



called 'progress'. This work depicts a square grey grid in the background, representing the looming threat of gentrified, pre-packaged, middle class ideals. In the foreground is a mountain spirit figure, which symbolises the living culture of Xucun. Culture is a living and evolving entity, and this work serves as a constant reminder of its fragility and relevance in our modern age.

Sunset was inspired by red and yellow mist bouncing off the white mountains. We were all on the tour bus when we saw it. I refused to take a photo and relied on my experience of it. I wanted to capture the essence of the sun and the mountains; I painted the background black and threw thinned white paint onto the surface like an abstract ink painting. I made my own spray can out of a spray bottle, which was the only one available in the village, sourced from the local hairdresser. *Rebuild* was a handmade house brick that I found in a nearby village. The brick was made from red earth and in the centre of it was a black coal-like deposit. I cracked the brick in half and when rearranged, it formed a mountain range. The act of cracking the brick represented my frustration with modernity. I wanted to create a work that reclaimed modern square building materials and returned them to a natural and organic form.

I shared a studio with Tasmanian artists Rob O'Connor and Tom O'Hern, who recently exhibited at *Primavera 2011*. After the residency I created a work called the *Wing Clan*, which was inspired by witnessing my first Chinese opera and Rob's portrait of Tom as a giant lethargic warrior, which to me symbolised Western sloth. The costumes in the Chinese opera were awe-inspiring; I was particularly taken by four

flags attached to each warrior's back, which I later found out are used as identity markers on the battlefield. I started to think of all the different flags that contribute to my cultural identity. This work will be shown later in the year in a CAST touring exhibition titled *Made in China Australia*.

I recently completed a 200-metre-long public artwork in Kimber Lane in Sydney's Chinatown. I was encouraged by Aaron Seeto to submit an expression of interest to the City of Sydney, who commissioned the project. In part, this work was inspired by walking through the clouds in the Taihang Mountains. I wanted to replicate the overwhelming oneness I felt with nature by replicating cloud murals on the walls, roads and pavement and suspending spirit figures in mid-air. I can only hope that this work, located in the heart of an urban Chinese-Australian metropolis, evokes the same spiritual experience I had whilst walking through those misty mountains.

I was enlightened and inspired by Chinese traditional culture and the great artists I met from all over the world. Interacting with international artists, I realised that as an Australian artist I tended to focus more on my identity as an individual. As a result of this residency I now see the need to focus more on international issues that affect the global community. I am returning to China several times in the next twelve months and one trip includes revisiting Xucun with Jumaadi. Soon after returning to our lives back home we realised that although education is vitally important, so too is community engagement. When we return to Xucun for the second time we will focus purely on facilitating a didactic puppet project that encourages community collaboration. Upon reflection, I can see that the Xucun Art Commune residency has had a profound impact on my art practice and sparked an ongoing interest and relationship with one of our closest and most powerful neighbours.

Jason Wing is a Sydney based mixed media artist of Chinese and Aboriginal heritage. His work addresses issues of cultural identity, Australian politics and our evolving relationship with the natural world. Wing has exhibited extensively across Australia and continues to engage in community art projects both nationally and internationally. In May 2012 Wing will have his first international solo show at the Kluge-Ruhe Museum, University of Virginia, U.S. followed by a solo exhibition at Arc One Gallery, Melbourne, which opens in late June. More of Wing's work can be seen at jasonwing.net.

