WANG BOQIAO
Digital Art China

Digital art in China

I proposed the topic 'Digital art in China' in 2008, and since then, almost every year we have invited scholars, critics and artists, both at home and abroad, to join seminars and forums on this topic. Though people's understandings and knowledge of digital art are full of contradictions and difficulties, and even suspicion and debate, I think the publicity and uncertainty are precisely the charm of digital art.

Undeniably, the popularity of the Internet and application of the computer in China have gradually removed the veil of mystery of science and technology, and the emergence of a large number of open – source hardware and programs has brought unprecedented creative means and tools to more Chinese artists. Our Chinese ancestors said that the writing brush and ink painting should always embody the changing times. Viewed in regard to the evolution of production tools, digital technology may be a more functional and convenient 'toolkit' compared with the writing brush and oil painting brush. Since these have been substituted by the mouse and hand-drawn board, and paper and canvas have been substituted by the screen, then can we say that digital technology is only a tool for us? In my opinion, certainly not. Digital technology brings us a digital way of thinking, whereby artists can carry out information processing and conversion. Artists can be inspired to observe life and society in this unique way.

In the 1980s, after 'electronic game' – a kind of interactive game that fascinated people – was introduced to China, changes have taken place in the creation of a number of artists; for example, artists can create paintings by recoding game source programs. The artist Feng Mengbo is representative of this, and I very much appreciate his seemingly casual remark that 'these things are actually being played with'. It is the great wealth of creative means that promotes

the maximum release of performance of concept. Art has been released from depression and has gradually become a game to play, turning from a political, negative, gloomy, human art form into a new relaxed art form. Meanwhile, digital and traditional Chinese art have not only experienced transformational change in creation, but have also experienced dramatic change in spread and influence.

Since 2000, many international and local digital art and new media art exhibitions, arts festivals and forums, large and small, have been held in China, the most significant of which include three International New Media Art Exhibitions held in Beijing from 2004 to 2006; four Electronic Art Festivals held in Shanghai from 2007 to 2009; the large-scale 'Synthetic Times: Media Art China 2008' held in the National Art Museum of China in 2008; Coding and Decoding: International Digital Art Exhibition held in CAFA Art Museum in 2010; and Beijing New Media Art Annual Exhibition held in Beijing in 2011.

Over the past few years, the institution I worked in has been more focused on discovery and the display of China's domestic digital art, and our project had the privilege of starting from the cosmopolitan cities of Beijing and Shanghai, but we do not aim to focus our attention only on Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and other first-tier cities in China, we hope that the wider population in China has the opportunity to appreciate the works integrating science with art, which will bring more creativity and innovation to artists. Due to inadequate funding over the past few years, we had to go to mainland China's secondary cities such as Jinan, Chongqing, Hangzhou and Zhuhai, but we still strive to bring our works to Hong Kong and a dozen overseas cities, such as Melbourne, Sydney and cities in Malaysia. Each exhibition always brings me energy, which comes not only from academia, science and technology, and artists, but more from the ordinary audience, who have never seen these works but are full of curiosity and enthusiasm.

Figure 1: Destruction Miaoxiaochun digital art.

Figure 2: 'Water is Deep Here in Beijing buhua Digital Art'.

In view of digital art education in China, some universities set up special programmes related to digital art ten years ago, and now almost all key universities have set up new media art departments or digital art departments. The most satisfying aspect of this is that these universities always encourage interdisciplinary cooperation and exchanges. For example, Tsinghua University and China Academy of Fine Arts have set up cross-media institutes. Thus, an artistic creative team composed of artists, engineers and programmers has emerged in China, who will further explore possibilities between technology and art to create amazing works.

I believe that, along with the development of society, all Chinese and western art rules in this field will be changed, while the creative integration of science and art will be an inevitable trend of the development of digital art.

CONTRIBUTOR DETAILS

Wang Boqiao is the founder of Digital Art China, a creative consultant for the National Museum of China, Secretary – General of the China Digital Art Association and a curator for the Wall Art Museum. Dedicating himself to media, arts, and science and technology, Wang Boqiao has organized activities of Chinese and foreign cultural exchange many times, and served as curator of thematic activities: Celebration on the 35th Anniversary of Sino-Malaysian Diplomatic Relations: 'Digital Art China@ Malaysia', Australia and China Culture Year: *A New Era: A New Media.* In 2008, he created the cross-sector cultural project 'Digital Art China' that takes digital art as its core, and involves architectural design, performance, multimedia, design, technology, culture, society and other fields, focusing on research, discovery and the display of China's domestic digital culture and arts. So far, this project has been performed in the form of exhibitions, forums and cultural exchange activities more than 30 times in dozens of cities both at home and abroad, such as Sydney, Melbourne, Kuala Lumpur, Shanghai, Beijing, Hangzhou, Hong Kong, Chongqing, Lhasa, Zhuhai and Jinan. Some workshops are also set up in these cities. It is interesting that only very few of the exhibitions and events he planned are held in art galleries and art spaces; most are held in town squares, exhibition centres, shopping malls, museums and other public spaces. In 2011, Wang Boqiao was invited to take charge of interactive experience design of digital multimedia in the audience experience area of the National Museum of China.

王泊乔
数字艺术中国DAC创始人

数字艺术在中国

"数字艺术在中国"是我2008年提出的一个话题，之后我们几乎每年都会邀请国内外的学者、批评家和艺术家举行与这个话题相关的研讨会和论坛，虽然大家对于数字艺术的理解和认识，充满了矛盾和困难，甚至质疑和争论，但我觉得开放和不确定性恰恰是数字艺术魅力所在。

不可否认，计算机、互联网在中国的普及，使科学和技术开始慢慢卸下它神秘的面纱，大量开源硬件、程序的出现更为中国艺术家带来前所未有创作手段和工具。中国古人说：笔墨当随时代，如果从生产工具进化论来讲，数字技术可能是相对于毛笔、油画刷更加强大和好用的一种"工具包"。笔和刷子被鼠标和手绘板代替；纸张和画布被屏幕代替......那么，数字技术对于我们来说仅仅是在工具层面吗？当然不是，我认为由于数字技术的出现，意味着一种数字化的思维方式，同时它也引发艺术家们以这种独特的方式观察生活、社会，并利用数字技术对信息进行处理和转换。

80年代，当可以被参与和互动的"电子游戏"传入中国后，一些艺术家的创作发生了变化，比如对游戏源程序进行重新编码来创作作品。代表性的艺术家有冯梦波等，我非常欣赏他看似不经意的一句话："我的这些东西其实就是玩出来"。正是因为创作手段的极大丰富，也促进了观念表现的最大限度的释放。艺术从被压抑出来的，逐渐变成了玩出来的。从政治的、反面的、灰暗的、人性的、走进了一种新的放松的艺术形态中。同时数字艺术同中国传统艺术不仅在创作中发生了变革性的改变，传播性和影响力上也发生了巨大变化。

大大小小国际和中国本土的数字艺术和新媒体艺术展览、艺术节、论坛从2000年以后在中国开始较为频繁的举行。比较重要的有2004年-2006年举办了三届北京国际新媒体艺术展、2007-2009上海举办了四届电子艺术节、2008年中国美术馆举办了大型的"合成时代：媒体中国2008"、2010年中央美术学院美术馆举行了"编码与解码：国际数字艺术展"。以及去年我们在北京举办的"北京新媒体艺术年展"等。

在这几年里面，我所在的机构数字艺术中国则更侧重发掘和展示中国本土数字艺术，我们的项目有幸从北京、上海这样的国际化都市出发，但我们却不想仅仅将目光聚焦在北京、上海、广州等这些中国的一线城市，而希望中国更广泛的人群有机会看到这些科学和艺术结合作品，从而引发更多的创造和创新。在没有太多资金的支持下，我们在这几年去到了一些中国大陆的二级城市，例如济南、重庆、杭州、珠海等地，同时也将这些作品带到了中国香港、马来西亚、澳大利亚墨尔本、悉尼等十几个海外的城市。在这一过程中，每个展览总能带给我一些力量，这些力量不仅仅是来自学术界的，科技的，艺术家的，更多的是普通观众的，他们对这些以前从未接触过的作品充满了好奇和热情。

从数字艺术在中国的教育来说，10年前开始就有大学开设了数字艺术相关的专业，而如今几乎国内重要的大学都开设了新媒体艺术系或者数字艺术系。而最令人欣喜的是学校鼓励不同专业之间的跨界合作与交流，清华大学和中国美术学院都成立了跨媒体学院。中国开始出现很多由艺术家、工程

师、程序员组成的艺术创作团队，他们不断发掘科技和艺术之间的各种可能性，作品令人惊喜。

我相信，随着时代的发展，将来所有中国与西方在这一领域的规则都会改变，科学和艺术创造性的融合将是数字艺术发展的必然的趋势。

附图1：缪晓春 数字艺术 灭
2：卜桦 数字艺术 北京水深

王泊乔

数字艺术中国创始人、中国国家博物馆顾问、中国数字艺术协会秘书长，原墙美术馆馆长 王泊乔先生辗转踏足媒体、艺术、科技领域，组织多次中外文化年交流项目，曾担任中马建交三十五周年"数字艺术中国@马来西亚"、澳大利亚中国文化年《新时代：新媒体》策展人等。2008年，他创建了以数字艺术为核心介入建筑设计、表演、多媒体、设计、科技、文化、社会等多个领域的跨界文化项目"数字艺术中国"，侧重研究、发掘和展示中国本土数字文化和艺术。迄今为止，这个项目已在悉尼、墨尔本、吉隆坡、上海、北京、杭州、香港、重庆、拉萨、珠海、济南等十余个国内外城市举行了三十余次展览、论坛、文化交流活动和工作坊，有趣的是，他策划的展览和活动只有很少数是在美术馆和艺术空间举行，大部分都在城市广场、展览中心、商场、博物馆等公共空间中举办。2011年王泊乔先生还受邀主持中国国家博物馆新馆观众体验区的数字多媒体互动体验设计。

intellect

www.intellectbooks.com

JOURNAL OF
CURATORIAL STUDIES

Journal of Curatorial Studies

Aims and Scope

The *Journal of Curatorial Studies* is an international, peer-reviewed publication that explores the cultural functioning of curating and its relation to exhibitions, institutions, audiences, aesthetics and display culture. As a critical and responsive forum for debate in the emerging field of curatorial studies, the journal will foster scholarship in the theory, practice and history of curating, as well as that of exhibitions and display culture in general.

Call for Papers

The *Journal of Curatorial Studies* seeks original research articles on the subject of curating and exhibitions, as well as case studies, interviews and reviews of recent books, exhibitions and conferences.
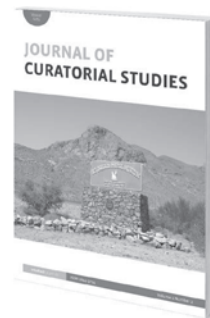
Editors
Jim Drobnick
Ontario College of Art & Design
jim@displaycult.com

Jennifer Fisher
York University
jefish@yorku.ca