

## EYE ON ART 01/04/13

### IN...ART FEATURES



#### Absurdistan at OV Gallery

OV Gallery is currently hosting [Absurdistan](#), a show which, as its name suggests, explores the surreal and the absurd. One of the most exciting artists featured here is [Ailadi Cortelletti](#), who Anne Murray caught up with to discuss her works in person. Cortelletti's works featured in Absurdistan are based upon [Julio Cortázar's](#) book 'Cronopios and Famas.' The book is a series of vignettes exploring conflicting social groups. The central characters are the Cronopios and the Famas, each living life in a completely different way; the Famas are so tightly wound that even their memories become bound in fabric, and the [Cronopios](#) are loose and wild, allowing their children to run amuck and bothering their neighbours with boisterous behaviour.

Her images feature some truly surreal characters composed in layers of paper and paint, with line drawings as well as monotypes. She creates imaginary street scenes that reference cities such as Amsterdam, with its neat rows of tall and thin houses aligned in twisting succession, as you might see along a canal. Her Cronopios have wings and a tail as if they could venture onto both water and land with ease, letting nothing inhibit their energy and creativity.

She takes her influence from artists old and new, including [Hieronymus Bosch](#), with an image of his, the '[Garden of Earthly Delights](#)', pinned up in her Shanghai apartment. She also loves the work of American artist [Alexander Calder](#), especially his explorations of lines both on paper and in wire. She explains that she began by only working in black fountain pen gradually introducing water and acrylic. She also takes influence from the work of Hungarian artist [Victor Vasarely](#). One imagines that the artist also sees some of herself in the characters she creates.



#### The Moment of Existence at Around Space Gallery

Moved from the original location at Around Space Gallery to 33 Sichuan Lu, [Qiu Hao's](#) solo [exhibition](#) reflects upon existentialist themes, notably the relationship of the self with the outside world. Qiu deploys various media to explore his ideas, including silk, rice paper and lambskin, and it is the interactions between these materials within each sculpture on a textural level that make this exhibition so exciting.

The centre piece of the show is a landscape rendered through rice paper, which creates depth within the image, but also

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adds a sculptural quality as the medium reaches out from the canvas into the gallery space. Some of the other sculptures are truly bizarre, the black leather surfaces giving the disturbing appearance of deceased creatures. Some of these creatures are confined within glass containers, as Qiu seeks to explore the dynamic between the inner self and the outside world.

### Shanghai Surprise at the K11 Art Mall

In the basement of the glamorous K11 Art Mall is an exhibition of works by some of the most prominent artists from across the Shanghai scene. Envisioned as a 'time capsule' by curators Leo Xu and Azure Wu, the show seeks to display the best of the Shanghai contemporary art scene. The exhibition itself is immaculately put together and organized in way that allows the works to compliment each other, despite the fact that they may be very different stylistically and aesthetically. The eclectic nature of this collection reflects the diversity of the local scene and the creativity of its artists. There are sculptures, photography, paintings and installations spread throughout the cavernous basement of the K 11 complex. Along with its manifold visual delights, the show also features a mobile library of printed and digital materials that document the Shanghai art scene over the last decade.



WORDS: Anne Murray & Arvin Mahanta  
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