

Claremont Colleges

Scholarship @ Claremont

CGU MFA Theses

CGU Student Scholarship

Winter 12-18-2021

TransFOR

Yumeng He

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarship.claremont.edu/cgu_mfatheses



Part of the [Art Practice Commons](#), and the [Graphic Design Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

He, Yumeng, "TransFOR" (2021). *CGU MFA Theses*. 157.
https://scholarship.claremont.edu/cgu_mfatheses/157

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the CGU Student Scholarship at Scholarship @ Claremont. It has been accepted for inclusion in CGU MFA Theses by an authorized administrator of Scholarship @ Claremont. For more information, please contact scholarship@cuc.claremont.edu.

Name: Yumeng He (Yuki)
Instructor: David Pagel
Name: Art Statement
Exhibit Title: TransFOR

Abstract:

The dialogue is not idealistic or theoretical. It's a step-by-step modification. I think of it as a sequence or series of "small episodes." These "small episodes" are of great help to the self-growth of the work. They reveal that my idea at the beginning is different from the finished piece. And, most important, the process can neither be predicted nor copied. This makes the work unique and authentic.

Key Words:

Newcomer, Reflect, selfish, selfless

On the road to getting in touch with art, I always think that I am a newcomer. I am surrounded by so much that is unknown, so much that I am curious about. I keep trying to understand more than I do now. There is a saying that practice makes perfect: after a long time working with one thing, perfection may be approached. But as a newcomer to the art, I'm not sure I'll ever get there. For me and my current work, that is not a bad thing. It increases my curiosity. And whenever I make a new, I discover something new. This is what I think is very important to art: the unknown arouses my interest and keeps me passionate. Art fascinates me because it has a sense of mystery. Also, every viewer who sees a work will have a different feeling, a response that belongs to them and no one else.

Art is a ray of light in my ordinary life. I try to reflect this in every piece I make. In the past, when I made work the initial process was the initial process was always dull and challenging, especially

when I was under pressure to take an exam and get a high score. Not surprisingly, I encountered a bottleneck. In a mood of irritability and despair, I "escaped" from the studio to a park with wonderful scenery. I fed pigeons snacks I had purchased. I sat on a lakeside chair watching the sunset. I did both for a long time. Now, when I look back, I understand how that experience had a significant impact on me: I connected the sunset I witnessed and the happiness it brought me with art. Since then, I feel the light in art, just like the lake's surface that afternoon, reflecting the warm orange glow of the setting sun, shining into my ordinary life. For me, art is a force of positivity, enthusiasm, and pleasure., My goal is to make works that people can experience in the same way.

I seek to make works that bring this experience to viewers as well as to me. For me, the process of making art is the process of communicating. I believe that works of art tell their own stories. In the process of making works, I have an uninterrupted dialogue with my materials. For example, when I made "PEEL," I initially thought that the orange peel would form a vast spiral, and that the larger end of the spiral would be at the top. But as I made that piece, some unexpected things happened. The orange peel was heavier than I expected. What finally appeared was a spiral with a much smaller waist than I had intended, and the big head of the loop was low and rested on the ground. According to my original plans, it looked as if the work had "failed." But after engaging in a dialogue with the result, I understood that it was not a failure: the environment combined with what I had attempted to form something unexpected. This change, in my perception and understanding, is not without reason. Thanks to the change, I became aware of the light and the warmth the work expresses on its own.

In fact, the dialogue is not idealistic or theoretical. It's a step-by-step modification. I think of it as a sequence or series of "small episodes." These "small episodes" are of great help to the self-growth

of the work. They reveal that my idea at the beginning is different from the finished piece. And, most important, the process can neither be predicted nor copied. This makes the work unique and authentic.

Sometimes I feel that art is a very "selfish" endeavor. Those who really pursue art will only do what they want and will not talk to the outside world for other utilitarian purposes. But meanwhile, art belongs to everyone's. Even a short film that is only taken for oneself, or a painting that was done only to restore one's dreams, will produce different thoughts when others engage them.

"Quiet life" is about the epidemic, but like my other works, I don't want to reflect on the negative side, and I don't want people to know at a glance that it addresses COVID-19. This may be contradictory, but it is my goal. The people I depicted with paint are represented by silhouettes because everyone is an independent individual, and there is no difference between anyone in this situation. At the same time, everyone's experience is different. Some people are calm, some are very excited, and some even don't care at all and are still laughing comfortably.

Another piece I made, with similar intentions, is a huge, realistic mask. I used a second-hand white bedsheet, cut it, and fixed it with a glue gun into the shape of a mask. In order to better shape its uneven three-dimensional effect, I hid and arranged five iron wires behind it. After that, I used gouache to repeat the coloring continuously, matching with its folds to make it more closely resemble a real mask. When viewers see it, I hope that they will not only focus on the size of the mask but also think of the people living behind masks today—that is, us. As far as I am concerned, I think this is the purpose and direction of my art. It's a glimmer of light in daily life, not only mine but also that of viewers. I want others to feel their own light from my works. Over the last year, this is what made me feel the most. It may also be because when I first arrived in the United States,

neighbors in the community or passersby on campus greeted me. At first, I was surprised. After I got used to it, the epidemic came. Now people who I pass in the street are more likely to bow their heads and avoid each other. This makes me feel sad. Although masks cover our faces, the emotions under the masks are different. People's feelings and identities should not change just because of wearing a mask.

The object of my art is human-centered social life. The impulse to "know yourself" leads people to the world. It makes people turn to the outside. These two works of mine are based on my life. Although they grow out of and reflect my personal experiences, they were produced in the current social environment. I plan to continue making works by looking at myself and then presenting "me" to society. I want my works to capture the reciprocal movement between me and society, emphasizing mutual support and mutual deepening. This is also the fascinating place of art: it is "selfish," but also selfless.

TransFOR

Yumeng(Yuki) He

Claremont Graduate University
Peggy Phelps Gallery
251 East Tenth Street
Claremont, CA, 91711

TransFOR

MFA Thesis Exhibition by Yumeng(Yuki) He

Opening Reception: Tuesday, November 30th, 3:30pm-5pm

Exhibition Dates: November 29th-December 3rd, 2021

Gallery Hours: Mon-Fri 10am-5pm

https://scholarship.claremont.edu/cgu_mfatheses/157

© 2021 Yumeng He
Instagram: yuki_mo311