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Installation view of “Timur Si-Qin: Take Me, I Love You” at von ammon co with Si-Qin’s “La Guardiania del Río Rinquia” (2020) in the foreground. (Courtesy of the artist and von ammon co)

Timur Si-Qin

By **Mark Jenkins**

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Most of the artists who show at Von Ammon Co. have a love-hate relationship with contemporary American advertising and marketing. Timur Si-Qin shares their fascination, but not their cynicism. His “Take Me, I Love You” borrows Madison Avenue’s tools to make a pitch that’s earnest and even cosmic. The New York-based artist’s photography and sculpture show touts “New Peace,” billed by the gallery as “a new form of spirituality in the face of global pandemics, climate change and biodiversity collapse.” It teaches immanence, or “all is one.”

“New Peace” was seeded by Si-Qin’s personal experience. He was born in Berlin to a Chinese Mongolian father and a German mother; she later married a man from the San Carlos Apache tribe and moved to Arizona with her then-8-year-old son. The high desert’s influence on Si-Qin can be seen in the show’s five large CGI renders of an idealized arid landscape. A massive tree encountered on a trip to Peru inspired another piece, a 3-D-printed sculpture of the organism’s gnarled root structure.

What Si-Qin proposes is a sort of cyber-age animism that rejects traditional Western divisions between human and nature, mind and body, and life and death. The principles he extols — “have faith in pattern,” for example — are etched cleanly in white and green into overlapping plexiglass panels. These incorporate the forms of trees, animals and a shell as well as text.

Skeptics may note that there are no natural objects in Si-Qin’s pristine, impeccably manufactured art: The sculptures are plastic and the landscapes are CGI. But the artist has rejected the distinction as arbitrary, arguing in an interview with Coeval magazine that “the simulated and virtual are just another branch on the tree of reality.”

Still, Si-Qin’s approach is not exactly one of Zen-like acceptance. In that same interview, he explained why he prefers computer-made pictures: “In a render the things you see are closer to 100 percent controllable, as opposed to a photograph which involves a large element of unintended randomness.” Si-Qin’s new theology may hold that all is one, but apparently it leaves room for the artist as godlike creator.

Timur Si-Qin: Take Me, I Love You Through Nov. 15 at Von Ammon Co., 3330 Cady’s Alley NW.



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