

Digital Drawing Room: MFA Fine Arts featuring Lisha Peng

Interviewed by Selam Bekele



Lisha Peng

Starting May 10, you can view work by students in the MFA graduating class on the website 2021.CCAMFA.art and in the [Class of 2021 Showcase](#).

Works in this series were written by students in Glen Helfand and Maria Porges' respective graduate writing seminars this past fall and spring.

Selam Bekele: Can you tell me a little bit about yourself?

Lisha Peng: I am a multidisciplinary artist who engages in painting, sculpture, performance, and installation. I love to express what makes me feel anxious and hopeful at the same time. My art practice focuses on philosophy, using psychological questions to reframe the relationship between the subconscious and an object.



Aesthetic Lost, 2020. Ceramics.

SB: What makes you interested in the subconscious?

LP: I'm curious about the relationship between reality and the senses. I'm interested in how objects are a tool for self-exploration, so I create work that makes me think about the sensory experience. My work is about exploring new sensory conditions through materials, dreams, and memory. I want to present my thinking on this topic by raising questions and answering them creatively.

SB: I understand you have an installation piece called *Thinking and Seeing (2020-2021)*. What kind of questions were you working through in the process of making this piece?

LP: I was thinking about the psychological process of the human mind relating to an object. I asked myself philosophical questions like; What is an illusion and what is reality? Where is the dividing line between reality and fiction? What comes first: thinking or seeing? I wanted to express this connection from material reality to the illusion of space. I am still in the process of trying to find the answer to these questions.



Aesthetic Lost, 2021. Ceramics.

I installed a series of objects in semi-transparent boxes. The installation allows people to see from different perspectives and angles. Everyone has a different feeling, and a different way of thinking about each object.

SB: Your work is beautiful, and very mysterious. What is your process like in making such abstract work?

LP: My process is mostly inspired by music, dreams, and books I'm reading. With the goal of exploring and researching, I search for new tools to illustrate my thoughts and imagination.

Fragment of Memory (2020-2021) is a series of oil paintings that I illustrated from memory. I was isolated in the hotel for 14-days before I returned to my hometown. At that time, I felt panic, fear, depression, and sadness. I could only read some books to calm down my fear and anxiety.



Aesthetic Lost, 2021. Ceramics.



Aesthetic Lost, 2021. Ceramics.

The paintings in this series are the results of those memories. For example, I was inspired by a shadow that went through the window, and I thought it was really interesting so I painted it from memory. Even though I could not tell its specific meaning, I knew they were all crucial to me.

I also have a video piece called *10 Questions* (2020-2021) that considers memory. I'm performing an action on screen repetitively, and it's to explore the psychological process of routine. I was thinking about post humanism, and themes I read in Donna Haraway's "A Cyborg Manifesto" (1985). I am interested in the relationship between the human and the robot.