

Art in America

December 2003

China Blue at Lance Fung

China Blue's less-is-more approach to installation art takes its inspiration from the Chinese philosophy and practice of feng shui, which contends that people can improve their state of mind and quality of life by dealing thoughtfully with the space that surrounds them.

Working with sonic, digital, organic and sculptural elements, Blue responded to the gallery rather than filling it with objects. In the name of "art," the artist sought to "transcend the functional aspects of the practice" (i.e., of feng shui). Upon entering the gallery, viewers were greeted with a small Plexiglas box that emitted the sound of a reading of Lewis Carroll's famed "Jabberwocky" poem. Layered on top of this was noise from several speakers strung up like holiday lights on a leafy tree near the opposite corner of the gallery. From afar, the tree sounded like a badly tuned radio. Up close, distinct voices were discernible, as a man and woman exchanged frequently rhyming statements as "he whistled," "she bristled."

The tree cast its shadow

against a wall on which the Artist had hung a long piece of pink paper, like a banner giving a rosy glow. Another wall hosted two projections of goldfish swimming.

Elsewhere a disco ball flashed light around the room, and a large mirror was positioned to reflect "the spirit of a person," as wall text explained.

This text went on to state, "Everything is a cause, and is caused, absolute and relative at the same time, making up an endless series of conditioned origination." Profound and true. Blue succeeded in encouraging viewers to investigate the energetic and diverse content of the gallery – which in this case was twittery, and a little bit literary.

-Sarah Valdez