

Wu Yandan 吴艳丹: **Body Double**

In her collaboration with the **island6Lab**, the artist/dancer/choreographer **Wu Yandan** has proven to be one of the most polyvalent young artists in the Shanghai area. Formerly involved with the Zuhe Niao Collective under the artistic direction of the local dramaturg and playwright, Zhang Xian, **Wu Yandan** uses her family-given name **nunu**. She had a core role in the internationally acclaimed *Tongues Memory of Home*, a contemporary physical theater work which inspired one critic to write: "Unfettered by the mainstream theatre's demands for commercial success, they depict life in China in a language rarely employed before now in Chinese theatre, and they cherish lightness and subversiveness." During the 2007 Young Choreographers' Festival at CCD Workstation in Beijing, **German dramaturg Peter Stamer remarked about her piece "Question 'mama'":** "I was struck by the work's artistic maturity and its superb usage of theatricality. **nunu** choreographically structured her duet with the most refined means of repetition, difference, and change both on physical and narrative levels and thus showed an astonishing sense for dramaturgical awareness of timing and temporality."

As a visual artist, **Wu Yandan** has brought her movement studies to the "theatre" of the gallery. In collaborations with artists Yang Longhai 杨龙海, Wang Dongma 王东马, Thomas Charvériat and Zane Mellepe, she has acted as a source of new inspiration lending her talents for physical interpretation and body movement to the creative process of electronic practice within the Lab. Choreographing movements for two dimensional and spatial installations including LED technology and video monitors has turned out to be a curious and often comical success. As a virtual muse for the artists in residence at **island6** her dynamism has brought new life to the chosen mediums: we see her enclosed, encapsulated and rendered visually abstract by way of pixelization. Her spontaneous interpretations in response to the innate message of each artists' own creation: a direct and interactive response.

Wu Yandan has performed exciting site-specific original choreography for the gallery's event openings, work which has captured the interest and awed the visiting public. For the opening of "Crowds of Clouds" she created a framed artwork filled with sand in the middle of a the gallery floor rendering a physical art/performance piece titled, "I'm Selling Art". Gallery visitors have also watched her record video choreography for new projects in-situ and have on occasion even told the gallerist, "I'd like to buy that piece with the fan when it's finished."

While relatively new to visual creations limited to "static" space, what impresses is the artist's elasticity and bold spirit. The constant interaction between choreographer and transformed visual artist is amusing and fascinating, her own voice having undergone a profound change in the medium. Doubtless, the question of the fusion of dynamic/static, spatial/virtual interpretation in contemporary art and performance is highly provocative in itself.

As **Wu Yandan** has come to develop and further strengthen the dramatic tension of her stagework during the open collaboration with the **island6Lab**, her talent as a visual artist now equally presides to motivate, enlighten and incite spectators to return to an examination of the changes undertaken, underground, underneath the view of the status quo of the PRC today.

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