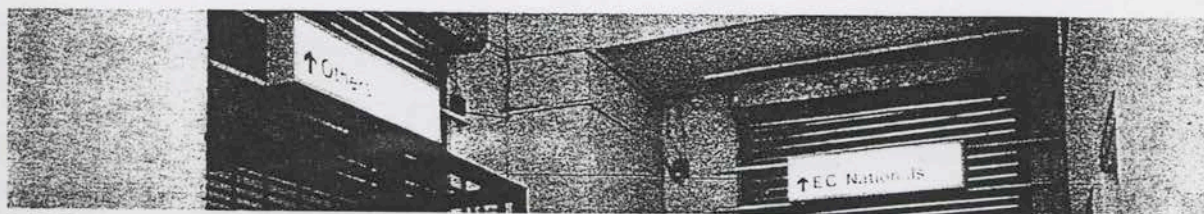


BARBARA GLADSTONE GALLERY

515 West 24th Street  
New York, New York 10011  
Telephone 212 206 9300  
Fax 212 206 9301

# HUANG YONG PING

G  
L  
O  
B  
A  
L  
  
A  
R  
T



PASSAGE, 1993. INSTALLATION DETAIL, CCA GLASGOW.



PASSAGE, 1993. INSTALLATION DETAIL, CCA GLASGOW.

Above the two entrances of the gallery two signs light up, black writing on yellow: "EEC Nationals; Others." Standing in front of them, one is meant to ask oneself, "Which door do I choose?" Actually, the question ought to be, "Am I a European or a foreigner (an Other)?" The question of identity is serious and addresses each of us. If we really considered everyone as a free individual as per the Western humanist ideal behind the construction of a new cultural body, the European Community, we would by now be far from this identity problem. But this remains a political, decorative ideal. When will this be achieved? Huang Yong Ping always works on the real, either evoking the ultimate possibility of any culture's superiority, of any *Weltanschauung*, or when he questions any concrete event which limits or controls the Other's freedom. The work refers to the artist's own experiences as someone "outside" who travels across Western borders — this time through the British border in Glasgow (the light boxes are exact replicas of those at the Glasgow airport). What is problematic is not a physical border but a mental one. The artist originally proposed to put a pair of lions in cages under the light boxes. Obviously, the lions would function as both real guards and as metaphors of authority, power, and control which can be traced back to both Chinese and Western traditions. But the answer was no: no lions in a public gallery! The (expensive) cages stood empty, shorn of their real function and sense. The real in art has lost its reality in the face of the reality in which we all live. Such a loss is not a failing of art but derives from our incapacity to deal with the real. It testifies to the wise words: "Only one's fear of the Other forces one to deny its Otherness."

Hou Hanru

*For Canton-born, Paris-based critic and curator Hou Hanru, Huang Yong Ping's Passage tackles one of the emergent issues in today's global culture: the definition and function of an international boundary, the border between "I" and the "other," and the "in-between" space where one confronts and contemplates the problem.*