



Underwater Dreams

Change in Motion



Cosmicomics is a collection of twelve short stories first published in the 1960s by Italian writer Italo Calvino. It is here that Lin Yuqi has drawn inspiration for her latest series of works, the title of the exhibition being Qfwfq (pronounced “kafoofeek”), who is also the narrator in Calvino’s surrealist fiction world. In her series of works, *The Rules of Change*, Lin attempts to achieve what Calvino did in *Cosmicomics*, to distill intelligence, humor, poignancy and irony into the purely luminous.

The exhibition features eight videos presenting caricatures rather than characters, irony rather than empathy. Entering the darkened gallery space feels like walking into a movie theater. *The Site* is arguably the most captivating piece, dominating the room on the biggest screen; it is also the only color piece in

the exhibition. In it, a young girl struggles in a swimming pool, suffocating at the frontier between the dream world and reality. There is the haunting sound of splashing water and police sirens in the distance. Hope and desperation spring to mind. You watch over and over as the video loops, but nothing changes, the outcome is always the same. Although a mere 41 seconds long, it is mesmerizing.

In *The Barter*, a seven-minute pastiche, reminiscent of a 1920s silent movie, an audience wearing absurd animal masks, as if lined up on chairs watching a movie tell themselves, barter with a reckless auctioneer. This is clearly a lawless land, but is it just an auction, or a premeditated killing?

I Am Always the Weak in Front of You, follows a protagonist—clearly inspired by Frida Kahlo with her distinctive unibrow—on an

absurd journey through time. The story is unpredictable and terrifying. Beautiful cinematography complements the absurdity of the story.

Lin Yuqi is clearly not satisfied with the mundane world she inhabits. “I see others as gangsters and I see the society as a complex crime scene,” she reflects. In this exhibition she has created a narrator to tell her stories, whereas other artists tell their stories themselves. “I am obsessed with the pleasure of losing control without disturbance or manipulation,” Lin explains. She refuses to give her audience too much information, indulging them the chance to draw their own conclusions without cue or coercion.

*** Misha Maruma, cncncreate.org**

Qfwfq at ShanghART, through Sunday, July 30, www.shanghartgallery.com



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