

Dacchi Dang "Liminal"

"Liminal" France occupied Vietnam in the late 18th century and thus French culture had a large impact on Vietnam. This is particularly evident in Vietnamese architecture. During the French occupation numerous artefacts were taken from the country and placed into museums in France. Many of these artefacts belonged to Vietnam's prehistory and early history (pre-1000AD).

Not surprisingly, French culture, architecture and landscape have always fascinated me. In my return trip to Vietnam in 1995 I visited Hue, the ancient capital city. This city has many examples of beautiful French buildings influenced by Vietnamese traditions, being constructed in harmony with the landscape. I created a series of works that explored the relationships between the architecture and the lands.

During my artist in residency at the Cite Internationale des Art in 2003, I investigated my new (almost colonial) surroundings, and the profound emotions that resulted led me to create a new series of photographic images that is "Liminal". This focuses on exploring the landscape, society and architecture of France, and the notion of disparity between the Eastern traditions of representation of those of the West. The depiction of the environment alters from culture to culture. I subverted the colonial trajectory of influence by using the French landscape to recapture the atmosphere and feelings I had in Vietnam.

I was walking through Paris was a rich experience. Each day I selected new locations, including outside the centre of Paris, and collected much visual material. Many of these photographs focused on the daily activities of French people. While walking and exploring the city, it constantly brought back childhood memories, helping to clarify missing clues inside me of how much French culture had influenced the way of life in Vietnam. These memories refer to identification of activities and objects from Vietnamese society. The planning and design of Saigon for example has a strong connection to Paris city, the building architecture, Church of Notre Dame and the big round food market in Paris.

In ancient time, Dong son drums were created for the used of warriors or spiritual function, the function of my new contemporary images reflected into our contemporary society. My personal experience and contact to Vietnamese living in Paris, and to exchange knowledge and experience with local French artists and French Vietnamese artists. The contact with the latter will give me an understanding of the particular difficulties of re-establishing one's life in France as opposed to my own experiences of immigration into Australia society. For example to visited the France Vietnamese activities at the centre. This centre focuses in promoting Vietnam art and culture in many activities to French/Vietnamese and French community.

My fascination and attracted to the beauty of the circle dong son leading me to kept original format and drawing design combining my new drawing element into my "Liminal" works. Element design like the sun flower it is can be find in many part of France landscape at the same time it also remind me in Vietnam

during the new year season. I also use Waratah reflected into my connection with the Australia society.

Technique, dimension and quantity:

"Liminal" is a series of nine large circular of photographs, 85cm in diameter, a mixed medium using early traditional photographic process (gum Print-invented in 1830) combining with water colour drawing on paper, it has been mounted on the archival board in 18mm thickness wrap around in Chinese rice paper.

Presentation:

The nine circular works will be presented in the main gallery, forming a broken ring the centre of the main space. The work will be presented on the horizontal plane approximately 10cm above ground level. When the audiences enter to the gallery, they will be confronted with an almost votive site, where the carefully controlled lighting will create a gentle, reverential response to the nine images. Lighting is a vital element of this work. Each of the nine floor pieces will be lit with a gentle vertical beam of light. Not only will this create the desired atmosphere, but it will also highlight the formal aspects of the images themselves. Each photograph is soft and delicate in tone and details. The audience will be required to become intimate with each work in order viewing the works.

This project has been assisted by the commonwealth Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body.

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