

A WOMEN'S GLIMPSE

Unreleased Chinese Contemporary Art Exhibited in the KIP Pavilion

By Xi Fang

From Beijing to Milan, five Chinese female artists interpreted their reflections on the multifaceted relation between human beings and nature in the Theatre of the KIP Pavilion. In response to the theme of the Pavilion, the exhibition remarked how human beings, especially women, react with the natural world and how the nature reflects and redefines the ontological nature – the becoming and the existence of human beings.

Using different artistic expressive languages from installations, photos and videos to performance, the five artists based in Beijing - Han Shuying, He Chengyao, Mo Di, Sun Shaokun and Tao Aimin - have expressed their sensibility, creativity with pieces of art and on site creations. As suggested by the title of the project itself - *Naturally Women* - or better by the Chinese title “天然奇瑰” (literally, *amazing treasures of Nature*), the Exhibition is an exploration of the intimate reflection and a gender vision on the world. Women, being actual or potential mothers are endowed with a particular sensitivity and innate attitude to protection that allows them to shed a new light on the theme.

He Chengyao is one of the pioneers of performance art in China. Inspired by the pilgrimage around Meili Mountain by Tibetans, a gesture that measures the life and time with their bodies, the artist intends to call people's attention to every single second of time. In *18000 SECOND* the artist marks each of the artificial seconds by pressing a needle in a circular pattern on a round piece of Chinese paper. Every single unit is empowered to vibrate into an almost invisible “black hole”.

Han Shuying's work *Daily Wedding Dress* series represent her reflection on the modern loss of value accorded to love and to its institutional bounding representation in Chinese society. The artist has realized a wedding dress with wastes and insignificant materials. The concept of love expressed in this exhibition, however, is meant to acquire a broader meaning, overcoming its mere inter-human conception.



Mo Di, an artist based in Beijing and Australia, explored the dialogue between its different expressions throughout history with a recreation of Quran using only words cut from the Bible, symbolically reaffirming the message of peaceful reconciliation. The work *In the Name of God* has been accurately carried out during five months' time.

Sun Shaokun's *Lotus Eaters* has been inspired from the ancient poem *Lí Sāo* where people of virtue and beauty are exalted as a creation made of flowers. The artist, thus, covers her body with petals and natural plants, creating an intense symbiosis between human nature and Nature and a dialectical dimension of *yin-yang*.

Tao Aimin's *The Mountain and the Water* takes the visitors backwards in time to appreciate the genuine simplicity characterizing a classic China where the pure and harmonious relationship between human beings and nature is restored. The Artist, reusing an element of the Chinese tradition, the ancient washboards, pays tribute to Chinese women, guardians of the ancient knowledge. The washboards here become the symbol of that original dialogue where the wooden surface met the human palm in a process of harmonious symbiosis throughout time. The artist, thus, rebuilds the dialogue and the spirit through the imprint of the washboard on the paper.

All the works, except for the *In the name of God* and *18000 Seconds*, have been created on site.

The exhibition has been curated by Alice Cazzaniga and carried out under the collaboration between Italian Embassy in Beijing, Confucius Institute of the University of Milan, Ever-Beijing Limited and the KIP International School, with special support of the Ambassador Alberto Bradanini, co-president of the KIP International School, Famiano Crucianelli, prof. Jin Zhigang, prof. Alessandra Lavagnino and prof. Marta Valentini of Confucius Institute of the University of Milan and Dr. Paul Jun Dong of Ever-Beijing Limited. It has been anticipated and announced by two press conferences, one held in April 2015 in the Italian Embassy in Beijing and the other in September at the Media Centre of Expo 2015.

To know more

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