

Stella Zhang Shuang
張爽
0-Viewpoint

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Foreword

It is with great pleasure that we present Stella Zhang's strikingly beautiful work *O-Viewpoint* in her first solo exhibition at Galerie du Monde.

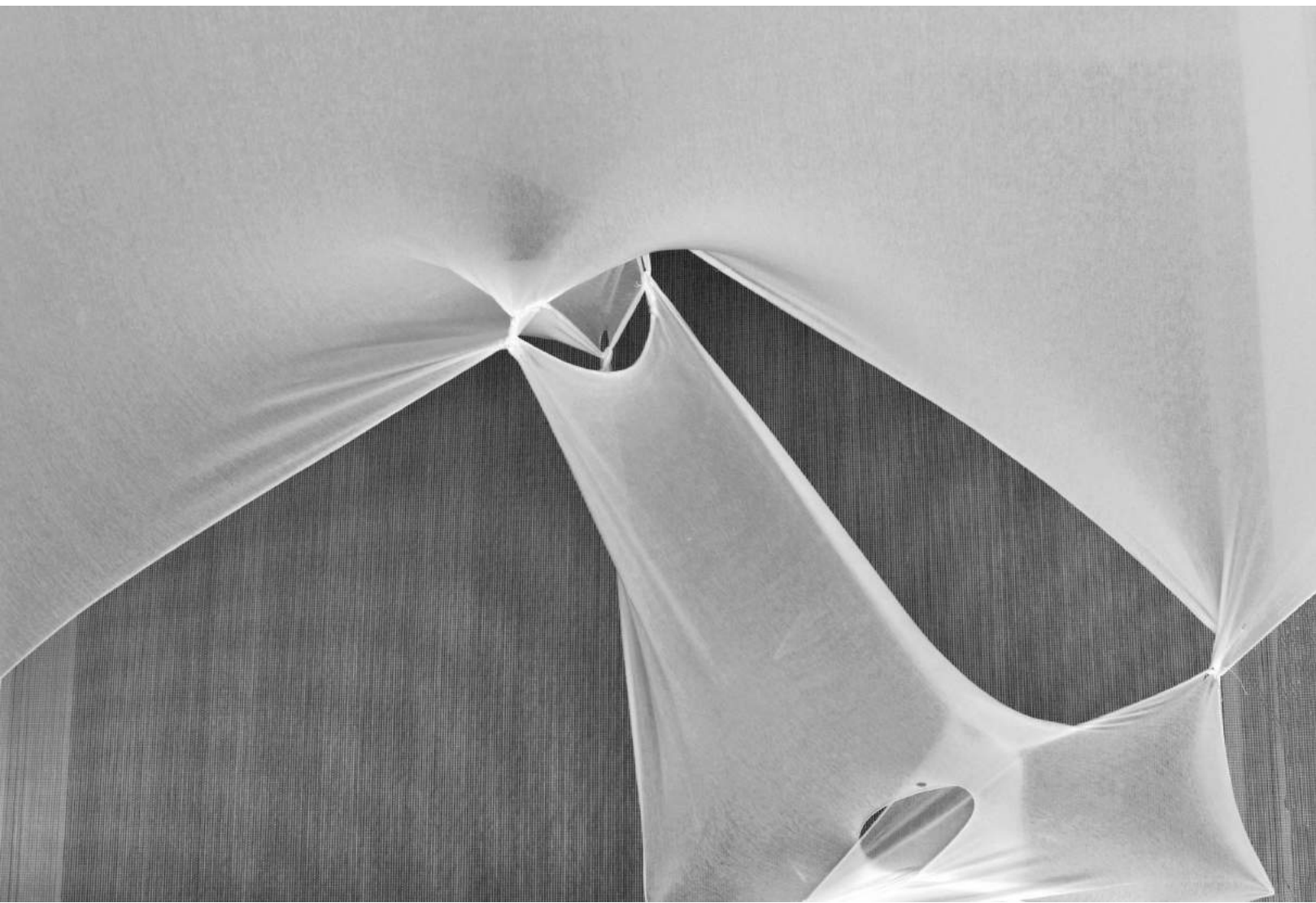
Not surprisingly, in this work, it is the energy of the human spirit, and at its most fundamental expression that propels Stella on her dream quest. Her vision seeks far more than perfect sensual beauty; rather her intent is to create a virtual presentation of feeling.

Stella Zhang's tools are the instruments that link her heart with her mind. More personal than her previous work, *O-Viewpoint* dramatizes the ever-present human need for release from inner repression. While art itself can be viewed as a metaphor for freedom, Stella's work represents a release from inhibitions. *O-Viewpoint* is a powerful coming together of these two expressions of liberation.

She sculpts her works into a myriad of emotionally sublime and corporeal shapes and forms. While each image stands alone, it also forms part of a complex visual dialogue between the various sectors of the work – its beauty, eroticism and unerring ability transcends the mundane through its sensual nature.

Stella Zhang literally moves us with her profound and provocative imagery. In the process, freedom and a release from inhibitions is refigured and presented in a most evocative manner.

Fred W. Scholle
Galerie du Monde



0-Viewpoint-6-12 0-視點-6-12 installation view 2010 dimension variable (detail)

A passage of “0”

Stella Zhang

Our keen awareness of life often transcends us to a realm of much deeper intuition ripened for our spiritual awakening. This spiritual awakening discerns the taste of an artwork. The realm of ‘0’ has always inspired me to search for the rhythm of life’s essence or its energy when released.

My works care more about life than a mere creativity expression of making arts. I’ve committed to connecting my life experience with life’s changes evolving around the shape of ‘0’.

Often the ordinary objects in my life as tiny as a drop of water, a piece of withered wood branch or a handful of sand from nature can arouse my most delicate feelings for them. They frequently become my sources of inspiration to transform these ‘0s’ into my artworks.

Because these materials come from nature and their simple elements among the creation, these subjects are my searches for the infinity without boundary. True beauty can only be discovered by ones who see the macro/ micro, subjective/ objective, art/ science, yin/ yang, east/ west,... and to have completed the incomplete. These contrasting



0-Viewpoint-2-16 0-視點-2-16 Mixed Media 2010 (detail)

properties strengthen my inner freedom to envision many imaginary spaces, their flexible elasticity, their infinite extension and permanency as implied by ‘0’.

‘0’ is my pursuit, a response to life’s spirit essence or my Asian’s taste of revelation in life. ‘0’ has cleansed, filtered, distilled, accumulated and recorded every bit of my life experience to create a ‘0-energy’ realm on canvas. The energy stored within ‘0’ sphere is a condensed substance field to transform the complex to the common simple, the human physical to the divine and mystical. These imply a perpetuating force to continue along the ever changing universe.

Multiplying '0s' connected the fragmented visual points in the environment by giving birth to the organisms within the revolving circles of earth. Every object in life rotates around a full cycle of birth, beginning, crack, mutation, merge, death, end, rebirth as depicted in my '0' series. The revitalizing energy helped me tremendously to inject life into my arduous art making process. From these '0s', I have found my loss to replenish my future consistently. These joining power has energized my consciousness to express their fluidness and richness among the passage of time.

The spiraling '0s' reinforced my realization of the interrelated succession of the ecosystem. These '0s' refreshed myself with a 'beginner's heart' in the daily endeavors of mine. They always offered me a space or realm with progress to do a house cleaning of my mind to free my self-centered soul to reconnect with and resume an original spirit. When I little think of achievement or think of self, I've become a true beginner to really learn something. A

beginner's heart often owns a gentle spirit of compassion. When my heart is compassionate, I then notice that I can start to re-examine the trueness of life and learn from life.

As an artist, I pray sincerely that my artworks may interact with viewers to initiate more caring heart for making the world a better place together where we all live with greater compassion.

For me, '0' is Zen, an awakening, a realization, a compassion surpassing the form or format. They recorded many traces I've treaded upon in life to seek the spirit within the living organisms via the language of their own to represent their portraits of nature.

'0' is Tao, it is in my passage rather than my path. As I looked into the spirit of cosmic change- I tried to register the eternal growth which returns to itself to produce new forms in harmony, in pureness and in oneness.



0-Viewpoint-2-5 0-視點-2-5 installation view 2010 dimension variable (part)

The Abstraction of Whiteness

Mary-Ann Milford-Lutzker*

Stella Zhang approaches her art with precision. Decisive cuts in her paintings reveal deep openings that can be read as wounds, but there is no blood. The ethereal sensuality suggested by the materials she uses is immediately negated. Tears are stitched together like scars. White sheets, loaded with layers of cultural coded meanings, are stretched, pleated, folded and knotted, intimating the tensions of sleepless nights, tightly wound bandages, and shrouds. Frayed edges in some areas are like dripping, viscous sinews. Sand has been painted on canvas to enclose yawning vulvas. Toothpicks pierce softly rounded organic shapes. Discomfort arises when trying to investigate meaning. Expectations, particularly those associated with femaleness, and the pristine qualities of whiteness, however, fall into question. Yet it is the abstraction of whiteness that is the alluring element of Zhang's art.

Despite feeling as if one has intruded upon intimate expressions of personal angst, Zhang makes clear, strong, feminist statements through her art. To devote her entire oeuvre to maintaining such a sustained vision must reflect her inner conflicts and search for meaning. It takes courage to make such self-revealing work, yet the veiled message, presented through abstraction, is one that is readily understood. It is still daring to make such art in the twenty-first century, when certain cultural mores often frown upon sexual explicitness, especially when made by a woman. Zhang's approach in fact contravenes the decidedly male and acceptable view of what art by women should be.

White on White is an apt title for Zhang's exhibition as the coded languages and double-entendres are many. White in the West signifies virginal purity, in the East it is associated with death. Whiteness is the absence of color, the absence of life; it is the clouded veil that becomes the shroud. Whiteness conveys a sort of innocence, we can become beguiled by it, entrapped by it, and in Zhang's art we find it both beckons us into yet also repels us from her private world. With installations this changes, this is where Zhang's art becomes interactive. We are not invited to participate as much as compelled to do so. We walk between and under white cloths that are stretched and torn to enter into an interior space of layers of translucent skin-like veils (0-Viewpoint 6).

There is a seduction about Zhang's work. The appealing softness of plush forms, the dream-like atmospheres evoked by her installations, whether walking through a piece such as (0-Viewpoint 6-7), or making one's way around the towering phalluses (0-Viewpoint 1-4). The haunting quality of these works that invites closer observation is disrupted by proximity. The abrasive sand that envelops the large vulva paintings (0-Viewpoint 5-14, 5-15) is deceiving from a distance as the cloud-like washes become redolent of uncomfortable irritants. The organic, soft forms of phalluses and vulvas (0-Viewpoint 2-6, 2-13) sprout spikes, like the tentacles of sea urchins, both endearing and repellant simultaneously. The negation of the sensuous mirrors the attraction of opposites; it is the constancy of the emerging and dissolving nature of change that is the essence of the I-Ching.

Mostly Zhang's art is about the body, the female eviscerated body that is a vision of interiority. There is nothing intimate or sensual about these paintings. In fact there is a sterility and clinical precision about them that evokes laboratories. Each incision is cleanly cut to reveal inner layers that in turn reveal yet more layers, all of which are devoid of color, of blood and bodily fluids. Monochromatic paintings of the 1950s and 1960s, so significant to abstract expressionist artists such as Ad Reinhardt, Barnett Newman, Clyfford Still and Mark Rothko, insistently rejected interpretive references. Zhang's monochromatic works do not allow such rejections of meaning. They may be monochromatic and abstract, however, they invite, if not implore, viewers to strip away their layers to discover meaning.

In her work Zhang plays with size and scale, from enormous towering phalluses over ten feet high, to installations that encompass whole galleries, to small more intimate works such as the stuffed and spiked organic objects (0-Viewpoint 2-5). A detail of one such piece (0-Viewpoint 2-1) is reminiscent of a rose with its white petals curled tightly within itself as if guarding a secret, yet protected by its thorny exterior. The rose is so beautiful, and yet so vulnerable, its only armor being its thorns. The meticulous sculpting of this labial rose recalls white porcelain blanc de



0-Viewpoint-1-4 0-視點-1-4 installation view 2010 dimension variable (part), photo courtesy of CCFSF

chine, the most treasured of ceramic bodies, its whiteness proclaiming its purity, its essential untouchability, yet also its strength.

The confidence with which Zhang works and expresses herself comes from long years of training. From the time that she was a small child she learned from her father, Zhang Ping, the noted brush painter, who was for many years a highly esteemed professor at the Chinese Academy of Fine Art (CAFA) in Beijing. She attended the CAFA High School for artists, where she studied and practiced calligraphy and painted in the classical tradition every day for four years, before entering CAFA as an undergraduate. One could say that she was born to be an artist, essentially it is in her DNA, she had no choice—yet she is a restless spirit. Frustrated by the essential conservatism of the Chinese art world regarding women artists in the 1980s, she went to Japan to continue her studies. She received her Master of Fine Arts degree at Tokyo Art University, and was married, only to find that gendered expectations were also the norm in Japan. In 2003 she came to California alone with her six-year old daughter. With each move Zhang has had to learn a new language along with different cultural

expectations. To survive she has had to adapt, and has found strength throughout by making art; she has said that for her art is like medicine, it is a way of healing herself. When cutting into a canvas or an object it is like cutting into herself. It is as if she wants to cut, remove and scrape away memories that she cannot erase.

The power of Zhang's art is that each piece possesses a pristine beauty. But in an age of skepticism and violence we look for the flaws, the uncertainties, and the vulnerable points. It is almost a relief to find them—the cuts, the abyss-like holes, the spiked objects, the abrasive surfaces. The tensions expressed are both literal and metaphysical, whether they are stretched sheets redolent of restless nights, pierced and spiked objects, sand trying to foil entry, or the fear of invasion by apocalyptic towering phalluses capable of nuclear destruction. By drawing us into her complex world, quite literally through her installations, we face our own fears, but we emerge in an altered state of awareness, and this is where Zhang's art succeeds.

- February, 2015, Mill Valley, California

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抽象的白

Mary-Ann Milford-Lutzker*

張爽的創作善於運用極為精準而暗喻的藝術表現手法。正如其作品中撕裂的畫布恍如無血的傷痕。雖然她在作品中很直接地運用了性徵造型，但在傳達信息上毫無庸俗的誘惑。直觀上白布塑造的皺紋肌理，像是撕裂後凝固在一起的傷疤；層層疊疊的破碎布片和那稀稀落落的線頭，密碼般地纏成了糾結的經絡與情緒……畫布上的細紗，似乎隱隱圍繞着女性身體的外緣；立體造型上的遍佈刺感的牙籤，空間中柔軟材料的拉伸、褶皺、折迭和打結以及多種細節處理，讓人聯想起一種漫長的心路歷程。如裹屍布般緊緊纏繞的繃帶亦如對人為束縛以及人生終結的思考。拋開這些嘗試深入的解讀，張爽的作品也許首先帶給人的是一抹不安：因為端莊拘謹的傳統審美已被徹底顛覆；純淨無染的白色也成了極具表現力的創作元素，而這恰恰是張爽作品的魅力所在。

儘管張爽的作品表現的是一種個人的焦慮，但從中可以明顯地感受到女權意識，透過各種材質的表面你能感受到一種對性別以及身份的清晰思考。她的作品傾注於這一主題表達，讓人能夠真切感知她內心的掙扎和對真知的求索。即使在如今的21世紀的文化環境，性主題的表達仍然會遭到各種質疑，更何況出自一位女性藝術家。因此，這種進行深度的自我剖析，並通過抽象的藝術表現手法對人性以及權利結構的認識的直接表現，確實需要莫大的勇氣。張爽的藝術直白的挑戰了男權社會對女性藝術家的固有定位。

張爽的作品主題“白上之白”（White on White）顯得頗為貼切，因為展出的作品無不隱含深意，且允許多種釋意相容共存。白色在西方文化中代表著貞潔與自由空間，而在東方則與死亡和葬禮有著千絲萬縷的聯繫。因為白色退去了萬物的色彩，也隱去了千姿百態，如生命中的原始能量，本質而不容回避。這種單純的視覺吞噬恰如裹屍布般的沉重而肅殺。但從另一個角度看：白色的單純，卻可能讓你在不知不覺間墮入美麗迷人的謊言……張爽能夠嫺熟自如地運用白色表達多重意向，因此她的作品更讓人無法捉摸：似乎愈是切近卻愈感遠離，令人觸及深處一刻，卻發現仍然身墜迷霧之中。張爽一體多面的藝術特質在作品中如此煥然呈現；她的作品更像是一份邀請和提案，讓觀者與作者之間靈犀暗

通。穿行於緊繃或撕裂的白布之間，撩起表面薄紗進入實質空間的同時藝術家的藝術密碼也終將被層層破解（0視點6）。

張爽能夠運用多種材料打造柔軟而明確的藝術效果。不論是在“0視點6-7”作品前駐足，還是從“0視點1-4”前走過，她的作品無論遠觀和近看，總給人如夢似幻的特質。在作品“0視點5-14，5-15”，一張巨幅的陰部畫面被粗糙的沙粒所圍繞，這些沙粒遠遠望去仿佛彤雲披拂；但是近看之下，儼如異物感的細節處理卻造成令人不安的視角反差。在“0視點2-6，2-13”之中，她使用柔軟的材料製作的性徵造型，釘在其上的尖刺仿佛海膽的觸鬚，讓人心生憐愛卻又無法靠近。這個違背經典美學法則的創作卻收穫了意外的效果。也許這正符合《易經》中對顯露與消失的恆久不變自然法則。

張爽的大部分作品表達都與身體有關，通過表現女性外觀身體的特徵卻暗示着深層的心裡變化。讓人們直接聯想到的是人與其性別身份。這些作品非關情欲，對於細節與精度的尺度把控，引導觀者的視線穿梭於如實驗室般感知瞬間的神經脈絡。整個作品中沒有顏色和血跡，更沒有體液，卻着實有着不能回避的吸引。回望20世紀50年代至60年代，單色畫曾是很多表現主義藝術家的寵兒，如艾德·萊因哈特（Ad Reinhardt）、巴內特·紐曼（Barnett Newman）、克萊福特·斯蒂爾（Clyfford Still）、馬克·羅斯科（Mark Rothko）等藝術家都將此作為重要的創作形式，但他們並不希望自己的作品被深入解讀。與此相反，張爽的單色作品卻是經得起細細品味的，觀者可以通過其抽象的藝術表現手法，逐層抽絲剝繭，挖掘出畫面背後的內涵。

在創作中，張爽對作品的尺寸強調更像是為了把握能量與精確的平衡。其中，一組象徵男權的陽具作品高度超過十英尺，而另一件以子宮為造型的作品則覆蓋了整個畫廊的內部空間。而她的小型作品也能輕易地抓住觀者的視線。既有柔軟帶刺的有機物體（0視點2-5），以及令人聯想的細節塑造（0視點2-1），後者對身體造型的處理讓人不禁聯想起層層纖薄緊鎖的白玫瑰，尖銳的針刺像是一種固執，似乎是自我看護。這讓人想起著名

的德化白瓷（又稱中國白），這種明代的瓷器以白色昭示著純度的力量，讓人油然產生“可遠觀而不可褻玩”的莊重之情。

多年來的藝術學習和文化薰陶，讓張爽找到了自由獨特的表達方式。張爽的父親張憑是著名的國畫畫家，曾長期擔任中央美術學院的教授。因此，張爽幼年時就對藝術耳濡目染。在青少年時代，她就讀於中央美術學院附中，畢業後順利考入中央美術學院。人們或許會說，她天生已被烙下藝術基因，走上藝術之路應是那麼的順理成章。然而，獨立自省的性格使她另覓其徑。20世紀80年代，面對當時中國的藝術環境，她決定東渡日本留學。在日本期間，她獲得了東京藝術大學的美術碩士學位。隨著婚姻、人生經歷以及生活環境的變化，在日本期間她開始關注不同文化中的性別規範，更於2003年帶著六歲的女兒移居美國加州。常年的旅居和遷居生活，讓她在接觸不同文化的同時，多了一些思考的角度。在適應新的生活環境的同時，藝術創作更成為她生活中不可缺少的平衡。在畫布上剪裁切割時，她好像在剖析自己的內心世界，沉浸在創作之中的她，能夠在過程中找到自我與自由。

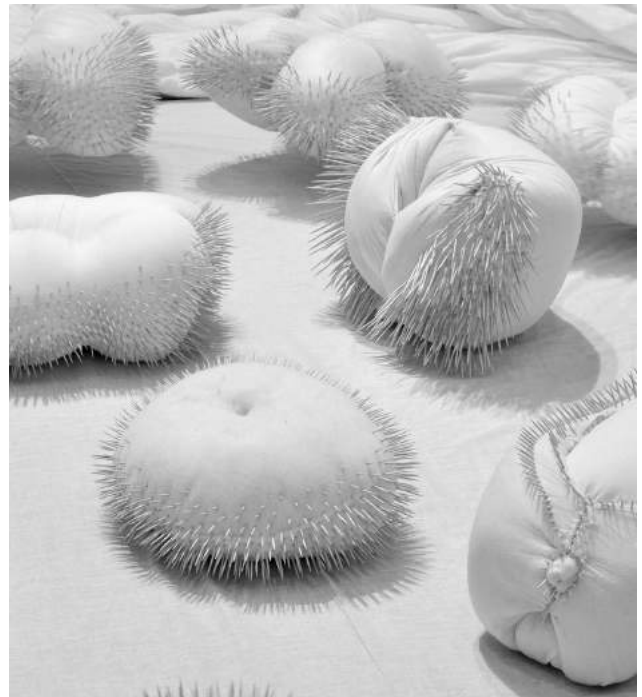
張爽作品的魅力在於有一種原始與能量的美；其富有張力的作品又顯示出形而上的意味。在這個充滿懷疑與美學暴力的現實中，我們可以看到她的作品在表達缺陷、脆弱或不確定性。不難發現在其作品中的破裂、尖銳與粗糙元素之下暗藏的不安、恐懼與躁動……她引領我們進入一個錯綜複雜的個人世界，在那裡，我們直面自身的恐懼，卻又得到深刻的領悟，這正是她的成功所在。

（本文由英文原稿翻譯而成，經作者授權出版）

-2015年2月，米爾谷，加利福尼亞州

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舊金山亞洲藝術博物館亞洲當代藝術委員及亞洲藝術協會顧問委員，印度藝術與文化遺產協會SACHI之創辦人之一
傳統及當代亞洲藝術策展人及評論家



0-Viewpoint-2-6 0-視點-2-6 Mixed Media 2010 dimension variable (part)

From Odyssey to Oasis, the Viewpoint of 0

Abby Chen*

"I expect to be inwardly submerged, buried. Perhaps I paint to break out" – Merleau Ponty¹

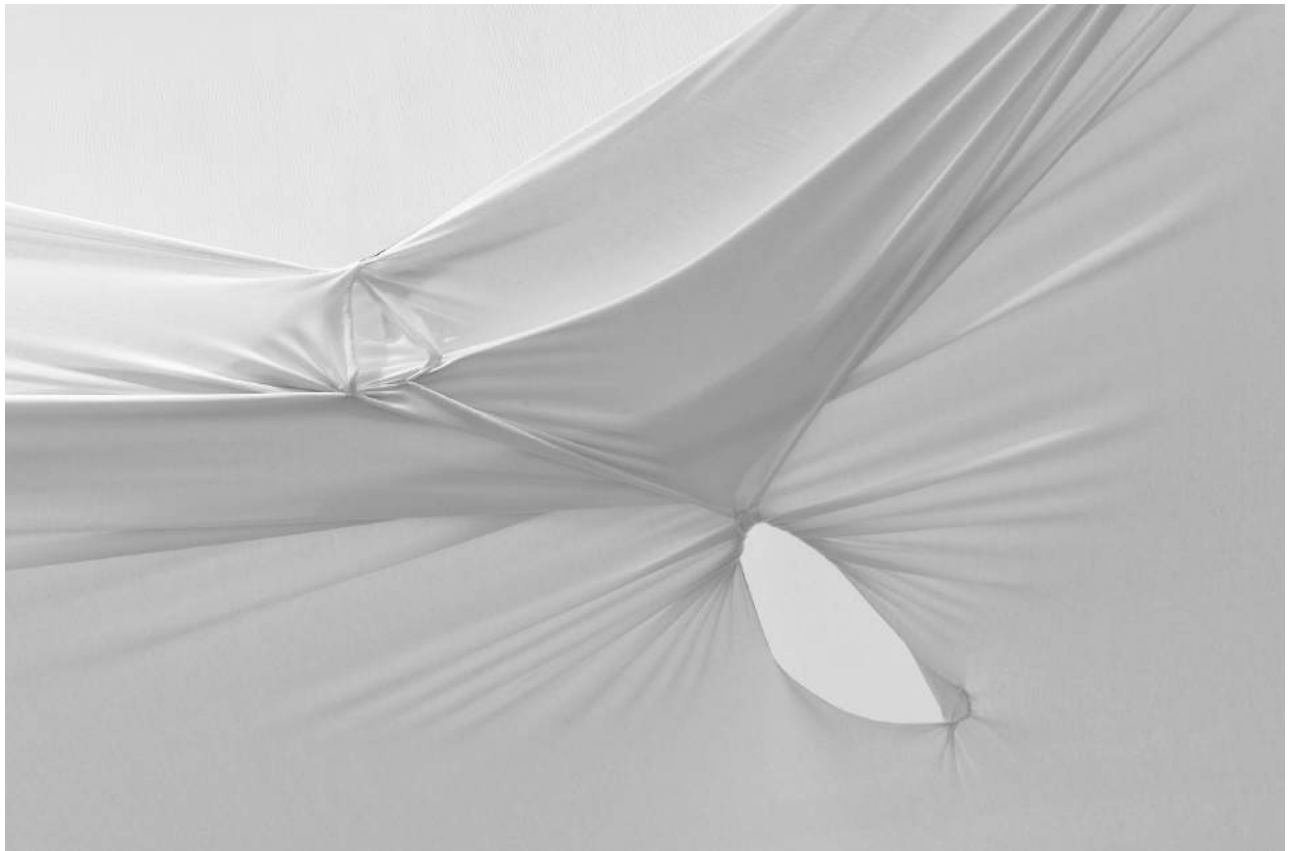
Born to a family of artists in Beijing in 1965, Stella Zhang started to learn painting at age of 7. She received art training at the local youth center and was enrolled into the High School of Central Academy of Fine Arts (CAFA), which pretty much guaranteed her entry into the Academy upon her graduation. Excelled in a highly competitive art education system at the time, Zhang said she was very well behaved, being a good daughter in Chinese sense. By 1985 at age of 20, Zhang was admitted into CAFA and followed masters in traditional ink painting. It was also around this time, Zhang started to grow a sense of self and became rebellious. She was anxious to find new expression but felt she was confined in a "box." If it is safe to say that Zhang's upbringing to this point was complacency under a parental safeguard, she was about to form the first perception of her own in a convergence of personal quandary and a historical era.

The Chinese art scene in the eighties was the most active since the inception of People's Republic of China. Almost ten years after the culture revolution, many, particular the young people, including artists, poets, and scholars were perplexed by China's past and future, with a consensus that something drastic was about to take place. 1985 is now marked as a critical year for "85 movement" or "85 new wave," led by a groups of pioneering artists and critics, many of whom are some of the most prominent figures in Chinese contemporary art field today. Following the country's aphasia of decades, it was an era that was full of hope and desperation, with a strong willingness to speak up. Without exception, artists bearing ideas were eager to invigorate the wave visually and critically, by breaking shackles circumscribed on centralized control of authority, as well as rigid tradition. This movement, along with many other movements going on in the country at the time, eventually faded out in the night of June 4th 1989, the Tiananmen crackdown.

It was certainly chaos for Stella Zhang. Trained as a traditional ink painter, Zhang became aware of her interest in contemporary art expression and works created by other artists. Robert Rauschenberg, Louise Bourgeois, Käthe Schmidt Kollwitz, and Eva Hesse, were just a few names of many that struck and inspired her. The intrinsic power of an individual's personality conveyed in these works seems to be what was lacking in artworks by Chinese artists. Zhang tried a few ways to innovate traditional painting but remained unsuccessful. She was not alone. Whether it was deformed ink stroke, abstract pattern, or application of new materials attempted by her or others, she found the outcome unsatisfying. She soon realized that the four elements, brush, ink, paper and ink-slab that constitute traditional ink painting, have become the obstacles that trammled her to break free. She was finding traditional painting too big of a framework with too little of possibilities. She cited the story of *Journey to the West* as analogy to describe this stalemate of hers: I was like the *monkey king*, regardless how far you go, you can't jump out of *Buddha's palm*.²

When Zhang was asked about her sense of self and environment during those four years, she recalled:

I was very confused at the time dealing with growing pain, treacherous relationship, artistic expression, and what was going on in China. For those of us admitted into CAFA, we were privileged and therefore all somewhat conceited. We seemed to know everything but we actually didn't. In 20/20 hindsight, I had a vision like a frog in the well at that time, clueless about the world beyond school. That was the era with no such thing like Internet and direct access to outside of China. However, the school strived to bring us visiting scholars and catalogs. We were lucky to be exposed to more new practices and thoughts than the general public. Consequently many of us sensed the big gap between artworks in China and those in the west, but none of us can decipher the reason behind it. Moreover, I was baffled and disappointed by what happened in 1989, I felt stuck and lost. I was perceiving the world and the self



0-Viewpoint-6-6 0-視點-6-6 installation view 2010 dimension variable (detail)

¹Andre Marchand, cited in Merleau-Ponty, 1964, p. 129

²In conversation with the author, 2009

without a perception of my own.³

The notion of “perceiving without a perception” was Zhang’s subjective assessment of the dichotomy formed by this certainty of unknown and the plight with her existing aesthesia. Zhang needed an answer, but not from the safe haven she has been sheltered; she wanted to ask questions, but was suspicious and doubtful of what the questions were. Just as the eye sees the world, and it sees what the world lacks in order to be a painting, and what the picture lacks in order to be itself... the same thing is both out there in the heart of the world and here in the heart of vision⁴. This dual predicament of artistry and self was an effective impetus for Zhang to seek change. In 1990 at age of 25, Zhang left China for Japan, a country she expected to be similar to China, and only to find out it was significantly different.

For Zhang, the experience living and studying in Japan from 1990 to 2000 was a process of metamorphosis in both of her artistry and her sense of self. The training received in renowned Tama Fine Art Institute and Tokyo Art University provided new direction and possibilities of her artwork, especially the application and manipulation of material and mediums. She benefited from the free-style teaching following her professor Uneo Yasuo, who encouraged her to try new approaches. What Zhang once found restrictive of traditional ink painting took on a new life with different media, such as the colorful Iwa-enogu (a Japanese pigment color from rock and plant) and Nikawa (glue), the form and the texture could be easily perceived as oil painting when the process was not explained (the colorless dream II, 2002). Zhang described the overwhelming variety and technique of material she was exposed to was like “a girl who likes sweets in a candy store.”⁵ From Zhang’s first monograph “Stella”, it was evident that her technique was refined, confidently shifting to wood, flax-paper and numerous materials from Chinese Xuan paper and ink, mixing with all kinds of ordinary material from daily life.

The exuberance of color from Iwa-enogu and the rhythm of mixed media furthered her understanding of properties of the medium, which allowed her to make a qualitative leap from the traditional ink form to an abstract expression.

While Zhang was greeted with Japan’s industrialized modernity as well as the countries obstinacy of etiquette and tradition, she also got a taste of xenophobia and gender bigotry being a sojourner and woman in this extremely male dominated society. The submissive role Japanese culture requires the women to play was a sharp contrast from that privileged, conceited and respected artist in China. Besides, China as a socialist nation, women enjoy higher degree of equality than many other countries. As a result, Zhang must realign and reposition herself to survive and start anew. In addition to retreating to her “good daughter” persona with clear knowledge that she was not, she also had to work many side jobs as clerk, waitress and tutor to make a living. This immediate and inevitable dislocation and displacement, for the first time in Zhang’s experience, forced her to look at herself through a different lens.

She has become a foreigner of her own life.

Her studio became the oasis of peace, providing equilibrium and outlet so that she could be at ease and listen to her true voice through art. To say Zhang’s perception was formed prior to her arrival to Japan, her conflict was no longer between not-knowing and known. Her encounter with the aesthetic, methodology, hierarchy, emotion, and gender simultaneously confronted her to galvanize self-awakening and enlightening. The environment she must succumb to edified a reflexivity of what she was not, which took her beyond herself in order to return, just as how Homi Bhabha described in his *Location of Culture*. The malleability of Zhang’s perception started to form from the crude not-knowing/known, which has then become a reference point for her new departure of artistry.

³Ibid.

⁴Stella Zhang, Monograph, 2003

⁵Conversation with the author

In 1994, Zhang got married and gave birth to her daughter in 1997, which led to a three-year break from art making. It was much needed as Zhang recalled. Having excelled the technique of the material, the form became a routine and boredom. She soon got tired of it. However, while assuming new roles of being a wife and a mother, Zhang found new interest in the intertwining relationships of life and body, wholesome and imperfection, and even time and space. Unlike feeling puzzled when she left China, Zhang was no longer equivocal about the world and herself. She started to form a new outlook in clarity of *what is not that*. The three-year break allowed Zhang to recuperate physically and mentally, let everything sediment as well as accumulate. This, as Zhang described herself, was like getting ready to exuviate, and to transform.

In 2000, Stella Zhang obtained residency in the U.S. and began to travel frequently between Japan and the U.S, and eventually settled down in 2003. When she visited New York, it was an immediate realization about the problem of her work: there was a lack of core in her work. A strong sense of dislocation or anachronism emerged again. Her previously formed perception of aesthetics and obsession with style and material were subverted. What she once eluded, resented and even rejected started to make sense. The absent side of the equation to that *what-is-not* finally became a visible *what-is*. The uncanny force behind all the impetus was demystified. It's all about timing, or it is fate? It seemed that the stimulus arrived just as Zhang was in need of it. Yet, it is important to note that "*to bring a vision that is not our own into account, it is to be sure inevitably, it is always from the unique treasury of our own vision that we drew, and experience therefore can teach us nothing that would not be outlined in our vision.*"⁶

The works Zhang created while she was living in Japan were the heap of her learning and experiments. These works demonstrated her solid ability of color, material, and genuine attempt of abstraction (see *Monograph 2003*), yet

they were monotonous and vacuous in substance and lack of originality. In 2004 and 2007, Zhang published new bodies of work after visiting New York and settling down in Los Angeles, demarcating a lapsing-away from the previous patency. These new works marked Zhang's significant break through as not only she simplified her visual language and form, she also embarked on the perception she formed within the past few years – the notion of "0."

"0-Viewpoint" series is Stella Zhang's perception of the mundane world and her inner self. In *Monograph 2004*, "cultural identity," "err," "resentment," "suspicious," and "alienation" made their first appearance in Zhang's statement, which ostensibly deviated from her previous hopeful, innocuous and complacent assertion. According to Zhang, "0" is both a form and substance, endlessly referenced by Daoism and Zen. "0" carries the omni-bearing significance that "one" comes from "0," then "two", then "three" and all beings. As this series continued to develop in 2007, Zhang consciously sought "0" through shape, color, and materials, which in turn convey her perception of "0" as a state of unconsciousness, somewhat natural, free, and spontaneous. From silver, green or blue translucent water droplet, to textures and layers of whiteness, "0" at this stage resembles Zhang's worldly vision with random touch of something internal, uncanny, and lyrical. Something compelling but hidden emerged in Zhang's execution of the work: succinct, transcendent and serene.

Just as Merleau Ponty pointed in "Eye and Mind:" "*We must take literally what vision teaches us: that through it we touch the sun and stars, that we are everywhere at once, and that even our powers to imagine ourselves elsewhere.*"⁷ Notion of abstraction interested Zhang, she is ever conscious of the potential of abstraction to heighten the sense of image and object, to intensify the suggestion of individual emotional response to actual scene. Zhang's ability of creating the vivid but surreal visual was effective and pleasing, as an obvious result of solid technique and

⁶The Merleau Ponty reader, The Intertwining – The Chiasm

⁷The Merleau Ponty reader, Eye and Mind



refined handling of details. This body of works mirrors the foundation of Zhang's perception when she began the series. They provide a sense of origin hinting a starting point as it progresses and evolves.

In 2010, Zhang debuted the new phase of her "0-Viewpoint," making an outward and visible shift again from her previous two-dimensional mixed media works to three-dimensional sculptures, video and site-specific installations. This time, the message got more complicated and conflicted. A field of soft and suggestive pillow-like forms lies on the ground inviting touch, but bristles with sharp points. Gentle smoke drifts lazily on a video screen surrounded by nails that anchor tautly stretched fabric, pulling in conflicting directions. These new works, alluring organic forms hint at tenderness and vulnerability while unexpected creases, spikes and smears of sand allude to a more complex and agitated landscape of feelings beneath the surface. With five dramatic all-white installation works, Zhang continued her deeply personal and often provocative exploration of identity – as an immigrant, a sexual being and artist. In her aching, sensitive sculptures, audience gets a sense of pain and struggle immediately, and it is the very essence of her new body of art.

"What appears in my work is the result of a real individual being shaped time and again by cultural forces and reaching for new equilibrium," she said, "In a new place, I must learn again about grief and loss, law and power, estrangement and acceptance, and all kinds of realities that exist in my new situation. Living at the intersection of cultures agitates my work." Her days in Japan were a phase of change, search and discovery, as Zhang found and worked out the structure of a new art. With it, she emerged from the unenlightened young girl as an artist reborn. To speak of this experience as an odyssey seems entirely appropriate. Revealing to us in their relatively unmediated directness is the operation of her mind, and often suggests the sources and techniques of her art.

Perhaps there is no important demarcation between any of the paintings and installations except what one might artificially draw, as the artist's actual experience was more likely a seamless and impenetrable ongoing process of observation, reflection, exploration, self-awakening, and achievement. Similar to how Wu Guanzhong's work was analyzed by Michael Sullivan, that "*in a way, it is almost otiose to talk about foreign influence as artists draw upon the art of the whole world to take what they can use.*"⁸ In the meantime, it is clear that she was moving towards a new vision, one less closely bound to observed reality, more akin to abstraction. Abstraction has become one of the central issues of Zhang's art, and is one means by which she has tried to reconcile the heritage of China with what she had come to admire in the art outside of china.

The predicament Zhang faces is not merely a matter of form versus content, but the hard fact that the concept of feminism and its artistic expression and the whole development of the feminist movement are of western origin. It could be out-of-date for the west, while from the Chinese it will evoke no response, and the artists will become outsiders. In *0-viewpoint 2010*, Zhang created a sophisticated interplay between the three-dimensional depth of her inner material landscape. "*0 includes everything, but I need to bring the 0 into my life, my creation is connected with 0 now, it's finally making sense, I am confident.*"⁹

It took three countries, two continent and more than forty years for Zhang's style to grow and transform. Although she still has much more to say, her work already manifests tranquility that is indicative of maturity. Where will she go from here? Towards the more abstract and self-indulging obscurity? To continue the pursuit of modernism or to enter the realm of postmodernism? It is impossible to say. It seems that she desires to forge ahead, let the artworks take their own course, only to surprise her audience with yet another new look.

- December, 2011

⁸Wu Guanzhong, A contemporary Chinese Artist, Michael Sullivan, 1989

⁹Conversation with author, 2010

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從漫長的遊歷到平靜之地——0視點

陳暢*

「我希望從內部被湮沒和掩埋，也許作畫是我向外迸發的方式。」

—梅洛-龐蒂引用安德烈·馬爾¹

1965年生於北京，來自藝術世家的張爽，自幼開始習畫。少年時代於當地少年宮接受繪畫訓練，並考入中央美術學院附中，而後考入中央美術學院國畫系。張爽說她幼年時期循規蹈矩，是中國人家庭標準的乖乖女。1985年進入美院時，正值張爽開始確立自我及反叛的階段，在追尋新的自我與表達方式之間，總覺得難以衝破固有的規範。假如說張爽早期的成長是父母悉心培育下的自滿，那麼進入動盪年代與自我困惑交匯之際，她的成人禮則始於其自身對世界的醒覺。

80年代，中國藝術步入自中華人民共和國建立後最活躍的時期。文革結束十年後，民眾中不少人，特別是年青人、藝術家、詩人和學者等都對國家的過去與未來感到疑惑，並預期社會將面臨激烈的轉變。1985年是「85藝術運動」或「85新潮運動」的重要時刻，浪潮由一羣先鋒藝術家及藝評人掀起，當中不少是現今中國當代藝術的代表人物。經過數十年如失語症般的抑壓，中國正處於希望與絕望交織、奮聲欲發的年代。懷着革新念頭的藝術家都渴望擺脫權威和傳統的掣肘，在創作和思辯的層面上推進新思維的發展。85藝術運動及其他國內的思潮運動，最終於1989年6月4日晚的天安門鎮壓中告一段落。

對張爽來說，那絕對是使人混亂失序的一頁。接受傳統技法訓練之時，張爽意識到她對當代藝術的表現手法和作品的興趣。使她深受啟發的藝術家包括羅伯特·羅森伯格、路易絲·布爾喬亞、凱綏·珂勒惠支及伊娃·海瑟等。他/她們的作品所展現的藝術家個性內在的力量，似乎正是當時中國藝術家的作品所欠缺的。張爽嘗試過多種國畫的新表現，但沒有成功。在這方面她並非

獨自一人。不論是形態奇特的水墨運筆、抽象圖樣、抑或是新材料的運用，張爽認為她或其他藝術家的創新嘗試還是未如理想。不久以後張爽意識到傳統水墨的四種工具——筆、墨、紙、硯，已成為她難以逃脫的模式。她一時感覺到被困在一個框架之中，並且以《西遊記》的故事比喻她創作的困局：“不論走得有多遠，還是跳不出如來佛的手心。”²

當被問到那四年間她自我的確立及周遭的環境時，張爽憶述說：

“那時候我被成長的痛苦、人際的複雜、表達的瓶頸和中國當時的種種狀態困擾着，那個階段的學生情懷既熱情卻自負。我們似乎甚麼都懂，其實甚麼也不懂。後來回望當日的自己，感覺不過是一只井底之蛙，對學院以外的世界全無認識。那年代中國還沒有互聯網或其他直接與國外接觸的途徑。可是，學院積極邀請外國學者到訪，並購入各地的藝術書籍。我們比一般人幸運，能夠接觸到新穎的實踐與思維。當然我們當中不少人也覺察到中國藝術作品與西方藝術作品之間巨大的差別，但都無法洞識背後的原因。此外，我對1989年中國發生的事感到幻滅和失望。我想擺脫但又迷失。我能目睹這世界與自己的存在，但我無法感受到自己的知覺。”³

“缺乏自己的感知去看世界”是張爽對未知的必然性與自身知覺困境之間的對立所下的主觀判斷。她尋求一個方案，但卻不能在那個予她庇護的避風港裏找到；她渴望發問，但更疑惑那些問題究竟是甚麼。在看世界的同時，她想找到一種交流，與人、與作品，一種內在的欠缺需要一個平衡的圓滿⁴。這種表達方式與自我確立的雙重困境驅使張爽追求改變。1990年25歲時，張爽移居日本——一個本以為與中國近似的國家，原來卻是截然不同的國度。

1990年至2000年在日本生活和學習，是張爽在藝術和

¹馬爾像，摘自梅洛-龐蒂，1964年，129頁

²藝術家與作者對談，2009年

³同上

⁴張爽，《專刊 2003》

⁵藝術家與作者對談

自我確立上的一個重要鋪墊。在著名的多摩美術大學及東京藝術大學的留學深造過程，為她的創作揭示了新的方向與可能，特別是對材料與媒介的運用和控制上。她從上野泰郎教授不拘一格的教學中獲益良多，從而嘗試新的創作手法。透過不同媒材，為以往被認為是傳統水墨的限制賦予新的生命，她開始使用岩繪具（一種從石頭與植物提煉出來的顏料）和鹿膠（《無色的夢 I》，2002）。由於接觸到極多樣化的材料種類和技巧，她形容當時的自己猶如「一個置身在糖果店之中，喜愛甜食的女孩」⁵。從張爽的首本畫冊《Stella》中可見，她的綜合技巧日漸成熟，走出單一材料的制約，從容地運用木材、布、亞麻紙創作。岩繪的豐富與混合物料的韻律加深了張爽對媒材特性的掌握，讓她在創作手法上踏出由傳統水墨繪畫跨向綜合媒材抽象表現的關鍵一步。

與此同時，旅居異鄉的張爽設身處地的感受到日本的工業化、頑固的禮儀與傳統對她個人所帶來的衝擊。作為一名女性，她更體驗到日本根深蒂固的排外和男性主導

社會中明顯的性別偏見。日本文化中等級服從的角色，與她期望的平等概念大相逕庭。曾經自負自豪的中國名校畢業生的光環不再，張爽必須直面這種基於社會與性別的身份落差並重新調整她的自我定位，才有可能再度開始前行。除了躲進「乖乖女」這個張爽深知是虛構的表面角色之外，她必須兼職文員和輔導教師來維持留學生活。這種在生存和生活過程中無可避免的多重錯位與置換，迫使她首次透過另一個視角審視自己（《物語——家族》，2001）。

張爽變成了她生命中的一個異客。

她的工作室成為了她追尋的平靜之地。在那個空間，她找到的平衡與釋放，讓她安靜地在創作中尋找自己真正的聲音。如果說張爽在來到日本以前，她對世界的感知還停留在某種知曉與未知之間，那麼此時該矛盾對她已不復存在。她與美學、方法、等級制度、情緒及性別的衝突，同時驅使她喚起自我的覺醒和領悟。讓張爽充滿



Stella with classmates (from left) Zhang Yibo, Shen Ling, Lu Xuechang, Xiao Yu, Stella Zhang, Wang Xiaoshuai, Li Yanxiu, Hong Hao. Beijing, 1997

（左起）張義波，申玲，路學長，蕭昱，張爽，王小帥，李炎修，洪浩。北京，1997

質疑的環境令她反思甚麼是非我，逼迫她跳出自我的邊界後再回歸到自己，恰如霍米·巴巴在《文化的定位》中描述的過程。張爽知覺的延展性，從知曉／未知的混沌中萌生，並成為她全新藝術旅程的一個參照點（《未知的旅行》，2002）。

張爽於1994年結婚，1997年女兒出生後，暫停藝術創作三年。張爽說那正是她需要的停頓。在嫺熟駕馭材料技巧以後，形式變成了一種常規和沉悶，讓她很快便感到厭倦。但在担起妻子與母親這些新的角色時，張爽在生命與身體、完整與缺失之間互相交織的關係之中找到了新的謬思。有別於她離開中國時滿懷困惑的心情，張爽對世界和自己的認知不再模稜兩可。對於「甚麼不是」她自身知覺的一部份這個問題，也逐漸建立全新而清晰的見解。那三年的休息讓張爽的身心得以復原，讓一切變成沉澱和累積。她形容那像是準備蛻變的過程。

2000年後，她經常遊走於日本和美國之間，在2003年定居美國加州。那段時間張爽參觀了許多美術館并發現了



Stella with Ueno Yasuo family, Pan Ying. Tokyo, 1999
與上野泰郎先生夫婦，潘縈。東京，1999

她創作的問題：她的作品欠缺核心。一股強烈的失調或錯誤的感覺剎時湧現。‘她之前對審美的標準、對風格和材料的執迷隨即被顛覆。曾經逃避、痛恨甚至否定的一切頓時變得澄明。」「甚麼不是？」那空白的一面，終於轉化為有形的「甚麼是」。所有原動力背後那股神秘的力量也呼之欲出。這是時機促成的覺醒，還是命運的安排？創作的激勵，妨如在張爽需要它的時候悄然來臨。但有一點必須闡明，「在深思不屬於我們的視覺時，我們必然是從自身視覺那獨特的藏庫裏看到它的映照。經驗教曉我們的，無不是我們自身視覺可映照出來的東西。」⁷

在日本生活時創作的作品是張爽學習和實驗的累積。那些作品展現了她對顏色和材料運用的紮實功力，和在抽象表達手法上真誠的嘗試（參看《2003》，《張爽Stella》）。儘管它們在內容上流於單調和空洞，也缺乏原創性，但和幾年前的作品已經有了一些明顯的脫離。於2004年及至2007年，張爽的一系列新作，標誌其創作正從過往安逸的狀態中掙脫出來（《錯位》，2004，《異物》，2004）。僅僅相隔兩年，同樣標題的《無色的夢’ I》儼然更加簡約和直觀。新作標示了張爽創作的突破，她不單只簡化了作品的視覺語言和形式，更開展着她在過去幾年建立的知覺——“0”的概念。

“0-視點”系列體現了張爽對現世與內在的自我的知覺。在《張爽Stella》中，張爽首次在自我陳述中用到「文化認同」、「犯錯」、「痛恨」、「懷疑」及「疏離」等詞彙，從思想上已經甩掉了她過去充滿希望、過於平穩的論斷。“0”是形式也是本質，是道家與禪宗思想中恆常的參照。“0”包含了一切的意義，在於零生一、一生二、二生三、三生萬物。2007年，張爽繼續該系列的創作，有意識地通過形狀、顏色及材料尋找“0”，表達她看到的“0”是一種無知覺狀態，是自然、自由和隨意的。在銀色、綠色、或半透明藍色水珠，或白色的層次與層疊裏，“0”妨如張爽的想像裏一種偶然、內在、神秘和韻律的觸動。一種衝擊但隱藏的意蘊在她作品的執行中浮現：它洗練、安靜，似乎在等待什麼。

正如梅洛-龐蒂在《眼與心》中寫到：「我們必須如實接受視覺教曉我們的一切：透過視覺，我們接觸到太陽和星星，我們的靈魂無處不在，想像於一瞬間把我

們帶到別的地方去。⁸」張爽對抽象概念的理論極感興趣，因為她意識到抽象表現手法在強化圖像與物件的觸感，及深化觀者對實際場境的感情反應的可能性。張爽善於創造鮮明但荒誕的視象，其巧妙而有力的呈現，來自她紮實的技巧和對作品細節嫺熟的處理。這批作品顯映出張爽開始創作該系列時自身知覺的基礎，和暗示箇中那個不斷發展和衍變的出發點。

2010年，張爽在舊金山中華文化中心發表“0-視點”全新階段的作品，其創作再次明顯地轉化，過往二維混合媒材的作品形式被三維布面、錄像和場域特定裝置所取代。這批新作表達的訊息亦比前作更複雜和充滿矛盾。地上放着一堆柔軟而富暗示性、如枕頭般的裝置首次呈現對肢體感官的衝擊，它們既讓人產生好奇去親手觸摸的欲望，但又怕被作品上佈滿的尖刺所穿透（《0-Viewpoint-2》）。幽幽的煙在視頻屏幕中飄浮，空間的頂部裝置由彈力布構建出一個巨大的白色天蓬，如同一個透著光亮的母體，被釘子所固定的輕盈，在朝不同方向被拉扯着的過程中滲透著堅韌和緊張（《0-Viewpoint-6》）。這批新作誘人的、自然衍變的形態暗示了在純潔和脆弱中的觸痛和張力，那些出奇不意的縫合、皺褶、尖刺和沙痕則隱喻作品背後一個更複雜與激蕩的感情領域。透過這五組全白色、充滿張力的作品，張爽繼續以她集移民、有性體和藝術家於一身的身份，進行極其個人和具挑釁性的探索。看着那些揪扯和撕裂的作品，觀眾切身地感到箇中的痛楚和掙扎。而那正是她新作的本質。

張爽面對的困難不單只是形式和內容之間的平衡，不難看出其作品可以充滿對女權主義的解讀和呈現。女權主義在發達國家或許已是耳熟能詳的觀念，然而在中國大陸則正面臨重新本土化的過程，而藝術家更會因此被邊緣化。然而任何所謂的“主義”之說，可以是旁觀者的

主觀臆斷，往往藝術家在進行創作時，意識形態更多存在於無形之中。「我的作品都來自一個真實的人不斷被文化力量所塑造，及追求平衡的經歷。」張爽如是說。「在一個陌生的地方，我必須重新學習悲傷與失去、法律與權力、隔閡與接受、還有種種新的處境中存在的現實。這些文化衝突激發了我的創作。」在日本生活的日子是一個轉變、追尋與發現的階段，張爽找到並確立了新的藝術創作的原形，由昔日那個未開悟的女孩，蛻變成一個重生的藝術家。將此歷程稱為漫長的遊歷大概十分貼切。藝術家不加迂迴地向我們展現，這更貼近了她藝術的技巧與本源。

三個國家、二個大洲和超過二十五年的漫遊，見證着張爽創作風格的發展和蛻變。在張爽的畫作與裝置作品之間，也許沒有任何內在或重要的分界，因為藝術家的實際經驗更可能是一個不受外界侵擾、連綿不斷的觀察、思考、探索、自我覺醒和成就的過程。這點和米高·蘇立文對吳冠中的作品的分析有相近之處：「在某個層面上，談論藝術家受到哪些外來影響幾乎都是無意義的，因為他們都在世間的藝術中涉獵適合的素材。」⁹與此同時，張爽正朝着一個不再拘泥於觀見的現實、更接近抽象的全新視覺進發。抽象手法已成為了張爽的藝術形式，也是她在中國以外重新認識和欣賞與中國文化密切相關的宗教哲學的手段。在《0-視點 2010》裏，張爽將內心的景觀與她創作中的三維深度相互交織。「0 包含了一切，但我需要把 0 帶進我的生命。我的創作現在與 0 連接，箇中的意義明澈起來。這種核心帶給我信心。」¹⁰

（本文由英文原稿翻譯而成，經作者授權出版）

-2011年12月

⁸藝術家與作者對談

⁷The Merleau Ponty Reader, The Intertwining - The Chiasm

⁸梅洛-龐蒂在《眼與心》

⁹蘇立文，《吳冠中：一個當代中國藝術家》

¹⁰藝術家與作者對談，2010年

*陳暢是一名活躍在美國的獨立策展人，評論家和藝術管理者。她現任舊金山中華文化基金會的策展人和藝術總監，致力於推動視覺藝術在華人多重文化身份和社會創新方面的表達。

0-Viewpoint

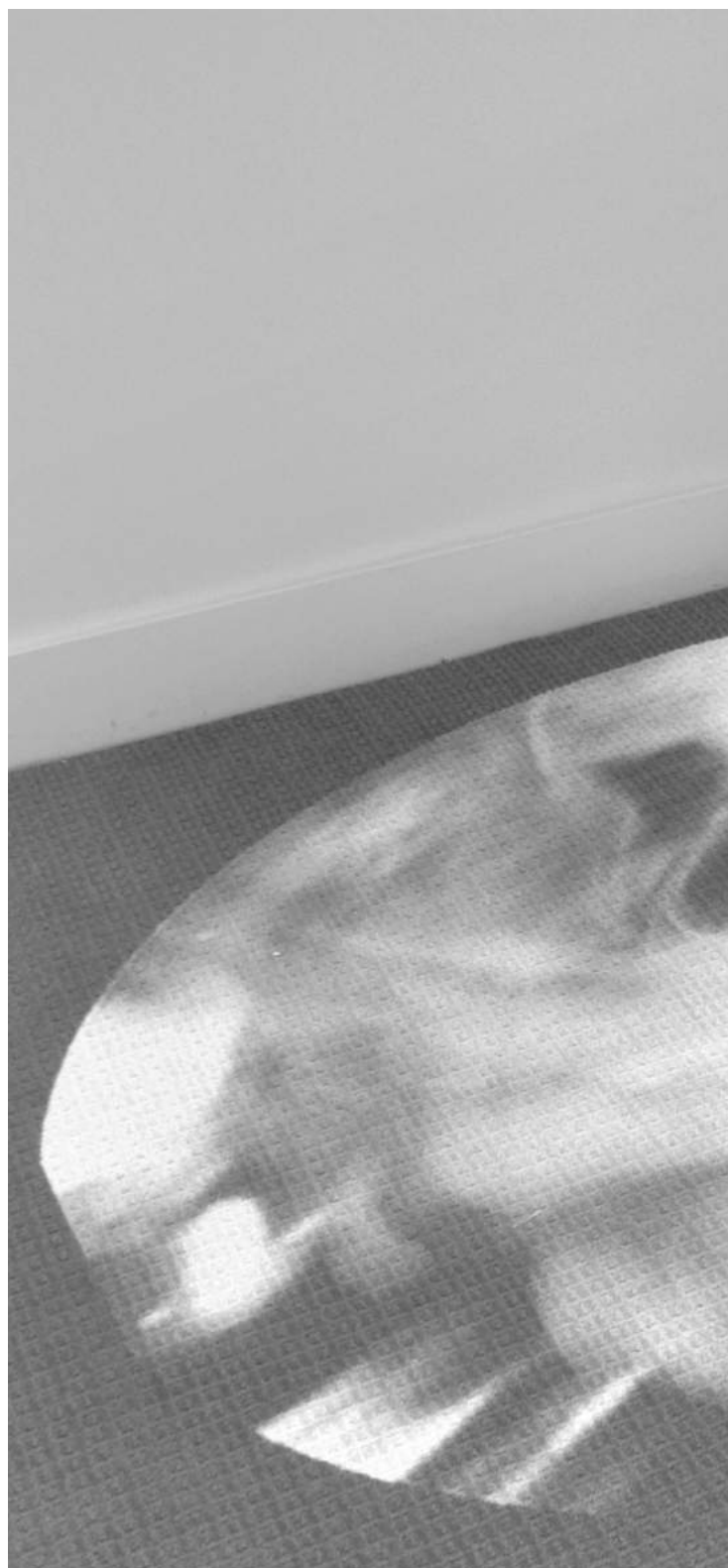
Michele Carlson*

0-Viewpoint is a multimedia collection of the artist's exploration into form and femininity. Zhang's work is visceral. Her series of sculptural monochromatic paintings have a feeling of urgency that borders on desperation. The desperation pervades the exhibition. In 0-Viewpoint #3, five large canvases are covered with white fabric that is pulled, folded, stretched, and knotted over the frame. The fabric is built up over the ordinary frames, aggressively burying whatever might be underneath; the structure hints at the fraught uncertainty that also lies in the process of building something new over whatever may have come before.

In 0-Viewpoint #2, dozens of small bulbous forms dangle from the ceiling, suspended just above a nest of white fabric. The soft orbs are irregular; some are attached together in a way that suggests they may be growing out of each other—forming and blooming out of one another while on display. Each bulb is fiercely pierced and punctured with small wooden toothpicks—a jarring display of mutilation, as the forms feel so bodily.

The orbs are stabbed through so repetitively and purposefully that it creates a sensation of near violence. But Zhang manages to unerringly play with the precarious balance between delicacy and brutality, allowing the installations to question these tensions rather than become about them. While obvious references to female genitalia exist within the exhibition, the formal tensions in Zhang's work speak to more-complex relationships with femininity than simply through the body. Her work is as much a poignant exploration into form and material as it is an investigation into other complex sociopolitical and personal agendas.

*Michele Carlson is a practicing artist, writer, educator, and curator whose trans-disciplinary research investigates the intersections of history, power, and visual culture. Carlson received a BFA in Printmaking and BAs in Interdisciplinary Visual Arts and History from the University of Washington. After her undergraduate work, she moved to the San Francisco Bay Area where she completed a dual degree MFA in Printmaking and in Visual & Critical Studies from the California College of the Arts.





0-Viewpoint-4-1 0-視點-4-1 Video installation 2010 dimension variable (part), photo courtesy of CCFSF

0-Viewpoint

Stella Zhang

Creating art is a way of examining my inner self, my true self. Creating art is my way of interpreting various emotions and spiritual thoughts; to remove the mask in order to show the true face of human nature. At times, I will create art as a process of rethinking myself.

In my life, I have experienced many impulses, both physical and mental, that have taken me from one place to another. I have adapted to new environments and cultures. Living at the intersection of Eastern and Western cultures has influenced my vision of life. My mind is usually hovering between what is real and what is imagined. Therefore my work is very personal and reflects my inner conflicts and struggles.

Many events in our lives happen naturally and frequently. Over time, we may become apathetic and neglectful of everyday occurrences, and even ourselves. This illustrates how people think and navigate through life, but recognizing the significance of small items can influence how we see everything around us. Seemingly insignificant details reveal the sensitivities and weaknesses of human nature.

We are consistently being challenged by feelings of confusion and lucidity, loss and hope. In addition, the place between an actual experience and a dream could also make one feel lost as we often struggle and seek out a space in which to escape.

My work is emotional and embodies a relationship that falls between reality and dream, rather than a description of a specific story. My work utilizes images to provide hints and/or clues leaving the viewer to his or her own conclusions. Each individual viewer will have a unique way of seeing my work, according to the life experiences and psychological state that the viewer has at that time.

I am attracted to a type of beauty that is flexible and uncertain, like a mood that is troubled and emotional, casual and sensitive. Imperfection indeed creates a new harmony. I have tried to metaphorically open a new space in my work to remind the viewers to interact with the piece. This allows them to dig out all the possibilities of the inner powers of the piece. Whether the reaction is positive or nega-

tive, it is an emotional response. This process of viewer creation promotes a way of seeking better solutions as well as other new energies.

When I create a piece, I feel like telling my viewers about my own stories. The interpretation and vision will be left up to my viewers to imagine and decide for themselves.

I like to use direct and pure language to explain themes. I use simple and basic elements to do the job giving up unnecessary details in order to maintain the fundamental element of the inner meaning of the artwork. The clarity of the work creates an intellectual and emotional relationship with the viewers, rather than giving fixed anticipations and expectations. The exhibition space, in relation to the work, is meant to be a guiding or interpretive tool.

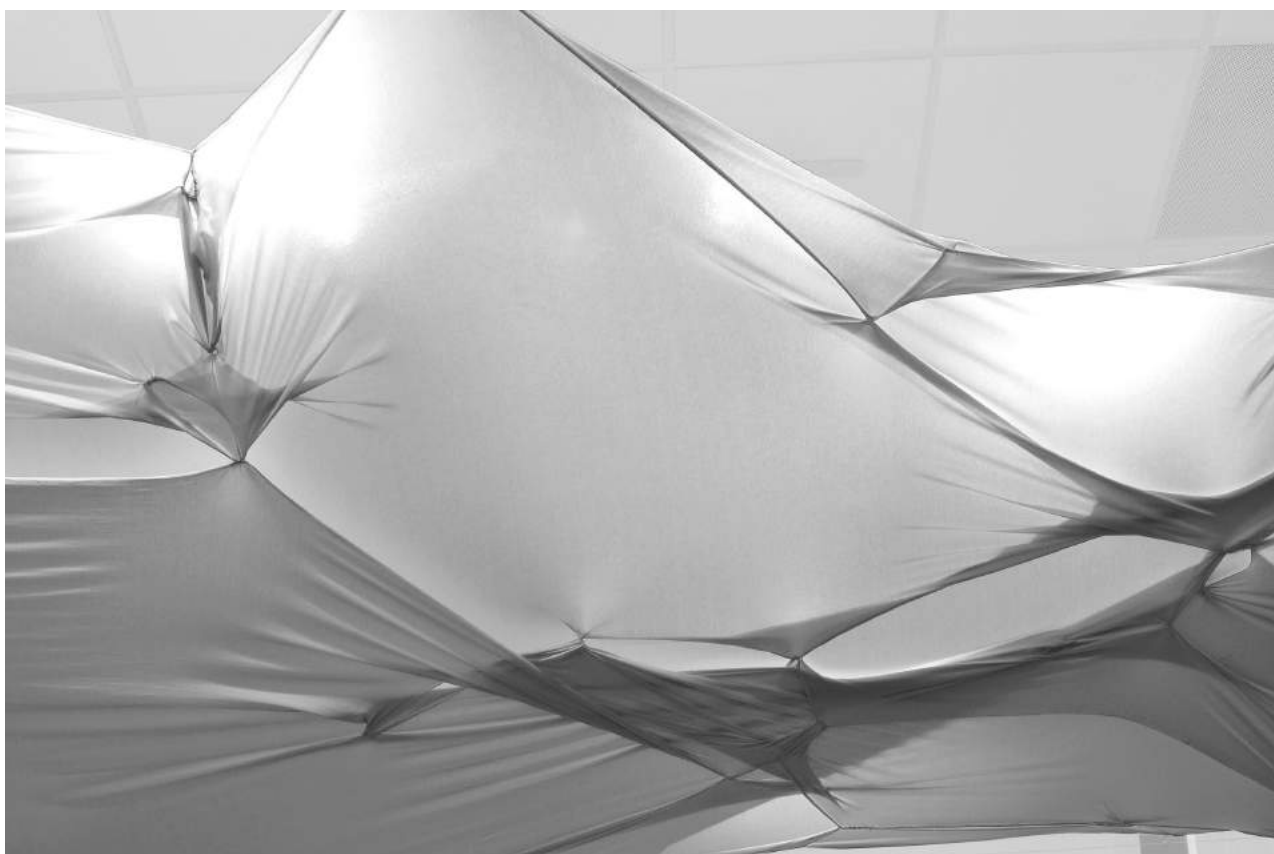
The meaning of my work demonstrates a state of mind in everyday life: a friendly, familiar feeling. Therefore, I choose raw and ordinary materials to create familiarity, closeness, and to stir emotion. I hope to create an image containing a natural quality of tenderness and flexibility evoking the viewer's memories directly and peacefully.

The purpose of using a white background is to give the effects of flatness, delicacy, ethereal and quiet. Differential light emphasizes the expansion of space, not only demonstrating clarity, but setting an assertive control of existence of "spirit."

The molding and sense of light combine illusion and gender, suggesting that the activity of temperament is prone to meditation and spiritual freedom, at times drifting, at time rebellious.

The expansion of space creates a field with pressure, so the work is not fixed due to the various elements used, which also demonstrate the faces of vitality.

During production, I work extemporaneously disregarding rules and boundaries. The freedom and diversity of artistic language enables me to find and channel my intimate needs of expression.



0-Viewpoint-6-2 0-視點-6-2 installation view 2010 dimension variable (detail)



Viewpoint 05
視點05
Mixed Media
2008 102 x 76 cm



0-Viewpoint-1

"0-Viewpoint is a collection of powerful body memories that demonstrate tension but are simultaneously vulnerable and defenseless."

– Abby Chen, Curator & Artistic Director, Chinese Culture Foundation of San Francisco



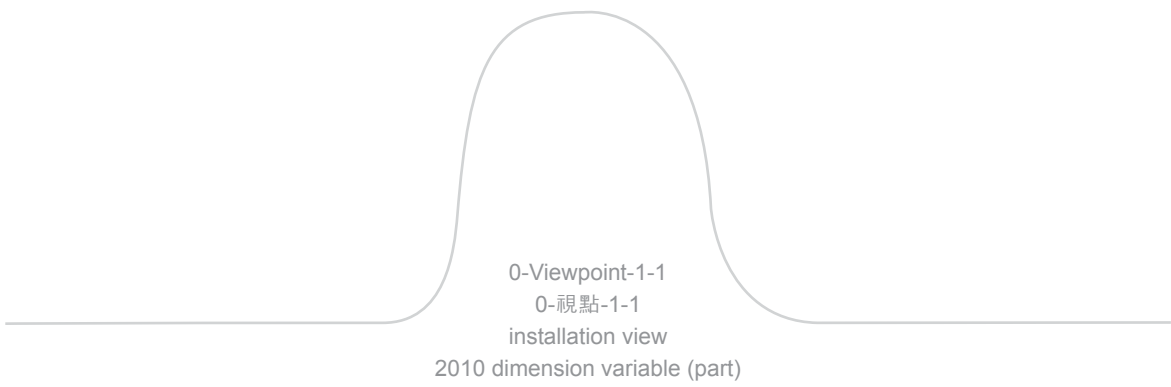




photo courtesy of CCFSF



0-Viewpoint-1-3 0-視點-1-3 installation view 2010 dimension variable (part), photo courtesy of CCFSF



0-Viewpoint-1-6 0-視點-1-6 2010 (detail)



0-Viewpoint-1-9 0-視點-1-9 2010 (details)

0-Viewpoint-2

"Zhang's work is visceral. Her series of sculptural monochromatic paintings have a feeling of urgency that borders on desperation."

– Michele Carlson, artist, writer, educator and curator









0-Viewpoint-2-13 0-視點-2-13 installation view 2010 dimension variable (part)



0-Viewpoint-2-1 0-視點-2-1 installation view 2010 dimension variable (part)



0-Viewpoint-2-16 0-視點-2-16 2010 (detail)

0-Viewpoint-2-2
0-視點-2-2
installation view
2010 dimension variable (part)





photo courtesy of CCFSF

0-Viewpoint-3

“The fabric is built up over the ordinary frames, aggressively burying whatever might be underneath; the structure hints at the fraught uncertainty that also lies in the process of building something new over whatever may have come before.”

– Michele Carlson, artist, writer, educator and curator





0-Viewpoint-3-1
0-視點-3-1
Mixed Media
2010 152 x 122 cm





0-Viewpoint-3-2
0-視點-3-2
Mixed Media
2010 152 x 122 cm





0-Viewpoint-3-11

0-視點-3-11

Mixed Media

2011 102 x 76 cm





0-Viewpoint-3-12

0-視點-3-12

Mixed Media

2014 102 x 76 cm





0-Viewpoint-3-13
0-視點-3-13
Mixed Media
2014 102 x 76 cm





0-Viewpoint-3-14

0-視點-3-14

Mixed Media

2014 102 x 76 cm





0-Viewpoint-3-15

0-視點-3-15

Mixed Media

2014 61 x 46 cm





0-Viewpoint-3-16

0-視點-3-16

Mixed Media

2014 61 x 46 cm





0-Viewpoint-3-17

0-視點-3-17

Mixed Media

2014 61 x 46 cm





0-Viewpoint-3-18

0-視點-3-18

Mixed Media

2014 61 x 46 cm





0-Viewpoint-3-19

0-視點-3-19

Mixed Media

2014 61 x 46 cm



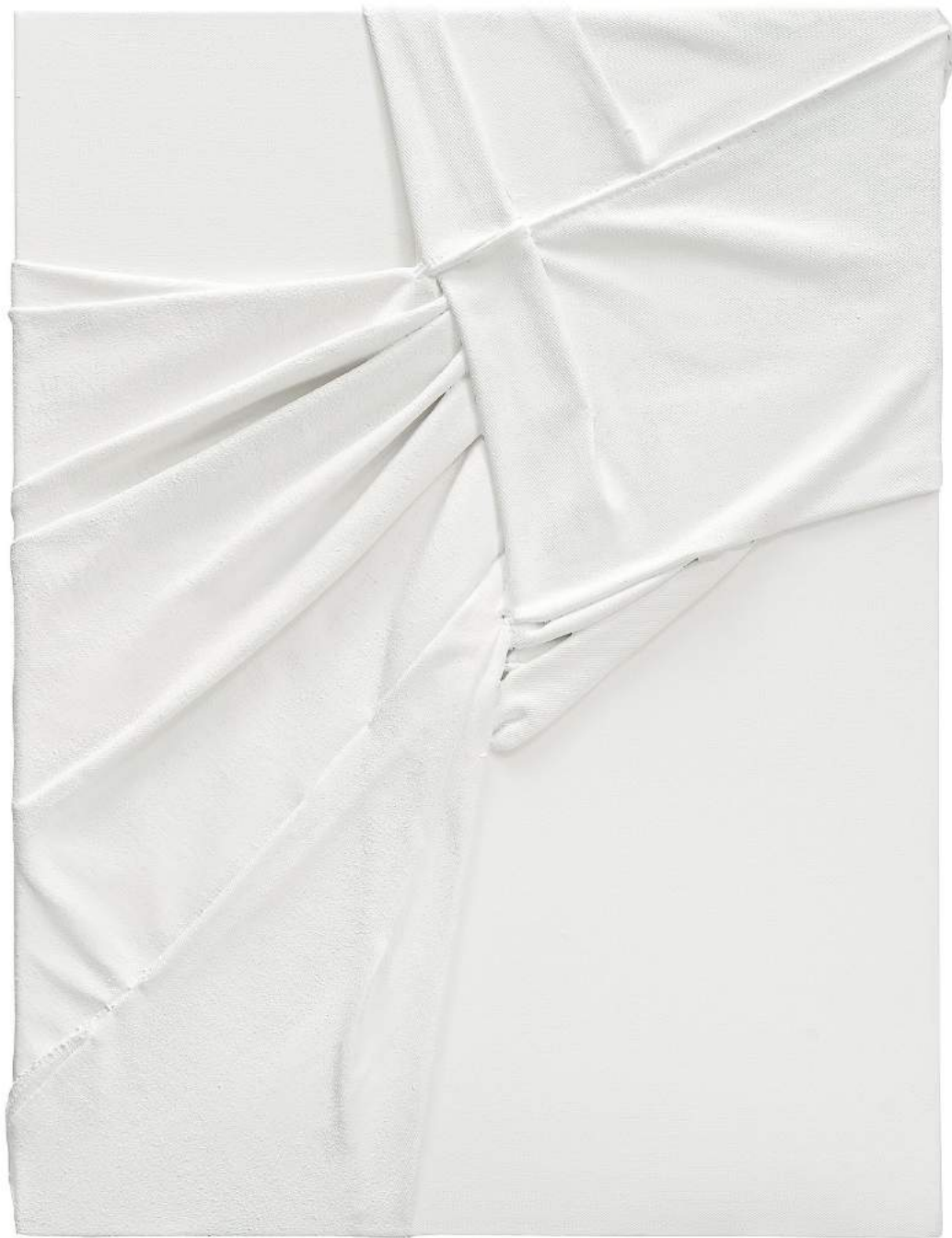



0-Viewpoint-3-20

0-視點-3-20

Mixed Media

2014 61 x 46 cm





"The energy stored within '0' sphere is a condensed substance field to transform the complex to the common simple, the human physical to the divine and mystical."
– Stella Zhang





0-Viewpoint-3-22

0-視點-3-22

Mixed Media

2013 155 x 30 cm





0-Viewpoint-3-23

0-視點-3-23

Mixed Media

2012 38 x 76 cm





0-Viewpoint-3-24

0-視點-3-24

Mixed Media

2014 61 x 46 cm





0-Viewpoint-3-26

0-視點-3-26

Mixed Media

2012 51 x 41 cm





0-Viewpoint-3-39

0-視點-3-39

Mixed Media

2014 122 x 91 cm





0-Viewpoint-3-40

0-視點-3-40

Mixed Media

2014 122 x 91 cm





0-Viewpoint-3-41

0-視點-3-41

Mixed Media

2014 122 x 91 cm



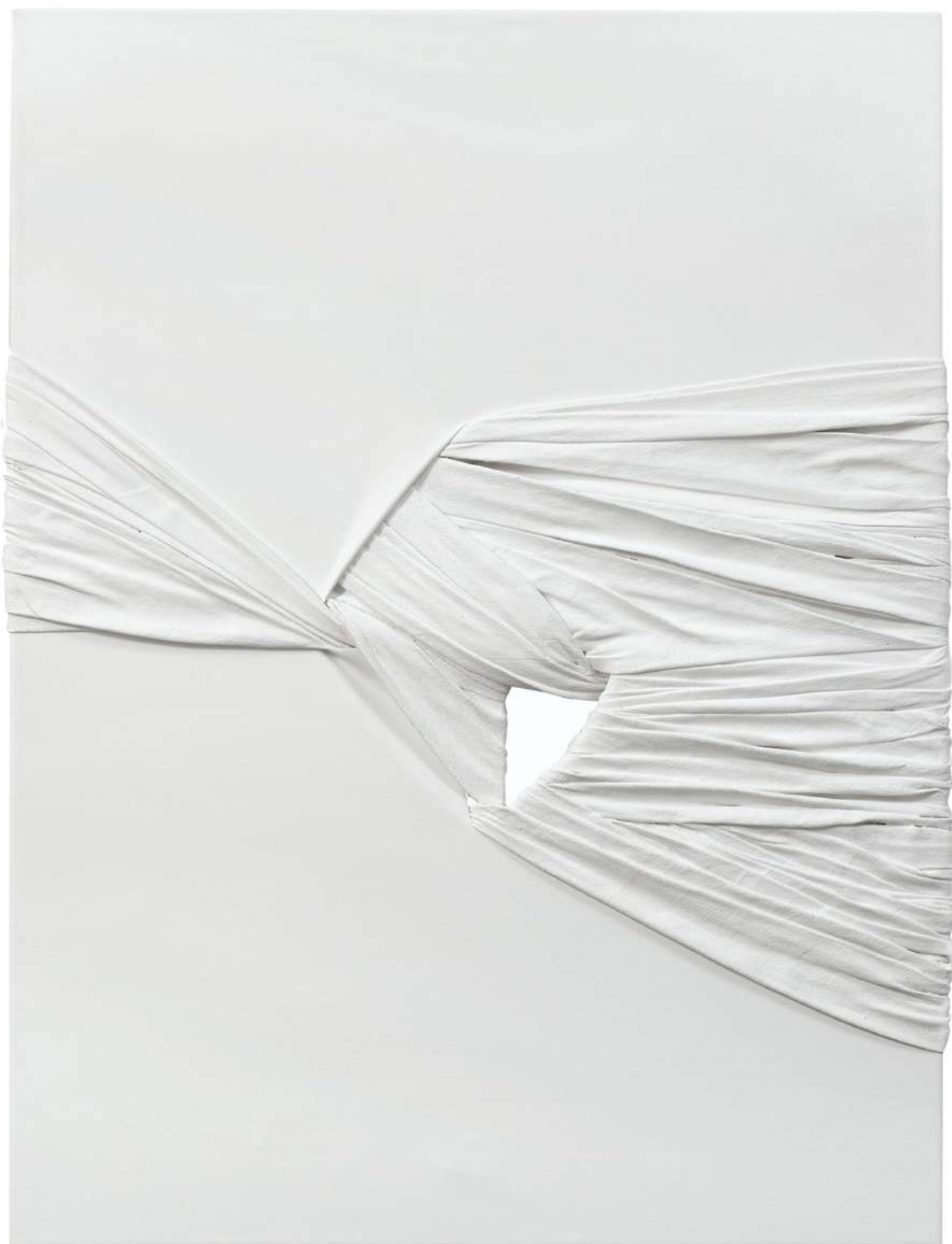


0-Viewpoint-3-42

0-視點-3-42

Mixed Media

2014 122 x 91 cm





0-Viewpoint-3-43

0-視點-3-43

Mixed Media

2014 91 x 122 cm



0-Viewpoint-5

"The realm of '0' has always inspired me to search for the rhythm of life's
essence or its energy when released."

– Stella Zhang





0-Viewpoint-5-1

0-視點-5-1

Mixed Media

2010 122 x 76 cm





0-Viewpoint-5-4

0-視點-5-4

Mixed Media

2010 122 x 76 cm





0-Viewpoint-5-8

0-視點-5-8

Mixed Media

2010 122 x 76 cm





0-Viewpoint-5-11

0-視點-5-11

Mixed Media

2010 122 x 76 cm





0-Viewpoint-5-14
0-視點-5-14
Mixed Media
2014 201 x 107 cm





0-Viewpoint-5-15
0-視點-5-15
Mixed Media
2014 201 x 107 cm





0-Viewpoint-5-18
0-視點-5-18
Mixed Media
2011 152 x 122 cm





0-Viewpoint-5-19
0-視點-5-19
Mixed Media
2011 152 x 122 cm



0-Viewpoint-6

"0 has cleansed, filtered, distilled, accumulated and recorded every bit of
my life experience to create a '0-energy' realm on canvas."
– Stella Zhang



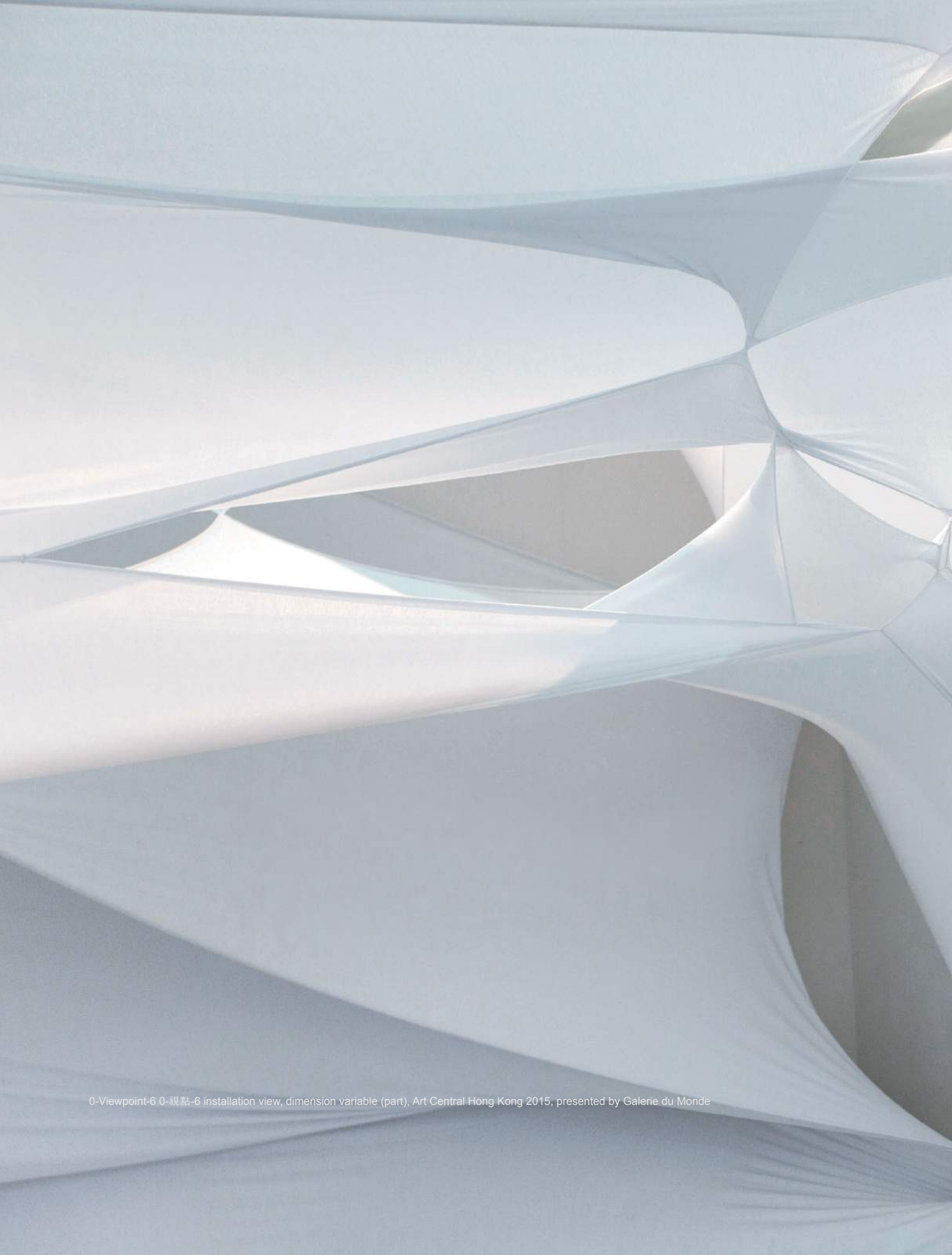


0-Viewpoint-6

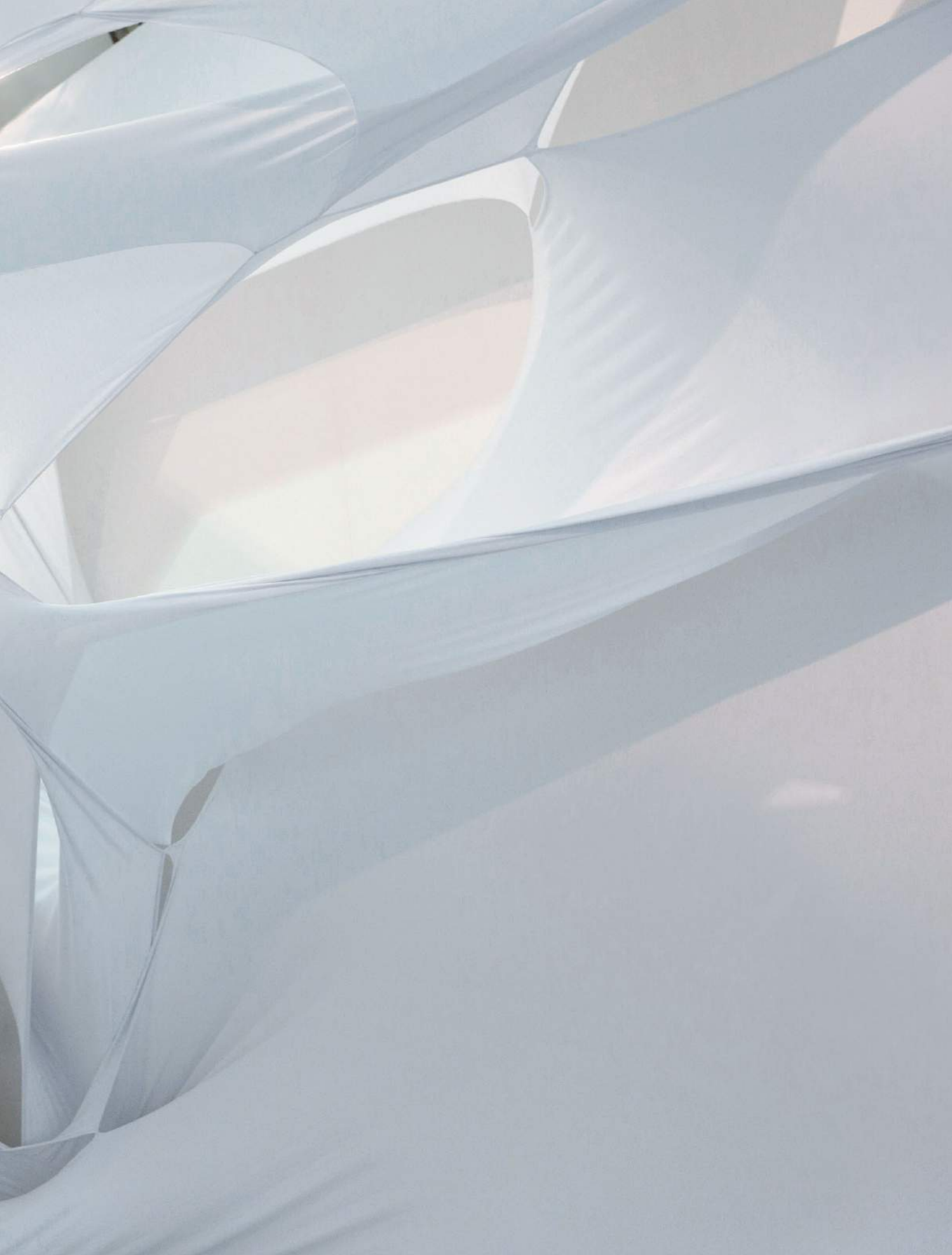
0-視點-6

installation view 2015 dimension variable (detail)





0-Viewpoint-6 視點-6 installation view, dimension variable (part), Art Central Hong Kong 2015, presented by Galerie du Monde





0-Viewpoint-6

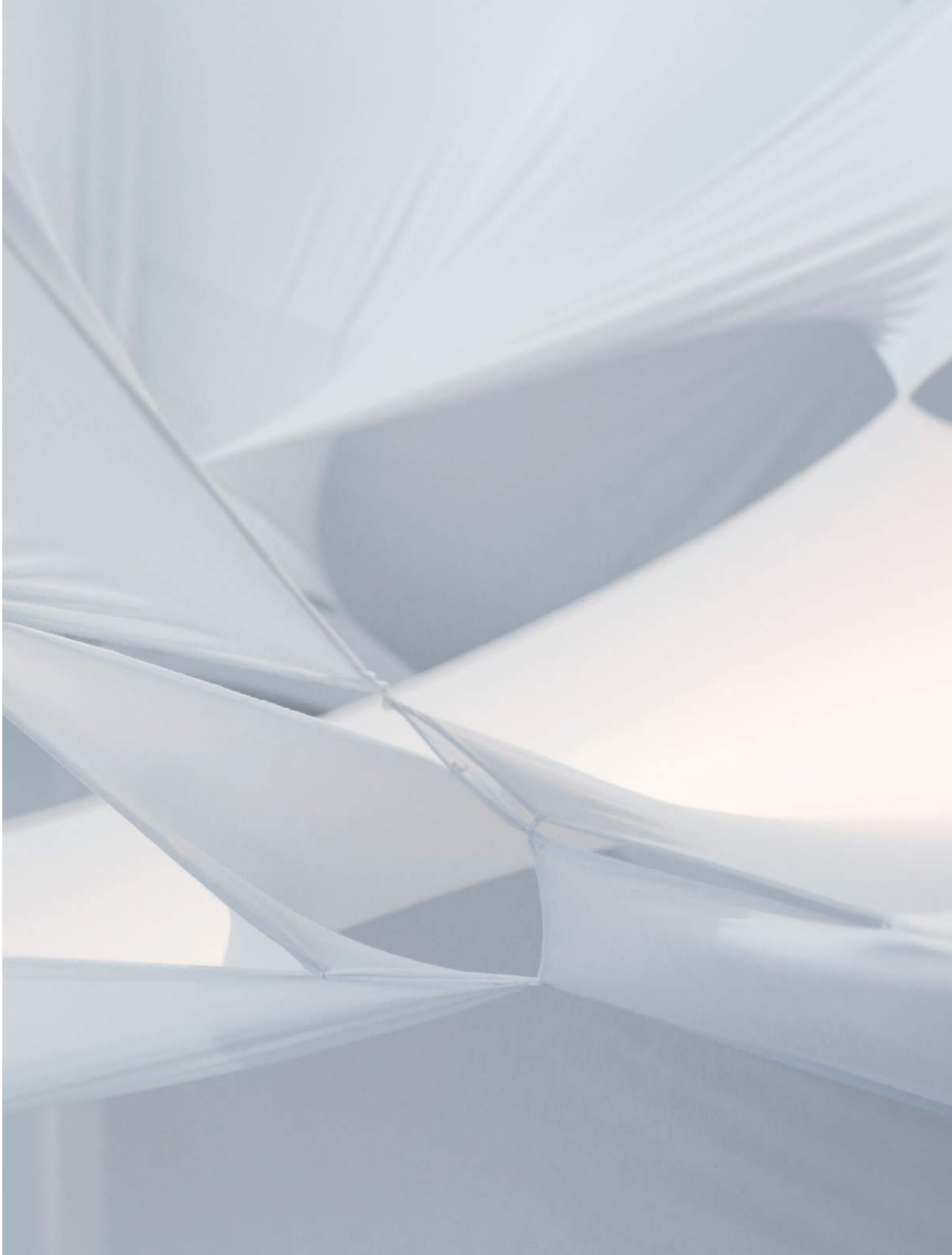
0-視點-6

installation view 2015 dimension variable (detail)





0-Viewpoint-6 0-視點-6 installation view, dimension variable (part), Art Central Hong Kong 2015, presented by Galerie du Monde



Stella Zhang

"Creating art is a process of self-examination, and this process enables me to collect my thoughts. We live in complex time that is in many ways defined by excessive want, greed, and waste. We all pursue a good life, but in this pursuit, do we really have choices? Without recognizing or aspiring to a specific destination, my art is a record of everyday life. This gives me an opportunity to look at myself more closely.

We all react to materials, whether we find them attractive or frightening. The desire for stuff makes one greedy and afraid at same time. We privilege finished commodities, but not how they are packaged. We shop at Safeway, but care little for the plastic shopping bags (unless we save them to collect more garbage). We ignore the cardboard used for packaging many of the goods we consume. We are overflowing with stuff, but this stuff must be made available to us and it has to be packaged. This packaging embodies a history and its own special language. Releasing plastic bags and cardboard from useless connections to human character enables one to redefine them. Perhaps they point to new concepts. Maybe their individual qualities have been neglected with the development of the consumer society. These objects contain many meanings that overlap. They represent our lifestyles. Damage, chaos, survival, and fragility define their relationship with humans. Faith and doubt are expressed in the objects illustrating the relationships between complexity and balance, order and disorder, attraction and repulsion.

I try to move freely in my works. Vast space blurs the boundary of areas and life events melt into a repeated circle. This is both my life and my work."





Stella Zhang - Biography

Education

- | | |
|---|---|
| MFA, Tokyo Art University, Tokyo, Japan | Exhibition, Tokyo, Japan |
| BFA, Central Academy of Fine Arts, Beijing, China | First Prize, 18th Fine Arts Tama Exhibition, Machida, Japan |
| 1965 Born in Beijing, China | 2003 Moved to the United States |
| 1989 Joint Exhibition in Central Academy of Fine Arts Gallery, Beijing, China | Solo Exhibitions in JKD Gallery, Santa Monica, CA |
| 1990 Moved to Tokyo, Japan | 2004 Solo Exhibitions in Center of Art And Culture, Taipei, Taiwan |
| First Prize, Exhibition of Chinese Cultural Paintings, Tokyo, Japan | National Art Museum of China, Beijing, China |
| 1991 Solo Exhibitions in Chinese Gallery, Yokohama, Japan | 2005 Solo Exhibitions in Sandstone Gallery, Laguna Beach, CA |
| 1992 Solo Exhibitions in Nagai Gallery, Tokyo, Japan | 2006 Solo Exhibitions in JKD Gallery, Santa Monica, CA |
| 1994 New Man's Prize, Fine Art Exhibition of Graduate Students, Tokyo, Japan | 2007 Group Exhibition in Guandu Museum, Taipei, Taiwan |
| 1995 Highest Honor, 32nd Asian Modern Fine Arts Exhibition, Tokyo, Japan | 2008 Joint Exhibition in Beijing World Art Museum, Beijing, China |
| 1996 Joint Exhibition in Onward Gallery, Tokyo, Japan | 2009 Solo Exhibitions in Elizabeth Norton Gallery, Palo Alto, CA |
| 1997 Joint Exhibition in Journal Gallery, Tokyo, Japan | Solo Exhibitions in Amrithika Gallery, Palo Alto, CA |
| 1998 Group Exhibition in Matsuzakaya Gallery, Tokyo, Japan | 2010 Solo Exhibitions in Chinese Culture Center of San Francisco, San Francisco, CA |
| 1999 Joint Exhibition in Tobu Gallery, Funabashi, Japan | Solo Exhibitions in The Performance Art Institute, San Francisco, CA |
| 2000 Group Exhibition in Matsuzakaya Gallery, Tokyo, Japan | Joint Exhibition in Alameda Museum, Alameda, CA |
| 2001 Group Exhibition in Matsuzakaya Gallery, Tokyo, Japan | Group Exhibition in A.I.R Gallery, New York, NY |
| 2002 Participated in 28th Spring Souga | |

Fleishhacker Foundation Eureka Fellowship
Program Nominated Artists 2011-2013
Xian Rui Artist Excellence of The Year,
Chinese Culture Foundation,
San Francisco, CA

2011 Solo Exhibitions in Silicon Valley Asian Art
Center, Santa Clara, CA
Joint Exhibition in EMG Shanghai,
Shanghai, China
Group Exhibition in Stanford University,
Stanford, CA
Group Exhibition in Yerba Buena Center
for the Arts, San Francisco, CA

2012 Solo Exhibitions in EDGE Gallery,
Hong Kong
Group Exhibition in Stanford University,
Stanford, CA
Joint Exhibition in Chinese Culture Center
of San Francisco, CA
Joint Exhibition in ARENA 1 Gallery,
Santa Monica, CA

2013 Joint Exhibition in Urban Studio, Miami, FL
Joint Exhibition in SOMArts,
San Francisco, CA
Joint Exhibition in Hilton Orange County,
Costa Mesa, CA
Fleishhacker Foundation Eureka Fellowship
Program Nominated Artists 2014-2016

2014 Joint Exhibition in Silicon Valley Asian Art
Center, Santa Clara, CA
Joan Mitchell Foundation Grant Program
Nomination

2015 Solo Exhibition "0-Viewpoint", Galerie du
Monde, Hong Kong
Participated in Art Central Hong Kong 2015
Participated in Art Taipei, Taiwan
Participate in ArtInternational, Istanbul

2016 Solo Exhibition at Insights, Art Basel Hong
Kong 2016

Museum Collections

National Art Museum of China, Beijing,
China
Tan Shin Fine Arts Museum, Tokyo, Japan

Monographs

2003 Stella Zhang, Chengdu, China: Si Chuan
Art Press
2004 Stella Zhang, Santa Monica,
CA: JKD Gallery
2008 Stella Zhang, Beijing, China: Rong Bao
Zhai Press
2010 Stella Zhang: 0-Viewpoint, San Francisco,
CA: Chinese Culture Center
2011 Stella Zhang: 0, Hong Kong, EDGE Gallery
2015 Stella Zhang, 0-Viewpoint,
Hong Kong, Galerie du Monde

Teaching

2008 to Present
Instructor at Pacific Art League,
California, United States
2013 Instructor of the Year Award





0-Viewpoint-6 0-視點-6
installation view
dimension variable (part) P108



0-Viewpoint-1-3 0-視點-1-3
installation view
2010 dimension variable (part) P30



Viewpoint 05 視點05
Mixed Media
2008 102 x 76 cm P25



0-Viewpoint-2-11 0-視點-2-11
installation view
2010 dimension variable (details) P35



0-Viewpoint-3-1 0-視點-3-1
Mixed Media
2010 152 x 122 cm P43



0-Viewpoint-3-2 0-視點-3-2
Mixed Media
2010 152 x 122 cm P45



0-Viewpoint-3-11 0-視點-3-11
Mixed Media
2011 102 x 76 cm P47



0-Viewpoint-3-12 0-視點-3-12
Mixed Media
2014 102 x 76 cm P49



0-Viewpoint-3-13 0-視點-3-13
Mixed Media
2014 102 x 76 cm P51



0-Viewpoint-3-14 0-視點-3-14
Mixed Media
2014 102 x 76 cm P53



0-Viewpoint-3-15 0-視點-3-15
Mixed Media
2014 61 x 46 cm P55



0-Viewpoint-3-16 0-視點-3-16
Mixed Media
2014 61 x 46 cm P57



0-Viewpoint-3-17 0-視點-3-17
Mixed Media
2014 61 x 46 cm P59



0-Viewpoint-3-18 0-視點-3-18
Mixed Media
2014 61 x 46 cm P61



0-Viewpoint-3-19 0-視點-3-19
Mixed Media
2014 61 x 46 cm P63



0-Viewpoint-3-20 0-視點-3-20
Mixed Media
2014 61 x 46 cm P65



0-Viewpoint-3-22 0-視點-3-22
Mixed Media
2013 155 x 30 cm P69



0-Viewpoint-3-23 0-視點-3-23
Mixed Media
2012 38 x 76 cm P71



0-Viewpoint-3-24 0-視點-3-24
Mixed Media
2014 61 x 46 cm P73



0-Viewpoint-3-26 0-視點-3-26
Mixed Media
2012 51 x 41 cm P75



0-Viewpoint-3-39 0-視點-3-39
Mixed Media
2014 122 x 91 cm P77



0-Viewpoint-3-40 0-視點-3-40
Mixed Media
2014 122 x 91 cm P79



0-Viewpoint-3-41 0-視點-3-41
Mixed Media
2014 122 x 91 cm P81



0-Viewpoint-3-42 0-視點-3-42
Mixed Media
2014 122 x 91 cm P83



0-Viewpoint-3-43 0-視點-3-43
Mixed Media
2014 91 x 122 cm P85



0-Viewpoint-5-1 0-視點-5-1
Mixed Media
2010 122 x 76 cm P89



0-Viewpoint-5-4 0-視點-5-4
Mixed Media
2010 122 x 76 cm P91



0-Viewpoint-5-8 0-視點-5-8
Mixed Media
2010 122 x 76 cm P93



0-Viewpoint-5-11 0-視點-5-11
Mixed Media
2010 122 x 76 cm P95



0-Viewpoint-5-14 0-視點-5-14
Mixed Media
2014 201 x 107 cm P97



0-Viewpoint-5-15 0-視點-5-15
Mixed Media
2014 201 x 107 cm P99



0-Viewpoint-5-18 0-視點-5-18
Mixed Media
2011 152 x 122 cm P101



0-Viewpoint-5-19 0-視點-5-19
Mixed Media
2011 152 x 122 cm P103

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