

TIAN Yi: *Braiding Corridors*

August 18 - September 19, 2023

No. 4 - 165 Wuyuan Rd. Shanghai

LINSEED is pleased to present TIAN Yi's (b. 1992, China) solo project "Braiding Corridors", which explores the perceptions of species in the context of scientific mystery and sci-fi narratives through a series of sculptures that intertwine architectural landscapes and organic textures. These organic abstractions evoke a sense of instability and ambiguity between a vast array of associations like the internet of things. Reflecting upon the relationship between an entity and its inhabiting environment, the artist reexamines the ineffable anxiety towards the unknown from both the natural and virtual world, and fabricates her own narrative which illuminates the fortuity in the process of development and questions the line between the imaginary and the real. The exhibition opens on August 18, 2023, and runs through September 19, 2023. Curator, writer, and Berggruen Scholar Iris Long writes about the exhibition and the artist's practice:

Fragments from the Next Weird

"Witnessed how one made organism had fragmented and dispersed, each minute part undertaking a long and perilous passage through spaces between, black and formless, punctuated by sudden light as they come to rest, scattered and lost—emerging only to be buried, inert, in the glass of a lighthouse lens." [1] In *The Southern Reach Trilogy*, in the uncharted zone known as "The Shimmer", electromagnetic signals and species' genes are trapped in an endless refractive loop, where genes mutate as they split, species boundaries diffuse, and the smallest units of the genome synthesize the most complex systems. The undefined, unidentified, and indescribable grotesque, like the ouroboros (the circular symbol of a serpent devouring its own tail), infinitely circulates within "The Shimmer"

When I first encountered this group of works, none of them had names, similar to the story of the *Southern Reach* ("A name was a dangerous luxury here. Sacrifices didn't need names."). In the moments leading up to this naming, they seem to be refracted from the cracks of certain weird and mysterious tales, meeting the observer one by one, pair by pair, group by group, without context, in the shape of a human being, of a plant-covered building, and of a miniature monument. They do not bring fear or grab feelings, but appear as a hidden and restrained invitation, a different "other" rather than a mad alien or a cliché and uncomplicated sci-fi. What we are invited into is a spatial interpretation of the "refraction," a prelude to "the next weirdness." These sculptures are conceptualized as building materials or shrubs evolving from the shapes of the sexual organs of various species, as if they are the new species/non-species born from the endlessly refracted and developed genes.

In conversation with the artist, I got to understand the trajectory of her research: the tension between genetic factors and environmental influences, the great uncertainty/non-linearity of biological information transmission, and the gender-based bias encoded in the scientific knowledge such as evolutionary biology, all of which had intrigued her—"...what we now understand is that sex isn't a crystal ball. Whether you produce eggs or sperm, it doesn't dictate what kind of dimorphisms exist, if any." [3] Even, for some animals, genetic sex determination can be replaced by environmental sex determination. Tracing the confrontations, intertwinements, synergies, and dislocations that occur on the genetic scale, as micro-structural eugenics are consumed by contingency, under the backdrop of Darwinian beliefs, a labyrinth entangled with genetic kinship emerges. Such emergence can be seen in a quote by American physicist and philosopher Karen Barad, "Not only subjects but also objects are permeated through and through with their entangled kin; the



other is not just in one's skin, but in one's bones, in one's belly, in one's heart, in one's nucleus, in one's past and future.”[4] In this exhibition, these unnamable sculptures begin to be imagined as organs in this labyrinth, allowing us to open up alternative gender scenarios. The “corridors” in the exhibition’s title is also an attempt to suggest the intricate, convoluted, and indistinct reproductive relationships, through their resonance with architectural structures full of secret doors and stretched corridors.

The strangeness of the old weird stories—whatever you think of, monstrous tentacles or Cthulhu's skin—seems to be very rare today, while technologies such as Cas9 (gene editing technology) and the continuous innovation of biological knowledge make the reality full of the possibility of becoming “weird”. The possibility of the next weird, unfolded by this series of Tian's works, comes from the deviation from the linear progression and technological boundaries, and derives from the multiple imaginings of genes, gender, and evolution. Perhaps, it is planting “The Shimmer” in the braiding corridors.

[1] VanderMeer, Jeff. 2018. *Area X: The Southern Reach Trilogy Collector's ed.* London: 4th Estate.

[2] Gallagher, Brian. 2022. “Overthrowing the Patriarchy Through Ecstatic Sex,” *Nautilus*. nautil.us/overthrowing-the-patriarchy-through-ecstatic-sex-21451/

[3] Barad, Karen Michelle. 2007. *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*. Durham N.C: Duke University Press.

Text by Iris Long

About the Artist

TIAN Yi was born in 1992, in Shanghai, China. She obtained her bachelor's degree from the London College of Communication in 2018 and her MA degree from the Royal College of Art in 2020. She currently lives and works in Shanghai. Tian's works are closely centered on the thinking of ecology and its derivatives. In her practice, she uses organic media and biological ingredients to recreate phenomena in a way of embedding. Combine with increasingly sensitive information extraction, Yi tries to present an improvisation via capturing a symbiotic system in an intergrading zone.

Her recent solo exhibition: “Braiding Corridors”, 2023, LINSEED, Shanghai. Her recent group exhibitions include: “Demonstration: The Art of Decision-Making Techniques”, 2023, Fosun Foundation, Shanghai; “Unknown Pleasures”, 2022, Soul Art Center, Beijing; “Perfect Partner in the Near Future”, 2022, Yuelai Art Museum, Chongqing; “Born in 1992”, 2022, Jiushi Art Museum, Shanghai; “USB Multi-Port Linking Exhibition”, 2021, MadIn Gallery, Qiao Space, Gallery Func, Shanghai; “Hereditary Territory”, 2021, Powerlong Museum, Shanghai; “RICAM Forum Workshops”, 2020, Centre Pompidou IRCAM, Paris; “Degree Show”, 2018, London College of Communication, London; “Arts Work of the Future”, Blavatnik Building, 2018, Tate Modern, London; “Science Museum Lates”, 2018, Science Museum, London.



田翊：甬道交错**TIAN Yi: Braiding Corridors**

2023年8月18日 – 9月19日
上海市五原路165弄4号

LINSEED欣然呈现田翊 (b. 1992, 中国) 个人项目“甬道交错” (Braiding Corridors), 通过艺术家一系列以建筑景观和生物结构形态交织的雕塑作品, 探讨科学神秘与科幻叙事语境下的物种认知惯性。这些作品的有机抽象形式由于复杂的关系网络激起了不稳定与模糊性, 如同物联网世界中千丝万缕的关联。这也正是艺术家对于物质和数字实体与其生存环境的思考, 借此重新审视当今随着生物世界与信息世界的愈发不可知而引发的难以言喻的焦虑, 探寻历史发展中的偶然性与人类秩序间的关系。展览将于2023年8月18日开幕, 并持续至9月19日。策展人、写作者、博古睿 (Berggruen Institute) 学者龙星如就本次展览及艺术家创作撰文如下:

自下一场怪谈穿梭来的碎片

“某个定制的生物体碎裂瓦解, 细小的碎片经过漫长危险的路程, 穿越黑暗无形的过渡空间和偶尔闪现的光亮, 最后消散失落——静静地埋在灯塔的玻璃镜片组里。” [1] 在《遗落的南境》 (The Southern Reach Trilogy) 中, 被称为“闪光”的不明地带里, 电磁信号和物种基因都陷在一个无尽折射的循环里, 基因在分裂时不断变异, 物种的边界弥散, 最小单元的基因组合成了最复杂的系统, 而未定型的、未具名的、未可描述的怪诞, 在“闪光”的内部如衔尾蛇一样无尽循环。

在我初次遇到这组作品时, 它们都还没有名字, 就像“南境”故事里一样 (“名字是危险的奢侈品。祭品不需要名字。”) 在这个命名之前的瞬间, 它们似乎像是由某个类似怪谈里的情节裂缝折射出来, 一个、一对、一组, 不带上下文地与观察者相遇, 以人的形状、植被攀爬的建筑的形状、微型纪念碑的形状。他/她/它们并不带来惊悚抑或攫人的感受, 更像一种隐秘、节制的邀请, 是有所不同的他者而非疯癫的异形或一目了然的科幻。而我们被邀请进入的, 是一种对“折射”概念的空间演绎, 某个“下一种怪谈”的序章。这些雕塑在概念上由各种物种生殖器的形状演变而成建材或灌木雕塑, 如同在“闪光”中因基因被不断折射而诞生出的新物种/非物种。

在同艺术家的交谈中, 我理解到她的研究轨迹: 遗传因素与环境影响之间的拉扯, 生物信息传递的极大不确定性/非线性, 和被编码进进化生物学等“科学认知”里的性别基础偏见, 都曾引起她的好奇——“性不是水晶球。无论产生的是卵子还是精子, 都不决定存在什么样的二态性”在一篇文章中, 她读到[2]。甚至, 对一些动物来说, 基因性别决定可以被环境性别决定所取代。当探针追踪基因尺度上发生的对抗、交织、协同和错置, 当微结构上的优胜劣汰被偶然性吞噬, 达尔文信仰幕布背后, 浮现了一个更纠缠的物种亲缘关系的迷宫, 或许在美国物理学家和哲学家凯伦·巴拉德 (Karen Barad) 的一段话里可以瞥见这个迷宫的样貌: “不仅主体, 而且客体都被其纠缠的亲缘关系渗透贯穿; 他者不仅存在于皮肤之中, 还存在于骨骼、腹部、心脏、细胞核、过去和未来之中。”[3] 而在展览的现场, 这些不可名状的雕塑, 开始被想象成这座迷宫里的机关, 让我们打开一些另类的性别场景。展览名称中的“甬道”, 亦是想以充满暗门和长廊的建筑结构, 暗示错综复杂的、边缘模糊的生殖关系。

旧怪谈的异质感——不论你想到了什么, 触手抑或克苏鲁的皮囊——在今天似乎已经很稀薄, 而酵素剪刀 (cas9) 之类的技术和生物领域认知的不断革新, 又使得现实充满成为怪谈的可能。这组创



所展开的另/下一种怪谈 (the next weird) 的可能, 恰恰来自于对线性演化的绕道而行, 和对技术边界的若即若离, 和对基因、性别及演化的多种想象。它或许正在交错的甬道种下“闪光”。

[1] VanderMeer, Jeff. 2018. *Area X: The Southern Reach Trilogy Collector's ed.* London: 4th Estate.

[2] Gallagher, Brian. 2022. "Overthrowing the Patriarchy Through Ecstatic Sex," Nautilus. nautilus.us/overthrowing-the-patriarchy-through-ecstatic-sex-21451/. 本文采取了霖舫的翻译。

[3] Barad, Karen Michelle. 2007. *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning.* Durham N.C: Duke University Press.

文 / 龙星如 Iris Long

关于艺术家

田翊, 1992年出生于上海, 2018年获得伦敦艺术大学传媒学院 (London College of Communication) 学士学位, 2020年获得英国皇家艺术学院 (Royal College of Art) 硕士学位, 目前生活工作于上海。田翊的创作围绕对生态及其衍生物的思考, 运用有机媒介及生物素材进行创作, 使之相互嵌入。结合日益敏感的信息技术, 她试图捕捉一种过渡中的共生系统来表现即兴关系。

其近期个展和项目包括: “甬道交错”, 2023, LINSEED, 上海。其近期群展包括: “示范: 做决定技术的艺术”, 2023, 复星艺术中心, 上海; “幻觉乱码”, 2022, 颂艺术中心, 北京; “近未来 - 完美搭档”, 2022, 悦来美术馆, 重庆; “生于1992——中韩青年艺术家交流展”, 2022, 久事美术馆, 上海; “USB 多端口链接展”, 2021, 没顶画廊、乔空间及 Func 画廊, 上海; “世袭领地”, 2021, 宝龙美术馆, 上海; “IRCAM Forum Workshops”, 2020, 蓬皮杜中心 IRCAM, 巴黎; “Degree Show”, 2018, 伦敦传媒学院, 伦敦; “Arts Work of the Future”, 2018, Tate 现代艺术美术馆 Blavatnik Building, 伦敦; “Science Museum Lates”, 2018, 伦敦科学博物馆, 伦敦。

