

GARDEN

Alice Wang

February 1 - March 28, 2020

Garden is pleased to present a solo exhibition of new work by Los Angeles and Shanghai-based artist Alice Wang. A single untitled sculpture dominating the space constitutes the exhibition: a large, chest-height table. On this table, the viewer is confronted by a landscape of curiosities at eye-level that manifest the ethereal, dynamic, and nutritive faculties of light and air. Wang constructs a laboratory that toys with the materials and concepts of electromagnetism, thermodynamics, quantum mechanics, and multidimensionality.

Light, which typically illuminates the art object, is here experimented with and materially constitutes the work itself. A monolithic triangular glass prism distorts and diffracts, highlighting the physical reality of light as electromagnetic waves radiating through space. The prism disperses light into its spectral components which we experience as the colors of the rainbow. A Crookes radiometer perpetually spins, converting electromagnetic radiation into rotational energy. Mysterious wet-plate collodion on mirror photographs of the surfaces of Mercury and Iapetus confound, indices of light reflected off of celestial bodies. Air plants grow without substrate, deriving moisture and nutrients from the atmosphere alone while photosynthesizing in the sun, becoming physical manifestations of air. Circumnavigating the scene reveals the items' meticulously casual arrangement; the abandoned workshop of a bygone—or future—scientist re-staged for our perusal.

These objects are arranged within a constructed environment tessellated by hand-made white gold tiles, draped with fluorescent netting, and mulched with glass microspheres. The translucent glass beads swirl and accumulate, forming dunes and lakes. They are at once particle and wave, coming together fluidly before scattering apart into discrete alterities. The net and tiles both employ the same logic of a grid of equilateral triangles, commonly used by engineers and architects for isometric projection, the encoding of three-dimensional space in two dimensions. These spatial representations, called *dengjiao toushi*, were utilized in classical Chinese scroll painting, predating linear perspective in the West. In a hand scroll all scenes exist concurrently at the same scale, available for the viewer to explore in non-distorted space and navigate through time.

Here, Wang makes perception itself both her subject and matter, materializing light and the air through which it transmits into sculpture. The projection from a two dimensional picture plane into three generates a consideration of higher dimensions: Einstein's four-dimensional spacetime, string theory's ten dimensions, and M-theory's eleven. Wang prompts the understanding of the self and environs as quantum. We are both material and immaterial, subject and stranger, individual and multitude, dispersed and diffracted through space and time.

Alice Wang (b. 1983, Xi'an) makes sculptures and experimental films. She received her BSc in Computer Science and International Relations from the University of Toronto, BFA from the California Institute of the Arts, and MFA from New York University. Wang was a fellow of Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, a Villa Aurora fellow in Berlin, and a recipient of several major grants from the Canada Council for the Arts. Wang has recently presented work at Capsule Shanghai, Visitor Welcome Center (Los Angeles), K11 Art Foundation (Hong Kong), Taikang Space (Beijing), FLAX Foundation (Los Angeles), OCT-LOFT (Shenzhen), and the Hammer Museum. Her next solo exhibition with Capsule Shanghai will open this November during Shanghai art week. She co-organizes The Magic Hour, an outdoor exhibition platform in the high desert of Twentynine Palms, California. Wang is an assistant professor of arts at New York University Shanghai. She is based between Los Angeles and Shanghai.