



One world, one dream aka Dirty mind, 2004
cast resin glass, internal light

La Trobe University, Geoff Raby Collection of Chinese Art.
Donated by Dr Geoff Raby AO through the Australian
Government's Cultural Gifts Program, 2019. © Guo Jian.
Photo: Jia De

At first glance, Guo Jian's large-scale resin sculpture is alluring and dazzling. At over half a metre high and wide, over a metre deep and lit from within with polychrome lights, the glinting gold surface is a spectacle. The initial impression suggests that the object may be a revered, even sacred object. Shaped like a brain, with the surface details mimicking the brain's folds and wrinkles, it may symbolise the 'mind' of the nation or a gesture towards the emphasis in China on scholarly refinement. However, a closer inspection twists the enticement of the lights, gold and glitter. Erotic scenes have been moulded into its surface and profanity emerges in its minutiae. High-flown cerebral pursuits are subverted by the debased and lowbrow, exposing the latent corrosion beneath the appealing surface.

The title, *One world, one dream* foreshadows the 2008 Olympics, as it would become the official slogan as Beijing pursued international prestige. Guo Jian's work may not have been explicitly created in response to the Olympics, given the work was created in 2004. However, for many, the title evokes memories of the event, which created the slogan to express 'the firm belief of a great nation with a long history of 5,000 years and on its way towards modernisation'. The Olympics, and the government at the time, weaponised the alluring rhetoric of greatness with policies of corruption and country-wide repression.

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