

Projection

May 26 — Oct 22, 2023 | Sifang Art Museum, Nanjing, Jiangsu, China

Sifang Art Museum is pleased to present *Projection*, a new group exhibition in the summer of 2023. Premised on a multifaceted perception of light, the exhibition brings together 40 works by 26 local and international artists / groups. Following the special visual and spatial design by participating artist and architect Duyi Han, the audience will embark on a journey to revisit the concept of illumination amidst the interweaving of ephemeral lights.

For a theme as timeless and as familiar as light, there is no need to re-emphasize how the evolution in the relevant knowledge, technology, and subject matter shapes art history, or how it is endowed by different cultures with meanings like brightness, warmth, etherealness, transmission, enchantment, and the interdependence of light

and shadow. The term “enlightenment,” one of the tokens of modernity, originates from the French word “lumières,” that is to say, light. Let the light of rationalism illuminates all and sundry. Tracing the scientific origin of light, the infiltration of light into the human eye to produce images serves as the basis for all visual phenomena and visual arts. The nature of light is often described as a stream of photons within a specific frequency range, exhibiting wave-particle duality.

But for the contemporary public who have grown used to glaring spectacles and media highlights and have endured dark moments of a crisis, is there still a yearning for greater, longer, brighter or even blinding beams of light? Perhaps at this turning point, we could refrain from assuming a universal light source that is monotonous and stiffened, and instead capture flows, changes, and interplays of diverging lights projected in different dimensions. Hence, the exhibition aims to start with the lived experiences of the contemporary public with regard to light, before traveling to the more distant. Through the four dimensions of retinal light, screen light, space light, and temporal light, the multimedia artworks in this exhibition seek to inspire more proactive and diverse imagination of light.

On the first-floor grand staircase, the “Jungle of Gazes” chapter creates an environment of interlocking gazes and mutual inspection through the eyes of various life forms in the works exhibited. In the underground exhibition hall, the “Machine of Simulation” chapter focuses on the expanding light of the screen, discussing how virtual images remold our perception of reality through synthetic photography and digital video works. The main exhibition hall on the first floor hosts the “Construct of Light” chapter. Taking Olafur Eliasson’s installation *Possibility Projector* as its centerpiece, it presents light installations, sculptures of reflective materials, and abstract paintings to explore how light and shade construct or erode space. In the second-floor upper gallery, the “Corridor of Time” chapter associates daylight permeating the translucent facade with the concept of “time” in Chinese culture, which stems from the practice of recording time based on changes in daylight. Domestic objects and nostalgic scenes that serve as vehicle for memory are scattered along the folding midair corridor. The unilateral lines of modern time seemingly intersect with the cyclic universe of antiquity.

Across from the terrace at the end of the exhibition hall, the skyscrapers on the other side of the Yangtze River are enwrapped in the shimmers of glass curtain walls, landscape lighting, and outdoor displays. However, what ultimately illuminates life is the feeble light that somehow finds its way to the bottom of one’s heart. Drawing inspiration from the mystic Venetian emblem on the poster, the audience is encouraged to transform the scope and medium of their vision along with their emotional rhythms. The light they perceive will be as heterogeneous as a starry summer night, projecting a magnificent spiritual panorama.

The exhibition is organized by Sifang Art Museum and produced by Director Lu Xun, with generous support from Nanjing Pukou Cultural Tourism Development Group and Sifang Culture Industry Group. We would also like to extend our gratitude to the artists, collectors ART ZHOU and Mr. Cao Jun, AIKE, AYE Gallery, BANK/ MABSOCIETY, Don Gallery, Kiang Malingue Gallery, MadeIn Gallery, Esther Schipper Gallery, ShanghART Gallery, and all friends that have offered their help and support.