

# **像素與欲望素的狂歡： 黃舜廷的媚俗影像畫與招財裝置**

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## 可分離的像素：Chuck Close難題

接近午夜了，我繼續坐在電腦螢幕前，為了更貼近黃舜廷作品所重擊我的視覺經驗。偶然間，我的焦點滑移，開始尋找各種關於Chuck Close的影片，似乎他的繪畫對於影像像素的處理與解離，可以為我提供一些線索。但我不知道那是什麼。其中一則2013年上傳的影片引起了我的注意，標題是：〈我的Chuck Close難題：Scott Blake在TEDxOhama〉(My Chuck Close Problem: Scott Blake at TEDxOhama)。(註1) 主角一出場就拋出他的問題：「如果你碰上世界上活著最富有的藝術家之一，他告訴你必須停止你的藝術創作，那該怎麼辦？我在兩年前左右遇上了這個難題，這是我今天要告訴你們的我的困擾。引起這個問題的藝術家就是Chuck Close。」

註1 | My Chuck Close Problem: Scott Blake at TEDxOhama, 2013年11月26日上傳, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OK-ndFPr4vWk>, 2021年5月28日。

這支影片的大意是，Scott說明了1960年代以來，Chuck Close在畫頭像照片和以美柔汀銅版畫方法處理頭像照的突破性，解釋了Chuck所使用的格網化處理像素、色點等細節的方法，帶來攝影與繪畫間的複雜關係問題後，也招致了Scott後來創造出Chuck Close風格的電腦運算濾鏡時，涉及的版權問題。2001年，Scott利用了Chuck頭像作品中的像素單元，像小塊小塊的金箔片那樣，一片片裁切組裝，製作出一個Photoshop的風格語彙濾鏡程式，然後把自己的頭像照片置入，經過四天的運算，終於出現了自己的點格頭像。2008年，頻寬改變，網路速度加快，Scott把這個濾鏡放在網路上提供下載免費使用，使用者可以選擇任一張Chuck Close的頭像風格，然後讓使用者置入自己要的頭像內容，經過程式重新組裝運算，就產生出了一張Chuck風格濾鏡下的另一個數位元件點格頭像。

2010年，Scott接到Chuck的一封憤怒的電子郵件，威脅他如果不立即撤下這個免費程式，就準備要提告。Scott屈服了。並且在他的網站上表明，大家不要再使用Chuck的相像圖像，也不要他的作品圖像來做藝術創作。問題來了，有一位名叫Devorah Sperber的女性藝術家，早在2002至2003年，就利用雪尼爾(chenille)數位平織繩絨線，插在發泡板上，並且從Chuck Close自畫頭像中選出不同形狀的點格元件色塊放大，成了一系列名叫「追隨Chuck Close...」(After Chuck Close.....)。(註2) 然而，Devorah卻從來沒有遇到被告的問題。請問各位有耐心讀到這裡的讀者，此題怎解？

註2 | Devorah Sperber, After Chuck Close: 31684 Units. [http://www.devorahsperber.com/close\\_series\\_htmls\\_plus\\_dac/](http://www.devorahsperber.com/close_series_htmls_plus_dac/), 2021年5月29日。

我認為黃舜廷的繪畫與裝置，可以說是回答「Chuck Close難題」的一種當代路徑。藝術家的世俗影像挪用與電腦程式工程師不一樣的地方，最簡潔的差異，或許可以用畫家李希特(Gerhard Richter)對照片的一句話來點破，「我不是試著去模仿照片，而是嘗試去製造一個。」所謂的「去『製造一個』」，涉及的就是手做與數位運算重組仿製的不同。不論是去製造一個照片似的圖像，或是去製造一組求財廟似的裝置，強調的都是精密地在不同的媒介材質的基礎上，利用手做的技法，將像素與俗世求財欲望的基本欲望要素分離開來，然後在不同的材質介面上加以「重新製造」。為什麼我要用手做與重新製造去描述這個藝術的實踐，而不用「偽造」或「假造」呢？因為，「偽造」或「假造」仍有利用擬像做直接指涉對象的功能，黃舜廷做為藝術家在藝術展覽空間中展示的，或許不是表面的欺瞞與相似性，更不是一種程式化的運算，而是他精細的手藝、製造與創作的轉化能力，近似機器那般的徹底反覆。

## 手做製造的狂歡：招財像素和欲望素

出生於1990年的黃舜廷，在2016年的臺北國際藝術博覽會(MIT Art Taipei)上，提交了《有錢圖》系列參展，其中包含了諧音命名、採自網路圖像再繪製的「鳩五橘」(很有錢)、「熊五橘」(尚有錢)、「蛙五橘」(我有錢)、「鷺五橘」(很有錢)、「鯨五橘」(真有錢)等等圖像，他以台語的諧音命名，藉由精湛的平塗壓克力畫法，以欺瞞性的表現手法，讓觀者幾乎一致地得到接近PVC影像輸出視覺物的粗糙像素印象，實際上，這卻是他一筆一筆運用畫筆生產出來的圖像。

在畫面中，黃舜廷「使用繪圖軟體Photoshop液化功能畫出一圈變形的圓，好像將畫面中的元素，包含水果、動物跟風景，串聯在一起，但其造成的，只是影像上的變形，並沒有造成這些物件影像要素間任何交融與結合。你可以看到各個圖像的邊界都很銳利，但僅止於似乎有關係，實際上又好像沒有這麼的融合。」(註3) 換句話說，在網路取用現成的、像素有限的圖像間，製造出相互堆疊或製圖軟體去背、剪下、貼上的語彙效果，成了黃舜廷「寫實繪畫」技術支撐的基本框架。當然，這並不代表這種繪畫的工夫是簡單的，如果一天在畫布前站著工作14至16小時，一周五天連續專注地畫，150乘以150公分的一件作品，也必須要一個半月才能完成。300號的一張則必須要畫三個月。黃舜廷像一具欲望機器一般地在畫室工作，圖像內容指向的世界是一個充滿求財欲望的象徵符號世界，如同布希亞(Jean

註3 | 林鈺芸，〈黃舜廷：《有錢圖》讓你有前途〉，2017年12月10日。https://artemperor.tw/focus/1857?page=2



有錢圖一蛙、五橘

Frog (l' m), Five Oranges (Rich)

150 × 150 cm

壓克力、畫布 Acrylic on canvas 2016

Baudrillard)所說的充滿死亡意味的資本累積符號世界,但他的藝術意志似乎有某些部分遠遠超過了這種「求財欲望」,形成了一具展現抽象力量的欲望機器。

從2016年《有錢圖》的系列之後,黃舜廷要挑戰的「真實」,似乎就不只是原本畫面內部對於「媚俗求財」心理的幽默諷刺。這是由於2016年藝博會的結果,讓他有點驚訝,原來真的會有藏家是因為這些圖像具有民俗上求財的潛伏意涵,因而購藏了他的展出作品。他的「招財畫」居然真的讓他獲得招財的效果,也被某些藏家當做自身「招財欲望」的投射對象。這個不同欲望對撞時的刺激,使他進一步思考對這整個社會熱衷於算命求財的「拜物教」現象,要如何用整體裝置的方式來做呈現。於是,2019年他在福利社空間《林北山—五福宮》的個展,將「藝術品」與「招財商品」之間的換位關係,連同2020年在台南節點空間的《永福五福宮》個展,呈現在「財神廟」的各種宮廟意象裝置中。

做為「重新製造」的藝術意志,在《林北山—五福宮》這個展覽中,黃舜廷將福利社的地下室布置成一座類招財廟,除了他實際上調查台灣各地的財神廟,並搜尋全台灣所有冠以「五」字開頭的廟宇,如五王廟、五福宮、五路財神廟等,在一張地圖上一一加以標定,同時將這座虛擬的五福宮偷渡置入之外,他也不忘自我嘲諷、不忘對藝術展覽與資本流動的潛在關係予以幽默地調侃,「展覽命題的概念來自於我所生活、移動的地區及展場所在地的彼此串連,以此建構出一間結合林口區的『林』、北投區的『北』及中山區的『山』所命名的『林北山—五福宮』,將展場的空間性質轉化成為圍繞於這三地的信仰中心。」(註4)彷彿先前的《有錢圖》理所當然地成了這間廟的壁堵,展場中的吃角子老虎,也邀請觀眾參與一個進入黃舜廷「五福宮」的求財循環遊戲中。當然,黃舜廷慎重其事地以鑄模翻銅的雕塑手法,製作了一座像是主神卻又顯得抽象的〈金五福〉銅像,在其周圍圍上了紅布,並輔以「摸五福詩」說明,引誘觀眾落入一種觸摸沾福氣的求財欲望「手勢」中。一條藝術展場所習慣使用紅龍隔離圍條,橫在〈主殿—金光轉轉〉這個錄像裝置的入口,製造了觀眾與神秘滾動黃光的距離。《林北山—五福宮》既像是在諷刺宮廟招財文化,又像是在暗嘲藝術展覽與資本的合謀;既像是在批判,又像是在自嘲。

註4 | 藝術家自述·視盟網頁<https://avat-art.org/huangshunting2019/> 2019年9月19日。

從招財影像像素的拆解重組,到招財文化欲望素的拆解重組,黃舜廷並沒有忘掉藝術創作本身也不可能自外於這種日常生活資本累積的欲望流動之中,這種既向外又向內的纏捲,形成了他的藝術「製造」中為迷人的多語義「製造」力。因此,到了《永福五福宮》,他進一步將這種手做「製造」的意志,擴展到常民圖像與物件生活中的求財植物、盆栽的吉祥陶盆、卡拉OK背景影像中的吉祥山水符號,慢慢的,這些分裂性、雙重性語義的招財符號,不再限於宮廟場所的範圍,而成瀰漫在常民日常生活中的場所體驗。這些材質各異的物件,譬如陶盆與影像重製,要藝術家一一動手去塑造、打模、進入製程、剪接、配樂、上字幕,充滿了手做製造的狂歡氣氛,好像這種欲望透過像素的重組、欲望物件要素(聲音、影像、物件、盆栽植物、地圖、告示)的重組,藝術家邀請我們進入一個招財欲望自身的狂歡世界中。

## 從影像化石到物件化石:招財物件的手做製程

2021年年中的疫情高張時期,在「迷失在那種潛伏中」的聯展中,黃舜廷抽取了他自2019至2021年的八件《(空白)》系列繪畫作品,與李吉祥的〈濾鏡窗景〉系列和廖震平的〈車窗〉、〈樹幹〉、〈鶴見川〉與〈風景與黑色形狀〉,形成了有趣的對話。我在觀看黃舜廷的《(空白)》系列時,在展場中,會不禁將他畫面中的白色色塊與廖震平畫面中的黑色色塊,置入一種很不對稱的對比觀看中。如果說李吉祥的壓花窗景寫實繪畫與攝影景框和濾鏡軟體的「技術支撐」很難分離,那麼,黃舜廷的寫實,由於更接近電腦螢幕與手機上常見的「網路招財影像物件」,其「技術支撐」就少不了當代網路介面文化中低像素的俗濫影像抽取。這也是「後媒介狀況」中數位影像存在的影像後製環節,畫家猶如把網路大量充斥的俗濫影像如化石般地挖掘出來,另外加以Photoshop的液化效果,使影像物件變形,讓分離的圖層之間產生互為表面的關係,再透過繪畫的壓克力顏料漸層與堆疊處理,形成最後的網路影像活化表現。

以W.J.T.米契爾(W.J.T. Mitchell)評論威廉·米契爾(William Mitchell)的「數位影像化石」觀點來說,「這個化石隱喻的另一項含意是:影像就像是已經死亡、休眠、甚至是滅絕的生命形式,但使其重獲光照——加以列印、投影、或是螢幕顯示——即可使其重獲生命。而我認為,這是思考數位影像的更寬廣文化脈絡的其中一個關鍵框架。就在數位影像在技術上達到完美的同時,另一類全然不同的影像/形象在進行類比程序。」(註5)我們不妨來檢視一下黃舜廷的作畫過程。

註5 | W.J.T.米契爾(W.J.T. Mitchell)著,《形象科學:視覺文化研究大師W.J.T.米契爾,探索形象本質經典之作》(Image Science: Iconology, Visual Culture and Media Aesthetics),石武耕譯,臺北市:馬可李羅文化,2020年,頁113。因為中譯書名與原書相去甚遠,故在本文中譯為《形象科學:圖像學、視覺文化與媒介美學》。其中討論查克·克羅斯(Chuck Close)的部分,出於頁110。

首先，黃舜廷會在網路上搜尋這些可以構成吉祥文化圖案的圖像，加以擷取後，置入Photoshop軟體，進行構圖，讓去背、拼貼、堆疊、剪下、液化、調光、調色這些圖像軟體程序運作於整個影像後製的效果過程中；其次，再將這些處理過後的圖像，在便利商店7-11彩色列印出來；最後，畫家看著列印出來的A4或A3大小的列印圖像，進行對應的填色。例如，同一張圖中，《有錢圖》系列中的四個橘子會是完全一樣的影像物件，因受光面不同而略有調色時的差異，另外一顆則是被切開或剝開的橘子。這些具象的植物、水果或動物的背景場景，圖像也來自網路（譬如華爾街的金牛），同樣經過軟體後製圖像的過程，與圖面上其他的影像物件形成沒有關聯的關聯。

其實，比較艱難的部分是這些網路數位圖像在繪畫上的類比轉換。黃舜廷的繪畫，在此有如「有機體、生物的生命形式透過分植程序進行的繁殖/再製。分植就是數位影像的活存、有機版本，牽涉了底下的一組遺傳密碼 (genetic code)、以及一套可見、有軀體、類比的體現之間的某種類似關係。」(註6) 然而，有趣的是，絕大部分觀看他的繪畫的觀者，都會認為他的繪畫是否只是電腦影像的輸出，也就是他的作品在畫布上的繪畫效果，十分類近於某種PVC材質的照片輸出影像，造成觀看上難以區辨的影像/繪畫經驗。潛伏在這些類PVC俗濫影像的底層的困難點，其實是壓克力顏料在處理漸層效果上的技術難題。由於像Chuck Close的油畫可以在第一時間就可以處理漸層明暗的分佈鋪陳，然後用色塊加以抹勻，呈現其基本的量感，再去慢慢堆疊修正，在半乾的時候做漸層。然而，壓克力顏料必須先將底色塗到最深，慢慢往亮的地方一層一層去疊色，用動物毛的水彩筆一層一層去染疊，同一個區域必須要依此染疊好幾層，才能漸漸讓看似普通的潛伏影像顯示出來。因此，手做製程的執迷與欲望，或許正是畫家不言明的藝術意志。

註6 | W.J.T.米契爾(W.J.T. Mitchell) 著，《形象科學》，頁113。

換句話說，在壓克力顏料複雜塗層和Photoshop變造的數位影像之間做影像與繪畫上的轉換，不僅吃力不討好，反而因為技術太過精細，造成難以辨認的圖像狀態。而這樣一種繪畫上的構想訴求，恰恰正是藝術家的「選擇」，面對當代數位影像的表層化現象，我們可曾仔細觀看「網路影像」或「數位影像」的表象本身的肌理？黃舜廷的作品，在遠看時似乎有很多影像的細節，但近看時，又如同像素不足的網路俗濫影像那樣沒有細節，只有比較大的筆觸的平塗；遠看的黑熊好像有毛，近看時卻像是某種像素不足的平面化假皮。黃舜廷的畫家工作，就如同Chuck Close所開創的邏輯，進行填色，利用眼睛的辨識力，把眼見的網路圖像列印出來的影像，一個單位一個單位、一個像素一個像素地填滿在畫布上的相應位置。近看，卻成為抽象的、解離的色塊；退幾步遠看，它立刻又成為具象的、組裝的影像，其實，它卻是依據數位拼貼、數位圖層、多處矛盾光源並存的壓克力繪畫。

「混亂光源數位拼貼」的網路圖像，其實正是黃舜廷作品中的影像遮罩。這種我們已經漸漸習以為常，不再有能力立刻加以分析、卻在直覺上似曾相識的視覺經驗，讓觀眾對於黃舜廷筆下的植物，以及那些被遮蔽掉的白色色塊，形成了一種對於當代繪畫與網路影像關係的猶疑、駐足、踟躕、與反思。是的，我們在《(空白)》系列中，看到了黃舜廷以手機拍攝的朱蕉、密葉竹蕉，看到了他拍的龍血樹、白水木，這些吉祥的、社交性的、招財性的豪宅裝飾植物，在本來看起來日常而不起眼的場所中，被抽取出來。對於這些習而不察的「影像遮罩」，這些已太過習慣的網路拼貼影像感，我們如何進行破解性的觀看？

## 剝除符號後的空白：迴返材質裝置自身

在「迷失在那種潛伏中」的聯展中，黃舜廷進一步解構了原本的網路影像遮罩，雖然這本畫冊並未收錄《(空白)》系列，但我認為這是一個值得注意的辯證發展。畫家透過白色色塊，與白色的噴濺效果，讓這些植物體上習常見到的人工裝飾物、蝴蝶結、金球被遮蔽起來，讓它們在影像/繪畫/輸出、俗濫/高雅之間，形成一種模糊的影像經驗，讓畫布的麻木材質本身出來說話，讓數位化擬像的表層進入與實體物質的對話。「影像遮罩」被破除，畫布的麻布材質加入視覺與觸視的對話中，突破了《有錢圖》系列中密不透風的像素重組繪畫平面，開始指向實體世界。我們不妨把《(空白)》系列看成另一種裝置，它把藝術世界的另一層肉身也暴露了出來，讓像素重組的繪畫世界、架上畫背後的物質世界、招財欲望的物件世界，三界合一，在媚俗與自嘲的往返運動中，互擁狂歡。但是，在這個狂歡的過程中，「招財」的欲望符號似乎漸漸化為空白，手做繪畫與材質裝置的藝術欲望，已爆破開數位圖層的畫布表象，展露自身為另一種無法掩蓋的真實。



(空白)004

(blank) 004

72.5 × 60.5 cm

壓克力、畫布 Acrylic on canvas 2019

# **Revelry of Pixels and Elements of Desire: Huang Shun-Ting' s Paintings of Kitsch Images and Fortune-Bringing Installations**

Gong Jow-Jiun

## Dissociable Pixels: The Chuck Close Problem

As time approached midnight, I continued to sit in front of the computer, trying to inch closer to my visual experience stricken by Huang Shun-Ting's works. Out of blue, my focus shifted, and began to search for videos on Chuck Close, as if the processing and dissociation of pixels in his painting could offer me some leads, yet I did not know what they were. One of those videos, which was uploaded in 2013, caught my attention. It was titled My Chuck Close Problem: Scott Blake at TEDxOhama. (Note 1) As soon as he stepped onto the stage, the speaker raised the question: "What would you do if one of the world's richest living artists told you to stop making art? I found myself in this problem about two years ago, and I am gonna show you how I got into this trouble. It all starts with the artist Chuck Close."

Note 1 | My Chuck Close Problem: Scott Blake at TEDxOhama, uploaded on November 26, 2013, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OKndFP4vWk>, May 28, 2021.

In summary, in this video, Scott introduces Chuck Close's groundbreaking ways of painting portraits and processing portrait photos through the mezzotint method since the 1960s, and explains Chuck Close's method of processing details, such as pixels and color dots, through the grid method, which not only has led to the issue of the complicated relationship between photography and painting, but also the copyright issue faced by Scott after he created the Chuck Close Filter. In 2001, Scott made use of the pixelated elements in Chuck Close's portrait works—by disassembling and assembling them like pieces of gold foil, he created a Photoshop filter, and then scanned his own portrait; after four days, the computer rearranged these tiles into his own pixelated portrait. In 2008, with improved bandwidth and faster Internet speed, Scott launched his filter online, which was free for anyone to use. Users could choose the style of any one of Chuck Close's portraits, and upload their own desired pictures; the filter would rearrange them into digital pixelated portraits in the style of Chuck Close.

In 2010, Scott received an angry e-mail from Chuck Close, saying that if he did not take his website down immediately, he would be facing a lawsuit. Scott caved. He even declared on his website, warning others not to make Chuck Close art and use his images. Here came the problem. A female artist named Devorah Sperber had already created a series titled After Chuck Close—from 2002 to 2003, using chenille stems on foam boards and selecting pixels of different shapes in Chuck Close's portraits. (Note 2) However, Devorah was never threatened with a lawsuit. Now, my question for the patient readers who have read up to this point: Why was she not threatened with a lawsuit?

Note 2 | Devorah Sperber, After Chuck Close: 31684 Units. [http://www.devorahsperber.com/close\\_series\\_htmls\\_plus\\_dac/](http://www.devorahsperber.com/close_series_htmls_plus_dac/), May 29, 2021.

I believe that Huang Shun-Ting's paintings and installations are a contemporary path to answer the "Chuck Close Problem." The difference between kitsch images of an artist and a programming engineer, the most straightforward difference, perhaps can be illustrated by a quote by painter Gerhard Richter on photographs: "I am not trying to imitate a photograph; I am trying to make one." "To make one" highlights the difference between manual recreation and digital computation and rearrangement. Whether you are making an image similar to a photograph, or making an installation resembling a good fortune shrine, the emphasis here is to precisely utilize manual techniques on the foundation of different media and materials to dissociate pixels and the basic elements of the desire for good fortune in the secular world, and "remake" them on different material interfaces. Why do I use manual and remake to describe this practice of art, instead of "forging" or "counterfeiting"? Because "forging" or "counterfeiting" still have the function of directly referencing the subject using simulacra; as an artist, what Huang Shun-Ting displays in exhibition spaces are perhaps not superficial deceptions or similarities, nor are they programmed computation; instead, he displays his intricate skills, converting ability of making and creating, and absolute repetition resembling a machine.

## Revelry of Manual Making: Good Fortune Pixels and Elements of Desire

Born in 1990, Huang Shun-Ting submitted "The Way to Wealth" series to the 2016 MIT Art Taipei, which included remakes of online images that had puns as titles: Pigeon (Super), Five Oranges (Rich), Bear (Very), Five Oranges (Rich), Frog (I'm), Five Oranges (Rich), Eagle (Super), Five Oranges (Rich), and Whale (Truly),

Five Oranges (Rich). He named these images using Taiwanese puns; through his outstanding technique of flat painting and deceptive expressions, almost all the viewers got the impression that these were PVC image outputs with coarse pixels, but in fact, these were images he created one brushstroke at a time.

In the paintings, Huang “uses Photoshop’s liquify function to draw a ring of deformed circle, as if connecting the elements in the paintings, including fruits, animals, and sceneries, together; yet what it creates is only deformation of image, and does not facilitate any fusion or integration of the elements of these object-images. You can see that every image has sharp edges, but it stops there; they seem to have some kind of relationship, but they really are not that integrated.” (Note 3) In other words, taking existing images online that have limited pixels and creating overlapping or cropped, cut, and pasted vocabulary effects using software have become Huang’s basic framework supported by techniques of “realist painting.” Of course, this does not mean that this kind of painting is easy; if you stood in front of a canvas and worked 14 to 16 hours a day, five days in a week, it would still take a month and a half to complete a 150x150cm painting. A size 300 painting would require over three months to complete. Huang Shun-Ting works in his studio like a machine of desire, and the world referred to by the contents of his images is a world full of symbols of the desire for good fortune, just like the world of symbols of capital accumulation that is full of death described by Jean Baudrillard; however, parts of his artistic will seem to have transcended beyond this “desire for good fortune,” and formed a machine of desire that displays the power of abstraction.

Note 3 | Lin Yu-Yun, Huang Shun-Ting’s The Way to Wealth Brings You Bright Future, December 10, 2017.  
<https://artemperor.tw/focus/1857?page=2>

Since “The Way to Wealth” series in 2016, the “truth” Huang wants to challenge seems to be more than the humorous sarcasm of the “vulgar mentality of begging for good fortune” within the original paintings. This is the result of the 2016 MIT Art Taipei; he was surprised that there were really collectors who would procure his paintings on display for the images’ hidden meaning of begging for good fortune. To his surprise, his “fortune-bringing paintings” did have the effect of bringing him fortune, and they became objects of projection of some collectors’ own “desire for good fortune.” The thrill when these different desires collide made him further consider how to present the phenomenon of “fetishism,” where the entire society was wild about fortune-telling and good fortune, through comprehensive installations. Thus, his solo exhibition “Lin Bei Shan - The Temple of Five Oranges” held at FreeS Art Space in 2019, as well as the “Yong Fu Temple of Five Oranges” solo exhibition held at Zit-Dim Art Space in Tainan in 2020, he presented through the various installations of the imagery of “God of Wealth Temple” the relationship of transposition between “artworks” and “fortune-bringing commodities.”

With the artistic will of “remaking,” Huang decorated the basement of FreeS Art Space into a pseudo-God of Wealth Temple for the “Lin Bei Shan – The Temple of Five Oranges” exhibition. In addition to field studies to God of Wealth temples across Taiwan, Huang also searched for temples in Taiwan with names that started with the word “five,” such as Five Kings Temple, Five Lucks Temple, and Five Gods of Wealth Temple. He labeled these temples on a map, and, in addition to bootlegging this fictional Temple of Five Oranges onto the map, he did not forget to poke fun of himself or humorously mock the hidden relationship between art exhibitions and the flow of capitals: “The concept of the exhibition originates from the connections between the areas I live in and travel to, as well as the location of the exhibition venue, with which I present the ‘Lin Bei Shan – The Temple of Five Oranges’ exhibition named after the ‘Lin’ of Linkou, ‘Bei’ of Beitou, and ‘Shan’ of Zhongshan, converging the spatial quality of the exhibition venue into a religious center surrounding these three places.” (Note 4) It seemed that “The Way to Wealth” from before inevitably became the screen wall of this exhibition, and the slot machine in the exhibition venue also invited audience to participate in a game of the fortune-bringing cycle in Huang Shun-ting’s “Temple of Five Oranges.” Of course, Huang Shun-Ting cautiously utilized the sculpturing technique of copper casting to create a copper statue of “The Five Golden Oranges” that seemed like the Main Deity but was rather abstract; he wrapped around it a piece of red cloth, which coupled with the instructions provided by the “Poem of Touching the Five Oranges,” lured people into touching the statue for blessing, a “gesture” of the desire for good fortune. A barrier commonly used in venues of art exhibitions was placed

Note 4 | Artist’s Statement, AVAT website  
<https://avat-art.org/huangshunting2019/>,  
September 19, 2019.

at the entrance of the video installation “Main Hall – The Rolling Gold Light” to create some distance between the audience and the mysterious rolling gold light. “Lin Bei Shan – The Temple of Five Oranges” seemed to be poking fun at the fortune-bringing culture of temples and shrines, as well as mocking secretly the collusion between art exhibitions and capitalism; it seemed like criticism, but also self-deprecation.

From the disassembling and reassembling of pixels of fortune-bringing images, to the disassembling and reassembling of elements of desire of the fortune-bringing culture, Huang Shun-Ting has not forgotten that art creation is itself not a bystander in this flow of desire of capital accumulation in daily life; this entanglement that is both outward and inward forms the most charming power of multi-semantic “making” within his “making” of art. Therefore, in “Yong Fu Temple of Five Oranges,” he further expanded this will of manual “making” to the image-objects in common life, such as fortune-bringing plants, auspicious pots of potted plants, and the auspicious landscapes in the background of karaoke videos; gradually, these separated, dual semantic fortune-bringing symbols are no longer limited to the premises of temples and shrines, and have become the experience of place that fills the daily life of common people. These objects of different materials, such as ceramic pots and image remakes, require the artist to be engaged manually in the processes of shaping, molding, production, editing, music, and subtitling, exuding a rich ambience of the revelry of manual making, as if this desire has been reassembled through pixels and elements of objects of desire (sound, image, object, potted plant, map, sign), and the artist is inviting us to enter a world of revelry within the desire of fortune-bringing.

## **From Image Fossils to Object Fossils: Manual Making Process of Fortune-Brining Objects**

At the height of the pandemic in mid-2021, Huang Shun-Ting selected eight paintings from the “(blank)” series from 2019 to 2021 for the “Lost in Latency Joint Exhibition,” which formed interesting dialogues with Lee Chi-Hsiang’s series of “filtered window views” and Liao Zen-Ping’s Window, Trunk, Tsurumi River, and Scenery with Black Shape. When I viewed Huang Shun-Ting’s “(blank)” series in the exhibition venue, I could not help but to put the white color blocks in his paintings and the black color blocks in Liao Zen-Ping’s paintings into an asymmetric comparison. If separating Lee Chi-Hsiang’s realistic paintings of patterned window views from the “technical support” of photographic frame and filter software was difficult, then, since Huang’s realism is closer to the “online fortune-bringing images and objects” often seen on computer screens and mobile phones, the extraction of low-resolution kitsch images in the contemporary Internet interface culture was a vital part of its “technical support.” This is the segment of image post-production of digital images in the “post-medium condition,” as the painter excavates excessive online kitsch images as if they were fossils, and then utilizes the liquify function of Photoshop to deform the image-objects, making separate layers into surfaces of each other; then, using acrylic paints for gradient and layering, Huang creates the final vitalized expressions of online images.

According to W.J.T. Mitchell’s critique of William Mitchell’s “digital image fossils” theory, “Another implication of the fossil metaphor is that images are like dead, dormant, or even extinct life forms that can be brought back to life by being brought back into the light—printed, projected, or screened. And this, I think, is one of the key frameworks for thinking about the larger cultural context of the digital image. These images have achieved technical perfection in the same period that an entirely different class of images has been subjected to an analogous process.” (Note 5) We might as well examine the painting process of Huang Shun-Ting.

First, Huang searches online for images that can form auspicious cultural pictures. After retrieving them, he uploads them to Photoshop for composition, allowing functions like cropping, collaging, layering, cutting, liquifying, lighting, and color adjustment, of the software to operate through the process of post-production; then, he prints out these processed images using color printing service at convenient stores;

Note 5 | Mitchell, W.J.T., *Image Science: Iconology, Visual Culture and Media Aesthetics*. Translated by Shih Wu-Ken. Taipei City: Marco Polo Press, 2020, p. 113. The original Chinese title was nothing like the original title, and therefore, this paper uses the direct translation of the original title when referring to the book. The part on Chuck Close can be found on p. 110.

lastly, he looks at these printed images sized A4 or A3 for corresponding coloring. For example, in the same picture, four oranges in “The Way to Wealth” series will be the same image-object, only that their colors are adjusted differently depending on the light facing side; the other one will be a cut or peeled orange. The backgrounds of these concrete plants, fruits, or animals, are also images taken from the Internet (such as the Bull of Wall Street); they are also processed using image software, forming unrelated relationships with other image-objects in the picture.

In fact, the more difficult part is the analog conversion of these online digital images into painting. Here, Huang’s paintings are like “the reproduction of organisms, biological life forms, by the process of cloning. Clones are a living, organic version of the digital image, involving a similar relation between an underlying genetic code and a visible, bodily, analog manifestation.” (Note 6). However, the interesting thing is that, the majority of viewers of his paintings will think that his paintings are just computer image outputs; that is, the painting effect on canvas of his paintings is extremely similar to a certain PVC output of photographs, resulting in a difficult viewing experience of telling apart images/paintings. The difficulty hidden at the bottom of these kitsch PVC images is in fact a technical problem of acrylic paint when dealing with the gradient effect. Oil paintings like Chuck Close’s works allow painters to deal with the deployment of gradient light and shadow right away; then, they use evenly applied color blocks to present the basic volume, and then slowly layering and adjusting to create gradient when the paint is half-dry. However, for acrylic paintings, the base colors must be the darkest, and lighter colors are then layered on towards the brightest spot. Painters use watercolor brushes made of animal hair to render layers, and the same area requires many layers to enable seemingly ordinary images to appear. Therefore, the obsession and desire for manual process are perhaps the painter’s unspoken artistic will.

Note 6 | Mitchell, W.J.T., *Image Science: Iconology, Visual Culture and Media Aesthetic*, p. 113.

In other words, converting images into paintings between the complicated layers of acrylic paints and digital images altered using Photoshop is not only demanding and unrewarding, but the technique that is too intricate has caused the images to be indistinguishable. This kind of painting concept is the very “choice” of the artist; facing the superficialization of contemporary digital images, have we closely looked at the superficial textures of “online images” or “digital images”? Huang Shun-Ting’s works, when looked at from a distance, seem to have many details of image; yet, when looked at from up close, they are like kitsch online images with low resolutions that lack details, manifesting only large-brushstroke flat coloring; from afar, the black bear seems to have hair, but when looked at from up close, it looks like a certain flattened faux fur at low resolution. Huang’s job as an artist, just like the logics pioneered by Chuck Close, is to apply color; relying on his eyes for identification, he fills the printed images of online pictures he sees onto corresponding positions on canvas a unit at a time, and a pixel at a time. Looked at from up close, they are abstract and dissociated color blocks; looked at from a few steps away, they immediately become concreted and assembled images. In fact, they are acrylic paintings of digital collages and layers, with multiple conflicting sources of light.

Online images of “digital collages of chaotic sources of light” are the image masks in Huang Shun-Ting’s works. Because of this kind of visual experience, which we have gradually grown accustomed to and can no longer immediately analyze, yet are intuitively familiar with, when audience see the plants painted by Huang, as well as those concealed white color blocks, they start to doubt, linger on, hesitate, and reflect on the relationship between contemporary painting and online images. Yes, in the “(blank)” series, we see palm lily and compact dragon tree, as well as the dracaena and octopus bush, photographed by Huang using mobile phone; these auspicious, social, fortune-bringing decorative plants of luxurious mansions are pulled from seemingly ordinary daily scenes. Regarding these often overlooked common “image masks,” these senses of online collages we have grown too accustomed to, how can we see and decipher them?

## **Blanks from Stripped Symbols: Returning to Material Installations**

In “Lost in the Latency” Joint Exhibition, Huang Shun-Ting further deconstructed the original online image

masks. Although this album does not include the “(blank)” series, I believe this is a dialectic development worth paying attention to. Through white color blocks and splashes, the artist masks these artificial decorations, bowties, and golden balls often seen on plants, and enables them to form a blurry image experience between image/painting, painting/output, and kitsch/elegant, allowing the material of canvas itself to talk and the surface of digitalized simulacra to enter a conversation with physical substances. “Image mask” is broken, and the material of canvas joins the dialogue of sight and touch, breaking the dense and impenetrable planes of reassembled paintings in “The Way to Wealth” series, and starting to refer to the physical world. We might as well regard the “(blank)” series as another installation; it has exposed another layer of the body of the art world, allowing three worlds—the painting world reassembled by pixels, the material world behind the paintings on the easels, and the object world of the desire for good fortune—to become one, embracing and reveling with one another in the back-and-forth movement of kitsch and self-deprecation. However, in the process of this revelry, the desire symbol of “fortune-bringing” seems to gradually turn into blank, and the artistic desire of manual painting and material installation have exploded through the canvas surface of digital layers, revealing themselves as another kind of truth that cannot be concealed.