Skyscraper, 160x300cm, c-print, edition of 6, 2008

The video "***Skyscraper***" depicts the construction of a fantastic installation of about 35 meters high, with a diameter of 45 meters, built by 40 workers within a month or so in Changping County, 30 miles north of Beijing. The scaffolding iron bars are painted with gold color to make them look shiny and golden under the sunshine. This golden scaffolding signifies the glory/wonder of drastic changes in urbanization drive to urbanize. The soundtrack dubbed at the end of video plays "Silent Night" together with images of colorful fireworks celebrating the Chinese New Year, hinting at a very peaceful while melancholy world.

Through this video piece, I want to analyze how dramatic social changes, in particular, in terms of sky-scraper construction, occur in China and how such construction projects have little to do with happiness of humanity. I chose this location and accidentally found this poor village has been contaminated with pollution resulting in deformities of children. My photo works consistently depict my skepticism in the face of such dramatic transformations, involving human intervention in less-than humanistic methods and attitudes. This "Skyscraper" is like a Greek god growing magically from a smoky ground and looming high above the earth. The whole process of this scaffolding construction emulates the processes we witness of beginning and finally ending construction of high rises all around us.

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Working of the film

“Skyscraper” – sketch 01

Upper view

Draft 1: 30m in diameter, 36m in height

Draft 2: 37m in diameter, 45m in height

Marquette with tooth-picks, December 2007

Shooting location, village in Changping District, Beijing. January 2008

Front view of 24 meter high

Construction site, Changping County, Beijing