai Sin Temple, Path of Tian, Remote Thurible Temple for the Mount Shizhu River JiuLi Ninth God, Grace Gratitude Temple, Kimlau Square, The First Chinese Baptist Church, Mahayana Temple Buddhist Association, Cheng Chio Buddhist Temple, Sung Tak Buddhist Association, True Buddha Temple Chinatown, World Buddhist Center, Chung Te Buddhist Association of New York, Inc., etc)

2. REALITY CHECK 鬥法

Trump Tower, 725 5th Ave, New York, NY 10022, USA

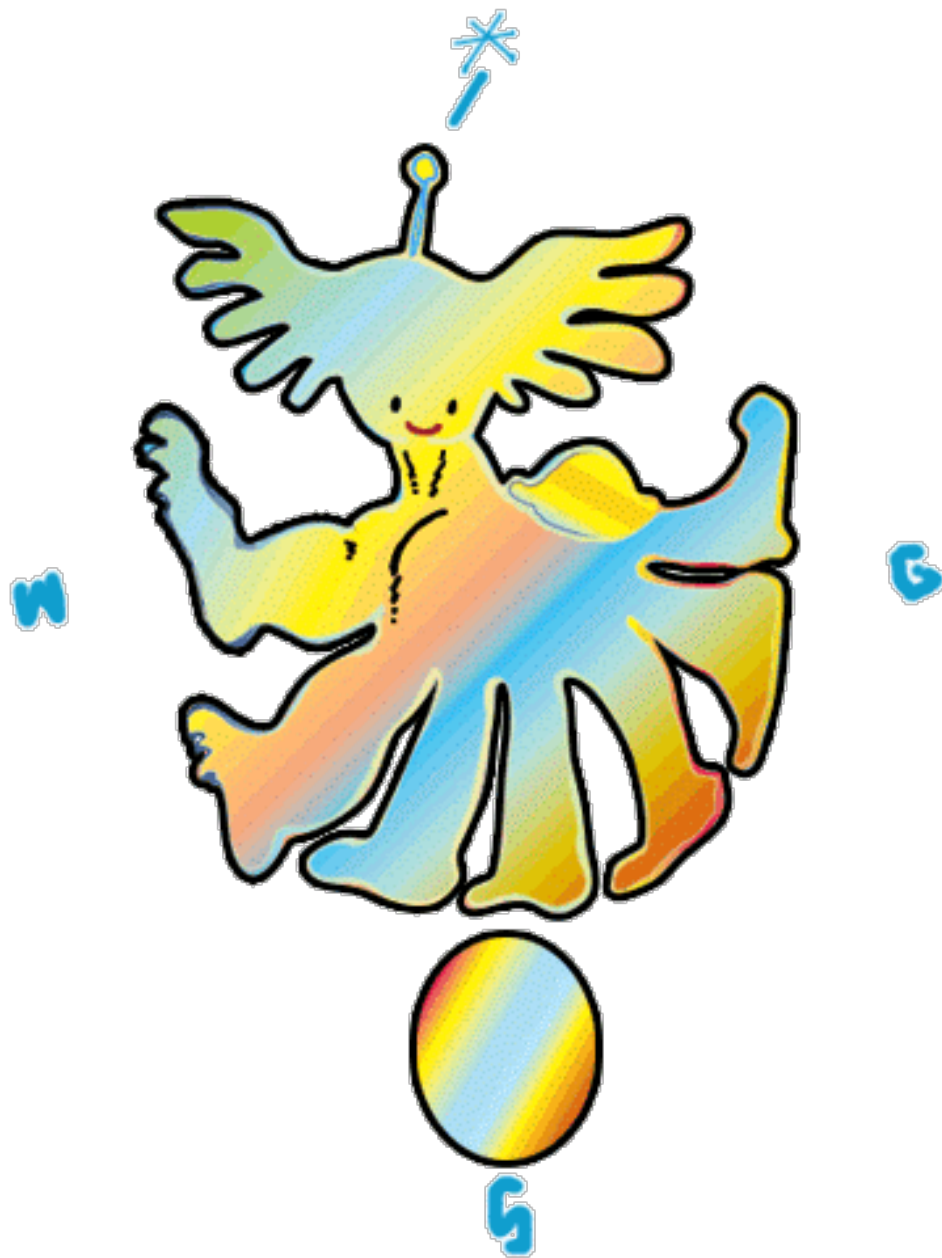
Street Performance (improvised performance and discussion):

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***If you are interested to join our tour and/or REALITY CHECK at Trump Tower, please RSVP at sleepcenterny@gmail.com**



Vigorous God of Journey

大力路神

by Mountain River Jump! 山河跳！

blessing those who are on the road.
祝福世上旅人一路順利，旅途平安。

What is "Mountain River Jump!" ?

Contents of this interview originated from WeChat conversations between Rui Lin and Shan Huang & He Huang.

Rui Lin:

What is “Mountain River Jump!” ?

Shan Huang (using He Huang’s account):

Basically, in Mountain River Jump!, we continuously explore and play with the supernatural and divinatory stuffs, a kind of interest we had since childhood. I can tell you that even as early as kindergarten, we formed a “superpower/psychic group” with the other kids (so you can imagine about us).

So, we had a lot of communications on these kinds of topics. One distinctive story was when I was in 3rd grade, my mum brought home one of those sketchy passing-time magazines you would buy from the train station vendor. In the magazine, there were tons of translated Western stories on UFOs and ghosts, which were mostly *X-Files* kinds of made up mythology stories, but we believed them, and convinced ourselves that they were real. At about the same time, the popular Hong Kong TV show, *Hong Kong Today*, aired the “alien autopsy footage” from the “Roswell UFO Incident”. It was such a hit! We were so obsessed by it and were constantly talking to our friends about it.

It originated from curiosity. And it is now for us the method to understand the reality, while we’ve always felt rather distanced from the materialistic and practical sides of this world. (This origin of curiosity) also includes that childhood experience I wrote you in the email: hanging out in the tourist park where ethnic minority people worked in. It triggered our interest, like opening the portal, to the ancient and spiritual world of shamanism.

Email excerpts:

*When Shan Huang and I were young, our mum worked in a tourist park called “Ethnic Culture Village” in Shenzhen. The park mimicked the so-called “aboriginal life” of many Chinese ethnic minorities, with young minority people worked and dressed in their own ethnic outfits. And I believe being in there was a source of influence to us. In that park, which was vast to us as kids, we got into touch with many “living space, sacrificial space, and ritual space” of the aborigines. Those campfires and bull heads left such strong impression to us, we felt the impression of cultural ancestry (like they are actual ancestors of us!). Although for the rational adults, these were just childhood fantasies. I feel the life with some supernatural beliefs is more happy and complete. It made us feel more connected (with the past and the real world). More than 10 years ago, Shan Huang had a dream: two young men, maybe from a Yi ethnic tribe, were **jumping** like tigers in a shamanistic nuo dance. They then performed a rain-invoking ritual with amber stones on a river bank. This dream had influence to us too, especially with the action of “**Jump**”, it eventually led to the name of our duo.*

As we have been fascinating with spiritual and supernatural things since childhood, our communist family always viewed us as weirdos. Growing up in this environment was painful. For example, one day we suddenly said we want to give up eating meat, the other family members despised us; we believe there are ghosts, people thought it as non-sense...etc. So, I

think whether one is capable of feeling supernatural power, and whether one believes in reincarnation and ghosts, are in fact issues also related to politics of daily life.

It is also about trying to be happy. The life is happier (with supernatural beliefs), as our real life was very dull. It was just the typical regulated Chinese high-school life (when Shan Huang had the dream), there was no freedom (during school hours), (and the spare time) was filled with mostly pop culture. In fact, we did not read much about the shamanistic *nuo* dance at all back then. Having such dream in a sudden, left a great impression to us.



*Young minority actors/workers dress in their own ethnic garments at *Splendid China Folk Village* theme park in Shenzhen, China

Rui Lin:

Since you used phrases such as “Mountain River Jump! believes/thinks” in our previous conversation, could I understand “Mountain River Jump!” as a collective concept and thinking pattern of some sort?

Shan Huang (using He Huang’s account):

In terms of creative works, we want to define a specific kind of spiritual space, specifically dedicate for our kinds of interest, and it is a collaborative effort between Shan Huang and me, for these, we formed Mountain River Jump!. This collaboration doesn’t necessarily have to be us making artworks together. What is important is that we come together to discuss and explore these interests, and to expand this space, to continuously come out with new discoveries and possibilities. We each have our own individual practice and directions and will continuously do so, they are all different from Mountain River Jump!. What are special to Mountain River Jump! are the topics regarding divination, horoscope, prophecy, ghost, etc.

So, I think you are correct: it is a conceptual pattern, schema, and behavior.

Whether we are making artworks together depends on our feelings at the moment. Sometimes we work together, sometimes not. Mountain River Jump! was just founded last year, and our duo has only own once in the group exhibition *Marching in Circles* (2016) at Long March Space, Beijing.

Rui Lin:

What interests me particularly in Mountain River Jump! as an artist collective, is the identity of both members being twin sisters to each other. I would imagine as growing up living together for such extensive time, the amount and the depth of communication and the exchange of thoughts between you two can only be massive. It distinguishes you amongst other artist collectives. I am wondering, from your perspective, what influence does the twin sister identity/relation has in Mountain River Jump!?

Shan Huang (using He Huang's account):

Within Mountain River Jump!, we still work separately. Our practices are often rooted in or influenced by the numerous discussions and communications between us. This kind of communication goes days and nights, and contains a gigantic amount of information. Different from the communications between common friends, which is separated in time, our communication is continuous and vast.

Thus, we can say that Mountain River Jump! is a demonstrative platform of the dialogue between Shan Huang and me, a creative space defined by us, a behavioral schema, and a workshop that is relatively private but can also be immediately opened (to the audience).

Regarding “twin sisters”, we also tried telepathy between us, though not as powerful as the case showed in a BBC documentary. It is a mystery of nature. Since this idea of twins having supernatural power has existed in various folk cultures for a long time, we thought we could try it and enhance it.

About...belief/faith, about the so-called duel between materialism and idealism, it has always been the backdrop, as cultural environment (of China), that everybody in this generation grew up to. It continues to evoke various questions, problems, contentions, and social phenomenon, and to generate various happiness or pain too. We believe we shout to pay attention to it, rather than ignoring it. I think Mountain River Jump! is about the spiritual freedom. The aspiration toward this freedom is long and far.

Maybe we are not psychic at all, but we just want to explore.

Please sign up for our mailing list, or follow us on social media, for forthcoming interviews, live broadcasts, updates and more. Thank you!

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Cards of Chinese Animal Idioms: Legends in Human World

Mountain River Jump! has chosen 49 Chinese animal idioms from common Chinese dictionary, illustrated them into 49 divinatory cards. We appropriate through methods that our ancestors used to describe ideology and humanity using animal idioms as metaphor. Origin of this method can be found in *Zhou Yi*. These 49 cards can be distributed into 7 groups, from 0 The dragon's nine distinguished sons to 48 Time flies like a golden crow and runs like a jade rabbit, including different stages of personal growth.

Divinatory cards are common in human culture, while Tarot Cards are the most common find in popular culture.

bài mǎ tóu 拜碼頭 :

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2. REALITY CHECK 鬥法

Trump Tower, 725 5th Ave, New York, NY 10022, USA

bài mǎ tóu 拜碼頭, literally translated to "a formal visit of respect to the Dock", meaning pay a formal visit to the local authority (mostly powerful local gang figures) when one travels to a new area, for the purpose to establish one's initial peaceful intention of visiting, and ask for permission and protection to set up shop.

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Mountain River Jump! 山河跳 ! is an artist duo formed by the twin sister artists Shan Huang and He Huang. They enjoy studying intangible beings and performing out-of-time practices, as they attempt to transform supernatural and transcendent experiences into touchable forms, and to approach humanism with occultism. As "Mountain River Jump!", through conceptual ways they jump out from the three realms (trailokya) - the desire realm, the form realm, and the formless realm.

Past exhibition and workshop project includes, group exhibition "Marching in Circles" at Long March Space, Beijing, China (2017); "Mutual Telepathy" at 5 Art Space, Guangzhou, China (2016); and "Fortune Teller's Tent: Tarot and Horoscope" at OCAT Shenzhen, Shenzhen, China (2016).

Shan Huang 黄山 (1985, Guangzhou) currently lives and works in Guangzhou, China. Her work has been included in group exhibitions "Ziran / Nature" at Brunkswiker Pavillon, Kiel, Germany (2015); "Institution Production" at Guangdong Museum of Art, Guangzhou, China (2015); "Canton Impression", at Kuiyuan Gallery, Guangzhou, China (2015); "Lending Art, Museum of Unknown" at Times Museum, Guangzhou, China (2013); "A Three Days Treatment", Globe – Art, Music & Performance in the Deutsche Bank, Frankfurt, Germany(2011); and "Connecting Concept" , Beijing Design Week, Beijing, China (2011). In 2014, she founded the mini art foundation Three Foundation. In 2016, she formed the artist duo Mountain River Jump! with her twin sister He Huang.
sitarr-hs.lofter.com

He Huang 黄河 (1985, Guangzhou) currently lives and works in Guangzhou, China. Her recently exhibition includes solo exhibition "Huang He / Yellow River: The Dog Urine" at Canton Gallery, Guangzhou, China (2016); group exhibitions such as "Glossy! Shiny! Fertility!" at Starproject, Hong Kong (2015); "Ziran / Nature" at Brunkswiker Pavillon, Kiel, Germany (2015); and "Lending Art, Museum of Unknown" at Times Museum, Guangzhou, China (2013). In 2009, she published The Virtual Feng Shui of Master Q, based on a virtual Feng Shui (Chinese geomancy) project built in the video game Second Life, invited by RMB City. In 2016, she formed the artist duo Mountain River Jump! with her twin sister Shan Huang.
www.yellowriver1985.com

Rui Lin, (1991, Shenzhen) a wealthy boy travels to exotic places drunk at the bar listens to models sharing their private stories, is currently living in London.
Rlinrlnrln.com

We would like to thank **CANTON GALLERY** for their generous support to this exhibition!

SLEEPCENTER, located on harmonious Monroe street of Chinatown, New York, is a safe house/experimental lab for art and ideas that provides local communities and international audiences with a forum for cultural dialogue.

SLEEPCENTER
9 Monroe Street, Basement, New York, NY 10002
Open to public for events and by appointment:
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Sleepcenterny.org

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2017