Jiang Zhi
(Yuanjiang, China, 1971)

Jiang Zhi belongs to that numerous group of Chinese artists, also including Yang Fudong and Liu Wei, who towards the end of the 1990s, came to the attention of the international public with the appellative of 'Post-Sense Sensibility', in the exhibition of the same name in 1999 presenting works that were radically new compared to the rigid formalism of their academic teachings. Born in the province of Hunan, Jiang, he moved while still young to Shenzhen, one of the large cities that serve as the economic powerhouse for the entire country, where he worked for a few years as a correspondent for a local newspaper before deciding to dedicate himself to art full time. With a strong sense of criticism, this experience allowed him to grasp the rapid transformations that were taking place transversally across Chinese culture, proud of its traditions and yet willing to open up to dialogue with the West. In this context in 2006, the *Rainbow* series came to light, one which includes a selection of images of natural and metropolitan panoramas dominated by saturated tones, large sections of blue skies and magnificent rainbows. It does not take a highly trained eye to realise that these colourful arches conceal a sinister message in their perfection: indeed, they are made up of the tiny logos and luminous advertising signs dotted along the streets of cities throughout the world. Some of these logos are clearly recognisable for a Western viewer, such as those of McDonald's and the Hard Rock Cafe, while others are made up of the characteristic ideograms of the Chinese language. That's how Jiang's rainbows lose all their evocative charge, only to be transformed into the artificial consumerist mirage of millions of people who, day after day, become ever more standardised.

Working indistinctly with video, photography and painting, over the years Jiang began to question the statute of images and the shifting of sense produced in the passage from one medium to another. A meaningful example is provided by a series of works generated between 2011 and 2012 in which the artist focuses on the representation of glitches: the digital distortion produced on the image, either through random system errors or induced deliberately. With the idea of exploring the perceptive and cognitive possibilities of man in an era ever more conditioned by computational logic, Jiang first captured some of these illegible patterns from the computer screen and then transferred them onto canvas, painting with great precision using oil paints, to the point of subjecting his pictorial technique to the arbitrary nature of the mechanical calculation.
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