

MANIFESTO MANIFESTED

for a New Landscape and of Our Current Condition

This is a geological dimension; this is a frame within which we will advance together. There's a disinterest in borders, in demarcation lines, in definitive signifiers.

We will represent this world with the least distortion and the most impartiality – a world that is identified by wider geographical bearings rather than national boundaries.

This is a levelling field, a field of neutrality, where *Minor Feelings* are acknowledged and historical attributions become redundant. Here, trust will once again be restored.

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We trust, for we will be able to rely on computation and automation. They will be the new divine authority which grants us certainty:

Certainty, which encapsulates stability to the extent of stagnation and regression;

Certainty, which eliminates chances of the accidental that is the principle for discovery and evolution.

An inevitable juncture of our evolution, these processes will use our definitive past – as the prototype – to project our future – a model based only on known past evidence. This future is approximated by existing data,

This future is the median of our past.

With computation and automation, we will be able to rely on confirmation biases and automation biases; we will be shielded from sources

of distress that come with unpredictability; we shall be alleviated from the burden of cognition!

Bygone will be the arduous efforts to perceive, evaluate, reason, and resolve. Sentimental obstacles will be pacified, unsubstantiated instincts will no longer be valid. And we, the 'strawberry generation', will be cradled in our fragile nests – free from the exhaustion of using our own faculties to judge, free from the weight of sentimental responses.

We will achieve desensitisation! Repetition and over-iteration make redundant that which is rehearsed over and over again. *Regarding the Pain of Others* – the only discomfort we shall encounter now onwards is that of vicarious pain.

Gone are the unexpected, the abrupt, and the extra-ordinary. In this future we will rejoice and forge on contentedly: without uncertainties, without anomalies, and is unaccountable for the unknowns.

This future is the extension of our current, existing selves: deepening and amplifying how our permafrost has softened, how our rivers have swelled, and how turbulence has time and again thrust our fragile flesh and body inside contained cavities.

And so accordingly, errors will be repeated and magnified, errors will be augmented, errors will become

HISTORY and FACT.

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In this new landscape we will be subjects of the world wide jury. We are moulded by consensus and the idea of uniqueness becomes redundant; for uniqueness ≠ novelty.

Uniqueness is an approved form and USP is the Unremarkable Selling Point.

Therefore popular opinion, surely, is the *true* opinion! We shall finally acknowledge that truth is the quantitative collective agreement, the *mean* of a racked up sample.

It is the *opinion publique* within which we must navigate to survive. It is also here that axes of concurrence forge, where our disparate belief systems converge and are accepted by one another.

Homogeneity is the new libido; Sincerity is the new Viagra.

This is a future made up of collective consensus that are contained within echo chambers. Rendered perimeters: it is the Internet, the avenue of information, that licenses the real borders today – not fences, nor walls. Individual localities will evolve, resulting in many a great New Rift Valley as each locality reaches a hyper-determination of their individual Internet ecosystem.

So we shall fall into harmony within oblivious echo chambers – and must cultivate the silos that validate our incompatible opinions!

Alternative demarcation lines are drawn. We shall follow the order of # followings, r/ subs, individual mandates, and so forth. As children of social brutes, we absorb and have reached an unfiltered information overload.

4 pills 365 times a year can cure you; 365 pills 4 times a year can kill you.

As we slip through time, we assimilate, metamorphose, and evolve into an unceasing stream of notifications and stimuli that is cast in our way – by means of continuous scrolls of remotely-linked videos, images, tweets, trolls...

We are ravenous yet unable to categorise.

We shall meander within an inexhaustible cascade of memes and a myriad of portals into the lives of others. Like never before, we are able to interject ourselves into a multitude of communities. Surely, this marks a window of opportunity to overhaul singularity with that of intersectionality!

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Against this backdrop of excessiveness, however, we are closing in on reaching the information-supreme. All data shall be cached in a deep, cavernous memory bank, where fragments of memory can be drawn, cited, implicated and applied to our advantage, anytime, anywhere.

We shall surrender our right to disappear, to remove, hide, or simply leave. This is a quintessential 'immortality project', albeit somewhat unsolicited. Furthermore, the calibre of this transcendental symbolic self is also subject to debate.

We have become re-animators of history, and like a magpie hoarding, we take references: a Braque, a Charline von Heyl, a Susan Kare, a Reuleaux, a tree from Donkey Kong... so to assemble them in the same space –

clashing,
colliding,
defying,
prodding,

and finally regenerating – new geographies that are both expansive and intensely specific.

This institutes today as the 'computational aggregate of multiple influences and sources'! We are creatures of assemblage. Authenticity is what we authorise ourselves to borrow and appropriate from different instances of time.

At last, we are able to opt for any point in historical time. We are able to establish a rapport with nominated instances of time. In fact, the continuum has become pseudo-progressive. There are no more stylistic milestones, marking the collapse of a linear timeline. So rather, we must now consider, what can we de-contextualise, re-contextualise, and insert into this standstill timeline?

We will annihilate the social construct that is chronological history, as only a temporal phases shall remain! Temporal hierarchies will be disturbed.

And let us efface bitter attributions, as hyper-determination – gender, race, and class – has been the source of throbbing fissures of society.

Unlearning and de-intellectualisation.

To disturb is to deconstruct, to deconstruct is to suspend, and to suspend is to unbind, thwarting pre-determinations for a more impartial future.

In this future, taking pole position – pronto! – will be fluctuation and ambivalence. A product of making work through the processes of assemblage and collision, fluctuation and ambivalence will be the budding means for openness and dialogue.

Nonetheless, there exists a fine line between openness and disorder.

Thrown into disarray, we quickly develop an inability to believe. Our lust for illusion has never been stronger.

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Faith in Fakes.

The artifices of our times comfort us. We are inhabitants of an enhancement society – ‘entrepreneurial revolutions’ equate to minute modifications of existing ideas. And progress is represented by a constant past-sizing of the new. We have been enchanted – by illusions (of social media) and further facsimiles of these illusions – but at what cost?

The poor have not been deprived of their jobs. Instead, they are again made wage slaves. Amazon Mechanical Turks scavenge the debris of contemporary society: filtering offensive rubble, flagging shocking clips, and counterfeiting automatic identities to sooth our desire for autonomy.

Technology and its systems parade in disguise as levelling tools. Yet just the same, they are authors of further inequity and new jailhouses for the poor.

These are the ultimate *artificial artificial intelligence*.

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A new pyramid of power arises. And we certainly will not be able to short squeeze lord-almighty The System.

Gazing at us from this pyramid is also the information broker who possesses sovereignty. Embellished with OAuth, savvy brokers today control accessibility, offering us keys of access through ‘safe’, ‘delegated access points’: CAPTCHA, multi-factor authentications, biometrics... only for the price of a fragment of our identity and integrity.

Today is the product of *The Happiness Industry*. In this domain, brokers are modern archaeological financiers, excavating from us new assets – namely our habitual choices – and erecting new markets for these new commodities.

The upper crust of this new market is composed of positive feedbacks and thumbs ups.

On 22 June 2018 I was alerted by a Photos compilation of my late grandmother, titled ‘Portrait Over the Years’. It was a reminder for me to feel a longing for her. But at the time, the grief was still too fresh.

Yet unbeknownst to us, pending detection underneath the crust of happiness lies even more valuable an asset – namely the vast range of sentiments such as dislikes and disapprovals – ready to be quarried.

We live in a time that is anxious,
schizophrenic,
fractionalised,
branched,
divorced,
split,
distributed,
and inconsistent.

New privileges of this enhanced geography come with the collateral damage of distraction.

Distraction shall prevail, as the new powers domesticate each and every soul for a noiseless society, at an exponential rate. We are subjugated by distraction, but to become subordinates of whom, exactly?

*To captivate is left field,
to amaze is the benchmark.*

Dispersed through distraction, the individual today is a body of spare parts. We are fragments assembled in infinite permutations.

We collapse into directionless units, cruising as clickbaits seduce us into different directions, and merging into intersectional ensembles that are then only to shoal the currents of crypto-economy, information-economy, distraction-economy. So we shall drift – through caves, tunnels, and springs – until our flesh and bones disintegrate and evaporate like

OUR MINDS.

In distraction we will find the rewards of normative dilution! Apologies will be abundant, and sincerity may be imported. Sincerity, in particular, will no longer be the operative baseline.

Rather, it will be a token of justification for thinking and believing the unconscionable.

Hyperreality will be reached!

Finally, in this confused, segregated arena, we will persevere by navigating through a mire of references. Our children will become the new Silent Generation who are born into today's Neo Great Depression – evermore agitated, evermore polarised, and in turn, evermore absent, evermore indifferent...

Namaste – perhaps we will feel again our own soul by emulating the soul in another. Or together, we shall strive to create the optimal mirage.

<Enter this neo-geological dimension to experience the Golden Age of Universal Taming/>

⌘Command + Navigate

Vivien Zhang
2022.04

Published on the occasion
of the exhibition:

Vivien Zhang
undo, undo, undo

26 April – 28 May 2022

Pilar Corrias
2 Savile Row, London W1S 3PA

Vivien Zhang's project *Manifesto Manifested* is a continually evolving text, reconstructed with every exhibition. The text adopts a contradictory and ironic tone, and plays with the conditions and paradoxes of our time. Themes explored in the manifesto are central to the artist's practice. Begun in 2018 and now in its third iteration, the manifesto questions and reflects a society in constant and ever-changing flux.