

Don't Look Back! I Told You So

'Don't Look Back! I Told You So', an exhibition of new work by Chien-Wei Chang at New Walk Museum & Art Gallery, Leicester, forms part of the national crafts initiative 'the shape of things'. The timing of the shape of things project is of great personal significance to Chien-Wei as it coincides with the final stage of his journey to become a UK citizen. Born in Taiwan of Chinese descent, Chien-Wei moved to the UK in 2000 at the age of 29. In 2011, after eleven years of temporary visas, he was finally granted UK nationality. The stories behind, and leading up to, this momentous event are woven into the works made specifically for this exhibition.

Chien-Wei is renowned for his striking re-interpretations and re-presentations of everyday objects in silver, wood and bamboo. In this exhibition, he has stepped away from his main practice of silversmithing and works relating to bamboo, concentrating on exploration of the vessel form and experimentation with new materials, specifically the transparent qualities of glass.

A key component of the exhibition is an installation based on the idea of the cellar across different cultures. For Chien-Wei the cellar is a space where things can happen – a laboratory, a place of experiment, and of mystery where a process of transformation can take place. A collection of two hundred transparent glass bottles and storage containers, combined with everyday objects signifying the routines and rituals associated with daily life, bridge the past and signal the future; providing a myriad of clues to the artist's personal and creative life: The coconut



1 Chien-Wei Chang, *Broken & Found*, broken glass bottles, found objects, ready-made objects, 2011. Photo: Andra Nelki

shell gathered from a Singapore beach, the rusty nail given by a Mexican sculptor, the empty coloured foil chocolate wrapper – all contain memories of the artist's journey through life.

Authorised Zone, 2012, an installation of objects relating to daily life displayed on an eighteenth century Chinese table 'as if on a stage', and one large sculpture piece, *Destined to be so cheesy*, 2012, are two more overtly political works which explore the relationship between the West and China and Taiwan.

Frances Lord

'Don't Look Back! I Told You So' runs from 11 February – 25 March 2012 at New Walk Museum & Art Gallery, Leicester.

www.leicester.gov.uk/chienweichang
www.theshapeofthings.org.uk
www.chienweichang.co.uk

Frances Lord explores Chien-Wei Chang's practice in Artists stories:
www.a-n.co.uk/artists_talking/artists_stories/single/429059

Visions of an underwater city

Plunge, a new public art work by Michael Pinsky, imagines a time 1,000 years in the future when the effects of climate change have transformed the city of London.

The work uses strings of low-energy LED lights to encircle three prominent London monuments – the Duke of York Column in Waterloo Place; the Paternoster Square Column near St Paul's, and the Seven Dials Sundial Pillar in Covent Garden – the glowing blue lines marking the predicated sea level in the year 3111.

While audiences can easily imagine the lines extending across London – placing themselves deep below the water's surface, the illuminations also appear to encase or protect the three pillars, suggesting we may still have a chance to change the situation. "A height of 28 metres above current sea level was chosen as an extreme illustration of what could happen if we continue with a 'business as usual' emissions scenario".

Pinsky recalls a reservoir near his childhood home in Scotland that inspired his project: "In particularly hot summers, when water was in short supply, the level of the reservoir would drop revealing the spire of a church, the highest point of a village which was submerged for a secure clean water supply. This image of a submerged bell tower has stayed with me ever since."

Plunge offers an opportunity to re-imagine the capital and its all too familiar architectural landmarks: "visual images associated with [climate change] tend to show vulnerable landscapes from around the world, but the situation for cultural landmarks at the heart of our metropolis is equally precarious."

www.michaelpinsky.com
www.liffestival.com

Plunge runs until 4 March. Created by Michael Pinsky and produced by Artsadmin and LIFT as part of the Imagine 2020 network programme



1 Michael Pinsky, *Plunge*, Sundial Pillar at Seven Dials. Photo: Julian Andrews