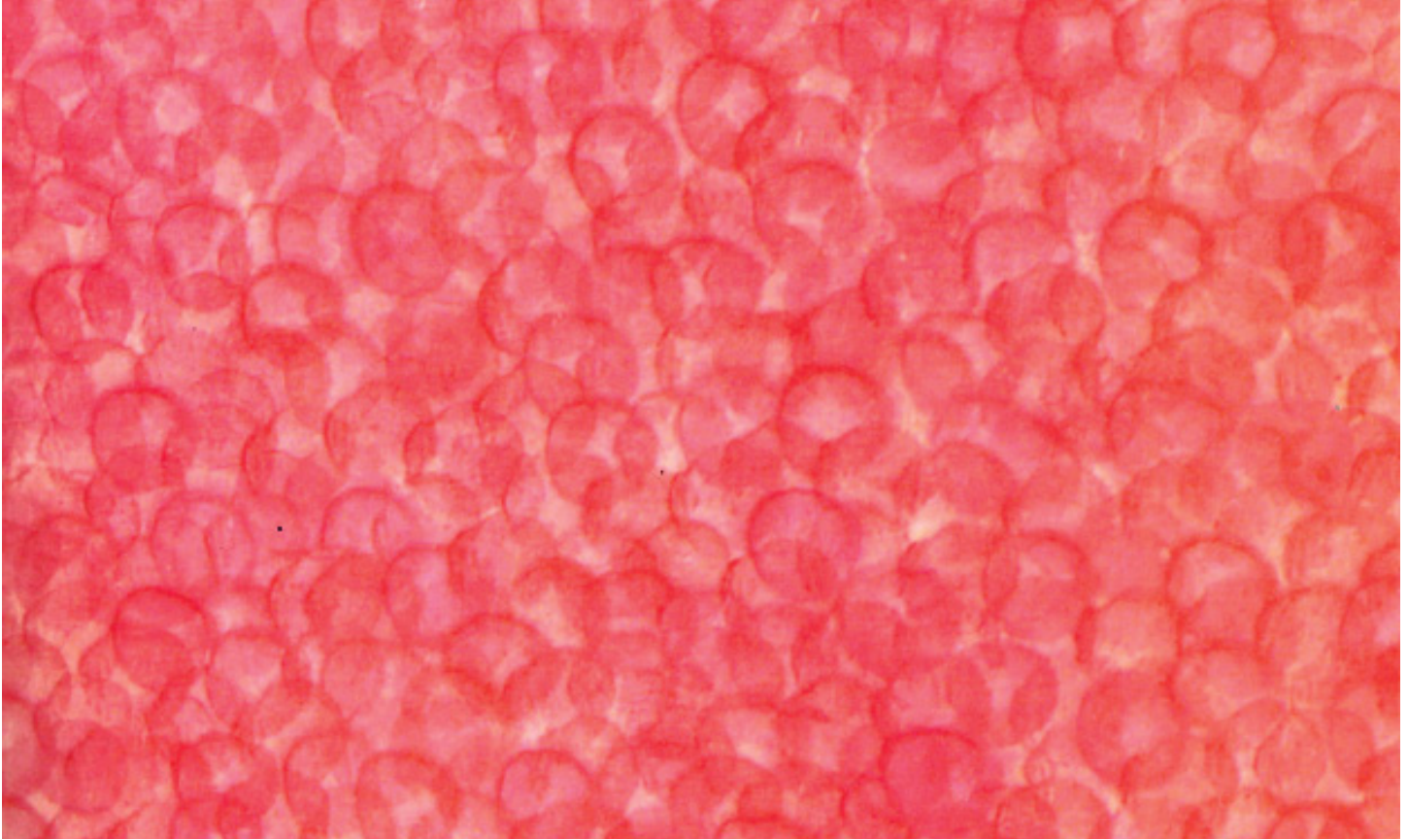
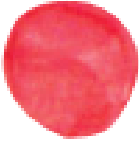


Mind Space

Maximalism in Contrasts



Zhang Yu, *Fingerprint 2004.10-1*, 2004, Plant pigment on Xuan paper
All images courtesy of Pearl Lam Galleries, Shanghai, China

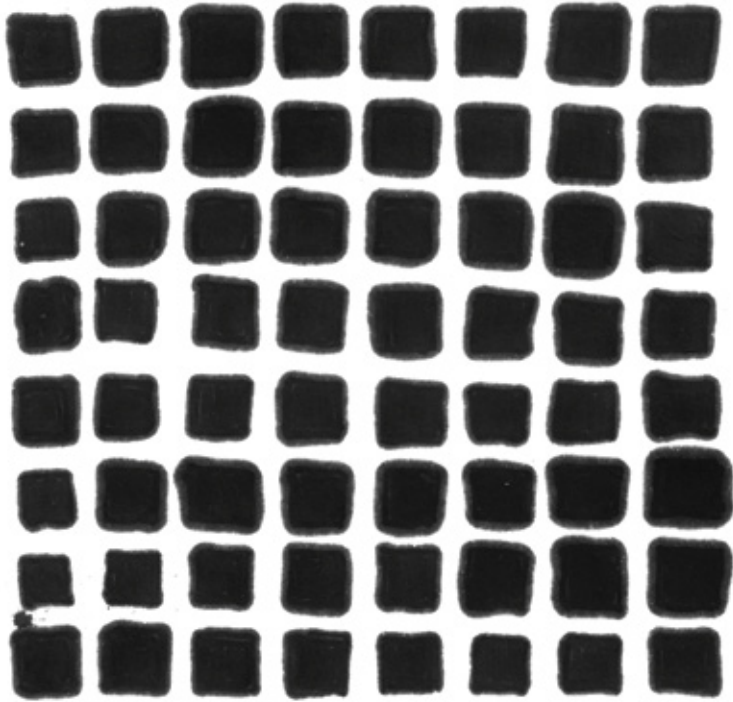
 This exhibition of mixed media installations portrays a new realm of artistic expression, exploring the conceptual space inside the artists' minds. The 31 works are comprised of 10 installations and 30 wall-hung pieces. *Mind Space* introduces four Chinese abstract artists—**Zhu Jinshi, Zhang Yu, Lei Hong, and He Xiangyu**—who convey the concept of “Maximalism” to a global audience.

Maximalism is a term coined by curator Dr. Gao Minglu, renowned art critic, esteemed professor, and one of the

world's leading scholars of contemporary Chinese art. At the philosophical core of Chinese abstract art, Maximalism expresses the meditative mind of the abstract artist during the creation process. Emphasis is placed on the spiritual experience of art-making. In Dr. Minglu's essay “Mind Space: Maximalism in Contrasts” he advocates that Maximalism as an art movement has been overlooked for decades by the international art world because of its modernist aesthetic, apolitical stance, and “aesthetic sophistication...inherited from traditional literati painting.”

Mind Space

Maximalism in Contrasts



Lei Hong, *Under Control*, 2008, Ink on filter paper

In Maximalist theory, the meaning of a painting is not expressed by its surface or subject matter. Maximalist artists embrace the ancient Chinese concept of *yan bu jin*, literally, "meaning is always beyond language," which is extolled in Chinese literature and art theory. True meaning is found in the narrative between the artist and the art work. The works function as a platform for the artist to convey his innermost, meditative thoughts. This idea of the art work as a diary for the artist is inspired by the Chinese *liushui zhang*, literally "an account book of running water," which acts as a record of daily, fragmented thoughts.

Mind Space

Maximalism in Contrasts

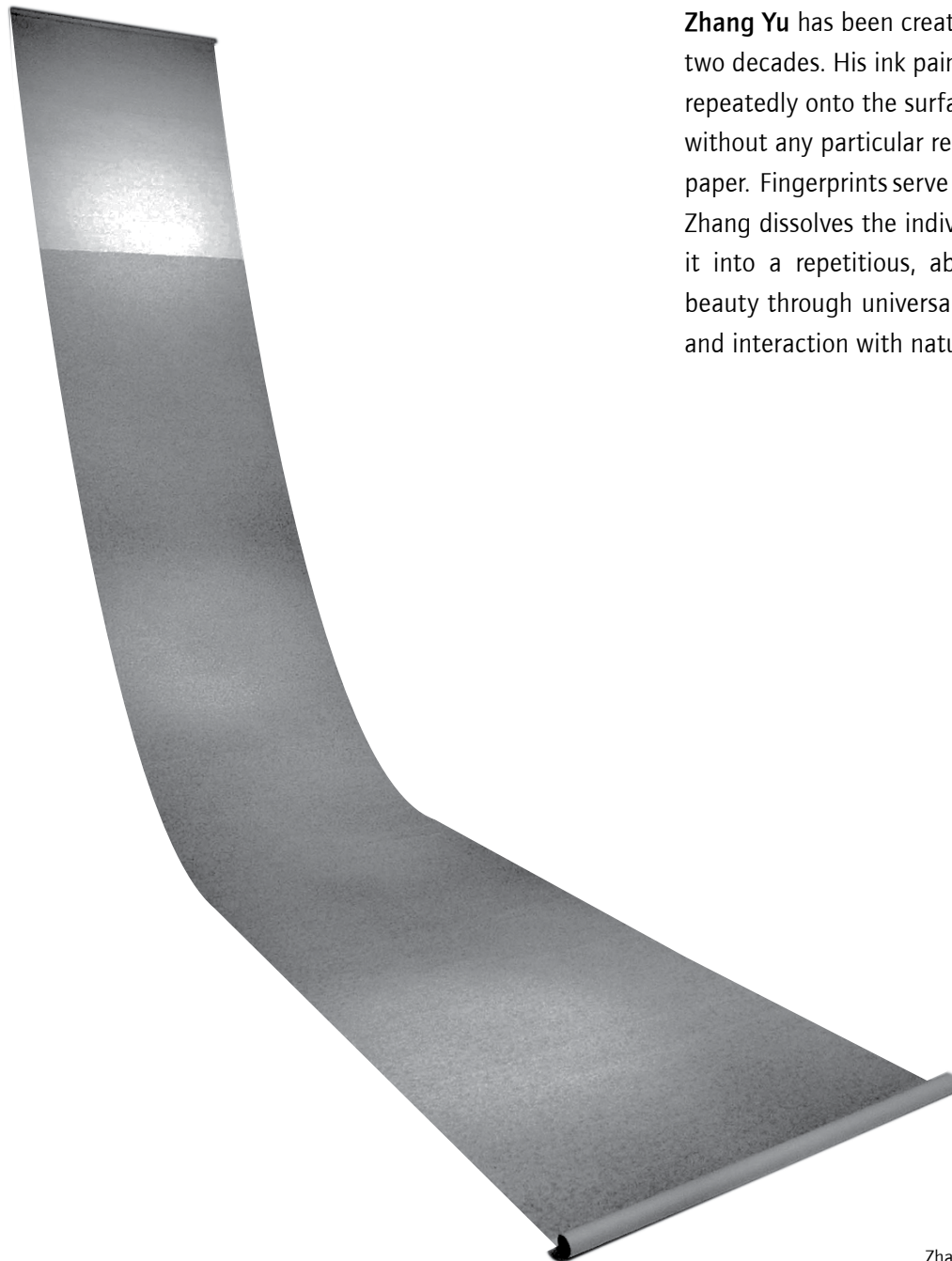


Zhu Jinshi, *Boundary Between Sheets of Xuan Paper*, 2010, Ink on Xuan paper

Zhu Jinshi has devoted himself to painting for over three decades, beginning his artistic career in the 1970s during the Cultural Revolution. In 1979 he participated in the legendary Stars group, one of the most prominent, avant-garde collectives in Chinese contemporary art. Zhu's installation work often utilizes Chinese rice paper (*xuan zhi*) and ink. In his work *Boundary Between Sheets of Xuan Paper*, ink is seeping through the xuan paper from bottom to top, gradually turning all the white sheets dark. This active color transfer gives viewers an opportunity to observe the organic process of painting without any human manipulation.

Mind Space

Maximalism in Contrasts



Zhang Yu has been creating fingerprint scrolls for more than two decades. His ink paintings involve pressing his fingertips repeatedly onto the surface of the paper in random motions, without any particular regard for the center or margin of the paper. Fingerprints serve as a system for human identification. Zhang dissolves the individualism of a fingerprint by turning it into a repetitious, abstract mark that suggests infinite beauty through universality. Every touch is an expression of and interaction with nature.

Zhang Yu, *Scroll Fingerprint*, 2008, Ink on Xuan paper

Mind Space

Maximalism in Contrasts



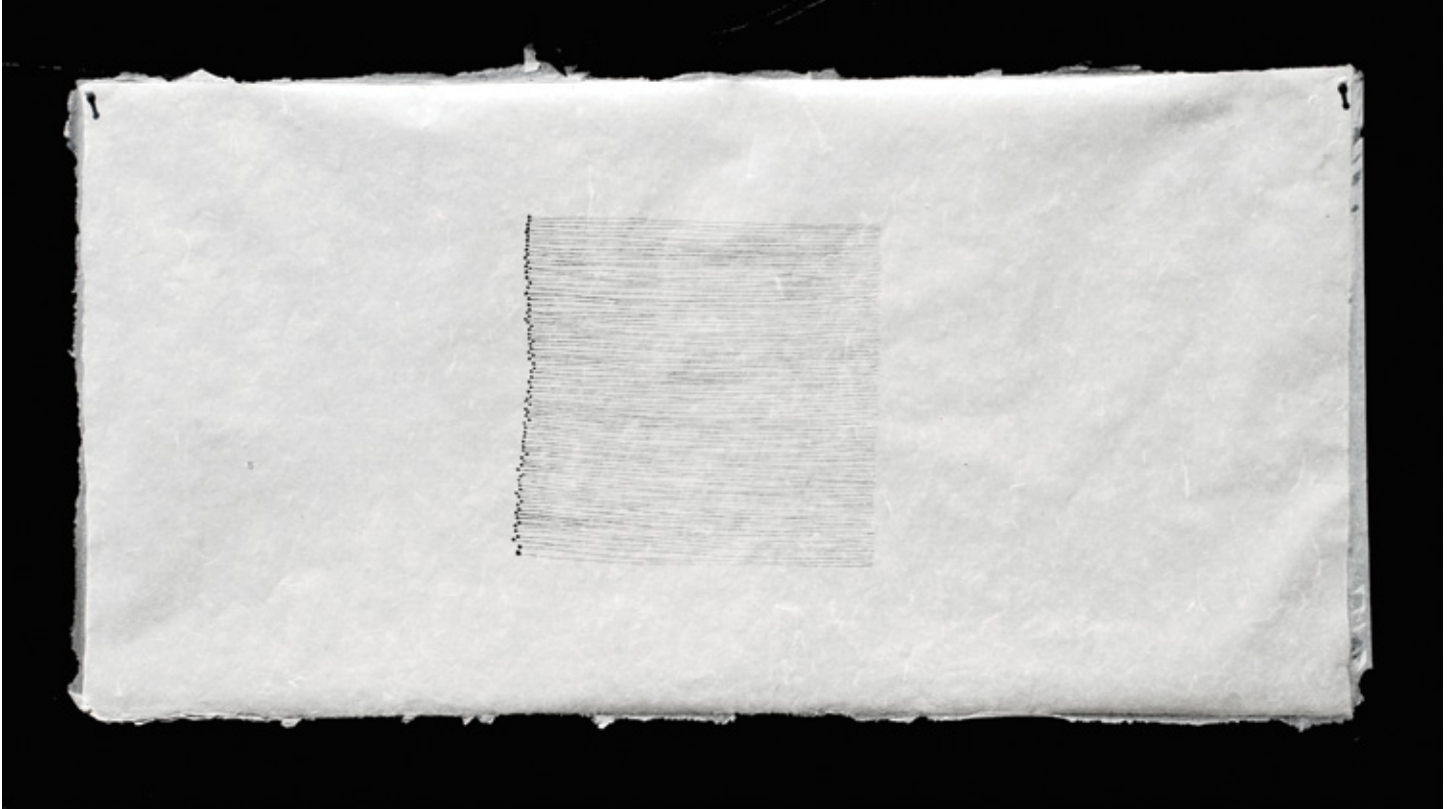
He Xiangyu spent an entire year cooking thousands of tons of Coca-Cola. He crystallized the resulting liquid into a dark powder. From the dark powder he created an ink with which to paint and write calligraphy. He effectively transforms a commercial product into a form of literati expressionism—from the industrial and mass produced consumer good emerges a unique and spiritual literati-influenced art.



He Xiangyu, *Circular Fan 1-5*, 2010, Ink and Coca-Cola on silk

Mind Space

Maximalism in Contrasts



Lei Hong, *Still on Paper*, 2006, Pencil on Xuan paper

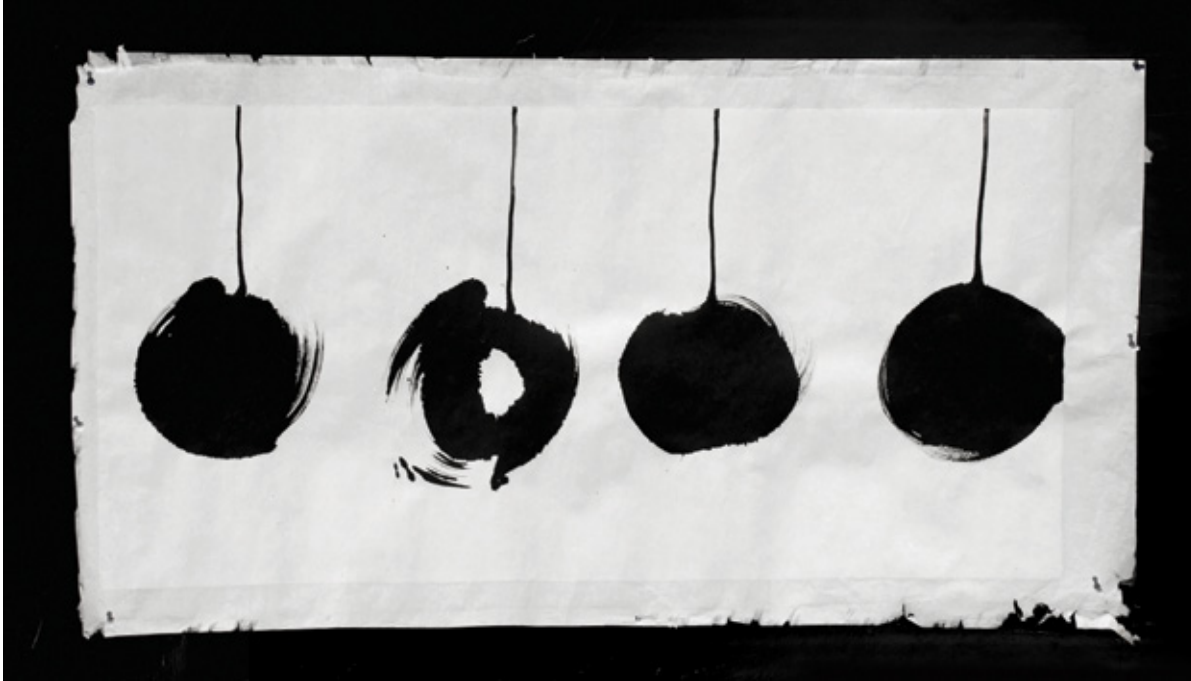
Lei Hong was mistakenly diagnosed with cancer in 1993, which imbued him with a sense of spirituality and a determination to explore extreme consciousness. Working in the middle of the night, he would temper his impulsiveness and passion through rational forms, grasping at what he calls a “momentary eternity.” The dots and lines in his works suggest a narrative, unveiling his imaginative process and the feelings he experiences at that particular moment of creation. His art is a form of meditation in the sense that Lei claims “it

is a completeness, a transcendence and the entering into a religious state to have been able to express it.”

These artists avoid extremes, never venturing toward representation or engaging in full conceptuality. Maximalism is in essence a meditation for the artists who eschew the external world in pursuit of spiritual, personal truth. The creations of Zhu Jinshi, Zhang Yu, Lei Hong, and He Xiangyu are a dialogue between artist and nature, an inventive response to a rapidly changing material world.

Mind Space

Maximalism in Contrasts



Lei Hong, *Still on Paper*,
2006, Ink on Xuan paper

EXHIBITION SPECIFICATIONS

Number of Works

31 works comprised of
10 installations and
30 wall-hung pieces

Organized by

Pearl Lam Galleries,
Shanghai, China

Curator

Dr. Gao Minglu, independent curator,
scholar, and Research Professor at
the University of Pittsburgh

Requirements

2,500 square feet,
moderate security

Participation Fee

\$9,500
plus outgoing shipping
and curator travel within
the contiguous U.S.

Booking Period

8 weeks

Shipping

IA&A makes all arrangements;
exhibitors pay outgoing shipping
within contiguous U.S.

Availability

May 2012 – December 2013, with
the possibility for extension

Contact

Margalit Monroe
Asian Art Specialist &
Senior Exhibitions Manager
margalitm@artsandartists.org

Mind Space

Maximalism in Contrasts

Artist Statement

He Xiangyu

He Xiangyu was born in 1986 in Dandong, Liaoning Province. He graduated from the Oil Painting Department at Shenyang Normal University and currently lives and works in Beijing. He Xiangyu has participated in many important international and national exhibitions, including *Reshaping History* (2010) in Beijing, *Yi Pai - Century Thinking* (2009) in Beijing, *The Beautiful City* (2009) in Taipei, and *Beijing Direction - Art Tribe of Dongying* (2008) in Beijing. He has also organized many solo exhibitions: *The Coca-Cola Project* (2010) at the Wall Art Museum in Beijing, *Origin of All* (2008) in Beijing, and *Illusion of Dongba* (2008) in Shenyang.

He Xiangyu is a young artist. He is particularly interested in subjects with an anthropological significance. He spent several years investigating life in the Dongba minority area. During this period, he once made a large batch of Dongba paper, using this format of ideas to depict the spiritual locus of tribal heads. It is very difficult to use the concept 'abstract' to interpret these depictions, as He Xiangyu not only emphasized the icons and composition, but paid more attention to the unity of materials and icons. The Dongba paper was a necessary consequence of the picture and vice versa. In other words, the cultural self-sufficiency of the object and creativity of the iconic meaning were inseparable. This point differs from the modern conception of a work of art as an 'object' or 'product' that has been created. He Xiangyu's *The Coca-Cola Project* is included in this exhibition. He has used a new format to display the enormous force of Coca-Cola from another perspective. Now, it is no longer the external charm of the image nor the propagation of myth, but in fact Coca-Cola's actual physical components and their subtle corrosive effects that they have on the body every day and every hour that is being illustrated. He displays a rationale for us: the chemical reaction in boiling Coca-Cola resembles the human process of digesting drinks.

何翔宇

1986年出生于辽宁省丹东市宽甸县。2008年毕业于沈阳师范大学油画系,现生活工作于北京。何翔宇最近两年来一直致力于考察云南丽江地区的东巴文化和收集纳西族文物,并将这些实地调研的成果转化为当代艺术作品,以唤起社会保护少数民族文化的意识。他2005年开始在沈阳举办个展,取名为“心灵的激荡”。2008年3月,在对东巴文化有了一定的实地考察之后,在沈阳举办了“幻象东巴”的个展。在举办个展的过程中,他参加过国内外诸多联展:2006年参加北京宋庄艺术节,2007年参加北京798艺术节,在德国柏林参加“中国最具潜力艺术家联展”,2008年参加德国柏林全角度画廊举办的“2008深呼吸—中国当代油画联展”。

何翔宇是一位年轻艺术家,他对具有人类学意义的物质非常感兴趣。他用了两三年时间在东巴少数民族地区考察生活。在此期间他曾经自制了一大批纸张,用意念的方式描绘部落酋长的灵魂轨迹。这些绘画恐怕很难用“抽象”的概念去解读,因为何翔宇不仅仅注重图像和构图,更重视材料和图像的一致。有此画,就必有此纸,反之亦然。换句话说,物的文化自足性和图像意义上的创造性二者是不可分割的。这一点与把艺术作品视为一种被创造的“客体”(object)或者“成品”(production)的现代观念是不一样的。当我们把自然“物性”和艺术家的创作“悟性”自然结合在一起的时候,这些所谓的“作品”就具有了某种人类学意义。在这次的《可乐计划》中,何翔宇用了另一种方式,从另一个角度展示了可口可乐的巨大力量,这一次不再是它那外在的形象魅力和流通传播的神话,而是它的实实在在的物质成分以及它每天每时每刻对人的肌体所可能产生的潜移默化的腐蚀效果。它向我们展示了一个道理:煮可乐的化学反应过程类似人饮用可乐的消化过程。

Mind Space

Maximalism in Contrasts

Artist Statement

Lei Hong

Lei Hong was born in 1972 in Dujiangyan, Sichuan Province. He graduated from Sichuan Academy of Fine Arts with a Master's degree in Environmental Sculpture in 2003 and currently teaches at the Fine Arts College of Qingdao University. He has been engaged in abstract painting and sculptural art since the late 1990s. He took part in the 2001 *West Lake International Sculpture Invitational Exhibition* in Hangzhou. From the beginning of 2002, Lei created a series of abstract works mainly composed of paper-based paintings. The works from this period show not only characteristics of Western abstract paintings, in which structural and abstract tension lies beneath the dots, lines, and painting's surface, but also the influence of the ways in which lines are drawn in Chinese paintings, particularly stressing the spatial relationship between "existence" and "emptiness," as well as "real" and "virtual." His *Absolute* series is a good example of this and was exhibited at the *Chinese Maximalism Art Exhibition* planned by Gao Minglu in 2002. In the subsequent two years, Lei's works became simpler in form and pattern, leaving only abstract lines of paint in the shape of black dots. Lei Hong also started using acrylic on canvas.

Lei Hong's works show obvious individual features. He often paints late at night, having a personal dialogue with his own mind. It is only during this time that he feels the world is real. Lei puts great importance on the accidental factors in the painting process, reducing rational factors as much as possible, and rarely designing compositions beforehand. He also focuses on the literal expressions and emotional narratives in his works, rather than the fixed symbolic meanings. His works are often unclear at first sight and require the artistic appreciation of the audience. Although they exemplify modern people's emotions, Lei Hong's works are closer to traditional wash paintings and calligraphy aesthetics.

雷虹

1972年生于四川省都江堰,2003年获四川美术学院环境雕塑专业硕士学位,现任教于青岛大学美术学院。从1990年代末期开始进行抽象绘画和雕塑艺术创作,2001年参加了在杭州举行的“西湖国际雕塑作品邀请展”。从2002年开始,雷虹创作了一系列的抽象作品,主要以纸本绘画为主。此一时期的作品既具备西方抽象画的特点,点、线、面的背后有着抽象结构的形式张力,同时也强调中国绘画中对线的表达,特别是突出在空间观念上“有”和“无”、“实”和“虚”之间关系的表达,代表性作品为《绝对系列》。这批作品在2003年参加了“中国极多主义”展(纽约)。其后的两年内,雷虹的作品形式更趋于简约,画面单纯,只有抽象的线或者层层涂绘的抽象黑色点块。

雷虹的作品个人化特征明显,他常常在夜深人静的时候作画,用画笔与此时个人的心灵状态对话,只有这时,他才感到世界是真实的。雷虹非常重视创作中的偶发因素,尽量减弱作品的理性构成因素,一般不预设构图效果,而突出作品的书写性表现,所以画面的形象表达的不是固定的符号意义,或者图象意义,而是情绪的叙事性。它不是一目了然的,需要观众的体味,所以,它接近中国传统水墨画和书法美学,尽管表达的 是当代人的感情。

Mind Space

Maximalism in Contrasts

Artist Statement

Zhang Yu

Zhang Yu was born in 1959 in Tianjin. He graduated from Tianjin Academy of Fine Arts and Crafts in 1988 and was an editor at Tianjin Yangliuqing painting studio, an associate professor at Tianjin Transportation Vocational College and a visiting professor in the new media department at Beijing Film Institute. Currently he is a professional artist. From the late 1980s, Zhang Yu has participated in various exhibitions, including *New Wash Painting Art Exhibition* (1997) held at Germany's Levbsi University Museum, the Berlin Museum, and the Harrer Museum; *Inside Out: New Chinese Art* (1998) held at MoMA PS1 in New York, the Museum of Modern Art in San Francisco, Henry Art Museum, Monterey Museum of Art, National Gallery of Australia, and the Hong Kong Museum of Art; *Dreams: The 2001 Contemporary Chinese Art* (2001) held in London; as well as *Yi Pai: 30 Years of Abstract Art in China* (2008 tour) held in China, and La Caixa Forum in Palma, Barcelona, and Madrid. In the late 1990s, Zhang Yu actively organized and edited the book *The Tendency of Modern China Wash Paintings at the End of the 20th Century* in the late 1990s, giving impetus to the development of China experimental wash painting.

Zhang Yu pursued the creation of wash paintings with oriental conceptual elements through the expression of personalized symbols and strong emotions in the late 1980s. His earlier methods include reforming traditional wash paintings with Western expressionism and the patterns of Chinese Folk Art. The *Fan* series is an example of this kind. In the early 1990s, his works, such as the *Notes* series, aim at strengthening the compositional features of form and the expressive power between dots and lines. Zhang Yu's painting style changed dramatically around 1994. His work *Notes on the Ink Images, Inspiration* from this period shows his attempt to integrate imagery of wash paintings with simple patterns. His works evolved again around the year 2005, in which he focused on the Yi School and "action" painting. The *Trace of Fingerprints* series represents works of this period, in which Zhang Yu presses his fingers dipped in wash paint or water on paper, leaving traces of different depths. Fingerprints are part of our body; thus, the dialogue between fingers

and xuan paper represents our daily experience as well as a kind of modest and plain beauty.

张羽

1959年出生于中国天津市,1988年毕业于天津工艺美术学院。曾为天津杨柳青画社副高级编辑,中国天津交通职业学院副教授,北京电影学院新媒体专业客座教授。现为职业艺术家。自80年代末始,张羽相继参加了各种展览,如1997年在德国莱比锡大学博物馆、柏林博物馆、哈勒博物馆等地举行的“新水墨艺术展”,1998年在美国P·S·1当代艺术中心、旧金山现代艺术馆、亨利美术馆、蒙特里当代美术馆、堪培拉国立美术馆、香港艺术馆巡展的“蜕变与突破:中国新艺术展”,2001年在英国伦敦举办的“梦:中国当代艺术展”,2008年在中国、西班牙帕尔马美术馆、巴塞罗那美术馆、马德里美术馆举办的“意派:中国“抽象”艺术三十年“(巡回)大展”等。90年代中后期,张羽积极筹划和主编了《20世纪末中国现代水墨艺术走势》丛书,对中国实验水墨的发展起到了推动作用。

20世纪80年代末期,张羽便追求以个性化的符号和强烈的情感表现来创造具有东方意象特点的水墨画。早期的方法是借鉴西方表现主义和中国民间艺术的图式来改造传统水墨画,如《扇面系列》。90年代初的作品强化了形式自身的构成性和点、线之间的表现力,创作了《随想集》系列作品。1994年前后,张羽的画风有了较大的改变,《墨象笔记》、《灵光》系列力图将水墨的意象表现和简约的图式完美地结合起来。2005年后,张羽的作品出现了新的变化,观念性和“行动性”加强,代表性的作品有本次展出的《指印》系列。在这件作品中,张羽不断用自己沾上水墨或者清水的手指在宣纸上按捺,留下深浅不同的痕迹。指印是自我身份的印记,因此,手指和宣纸的“对话”不但记录了个人的特定日常经验,同时也在一种不事张扬的、素朴的美中将个人身份暗示出来。

Mind Space

Maximalism in Contrasts

Artist Statement

Zhu Jinshi

Zhu Jinshi was born in Beijing in 1954. He studied painting under Professor Li Zongjin, a fine arts professor at the Central Academy of Fine Arts from 1973 to 1977. Zhu moved to Germany in the mid-1980s and became a lecturer in the Architecture Department at Berlin Institute of Technology (TU Berlin) in 1994. He now lives in Beijing. In the late 1970s, he began painting abstract works, and participated in the Stars group exhibition, the first avant-garde art exhibition after the Cultural Revolution. He has been producing large numbers of installation works since the mid-1980s. He particularly likes to use traditional Chinese xuan paper to make installations representing various forms. It is through the contact and dialogue with materials that the artist's perception and understanding of the world are expressed, and it is through the same process that these materials come to express images in his mind and spirituality. The core value of Zhu's art, being fully reflected in his paintings and installations, is best represented by the Chinese traditional aesthetic view that human beings and the natural world should be in harmony. In addition, he attempts to use traditional images that represent reality. Contrary to normal expectations, these works are completely free brushworks that depict abstract forms, which are neither the result of logical analysis and generalization nor individual emotional expressions. They are the "mind images" produced by the complete comprehensions of the phenomenon.

Zhu Jinshi has participated in many important international and Chinese exhibitions, including the *China Avant-garde Art* exhibition (1993) in Berlin, the *4th Istanbul Biennial* (1995), the *First Guangzhou Triennial Exhibition* (2002), the *3rd Swaziland Contemporary Art Triennial Exhibition* (2004) in Germany, the *Reincarnated Phantom: Chinese Contemporary Art Exhibition* (2006) in Vienna, and the *What is the Wu-school Exhibition* (2007) in Beijing.

朱金石

1954年生于北京,1970年代末期,开始进行抽象绘画创作,并参加《星星美展》。1973 至1977年师从中央美术学院油画家李宗津教授学习绘画。1980年代中期移居德国,1994 年任柏林TU大学建筑系讲师,现居北京。朱金石多次参加国内外的展览,诸如1993 年柏林“中国前卫艺术展”,1995年“第四届伊斯坦布尔双年展”,2002年“第一届 广州三年展”,2004年德国“第三届史瓦本当代艺术三年展”,2006年维也纳“转世魅影,中国当代艺术”,以及2007年北京“什么是物派”等展览。

中国传统美学主张人与自然物应当处于和谐的状态,这是朱金石艺术创作的核心价值,这种价值被充分地体现在他的油画和装置之中。他的油画也尝试运用传统的意象美学表现现实,但是画面中呈现的这个现实是由自由笔触组成的抽象形式,这个形式既不是来自一种逻辑分析和概括,也不是来自情绪的个人表现,而是来自大脑中对现象的整体把握后的意象,《死囚》和《涂画展览会》就是这一类型的作品。1980年代中期以来,他用中国传统宣纸做材料制作不同形象的装置艺术。通过艺术家和材料的接触和对话过程来表达对物质世界的感受和诠释,并赋予这些物质以某种意象和灵性。

Mind Space

Maximalism in Contrasts

About Pearl Lam Galleries

Pearl Lam Galleries is dedicated to presenting creative excellence in art and design from East and West to the international art community. Founded by Pearl Lam in 1992 in Hong Kong, and now based in Shanghai, the Galleries nurture and promote creative talents where art, architecture, and design intersect. The Galleries have evolved from a philosophy rooted in Chinese "Literati" art, which promotes art for the sake of self-cultivation and embraces creativity without hierarchies. The Galleries' exhibition program is designed to create new cultural exchanges by representing artists from all parts of the world working in divergent traditions and across disciplines.



He Xiangyu, *Coca-Cola Project - Handwritten Copy*, 2009,
Coca-Cola, handwritten copy of Diamond Sutra on paper, bones

Mind Space

Maximalism in Contrasts

University Art Gallery, University of Pittsburgh, PA
February 15, 2011 to March 18, 2011



caption