

In late October 2017, M WOODS welcomes visitors to the world of Lu Yang, an ambitious solo exhibition comprising three new commissions and a constellation of previous works that include sculpture, video, installation, computer programming, and video games. A leading figure among a young generation of new media artists, Lu Yang's creative practice often satirizes efforts to demystify human experience through scientific theory, dismantling them with humor and fluency in the language of popular culture. Citing knowledge gleaned from the realms of neurology and biology, her works also reflect an ongoing interest in spirituality as a state of being pursued through different forms of religion and creative expression.

Capturing a breadth of influences from hip hop to Goa trance, punk, gothic, and glam rock street styles, gaming, anime, and the practice of Otaku, Lu Yang's mesmerizing, multisensory environments reflect the dynamic amorphism of today's globalized cultural climate and the semi-porous understandings we use to define the current historical moment of China and beyond. Conceived in entirety by the artist, the exhibition is something of a Gesamtkunstwerk combining the neon glitz of an arcade and the ritual of a heretical temple.

Presented on the first floor, Electromagnetic Brainology represents a new direction in Lu's video work. Unfolding in the ritual-like space of the central hall, the work incorporates motion sensor technology and a soundtrack contributed by acclaimed Japanese producer invisible manners (インビジブル・マナーズ), weaving together popular culture and pan-cultural religious iconography. Stemming from her interest in MikuMikuDance (MMD) and the internet folk culture surrounding it, Lu uses the popular freeware as a readymade to complete the "LikuLikuDance" seen within many of the videos.

The action and aesthetic of gaming recurs throughout the exhibition, from the adventures of Lu's gender-curious superhero Uterus Man (2013), to the 8-bit nostalgia of Cancer Baby (2014). Affinities to the gaming world are equally present in Wrathful King Kong Core (2011), and a sculptural installation on the second floor inviting viewers to 'play' using augmented reality. Emphasis on engagement and a visual vernacular popularized by modern video games form one thread of Lu's artistic strategy that in the show subvert the normal functions of the museum.

In LuYang Delusional Mandala (2015) and LuYang Delusional Crime and Punishment (2016), relations of violence and domination become a solipsistic theatre revolving around her own likeness. Lu's interest in deep brain stimulation (DBS), a treatment for tremors caused by Parkinson's disease, is taken further through the invention of a halo-like, stereotactic surgery device that short-circuits the limbic system and results in religious delusions. For Lu, these investigations into the

mechanisms of the mind and spirit, as well as our abilities to visualize them, lie at the heart of identity in the twenty-first century. Regularly featuring in her own films and animations, the artist's own identity is deconstructed and she is re-incarnated in various works as a giant sculptural kite, a lifelike but genderless, non-binary simulation, and a guardian of the gates to 'Luyang Hell'.

Collaborating with musicians, actors, and animators, the exhibition culminates in an exorcism, writhing to a soundtrack of post-trance core. As an artist whose playful irreverence and wicked humor constantly question norms of acceptability, Lu's last gesture raises deep polemical issues about the cathartic role art and art institutions play within society. As the artist's first exhibition at a non-profit institution in China, and the first solo show by a Chinese artist at M WOODS, Lu Yang's exhibition brings together many of her best-known works while pointing to new directions within her practice.

Lu Yang's exhibition will open with a cosplay Halloween party on Saturday 28 October. To coincide with Lu Yang: Encephalon Heaven, M WOODS Shop is selling LuYang Interactive Hearse, an edition made by Lu Yang with Daata Editions

About Lu Yang

Born and based in Shanghai, Lu Yang graduated from the China Academy of Art in 2010. Her works have been featured in important solo and group exhibitions at the Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (Beijing), Centre Pompidou, 56th Venice Biennale 2015 China Pavillion, the Third Istanbul Design Biennial, Liverpool Biennial 2016, Shanghai Biennale 2012, Montreal International Digital Art Biennial 2016, Musée d'art contemporain de Lyon, Momentum (Berlin), Tampa Museum of Art, Fifth Fukuoka Asian Art Triennale, and the NYU Shanghai Art Gallery among others.

About M WOODS

M WOODS is an independent, not-for-profit art museum founded in 2014 by collectors Lin Han and Wanwan Lei, and co-founded by Michael Xufu Huang. The program draws predominately from the M WOODS Collection, a collection that ranges from ancient Chinese stonecarvings to international painting, sculpture, and video. This mode of collecting forgoes focus on a specific period, movement or medium, instead seeking clarity and timelessness in a pursuit to be universal, and therefore truly contemporary. Alongside the exhibitions, the museum runs an education program manifest in talks, events, film screenings, and art activities for all levels of engagement. In 2015, M WOODS received official not-for-profit status in acknowledgement of its cultural services to the public.

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