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## Essay (Outline): From Hand-made Paper Work to Computer Art - Feng Mengbo's Art in China's and International Context (by ZHOU Yan)

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*for*  
An Essay Outline <sup>^</sup>the Panel for AAS 1998 Annual Meeting

**From Hand-made Paper Work to Computer Art  
-- Feng Mengbo's Art in China's and International Context**

**Zhou Yan**

There are basically two generations of China's avant-garde: the artists of the first generation born in the 1950s and mostly graduated from the academies in the 1980s; while the second one born in the 60s and graduated in the 90s. Generally speaking, the first generation keeps more idealistic attitude, humanistic enthusiasm, and revolutionary action will; while the second one, more pragmatical, sometimes cynical, individualistic and fashionable.

Feng Mengbo, born in Beijing, 1966, belongs to second generation in terms of birth and graduation days. However, he seems to combine the attributes of both generations. From 1991 to 1997, his art has changed in media, subjects and perspective. Hand-made paper "printing" was his graduation work, which shows his sense of humor but was almost dismissed from the graduation exhibition by his teachers because of their appearance that had little to do with so-called "printing", his specialty. After another series of hand-made paper work, video game-like painting, he is working on his computer art work now. The issues he has dealt with goes from language of printing, political and historical subjects, to a kind of genealogical study. His approach seems to exemplifies the conditions in which China's avant-garde develops: academic tradition and modernism, domestic concern and international trend, political suppression and liberal demand, all made China's avant-garde a unique part of the world's contemporary art.

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