

Is my practice contemporary?

Mengyue Zhu

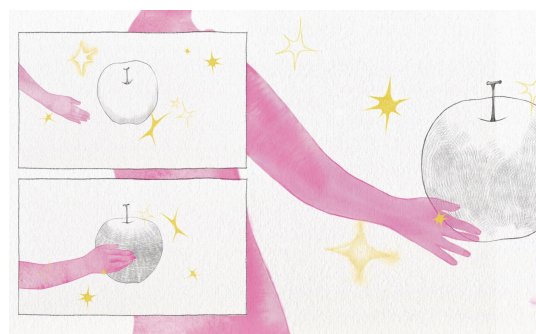
2308037

16-10-2023

Italian historian and philosopher Benedetto Croce once posited that "all history is contemporary history." Within the realm of the historical transmission of art, the continual reinterpretation of these "past" narratives effectively renders them as still belonging to the "present." We use the current perspective and concepts to give these 'classics' a contemporary interpretation. It can be argued that all of art history ultimately converges into contemporary art.

The question, 'Is my practice contemporary?' can be understood broadly as anything transpiring in the present being considered contemporary art. Given that my practices are created in the present, they inherently have contemporaneity. Narrowly speaking, it is also a complex problem. Contemporary art is an artistic creation that presents social trends and possesses a spirit of reflection and criticism. Of course, contemporary understanding of art is broader and more inclusive, and criticism is not the only way. Artists engage with contemporary societal, environmental, cultural, and medium-related issues, and use their diverse artworks to explore these issues, triggering people's interpretation and reflection. Next, I will explore the connection between my practices and contemporary art, and evaluate whether it is contemporary.

Contemporary artists often use their works to explore present-day social and political issues, intending to stimulate thinking and discussion. Among audience. My personal artistic works also attempt to reflect certain societal issues. My practice <APPLE>, for instance, aims to explore the contemporary phenomenon of society's pursuit of a singular and idealized concept of perfection.





Given the impact of social media, societal pressures, social recognition, and society's emphasis on physical appearance, individuals increasingly aspire to conform to similar physical attributes in order to meet society's standards of beauty. People all attempt to become the standard recognized perfection, and the definition of perfection tends to be 'singular'. Through the image of an apple, a fruit with a universal appeal characterized by a colorful skin texture like fireworks. So I compared the unique definition of perfection to the image of apple, which people continually pursue, even if they tear themselves apart, hoping to become it. However, at the end of the story, when individuals no longer fixate on the pursuit of a singular framework of perfection, they are all just ordinary but remarkable apples. Furthermore, I used the composition of Matisse's "The Dance" to depict the pursuit of perfection, contrasting the originally primal and free dance with the mechanized pursuit, provoking contemplation. This artistic commentary on societal phenomena interweaves with my artistic creations, attempting to empower my work as a reflection of the present thoughts.

Contemporary art emphasizes cross-cultural communication after the era of globalized economy. It is no longer limited to specific geographical and cultural backgrounds, but actively absorbs and integrates elements of different cultures. My work "A START OF THE END" aims to explore the cultural understanding of death under the influence of Tibetan Buddhism. This reflects my new perspective on cross-cultural and multicultural collision,



as I stand under the education of Chinese non faith culture.



The project hopes to present a peaceful process of death in Tibetan Buddhism through images, so that people from different cultural backgrounds can intuitively feel the understanding of death. The edge of death is the end and it also can be the beginning. Through these images, a death in this cultural context is formed, which is an infinite and abstract rebirth. I have presented cross-cultural understanding through visuals, integrating elements from different cultures, and creating new visual and ideological experiences.

In addition, the continuous development of diversified technologies has also provided broader creative tools and expressions for contemporary art. Some of my works involve digital art, which reflects the impact of contemporary technology on my creations. Some of my works are also trying to combine traditional printmaking, oil painting, and other media with digital art, expanding my diverse creative side.

In summary, I believe that my work has a certain degree of contemporaneity, but whether it fully conforms to contemporary art still deserves deeper consideration. At the global stage, diverse opinions exist concerning the definition and boundaries of contemporary art. However, I still agree that what occurs in the present is contemporary art, and this statement is replete with contemporaneity.