



《万用抗议牌》
2010年
木料、油漆、丙烯
450 × 228 × 80厘米
*Universal Protest
Banner*, 2010
Wood, paint, acrylic
450 x 228 x 80 cm

刘辛夷的创作在时下国内的艺术环境中有着非常明确的可辨识度：形式表达的熟练和完整，高度政治敏感的作品主题，以及（到目前为止）线索清晰的个人体系。还有就是，一点显而易见的、但很节制的狡黠和冷幽默。作为他在北京的首次个展，“探员L”向人们展示了这位年轻艺术家多少有些出人意料的成熟。

正如展览名所提示，“探员L”呈现的六件作品更像是一份来自异空间对地球政治的调查报告，这份报告在视角独到地提出问题、深入浅出地分析问题之余，还颇有创见地给出了部分解决问题的最便捷方法——当然，是以既嘲讽又天真的方式。展厅中占据观众视线的第一件、也是最具有干扰力的作品是白底红字的《万用抗议牌》，上面有一句窄黑体大写的英文“YOU ARE DAMN WRONG”，这件

“制作精良，纪念碑尺寸，语言突兀”的作品对视觉的占据相当直接和粗暴，足以对接下来的观看和判断产生影响，而这种效果正应在艺术家的计划和控制之中。展厅地面靠近居中位置的作品是《自动手臂》，由拆卸后又改装过的招财猫电动手臂排列成三角形；换了方向的招手动作看上去像是抗议的手势，一组金闪闪的猫手臂此起彼伏，一下下拨弄着观看者的忍耐力。墙面上的作品按顺时针依次有《平民邦交》，借助握力器拉近物理意义上国与国之间的距离；《马恩列斯毛》，一组由多到少、最后到没有的胡子，是国际共产主义运动的五个象征性领袖最一目了然的表征变化；《一个世纪的崛起》，利用植物的生长过程、以及因趋光性产生的高低摇摆，制作一个20世纪全球风云人物的政坛沉浮模型；《世界中心》，以人类臀部中线为准轴，将缓慢自转

的世界地图投影于其上,让东西半球每个国家都有机会成为视觉意义上的世界中心……

这些作品反映出若干改造视觉真实的方法:一是消除对象原有的完整形象或上下文;二是破坏或重新捏造现实世界中的判断标准;三是过滤掉一切有具体所指的含义和立场;四是强调道具和细节的干扰性存在。这几种方法常常结合使用,目的有多种,有的是直截了当地政治性的,有的则是带有“艺术性”的,而最终的共同目的则在于制造一个理想的、虚假的“另一个世界”。它的有趣之处在于不真实得过于明显和真诚,所有深刻、复杂的意义和内容在这里都失重了,只剩下形式的空壳在游戏和招摇。

展览“探员L”呈现给人们的是一个至少在表面上抹平了地域性和文化差异的创作状态,这也许与刘辛夷的教育背景、思维方式以及对事物的认知角度直接相关,但不能简单归结为一种因环境而生的个人性,而是有着其所属的一代人的集体印记。在今天,年轻艺术家在对政治逻辑的不断推敲中所得到的经验已不再与个人的成长和记忆重叠,他们审视过去与现在的态度更为理性也更为冷漠,并善于从中找寻到仍可利用的剩余价值。 张夕远

Liu Xinyi's work is instantly recognizable from within the art environment of China today: an adeptness and integrity of the expression of form, subjects with a high degree of political sensitivity, and a (so far) clear continuity of a personal logic, with touches of obvious yet tempered slyness and dry humor. Liu's first solo exhibition in Beijing, "Agent L," demonstrates just how much this young artist's maturity surpasses all expectations.

Just like the title indicates, the six works presented in "Agent L" resemble a survey of global politics from outer space. In a visual sense, this survey poses unique questions and analyzes them in a profound yet simple way, all while very insightfully bringing forth the most expedient method for finding a partial solution—an approach both cynical and naïve. The first thing that occupies the viewer's line of vision in the gallery is also the most disturbing work, the red-on-white *Universal Protest Banner*, on which "YOU ARE DAMN WRONG" is written in English in boldface capital letters. This finely executed work of monumental dimensions, complete with such blatant language, takes a fairly direct and crude stance toward the visual—enough to influence subsequent views and criticism. This type of effect is indeed planned and controlled by the artist. On the floor, right near the middle of the room, is *Automatic Arms*, composed of rows of the waving mechanical arms of disassembled then reassembled lucky cat figurines lined up in

a triangular formation; the altered direction of the arm movements made them look like gestures of protest, a group of golden, shimmering cat arms waving one after another, prodding the viewer's limits of endurance. Clockwise on the walls are *Civil Diplomacy*, which with the help of spring-grip dumbbells draws nations together in a physical sense; *From Marx to Mao*, a collection of beards going from thick to sparse to none at all, characterizing the transformation of the international communist movement's five most symbolic leaders; *Rise of the 20th Century*, utilizing the course of a plant's development, as well as the phototactic changes in its height, to create a model of the ups and downs of the political life of the "Men of the Twentieth Century"; and *The Centre of the World*, taking the human buttocks as an axis onto which a slowly rotating map of the earth is projected, giving each of the countries in both hemispheres an opportunity to assume the visual significance of being at the center of the globe.

These works reflect methods for modifying visual truth: one is removing an object's original integrity of form or context; the second is destroying or creating from scratch the standards of the real world; the third is filtering away connotations and standpoints with concrete referents; the fourth is emphasizing the disruptive existence of props and details. These methods are often employed together, sometimes straightforwardly political, other times more artistically. But the joint goal lies in making an ideal, false, "other world." What is interesting about this is its inauthentic, excessive obviousness and sincerity. Everything with a profound, complex significance and substance is weightless here, with only the emptiness of form remaining in games and attention-seeking displays.

What "Agent L" presents at least demonstrates a creative condition where regionality and cultural divergences are superficially obliterated. Perhaps this is directly related to Liu Xinyi's educational background, mode of thinking, or cognitive perspective on objects. It cannot simply be attributed to an individuality born out of his particular environment, but rather to the collective imprint of the generation he belongs to. Today, the experience young artists gain from continuously refining their political logic no longer overlaps with individual maturation and memory. Examining the past and the present in a rational and detached manner, they are adept at seeking out whatever leftover value is still usable. Zhang Xiyuan (Translated by Cady Moss)