

# Symbiosis and Coexistence: 11th "From Lausanne to Beijing" International Fiber Art Biennale Opens Online

A Virtual Exhibition Exploring the Symbiosis of Fiber Art and the Zeitgeist

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**Tsinghua University** →

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BEIJING, Jan. 15, 2021 /PRNewswire/ -- On January 16, 2021, the 11th "From Lausanne to Beijing" International Fiber Art Biennale opened online at <https://lbfiberart.ad.tsinghua.edu.cn>. The exhibition is jointly hosted by the Academy of Arts & Design, Tsinghua University and the China National Arts and Crafts Society. Over 300 works of fiber art by artists from five continents are featured in this Biennale. They will be available for online viewing to audiences across the globe through February 16.

With the pandemic spreading across the globe, no time has ever been as full of instability as the present. Head Curator Lin Lecheng commented on this year's Biennale: "Fortune rewarded artists' passion, providing an opportunity to hold this exhibition in this challenging year and once again proving art's indomitable vitality." The "From Lausanne to Beijing" International Fiber Art Biennale embraced this year's difficulties and sought out new opportunities in this time of crisis. "Symbiosis and Coexistence" was chosen by the organizing committee as this Biennale's theme after

rounds of intensive discussion. The virtual exhibition hall is the heart of the show, connecting fiber art with the current moment and social responsibility. This new technology has helped bring fiber artists worldwide together with audiences online.

Since their creation in 2000, the "From Lausanne to Beijing" International Fiber Art Biennales have been continuing the spirit of modern tapestry kindled by the International Lausanne Tapestry Biennials. This year, the 11th Biennale continues to pursue the intrinsic nature of fiber while also exploring a new format: the virtual exhibition. Fiber art is a discipline with deep historical roots and unique powers of expression in tactility, qualities, and techniques. How do we accentuate the form's characteristics, juxtapose works by global artists, and give audiences a new experience in a virtual space? These were the challenges faced by this Biennale.

For this exhibition, two departments from the Academy of Arts & Design, Tsinghua University – the Department of Art and Crafts and the Department of Information Art & Design – collaboratively created an online exhibition hall, aided by input from 3 institutions' online exhibition teams. The virtual format expanded the scope and space of the artwork, connecting audiences with fiber art and providing a rich artistic experience.

The virtual exhibition hall revolutionized the relationship between fiber and space, making it possible to experience art from anywhere in the world. In addition, this Biennale's display capabilities and online interactivity were greatly enhanced by the new media technology team, who built a strong technological backbone for this innovative new format. With the bilateral interaction made possible by the "2.5D" virtual venue, audiences were provided with all-new perspectives and experiences.

While viewing the pieces, audience members can choose between a conventional in-person experience (i.e. a linear progression through forewords and introductions, judges' works, award-winning works, and short-listed works) or a non-linear journey browsing and comparing by continent or artist. Additionally, newly introduced interactivity enables audiences to break free from the traditional viewing experience.

From multi-level fiber spaces that can be entered with a swipe, to zoomable detail views of artwork, to videos of the production process, the virtual space offers all-new perspectives through which to enjoy fiber art.

Both offline and online judging were involved for the first time in the Biennale's history. Over 1,000 submissions by artists from 56 countries were sent to the organizing committee. Judges, academic consultants, and curators from 13 countries evaluated the works with several criteria in mind: relevance to the current cultural moment; uniqueness of creative ideas; and diversity of technologies. One Gold Award, 4 Silver Awards, 11 Bronze Awards, and 79 Excellence Awards were presented in recognition of fiber artists who created outstanding works in this pandemic-stricken time.

This year's Biennale widely features works that speak of artists' social responsibility in a time of disease. For the theme "Symbiosis and Coexistence", artists reflected on how to transform crisis into action. Korean-American artist Mi-Kyoung Lee's Gold Award-winning artwork *Symbiosis* explores the consistency and complexity of nature imagery. An artistic reconstruction made with bound, twisted zippers and cables, her work depicts both today's natural landscape and our symbiotic artificial landscape. As Curator Hong Xingyu remarked, "This exhibition conducts a dialogue with nature, with life, with our art, and with our future."

According to special guest judge panelist Liu Jude, "art has the power to help humanity get through hard times." Cha Young Soon's work *Silver Lining* and Chinese artist Zhang Haidong's *Tie Knots to Record* are both meditations on the value of human life as recorded through specific places, cities, and portraits. The works featured in this Biennale weave a web of connections between art and the zeitgeist. Together, they form a unified whole that is the same air all of us breathe.

Curator Ni Yuehong commented: "As the economy becomes more globalized, politics more multipolar, and culture more diverse, we reflect on how all of humanity faces the same issues and challenges. This International Fiber Art Biennale presents

the values of artists coming together from across the world to create and realize a fiber arts exhibition."

The "From Lausanne to Beijing" International Fiber Art Biennale is rapidly gaining global academic stature in fiber art: an art form intertwined with tradition, attuned to the present, and shaping the future. The virtual exhibition explores the symbiosis between fiber art and the zeitgeist. Artists are modernizing traditional materials and techniques, injecting new vitality into fiber art in a time of crisis. It is our fond hope that we can come together with even more artists worldwide at future in-person Biennales.

The 11th "From Lausanne to Beijing" International Fiber Art Biennale online exhibition will be open through February 16.

SOURCE Tsinghua University