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Novelty and Hybridity in Recent Macao Art

Evoking the hackneyed East-meets-West story which has proved such an efficacious marketing tool, some recent works of Macao art raise questions about the state of local Macao culture. *Macao Gondola* (2007) by Lui Chak Keong and Lui Chak Hong, for example, is a sculptural installation that nods to the gondolas of Venice as well as those that ply the decorative canals of Macao's new Venetian Casino. At the same time, the work combines architectural elements borrowed from Macao's most well-known Heritage-listed buildings: the Chinese *A-Ma Temple* and the Portuguese *Ruins of St. Paul's Church*. Konstantin Bessmertny's *Si Monumentum Requirit, Circumspice* (2007), on the other hand, is an installation that takes the form of a primitive aeroplane filled with made-in-Zhuhai "Western" masterpieces and covered in slogans written in Latin, Portuguese and Chinese. In this paper, Nikos Papastergiadis' work on cultural hybridity and Sharon Zukin's notion of 'Disneyitis' are deployed to explore the manner in which key examples of recent art represent Macao culture in terms of novelty, commodification and hybridity.