

Exhibition creative brief

Found in Translation

This exhibition catalog is a collection of works by artists that capture a pivotal shift in the way of seeing and perceiving. The works within the catalog focus on the cultural signs that have gained wide acceptance and popularity, charged/influenced by the biases present in our culture to derive meaning from it. There is usage of techniques of cliché, parody, pastiche, appropriation, and satire to build a narrative that is beyond what the artist of an independent cultural sign intended to communicate to begin with. Found in translation aims to draw attention to a way of embracing the structuralist perspective of giving meaning to things only in relation to a system/culture it exists in, or what surrounds it but at the same time taking in the post-structuralist perspective that meaning is not only reliant on what is just present Infront of us but also by what is absent, giving the viewers the opportunity to explore the multiplicity of meanings inherent in these signs. The catalog focuses on the artists/designers such as Banksy, Ai Wei Wei, Corita Kent, Ron English, Wang Guangyi, Andy Warhol etc who embraced and justified this process of creation of meaning not through nothingness but by altering the lens through which we view these pre-existing cultural codes and signs. In doing so it explores what lies beyond the surface and opens up a new array of possibilities characterized by a lack of objectivity, and instead enhancing the objective with deferred meanings, hidden stories, and alternative interpretations.

Designed works for exhibition catalog



RON ENGLISH

MC Supersized, Popaganda

English came up with the fat Ronald McDonald mascot called "MC Supersized" for Morgan Spurlock's 2004 *Supersize Me* documentary. MC Supersized is a take on what would Ronald McDonald look like if he actually ate at McDonald's according to the Artist. Bootlegged MC Supersized vinyl figures are sold in China and are the reason for its great popularity. MC Supersized vinyl figures are packaged in a box adorned with golden arches and the McDonalds logo to support the created narrative.



BANKSY

Napalm (Cant Beat That Feeling), 2004

Banksy in this artwork juxtaposes the image of the famous Vietnam War photograph taken on June 8th, 1972 by Nick Ut of a young girl Phan Thi Kim Phuc fleeing the town of Trang Bang after an air strike to surface bombing raid by U.S. soldiers, against the symbols of capitalist giants, Mickey Mouse and Ronald McDonald. Investigating the relationship between perception and reality.

It is a satirical take on the cultural perception of America, and America's perception of itself. This is considered to be one of Banksy's most daunting artistic expressions.



BANKSY

Shoeshine, 2013

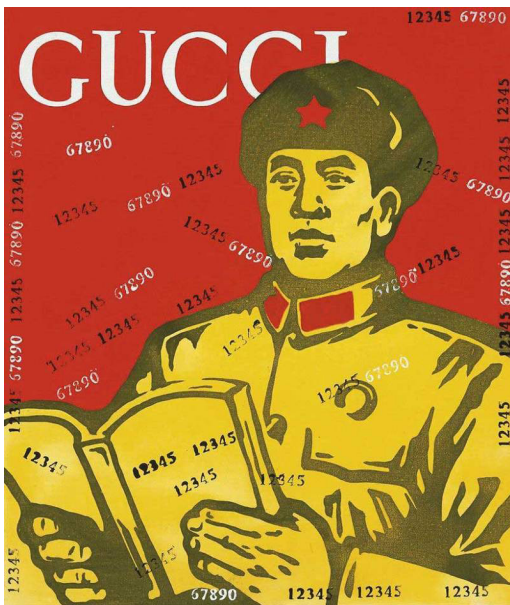
Banksy's work here is his commentary on mega-industry business corporations. By creating a fiberglass replica of Ronald McDonald with a ridiculously large shoe being buffed to a shine by a real person. It was put up outside McDonald's in South Bronx. Banksy, through his work here, speaks volumes on the tough labor required to maintain and keep the polished image of such mega-corporations.



AI WEIWEI

Han Dynasty Urn with Coca-Cola Logo, 1993

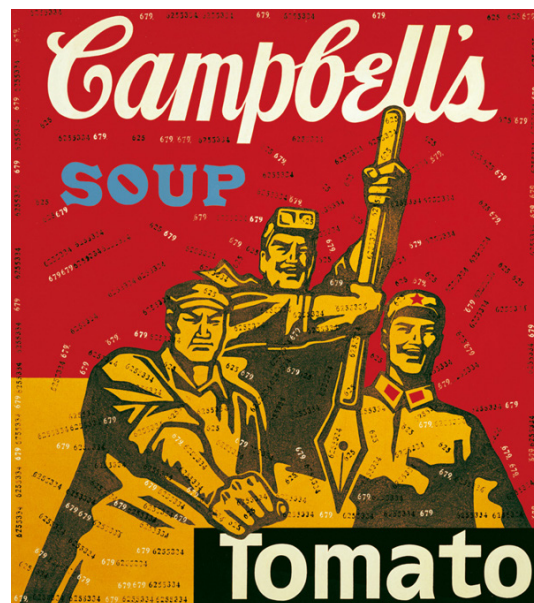
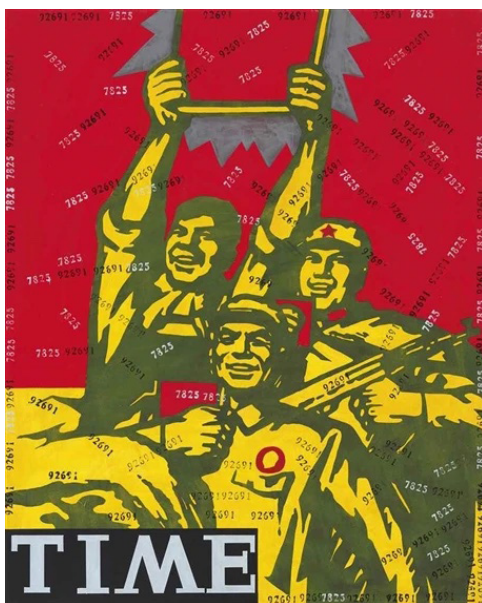
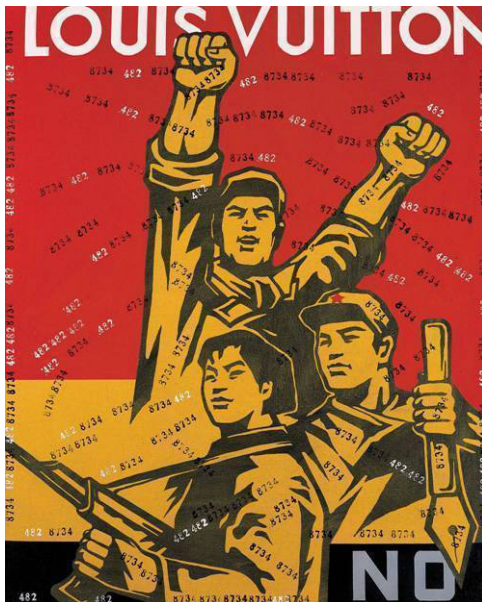
Ai Weiwei's longest running work, using the power of symbolism he conceptualises the stirring of east and west together, and its starkness, in the form of the Coca-Cola logo on Han Dynasty Urns, an ancient Chinese craft. It is a commentary on the evident effects of globalisation that is setting its roots down and deep, as capitalism infiltrates China. For Ai Weiwei, it depicts the tides of change and cultural conflict washing China. The Coca-Cola symbol with its lettering in red color is ubiquitous and proliferating, which aptly sits in the subconscious of the masses as a leading symbol of the consumer culture. He constructs a reflection of a country in flux, where the east and west are in a way chafing but do not appear to be settling in its formation.



WANG GUANGYI

Great criticism

Known as the Andy Warhol of China and best known for his series, Great Criticism, Wang Guangyi's work focusses on repurposing Chinese propaganda paintings, by merging them with western influences, such as Coca-Cola, Louis Vuitton, contributing to the movement known as the Political Pop. Guangyi puts in juxtaposition the yellow-red Mao- era posters with brand logos, serial numbers and barcodes, and his own captions ('No') forming a merger of commercial and political symbols. The artist is indicating the uneasy points of confluence between the country's Maoist past and its promising economic future. Wang's work is deeply rooted in the investigation of the binary of Western society and Socialist ideology, and through usage of imagery denoting the visual culture of both, he finds a powerful meeting point.

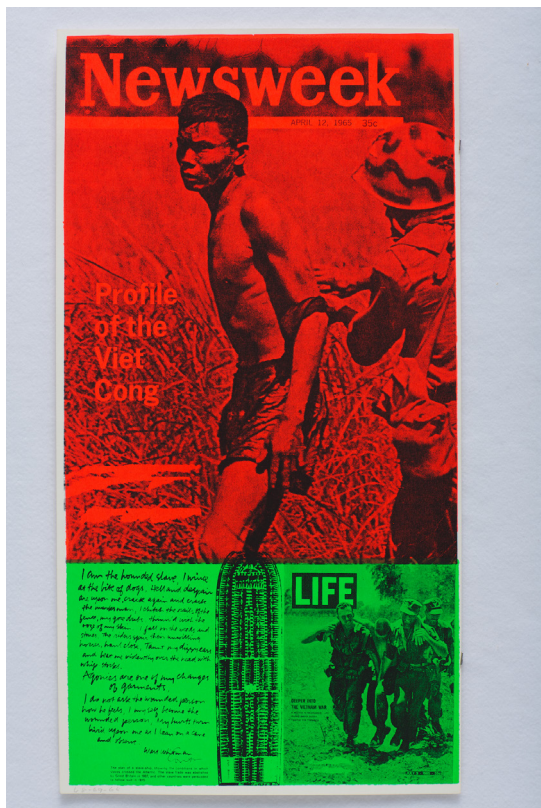




CORITA KENT

The cry that will be heard, 1969

Corita Kent also known as Sister Mary Corita, created vibrant serigraphs, screen- prints and artworks that carried a combination of logos of mega-corporations along with some excerpts by the artist's favourite writers, which created a junction of religious sentiment and advertisements. Corita's work reflected her concerns about poverty, racism, and war, and her messages of peace and social justice continue to resonate with audiences even today.



CORITA KENT

News of the week, 1969

Transcribed text:

Newsweek APRIL 12, 1965 35 cents Profile of the Viet Cong

LIFE July 2, 1965 35 cents

Deeper into the vietnam war.

A marine is evacuated during patrol action against the Vietcong.

I am the hounded slave, I wince at the bite of dogs, Hell and despair are upon me, crack again and crack the marksman, I clutch the rails of the fence, my gore dribs, thinned with the ooze of my skin. I fall on the weeds and stones, the riders spur their unwilling horses, haul close, taunt my dizzy ears and beat me violently over the head with whip-stocks.

Agonies are one of my changes of garments, I do not ask the wounded person how he feels, I myself become the wounded person, my hurts turn livid upon me as I lean on a can and observe.

Walt Whitman



ANDY WARHOL

Campbell's Soup Cans 1962

Andy Warhol's Campbell Soup Cans is one of the most iconic representations of Pop Art Culture. It is a piece that exemplifies appropriation art. The original labels have been copied exactly, and the entire plane has been filled with them. The repetition of the image makes the brand the image's identity, which instills the recognition of the product. This also linked to other associations of consumerism, commercialism, fast food, middle-class values etc.



ALEC MONOPOLY

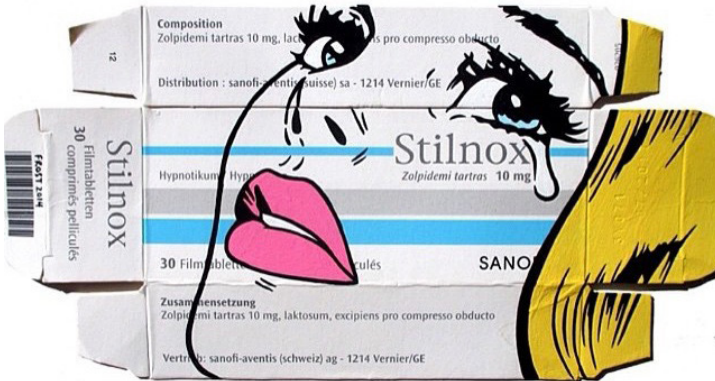
Money Bags Monopoly, 2015

Alec Monopoly (born Alec Andon) through his art, tempts viewers to buy into ideas of fame, money and celebrity. The mascot of Monopoly, his symbol of reflecting upon economical concerns of the world, Rich Uncle Pennybags, inspired Alec. The moustachioed mascot, who often carries a money bag among many other conspicuous markers of wealth throughout the artist's wry work, becomes a mirror for capitalist greed and culture.

BEN FROST

Retail therapy, 2017

Artist Ben Frost is popular for his work that stands as a unique blend from diverse sources such as graffiti, collage, photo-realism and sign-writing. His work undermines the power of the mainstream icon from entertainment, politics and advertising, and creates a visual piece that is bold and often controversial. According to the artist, the media has fine-tuned the 'must-haves' appeal of the products for the consumers, which also has a duality to it. Borrowing from the widely accepted world of advertising, entertainment mainly Frost uses subversion of iconography to communicate a strong, confronting visual narrative.





KIKAYOU

Felix Chill

Kikayou brings images from his imagination and memories, which have been a part of his journey thus far. His work creates a path for the viewers that activates their own interrogations and perceptions, through its colours and sensations. His work targets topical concepts presented in their own mix of emotions and imaginations and always devoid of any pretension.



GASPARD MITZ

At Your Own Risk, 2021

Gaspard Mitz is a mixed-media artist from Paris. His notable work known as the Box Stories, is aimed at making people smile and offering a new perspective to the otherwise ubiquitous. He fuses eras and mediums, through destinies for his figurines with references to art history, using varied materials such as wood, foam board and paper.



ANDRE TAN

Andre's work carries a chaotic mix of brand identities along with comic and cartoon characters. For the viewers, there is path of perception that first gives way to recognition of elements, after which humor strikes. The brands and characters have high recognition values from fields as varied as fashion, apparel, visual merchandising, film, animation and gaming, drawn from both Western sources as in comics, or Eastern ones as in manga or anime. They emerge from the fabric of contemporary popular culture, placing Andre firmly in the genre of pop art. Andre goes beyond the mere juxtaposition of these images to construct complex witty pieces of parody of these products.

