ALMINE RECH

Re-Constellations
5th Hangzhou Triennial of Fiber Art

Sep 23 — Nov 2, 2025 | Zhejiang Art Museum, China

The 5th Hangzhou Triennial of Fiber Art, curated by renowned curators Jiang Jun, Huang Yan, Assadour Markarov, and Xu Jia, takes "Re-Constellations" as its central theme. It brings together 45 outstanding artists from 17 countries and regions, who will collectively weave a new cultural canopy in Hangzhou—the ancient city of silk—using fiber art as a unique medium. The exhibition explores the cultural rise of the "Global South" and the future direction of contemporary art against the backdrop of global retreat and value reconstruction.

The theme "Re-Constellations" draws inspiration from an ancient metaphor that has run through human civilization: the vast starry sky likened to a woven fabric of interlacing threads. Different civilizations have imagined and interpreted the cosmos in diverse ways, shaping their own distinct worldviews. The ancient Greeks saw in the Orion constellation a hunter wielding a club; the Sumerians perceived it as the "Celestial Bull," a symbol of strength; while ancient Chinese astronomers constructed a cosmic order of "harmony between Heaven and humanity" through their system of "Three Enclosures and Twenty-Eight Mansions." However, with the advancement of modernity—especially after the International Astronomical Union standardized constellation boundaries based on Greco-Roman models in 1930—non-Western cosmologies were systematically marginalized and gradually faded from mainstream awareness.

The core mission of this Triennial is to challenge this singular "universal narrative." We seek to transcend the fixed boundaries of astronomy, transforming "Re-Constellations" into a metaphor for a cognitive revolution—one that not only deconstructs and reassembles the established "constellations" of art history but also collectively awakens the cultural "stars" of the Global South, enabling them to shift from "obscured dark stars" into "self-illuminating celestial bodies." In an era marked by the ebb of globalization and the erosion of monolithic narratives, this exhibition aspires to emulate our ancestors' practice of stargazing: to discover connections amid differences, and to forge links across fractures.

Dark Magazines employs the traditional Chinese craft of "brocade weaving" - a common Chinese household decorative item in the 20th century—to envelop international art and culture journals such as Flash Art and Art Forum. These fabrics, printed with iconic Chinese landscapes like Huangshan's pine trees, West Lake, and the Summer Palace, once served as significant cultural symbols in the planned economy era, functioning as both home decor and ceremonial gifts. The black-and-white negative effect on the reverse side of the brocade, combined with the act of wrapping, creates a dual path of visual deconstruction: it abstracts the colorful imagery into a schema of shadowy beauty while simultaneously dissolving the functional identity of the magazines as vessels of knowledge. This can be seen as a visual representation of the inevitable information loss and semantic drift that occur in cultural translation.

The scenic motifs in the brocade form an intertextual dialogue with the exposed journal titles. As the international publications are encased within a local traditional medium, their textual meaning undergoes filtration and reconstruction by the warp-and-weft system of the fabric, constituting a semiotic contest within a postcolonial context—one that hints at regional resistance amid the tides of globalization. The act of wrapping thus becomes both a reconfiguration of the materiality of archives and a restructuring of discursive power dynamics.