

More than the "Sorrow of Objects"

Zhang's work initially implies sorrow, but there are deeper layers to her art. She gathers outside observations and reshapes them in her own way. By binding and twisting fabric, she explores the relationship between inside and outside. Binding and twisting exist in a relationship. If tied from the outside and twisted inside, they compete with one another. The inner twist will condense an outward explosive force to break the bond, and the relationship will be deconstructed and reset.

After years of heavy memories, Zhang began peeling off the layers of scars and that eventually led to "Open a Window for Myself". Is it still she who is weathered by time in the window? The sunlight outside the curtain has passed through, the silkworm cocoons are split, and the butterflies are flying across the ocean.

Appreciating Zhang's art gives me the overall feeling of being restrained but full of the beauty of wabi-sabi.

Simplicity is the language characteristic of her work; elegant style is her life attitude infiltrating art and the spiritual realm of tranquility.

Making a comprehensive survey at the aesthetic system of Zhang's works, I have a superficial understanding of it as such a constitutive model:

Eastern traditional aesthetic system plus Western modern art concept

Eastern traditional aesthetics includes two aspects:

The Aesthetic Philosophy of Chinese Traditional Culture from the East

And from the core of Japanese traditional aesthetics, the concept of "and wabi-sabi"

Zhang's aesthetic composition "patterns" coexist and complement each other. She manipulates them magically: "When the two are separated and combined, you will have heightened reflection and thought".

Her work infiltrates the aesthetic philosophy of traditional Chinese culture. Her decades of high quality work began from her childhood as part of a family tradition and the infiltration continues to her installation work, so that the familiar points, lines and surfaces on the two-dimensional plane have a reclusive and ingenious transformation in the three-dimensional space.

The preservation of the block and surface construction of the work, the treatment of partial emptying, and the entanglement of three-dimensional wrinkles, all correspond to the legal principles of the two-dimensional line density relationship in Chinese painting, and the jurisprudence of painting of when arranging the ink, consider the rhythm of the blank space, and treat the blank as important as the ink.

The work develops the imprint of the foundation of traditional Chinese culture in her heart. This is undoubtedly the potential that allows her work to in the Western field. Her work also reveals the influence of the traditional Japanese aesthetic concept of "matter sorrow and wabi-sabi", most likely from the time she studied in Japan. "Silence" is connected with "錆", which means old and rusted. The original meaning of the word comes from Chinese, but under the influence of the famous Japanese haiku writer Matsuo Basho, a layer of aesthetic meaning gradually emerged: "Under the appearance of dilapidated objects or human appearance, revealing a beauty full of time; a shocking

beauty that cannot be stopped and intensified, even if its appearance is mottled or faded.”

The admiration for "Mono-ha", a Japanese modern art genre, and the use of this genre's creative techniques infiltrate and permeate her work. This is her borrowing and blending the concepts of traditional Japanese aesthetics and traditional Chinese aesthetics. In this way, her work shows the tension between vision and touch allowing the audience to touch, somatosensory, and even smell the work. The desolate and poignant hues presented in her work mixed with the beauty of plainness and mottled outer rust and unfolding of the texture, the annihilation and the swirling abyss falls into beauty of wabi-sabi in ugly outside and inner wisdom.

It is the same as the wordless, silent beauty emphasized by Chinese Zen Buddhism. Most of her work may not correspond to the majesty of the Han Dynasty in China and the dazzling brilliance of the current "prosperous world", but it has the refined and transparent demeanor of the people of the Jin Dynasty, simple and leisurely, and gray tranquility.

Zhang's work contains a series of women on the "aesthetic continuum", which is used as a starting point to explore the direction of the social proposition of human beings in philosophy. By intercepting the small connotation of a certain characteristic symbol of the body as an entry point, we will explore and examine the large extension of me, women, people, and even the creatures in the world. In this way, from the intuitive concept, the qualitative change to the perception concept. This "continuum" is her research object on social life and aesthetics; "aesthetics" is her research method on "continuum".

One of the characteristics of its expression is Zhang's use of materials. First, the use of raw materials such as "stone, wood, paper, cotton, iron" can be seen in her work, just as we mentioned the influence of "Mono-ha" on her art. As for the use of feminine materials that seem to be favored by female artists is a double-edged sword! For example, the clothes and stockings that are related to women's life, she not only does not shy away, but also deliberately allows herself to collide and screen in this commonality to find out the differences. And her rich artistic attainments give her the confidence to be "same but different". She searches for the mechanism of discovering the materials in a private grind with them; the subtlety of "letting it flow out of itself" in the rounds of tearing with them thus chiseling its plasticity. This is the fundamental difference between her and other artists' materials.

I especially appreciate her clever use of resilient stretch silk. Its material properties, as well as the subtlety of this property as a feminine feature, have both been brought into full play in her work. The transparency of the grid-like structure of the material provides a clear identification for the creation of multi-layer spaces of the work. The strings, seams, and areas they pull out are in harmony with women's gentle beauty and grief. They are like the chanting and answering of poetry, like the of through objects into knowledge transformation. The deep texture that is repeatedly wrapped and leaked is like a hidden scar in front of you, but there is still temperature. The threads and surfaces drawn by the elastic fabrics seem to hold the taut past; however, they extend to the far-flung and unknown space for exploration with a more fluid attitude.

For example, the work "Binding", I privately titled it as God's unique gift to women: "The Upside-Down Calamity Pear". (Disaster pear: It is a book that is useless for engraving. The disaster involves the pear wood used for engraving the text plate. It is often used as a modest word for engraving. The pear plate has the function of inheriting the text of "life force", but when it is taken from the pear tree, it is undoubtedly from the pear tree. It's a "disaster".) The uterus is the production body of organic life. However, in her works, the "umbilical cord" that connects the cradle of life and is woven with fibers is wrapped around an inorganic stone! At this time, the "calamity pear" has completed its mission and has shriveled and shriveled itself; perhaps it has been dissimilation. Does it stop at the meaning of a mission tool?

Zhang reminds us that "every part of the installation is a partial appearance, like a mask; the invisible connotation is connected with the response of the body and the mind; behind the surface there is another layer of related meaning."

Shyness is almost everyone's perception of privacy. Ashamed, people are always uncomfortable. Freedom is the best state of human existence. If you say the word "shyness", it undoubtedly hides the various unbearable physiological states and complex psychological mechanisms of women who have been "come-overs" in China in the past dynasties. Although its functions and properties determine its natural structure and layout for self-protection, I sometimes have the paranoia that I want them to be "replaced". This whimsy of "flower and wood" replacement is neither boring nor sudden. I have a paranoid idea, delusional about the operating state of our private organs, as if we can naturally wipe the sweat off our faces in public, but at the same time maintain our superiority as advanced animals. So I thought that poet Yu Xiuhua might be better off ignoring the "ugly" genitals and calling out to have sex with you.

And Zhang's series of "examine the body" seems to coincidentally satisfy my "replacement" delusion! In the exhibition hall, they break free from the inherent secrets of the body, “且” It stands upright, naked and upright; the female flower is open to the public in the form of pure beauty. They can "look" at you naturally, and you can avoid them without embarrassment, but instead look straight ahead and appreciate the beauty of their form. It's like looking at yourself with no shame. Could it be that because the genitalia grows in the hidden places of the body and the particularity of the flavors and tastes that accompany its functions, does it make women feel ashamed? It's otherwise! The physical and mental shackles of Chinese traditional morality for thousands of years on women can be felt from the seven arches in Shexian County, Huizhou. In order to perfect the autocratic high-pressure system that is only male, we use the majestic and in-depth symbolic arches to quantify and worship things forever. Men can enter this type of archway at will, but not every woman can go in and out. This move makes "humiliation and shame" only written for women. Isn't the archway built for you women? But you women just can't pass under the torii! This reminds me of Kafka's "In Front of France" and Lin Fengmian's tragic separation from his mother. This is painful for women like a needle or a slow knife. It is no wonder that in Zhang's work, sharp needle-shaped objects are interspersed and stationed from time to time. On a large area of the pale body, a pair of scissors pierced, and a single injection of blood flowed.

The topic of women is more than the era of China's "three-inch golden lotus". As Zhang

said, they are ignored intentionally or unintentionally, and they are superficial and formalized. This covers a lot of problems, which shows that this problem is deeply rooted in society. The expectations and restrictions on women have created the constant tension and struggle in my work. I always want to reveal the gap between women's expectations in different cultures and between themselves and the outside world through my works and find the process of positioning. The process is not soft and comfortable, they present a twist, and they are not beautiful. But this is the real status quo." This real status quo is often sprayed directly in front of our eyes with blood on the chain! The links of the iron chain are interlocked, how long and heavy is the chain on a woman's body, and how long and heavy is the invisible chain link that extends on the other end! This chain prop of the "human comedy" connecting the two poles throws us countless question marks as heavy as a hammer.

Zhang said with a conscious sense of social responsibility, "When you peel off the interference of psychedelic barriers layer by layer, what appears in front of you is a naked question mark. What I have to do is to sincerely remove this question mark from the debris of social information dust the inside is revealed in a way." Therefore, the thousands of needles pierced in her installation works are "pulled" from the hearts of different victims. She pays attention not only to her own mind and body, but also to the social responsibility of an artist, which makes her aware of the connection between the individual and the fate of women as a whole, think sadly and speak freely and thoroughly.

Regarding Zhang's series of works "0-Viewpoint" (0-Viewpoint), I especially feel the taste of the "0" logo. Maybe she also uses the shape of "0" to identify female characteristics.

After the "0-Viewpoint" series, her "single feeling" towards the special connotation of individuals and women has moved towards a "synesthetic" concern for reality and the ultimate concern for human beings. "Questioning cultural contexts, value systems, and power structures." "I feel like I'm in a mixed and peculiar 'historical retrogression'. Mind and body are overrun by unnatural violence, and their situation is like overlapping eggs that could be at any moment. collapsed and shattered." Works such as "The Pen That Can't Be Written, The Book That Can't Be Read" are her deep concern for the society; she is worried that the world is like "stripping hexagrams" and is like overlapping eggs that could be at any moment collapsed and shattered and she thinks deeply and shout out sincerely.

We can feel that her character has both the "wind" of feminine delicate sentiment and the "bones" of men's intellectual thinking and desire to carry the power of society.

From the work "0-Viewpoint" (0-Viewpoint) series to the work " Overlapping as Eggs", a vector illustration of her artistic creation is constructed.

"The living environment, code of conduct, power relationships, etc. are all my thinking issues. To talk about influence, I feel that I have been " reshaped ". I have been

wandering overseas for decades, and I deeply feel that my heart has gradually become independent, calm, even fearless. For me, the baptism of different cultures is a rich gift, a gift of life.” Perhaps I had some similar experiences with Teacher Zhang, and I felt kindly resonated and enlightened about this self-talk she experienced under the moonlight when the lights were turned off, and it was especially made clear for me.

People who have experienced crying late at night are generally low-key and calm, and their hearts are strong. This is the tempering of the heart and doesn't work hard for feelings. Understand not to be tired of emotions, but to rationalize emotions. Although Zhang's work is heavy and dripping blood, they are not at a loss of witty, poignant, and romantic elements.

In "token", the once existing "you" that has been turned into handwriting is connected by a thin and long iron wire that does not let it weather, and who at the other end has been bleached, dilapidated and embrittled. It may be a token that cannot be sent out temporarily, because "a sea has been dug out of the body, and there is no such person." Then let it form in the clear stream of the work, like a small boat, with the crisp sound of a paddle, the stream sails to the exhibition hall, and the "private site" will be stored in the exhibition hall forever.

Talk about the methodology of metaphysics and start with a “Positive Method ” go deep-draining this special topic of women ; Then, then women they hope will eventually be able not to say, “Sorrow for objects” but not addicted to sorrow and return object image and the finally “Negative Method”.

On the heavy topics of human society, “ If there is no sustenance, it will not be written, and if there is a sustenance, people will not see it”.

02-2022 Amy Zhou