



Brendan Earley, "In the midnight city", 2012; felt tipped pen on paper, 225 x 280 cm

## Brendan Earley: In the Midnight City

Brendan Earley participated in our artist-in-residence program at Galerie Urs Meile Beijing from August to November 2012 and the works exhibited in this exhibition include drawings, installations and sculptures created by the artist in Beijing during that period.

Earley's new works present his reflections concerning the subject of the city—according to Earley, the character of a city is not only defined by its cultural landscape, which is shaped by historical and geographical factors, but also by the material characteristics of its architecture and planning, and furthermore by the interactions that take place between the city and its occupants.

The new series of drawings demonstrates a unique form of artistic depiction. With his repetitive use of short, sharp strokes in felt tipped pen, the artist has reduced the graphic and narrative nature of the works to an absolute minimum, laying bare their pure form. This process of indefatigable repetition describing the essence of the drawing's own making, is a metaphor for the eternal construction of the city.

The concept of light is often present in Earley's works—he has integrated fluorescent light, color filter paper, natural light and translucent acrylic panels to produce a pure and simple aesthetic that possesses architectural characteristics, one in which we can see the profound influence of minimalist aesthetics and architectural language. In Shine a Light (2012, florescent lights, plastic ties, stainless steel and yellow filter paper, 110 x 44 x 22 cm) florescent lights installed inside the piece shine through acrylic panels covered with yellow filter paper to cast c. As China's cities undergo dramatic transformation, the construction of new buildings is accompanied by the dismantling and destruction of the old. Earley has successfully balanced the relationship between both kinds of urban space in his work.

Earley's reflections concerning the materiality of urban construction during his residency in Beijing are expressed in the sculpture Untitled (Janus Head) (2012, steel, plastic ties and plywood, 43 x 22 x 20 cm in which the artist has used hard steel to articulate the unconstrained nature of Styrofoam. Although steel is a core construction material, it functions as filler in the urban landscape. Such a conceptualized transformation of materials is not only a continuation of Earley's former work, but furthermore a step forward in development and experimentation. As Earley himself notes: "These new drawings and sculptures continue to develop my interest in the materiality of the object and images combined with a more conceptualized concern with the legacies of past eras of cultural history and the contextualization of artifacts within the pragmatic approach to design through construction." Through his sculptures and drawings, which are concise in form and profoundly expressive, he hopes to create an alternative view of order, one which attempts to reconcile one's position in everyday life.