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GENÈVE

MEZZANINE

BURIED ARMY OF EMPEROR SHIHUANGDI

A material of memory, earth brings together mankind and history.

Since 2003, under the generic title *Entre rien et quelque chose/prendre et jeter* (Between Nothing and Something/Take and Discard), I have produced a whole series of works based on the heads of soldiers from the buried army of Xi'an, in memory of the 600,000 workers who disappeared, according to legend or to certain historical sources, following the construction of the famous tomb of Emperor Shihuangdi.

Implicit in this work is a discourse on power and its abuses. Taking, when the need arises – what could be more natural – then discarding – why put oneself out – has been a characteristic of humankind since the dawn of time, and is nowadays exacerbated.

This is a state of affairs, and a critique, that of course goes far beyond the spatial and temporal borders of China, and pertains more generally to humans when the freedom of desires and power is not constrained by any kind of responsibility, whether individual or collective.



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By taking as a model the head of a buried army soldier – an object for tourists – it's the archetype that is pushed to the fore: a soldier standing in for all of humanity.

Jacques Kaufmann