

ARTS2F History of Art, Multicultural Arts in US

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Extra Credit 3 Assignment- Analysis of Formal Element in Three Arts, July 20, 2022

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## **Comparison of Shape Usages in the “*Collective Resilience: Asian American Artists Honoring Our Community’s Strength and Unity*” Exhibition**

In this paper, we compare the use of *shapes* in three arts in the *Collective Resilience: Asian American Artists Honoring Our Community’s Strength and Unity* Exhibition<sup>[1]</sup> at the Chinese American Museum, Los Angeles, California.

*Strata* (2021)<sup>[2]</sup> by Huntz Liu is a big cubism *spheroid*, *oval sphere*. Liu uses only straight lines to construct *triangles*, *diamonds*, and other *quadrilateral* patches to model the *spheroid*. Three big *quadrilateral* patches are subdivided into nine nesting *u-shaped concave octagons* and a *rectangle*, forming a *3-D rectangle* in perspective. The combined *spheroid*, composed of *sharp-angled* elements, appears *slippery* without *acute* corners.

*Deep Roots, Good Water, Shared Fruit* (2021)<sup>[3]</sup> by Kris Chau is a big *square* mural built up on a *flexuous hill*. A *Yamari*<sup>[4]</sup> who has one *body*, two *legs*, three *heads* and six *arms*, leans forward left with a symmetrical upper body that has a *dove* with an *olive branch* on her chest and a *flower* on her head. Her upper hands raise a *flower string*, and middle hands each hold a *living plant*. Her lower hand holds a *vessel* pouring a *waterfall* on the left and opens on the right. Three *octagram* flowers splash out from her vessel and a *vine* sprouts up inside the *waterfall*. Her open hand dallys two *comets*, *octagram* inside a *sperm*. A *circle* and a smaller *balloon* diagonally shape a *Taijitu*<sup>[5]</sup>. A *waning crescent*, a *waning gibbous*<sup>[6]</sup>, and three *octagrams* spread between her *legs* illustrate a *face* in abstract. Various *vines* and *flowers* grow on the ground horizontally from the right. Overall, a *symmetrical* scene grows on top of an asymmetrical ground.

*Urban Rendition* (2021)<sup>[7]</sup> by kaNO is a wider mural with a big roundabout *dragon* moving toward its right. Two figures in the center, supporting each other back-to-back, face outward. The left one stretched her arms with a *Bruce Lee's ready-to-fight gesture*. The right one shows a *Kung Fu salute*<sup>[8]</sup> with a pair of *nunchaku*<sup>[9]</sup> resting on his neck. A *striped road barrier*, a *folding fan*, a tilted *watchtower*, and a *bird* stacks up on the left symbolizing an environment with security, privacy, vigilance and peace. *Lotus*, *Taijitu*<sup>[5]</sup>, and *circle fist* logos label the coat and hats.

These were all commissioned and made at the Los Angeles based Chinese American Museum for its 2021 post-COVID19 reopening. The exhibition opens from September 2021 to October 2022 and expresses a common theme on the unity to counter the systemic racism against the BIPOC community. All three artists live and work in LA now: Liu is a 41 years old<sup>[10]</sup> Taiwanese American<sup>[2]</sup> who received his BFA from Rochester Institute of Technology and focuses on cut and layer color paper<sup>[11]</sup>; Chau is an artist born in Hawaii to Chinese Vietnamese refugees of the Vietnam War<sup>[3]</sup>. She makes visual arts in various mediums<sup>[12]</sup>; kaNO was born and raised in New York City and obtained BFA in Animation at School of Visual Arts<sup>[7]</sup>. He is now freelancing for Hollywood studios as character designer. They came from different backgrounds and approached arts with unique taste. These arts are all large indoor murals, without complex *texture* or *color ramp*. They were commissioned at the same time, made in the same place for the same theme. They show shapes in various colors, styles, school of arts, and arrangements express visual effects with dramatic differences: Liu uses *geometric primitives* to embrace “strata”, a cultural stratum in the community, showing one, without losing their individuality, can adopt and compliment another grew in different cultures. Chau uses shapes from nature to depict a world of cultivation. kaNO uses objects with culture references to show the determination of unity.

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