

*Eat Chinese. Drive German. Dress French.*

We live in an era of hybridization. As economic power is shifting from West to East, cultural dominance is giving way to cultural synthesis. With low-cost airlines and social media as the new trading ships, ideas are traveling with the speed of light. The steady flow of cultural supremacy from developed to developing countries is now a complex net of streams, disrupting traditional systems of value and meaning. Cultures, commodities and customs are being appropriated, reappropriated and appropriated again. A Danish design chair influenced by Ming Dynasty furniture and branded as the epitome of Scandinavian modernism, is now being counterfeited and sold to the Chinese nouveaux riches. The workings of cultural appropriation has become full circle. Heritage has become a strategic marketing tool while cultural identity is merely a defense mechanism against political self-doubt.

In this new landscape, artists become brands and brands become culture. What is real and what is fake lies wholly in the eye of the end consumer, and authenticity is nothing more than a paragraph to copyright laws lobbied into legislation by multinational enterprises. While cultural expressions inevitably become more hybrid and intricate, the powers of capitalization and consumerism are desperately trying to uphold traditional systems of categorization and cultural dominance. Countries are incessantly protecting their borders while multinational enterprises persistently fight against copyright infringement and museums refuse to return stolen artefacts.

This line of thought is exercised in the work of Karl Patric Näsman. Merging subtle cultural historical references with a truly hybrid artistic practice, he lays bare the traditional systems of value and meaning as mere constructs. In *Cathay Pavilion*, he traces the hybridization of culture through a string of playful yet highly sophisticated pieces. Simple in shape, they are rich with meaning and narrative. In an exploration of everything from the commodification of cultural heritage to the role of the artist, he deconstructs concepts of authenticity and appropriation and reconstructs them as idiosyncratic paintings, sculptures and installations. Exhibiting original paintings and sculptures side by side with digital prints and utility objects made to order by Chinese producers, he blurs the line between art and handicraft, high and low, real and fake.

In its kaleidoscopic entirety, *Cathay Pavilion* presents a lucid view of today's hybrid society, filtered through the eyes, hands and mind of Karl Patric Näsman.

Karl Patric Näsman, b. 1986, lives and works in Stockholm. He holds a Master of Fine Arts from Konstfack University College of Arts, Crafts and Design in Stockholm, graduating in 2015. His work has been shown in solo and group exhibitions in Stockholm, Shanghai, Copenhagen and Utrecht. In 2016, Näsman was awarded the Fredrik Roos Art Grant, presenting his work at Moderna Museet Malmö. In 2015, he spent two months in Shanghai on a scholarship from The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sida, a stay that in many ways inspired the pieces presented at Young Art. *Cathay Pavilion* is Näsman's second solo exhibition at the gallery.

Text by Sonja Nettelblatt.

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