

Guo Xi: The Reenactor

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Several days ago, the convenience store I often visit hung a 30% off sale notice. Later, it changed to 50% off. One hour before its closure, the shelves were almost empty, only remaining a few products. This scene is a Déjà vu moment for me: isn't it the Guo Xi's exhibition *The Reenactor* at Vanguard gallery? Reenactor is enacted again.

Déjà vu. Already seen. The same thing happens twice. Feeling of familiarity. Twisted brain. The illusion created by Hippocampus. Coincidence. Reenactor's rhyme skills. The rhyme effect of daily experience indicates that something is repeating. Or time is not linear as we thought but is closer to the swirling bun of the main female character in Hitchcock's movie *Vertigo*.

When Guo Xi uses "*All Days*", which is a blue background with pink edge and white words written, to enact a visual image of *All Days* convenience store. The special swirl is formed: gallery white cube transforms into 24 hours convenience store with eternal lighting; the brand visual identity often decorated outside of convenience stores is flipped inside; there is an easily overlooked thin horizontal line (ł) added on the second "l" on "*All Days*". It is like Latin letters which are used in Polish and Belarusian languages to differentiate sound / l / , indicating there is a tiny variation on l's doppelgänger. It also reminds people of the famous quote in Macedonia movie *Before the Rain*: "Time never dies, the circle is not round." Besides, italic ł is eerily reminiscent of *the cross*, some kind of "All Days Religion"

Every visitor who comes to (or enact) *The Reenactor* walks into the inner of the work. It is different from our normal visiting experience—watch from outside. Guo Xi's *The Reenactor* is a space to display the inner of daily objects: the arrangement of the exhibition makes people think of specimen table, creating a usual anatomic atmosphere featured in natural science museums. Probably, "specimen", "anatomy" and "translation" can all be regarded as the implication of Guo Xi's art practice: pictures on cans or drinking bottles are stripped out, showing a certain void; accordingly, images—no matter painting *Girl with a Pearl Earring*, actress Tang Wei, Lao Gan Ma, cows, or the letters "late" which are taken out of context, abstract painting like fusilli's surface—the photos of these objects have been zoomed in to an extent that the pixel particles can be seen. They become so familiar as well as strange. Like Jia Siwen, who becomes a giant after passing through Enlargement Door (artwork *There Never Should Have Been an Artist Named Jia Siwen*, 2012-2014). "Value disappearance and reconstruction happen in an instant". The use of Mirror and mini camera to shoot close-up of daily object's surface create a reversed inside and outside illusion. It also implies to observe daily object both from outside and inside simultaneously.

Of course, time and memories are the core of reenactor's rhyme tool (inside out, end-to-end loop). When I watch again exhibition *The Reenactor's* photos on the computer again, I can't memorize what is the blue cylindrical item which is covered by the painting *Girl with a Pearl Earring*. Is it a flashlight, or a cup? So I rushed to the *All Day* convenience store at the ground floor near my apartment. I approached to the shelves and scanned them again and again, following Guo Xi's definition of XY axis. However, my abnormal behaviour finally attracted the attention of one store staff. "Sir, what are you looking for?" he asked.

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