

Demystified mythology

“Astronomers have found the first evidence that dark matter interacts with forces other than gravity.”

The night before writing, I read an article in the news (the title is quoted above) on the official webpage of James Cook University in Australia. The report said that the scientists had grasped solid evidence proving that dark matter interacts with forces other than gravity. Traditional understanding, the “truth” to be more precise, has been dominating the rights of speech, bestowing orthodoxy and sovereignty to gravity, which is believed to control the universe. Neglected visually, this being, called as “dark,” exists elsewhere, creating its own mystic atmosphere. In English, things are either black or white, communicating positive meanings. A “dark force” implies a righteous and subtle force.

Yet, the news confronting us attempted to remind us that the excludability of such a force was being challenged. Here, we have no intention to agree or disagree with the news, which is not the key point. The key is that we are sure that exploring facts beyond the truth by thinking out of the box, much like a mirror, reflects our thinking, thus opening up the possibility of self-criticism. Doubtless, it is a notice, reminding us to explore the possibilities of surpassing ourselves in our actual day to day performance and practice.

Coincidentally, such ideals are in consensus with the representation that is attempting to be displayed in this exhibition: an attempt to keep an alternative and external perspective, i.e. seeing beyond the boundary of dualism. Constructing a platform for equal conversation, thus enabling us to fathom and study the relationship of intersubjectivity.

First, we should not avoid an “exaggerating” and “flattering” narrative. In fact, the mythic and contagious art experience of each piece of jewellery, from conception to production, is worthy of appreciation and veneration by each viewer. It coincides with the contemporary spirit – the priority of creativity, which well recognized by the general public.

Indeed, we must face the conditions of existence of contemporary jewellery in Asia, including Hong Kong. Without optimism, what is the subtle internal force that drives young artists to strike a balance between survival and development by taking the traditional understanding of “absurd” and, by strict analysis and thinking, transform it into unique and precise wearable forms? Contributing their hearts and hands, they rehearse a wonderful evolution in materials.

The process always hides behind a work. Due to the limitation of words, I am unable to explain it in detail. From the bits and pieces, we can still gaze into the matter: these young artists are all familiar with human nature. No matter if they are innocent or sophisticated works, they are the fruits of wisdom. For example, the artists noticed the dinner tables of the Cantonese people. They

often eat a fish in most meals. Its fresh and juicy flesh is intended to nurture the elderly and junior people, who are respected and protected respectively, in the family, communicating the traditional ideal of family. In most families, there are many people who faithfully follow traditions. The artist is inspired by “slicing the fish meat,” trying to create an independent and yet inter-dependent condition. Choosing colors in accordance with the media, she uses a translucent yellow substance to project a warm and sunny social atmosphere. With jewellery as its carrier, like allegories, the artist tries to depict the profound and fresh cultural implications of “seeing the cosmos in sand” and reaching understanding more from a microscopic viewpoint. Through art, it is able to transform abstract ideas into reality, giving them an unnamable but infinite character. At the same time, this ability to transform stone into gold seems to be full of magic, the magic to extract ourselves from the numbness of mediocrity in daily life.

Second, by distilling the best from the best, as a kind of material, I have no intention of separating jewellery from its innate functions and commercial properties. The reason: by taking away its halo, it is also an ordinary piece. Although the certain differences between man-made pieces and mass productions are indubitably existed. As to our understanding, contemporary jewellery strikes a perfect balance between a constructed system and an internalized system, coinciding with both norms harmoniously. It is reason and logic.

With the introduction of various contexts, in fact, it gives the works a possibility of falling into what is commonplace. Growing within the system foretells chances and challenges. Hong Kong has shouldered the burden of being a “cultural desert” for a prolonged period of time. However, it is amazing to root and sprout in this desert, locating the genes of culture. When I was a child, I heard a voice, telling allegories – the desert is transformed into an oasis; and the fool has moved the mountain away. Doubtless, the internal drive behind all these is so miraculous beyond words. It is mythic to say that I want to be alone, survive and flourish, and get away from the reality and system. Artists should always remind themselves that they are “art workers”, a professional role that is far from being legendary, it is highly practical. Yet there is the immanent charm of being surreal.

On this occasion, all the artists in this exhibition were born after the 1990s. Choosing art as their profession, they have to face the existing values that can hardly be evaluated objectively in a short time. Some of them may have family burdens and social stress. Such phenomena are rather extreme in a highly commercial society like Hong Kong. Nevertheless, it is something we should treasure. When they were receiving enlightenment education, they were so fortunate to be supervised by a renowned German artist, Franz Bette, who facilitated them build up solid concepts and professionalism. More importantly, he enlightened them to explore the essential value of the existence as a living being. Immersed and in such a condition, with parallel running programmes, they completed their art training at the Hong Kong Design Institute and Sheffield Hallam University. Undergoing systematic training, these “kids” gathered a force with action. With practice, they have

dared to face nothingness. Endeavoring to do their best, they serve as exemplars of culture.

In the days of reaping, they encounter another opportunity. With the consent of Ubi, they were provided with the chance and space for exhibition and promotion. Within the system, surpassing the myth, they are writing the fable of new jewellery. For us, it is another way of sublimating the implications of art works, ensuring its smooth applicability. When a melon is ripe, it falls. When water flows, the duct is done. It is no longer a myth. At the same time, it adds more philosophical implications and tacit “new tonality” to the mythology in the tradition. Titled “The Matter Myth,” it articulates the physical and the natural, the independent and interdependent properties of matter and art.

At this point, I would like to express my gratitude to Ubi Gallery in Beijing and its outstanding leader—Machtelt Schelling, whose promotion and support of this exhibition is notably valuable. Ubi has been playing a significant role in the promotion of contemporary jewellery art in Asia. In recent years, it endeavors to help young Asian talents in fulfilling their ideals by offering help and support. Nine young Hong Kong artists are honored to present their fables in late spring and early summer, the season for things to flourish, in the space of Ubi in Beijing. There they are going to interact with Asian viewers vividly and positively.

Regarding the contemporary jewellery, should we deconstruct the myth or construct more possibilities beyond the myths? The answer is in your own heart.

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