



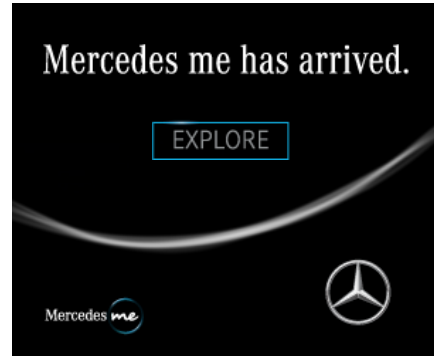
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With a clinical view, Hong Kong art show challenges how we see our bodies

From the moment you step into Blindspot Gallery and are asked to don a white doctor's gown, its exhibition of work by seven Hong Kong artists challenges the visitor's perceptions of the human form

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The art piece Inner Vision No. 5 2015 by Otto Li is an optical glass LED with multimedia elements, part of "The Human Body: Measure and Norms" exhibition at Blindspot Gallery in Wong Chuk Hang. Photos: Jonathan Wong

Blindspot Gallery's new exhibition features works by seven artists who have used very different media to tackle the same issue: how do you use art to break down hardened social norms about the human body?

The exhibits range from drawings and videos to the more unusual materials of human hair and LED-lit optical glass blocks, which is a departure for a gallery that has focused on exhibiting photography in its five-year history.

A clinical, detached air runs through the first part of a show that parodies the objectification of bodies.

On arrival, visitors are asked to put on white doctors' gowns – uniforms that usually confer authority, but here, it literally cut you down to size, as they are all standard, Asian woman medium-sized.

Thus snugly outfitted, visitors are asked to view the seven artists' works in the order determined by curator Caroline Ha Thuc.

The first stop is a large piece of paper covered in charcoal marks resembling pairs of lungs. These are marks left by participants in performance artist Isaac Chong Wai's 2012 project, *Equilibrium No. 8 – Boundaries*. A group of people lay face down and made the equivalent of snow angels with charcoal, marking the extent of their two-dimensional boundaries.

Chong, a Hong Kong-born artist based in Berlin, has always been interested in exploring reactions to the physical and psychological proximity of others. A rather unnerving example are close-up photographs (*Equilibrium No. 6 – Distance*) of one of his eyes pressing down into his then-girlfriend's, and the drop of tear that had spilled out from hers.

Next, drawings and sketches by the late Antonio Mak Hin-yeung are displayed beside a small, cast-bronze statue that give a glimpse of the artist's fascination with the human figure as a biomorphic structure.

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Isaac Chong's Equilibrium No. 8 – Boundaries.

From Mak's traditional art forms, one jumps into the surreal, hi-tech space created by Otto Li Tin-lun. His LED-lit laser carvings of bone structures glow in a cold, blue light inside a pitch-black section of the gallery like three-dimensional X-ray films. Anatomy rarely looks so beautiful.

At this point, the exhibition switches from quiet musings to works that provoke a visceral reaction with their blurring of the line between the normal and the abnormal.

Ho Sin-tung revisits a favourite motif of dancers with extra limbs. Her series of new pencil drawings feature anorexic, spider-like women stretching their bodies with pride. The viewer, recoiling in horror from the grotesque figures, becomes complicit in the judgmental standards of "the normal".

Angela Su's *Mesures et Démesures* is a six-minute video that opens with nice images of flowers while a soundtrack of a regular tapping is heard in the background.

Next, pictures of late-19th century psychiatrists and the horrific tests they conducted on patients appear, interrupted by scenes suggesting moments of collective madness. The disturbing source of the tapping sound is revealed at the end of the film. Also shown in the exhibition is Su's embroidery of a shape that morphs together human, insect and plant-like characteristics. The use of black hair as material brings the strange tendrils to life.

Angela Su's piece *We are standing in the spiral under a hammer*, takes inspiration from inkblot patterns of a Rorschach test.

The concluding two exhibits take visitors back to a more meditative space. Ho Siu-kei has created a zen garden in the gallery with a video showing him chanting in a grotto while wearing a headgear weighed down by a heavy rock.

Back near the entrance, Clémence Torres has installed a series of glass panels hanging at different levels from the ceiling. The sections of the panels that are above her height are concealed, forcing anyone taller to adjust themselves in order to see beyond the marks.

"The Human Body: Measure and Norms", *Blindspot Gallery*, 15/F, Po Chai Industrial Building, 28 Wong Chuk Hang Road, Tue-Sat, 10am-6pm. Ends Feb 6

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