

North Shore Times

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Lifestyle.

16
TASTE OF
SYDNEY



CHINESE TROVE OF INSIGHTS DEGENERATION EXPLORATION

Leesa Smith

A GROUP of China's emerging multimedia artists have come together to exhibit their work in the Degeneration exhibition.

Curator Mariagrazia Costantino said the idea came from the literal meaning of the word degeneration: "deviation from the genus."

"It refers to a process that cannot be stopped, an altered status that makes it impossible to go back to the starting point," she said. "Not necessarily entirely negative, this is a condition confronting all contemporary societies, including China."

Costantino said the participating artists were possibly the first within the system of contemporary Chinese art to be part of a genuinely transcultural circuit of art production.

"Fully aware of this, they are wise enough to know that it cannot represent the main feature of the undefined generation to which they belong," she said.

"Here lies an interesting contradiction - by denying their belonging to a generation, with its plans and requirements, they assess and reinforce their belonging to a wider system, which is not only transcultural, but also 'transgenerational'."

Different languages such as video, photography, sculpture and painting are combined by the



Images from the Degeneration exhibition at the ACAF Art Terminal.

young artists with a wide filmic culture, music and pop imagery to embody their reflections and convey their obsessions.

"We could even talk about dreams, if only this word weren't terribly inflated," she said. "Yet dreams are not only about planning a future: they entail relying

on the images our minds generate, giving them space and the possibility to become real and guide us through the darkness of these times, their aberrations, disillusion - degenerations."

Another theme was a sense of disillusion, with works critical of effects of globalised capitalism.

EXHIBITION

WHAT: Degeneration exhibition

WHEN: 22 February 22 - May 16
from 2 - 7pm/Wednesday -
Saturday (or by appointment)

WHERE: ACAF Art Terminal T1 at 9
Atherton St, St Leonards