

The Bao Brothers
mixed media on panel
26 x 18 cm 2022

The Bao brothers have been taking a sabbatical. They were just fed up and they had it up to here. They needed a fix. A hook. A fresh start. They felt their brain function was slowly deteriorating, their muscle strength and motor skills were weakening and their stress level had reached an all-time high.

So they left the province of Shanxi to their west, Henan to the south, Shandong to the southeast and Liaoning to the northeast, as well as the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region to the north and sat down.

It's been two years now and what this is what they've come up with. Balls. So far, they've made three. Their plan was to start rotating two or more balls repeatedly in the paw. Intended to improve their finger dexterity, relaxation of their paws, at the same time aid in the recovery of muscle strength and motor skills, further exercise paw muscles, improve their brain function and reduce stress. And it would have worked if their hands weren't so damn small.

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THE BAO BROTHERS are looking for solutions. They know that in the problem lies the solution, but they now know that the problem of only looking at the solution is that one quite easily creates a new problem. And by only focusing on the problem, it will get bigger.

What they have learned is that when looking for solutions, one needs first to locate and define the problem. And to keep their eyes on the problem. And to transform the problem, into the solution.

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Chris Berens

Chris Berens studied illustration at the Academy of Art & Design in 's-Hertogenbosch, graduating in 1999. He has developed a complex and time-consuming painting technique, mostly shown as mixed media on panel.

"I'm most comfortable using fine brushes and drawing inks and graphites, but I also regularly use water color paints, markers and acrylics", Berens says. "For some time now I've added digital image making to my line of techniques, meaning 3D sculpting, digital painting and image processing. I combine and mix them with my more traditional media."

After his first major solo show at Jaski Gallery in 2005, Chris Berens' fame spread quickly. The young artist has already exhibited all over the world, from Amsterdam to New York, from Tokyo to Los Angeles, Seattle and Singapore. He also designed the cover for Panic of Girls, an album which was released in 2011 by Blondie. Deborah Harry and Chris Stein, founders of the band, are admirers of his work.

Back home Chris has been the subject of a television documentary. Chris Berens, Master of his Magical Universe was made for Dutch broadcaster Avro's Close Up series in 2013 and has since been broadcast several times at home and abroad.

Chris Berens also featured prominently in the television documentary Krabbé searches for Van Gogh, in which actor/painter Jeroen Krabbé traced the path of Vincent van Gogh in co-operation with Dutch artists.

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