

"IRRELEVANT" or "MEANINGFUL"? - RGB.

-The Reviews of Three Chelsea MAFA's China Off-Site Exhibition

"This is an exhibition title that can easily lead to misunderstanding and discussion."

The exhibition's name, RGB, is derived from the three primary colors of light, where R stands for Red, G for Green and B for Blue¹. In the digital world, RGB mode, as an additive model, is standardization of colors. Various color systems produced by superimposed and mixing the three basic colors of red, green and blue in different ratios are often referred to as RGB mode.

Does that mean that the core of the exhibition is to focus on color? This would require knowing what color is, and how to understand color. By definition, color is a visual effect on light produced by the integrated response of the eye, brain and life experience. At the same time, it is also a form element that can arouse our aesthetic pleasure. Color is an important element in the art world. It can express emotions and directly affect the feelings of the recipient. In representation art, colors can reproduce objects and create the effect of an illusion of space. Color can be understood as a set of visual language systems containing emotions, which is in an unstable state due to its rich changes.



Meilun Art Museum · Shengzhi Space (Beijing)

¹ RGB Definition, accessed 31 July 2021, <https://www.shutterstock.com/blog/rgb-definition-design-work>

Does color only exist in the visual representation received by the viewer? In Newton's color theory, color exists independently of human existence, it is "objective"². Goethe believed that color should also be "subjective" and produced in consciousness³. In the theory of color ontology, the problem of color properties is discussed, that is, whether they belong to the physical properties of objects or the properties of colors themselves. Although the discrimination of color is a kind of visual nerve sensing, it cannot be completely dependent on physiological functions to describe color. For example, the concept of "color synesthesia" is an associative perceptual response caused by interaction in the process of color perception⁴. It is great significance for the exploration of the inner spiritual quality and attributes of color, as well as the enhancement and expansion of the visual language system of color. Since it can exist at the level of consciousness, words cannot express the exact characteristics of consciousness experience or feelings. Color can also be understood as a kind of emotional prompt, a kind of political clue, a communication tool and so on. On the contrary, some things and phenomena can also be endowed with certain color properties under the promotion of synesthesia. These assigned color attributes can refer to a field, or a mood, or a practice.

In this exhibition, the audience may not be able to see the obvious and figuratively represented visual color classification of red, green and blue. In this exhibition, the works of young artists Yalin Cao, Dingyi Feng and Dan Wang are respectively given three different color

attributes, which are presented in an "invisible color" form. The three artists have different artistic styles and research directions, but when combined, like the RGB color pattern, an infinite number of possibilities can be created.

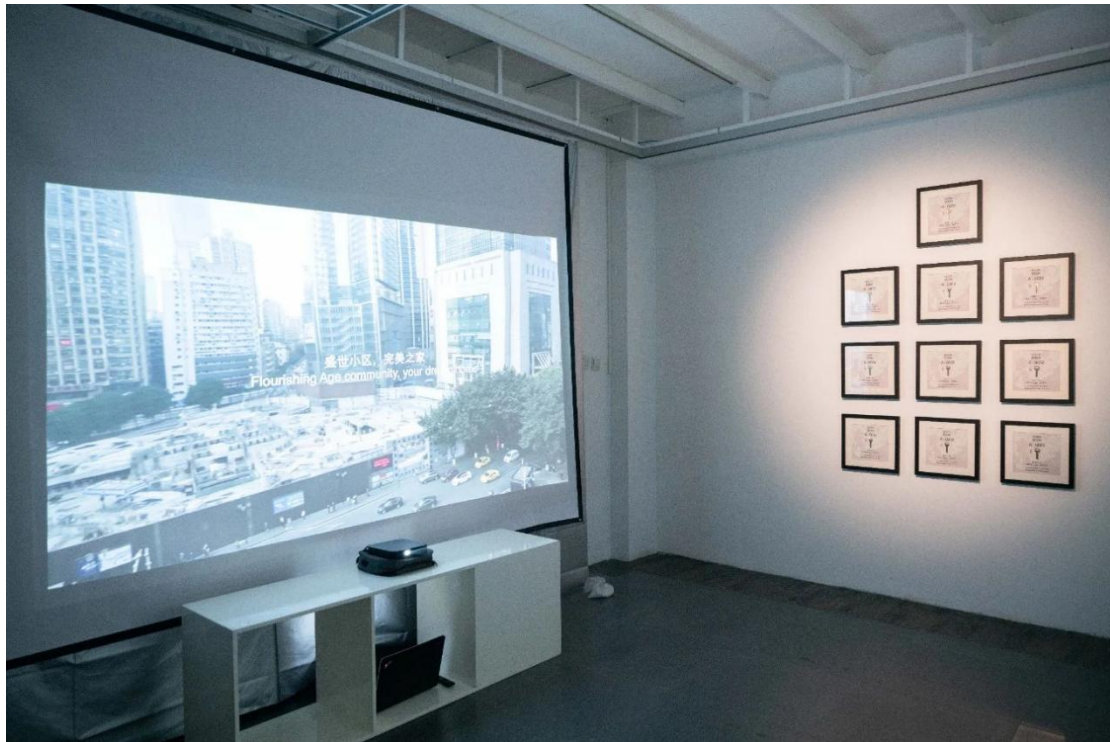
R: Hot and intense, extreme and dangerous-Dan Wang

Young artist Dan Wang's works are endowed with the attribute of Red. Most of her works focus on the reflection of social issues. They are from the unique perspective of her own growth experience and real experience. A kind of enthusiasm and focus burst out from the inside out can be reflected through the video images and easel works in this exhibition. Such extreme emotion and rise to the legal and moral exclusion of social issues, and the same as the color attribute of red. Wang Dan's works cannot be seen in the exhibition hall. The audience's exploration of her works and Dan's exploration of social practice seem to happen coincidentally in the exhibition, and they all continue to explore and practice in a vague and uncertain environment.

² Guerlac, can there be colors in the dark? Physical color theory before Newton. *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 1986, 3-20.

³ How do colors affect us? The origins of colors psychology. accessed 2 August 2021, <https://abcofcolors.xyz/page/theory-of-goethe>

⁴ Roman, Color Ontology and Color Synesthesia, McMaster University (Doctoral dissertation), 2016.



Title: Dream Home

Artist: Dan Wang

Independent in the space outside the square white cube exhibition hall, the integrated image installation Dream Home is played alone. In the course of China's development, people have a special obsession with certain things. The object itself and its related sum can be regarded as a symbol of social membership, but more importantly, the selection of the object also depends on the overall structure of the environment in which the object is constructed, and the activity structure of the related behaviors⁵. This object is the house. With such an important element, who would not want to acquire the dream home that belongs to them? Some perfect homes that seem to be created by perfect propaganda films and language really exist in reality, or are they just castles in dreams? Does the key in the decorative painting open the door to the dream home? Whether it is a dream home or an unfinished project, it is clear in Wang Dan's works. Likewise, the video work "Ji Qing Temple" also uses virtual scenic spots to reflect the issues of antique architectural scenic spots in social practice. Cultural monuments, ancient buildings under lies and virtual scenic spots that do not exist in reality are intertwined, causing the viewer to think deeply. Influenced by Bourdieu's theory, Wang Dan's social practice tries to overcome the opposition between subjectivism and objectivism. She not only sees society objectively from the outside, but also focuses on understanding society from individual cognition and action⁶. She can be called an experimenter who reflects social practice and social ecology through art noumenon.

⁵ Baudrillard, For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign, *Verso Books*, 2019.

⁶ Qiang, Interpretation of Bourdieu's Social practice View, Jilin University (Master thesis), 2012.



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Wang Dan's social practice and reflection also give rise to a series of questions: how can contemporary art reflect the reality of our time? Such as the reality of daily life, the reality of society and its existence in the entanglement and contradiction. Where is its critical value embodied? And how to match creative actions with the objective meaning they have for them will be a question worth thinking about.

G: The rhythm of calm-Yalin Cao

What comes to mind when you come to "Green"? Plants, nature, vitality, environmental protection, sustainability...

Green, the most common color in nature, has been given many cultural connotations, including the reference to life force. In Varela's concept of autopoietic systems, he seeks to define an emerging uniqueness that can produce life in its most basic cellular form. It's only relevant at the cellular level⁷. A cyclic process or network produces a contradiction: a self-organizing network of biochemical interactions produces the mole. Their function is clear and unique: to create a boundary, a membrane, and to constrain the network of components that produces it. It is a logically self-expanding system that forms a loop: a network produces entities that create boundaries, and such entities constrain the network that creates boundaries. This self-malleability is what makes cells unique. Only when the self-propagating system is complete can a self-differentiated entity exist. Yalin Cao 's "Micro" series of digital paintings is to show the boundless vitality contained in calm through the cells and textures of plants. They go round and round, wild in nature; Mysterious and abstract, they have an energy that connects us to the unknown. This power pulls the viewer

⁷ Lee Hengwei and Xu Yi, From Biological Autopoiesis to Social Autopoiesis, accessed 2 August 2021, http://www.cssn.cn/zh/xz_kxjszx/201408/t20140827_1305852.shtml

out of the present time and space, into the most primitive cell micro universe, where they can feel the rhythm from the vitality. The life force bursting out in the micro world is extremely easy to bring people into another field of thinking, where time will freeze and stop, so that people can ponder for a long time.



Title: "Micro" series

Artist: Yalin Cao

"Listen to her" is a striking installation composed of flowers in a transparent box. Viewed from a distance, this work lies quietly in the exhibition hall, calm and solemn. It seems to be a farewell ceremony for the irreparable loss of ecology and the lost gifts of nature, and it seems to be moved into the flower cultivation base of the art museum. However, as you approach them slowly, you will hear a whisper in your ear. In this installation, Cao has given each flower a different sound and character. The sounds are subtle and can only be heard when you get close to them. Maybe it's calling for help, or showing off its beautiful appearance, or sniggering, or sobbing. Are they alive? Is it the object speaking, or is it just the voice of the machine? These flowers with character are embedded in the concrete living world, and the whole rich meaning of the living world responds to it. When they begin to speak, they subjectify themselves, and does this cross the line of continuous movement between inner and outer⁸?

⁸ Slavoj Žižek, *organs without bodies: on Deleuze and consequences* [Slovenia], Wu Jing Nanjing University Press. 2019.



Title: Listen to her

Artist:Yalin Cao

B: It exists on the boundary of nothingness-Dingyi Feng

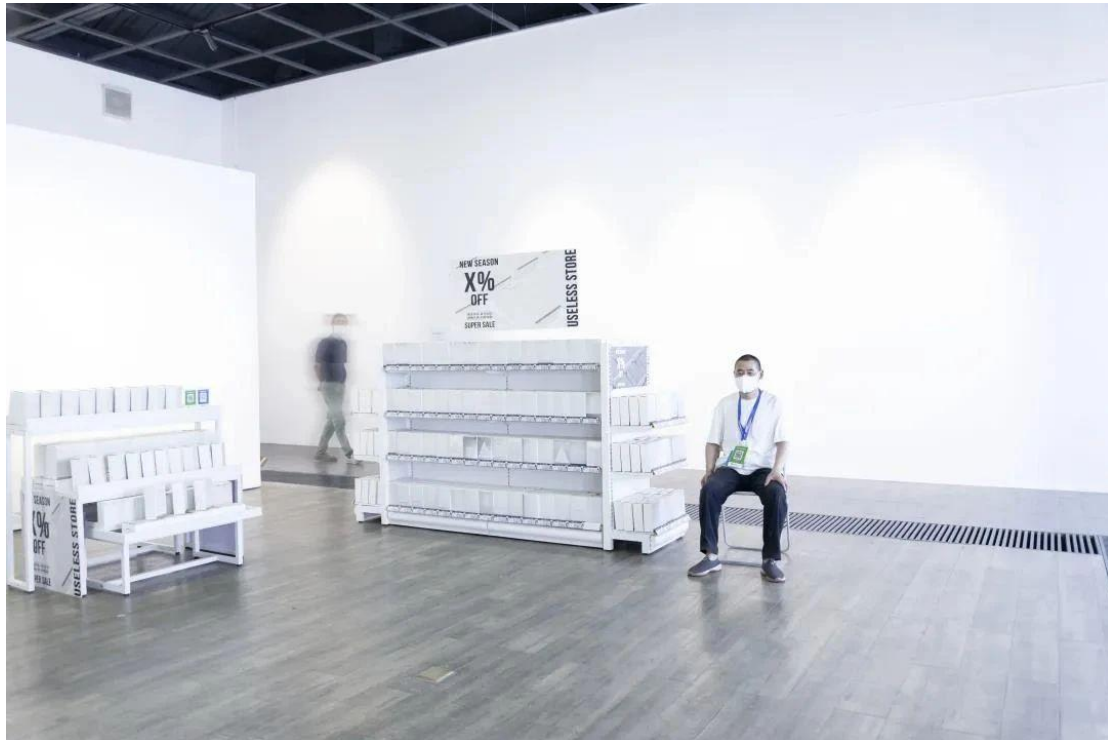
Blue is the most resonant color for human beings. It represents not only the depth and infinity of nature, but also a metaphor for emotional and psychological states. It is the driving force that leads human beings to cross reality and step into the realm of imagination. It exists in desire, distance, and the unknown. The blue world is physical and visible, but it is also nihilistic and abstract. Because it is not at the end of the endless distance, but blurred in the boundary between and the end. In 1957, Yves Klein brought "Klein blue" to the artistic horizon. The whole picture is nothing but blue. When we face this blue space, the inner mood is rhythmical, calm, but also a little sad, not despair, with some distant expectations⁹.

Most of the young artist Dingyi's projects are about the elaboration of the visual logic between the real and the virtual, as well as the deconstructing and blurring of the opposition between the virtual and the real. The work on display, "Useless Store", comes from Dingyi's collection and reproduction of images related to painting in the electronic space. From the perspective of iconography proposed by Michel Foucault, art history itself is the product of the transition of early paintings based on photography and mechanical reproduction of images¹⁰. With the end of postmodernism, the painting turned to images, and as elements of consciousness, the indelibility of images may continue to symbolize the construction of the human world. The alternation of digital technology and modernist science gives birth to the world picture system based on image production. It is not difficult to analyze, the large

⁹ Barker, Features: Sublime Klein. *Art Monthly (Archive: 1976-2005)*, (183), 3, 1995.

¹⁰ Olsson, M. R, Michel Foucault: discourse, power/knowledge, and the battle for truth. *Leckie, Gloria J*, 63-74, 2010.

number of internet-based art image transmissions and the current popularity of NFT has become an example of Picture Act or Bildakt proposed by Horst Bredekamp¹¹. Based on this background, Dingyi found a method system based on virtual image transformation to discuss some induced rules and order between electronic space and real image.



Title: Useless store
Artist: Dingyi Feng

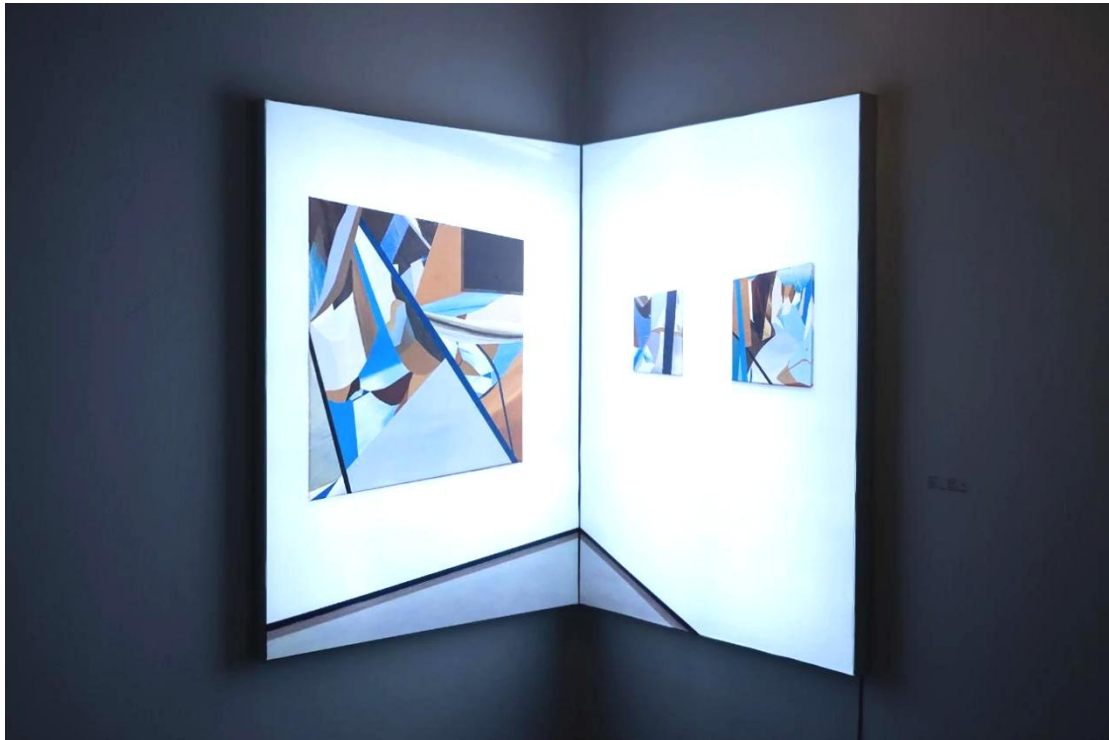
Dingyi initially intended to create an absurd and artificial micro narrative scene, it starting from (productivism) based on artistic production oriented "manufacturing". She chose the image properties box products, and product packaging includes image products, after the pixel scale, QR Code and HTML hypertext markup language, which may be some sort of electronic age response to J. Kosuth one and three chairs¹². The uselessness of empty white-box products is a reflection of the convergence of images in the white cube space. She tends to output the mediating power between one reality and another, as described by Baudrillard, into some form of expression with social activity output and institutional space criticism. Dingyi has been trying to explore this junction between finished products and ready-made, fictional and real matter. The final works form of the exhibition is mainly supermarket shelves and promotion tables, placed in the center of the exhibition hall, and accompanied by a specific sales mode as a display of on-site behavior.

Ding Yi's unique and interesting works have become a fascinating landscape in the exhibition. The artist is not only displaying her latest creations, but also showing her own working

¹¹ Bredekamp, H, *Bildakt* (pp. 25-34), De Gruyter, 2017.

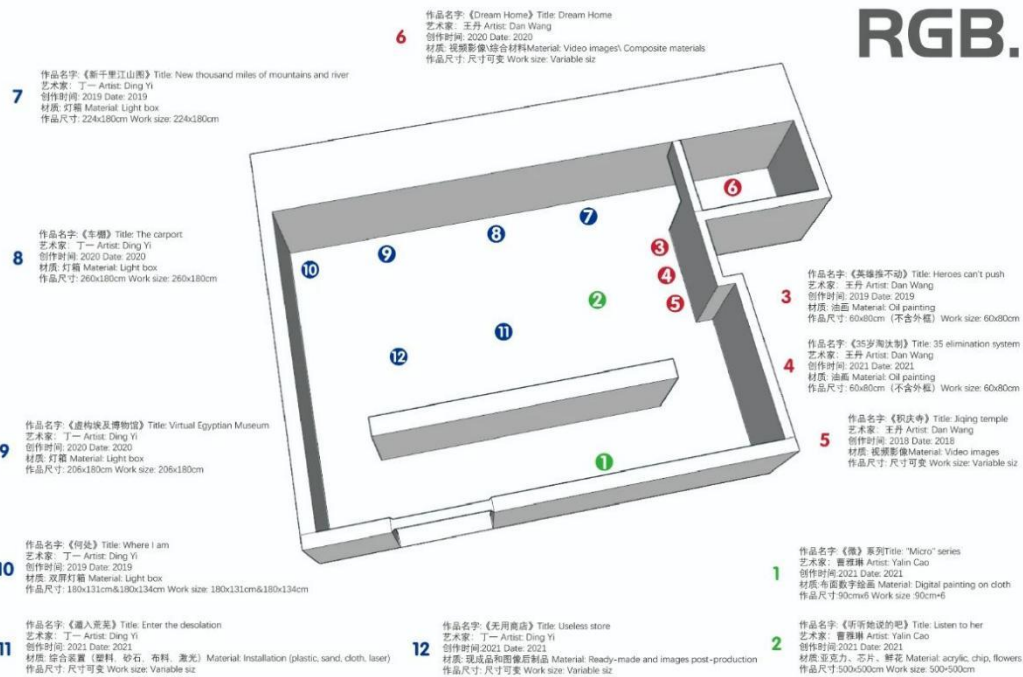
¹² One and three chairs, MoMa learning, accessed 2 August 2021, https://www.moma.org/learn/moma_learning/joseph-kosuth-one-and-three-chairs-1965/

methods and explaining the origin of her creations and images in the form of exhibitions. This kind of self-deconstruction is similar to the deconstruction of objects in exhibitions. On the one hand, it points to the outside of itself, on the other hand, it points to itself.



Title: Where I am
Artist: Dingyi Feng

Perhaps in this exhibition, you will feel annoyed and angry because there is no clear distinction between RGB colors, but perhaps this text can help you to have a deeper understanding of the invisible RGB colors. Here we will see wang Dan's works, which are given red meaning and reflect social practice; Cao Yalin's works, which are green meaning and highlight nature ecology and vitality; and Dingyi Feng's works, which are blue color meaning and discuss the boundary between virtual and reality. This is such a unique and profound exhibition. The combination of the three artists seems to have no connection, but it is connected by the relationship of color meaning. It is located in Meilun Art Museum, 798 Art District, Beijing, China. Welcome to view this exhibition. Wish you a pleasant visit to the exhibition.



RGB.

Exhibition Site View

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