

disturbances
9 - 28. 3. 2013

Curator's note

Gallery EXIT is pleased to present “disturbances”, a group exhibition with works by Casper CHAN, Szelit CHEUNG, Elva LAI, Firenze LAI, LINGPui Sze, Lulu NGIE and TANG Kwok Hin.

The exhibition exposes the viewer to a surreal world where control paradigms, plans and structures are put into jeopardy. What is left is an acceptance to chaos, an acknowledgment of our incapability of becoming a “Body Without Organs” (Deleuze and Guattari, “A Thousand Plateaus”).

Society, with its values and all the arbitrary and unnatural binary structures of gender, ethnicity, sexuality, age etc., inhibit us from an uncontrolled, ungoverned, spontaneous existence. From the moment we come into being, we introject these ethics into the construct of a artificial fabricated personality. As Deleuze puts it, society is a hierarchical organism, where everybody is one part of an economic infrastructure without any space for free will, variety or identity.

The works on view proclaim the possibility of a failure; the paradox of fighting against a status quo that could never be defeated. They delve into the friction that is created when the innate idea of the self tries to challenge the artifice of a socially acquired personality. In a convergence of multimedia works, “disturbances” will reveal the emergence of social and personal disturbances in a display of corruption of the mind, alienation, perversion and madness.



Szelit CHEUNG
Blurred Myself (1 of 7 panels)
2012
pencil on paper
46 x 35 cm each

This new work by Szelit CHEUNG reveals the self to the biased eye of the Other. Seven are the agonizing ways in which the artist come into terms with his own personal individuality and seven are the different and terrifying ways in which he erases it.

In a quest for identification, this work positions itself rather differently to the other works in the exhibition. Instead of showing a struggle against the system it presents the system as it; a simple display of pure discrimination. In this scenario, the work revolves around the idea of hiding personality by means of deletion. It manifests the possible ways of hiding oneself from discrimination as an antithetical refusal of showing oneself to the others.

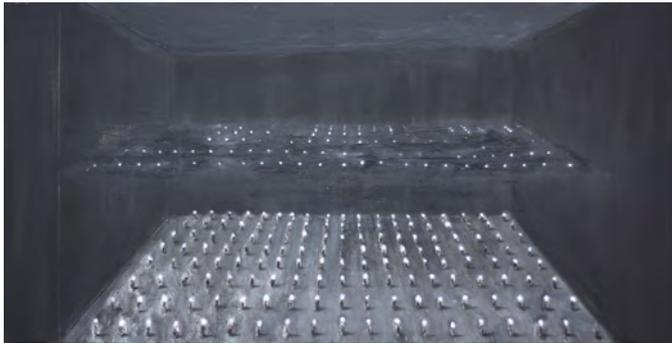
Contributing to a discourse on variety and identity, this work shows the lack of control on others and on they ways they see us. To delete oneself may be the only possible and acceptable way to protect oneself in society. Because no matter what, we are shaped and judged by the way society determine us.



Elva LAI, *The Fear of Perfect Order*, 2012, oil on canvas, 64 x 122 cm

The two oil on canvases by Elva LAI represent two different but integral explorations of the world of disorder. Through her oeuvres we come into terms with the realm of mental resistance towards the composed, controlled and ordered system provided by society. In "The Fear of Perfect Order", a perfectly lined up group of people are trying to keep their balance while walking on balls; in the background is a perfectly white and alien room. They are struggling, agonizing, consumed by the need to maintain their equilibrium. By means of earthy, turbulent, psychologically penetrating brush strokes, the painting reveals the restlessness in mind of being forced to behave in a certain accepted way. There's a great sense of losing one's control, of mental fragility, of that apprehension of being easily broken or destroyed.

This resistance thou seems to allow some room for hope. The second work "Room" presents an inverted composition. A series of tiny figures are positioned in line. They are weightless figures, almost shadows that seem to be swinging to the sound of a chant. They wonder aimlessly in a black and somber room. There's a dim source of light on top of their head, it's an assuring and comforting light. It appears to provide hope for their spirit and their aspiration. These lights represent the individual positive beliefs and desires. Even if this hope is doomed to disappear, these lights create a beautiful and relieving landscape. Powerful as a whole.



Elva LAI, *Room*, 2013, oil on canvas, 64 x 122 cm

This new series by Firenze Lai look at the realm of alienation. It is the alienation created by interferences of transparency, of chaotic anonymity, of utter nothingness. Usually affected by the people surrounding her environment, for this new series the artist positions her gaze at the realm of "transparency".

Transparency is a type of subtle communication failure that lurks in our daily interpersonal activities. Our daily life is articulated around constant encounters. Many are the people that compose our daily human landscape and yet it is this multitude of ever-present characters that we seem to ignore the most. They look transparent to us but we also look transparent to them, seemingly we can't really see each other.

United by invisibility we all reside in apathy, we populate places of transience, "non-places" where insignificance is the only and sole condition. Florescent lights, inodorous ambience and constant room temperature are some of the environmental features that affect the way we interchange with others. And yet these features become the repositories, the triggers, and the projections of a collective performance of madness. In a world of constant alienation, denial seems to be the only and sole purpose. We deny to be interlinked to others, to live in a world of pure solitude, forgetting that somehow a "language without articulation" connect us all; making us feel the same.



Firenze LAl
Untitled
2013
oil on canvas
80 x 60 cm



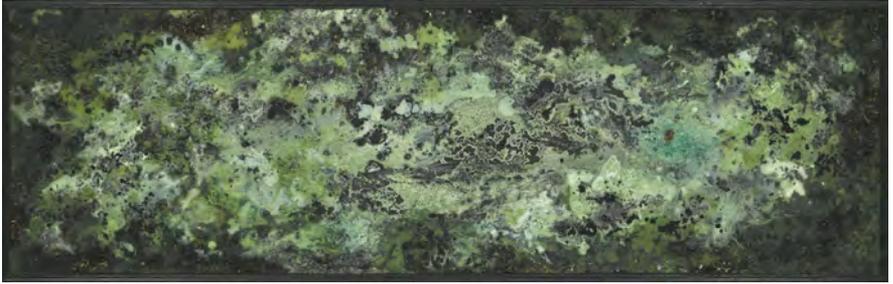
Firenze LAl
Do you need a bag?
2013
oil on canvas
80 x 60 cm

The works by Lulu NGIE present a perfect visual implication of disturbances. Her ink on papers and oil on canvas present us with identical and yet at the same time different human figurations. They're ghostly and ethereal like figures, they develop without a specific narration or definition, positioned in a state of uncertainty. The works depict places of no particular significance, sites for waiting, pondering, forgetting where at times the figures disappear within the lines of a brush stroke.

Bright and clear brushstrokes brings emphasizes a great sense of alienated solitude. It is the emptiness and isolation resulting from the confrontation with the self, the coming into terms with an inner world that much prefers to be obliterated than to be falling into oblivion. Strong, contrasting brushstrokes, colours and textures emphasize the character's inner struggle, its conflict with society and its endeavour to find a peace of mind. And yet the only possible outcome seems to be to observe from a distance and to stay silent. A quietude of the mind and of the soul, a stillness born in a state of confusion.



Lulu NGIE
Interlude
2012
ink on paper
70 x 42 cm



LING Pui Sze, *Metamorphosis*, 2012, mixed media on woodboard, 56 x 172 cm

Aesthetically haunting and visually perverse, the works by Ling Pui Sze are a corruption for the eye. Beautifully terrifying they confront the viewer with an astonishing poetry of libertine juxtapositions.

“Metamorphosis” is the first in the series composed of cicadas body and shell, wood crumb, stone, wax. it is the perfect apotheosis of an assemblage of a mad alchemist. Employing a feeling of disjunction between an ordered system and the acknowledgment of the fictional nature of this order, this work investigates the influence of changes. A cicada quietly leaves its shell to obtain freedom even though the insect used to be one with it. Instinctively and visually this work seem to re-enact the tremendous mental and physical transmutation of Franz Kafka’s “The Metamorphosis”. Sharing the same uncomfortable awareness that occurs when you lose control of yourself, in Ling’s artwork the cicada is metaphoric of society and we are like the shell, fragile and hollow. The shape of shell can only follow the changes of the body, the same way society moulds us in its becoming. Once we leave the society, we will be empty.



LING Pui Sze
Expanding
2012
mixed media on woodboard
213 x 213 cm, in 4 panels

The second and the third works in the series are “Expanding” and “Floating”, ink on paper collages of carefully researched human and animal cell images. The cell is the most primary and basic unit of living organisms. Though simple and essential in form, a cell is the starting point of all life forms. This idea of simplicity in form and structure is in “Expanding” and “Floating” projected even further by introducing the concept of accepted/ functional/ structural difference. Coming from a variety of sources, the selected cells differ in size, shape, colour and essence. By tearing them apart, into small and unidentified pieces, the artist detaches the images from any context and combined and rearranged them into sustainable potentially existing organisms. These are forms that don't have a beginning nor an end. They don't project into anything a part from pure presence.

In this play of genesis control, the artist in a way is suggesting a possibility of diversities' coexistence within a perfectly balanced and aesthetically pleasing form.



Casper Hiu Kwan CHAN , *Out there*, 2013, pencil and acrylic on canvas, 90 x 121.5 cm

The works on view by Casper Hiu Kwan Chan present a play on disturbances by delving into the world of absence. To talk about absence is to talk about an absence of *something*. It is in the juncture between appearance and absence that these new works find their own dimension. In a play of textures, material and colour, the artist creates a world that addresses the missing 'something' by describing its surroundings. No one can tell what the missing thing is. It could be lost or left behind somewhere. And what remains simply sits there and waits for time to pass. The absence is not accompanied by a dramatic sort of feeling, if you are not actually looking for the missing component, you probably would not notice that it is not there. You may not even remember what it is, but still, you know that something is missing.



TANG Kwok-Hin, *The Spine Passerby*, 2011-12, video, colour, stereo 54 min

TANG Kwok Hin's video piece "The Spine Passerby" deploys an interesting and humorous take on the idea of individual social construction.

In Shatin Park, there is a passerby. A fake ape appears in a fake nature with the most primitive appearances of human beings. He is employed to work in the park for 3 months. Within that period, the ape undergoes a process of evolution. From beast to a socially accepted person. His appearance, costume, tools and acts evolves to show how a person learns to lead a modern life.

Knowledge, social norms, culture and even identity are some of the social constructions that are exposed in this piece. They seem to be approached as a process of accumulation, where trust and emotions among communities, relation with nature and even self-appraisal are influenced by a rather modern and more complete structure of preservation. From caves to concrete buildings, we have gradually removed all natural elements from our habitats and we have grown to prefer to live in a box of solid walls. In a lack of actual beasts to be prevented from, it seems like foreign, different people have become the only threat to our life.

Have we become too detached?

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