

《倫巴》

曹斐

1

2015–2018

裝置：平台和自動清潔機

尺寸可變



穿梭於藝術家所設計的奇特地形，碟狀機械人的移動軌跡毫無規律，它們彷彿是有生命的，卻又似漫無目的地在平台上遊走。此裝置之所以名為《倫巴》(Rumba譯音)，源於藝術家取其與2002年首次推出市場的自動掃地機 (Roomba) 的諧音。曹斐於2015年首次使用這些掃地機械人創作，適逢其工作室遷拆，她便把掃地機械人置於工作室原址，拍下它們時

斷時續的機械式轉動，似是在試圖清掃現場的頹垣敗瓦，卻苦無對策。藝術家藉作品對有序與無序的呈現作出辯證，並且對中國城市結構的快速變革，城市發展與人民生計，以至當代社會開發與保持城市清潔之間的矛盾等提出見解。機械人在嶄新的美術館空間中漠然地走動，猶像機械外星生物在探索新大陸。

# Rumba

Cao Fei

1

2015–2018

Installation with stage and cleaning robots

Dimensions variable



Disc-like robot cleaners traverse a strange minimalistic landscape; randomly and aimlessly they go, sometimes navigating a passageway from one island to another. This installation is named after Roomba, the automatic cleaning robot first introduced in 2002 to take over the chore of vacuuming one's floors. Cao Fei first worked with these robot cleaners in 2015, when her Beijing studio was demolished; she placed them at the former site of her studio, filming their staccato, robotic pirouettes as

they attempted in vain to vacuum up the debris. By restaging a dialectic of order and disorder, not only does the artist comment on a rapidly transforming urban fabric in China but also on the tensions between development and livelihood, and on the contemporary emphases on the new and clean. Here, the robots are running on an empty landscape in a pristine gallery, nonchalant and aimless, perhaps like mechanical aliens exploring a new earth.

《La Town》

曹斐

2

2014

錄像

42分鐘13秒



「所有人都對La Town的神奇有所耳聞。這個故事起源於歐洲，穿越時空蟲洞，重新在亞洲和東南亞上演。」

曹斐的視頻作品將一座貌似已經荒廢的大都市置於眾目睽睽之下。映入觀者眼簾的全是廢棄的大廈、住宅及停車場，還有些廣為人知的商店標誌，如保時捷和麥當勞等——全都為觀者所熟悉，卻又明顯因破壞而變得面目全非。在藝術家手工製作的微觀城市內，可見不同人物、動物、怪物和喪屍遍佈每個角落，令整座城市散發著詭異不詳的氣息。藝術家從呈現災後的都市面貌，以及各種詭譎奇特的想像，

喚起觀者對人類文明正逐漸步向淒慘毀滅的思考。

受阿侖·雷乃指導的電影《廣島之戀》和瑪格麗特·杜拉斯的同名劇本所啓發，《La Town》的敘述採用對話的方式——男女主角如舊情侶般你一言我一語，談及過去、分離以及反烏托邦的社會形態。《La Town》的整座城市彷彿穿越時空回憶般輕浮不穩，同時予以觀者窺探的視覺，使其從旁觀角度，無助地俯瞰這座城市之時，會對當代消費與社會的可持續性有所反思，從而引申對歲月滄桑變換的永恆詰問。

2014

Video

42'13"



"Everyone has heard of the myth of La Town. The story first appeared in Europe, but after travelling through a space-time wormhole, reappeared in Asia and Southeast Asia." —*La Town*

Cao Fei brings viewers of this video work to gaze upon a seemingly abandoned metropolis. Haunting and ominous, the city appears derelict yet familiar, populated with deserted buildings, houses, car parks and recognisable symbols—destroyed Porsches and McDonald's signs, among others. The miniature, hand-made architectural sets are dotted with figurines, animals, monsters, and zombies. In this work, Cao Fei presents an urban post-apocalypse, conjuring fantasy in order to evoke the human condition, step by step descending into gloomy destruction.

Inspired by the screenplay and film *Hiroshima, Mon Amour* (written by Marguerite Duras and directed by Alain Resnais), *La Town* deploys the format of dialogue as narration—a woman and a man, formerly in a relationship, tell a story about the past, detachment, and dystopia. Strikingly analogue and dystopian, *La Town* can feel voyeuristic and ghostlike amidst moments of surreal levity; the city feels lived through with memories, while we as viewers look helplessly on, reflecting not only on contemporary questions of sustainability and consumption but also eternal questions about the vicissitudes of time.

《我·鏡》

曹斐(第二人生中的化身：  
中國·翠西)

3

2007

第二人生虛擬電影

28分鐘



寫著「土地出售」的招牌在數碼地平線和城市景觀的畫面上自轉、盤旋，帶領觀眾進入《我·鏡》的世界。此機械電影（利用遊戲動畫圖像引擎製作的錄像作品），以「第二人生」的網絡虛擬世界為背景。「第二人生」曾經是一個廣受歡迎的大型網絡平台，用戶可以自定虛擬化身，在預設空間內到處探索：由興建虛擬建築物、用虛擬貨幣購買數碼商品、交朋結友，以至互相調情、凌空飛行、用意念移物；或者乾脆甚麼都不做，漫步欣賞數碼世界的日落景色。作品明顯受數位龐克（電腦科幻小說）影響，如威廉·吉布森的小說《神經浪遊者》中的矩陣，或是尼爾·斯蒂芬森的小說《雪崩》中的虛擬實境。不同的是，本片由藝術家曹斐在「第二人生」的化身中國·翠西執導，以紀錄片的形式，敘述一趟穿越平行世界的旅程。中國·翠西

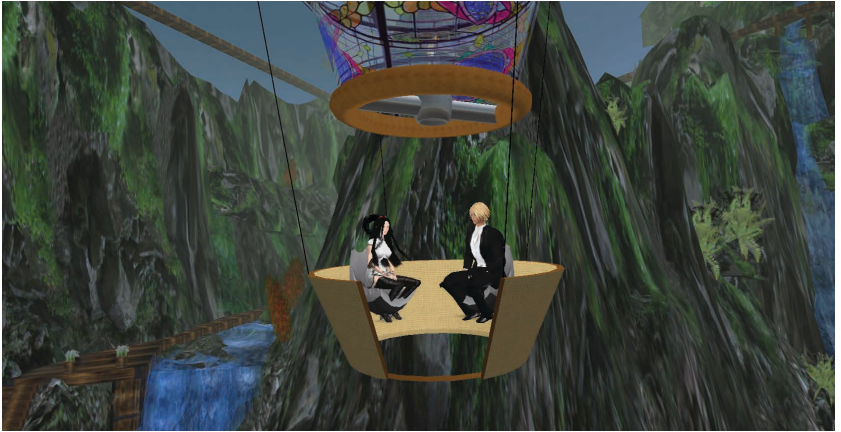
與網友Hug Yue的緊密互動演化成為一段虛擬的愛情故事，兩人借用了網絡身份，既陶醉於自欺，也沉思於改變，思考現實和虛擬世界，以及兩者之間模糊不清的界限。

《我·鏡》是中國參展2007年威尼斯雙年展的作品之一，亦是曹斐在「第二人生」中創作的第一部作品；此作之後的另一部視頻作品《人民城寨》也將於是次展覽展出。藝術家全然沉醉於這個虛擬世界，觀察著這個个性化的烏托邦，在另類而充滿實驗性的平行世界裡是如何形成，又如何消解。或許，這怪誕而扭曲的平行空間，正好成為一面明鏡，反映著我們自身，以及所面對的現實；容許我們在未來回顧之時，能以此作為現實生活世界的先聲和預兆。

2007

Machinima

28'



Rotating “Land for Sale” signs hovering against the digital horizon and cityscape welcome viewers to *i.Mirror*. This machinima—a video work created with game animation graphics engines—is set in the online virtual world of Second Life, a once-popular internet platform where users create avatars (virtual identities) of themselves and explore the world with no particular set objective: building virtual structures, buying digital goods with virtual currencies, making friends or flirting, flying or teleporting, or simply doing nothing and wandering off to the digital sunset. Cyberpunk references obviously come to mind—one may think of the matrix in William Gibson’s *Neuromancer* or the metaverse in Neal Stephenson’s *Snow Crash*—but here, the work is styled as a documentary directed by China Tracy, the artist’s Second Life avatar. The work takes us on a

journey through this parallel world, and in China Tracy’s interactions of Hug Yue, we discover a virtual love story that has characters performing online identities, enacting cheerful self-deceit, and ruminating on change, the real and the virtual, as well as the blurred boundaries between the two.

First shown as part of China’s participation in the 2007 Venice Biennale, *i.Mirror* was the first work that Cao Fei created in Second Life; this was followed by the *RMB City* project, part of which is also shown in this exhibition. The artist was engrossed with this virtual world, seeing how personalised utopias were forged—and unmade—in this alternative parallel laboratory that, perhaps, in a weird, distorted form, could hold a mirror to ourselves and our reality—and in retrospect serve as a harbinger of the world in which we now live.

2007

錄像

5分鐘57秒



《人民城寨》是曹斐一部以「中國製造」為創作出發點的都市奇想錄，背景設於「第二人生」的虛擬世界，用戶可利用化身（虛擬身份）在此空間內四出探索。藝術家把其最初的探索成果拍成了《我·鏡》，並由此悟出「第二人生」的虛擬城市，似乎也反映著西方的美學和感性，因而創造一個能反映中國內地國情的「山寨」版本。中國的標誌建築舉目皆是，如北京國家體育場、三峽大壩、毛澤東雕像和東方明珠塔等。這些建築物高低層疊的排列狀態，更深化了城市活動節奏急速的印象，加上採用仿無人機的拍攝角度，令整個畫面猶如一場盛大的開

幕典禮。此由虛擬想像發展出來的壯觀場面，不無一點中國未來主義的荒誕味道。

值得強調的一點是，《人民城寨》是「第二人生」內一個實際的虛擬空間，用戶的而且確可以進入其中，而在這裡，正如藝術家所言：「沒有國籍或邊界……我們都是未來世界的公民，人人都在這裡活出各自的第二人生，創造自己的價值。」除此之外，《人民城寨》還衍生出其他紀錄片、現場舞台演出、表演，甚至歌劇。

2007

Video

5'57"



*RMB City* is Cao Fei's "Made in China" urban imagining, set in the virtual world of Second Life, an online platform where users assume avatars (virtual identities) and go about exploring that world with no particular purpose. After her initial explorations which resulted in the work *i.Mirror*, the artist reflected on how the virtual cityscape of Second Life seemed to reflect Western aesthetics and sensibilities, and set about creating a "shanzhai" version that reflects Mainland China's national condition. Aside from overabundant iconic structures—like the Beijing National Stadium, the Three Gorges Dam, a statue of Mao, and the Pearl Oriental Tower (among much else)—there is a hyperfrenetic pile-up of

structures, all shot (in the video presented here) from a drone-like perspective, almost mimicking a grand opening ceremony, and not without a whiff of the Sinofuturist absurd, a spectacular imagining of virtual possibilities.

It is important to note moreover that *RMB City* existed as an actual virtual space within Second Life, a place where users can actually enter virtually, a place where, as the artist states, "There are no nationalities or borders. We are all world citizens in a future world where everyone lives his second life and creates his own values." The *RMB City* project also spawned other documentaries, live theatre, performances, and even an opera.



《即將到來：香港》		曹斐	5
2018	表演裝置	尺寸可變	



在此狹小的空間內，藝術家顛覆了觀者對事物的慣常感知及思維——通常被設於地上的敲擊組合被橫向裝嵌於牆上，兩名表演者維持一貫盪鞦韆的垂直坐向，對盪將身體延伸，並以雙腳擊鼓。此起彼落的鼓聲似是在預告有事情即將要發生，而表演所附帶荒

誕佻皮的玩味，讓人聯想起一段充滿未知性的舞蹈。鼓聲的強大音量、戲劇化的燈光效果，加上在鞦韆上來回舞動的表演者，賦予作品強烈的存在感，同時予觀者多元澎湃的感官體驗，似是被玩弄於未知的感覺之中，為作品提供了無盡的詮釋空間。

2018

Performance installation

Dimensions variable

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The artist subverts viewers' habitual perceptions and ideas in this small confined space. Two drum sets, normally placed on the floor, are installed on the wall; the two performers swing back and forth, striking at the drum set with both feet. The sound of the drums perhaps evokes a heightened anticipation of something "coming soon", while the playful absurdity simply

and deftly suggests the dance of chance (the sway of the swing, the stretch of the feet). The sensorially powerful work—the volume of the drums, the dramatic highlights, the performers on the swing—combines sound/music with elements of trapeze to forge a striking presence. Visitors are toyed with a sense of the unexpected and offered open-ended possibilities of interpretation.

## 《監獄建築師》

曹斐

6

2018

影像裝置

57分鐘

曹斐作品的動人之處，在於其能夠細膩捕捉人處於當代社會中所感到的迷茫和困惑。此不確定性是主觀的，然而觀眾總可以跟隨藝術家所鋪層的意象，緩緩領會，悟出屬於自己的深刻見解，並由此產生共鳴。

《監獄建築師》是大館委託藝術家曹斐所創作之新作，為展覽的敘述中心，冀望以此展示藝術家在創作上的願景以及其對情感的仔細拿捏。作品以影片、裝置及雕塑的多維敘事形式呈現，微妙地貫穿美術館的三層空間。其中影片圍繞一位建築師的獨白創作：「作為一個建築師，一個人，我很難想像自己將成為那個將同類囚禁起來的空間設計者」。作品以域多利監獄的沉重歷史材料為創作靈感，並於中環區鬧市取景拍攝。影片中男女主角在兩個平行現實裡（當代及年份模糊的舊時），對囚禁各有思索和切身體驗。這個時空交錯的對話，延展出藝術家對人與世界之關係的駁論。

作品的大型裝置跨越美術館三層樓的主次空間，而宏觀整體展覽設計，觀者亦不難領會藝術家對囚禁的幻想。影片的拍攝場景在展覽空間內重現並重疊，展示予觀者理想與現實之間的困惑和錯愕，沿襲藝術家一貫的創作風格。

「追求自由，乃人之本性。」黑格爾說。影片對存在主義為自我救贖的方式進行探討，並對人自身內在的關係，以及人與空間的關係提出質疑。這是藝術家面對複雜的世界與難解的人性，所進行的調節與和解。

主演：周嘉玲、關尚智

影片是曹斐與香港電影金像獎最佳攝影師關本良先生的首次合作，拍攝團隊來自香港，後期製作於香港，台灣和北京完成。

放映時間：每整點播放



2018

Video installation

57'

Capturing the confusion and bafflement of the modern age within contemporary society is the poignant aspect of Cao Fei's work. The ambiguity is subjective; often only by means of slow-moving imagery can viewers gain insight and empathy.

The newly commissioned work *Prison Architect* is at the narrative heart of the exhibition, aspiring to present a microcosm of her creative vision and her calibration of sentiments. *Prison Architect* subtly traverses the three floors of the exhibition space in a diverse array of formats such as film, installation, and sculpture. The film contains this monologue from the architect: "As an architect, as an individual, it is difficult to imagine myself becoming someone who designs spaces to imprison my fellow human beings." In the film, the character takes inspiration from the sombre history of the Victoria Prison, while the film is set in the bustling neighbourhood of Central. The male and female protagonists, in parallel realities (in the present as well as an indistinct past), conjure up imagination and experiences about imprisonment. This dialogue across space and time in fact presents the artist's notions about the relation of humans, the world, and freedom.

This large-scale installation cuts across the various spaces in the three floors of the art centre. The artist's imagination about imprisonment can also be grasped from the exhibition design. The setting as shot by the film reappears and overlaps in the exhibition—which follows from the artist's oeuvre, shot through with that bafflement between reality and hope.

For Hegel, the pursuit of freedom is human nature. This film explores existentialism as a means of self-redemption, questioning at once the relationship of the self to itself, and that of humans to the space around them. This is the artist's attempt at reconciliation with the world and human nature.

Actors: Valerie Chow,  
Kwan Sheung Chi

The film is the first collaboration between Cao Fei and the award-winning cinematographer Kwan Pun Leung (who has won at the Hong Kong Film Awards), with a Hong Kong film crew; post-production was completed in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Beijing.

Screening time: every hour,  
on the hour.



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