

Kaleidoscope Asia, *Liu Shiyuan*, by A. S., Issue 3, Spring & Summer, 2016, P166-177



Liu
Shiyuan

刘诗园

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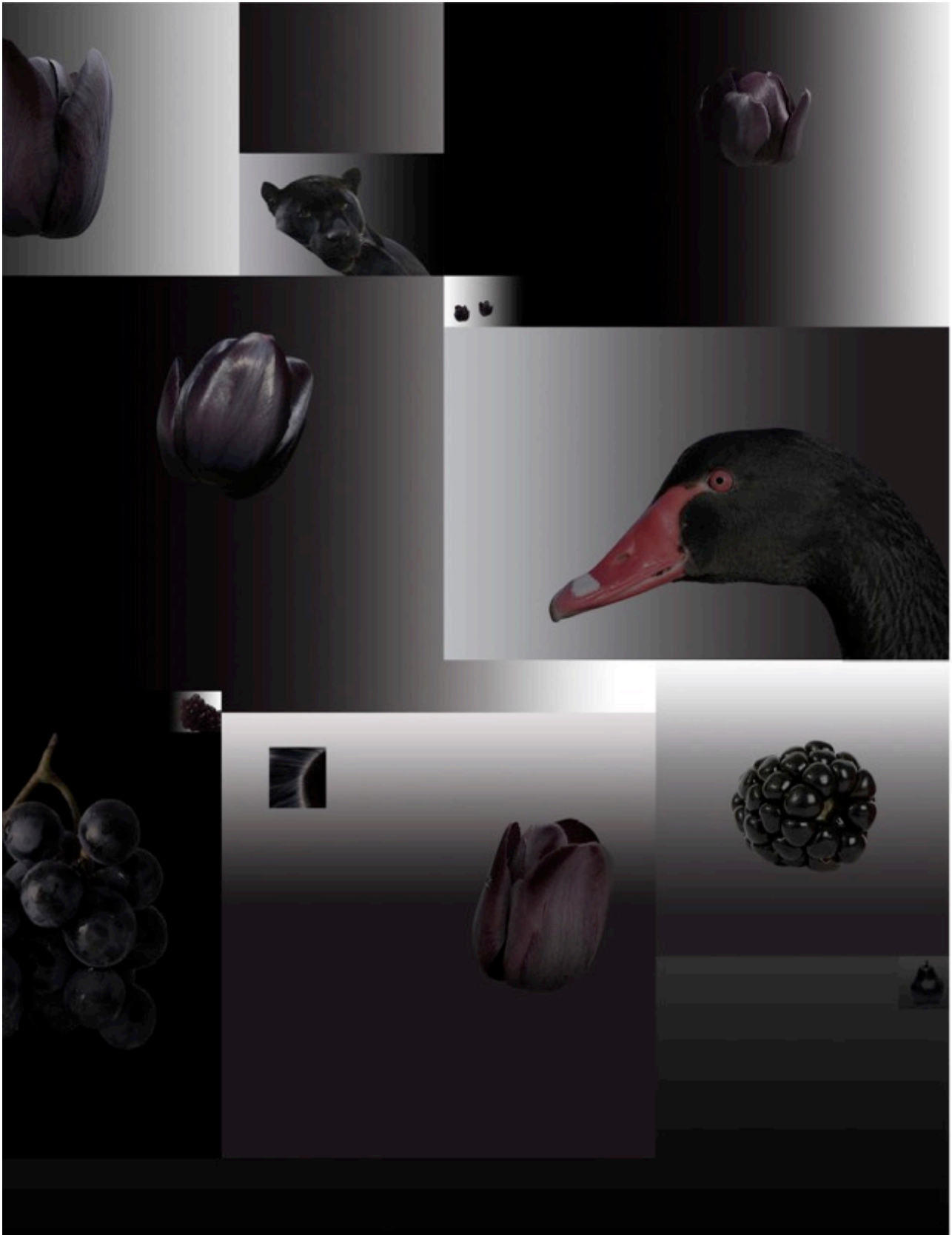
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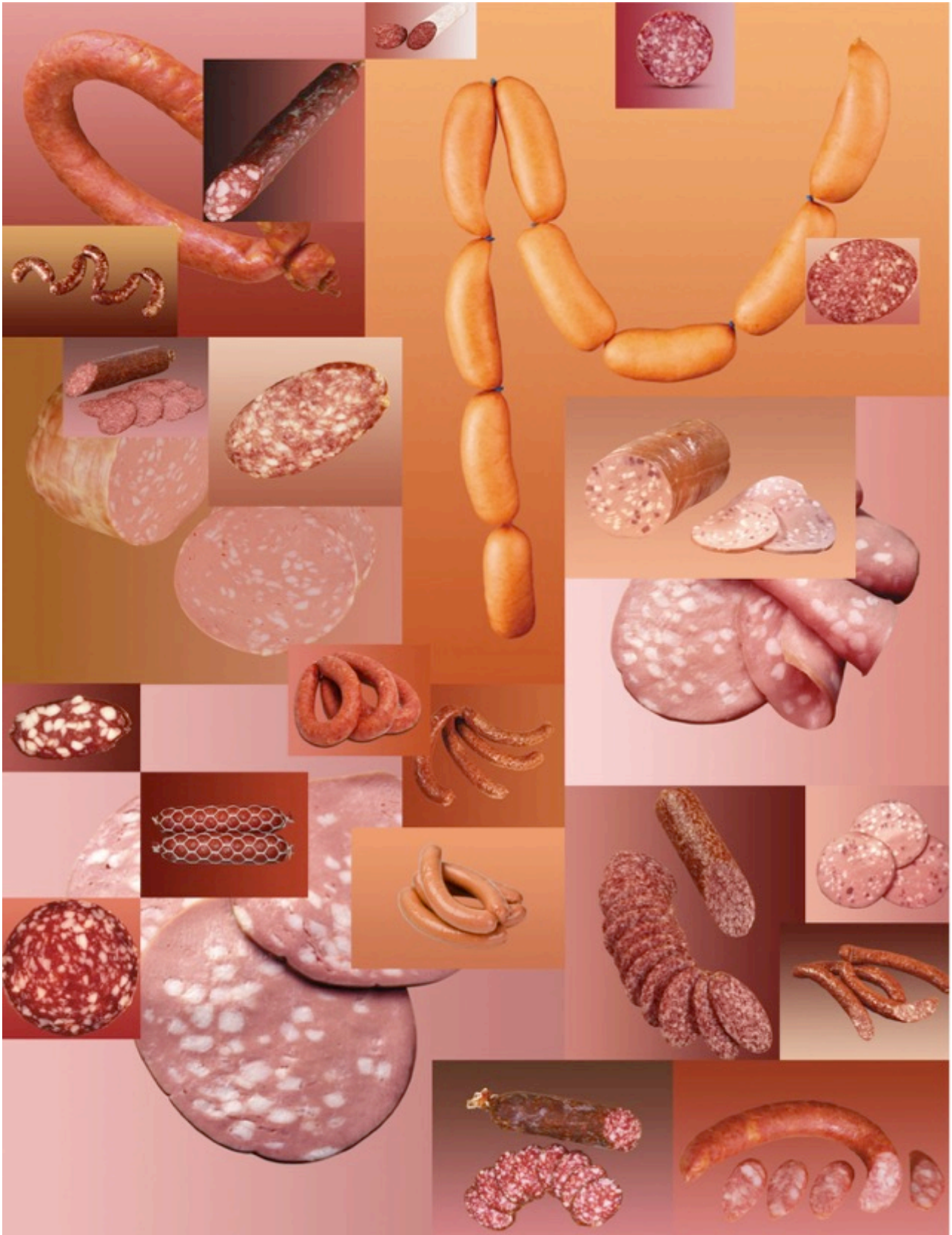
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Interview by Andrew Stooke

AS I'd like to start by talking about *Love Poem*, currently on view as part of the group show "Unordinary Space" at Shanghai Aurora Museum. The work's use of text and language, and the processing of the image material behind the words, seems different from your approach in earlier works. Can you tell us something of how this piece came about?

LS I don't think the piece is so different from my previous work. From the beginning, I've dealt with the value of people's emotion in fictional worlds, and how that bleeds into the real world. The beauty of language is not from what you say, but how you say it. I have long wanted to do something with poetry. It seems to me that poetry, especially love poetry, has been forgotten in modern society. I wanted to bring love poetry into an international, multilingual context, and to bridge the gap between interpersonal emotions from many different cultures and ages.

AS Much of your work is rich in images. *As Simple as Clay*, exhibited at Shanghai Yuz Museum of Contemporary Art, must include about 2500. Although the work originates in thoughts of haptically experiencing these images, they (as in other works) are all indirectly encountered. All of these images must have once "belonged" to someone. How do you feel about the relationship between the image and the experience?

LS *As Simple as Clay* started with the images being isolated individually, removed from their cultural contexts and put into the greater context of the artwork. I translated the word "clay" into several languages and used Google as the universal tool to find images. The result was a breaking down of cultural and geographical borders. The reason why I used Google image search is that I wanted to not only speak for myself. Art should not be a vehicle or funnel for the artist—it should speak from and to more people than the artist.

AS Many works use vibrant color, such as the amazing red stairwell, *OMG Welcome* (2015) in your Leo Xu Projects show, "From Happiness To Whatever." What guides your decisions in choosing colors and their intensities?

LS I have a background in painting; I studied for 15 years before I started my undergrad work. From that, I am very familiar with the effects of color and how to control it, and how to express the comfort of contrasts and brushstrokes. I began using images made with lenses because I started to question my craft as a painter. When you paint, you start with a blank canvas, and everything you do from there is about yourself. Now, I would rather hide my skills as a painter, and instead reflect reality with photos or film. The way I use color is with great respect to the original object.

AS One of my favorite works is *Extreme Deep Field* (2013). It seems to reference Thomas Ruff's photos of deep space, as well as Giorgio Agamben's words on being contemporary ("In an expanding universe, the most remote galaxies move away from us at a speed so great that their light is never able to reach us. What we perceive as the darkness of the heavens is this light that, though traveling toward us, cannot reach us, since the galaxies from which the light originates move away from us at a velocity greater than the speed of light...To perceive, in the darkness of the present, this light that strives to reach us but cannot"), but with a quirky humor. Do you intend the works to be funny as well as profound, or do they just come out that way?

LS I always try to put irony and humor into my works—not blatantly, but hiding just beneath the surface. For me, making these simple images was like a game. I started with a five-by-five-centimeter picture of space and enlarged it to double-size. I then drew very symbolic stars on top of it in Illustrator. The stars resemble the stars on discounted goods at the supermarket more than real stars. I repeated the process of enlarging and drawing until the image was three square meters. In this way I created digital depth, since every time I enlarged the picture, some parts became more pixelated, contrasting the drawing I made on top of it, which was very sharp. In the end, I had artificial space made from a NASA-produced photo of actual space. The result was a bit surprising to me. It turned out to be very beautiful and cerebral, compared to the original photo. ☺

Liu Shiyuan (Chinese, b. 1985) is an artist who lives and works between Beijing and Copenhagen. She is represented by Leo Xu Projects, Shanghai. Her upcoming projects include a solo presentation with Leo Xu Projects at Frieze New York in May. Her work is also featured in the group show "Bentu: Chinese Artists in a Time of Turbulence and Transformation" at Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris.

Andrew Stooke is an artist and educator working in Shanghai and London. He currently leads an experimental art program exploring new models of Sino-foreign cooperation.

访/安德鲁·斯图克

AS 我想从《情诗》（2015）开始谈起，该作品目前正在上海震旦博物馆的《空间三重奏》群展中展出。作品使用了不同语言的文本，而且对文字背后图像进行了处理。这些手法都和你早期作品不太一样。可以谈谈这个作品吗？

LS 我不觉得这件作品和我以前的有多大不同。我的创作一直围绕虚构世界里人的情感价值，以及这种价值如何渗入到真实的世界展开。语言的美并不是你说什么，而是如何说。我一直都想做一些和诗歌有关的作品。对我来说，诗歌，尤其是情诗已经被现代社会所遗忘。我希望将情诗带入一个国际的、多语种的脉络里，成为沟通不同文化、不同年龄之间人际情感的一座桥梁。

AS 你的很多作品都有着丰富的图像。比如在上海余德耀美术馆（2015）展出的《像泥巴一样简单》大概包含了2500张图片。虽然作品呼唤一种触觉体验，但却是间接地被呈现出来。这些图像都曾经“属于”某个人。你是如何理解图像和体验之间的关系？

LS 《像泥巴一样简单》的创作开始于许多各自独立的图片，它们脱离了本来的文化脉络，被重新编进了更大的艺术脉络。我将“泥巴”翻译成不同语言，然后用谷歌，这种世界通用的工具去搜索泥巴的图片，最终的结果是打破了文化和地理的边界。我使用谷歌图片搜索的理由是我不想仅仅表达我自己。艺术不应该只是艺术家的表达媒介或感受渠道，应该为更多人所用。

AS 你喜欢使用明亮鲜艳的颜色，比如Leo Xu Projects举办的个展《从幸福到别的一切》里出现的《OMG Welcome》（2015），出现了一个红得惊艳的楼梯。你靠什么来选择颜色并决定它们强烈的程度？

LS 在大学之前我曾经有过十五年的绘画背景。我十分清楚不同颜色的效果以及如何掌控它们。也知道如何表现令人愉悦的色彩对比和笔触。我开始使用照片是因为我开始质疑绘

画这种工艺。当你在空白的画布上作画时，所有都是关于你个人的表达。如今我更愿意将绘画的技巧隐藏起来而选择用相片或影片反映真实世界。在用色方面，我也总是带着对真实物体的最大尊重去选择。

AS 我个人最喜欢的作品之一是《极度深空》（2013）。它看上去似乎参考了托马斯·鲁夫式的幽深太空，以及阿甘本关于成为当代人的论述（“在不断膨胀的宇宙中，最遥远的星系以一种极快的速度逃离我们，它们的逃离是如此之快以至于它们发出的光线无法抵达我们。被我们觉察为宇宙之黑暗的东西，就是这种无法抵达我们的光线……要在现实的黑暗中觉察这种努力驶向我们但又无法抵达我们的光明”），但带着你自己的幽默。你是有意制造这种效果，还是它自然而然就成了这样？

LS 我一直都尝试将讽刺和幽默融入作品，但不是露骨地，而是隐藏在表面之下的。对我来说，制作这些简单的图像就像做游戏。我从一个5厘米乘5厘米大小的图片开始，放大成双倍尺寸，然后再用Illustrator往上面画小星星——不是真的星星！而是好像超市减价商品标签上的那种简笔画星星。我不断重复这些步骤，直到整个图像有三平米那么大。如此反复下来，一些局部由于被不断被放大而变得模糊，和新画上去的清晰星星形成对比，并最终呈现出一种数码感十足的厚度。我以美国国家航空航天局（NASA）的真实太空照片为摹本，人工做出了一个星空，名字也参考了NASA拍摄到的一颗离地球最遥远的星。完成后的作品相比原始照片更加美丽也更加理性，令我有点意外。

刘诗园，1985年生于中国。现居北京和哥本哈根。Leo Xu Projects [上海] 合作艺术家。

刘诗园的最新作品包括5月在奥克兰纽约世博会的个展（与Leo Xu Projects合作），并于今年2月出现在慈善基金会（巴黎）举办的《本土、潮流和雅安下的中国艺术》群展中。

Andrew Stooke 是一位工作生活于上海和伦敦两地的艺术家、教育工作者。他目前正在领导一项探索中外合作新模式的实验艺术项目。

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