

# BEIGAO STUDIO 5

北皋 费家村 五

# BEIGAO STUDIO 5

北皋 费家村 五

**BEIGAO STUDIO 5**  
**INTRODUCING THE ABSENCE OF THE BODY**  
**LET ME BE STRAIGHT WITH YOU**  
**TRAVELING THE SPACE TOGETHER**  
**THE STORY TELLER**

## BEIGAO STUDIO 5

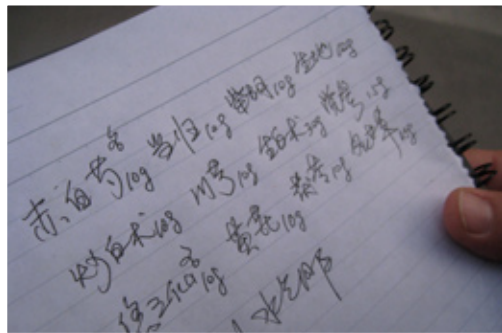


For my stay in Beijing in 2009, I initially proposed to research the role of the body within the Chinese arts and society. I started the project by meeting four Chinese artists: Sheng Qi, Peng Yu, Zhu Yu, and He Yung Chan. We discussed the aspects of performative, the differences and similarities between western and non-western societies in our artworks. Additionally, we looked into the changes derived from China's growing reformulation and commercialization of arts and urban structures. All meetings were documented on video and photographs.





I continued the project by researching the aspects present in everydayness and cultural rites. I was given the opportunity to meet with several people and encountered a series of peculiar events and consequently a portrait of a country in which the citizens seem to be urgently in the search for a position in a fast changing environment. For instance, I have met a Traditional Chinese Medicine Doctor who did practice acupuncture and other techniques e.g. cupping and massage but who also lead me into a religious discussion. Besides that, I hired a Kung-Fu master for seven-week private lessons who is a political activist. During this time I have met another activist a 45 year-old woman who explained to me the importance of the Internet e.g. blogs writings on today's actions and in addition to the street protests. I also participated in political discussions surrounding various themes such as riots and protests for democracy and women's rights in China. This expanded my original preconceptions of China and gave me a real sense of the current controversial situation of the country.

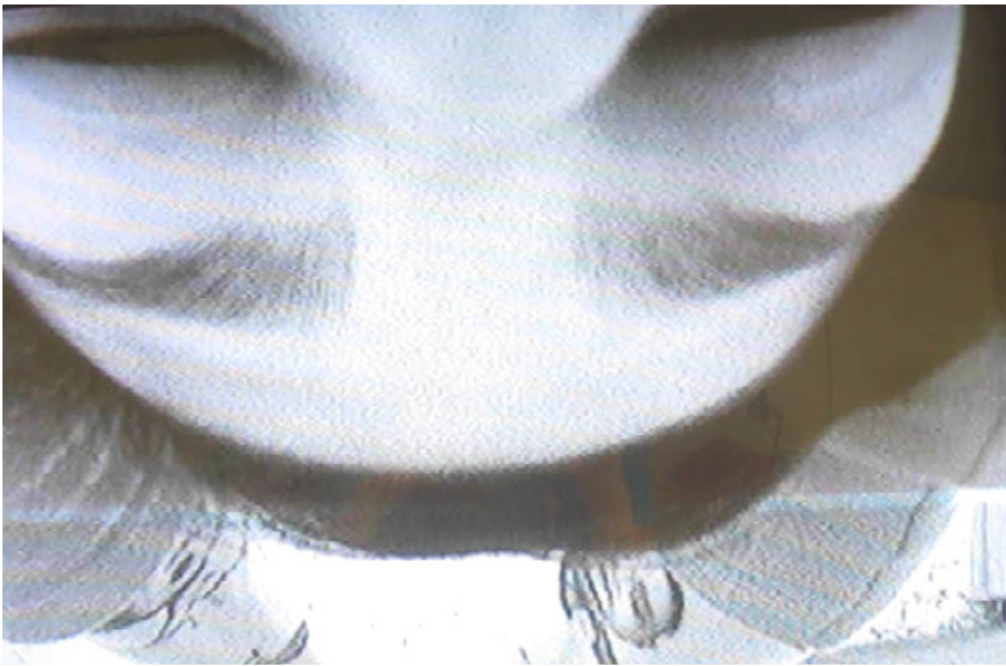




Lastly, I collaborated with other Artists in Residence in order to explore the ideas surrounding the concepts of spatial constitution drawing from my PhD thesis: The constitution of space <sup>1</sup> can be seen analogically to that of performative arts and its elements. They create relationships between people and the space where it takes place. The audience is a strong element for creating these relationships.

<sup>1</sup> According to German sociologist Martina Löw iThe constitution of spaces takes place through (structured) ordering of social goods and people in places. Spaces are created in performative action by synthesizing and relationally ordering objects and people.i *Raumsoziologie*, Martina Löw, Frankfurt, 2001, Suhrkamp.

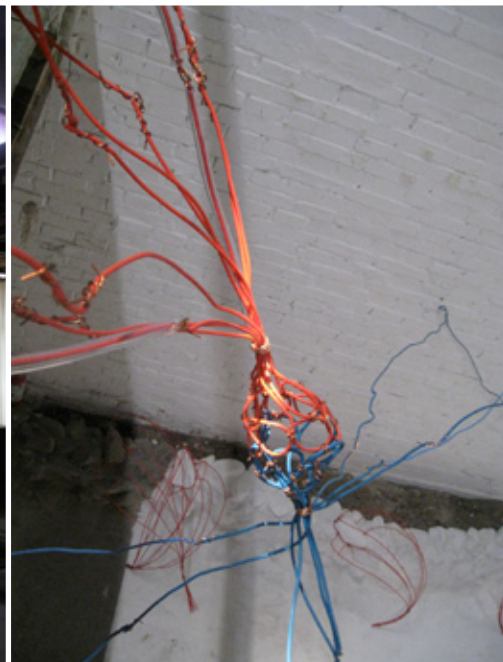
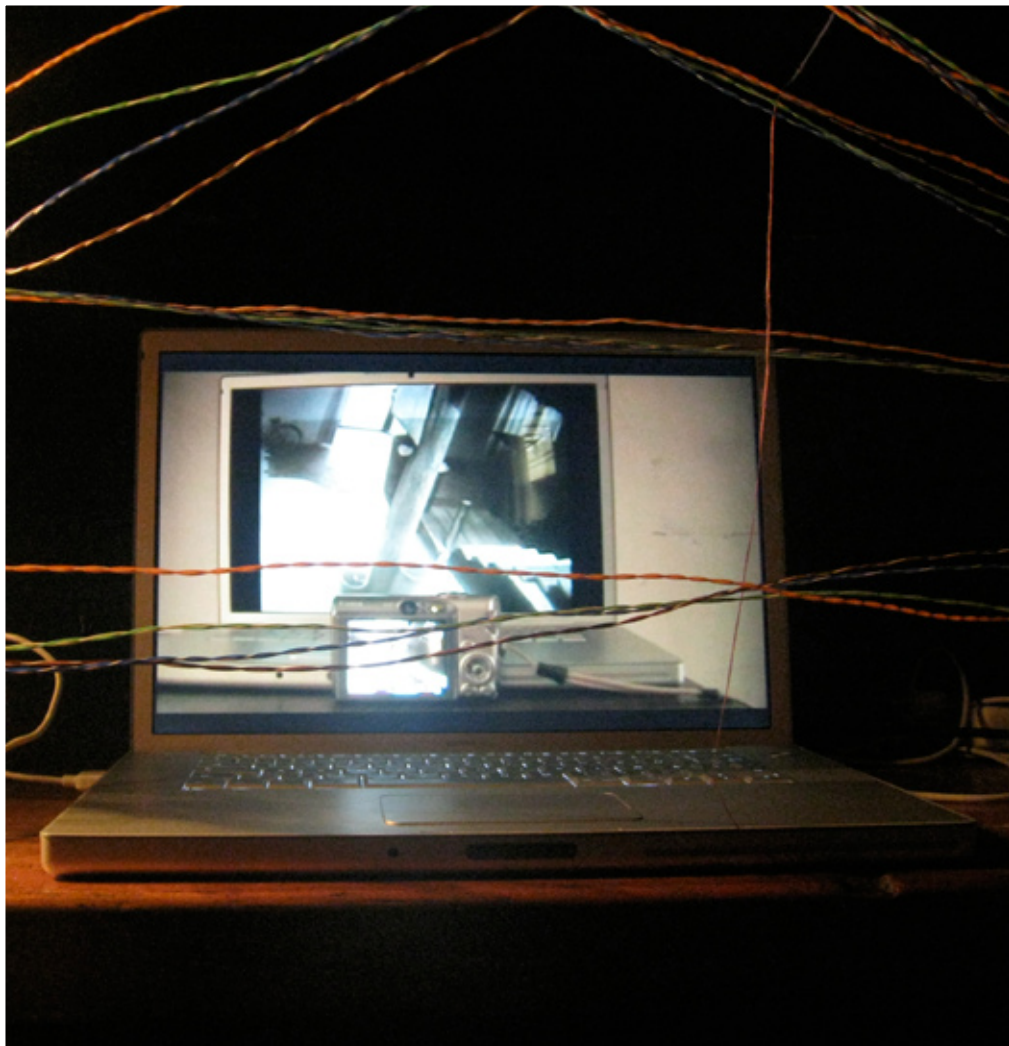




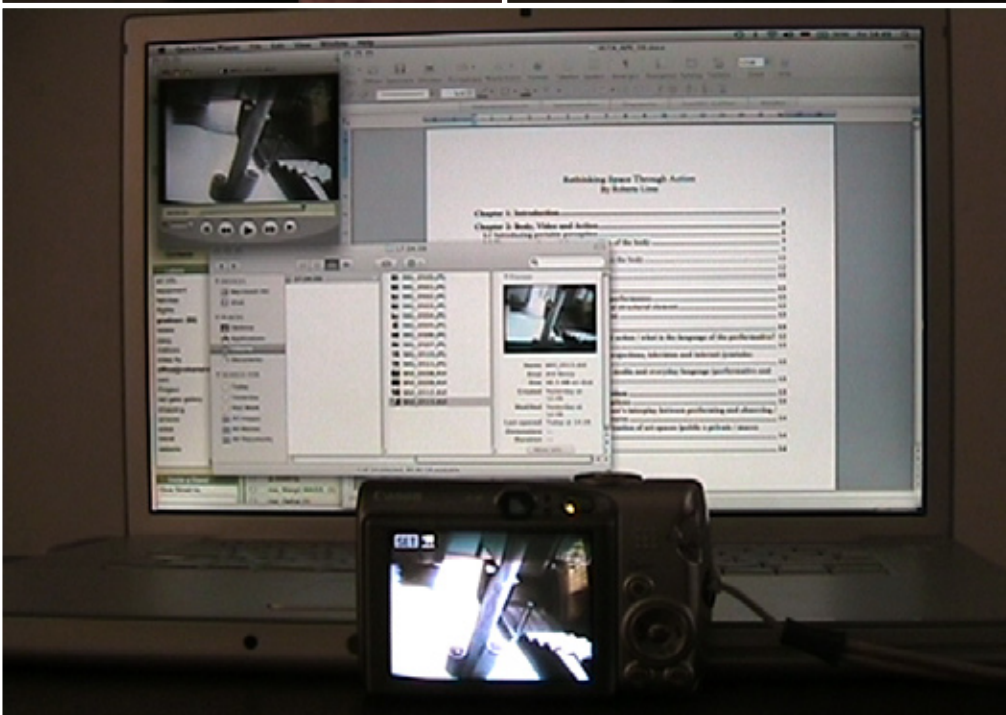


In April I invited British artist Kate Royle to share my studio for two weeks of their residence in Beijing resulting in the work entitled “Let me be straight with you”. In June I made two pieces with Irish choreographer Fearghus O’Conchuir. During this time of artistic exchange the configuration of Beigao Studio 5 was reorganized and acquired new meanings. For example, in order to have room to practice Kung-Fu I had to cut one of Kate’s sculptures. Later, when dancing with Fearghus her sculpture was re-considered as part of the space and integrated in the piece.





## INTRODUCING THE ABSENCE OF THE BODY



Following my experiments at das weisse haus in Vienna and at the 11<sup>th</sup> Cairo Biennale, I worked with the spy camera attached to my chest. When using this type of device I have encountered many difficulties trying to record the images. As result, the monitor was photographed. The photos exist as the only documentation of the images broadcasted during the performance. In China while attempting to photograph the monitor (an older analog equipment) I found that different interferences occurred and had an interested effect in the images. I decided then to switch from photography to video. Besides that, I discovered the monitor as a mirror, a surface, where the space and other elements present in the studio were reflected on. This way the work not only acquired different conceptual meanings but also many visual layers. I carried on experimenting with video by capturing the images from other displays (e.g. computer, photo camera) playing with the multiplicity of image production. This created a distance and certain loss of the original moment, as well as an analogy to the disappearance of the body.

## LET ME BE STRAIGHT WITH YOU



Kate Royle and I share the same interests in terms of cultural studies, art and gender theory. During our residence in Beijing I have invited her into my studio to discover a way to use different disciplines as a means to intertwine each other's art. We brought our individual experiences with performance and together benefited from the unpredictable. For this work I placed the spy camera on my chest to survey Kate while she was doing her sculptures and I was simultaneously working on my dissertation. We also decided to place a second camera bird's eye view, which recorded the process of Kate doing the sculptures. We also decided to do a performance piece together, in which she built an installation of wire surrounding me in the form of a cocoon while I was writing. The choice of the material was intentional and represents our technological, and spatial limitations. The growth of the cocoon forced me into remaining in the same place and in front of my computer.

This mixture of different disciplines –for example, through Kate's sculptural installations and my PhD dissertation and experiments with video – resulted in building dialogues.

## TRAVELING THE SPACE TOGETHER



Fearghus works with bodies and spatial appropriation. He has also developed a creative conversation for the past two years with the Chinese choreographer XiaoKe. Having identified similar themes within our work we discussed ways of collaborating.

In June I invited Fearghus to invade my space. He invited me to travel the space with him. With that I rediscovered Beigao Studio 5.

Expanding on my previous collaboration with Kate, we decided to use wire again as a tool for both linking and limiting out bodies. This time, the wire was the cord of the spy camera attached to my chest and connected to the monitor: this broadcast the images of the two of us dancing. Another camera was placed in a tripod, facing the monitor, recording the images from the spy camera. *Traveling the Space Together* refers to an apparently simple human interaction. Yet that interaction resulted in a complex set of images layered in the video: the black and white images generated by the spy camera were captured with the interferences of the analog monitor and the color reflections of the room on the screen. In addition, *Traveling the Space Together* shows the people, objects, and the process of its own making.

## THE STORY TELLER

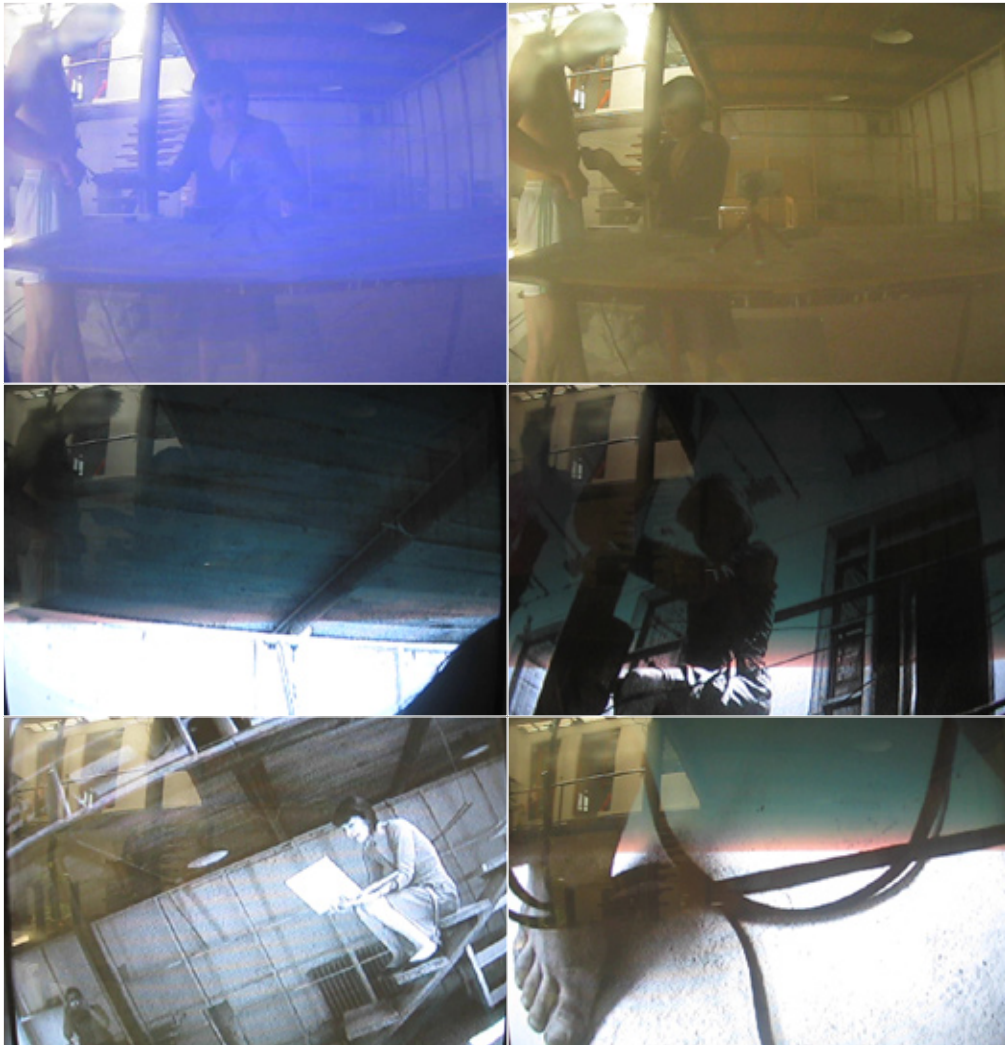
For this second piece, I attached my spy camera to Fearghus' chest and again linked it to the monitor. I placed another camera on a tripod which faced the monitor and recorded the spy camera's images.

We also documented the process through a series of photographs. This time, Fearghus responded to the sound and intonation of my voice while reading my article entitled *Thinking Praxis and Theory Inversely*.<sup>2</sup>

I placed a third camera from a bird's eye view perspective and I sat on the stairs. During the reading an interaction took place between my gestures and Fearghus movements. Although I was present during this piece I did not fully acknowledge this interchange was happening until I viewed the footage of the recorded piece. The duality of this piece lies in the fact that both attachment and de-attachment took place.

*Invasion suggests an unwelcome entry, a breaching of defended terrain. Invitation contradicts that threatening inroad. The Story Teller in particular communicates these contradictions - I am free to explore the space but tethered to the camera and responding to your voice and your words. You are confined to the stairs, a small, almost childlike figure and yet you direct the action and the recording of it. The interplay is rendered more complex still by the inadvertent resonances between our movements.* Fearghus O'Conchuir

<sup>2</sup> *Thinking Praxis and Theory Inversely*, Roberta Lima, Dublin, 2009; Art & Research, Vol. 2, No. 2, Glasgow.





**ROBERTA LIMA** was born in 1974 in Manaus, Brazil.

After graduating with a degree in architecture in 2002, she moved to Europe where she now lives.

In 2007, after earning a Master's degree in Fine Arts, she began her PhD studies at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. She is current Associate Researcher at GradCAM in Dublin.

Roberta focuses on her own body as theme for her work and uses various media, such as photographs, video and installations. Additionally she investigates space and appropriates aspects of different places and contexts – from subculture to science, from popular media to historical reference and feminist theory – for producing art and starting discussions on the role of artist and viewer.

## SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2008 “Into Pieces” (das weisse haus, Vienna)
- “6teen Stitches” (Donau Festival, Krems)
- 2007 “Lights Out!” (Kunstraum NOE, Vienna)
- “Cut it Out!” (Kapelica Gallery, Ljubljana).

## GRO UP EXHIBITIONS (selected)

- 2009 “Fragments of Art in Translation” (Gallery Raum mit Licht, Vienna)
- 2008 “Synchronicity“ in collaboration with Dorit Margreiter (11th International Cairo Biennale)
- 2007 “Provokation? II Unterschiedliche Aspekte von Provokation” (Fotogalerie, Vienna)
- “Fresh Europe 07” (Kogart House, Budapest)
- “SCOOP 07” (Momentum – Photographie Editionen, Vienna)
- 2006 MAK NITE – Exhibition “Microstories Austria – Kurzfilme österreichischer Medienhochschulen“ (MAK, Vienna).
- “ALL NIGHT LONG”(Christine Koenig Gallery, Vienna)

## PRIZES , SCHOLARSHIPS , AND FELLOWSHIPS

- 2007 Atelier and traveling fellowship in Peking, China for the year 2009 (BMUKK, Austria)
- Kunstpries H13 2007 (Kunstraum Noe)
- Akademiefreundepreis (Vienna)

## PUBLISHED WORKS (selected)

synchronicity. Felicitas Thun-Hohenstein (Hg.). Vienna, 2009 (Ed. Walther König).

Thinking Praxis and Theory Inversely. Roberta Lima. Dublin, 2009 (Art & Research, Vol. 2, No. 2, Glasgow.)

Invasion: RNA Chips and Butterflies. Roberta Lima. Vienna 2008 (self published)

From Transgression to Transcription. Roberta Lima. Article. Vienna, 2008 (Corpus: Internet Magazin für Tanz Choreographie und Performanz)

Into Pieces. Exhibition catalogue. Roberta Lima. Vienna, 2008 (self published).

Camera Austria International #101. Graz, 2008.

Provokation. Exhibition catalogue. Fotogalerie Wien, 2008.

Lights Out! Exhibition catalogue. Roberta Lima. Vienna, 2007 (self published).

Inversion. Roberta Lima. Vienna, 2007. (self published).

Bread And Butter VII – Berlingold. Photo story. 2004.

Elarqa # 33, published by Dos Puntos. Montevideo, 2000.

Projeto Design # 233, published by Arco. Sao Paulo-Brazil, 1999.





SPECIAL THANKS TO

Pingxiu, Suzanne Caines, Dan Staincliffe, Matja, Alice Dittmar, Anna Wassertheurer, Joerg Pacher, Candido Fonseca da Silva, Liu Shifu, Terry Batt and Janine, Kamen Stoyanov, Melissa Lumbroso, Austrian Cultural Forum Beijing and Red Gate Gallery.

Text: Roberta Lima

Graphic design: 10110 Erika Ratvay

Printed in Beijing, China

Credits:

Bei Gao Studio 5: Roberta Lima

Chinese Performance Artists: Pingxiu

Traditional Chinese Medicine Doctor: Roberta Lima

Kung Fu, Traveling the Space Together, The Storyteller: Anna Wassertheurer and Roberta Lima

Let me be Straight with you: Roberta Lima



Roberta Lima Beijing 2009