



11 Alice Wang, *Pyramids and Parabolas II*, 2021, 16mm film transferred to HD video and HD video, 18 min 43 sec. Courtesy the artist and UCCA Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing

From the moment our prehistoric ancestors began trying different foods, or wondering what was beyond the horizon, human brains have emitted that neurological gold dust – dopamine. Rewarding curiosity, triggering more questions. Since then, we’ve been dissecting everything around us, inventing technology so that we can

11 do more poking around. **Alice Wang** has been doing some poking of her own: from visiting sites like Arizona’s Biosphere 2 for *Oracle* (2017) – a video about how humans have discovered ways to replicate and mediate natural environments – or exploring New Mexico’s Very Large

Array (a radio astronomy observatory) and Mayan pyramids on the Yucatán Peninsula for her 'infinite film' series *Pyramids and Parabolas I & II* (2019 & 2021), which examines 'how we communicate with the unknown universe through geometric structures'; to creating mysterious (unnamed) sculptures out of moss, fossils, meteorites, microprocessors and more. Wang prods at the meaning of sentience, using various mediums (including photography, print and ceramics) to describe the relationship between the technological, the natural and the spiritual. At UCCA Dune, the artist will kick it up a notch, presenting 'an imaginary world of quantum computers'. And if, like *ArtReview Asia*, you don't quite know what quantum mechanics means for the future, you'll just have to go and discover that for yourself. (FC)

technological acceleration. A comparable interest in scalar play is seen in **Alice Wang**'s research into the imperceptible dimensions of reality, which led to the development of her new project 'Quantum Dream Machine' (2023), presented by **Capsule** in the Discoveries sector, with coming presentations at Kling & Bang in Reykjavík and UCCA Dune in Beijing.

The origin of Wang's project – a picture of a quantum computer resembling a chandelier from some extra-terrestrial civilization – triggered the artist's vision of a quantum computer as a crystal ball. This vision effectively became the prototype for the sculptural objects that constitute her latest work, *Untitled* (2023). Cast from 3D-printed models of the basic geometrical components of different atomic orbitals – the probability distribution of electrons around the nucleus – the sculptures composing the work are made in pairs. With one element ultra-matte black and the other reflective stainless steel, each duo animates the surrounding space by doubling the viewer's sensorial experience.



Alice Wang 王凝慧, Untitled, 2023. Courtesy of the artist and Capsule Shanghai.

Wang's sculptural pairs materialize the poetic phenomenology of quantum computing by offering an analogy between subatomic and celestial bodies. Together, they cultivate an interscalar landscape that perhaps resides only in the dreams of the quantum machine itself. A series of images of quantum computing technologies rendered on glass sheets through the wet-plate collodion process extend these dream-like landscapes. Framed as transparent sandboxes, they give a glimpse into superimposed spaces and times.

SHANGHAI

Alice Wang

CAPSULE SHANGHAI

A yearning for the otherworldly—for what certainly or seemingly lies beyond our reach—undergirds all of Alice Wang's work, which trespasses on astronomy, geology, ancient history, and science fiction. Her recent exhibition consisted largely of sculptures, along with four black-and-white photographs and the video *Pyramids and Parabolas II*, 2021, a sequel to or a continuation of a 2019 work presented in a 2020 group show at this same gallery. Visitors were first confronted with a circular table topped with two-way mirrored glass, on which were perched six gleaming silver shards; like most of work in the show, this sculpture was dated 2021. The shards are actually pieces of iron meteorite found in the East Uweinat Desert of Egypt. (When Wang herself isn't traveling to some of the world's most remote corners for researching and filming purposes, she is trawling the internet for dealers of rare-earth and astronomical debris in order to obtain materials for her artworks.) Another sculpture consisted of fossilized Jurassic-period wave forms discovered in Eastern Europe: The work's three hip-high components stood close to one another, forming a broken triangular whole. The most confounding of the bunch, however, was a table sculpture that occupied an entire room of the gallery. On it sat a prism, handmade white-gold tiles, air plants, fluorescent-pink isometric grid-ding, wet-plate collodion photographs on mirrors, glass microspheres, and a Crookes radiometer (a nineteenth-century invention for measuring

Alice Wang, *Untitled*, 2020, mixed media. Installation view.

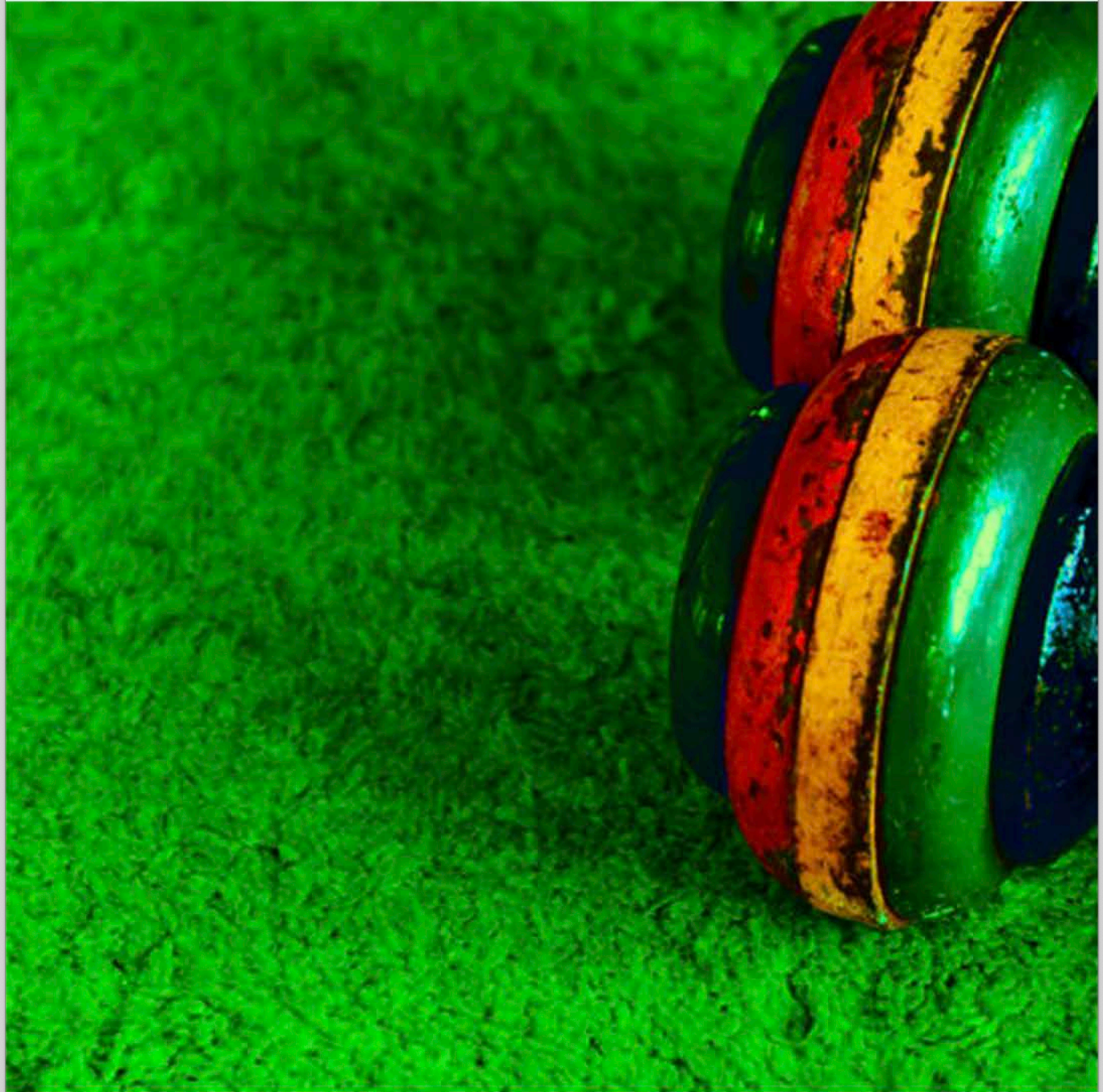


electromagnetic radiation). What do these objects have to do with each other? Situated halfway between the science lab and a high-end avant-garde fashion-shop display, the carefully rendered parts left us with the pleasurable task of fathoming the connections between them.

The first installment of *Pyramids and Parabolas* included footage of Jodie Foster as Dr. Ellie Arroway in *Contact*, a 1997 film about a scientist's search for extraterrestrial life. In *Pyramids and Parabolas II*, the artist plays a role similar to Foster's, constructing an observation post in the desert. The scene then shifts to the open sea—reminding us of what that desert once was—then to a sun-drenched mountain landscape somewhere in China, then to the Arctic Circle, where a lone wolf runs toward the camera. The film is inspired by the Crab Pulsar, one of the few neutron stars visible to the human eye. This astronomical object was born from a star's explosion into a supernova in the year 1054, an occurrence documented by astronomers of the period. "These beacons in the sky are an archive of past events," says the video's narrator. The camera pans to the blinding white light of the sky before cutting to a prolonged sequence of a bumpy ride filmed from behind the dash of a snowmobile. Afterward, the scene returns to the desert, where we again see the artist constructing her frequency-listening device, this time beneath the pink-orange setting sun. The soundtrack plays a recording taken from NASA's archives: the static noise of a solar burst.

Together, these works reflect Wang's deep investment in issues of materiality. She reveals not just the pure metaphysical thingness of objects found or made, but also their unique property of extension, connecting us to historical and cosmological dimensions beyond the perceptible.

—Travis Jeppesen



China: six must-see exhibitions

Fiona He

Chinese artists are placed center stage in shows across Beijing and Shanghai

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Alice Wang, Untitled, 2021. Wave form fossils found in Eastern Europe from the Jurassic period, stainless steel. Three pieces in 74 x 43 x 84 cm, 107 x 58 x 97 cm, 80 x 54 x 86 cm. Courtesy of the artist and Capsule, Shanghai.



Alice Wang, Untitled, 2021. Wave form fossils found in Eastern Europe from the Jurassic period, stainless steel. Three pieces in 74 x 43 x 84 cm, 107 x 58 x 97 cm, 80 x 54 x 86 cm. Courtesy of the artist and Capsule, Shanghai.

Alice Wang

Capsule Shanghai

Through May 8, 2021

In her artistic practice, **Alice Wang** (b. 1983) explores the fusion of the rational and subjective aspects of consciousness – a theme which, in this exhibition, is applied to our understanding of both land and space. Sculptures take the form of fossils from the Jurassic period found in Eastern Europe cast in stainless steel, as well as iron meteorites found in the Egyptian desert. The video *Pyramids and Parabolas II* (2021) revolves around the Crab Pulsar, a relatively young neutron star and one of very few pulsars to have been identified by the human eye. Elsewhere in the show, a table displays a constellation of a prism, air plants, fluorescent pink thread arranged in an isometric grid, handmade white-gold tiles, and a Crooks radiometer. Each of these pieces are united through a recurring, reflexive component: that of the mirror. With a background in both art and science, Wang never loses sight of the human connection to and perception of the universe.

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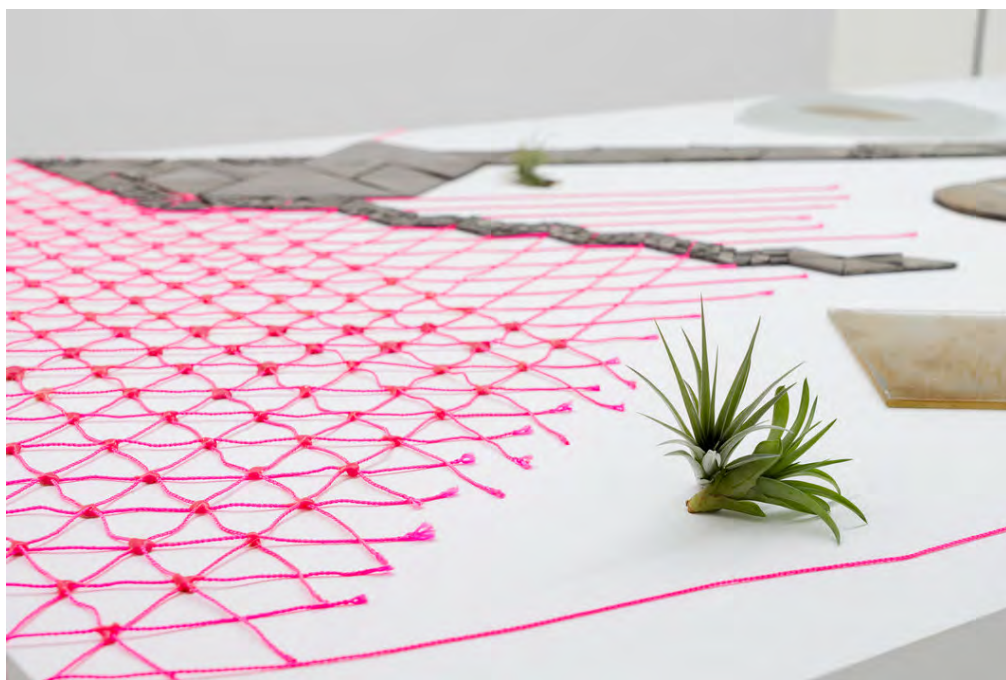
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王凝慧，《无题》（局部），2021，棱镜、克鲁克斯辐射计、手工白金瓷砖、气生植物、粉色织网、湿版火棉胶摄影印于镜子上、玻璃珠，243.84 x 121.92 x 121.92 cm.

上海

王凝慧

胶囊上海 | CAPSULE SHANGHAI

上海市徐汇区安福路 275 弄 16 号 1 楼

2021.03.20 - 2021.05.08

本科毕业于计算机科学和国际关系专业的王凝慧曾经在采访中戏谑地自称“科学极客”（science geek）。她的展览大多以自己的名字命名，而作品则往往只叫“无题”。她

曾经罗列化学元素周期表，用以抵充展览介绍文字；而在此次胶囊上海的个展“王凝慧 Alice Wang”上，艺术家故技重施，在新闻稿上如同传统相声“报菜名”那般，一口气播报着：热能、电磁能、太阳能、大气、棱镜、克鲁克斯辐射计、气生植物、等角栅格、玻璃珠、黄铜、金、不锈钢、陶瓷、铁陨石、侏罗纪时期的波状化石、湿版火棉胶摄影印于镜面、明胶银盐照片……

这份来自科学的关键词清单，多少显得有些冗长。它大致勾勒出展厅内作品的“相关物”，包括地形学、地质学、热动力学，却并未清晰地说明这些作品本身究竟是什么。这几乎是所有“科学极客”艺术家固有的路径依赖，王凝慧也不例外。即便相关物的主题各有不同，然而连接艺术与科学的方法论总是大致相似的——模拟。当观众看到高脚桌上平铺的等角网格的粉红色丝网、摆放整齐的白金三角瓷片、堆叠成火山口形状的微型玻璃珠，以及点缀其间的绿色植物时，似乎总能够轻而易举就把它视为地形沙盘模型。可是，它究竟意味着什么？仅仅依靠感官直观，似乎完全无从感知。

坦言之，那张桌子上置放的物件仅仅是艺术，科学不过是为艺术赋形的某种叙事线索，它并不可见，亦不可感，但为可见可感的艺术体验暗中呈供着合理性证据。或者也可以说，艺术模拟出科学的外在现象，由此产生相关性。所谓模拟，更像是便利店里销售的利乐包装咖啡饮料——人们以为它是咖啡，可包装上注明的品类赫然写着“咖啡味饮料”。

近年来，随着布鲁诺·拉图尔（Bruno Latour）、唐娜·哈拉维（Donna Haraway）等人的理论配方在当代艺术领域走俏，后人类、非人类、政治生态学等大量学术添加剂被用于调制“科学味艺术”。如今，只要经常参观美术馆与画廊，就不难发现这类艺术的产量骤增，在展览市场的占有率也日渐增大。即便如此，在众多同类作品中，王凝慧的创作依然具有很高的辨识度。她几乎从未在作品中直接呈现硬核的科学原理，而是将技术话语转译为视觉形象，用人工手段模拟非人类现实，并赋予它冷抒情的美学特征——冷静、克制，同时散发着金属质感的坚硬与植物质感的轻柔。

至于如何看懂，正如无须追问咖啡味饮料究竟是不是咖啡，纵然对王凝慧作品里暗藏的科学原理一无所知也无妨，它们本就是两种只存在相关性的不同事物。看透是科学提出的要求，“看”才是艺术。

文／刘化童

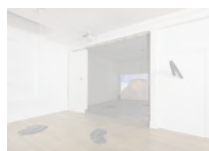
Plummeting towards the sun but missing it: planetary physics, ancient ruins & astronaut memoirs in the work of Alice Wang

Hannah Spears, 20 May 2019
interviews

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Los Angeles and Shanghai based artist [Alice Wang](#) makes work that's often described as alchemical. She's drawn to properties like heat, scent, and the sensation of air being circulated around a room. Her *Untitled* piece for a recent group show that at [Tin Flats](#), a former chromium-plating factory turned gallery and studio space by the Los Angeles River, was a white ceramic vessel plugged into the wall that emitted thin whiffs of vapor. The show, called *The Angel's Share* in reference to an amount of alcohol lost to evaporation in the process of distilling a spirit, was about "the idea of process," and in particular, the process of transformation.

For her latest solo exhibition at Los Angeles' [Visitor Welcome Center](#) that ran March 16 to April 20, 2019, Wang focused her attention on what might have been a much headier subject: outer space. But the exhibition wasn't so much a consideration of the stylized representations of outer space in science fiction or the political implications of space travel, as one might expect. Wang's treatment of the



Alice Wang, solo exhibition (2019). Installation view. Image courtesy the artist and Visitor Welcome Center,

subject instead forefronted sensation, something she regrets she can only experience vicariously through things like astronaut memoirs, which she reads voraciously. Her research for the show involved traveling to places where it's most possible to perceive the Earth on a planetary scale: the high desert in the middle of the night; the arctic during the first sunrise of the year; seven stories above a rainforest canopy. Sites she describes as being "at the edge."

When we sit down to discuss her show and accompanying publication, *An Atlas of Outer Space*, published March 2019 on San Francisco's [Sming Sming Books](#), it becomes apparent that these experiences informed her choice of materials — in this case, black mirrored glass ("the light play on it is incredible"), an iron meteorite, and sheet mirrors printed with images from NASA's archive using a wet plate collodion process. When asked about this process, the artist talks about its materiality, and gestures as she describes submerging the plate in a silver nitrate bath.

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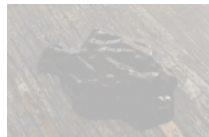
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Similarly derived from an interest in phenomenology, Wang's standout video piece 'Pyramids and Parabolas I' (2019) is set to a score of radio transmissions from celestial objects in outer space that she sourced from NASA's archive of sound recordings (a sampling of which can be found [on soundcloud](#)). Visually, the work switches between the Very Large Array, a radio telescope observatory in New Mexico, and Mayan archeological sites in the Yucatán. Also included in the video is crowdsourced [amateur video footage](#) of the 2013 meteor over Siberia. One of the most striking aspects of this footage is the banality of the scenes that this massive projectile from outer space interrupts in a literal flash. Perhaps as a result, Wang's piece conveys the sublime sense that, as she describes it, "the Earth is plummeting towards the Sun but missing it."

*** Before we delve into your show, I wanted to ask you how you arrived at your subject matter. You studied computer science and international*



Alice Wang, 'Untitled' (2018). Installation view.

relations, but what compelled you to start working on outer space as a subject?

Alice Wang: Well, like a lot of people, I'm a space junkie and sci-fi nerd and just really curious about the cosmos. When I was in undergrad I took a few astronomy classes that blew my mind and were tucked away in there for probably ten years until I started thinking about astronomy again recently. Now I'm really interested in the experience of being on Earth. Starting from when I finished graduate school six years ago, I started thinking about this idea that the Earth is plummeting toward the sun but missing it. That reality didn't really sink in for me until many years of working through that sentence to the point where it's become strange and uncanny. It describes gravity and how we're constantly falling as we orbit around the sun.

*** Elsewhere you've called this sentence a mantra. I'm interested in how it entails a modern understanding of planetary physics that, like the images you've compiled in your latest volume, An Atlas of Outer Space, fundamentally transformed the way people conceive of the universe. But in your video, 'Pyramids and Parabolas I' (2019), you alternate between footage of the Very Large Array, a radio telescope facility in New Mexico, and footage of ancient ruins. Could you talk about the site visits you conducted and your decision to bridge these disparate temporal registers in the video?*

AW: The video is episode one of a series I just started. And to give you some

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courtesy
the artist
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background on it, I'd been thinking about the relationship between geometry and both monolithic architecture and technological structures as ways to commune with the cosmos. A parabola, which is basically the shape of a bowl, is a basic geometric shape. But we use that to create satellite dishes that receive and transmit signals. There's also some footage [in the video] from the movie *Contact* with Jodie Foster at an actual scientific research site where they're listening for quasars and pulsars in outer space. So that, on the one hand, is very current, modern technology. On the other hand, a pyramid is also a geometric shape even though we have these cultural associations with the pyramids in Egypt or Mexico or Mesoamerica. And I was thinking about how pyramids are also these transmission devices that sort of communicate with the cosmos. When I began this series, I was following a hunch that there was a relationship between geometry and a kind of outward urge toward space. What affirmed this hunch was my experience actually climbing the pyramids. We landed in a small airport, drove for hours until we reached a kind of entrance to the rain forest, drove another hour and a half to two hours, and then hiked for another thirty minutes. So it was really deep in the jungle. And when we climbed up, we climbed maybe five stories above the canopy of the forest. It became very clear to me that these structures were built by people seeking to get to the heavens, to the cosmos, physically.



Alice Wang, solo exhibition (2019). Installation view. Image courtesy the artist and Visitor Welcome Center, Los Angeles.

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*** Before going to this site were thinking about these two technologies in tandem? Or*

did you make the connection later?

AW: When I make anything, I usually don't start with a solid idea, but with curiosities or inklings. Almost like searching in the dark. The research I do usually leads me in a certain direction and I find that openness to be productive and necessary. Ten years ago I was working in the Canadian government regulating traditional Chinese medicine and acupuncture and I found that this very rationalistic, analytical thinking was stifling. In society in general, rational thinking can be a bit overdetermining. So I allowed an intuitive process to guide me to explore other ways of knowing and just trust the process.

*** Let's talk about your book, An Atlas of Outer Space, which is a compilation of images from NASA's image archive. It's by no means comprehensive, yet you chose to call it an atlas, which also happens to have been one of the primary tools of empire and colonialism. Tell me more about your use of this term. Is it meant to be tongue in cheek because of the literal impossibility of mapping outer space in its entirety?*

AW: It's definitely not meant to be taken too seriously — it's an impossible task as you mentioned. It was kind of a pet project that I realized after it was printed is actually an important part of my practice. Because, going back to that statement or mantra, what it does for me is take me out of the social, out of this human centric way of thinking, and catapults me into outer space and to this

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Alice
Wang's
*An Atlas
of Outer
Space*
publishe
d March
2019 on
Smimg
Smimg
Books.

realization that we are part of this solar system, the Milky Way galaxy, and whatever larger mapping that exists. So I wanted to concretize and make tangible that existence. It's hard when you're in a city but I feel closer to it when I'm in Twentynine Palms—kind of at the edge in a way because there are so many stars. Another time I felt this proximity to outer space was when I decided to go see the first sun rise of the year in the Arctic. For me it's really important to have an embodied experience to get the phenomenological sense of that space and the light and so I went to the Arctic. It was a life-changing experience to be at the edge like that.

*** Included in the atlas is the iconic pale blue dot photograph, which I understand has been something of a touchstone for you. What about this image interests you? Does it have to do with taking you out of a human centric way of thinking?*

AW: Definitely, and I feel like images when they become tangible do something. I think that's what's interesting about art is that it enters you and kind of does something.

*** I have to ask, any strong reactions to the black hole photograph that just came out?*

AW: [Laughs] Yes! And actually my publisher Vivian Sming sent me an article a few months ago while we were working on this project describing how scientists were trying to look at the black hole but the image wasn't out yet so I also experienced some



Alice Wang, solo exhibition (2019). Installation view. Image courtesy the artist and Visitor Welcome Center,

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anticipation around when it would finally come out. But I'm still grappling with the idea and some of the scary and exciting possibilities it opens up around things like time travel.

*** Going back to your current exhibition, the show is very materials-focused with the fused glass pieces being fairly dominant in the space. Why did you want to emphasize materials over images in the exhibition? In the past, your work has dealt with the alchemical transformation of materials. How is this linked to your current project, if at all?*

AW: Because these pieces were made recently, they're difficult to talk about. But maybe I can try to connect them to my thinking about my past work. One of the pieces heats up and heat has been a material I've wanted to work with for a while. I'm interested in more immaterial materials or ones that you don't see. Before this I've worked with water vapor, which I like because as soon as it touches a surface, it condenses into water, undergoing its own metamorphic process. Another piece I did was with a bladeless Dyson fan and a monolithic beeswax sculpture. Beeswax has a scent and with the wind, the scent is circulated throughout the space. The iron meteorite piece in this show can also be activated. I feel these works exist somewhere between the real and the imaginary — imagining the beeswax scent circulating, for instance, or the iron meteorite's activation into something else.

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*** Your obsession with astronaut memoirs — tell me more about that.*



Alice Wang, solo exhibition (2019). Installation view. Image courtesy the artist and Visitor Welcome Center, Los Angeles.

AW: [Laughs] I would've loved to have been an astronaut before, but it's a bit too late now. Not really sure I have many skills to offer them. It really started when I went to the Arctic. As I mentioned before I wanted to get close to the extremes. I looked up when the sun would rise and I went about three days before the first sunrise thinking that it would be completely dark and then the fourth day I would start to see the sun. That's what I was imagining. But what ended up happening was that I landed in the evening so it was obviously completely dark but then the next day around 10:30–11, you could start to see the sky turning grayish blue and sense that light was coming through. At about noon the sky was this bluish pinkish hue like during the magic hour at dusk and dawn and it was like that for four hours. So it maintained this dusk. The light of this dusk was arrested and we were enveloped by this hue. It made me realize the sun is obviously not a light that you turn on and off and it allowed me to really observe the effects of Earth's curvature. This experience pushed me to explore outer space as a subject and that's when I began reading the memoirs of astronauts. I can't go to outer space so the next best thing is to hear what their experiences were. And there are some really crazy stories.

*** Anything stand out in particular?*

AW: The idea of orientation is something I've explored a bit in my work. When you're

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in space there's no up and down or left and right. The astronauts describe how disorienting it is to do EVA or Extra Vehicular Activity outside of the spaceship. Because at least when you're inside you have an up and down and objects to orient you.

*** Whose memoir was that in?*

AW: Scott Kelly's. And what's crazy is he was doing a twin study with his brother. They're both astronauts and they're twins. He was sent to space for about a year, which was the longest anyone has stayed in space, and they studied his brother on Earth. Just last week there was a press conference to reveal the study. It's really to study what would begin to happen to humans if we stayed in space for a long time. So to me it indicates we're really getting ready for that. Which is kind of frightening. Seems like it's no longer if but when.

*** What's next for you? Any plans at the moment?*

AW: Still definitely interested in space. Thinking about trying to focus more on a planet now. I'd definitely like to go back to the Arctic, maybe when the sun is up for 24 hours so I can experience this disorienting feeling of being exhausted when it's light out. I think that'll be what's next. **

Alice Wang's exhibition was presented at Los Angeles' Visitor Welcome Center from March 16 to April 20, 2019. Her book *An Atlas of Outer Space* was released in March 2019 on San Francisco's Sming Sming Books.



Alice Wang, 'Untitled' (2018). Installation view. Image courtesy the artist and Visitor Welcome Center, Los Angeles.

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VENUS LAU

VENUS LAU IS A CURATOR AND WRITER BASED IN SHANGHAI. SHE IS CURRENTLY THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR OF K11 ART FOUNDATION, AND HAS SERVED AS ARTISTIC DIRECTOR OF OCT CONTEMPORARY ART TERMINAL IN SHENZHEN. SHE IS THE EDITOR OF CAO FEI: SPLENDID RIVER AND ZHANG PEILI: CERTAIN PLEASURES, AMONG OTHER PUBLICATIONS. (SEE CONTRIBUTORS.)

9. View of "Alice Wang," 2017, Capsule Shanghai.
Foreground: *Untitled*, 2017.
Background: *Untitled*, 2017.



9

ALICE WANG (CAPSULE SHANGHAI) With this show, the Chinese-born, LA-based artist kept asking a simple question: What is a sculpture? The spare and elegant works she presented—incorporating materials such as mist, moss, and the plant *mimosa pudica*—provided only the barest answer.

9



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Alice Wang, Capsule, Shanghai

Capsule Shanghai

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Exhibition view, Alice Wang, Capsule Shanghai, 2017. Photo: courtesy of the artist and Capsule Shanghai



Alice Wang
CAPSULE, Shanghai, China
September 2—October 18, 2017

The first thing one notices about Alice Wang's exhibition at CAPSULE is the way her work subtly incorporates the space. The gallery—a combination exhibition space and art laboratory—occupies a lush 1930s garden house brilliantly redesigned by the architect Nunzia Carbone. Quietly hidden at the end of a winding alley, the gallery is filled with light and connects the outdoor green space to the interior through large leaded windows. Just as the gallery has a porous relationship with the environs that surround it, Wang's work seems to mold to the features of the space.

The first piece that greets viewers is a large raised white flowerpot filled with *mimosa pudica*, a plant sensitive to movement that recoils and folds its leaves protectively inward when touched. The work does not announce itself immediately and could be as easily an extension of the garden outside as it is part of the exhibition. But it is the plant's awareness of us rather than our awareness of it that is so uncanny—its slight movements as we unwittingly brush against it in passing, oblivious to its reaction. The exhibition includes a video installation (with Ben Tong) entitled Oracle (2017), a moody array of landscapes and organisms, but otherwise all the works are untitled, which gives them an additional sense of interiority; they are not here for us but for themselves, acting on their own.

There are works that are less delicate but no less potent as the *mimosa pudica* planter. A sliver of moss seemingly forced up through the floor like a tiny mountain edges towards the window, an escape measured on a tectonic clock. It is a work that plays off the stark white interior of the gallery and the dense sylvan world outside. In another piece, a large copper plate leaning against a wall transforms more rapidly, its colours altered by long streaks of condensation that form images like gas clouds or otherworldly topographies, patterns of bright, satisfying greens held on a deep earthen surface of the copper. The plate reacts to the mixture of late summer humidity, the rush of cool, conditioned air, and the presence of viewers in the space. The work shares visual echoes with Andy Warhol's *Oxidation Paintings* (1977–78), his playful commentary on abstract expressionism spoken in splatters of urine, but Wang's work is not tongue-in-cheek. The copper is an organism adapting and reinventing itself in this ever-changing milieu. It is safe to say that change in these works is key. In another visually striking piece, a cluster of fossilized clamshells gilded in silver is arranged in an amoeba-like pattern on the floor. It is impossible not to notice the lustre of the silver fading, untouched but unprotected and thus subject to tarnish and decay. Over time, the fossils will eventually turn black. While each has a fierce presence, each is also a chrysalis waiting to reveal some new form.

There are two pieces that assert themselves more than others: the first, a triangular wedge of beeswax and water vapour, and the second, a towering slab of beeswax with a hole lined in silver. The triangular wedge, connected to the wall by an

electrical cord, has dozens of perforations laid out in a symmetrical pattern from which a fog of vapour emerges. For a moment, the vapour is suspended, and then falls over the sides and disappears. The wedge is small but is just as imposing as the tall slab of beeswax, also tethered to the wall by an electrical cord, which emanates a mechanical whirling sound but seems to do nothing in particular, either cooling or melting the piece, or perhaps concealing some secret labour. The beeswax constructions feel meditative but refuse the spiritualism of aesthetically similar works by artists like Wolfgang Laib, which are not about the substances themselves but the way substances are taken up as a symbol by both artist and viewer. Wang instead exposes the ontology of substance brought forth through the *techné* of form. The wedge exhales vapours and the slab hums with inner life. Alice Wang produces works that are animated by their own chemistries and that enfold their surroundings. These are works that transform and mutate; metamorphic works that respond to the worlds they encounter to become something new.

Artistes: [Alice Wang](http://web/20171205023113/http://esse.ca/en/artistes/alice-wang) ([/web/20171205023113/http://esse.ca/en/artistes/alice-wang](http://web/20171205023113/http://esse.ca/en/artistes/alice-wang))

Lieu: [Capsule Shanghai](http://web/20171205023113/http://esse.ca/en/taxonomy/term/2878) ([/web/20171205023113/http://esse.ca/en/taxonomy/term/2878](http://web/20171205023113/http://esse.ca/en/taxonomy/term/2878))

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Titus : Lamentable tragédie sanglante

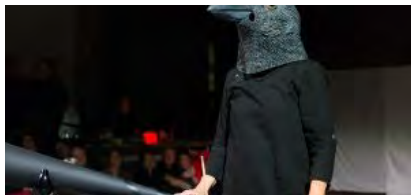
([/web/20171205023113/http://esse.ca/en/titus-lamentable-tragedie-sanglante](http://web/20171205023113/http://esse.ca/en/titus-lamentable-tragedie-sanglante))



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Fred Laforge, Comment ne pas être cyni...

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Viva ! Art Action 2017

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The Long Moment, Patrick Mikhail Galle...

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([/web/20171205023113/http://esse.ca/en/carl-trahan-parce-qu'il-y-a-la-nuit-mnbaq-quebec](http://web/20171205023113/http://esse.ca/en/carl-trahan-parce-qu'il-y-a-la-nuit-mnbaq-quebec))

Carl Trahan, Parce qu'il y a la nuit...

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([/web/20171205023113/http://esse.ca/en/erika-defreitas-conjuring-bringing-water-back-bradley-anchorage-bradley-museums-mississauga](http://web/20171205023113/http://esse.ca/en/erika-defreitas-conjuring-bringing-water-back-bradley-anchorage-bradley-museums-mississauga))

Erika DeFreitas, like a conjuring (bri...

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ArtReview Asia

Park Chan-kyong



Charu Nivedita
on why, 70 years
after independence,
India today is far
from free

The uncommon
sense of Anicka Yi

From Hitler and
Thai diplomacy
to Portuguese nuns
and egg thong yod

Previewed

Paola Pivi
Perrotin Tokyo
through 11 November

Jesper Just
Perrotin Hong Kong
through 11 November

*Art and China After 1989:
Theatre of the World*
Solomon R. Guggenheim
Museum, New York
6 October – 7 January

Hyper Real
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
20 October – 18 February

Zhōngguó 2185
Sadie Coles HQ, London
21 September – 5 November

Céleste Boursier-Mougenot
Shanghai Minsheng Art Museum
through 12 November

Occulture: The Dark Arts
City Gallery Wellington
through 19 November

Colonial Sugar
City Gallery Wellington
through 19 November

Sahej Rahal
CCA Glasgow
16 September – 29 October

Oku-Noto Triennale
Suzu, Japan
through 22 October

Japanorama: New Vision on Art Since 1970
Centre Pompidou-Metz
20 October – 5 March

2017 Nissan Art Awards
BankART Studio NYK
16 September – 5 November

Tatzu Nishi
YCC Yokohama
18 September – 5 November

Korea Artist Prize 2017
MMCA, Seoul
13 September – 18 February

Yoo Geun-Taek
Gallery Hyundai, Seoul
through 17 September

Cheng Ran
Galerie Urs Meile, Beijing
9 September – 22 October

Zhang Hai'er
scor, Shanghai
6 September – 30 October

Alice Wang
Capsule Shanghai
through 18 October

Tabaimo
Hammer Museum, Los Angeles
through 3 December

Takashi Murakami
Garage Museum of
Contemporary Art, Moscow
29 September – 4 February

*Culture City of East Asia 2017 Kyoto: Asia
Corridor Contemporary Art Exhibition*
Nijo Castle, Kyoto Art Center
through 15 October

Aki Sasamoto
Mendes Wood DM, São Paulo
through 16 September

Sakarin Krue-On
Tang Contemporary Art, Bangkok
through 23 September



18 Alice Wang, *Untitled*, 2017,
iron meteorite, 9 × 30 cm. © the artist.
Courtesy the artist and Capsule Shanghai

When it comes to inspiration, how's this for a statement: 'I work with by-products from

the metabolic process of the universe'? That's Alice Wang, who's the subject of a solo exhibition at Capsule Shanghai. A typical work by the Chinese Canadian (in this case *Untitled*, 2016) could include beeswax, silver, wind and electricity (Dyson blade-less fan) and take the form of a monolithic yellow slab with a silver hole in it. So, look out for a show that might take in everything from the Big Bang to the metabolic processes of bees.

