

Review Media-Dali



Why the long face? K11's new Dali exhibition has its hits and its misses.

★★★★

Does K11's latest blockbuster art exhibition live up to the hype?

It's hard to overstate the impact Salvador Dali's work has had on the world. His body of work has seeped into the mainstream subconscious of popular culture so deeply that it is now regarded with as much reverence as work from the Renaissance masters.

K11 is only too aware of this, and after the runaway success of last year's Monet exhibition they have their targets set on another blockbuster show that will increase the footfall in the otherwise inconsistently busy mall. So far, so good then, as Media-Dali opened at K11 last month to a packed house full of media bods, socialites and other hangers-on. Now the dust has settled after the opening, the real question is, 'Should I go?'

That depends on what you're hoping for. Expecting a similar approach to last year's Monet show, which offered a rare chance to see a sizable number of the master's paintings up close, will lead to disappointment. There is still a chance to see pieces such as 'Gala Contemplating the Mediterranean Sea Which at Twenty Meters Becomes the Portrait of Abraham Lincoln (Homage to Rothko)' from 1976, but a large portion of the exhibition is taken up by magazines.

That's right, magazines. Dali was an active illustrator of magazine covers, adverts and even comic strips, many of which are on show here. There are also numerous magazines which feature the artist himself; Dali was a voracious self-promoter, and his public persona was a perfect match for his art – odd, eccentric and surreal.

It may not be what many of us were expecting, but the exhibition does provide a glimpse into a side of Dali that gets lost behind the hype that surrounds his masterpieces. For that, it's worth a visit. **NJ**

Media-Dali is at chi K11 Art Museum until **February 15 2016**. Tickets are 120RMB.

Review The Last Man

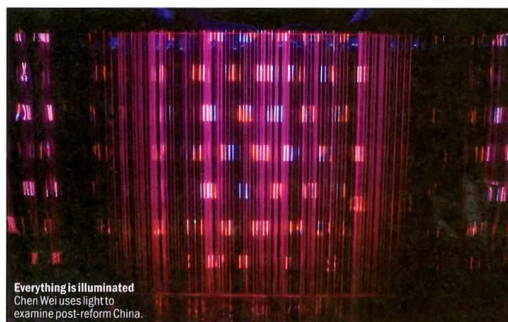
★★★★

Exhibition from Chen Wei muses on China's '90s disco movement

Artist Chen Wei has achieved a rare thing indeed. With his latest exhibition *The Last Man* at Leo Xu Projects, he's hit upon a concept that examines the society in which he lives, and does so with a series of works that are as beautiful as they are thought-provoking.

More precisely, Chen is examining a period of recent history in China. He's looking back to post-reform China in the '90s as things just began to open up, and has tried to recreate the feel of the discos that became an important new area of personal freedom and cultural expression for people in China. Cultural theorists have long held nightclubs and discos as important areas of radical expression – nowhere was this more so than in China in the 1990s as people came into contact with new ideas, new music and new ways of thinking.

In this exhibition, Chen's skill as a photographer is palpable. Like previous exhibitions, many of the photographic works are of scenes that he created in his studio. Among these you will see a photo of an empty nightclub with disco balls resting on the dance floor, a club full



Everything is illuminated
Chen Wei uses light to examine post-reform China.

of people transfixed by a heavenly ray of light, or a collection of empty Tsingtao beer bottles resting on the floor near a concrete pillar.

His use of light is nothing short of exquisite. He combines neon highlights reminiscent of old-school nightclubs, with a striking sense of composition and atmosphere that has us practically begging that he turn his gift to the storytelling medium of film. The club atmosphere is also brought right into the gallery in his piece 'The Drunken Boat (Shanghai)'; an installation on the first floor that features a room made of black tiles bathed in the

iridescent light of flashing LEDs. On the third floor, Chen presents a fabricated archive of the period, with many fake magazine publications that purport to document the cultural movement as it occurred.

Far from just being stylistically impressive however, this exhibition serves to shine a light on an oft-forgotten and overlooked societal phenomenon that both drove, and reflected, the massive changes that were taking place in China at the time. **NJ**

The Last Man is at Leo Xu Projects until **Thursday 31**.

Don't miss



DA VINCI - THE GENIUS

THE HUB, 130-252RMB
Everyone's trying to get on Shanghai's new money train: exhibitions based around the old masters. This large scale exhibition takes place at The Hub near Hongqiao Airport and features 75 life-size reproductions of Da Vinci's inventions. **Tue 8 ▶ Apr 7**

THE BALLAD OF GENERATION Y

OCAT, FREE
Ten of China's most exciting new media artists take over the two exhibition halls at OCAT for the gallery's final exhibition of 2015 (and first of 2016). Among the artists is the very talented Miao Ying, whose work explores internet culture. **Sun 6 ▶ Feb 22**

Death Is Going Home

SHUNART, FREE
Ten years ago, Shanghai-based Frenchman Alexandre Oulary was selling no work in a market of foreign buyers wanting works from Chinese artists. So he adopted the name Tao Hongling and has been pretending to be Chinese ever since. Now selling enough work, he decided to come clean for this exhibition. **▶ Sun 13**

MOVEMENT

ARARIO GALLERY, FREE
Japanese artist Kohei Nawa studied sculpture, but now creates works that include video and painting. One of the standout works from this exhibition is a deer's head made from a variety of different sized glass beads. **▶ Jan 31**

Steinholt

OFOTO GALLERY, FREE
Steinholt is the name of a house in Iceland, that was built by the grandparents of photographer Christopher Taylor's wife. In 2010 Taylor and his wife acquired the house for a cheap price from a family relative – these photos document the area and its history. **▶ Jan 29**



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