

291 GRAND ST, 2ND FLOOR
NEW YORK, NY 10002
OFFICE@47CANAL.US
(646) 415-7712

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Weeds of Indifference

Amy Yao

September 8 – October 8, 2017

Since the early 90s, when she was a member of the riot grrl band Emilys Sassy Lime (ESL, also an acronym for English as a Second Language), Amy Yao has worked with the realities and performativity of 'identity' through her personal and strategic use of camp. *Weeds of Indifference* continues in this vein through sculptural works imbued with anxiety around issues of reproduction, gender, toxicity, and displacement as they relate to artificiality and the natural world.

If advanced consumer culture represents nature through artificiality, how are we to understand biology through this framework of the so-called natural? As Donna Haraway says, "Part of remaking ourselves... is remaking the sciences which construct the category of 'nature' and empower its definition... By constructing the category nature, natural science imposes limits on history and self-formation." We are already on our way! It is fear and anxiety that hang onto an old world order under the process of becoming undone. The natural becomes an instrumentalized construct, serving as proof or logical argument of why things should stay the way they are.

Versions of authenticity are often invoked for reasons that work against themselves. The new restaurant that is so authentically this... The ceramic plates used to serve the food were made by real craftsmen... What is even real? The new authentic is used to eradicate what came before. But which is actually authentic? Are the Chinese who are buying investment properties in Chinatown authentically part of Chinatown, or are they to be feared and despised? On every block there seems to be new construction but for whom? Is the new empty space available to you? Finally healthy food? Good coffee?! How do we use concepts of the natural and authentic to maintain the status quo?

Special thanks to the 47 Canal gang, Cal State University Long Beach Ceramics Department, Tony Marsh, Cooper Jacoby, David Donahue, Nichole Wanda Borgo, Chiz Ballreich, Carissa Rodriguez, Sylvie Auvray, Eva Svennung, Anna Sewhoy, Jennie Jieun Lee, Amy Lien, Esther Varet Kim and Phillip Zach.

Dedicated to the memory of my grandfather, John Hee-Pey Liu.

Amy Yao lives and works in New York and Los Angeles. She received a BFA with Honors from the Art Center College of Design, Pasadena, in 1999 and a MFA from Yale University School of Art, New Haven, in 2007. Her work has been exhibited at the Musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris; Museum of Contemporary Art, Tucson; MoMA PS1, New York; the 8th White Columns Annual, New York; the MoMA, New York; He Xiang Art Museum, Shenzhen; the Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; and the Museum of Chinese in America, New York. In 2012, she received the Creative Capital Grant, and in 2011 the Printed Matter Artists Award. She has also been the recipient of the CUNY-PSC Professional Development Grant in 2009, and the Susan H. Whedon Award from Yale University School of Art, New Haven, in 2007. Amy Yao is represented by 47 Canal, New York; Various Small Fires, Los Angeles; and Mathew Gallery, New York and Berlin.

AMY YAO