

"In China, We Don't Discriminate Between Art and Design". Danful Yang goes Back to Basics at Pearl Lam Galleries



Courtesy: the artist and Pearl Lam Galleries

Danful Yang, "Devil or Angel" (details) (2012), Porcelain wall installation

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Published: December 17, 2012



Danful Yang, "Packing Me Softly" (2012), Foam and Embroidery, L32 x W29.5 X H31 cm

Babies and cardboard cartons are departure points for the first design art exhibition at **Pearl Lam Galleries'** Hong Kong Pedder Building space: "Back to Basics — the Cross Fertilization of Design."

The event aims to redefine the relevance of China's craft in the context of twenty-first century as design art, Chinese artist Danful Yang told **ARTINFO**. "China has no design history. We only have craftsmen — the word 'designer' didn't emerge until the 1970s, when Western design influenced China," she explained.

"In the West, art is arranged over decorative art and design in a hierarchy, but in China, we don't discriminate between art and design — it's about creativity and the idea behind the object."

Featuring works by herself, French designer **André Dubreuil** and Pearl Lam's own collective **XYZ Design**, the exhibition embraces traditional Chinese arts and craft techniques such as cloisonné, woodwork and porcelain.

Taking centerstage is her installation of broken or disfigured infant figures made by the porcelain craftsmen of Dehua in Fujian Province. Balanced precariously in PVC tubes that represent the busy environment of this world, Yang's fragile and disturbing babies are titled "Devil or Angel", her reminder that the future is in our hands. "If you behave right, you can be an angel," she explains.

The exhibition also unveils new designs for Yang's Packing Me Softly series, which was first shown at PAD London earlier in October. Painstakingly sewn to imitate scribbled-on packaging cartons, the fine silk embroidery is so lifelike that visitors to PAD didn't recognise them as art, kicking the pieces out of the way when visiting the booth.

"They didn't do it on purpose, I know — but this is what I really want to express," said Yang. "People's attitude towards what's inside the box and the box itself is totally different. They want to take care of the things inside but are very rude to what's outside."

One of the pieces in this collection — modeled after the box Yang used for packing when she moved house — has also been donated to the **Hong Kong Ambassadors of Design** for auction.

Back to Basics—the Cross-Fertilisation of Design, December 14, 2012 - January 9, 2013 at the Pearl Lam Galleries, 601-605, 6/F, Pedder Building, 12 Pedder Street, Central, Hong Kong.

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