Individualism & Multi-Sensory Art in Printmaking

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Introduction

"The definition of Individualism is political and social philosophy that emphasizes the moral worth of the individual" Individualism and liberalism are the controversial theory in contemporary Chinese society. Multi-foreign cultures have the tremendous impact on Chinese culture. At the same time, liberalism theory also leads the new Chinese generation to develop a social political and cultural environment. Individualism and conservatism are opposites forms of philosophy. In the recent years, there has been an increasing trend of a contradiction of thought in Chinese culture between the philosophes of individualism and conservatism.

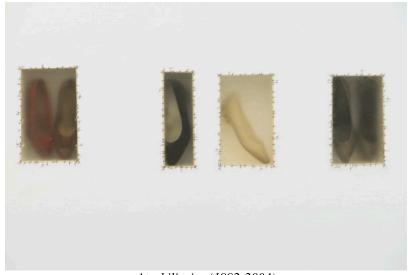
Doris Salcedo who, from Colombia, her installation art had brought me a lot of inspiration and reflection. Salcedo's art shows the unique atmosphere of silent revolt in her memory and experience. Artwork "Atrabiliario" gave me the idea to question my art. Moreover, it gave me the confidence to face the problem and challenges, which is the bound from traditional Chinese thought, in my heart. I am going to discuss the significance of independence and liberalism in my works from three aspects: the influence of her works, the detention of Chinese traditional culture, and the exploration of the elements of Liberalism.

The influence from Doris Salcedo's installation art

When I went to the Chicago Museum of Contemporary Art two years ago, I saw the artwork *Atrabiliarios* created by the Doris Salcedo. I had been longing for peace of mind but was profoundly shocked. *Atrabiliarios* (1992-2004) appears to be the usual art display, but it is likewise a kind of depiction of the violence of war and anger. It is a profound history of war, and the depiction of human cruelty appears again. When I see worn shoes are sealed in the white walls, as if to see the reality memory from the cruel war. It is not only a kind of life and the life

¹ Lukes, Steven M. "Individualism." Encyclopædia Britannica. December 03, 2014. Accessed March 22, 2017. https://www.britannica.com/topic/individualism.

of the display but also a memory of the war. "She uses a variety of natural materials and supplies to interpret the art-work of *Atrabiliario*. She used several different materials in her art, such as shoes, dry wall, paint, wood, animal fiber (ox bladder membrane), suture, 43 Niches and 40 boxes. These simple materials had the rich and heavy historical significance."²



Atrabiliarios (1992-2004)

Gerardo Mosquera in the book "Contemporary Art in Latin America" introduced Doris Salcedo. She was born in 1958 in Columbia. Salcedo's inspiration came from her personal experience. Her early works frequently used regular objects, such as a desk and a chair. Salcedo also utilized daily activities to revising the second creation. In her art were full of violence, displacement, force and missing person. Her work often makes a silent violence, such as the parents of children were involved in political radicalism murder, were murdered the families were victims of society violence and war-torn.³

In her "Doris Salcedo on her Colombian heritage" talk, she speaks about the experience of her life in her home country.

³ Mosquera, Gerardo, Luis Camnitzer, Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro, Cuauhtemoc Mochina, and Guy Brett, Contemporary Art in Latin America (London: Black Dog Publishing, 2010), 71.

² Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago. "Exhibitions Past; Doris Salcedo, Feb 21–May 24, 2015." MCA.com. https://mcachicago.org/Exhibitions/2015/Doris-Salcedo. (Accessed March 22, 2017).

she was born in the wrong country and worked in the wrong place. Columbia is the country respect is considered drug trafficking and brutal. In Columbia, if hundreds of people die, people will not know what has happen. Because people lost the status of human being.⁴

she mentioned that she went through horrible experiences there. Likewise, all the experience influenced her work, giving her ideas why she was working with the social, political installation art in her life. Her sculpture and installation reflected the social life of marginal people. In addition, her work shows the innocent victims of human right abuses in the third world. From her abstract and art criticism of art piece, we could see the victim's real inner world.⁵

Manchester, Clare, and Gilda Williams in the book "Fresh Cream" mentioned the artwork of Salcedo showed Columbia's history and suffering. Her artwork seems a small personal art project, but behind her art there is a great and profound meaning about the violent history of Columbia. her arts usually display concepts of the privation, women, and the bottom of society's attention. this approach reveals the poverty-stricken and vulnerable groups in the pain of life and memory. In her art projects not only sigh the memory of her life and family, but also cherishes the memory of the whole country which, because the war, led to the bereaved family. On the other hand, she uses her idea of talking about Columbian War history in the present age. Such as, endless war, concerns about the drug trade, political instability, and people becoming destitute and homeless. Persecution and violence lead the country, and the human being has brought irreparable pain and cost today.⁶

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⁴ San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. "Doris Salcedo on her Colombian heritage." sfmoma.org. https://www.sfmoma.org/watch/doris-salcedo-on-her-colombian-heritage/ (Accessed March 22, 2017).

⁵ Art 21. "Doris Salcedo." PBS.com. http://www.pbs.org/art21/artists/doris-salcedo. (Accessed March 22, 2017).

⁶ Manchester, Clare, and Gilda Williams, Fresh Cream: Contemporary Art in Culture; 10 Curators, 10 Writers, 100 Artists. (London: Phaidon Press, 2000), 526

Doris Salcedo in her "Doris Salcedo's Public Works" mention that "Being in a violent country, you cannot act as if violence is not happening, and that's why I think art has to somehow create a balance. Art does not give answers, only poses questions."⁷

The detention of Chinese traditional culture

Throughout the 21st century, China is still in the process of cultural conservatism.

Nevertheless, it is not the originally conservative. It is containing both western and eastern traditional cultural conservatism. It is right on the same time influenced by over 5000 years on cultural inheritance. Fundamentally, Chinese culture and thoughts can fail to get rid of historical factors and Confucianism. "Confucianism, also called as Ruism, is described as tradition, a philosophy, a religion, a humanistic or rationalistic religion, a way of governing, or simply a way of life" Confucianism is the foundation of traditional Chinese culture. In contemporary socialist theory, Confucianism still has the significant reference value. Furthermore, Confucianism is the epitome of Chinese culture. The influence of Confucianism from the Millennium baptism of traditional culture which is difficult to tolerate ideological liberalism.

Confucianism theory believes that when people are born, their personalities are gentle, and their temperaments are also very similar. The idea reflects the conservative attitude of Confucianism. Although Confucianism does not deny people's character is unique and individual, but the theory emphasizes an apparent exclusiveness. Due to the influence of traditional culture and Confucianism, similar groups of people will isolate and discriminate relatively unique groups. The distinctive individuality erased by social reality conditions. The consciousness of self-protection to allow people to produce a self-restriction and bound nature.

⁷ Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago. "Exhibitions Past; Doris Salcedo, Feb 21–May 24, 2015." MCA.com. https://mcachicago.org/Exhibitions/2015/Doris-Salcedo. (Accessed March 22, 2017).

⁸ Yao, Xinzhong. An introduction to Confucianism. Cambridge, (New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2000), 38-47.

This peculiar self-restriction and Durance is the sign of most Chinese culture. Since the severe pressure of Self-protection is present, people want a spiritual release. As a Chinese student, I deeply comprehend the social contradictions in the sense of oppression. The conservative cultural environment also gives me a weighty impact and effect. When I try to learn from the United States and Western cultural liberalism, the self-confinement and the desire for freedom have brought a significant impact on me. The hope and dream of liberty have constituted the central theme of my artistic creation.

From two different philosophical contradictions, I named my art ideas to essence and camouflage. In my opinion, people wear different clothes, and masks to blend in with other people, and to adapt to the society. When some wealthy people remove the cover, the body is often different from their appearance. However, some people are full of hope and passion for life. Unequal social order and political environments obscure the human right of variety. I always want to expand on this contradiction through my art. I am trying to peel away people's masks, and explore the real self so that the audience more clearly understands the imbalance of contradictions in the world. I hope the audience may perceive another layer of the real world and to understand the balance of world.

The exploration of the elements of liberalism

From the exploration of ideas of liberalism, I believe that art not only has a visual appreciation, but also has a variety of experiences, such as taste, smell, touch, and listening. This form of art derives from freedom of consciousness - Multisensory Art. In the field of multisensory art, artists are not limited to using visual elements to create the world. The viewers pay more attention when the artist uses a variety of materials and components to create a set of Art or the term synesthesia (catching an object using all the senses at the same time the aesthetic

experience). By working with a variety of media and methods such as papermaking, printmaking, ceramics, edible sculpture, and animation when creating my installations. I want to use unique sensory experiences, and break down the conservative shackles. The audience will be able to re-examine and understand their lives through the stimulation of the senses and the unconstrained art form. People can get confidence, rather than being depressed.

Annamma Joy and John F. Sherry, Jr said in an article, the body's perceptual experience has a certain imaging ability. The brain's stimulus to a distinct sensation often results from logic. When people hear the sound bites which tend to think of the bell. When people smell the fragrant of coffee tend to think of the morning coffee shop. Although the most important way to appreciate the art of the audience from the visual experience. But people feel the sense of awareness is often more than a mere visual experience. In other words, the audience experiences a whole work of art, not only the need to stimulate the visual elements, but also a variety of sensory experiences. Annamma Joy and John F. Sherry, Jr mentioned "If you use only one of the senses, you acquire only one-fifth of the aesthetic experience (container schema). In synesthesia, however, several of the senses are included, and, hence, a more holistic appreciation is possible"

Frances W. Herring mentioned "the importance of touching experiences in art. He believes that the sense of touch in the history of Western art is often not considered or not to be classified as an art experience is an outmoded view. He gave an example of China's jade and Chinese pottery, which were usually made of a piece of art that can be touched. In addition, he believes that the visual experience couldn't compare to sense of touch and aesthetic experience. Tactile experience will be more appreciated by people from diverse audiences, such as blind people" 10

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⁹ Joy, Annamma, and Jr. John F. Sherry. "Speaking of Art as Embodied Imagination: A Multisensory Approach to Understanding Aesthetic Experience." Journal of Consumer Research 30.00935301 (2003): 259-82.

¹⁰ Herring, Frances W. "Touch: The Neglected Sense." The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism 7.00218529 (1949): 199-206.

Larry Shiner and Yulia Kriskovets mention the importance and function of the smell in the art performance in the article The Aesthetics of Smelly Art. The author believes that smelly art comes from nature, and creates by nature. Olfactory experience art, auditory and visionary art has the exact same aesthetic experience value. Olfactory experience art could be more easily than the visual elements to link people's emotional memories. In addition, the smell of art is more sensible than mere visual elements. Larry Shiner and Yulia Kriskovets wrote that the fact that the vocabulary for discussing smells was more restricted than that for colors or sounds does not mean that smells couldn't support aesthetic analysis, only that articulating their significant features would be more hard.¹¹

Moreover, Jinsop Lee, who was a TED Talent Search winner in his TED (technology, entertainment, design) lecture spoke of thought that was the importance of five different senses in the design and art. in his speech, he pointed that he had an epiphany when a young lady told him sex is so good because of the five senses. ¹² According to the unique aesthetic experience, he has given a series of examples in his five-sense graph of certificate why the aesthetic experience art is often better than visual arts. The most impressive example was the experience of reading books are often better than to see a movie. Jinsop in his graph, labeling the film only has two of senses experience which were visual and auditory. However, when people reading a book could get visual (illustration and imagine), touch, smell of the book and auditory which is the sound of their own voice and paper turning) experience. ¹³

For these reasons, I elect to use mostly natural materials in my artwork. Such as, chocolate, water, leaves stones, food, spice, and tea. I also chose few unique ways to display and

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Shiner, Larry, and Yulia Kriskovets. "The Aesthetics of Smelly Art." Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism 65.00218529 (2007): 273-86. Wiley on Behalf of American Society for Aesthetics. Web. 27 March. 2017.

¹² Lee, Jinsop. "Design for All 5 Senses." 1 Feb. 2013. Lecture.

¹³ Torgovnick, Kate. "Jinsop Lee." Jinsop Lee. TED Conferences, LLC, 6 Aug. 2013. Web. 29 April. 2017. https://www.ted.com/speakers/jinsop_lee#

present my artwork. I am using the idea from Lee Jinsop, which was five senses design to create my art. I created a formula of my artwork that use the visual element add few different perceptual experiences to create distinctive art. Moreover, I used the different way to create my project. For example, papermaking, cooking and chocolate production that gave the new elements to my art. Such as touchable, scent, edible art piece. I am trying to use the idea of sharing experience to help people understand my art. The audience not only can see the image, but also can form smell, touch, and taste to feel the purity element in my art.



Experience of Life, Installation Art, 2015

For example, one of my art pieces that I created at the spring semester in 2015. The title of artwork called the Experience of Life. The formula of artwork was the combination of Visual, taste, touch and smell experience art. I let people feel my art piece and make the audience become part of my art. I put 50 different edible martial in the egg shape chocolate and created 300 piece of a colorful chocolate piece then let audience taste and find the experience of my project. I also use the embryo becomes the visual element which screen-printed on the package of the chocolate egg. When people open the box, and eat the chocolate, similarly make the single initial taste experience be born by the audience. When people began to talk about what kind of

flavor they ate, they make the communication between different people and sharing the experience of life.



The Fragrance of China, Papermaking Installation, 2015

Another example is "The Fragrance of China" which is papermaking project and I am creating at the fall semester in 2015. The formula of artwork was the combination of Visual, touch and smell experience art. In this time, I am creating the scent artwork. Let the audience to explore Chinese scent culture of my artwork. I picked Chinese five-spice powder to do paper. Five-spice powder is one of the most representative Chinese mixed spices. It commonly used in Chinese cooking. Moreover. We could say that the five-spice powder is the essence of taste and smell of Chinese culture. Each place gets its stories and atmospheres. Different flavor and scent will remind old memory in our life. Moreover. The smell usually helps people immersed different culture. I am using installation art and papermaking to create an atmosphere of the

traditional Chinese spice culture. The key to my art is "the experience of smell." And my goal is that use this idea to show the Chinese catering culture in America.



Dream, Flash Animation, Hard copy and bookmaking, 2014

Another piece of my artworks named Dream that created by fall semester 2014. My recipe is the combination of sound and visual elements. First I hand dyed the marbling wool paper. Then I used computer software made 977 frames of the flash animation that combined visual components of the scene painting, marbling paper and unique sound clips. The whole animation goes to the memory of a dream. From the beautiful Paradise Island to hell. Different sounds and graphic elements created a sense of violation of the atmosphere. At the end of the animation, role jumps off the edge of the dream. The end of the dream is the beginning of another dream. Go around and begin again.



Childhood Memories, Installation Art, 2015

Childhood Memories are created in the fall semester 2015. I have an interest in the combination of sight, taste, touch and smell. First, I did a survey in China and the United States. My question was what food can arouse people's memories of childhood. I had a total of 1488 survey results. Then I choose top 5 from China and top 5 from the United States of America as an information support of my artwork. I make ten different kinds of food which indicate different childhood memory from the cultural background. Moreover, I'm putting all dishes in a container of chocolate. When Art is on display, art itself can be tasted. My goal is that recreation of food leads the audience back to childhood memories. And, from the excellent display in my artwork let the audience understand this difference between the cultural background and childhood memories.



Natural Spirit, Sculpture, Golden Apple Residency 2016



Islands, 3D Mix Media Drawing, Golden Apple Residency 2016

Both *Natural Spirit* and *Islands* created during the same period. I went to Golden Apple Residency in Maine 2016. After residency and soak in the natural environment, I began to think about my life, and my artistic thought. The physical vitality and beauty, I cannot feel the bustle of the city and China. It is for this reason original self-release let me on my artistic consciousness

has changed. Once inspiration is always impetuous but now become more natural and accurate. I have been concerned about the real world, and I believe that everything in the world has its own life. They all have a beautiful side, but we live for the moment we ignore a lot of beautiful moments. I want to use my artistic skills to bring these great lives back to people's vision, let people and I understand and feel the beauty of life. By used handmade marbling paper, plaster, tree branch, and watercolors I created a combination sculpture of natural spirit. Colorful marbling paper like clothes which covered the entire sculpture, that symbolizes human being wearing clothes to suit in the society and world. That also shows the beautiful soul remained in the natural body.



Freedom Voyage, Installation Art, 2016

Freedom Voyage was a turning point artwork in my thesis period which created in fall semester 2016. I engaged with my husband at that time. The emotion and the desire of my creation had totally changed after I knew I could rely on other people who love and take me. My world not only full of depressing but got more confidence to face my life. In the same time, I was looking for bringing different material using to Multi - sensory art. I began to work with clay and

glaze which gave more elements in my concept. I believed that Freedom is the eternal desire of humanity. We are always bound by social discipline, which cannot be psychological and physical freedom. I wish to express my heart through the installation art to show my freedom and my dream destination. Five different branches are the core of my art. The changing of the branches from outside to inside showing a transformation process - real world to dream the world. To me, the dream world is often free, and contains the liberation of thoughts and emotions; it is a colorful world. A small fish was the symbol of my life. It was going to a fantastic voyage to find the dream world in its life. Each clay leaf looks like an independent world. They were showing the unique life at the same time, but no one knows that which one is the real dream piece. By using monotypes, marbled paper, Sculpture, ceramics and handmade paper, I was creating a combined free world. I am using handmade paper to create a landscape view. The combined view will integrate the real world and the dream world.





Bound, Bookbinding Art, 2017

The Rock, Bookbinding Art, 2017

Bound Series was created at 2017 spring semester. From my personal experience, I believed that imprisonment is a default consciousness. In my opinion, when people being bound by the environment and others at the same time, they already have accepted being bound by

themselves. This artwork also is one of the pieces help me to explore my own pursuit of freedom. The reason for being fetter, not only bound by environment and thought, but also have a fear to face the outside world. *The Rock* is a shell shaped bookbinding art. From the idea and meaning, they are also like sea shell which has layers of armor to protect their slender inner world. When their lives came to an end, they may hand to open their own guard. I have the same feel being a sea shell in my life. I am also afraid to see the outside world. Self-restraint is the way to safeguard my weakness and cowardice. In this series, I use the oven bake clay and natural fiber handmade paper as the primary material. Two different textures are stacked at the same time improving the level of multisensory experience. It is a combination mix media artwork which includes smell, sight, and touches sensory.



The Seed, Mix Media Installation Art, 2017

The Seed was created in the spring semester of 2017. It is a combination artwork of my original concept. In both concept and form, it reflects an attitude determination for freedom. It also is a mix media installation art which contains the Chinese article, sculptural environment,

seeds, and, self-portrait four essential parts. Each part represents an idiosyncratic meaning. They show a collection of self-liberation and aspiration.

The title of Chinese article is The Peach Blossom Spring. Author Yuanming, Tao pursuits freedom and wrote this story around 1700 years ago. He was living in the war, imprisoned traditional ideas inspired him to create a whole thing. The story is about a fisherman found the lost world of Taoyuan. The people's life was full of happiness and freedom. The atmosphere was full of hope and confidence. However, when he left, he couldn't come back there anymore. He doesn't know and confirms the truth of Taoyuan was a dream or reality. I want to show Chinese traditional ideological shackles bound on Queer culture and thought through this article. From the Vinyl cut text, elements of environment, and bird shows my heart yearning for the pursuit of freedom. Handwritten text is floating in the mountain air, which shows a dubious mood. As described in the story, the lost world may exist between dream and reality.

The seed was composed of clothes hangers, branches and handmade of paper. I think that people wearing different clothes and adapt to the world. The paper as the carrier of clothing wrapped in layers of seed formation form. Slightly spreading branches represents my pursuit of self-liberation process. The flashing lights create a sign of life. The seed is a symbol of hope; the thought of Individualism will become high and giant. Different ceramics leaves represent different time points in the voyage of Individualism. They are not dull, but dazzling. They symbolize everything for freedom seeking and efforts are a type of wealth. Even if they are broken, they fall, still, shine. Self-portrait from right to left order to show myself from bondage to the emancipation process. The entire installation includes screen print, handmade paper, sculpture, paper marbling, and glass glaze ceramic techniques to create a combination of olfactory, visual, tactile collections of multisensory Art.

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Title: Inner world

Plaster, Rice Paper, Paper marbling,Tree Branch
Installation Work 2.5'x8'

July 2016



Title: The Fragrancy of China

Five Spice Power, Abaca, Watercolor, String, Fabric

Installation Work 15'x 8.5'

2015

Bohan Li Master Fine Art Printmaking



Title: Self Healling

Cotton, T-shirt, Jeans, Abaca, Watercolor, String, Fabric

Installation Work 6'x8.5'

2016



Title: Freedom Voyage Installation with mixed materials including fabric, wood, stones and handmade ceramics, soap, and paper 8.5'x18'



Title: Inner World-Stage
Cotton, T-shirt, Jeans, Abaca, Watercolor, String, Fabric
8'x18'
2016



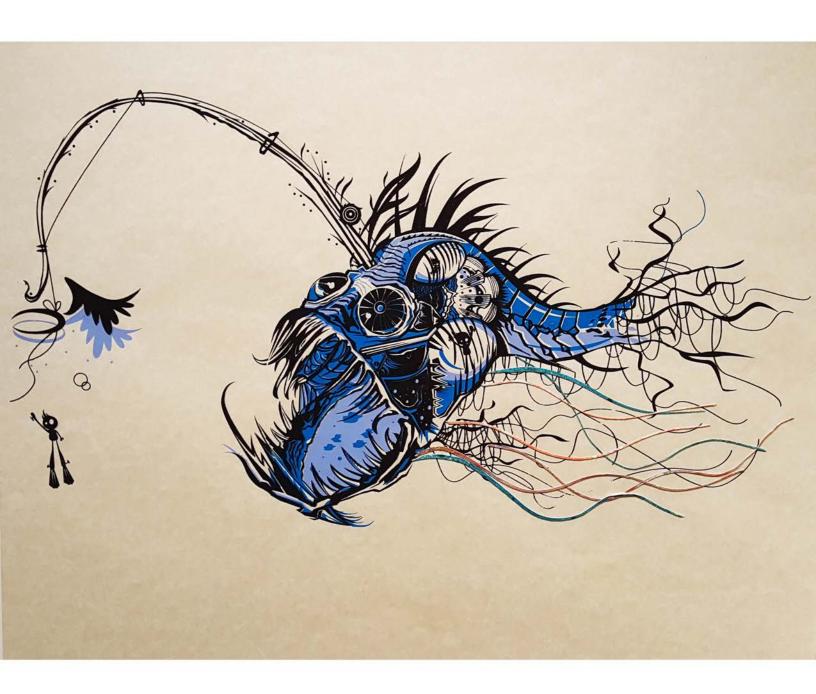
Title: Prosperity
Digital illustration, Acrylic
Life Size Car
2016



Title: Dye Fish Wool Paper marbling with Collagraph 18"x24" 2015



Title: mythology Digital illustration 16"x24" 2015



Title: The Truth-Fishing

French Paper, Paper marbling, Three Color Screen Print

Screen Print 18"x24"

2015



Title: Self -Portrait

Monotype 26 Colors Screenprint with Collage

Screen Print 18"x18"

2015



Title: Rocks

Book Binding with Handcraft Clay

2017



Title: Self Bound

Book Binding with Handcraft Clay

2017



Title: The Seed
Installation Art combine with Papermaking, Ceramic,
Screenprint, and Sculpture
2017



Title: The Seed
Installation Art combine with Papermaking, Ceramic,
Screenprint, and Sculpture
2017



Title: The Seed
Installation Art combine with Papermaking, Ceramic,
Screenprint, and Sculpture
40x26 inches
2017



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