

“滑稽史诗”： 宇宙论、标准生活及其危险

共代谢工作室（Cometabolism Studio）是一个当代艺术小组，成员是两位年轻艺术家张宁和杨亚非。和大多艺术小组不同，两位艺术家都有学习设计的经历——张宁曾学习室内设计，杨亚非曾就读家具设计专业，这构成了他们合作、并创立共代谢工作室的起因，也是他们小组创作的核心要素。他们也有别于一般的设计集体，其目的与其说是设计具有明确功能的实用产品，不如说是创作带有社会参与色彩的当代艺术作品。在某种意义上，可以说他们对自己的定位既明确又模糊，看似是介于设计与艺术之间的一种混合型生产，但事实上，他们既不想以艺术的名义冒犯设计，也无意用设计去“冲撞”艺术。大多时候，而只是在寻找一些新的缝隙，一些边缘地带，不动声色地“侵入”或“占领”公共空间，为民众提供些许免费的便利。躲避主流是他们主要的策略。

“滑稽史诗”是共代谢工作室以艺术的名义实施的第一个项目。此次展览不再介入城市角落，而是依附于画廊的白盒子空间。作品虽然保留着设计的属性，但叙事的起点不再是如何以艺术的名义服务社会，而是美苏太空计划。早在1952年，《利科尔》杂志三月刊的封面就写着：“人类很快就会征服太空”（“Man will conquer space soon”）一行大字。虽然，在后来的太空竞争中，美苏两国都先后发射了人造卫星，美国还成功地登上了月球，但时至今日，无论对于美苏，还是对于全人类，“征服太空”依然是个笑话。在共代谢工作室两位艺术家的眼中，这样一种宇宙论即是一部“滑稽史诗”。

在此次展览中，共代谢工作室将半个多世纪前的征服太空计划拉到了日常空间，以一种调侃的姿态重新演绎了这部“滑稽史诗”。他们始终在实用与非实用、积极的介入与消极的参与、乌托邦与反乌托邦等之间拉扯一样，对他们而言，先锋派的“总体设计”和乌托邦愿景早已破产，今天的设计和 zwar 艺术虽说实现了艺术与生活的重新连接，但依然受制于文化产业和标准生活的专制独裁——这也恰好印证了冷战所塑造的两种极端意识形态的共同命运。而他们要做的，就是要在二者的夹缝中，找到重建“解放思想”宏愿的新途径和通往未来日常生活的新目标。

—— 鲁明军

Cometabolism Studio is a contemporary artist collective composed of two young artists, Zhang Ning and Yang Yafei. Unlike most artist collective, both artists have an educational background in design - Zhang Ning studied interior design and Yang Yafei studied furniture design, which formed the basis for their collaboration and the creation of Cometabolism Studio, and is a core element of their work. They are also different from other design collectives in that their aim is not so much to design functional products as to create contemporary artworks with a socially engaged perspective. In a sense, it can be said that their position is both clear and ambiguous, seemingly a hybrid production between design and art, but in fact, they neither want to offend design in the name of art, nor do they intend to use design to "impinge" on art. Most of the time, they are looking for some new gaps, some marginal areas, to "invade" or "occupy" the public space in an unobtrusive way, to provide some free convenience for the public. Avoiding the mainstream is their main strategy.

"Mock Epic" is the first solo show by Cometabolism Studio in the name of art. Instead of intervening in urban corners, this exhibition is attached to the white box space of the gallery. While the work retains its design attributes, the narrative no longer begins with how to serve society in the name of art, but with the U.S.-Soviet space program. In 1952, the cover of the March issue of Collier's magazine bore the line "Man will conquer space soon". Although, in the subsequent space competition, the U.S. and the Soviet Union launched artificial satellites, and the U.S. successfully landed on the moon, today, whether for the U.S. and the Soviet Union, or for all mankind, "conquer space" is still a joke. In the eyes of the two artists, such a cosmology is a "mock epic".

In this exhibition, Cometabolism Studio brings the space conquest plan of more than half a century ago into the everyday space, and reinterprets this "mock epic" in a flirtatious manner. For them, the utopian vision of the avant-garde has long been bankrupt, and today's design and art, though reconnecting art and life, are still subject to the dictatorship of the cultural industry and standard life. The authoritarian dictatorship of the Cold War is a testament to the common destiny of the two extreme ideologies shaped by the Cold War. What they are trying to do is to find a new way to rebuild the ambition of "emancipation" and a new goal for the future of everyday life in the middle of the two.

生活区

Living Quarters

“生活区”现场是一组由亚克力和机械配件构成的装置，造型大多来自太空计划中未曾实现的图纸和样本。两位艺术家并没有完全还原这些设计，只是取其部分或局部，尽管如此，它们依然带着早期先锋派设计的乌托邦色彩，保留着运动、速度以及向上的势能。不同的是，他们在设计中尽可能地融入某种实用的功能，有的可能是一个茶几，有的像书架，有的仿佛是落地灯，有的则像是屏风，还有的可能只是一个装饰用的摆件而已……展览的现场，散落的装置（配件），仿佛是某太空计划的失事现场，又像是一个“虚构”的人类日常生活的空间。滑稽的意味也体现在这里，就像他们所说的，这些原本不切实际的幻想和过时的发明，如今也变得真实和有效；这些原本带有明确意识形态指向的设计和构想，如今也变得客观、中性和标准。

The "Living Quarters" area is a collection of acrylic and mechanical installations, mostly shaped from unrealized drawings and samples from the space program. The two artists have not fully recreated these designs, but only taken some of them or parts of them, nevertheless, they still have the utopian color of early avant-garde design, retaining movement, speed and upward momentum. Some may be a coffee table, a bookshelf, a floor lamp, a screen, and some may be just a decorative ornament…… With the scattered installations (accessories) in the exhibition, the space is like a space program crash site. It is also like a "fictional" space of human daily life. The sense of “mock” implicates here, as they say, that these originally unrealistic fantasies and obsolete inventions have now become real and valid; these originally ideologically oriented designs and ideas have now become objective, neutral and standard.

自反词

Conronym

与“生活区”相反，在这一部分，他们创作的起点不是不切实际的太空计划，而是日常空间的某个角落和某个日常物。经由他们的重新演绎，这些日常空间和日常物原本的功能被彻底替代，它们可能变成另一个实用物，也可能变成一个纯粹的装饰品。比如游泳池变成茶几，跳台可能变成一个课桌……还有诸多从淘宝收集而来的工业代谢品图像，通过传统纹样（剪纸、木窗格等）的数学逻辑，生成了

各种无甚实用功能的装饰物——当然，如果你非要赋予它一个功能，也似乎未尝不可。不过，两位艺术家并不满足于这样一种简单的图像转译，目的也并非只是通向另一个（实用或装饰）物，关键还在于，这些新造物及其所隐喻的标准生活所传递的恐惧和不安。悖谬的是，这些异常的人造物所挑战的也正是标准生活：一方面它们源自标准生活，另一方面它们又反身指向标准生活的危险。而这个危险既来自设计，也来自今天的当代艺术，哈尔·福斯特（Hal Foster）早有预言，它们“带来了一种新式的自恋，空有外表，没有内涵——是对主体的神化，但同时也可能让主体消失”。

Contrary to the “Living Quarters”, in this section, the starting point of their creation is not an unrealistic space project, but a corner of an everyday space and everyday object. Through their reinterpretation, the original functions of these spaces and objects are completely replaced, they may become another practical object or a purely decorative one. For example, the swimming pool becomes a coffee table, the diving platform turns into a school desk…… and many industrial metabolic images collected from Taobao, through the mathematical logic of traditional patterns (paper-cutting, wooden window lattice, etc.), generating various decorative objects with little practical function. But if you insist to endow a function to them, it's not impossible. However, the two artists are not satisfied with such a simple translation of the image, nor is the purpose simply lead to another (practical or decorative) object, but the key lies in the fear and unease conveyed by these new creations and the standard life they metaphorically represent. Paradoxically, it is also the standard life that is challenged by these anomalous artifacts: on the one hand, they originate from standard life, and on the other hand, they point back to the dangers of standard life. This danger comes both from design and from today's contemporary art, which Hal Foster predicted long ago: "Design seems to advance a new kind of narcissism, one that is all image and no interiority - an apotheosis of the subject that is also its disappearance."