

Peter Hagan: | 沪艺术 展评
Peter Hagan: | HuArts/ Review
2017
胶囊上海 | Capsule Shanghai



Since beginning to exhibit her work, Alice Wang only has one name for her exhibitions: *The Earth Is Plummeting Towards The Sun While Just Missing It*.

“Why is this the only exhibition title you have ever used?”

“The reason why I believe we are plummeting to our death but at the same time we are not is because I prefer to leave the social, I prefer being alone. I find human nature to be quite oppressive.”

“So is this interview something you’d rather not do?”

“Well, I think a little bit. I don’t want to completely give everything away through interaction. I do want the challenge to say something but not say anything... My challenge is to get the art critic to find their own language, not in service of something else.”

In the furthest room in Capsule Gallery a perfect three-dimensional rectangle stands over two meters high murmuring softly. Its surface is smooth and dull, made of beeswax, but the yellow color is loud in the white room and the shape dominates the space. At eye level, a hole punched through the rectangle shoots a column of gentle wind.

“Wind has always been something I wanted to work with... The physical limits of the sculpture don’t end at it’s visible limits,” Alice says. “I ‘see’ the other shape jumping out of the structure.” Indeed, the piece affects the space around it, and ‘seeing’ its invisible influence isn’t done through sight.

Alice Wang’s work does not rely on sight so much as she does on a person’s intuition. That said, Alice’s work is not easy to access, but it raises worthwhile questions about what art should be. I know what you think, I have thought it too: “intuition” sounds meaningless and like a good way to avoid responsibility over your art. I disagree. True, Alice is reticent to explain her art: her work does not contain titles; her exhibitions are unnamed; the gallery does not include descriptions about her work. But the anonymity of the work does not mean there is no purpose. Alice herself said to me during our interview, “I really don’t think of art as a communication device. Art is an experience... I didn’t want any linguistic scaffolding. I wanted to throw

you into the experience and have you make sense of it on your own. Whatever you get out of it is what it is; I don't think it is important for the audience to get it right away."

Making sense of Alice's work is our job, yours and mine. She is asking a lot from us but it is a worthwhile task because it helps us understand a fundamental question: What is art? This means, what are art's limitations?

So what do we make of Alice's artwork?

"I might be part of a group of artists who do not think art is a referential thing, pointing to something else. The artwork itself is a being." Indeed, Alice's work is kinetic and moves independent from human intervention. For example, the copper patina has an entropic kinesis, seen as brown dust flaking from the surface to reveal a blue sea beneath. The "movement" is a temporal one, consciously put in to motion but given the freedom to move on its own through time. Other pieces, like the mimosa and the moss have different degrees of kinetic force. The patina has an entropic kinesis, degrading over time, while the mimosa pudica and moss move in the opposite direction, growing and reacting to immediate environmental stimuli.

"Sculpture evokes the haptic senses, where you want to touch it but you can't feel it. It is very sensual."

All of the pieces denote some degree of kinesis. The work included in the Capsule exhibition is associated with the progressive changes in sculpture, from static to dynamic, from controlled to autonomous, from dead to living.

And what do we make of Alice herself? I liken an artist to being a researcher of specific concepts, concepts that attempt to understand humans in a metaphysical sense.

Alice runs a very high risk of being called pretentious or exclusionary because her art does not portray meaning, exists in incoherence, and is not concerned in helping the audience understand the message. This is where the message lies. Can you imagine exposing yourself to people you don't know so they can tell you, "your work and life are nonsense"? Alice's purpose is to examine this "zone" of being. She creates work that is meant to live on its own, outside of meaning and she herself enters in this hostile place.

Alice gives no names to her work and once they are finished the author is dead.

She quickly gives up her autonomy over the work and is rewarded with anonymity while we, the viewers, approach with skepticism, wary that the art is inaccessible. Alice embraces this.

"When you walk into the show you are working into my interior. It is where I want to live." She creates and the art exists. That is Alice's approach to art, and she is brave for it.

In 1947, Jean-Paul Sartre visited the famous sculptor Alexander Calder's studio. He was struck by the intensity of the work that straddled an immovable servant and the independence of nature, "...It captures genuine living movements and shapes them. 'Mobiles' have no meaning, make you think of nothing but themselves. They are, that is all." Are we also able to let the art exist for the sake of existence? Does Alice's art imitate her life, or does her life imitate her art?



王凝慧自开始展出作品起，对自己展览的只有一个命名“地球朝着太阳飞速坠落，却又与之擦肩而过。”

“这是您唯一使用过的展览标题，能谈谈为什么吗？”

“我相信我们正在急速坠入死亡，但同时又离它还远，这样想的原因是我倾向于远离社交生活，更喜欢一个人待着。我觉得人性很使人压抑。”

“所以这次采访你也宁愿回避吗？”

“对，还是有一点想回避的。我不想通过这样的互动把自己完全交付出去。我确实需要挑战来让自己表达些什么，但又不想说得太太多。我的挑战是让艺术评论家找到他们自己的语言，而不是服务于他物。”

在胶囊上海最里侧的房间里，是一块两米多高的完美三维立方体，在柔声低语。它由蜜蜡制成，表面光滑滞重，在白房间里呈喧闹的明黄色，这一形状主导了整个空间。与视线齐平的位置有一个圆孔击穿柱体，透进来温柔的风。

“我一直想用风进行创作……雕塑虽然有物理界限，但不会在肉眼可见的边界结束，”王凝慧说，“我看到更多的形态从雕塑中跳出来。”这幅作品确实影响了周围的空间，仅凭视力无法“看见”它无形的影响力。

王凝慧的作品与其说是靠视觉，不如说更多靠一个人的直觉。这意味着她的作品难以被感知，但提出了艺术应该以何种形态呈现，这样颇有意义的问题。我知道你的疑惑是什么，我也想过：“直觉”听起来毫无意义，貌似逃避对艺术负责的一种好办法。但我不同意这种说法。诚然，王凝慧拒绝解释自己的作品：她的作品不设标题，展览没有命名，画廊对她的作品也没有介绍。

但作品的无名并不意味着它没有目的。采访期间，王凝慧曾对我说，"我确实不认为艺术是一种交流的工具。艺术是一种体验.....我并不希望用任何语言来堆砌。我想把人抛入体验之中，让你独自去感受它。你能悟得到什么自有定论，我想也不必让观众立刻读懂。"

理解王凝慧的作品是观者、你和我、每一个人的任务。她向我们抛出了许多的问题，但这个任务值得去做，因为它帮助我们理解一个基本的问题，即艺术是什么？换句话说，艺术的局限性在哪里？"

所以我们能从王凝慧作品中了解到什么呢？

"我可能属于那一类艺术家，认为艺术不具有指示作用，不指向他物。艺术作品本身就是一种存在。"确实，王凝慧的作品是动态的，作品的运动不受人为干涉。例如，铜锈是一种熵的运动，棕褐色粉末从表层剥落，露出下方的蓝色海洋。这一"运动"是暂时的，被人有意识地启动，但又自主地随时间变化。其它的作品如《含羞草》和《青苔》则表现出运动的不同力量。铜锈属于一种熵的运动，随时间的流动而被侵蚀，但含羞草和青苔的运动却是朝着相反的方向，生长和反应都能即使应对外界的刺激。

"雕塑能唤起触觉的感受，你想要触碰它，却无法与之相触，这种感官十分地强烈。"

所有的作品都暗指某种程度的运动。胶囊上海展出的作品与雕塑的渐进变化相关，从静态到动态，从受控到自主，生命从无到有。

我们从艺术家王凝慧本人又能了解到什么呢？我把艺术家比作特殊概念的研究者，这些特殊概念试图从形而上学的意义上理解人类。



王凝慧冒着很高的风险，她很有可能被认为是矫饰做作或是排他，因为她的艺术没有描绘任何的意义，作品的存在没有相关性，也丝毫不能帮助观者了解作品传达的信息，而这就是意义存在的地方。你能想象把自己暴露在陌生人面前，任由他们告诉你，"你的作品和生活都是荒谬可笑的"？王凝慧的目的就是要检验这个存在的"区域"。她创造的作品注定要靠自身求存，独立于意义之外，她只身进入了这个充满敌意的领域。王凝慧虽然没有给作品命名，但作品完成之后，作者便消失了。

她果断放弃了对作品的自主性，却得到了匿名的奖励，王凝慧接受我们作为观者提出的怀疑，担心无法理解艺术。

"当你走进展厅，便是在我的内心做功。这是我希望的居所。"艺术家创造，艺术便存在，这就是王凝慧大胆的艺术方式。

1947年，让·保罗·萨特参观了著名雕塑家亚历山大·考尔德的工作室。他被那件跨坐姿势仆人雕塑的张力和独立个性所震撼，"这件作品抓住了生动真实的运动瞬间，将它们塑形。"运动"这个词本身没有意义，只能让你想起运动的状态。这件作品就是这样。"我们也能让艺术为了存在而存在吗？是王凝慧的艺术模仿了生活，还是她的生活模仿了艺术呢？

沪艺术是一个艺术平台，涉及领域包括举办艺术相关的活动、撰写深度展评和联系在中国的艺术家。

翻译：ARTranslate