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ZHANG DING
“GOLD & SILVER”

OPENING: Tuesday, April 9, 2013, 7 p.m.
DURATION OF THE EXHIBITION: April 10 – May 5, 2013
The artist will be present.

This is the first exhibition dedicated entirely to the work of Zhang Ding at the Galerie Krinzinger. He was already featured in Krinzinger Projekte as a residency artist in 2008. Now, in an exhibition titled “Gold & Silver”, Zhang Ding is presenting a series of works, primarily sculptures and installations that are based on themes such as power, ideologies and their systematic control and their political practice. The artist uses the metaphor of gold and silver as precious commodities to create a bridge enabling him to critically explore the superordinate system of capitalism. In one installation the artist has erected high concrete walls throughout two rooms of the gallery. These walls, however, prove to be a trompe-oeil, since these walls only imitate the material. They are reminiscent of the Berlin Wall – here, too, space there is a separation of space and, like the original, Zhang Ding gives the wall a name. On the one side we can read English slogans, while on the other side there are Chinese proverbs.

Sayings such as “Gold can excite the Gods” and “It makes no difference whether a cat is made of gold or silver as long as it aspires to gold” allude to the power of gold and to corruption as well as to a famous statement made by Deng Xiaping regarding the question whether China should continue to adhere to the strict communist ideology or open its economy to capitalism. In connection with these quotes a golden sculpture of a cat can be understood as an embodiment of various Chinese myths and folkloric truisms referring to this animal, which can be equated with the devil, a racketeer or a merchant. A cat is also to be able to have the ability to bring about wealth and power. Sculptures of hands holding different objects illustrate manual labor, conditioning into a society in which rebellion might be silently considered. Here, however, in the guise of works made of precious material it never becomes explicit where criticism might begin or end – in a system that finds itself situated between communist ideology and rising economic power.