

**The Power Station of Art and the CHANEL Culture Fund Announce
The Parallel Exhibitions of “Art of Craft”
The First Season of the “Next Cultural Producer” Unveiled**

The Power Station of Art (PSA) and the CHANEL Culture Fund announce that “Art of Craft”, the first season of the “Next Cultural Producer” programme, takes the form of parallel exhibitions at PSA’s 2F exhibition hall from November 5, 2022, to February 5, 2023. Two winning projects of the season are Hill of the Madman, curated by FENG Lixing & WU You, and Back to the FUTURE: Breaking the Time Barrier, curated by ZUO Jing & WANG Yanzhi. By taking different approaches, the projects invite the public to debate the current situation of Chinese crafts and the possibility of their revival.

About Hill of the Madman

Tracing the origin of “craft” in Eastern and Western philosophy, Hill of the Madman endorses the idea of crafting as the ability to “know” and to “see”. Through the exhibition, FENG Lixing and WU You gaze upon crafting of 11 artists as both a daily routine and a “non-productive” way of connecting their bodies with material world, and eventually present a collection of subtle yet highly intensified artworks that could be perceived as “madness”.

For artist **YUAN Jai**, such “madness” lies in the competitive and inter-promoting relation between clouds, rocks and water in either dynamic or static states, portrayed through interlacing colors and lines; for **NI Youyu**, it is about collaging Freewheeling Trip, a fictional landscape developed with tens of thousands of old photos collected worldwide that are sorted, cropped and reorganized in an “anti-photoshop” way – here, photography is no longer photography, but fragments of time and space; for **FU Xiaotong**, it is the whispering of needles piercing rice paper countless times, until the pinpricks gradually link into mountains and tempestuous waves; and

for **SHAO Yinong**, “madness” refers to a kind of self-cultivation with perseverance and consistency. He uses oil paint to make an ebony heartwood that has been lying underwater for thousands of years continue to grow: paint, sand, sack, hang ash, and paint again – the unity of time, wood, paint, hands and labor endows the ebony heartwood with new growth rings.

About Back to the Future: Breaking the Time Barrier

In a time when modern civilization has led to the eventual sorrow of handicrafts, Back to the Future: Breaking the Time Barrier proposes to examine “crafts” within the framework of a friendly yet restrained production system. By doing so, the exhibition attempts to re-embrace a method through which man and nature bond and empathize with each other and explore how the healthy concepts of making and the spiritual heritage of traditional crafts could be applied in contemporary manufacturing and modern life.

Drawing from the personal experience of the two cultural producers, **ZUO Jing** and **WANG Yanzhi**, the exhibition first revisits their practice of folk art revival over the past decade that centers on the theme “Crafts and the Rural”. Notable exhibits include how Xiaohe and Zhong Yongfeng created the “Homecoming” album around Mainland rural reconstruction and crafts revival; how **GUI Shuzhong** intervenes in the fate of his hometown crafts, “Yukou paper” and “wooden movable type” through field research documentaries; how **LIU Qingyuan** approaches woodcuts between urban and rural areas by combining aesthetics, education and functionality; how **SUMMERWOOD Textiles**, **GAO Xiang**, **GAO Qizhen**, **Didi WU** and **the Phadrok bha Cooperative** provide referential solutions for the revival of crafts through pragmatic practice and an integrated “social design” mindset; and how **Healing Garden** focuses on hand-associated labor and artistic practices as a thread to reshape the spiritual connection between people and communities, and between human and nature. At the same time, the exhibition has also commissioned architect **LUO Yujie** as the exhibition’s space designer, by creating a “paper” exhibition system, to showcase how the concept “natural building” can be applied in both exhibitions and contemporary lives.

The two “Next Cultural Producer” groups commit to long-term practice and research based on the Chinese context. With such efforts, the two groups try to bridge “craft”, “making”, and their fragmented cultural context in the era of digital consumption through unique approaches, and have them “revived” in intimate yet inspiring cultural and living experiences. The groups also

seek to overcome the problems faced by “crafts” amid the transformation of modes of production and ethics of consumption, reconstructing the relationship between “hand” and “craft” as well as between “crafting”, individual spirit, and the material world.

About Documentary Film *Art of Craft*

PSA and the CHANEL Culture Fund have also invited film director and visual artist YANG Yuanyuan to follow the footsteps of the two selected groups of “Next Cultural Producers” over the past six months, diving into numerous crafting scenes to film *Art of Craft*, a documentary of the same name that will be screened at PSA simultaneously with the exhibition. Through Yang’s lens, the audience will be able to step into artist studios that contributed to *Hill of the Madman*, and, in an up-close manner, observe how time is lost through repeated scribbling, penetrating and collaging, and how it is “reshaped” through art amid the spiritual harmonization between “hand” and “craft”. They will also be able to visit communities and workshops in Anhui’s Bishan Village – from red envelop workshop to bamboo weaving workshop, and from former supply and marketing cooperative to today’s Bishan Crafts Cooperatives, they will walk the modern and rescuing journey of rural and traditional crafts via the daily routine of local residents.

About “House of Crafts”

PSA’s specially-curated parallel project, “House of Crafts”, will feature “Strike While the Iron is Hot” as the first chapter, focusing on “iron art”, a form considered to be the cornerstone of the development of crafts. It will present the variety of China’s “new iron artisans” on the river-view terrace on the third floor. Hosted at “Power Station Configurator”, a temporary pavilion designed by Atelier Anonymous, “House of Crafts” will exhibit different categories of Chinese crafts as well as related research and literature in various chapters in the coming future.

About Next Cultural Producer

The “Next Cultural Producer” is a programme launched by PSA in partnership with the CHANEL Culture Fund in 2021. It aims to provide an all-encompassing stage for explorers, creators, practitioners, and defenders with a cultural vision to showcase and articulate

themselves, jointly mapping out the future of Chinese design and exploring the intrinsic cultural value of Chinese architecture.

Being the programme's first season, "Art of Craft" comes as not only the first collaborative project between the museum and the CHANEL Culture Fund, but also their first attempt to leverage art to navigate the complex global environment. The second season, titled "Dynamic Architecture", will open to the public in the summer of 2023.

Bios of Selected "Next Cultural Producers"

Hill of the Madman

FENG Lixing (Ivy) is a postgraduate of the School of Architecture at Princeton University. Ivy led the design of the VR installation Real Virtuality for the 2018 Shenzhen Biennale, and participated in the exhibition Paradoxical as curatorial consultant. In 2019, she also tutored at "Josef Albers and the 'Primary Sculpture'", a children's workshop at China Design Museum. As an architect, she has worked at SOM in New York, and Neri&Hu in Shanghai.

WU You is a designer and a curator. His work explores the dialectic relationship between body and technology, image and text through an interdisciplinary approach. He graduated from University of California Los Angeles, where he was awarded the Emma B. Keller Fine Arts scholarship. He earned his Master of Architecture from Princeton University, where he received the highest honor Suzanne Kolarik Underwood Prize. He is also a recipient of Fontainebleau School fellowship.

Participating Artists:

CUI Fei, FU Xiaotong, LI Gang, LIN Fanglu, LIU Jianhua, LU Bin, NI Youyu, SHAO Fan, SHAO Yinong, WANG Kezhen, YUAN Jai

Back to the Future: Breaking the Time Barrier

ZUO Jing is a curator, rural construction practitioner, editor-in-chief of *Bishan* MOOK and Associate Professor at Anhui University. Since 2011, Zuo has been taking Anhui, Henan and

other rural areas as his work base, as he shifted his career focus to the construction of villages (and towns). Zuo has gradually developed a set of principles for his rural work: “community service, regional imprint, and urban-rural bond”; “social design for rural areas” which involves “the production of relationships, spaces, cultures and products.” He follows the path of “importing urban resources to rural areas, and exporting rural values to cities”, celebrates cultural creativeness and sustainability, and takes the cultivation of community’s cultural awareness and the improvement of local cultural environment as his goals.

WANG Yanzhi is a curator, writer, and editor at Bishan MOOK. She received her master’s degree in Chinese studies from Stanford University and bachelor’s degree in art history and economics from New York University. Her current curatorial and research interests include local design, social design, and socially engaged art. Her book translation *Picturing the Book of Nature* was published in 2021. Her articles can be found in art publications such as *Yishu: Journal of Contemporary Chinese Art*.

Participating Handicraft Practitioners, Researchers, Artists and Architects:

Bishan Crafts Cooperatives & LIU Qingyuan, GUI Shuzhong, YANG Tao, TANG Shukun, ZHONG YongFeng, XIAO He; LUO Yujie; The Phadrok bha Cooperative; WANG Yuanzheng; Wengwa Rainforest Discovery; Summerwood Textiles; Healing Garden

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#NextCulturalProducer

About PSA

Established on Oct. 1st, 2012, the Power Station of Art (PSA) is the first state-run museum dedicated to contemporary art in mainland China. It is also home to the Shanghai Biennale. Renovated from the former Nanshi Power Plant, PSA was once the Pavilion of Future during the

2010 Shanghai World Expo. The museum has not only witnessed the city's vast changes from the industry age to the IT era, but also provided a rich source of inspirations for artists with its simple yet straightforward architectural styles. And as Shanghai's generator for its new urban culture, PSA regards non-stopping innovation and progress as the key to its long-term vitality. The museum has been striving to provide an open platform for the public to learn and appreciate contemporary art, break the barrier between life and art, and promote cooperation and knowledge generation between different schools of art and culture.

About CHANEL

CHANEL is a private company and a world leader in creating, developing, manufacturing and distributing luxury products. Founded by Gabrielle Chanel at the beginning of the last century, Chanel offers a broad range of high-end creations, including Ready-to-Wear, Leather Goods, Fashion Accessories, Eyewear, Fragrances, Makeup, Skincare, Jewellery and Watches. Chanel is also renowned for its Haute Couture collections, presented twice yearly in Paris, and for having acquired a large number of specialized suppliers, collectively known as the Métiers d'Art. Chanel is dedicated to ultimate luxury and to the highest level of craftsmanship. It is a brand whose core values remain historically grounded on exceptional creation. As such, Chanel promotes culture, art, creativity and "savoir-faire" throughout the world, and invests significantly in people, R&D and innovation. At the end of 2021, Chanel employed more than 28,500 people across the world.

About CHANEL Culture Fund

The CHANEL Culture Fund is a global programme of unique initiatives and partnerships that will support cultural innovators in advancing new ideas and greater representation in culture and society. The Fund seeks to champion equality of voice and give visibility to global gamechangers at a time when the arts provide a vital source of inspiration and shifting perspectives on the way we view the world.

Expanding upon the House's rich history of cultural patronage, CHANEL is also committing to a series of long-term partnerships with leading cultural institutions around the world to create new programmes that will support innovation in creative and cultural thinking. Projects are intended

to foreground missing narratives, foster collaboration across disciplines, and help propel transformative ideas that benefit culture and society.

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