

FUTURES

Chunxiao Qu - The Age, 9 Sep 2023



EXHIBITION

CHUNXIAO QU: ART IS A WASHING MACHINE THAT IS WASHING ITSELF

FUTURES Gallery, until September 23

"Contemporary art is what garbage is," claims one of Chunxiao Qu's text paintings, with black writing on stark yellow, delivered in a forthright, funny, deceptively simple style. In acknowledging the worn criticisms of contemporary art, Qu's practice is defined by a push-and-pull to simultaneously revere and defile the form. Born in China and living in Melbourne, the artist and poet is showing paintings, neon and sculpture. There's a screen print of a foetus ultrasound overlaid with text, "Make baby not war". Another painting reads, "F--- them if they don't have taste." There's both an ode to and joke about Damien Hirst, with a fly caught in resin (a riff on Hirst's famous shark). This sits opposite a neon flower made of glowing phalluses. It's a potent mix of advertising, art, capitalism, and sex, made both sharp and playful, toeing irony and sincerity. It goes back to earlier conceptual artists, questioning how one can make art without complicating the form itself.

Tiarney Miekus