

| Cui Xingming | 崔新明 |



INTRODUCTION

A recent graduate from the Sichuan Academy of Fine Arts, Cui Xinming is a rising Chinese artist who creates expansive oil on canvas works that express, in an elaborate and vivid painterly style, the tumultuous thoughts and reflections of a younger Chinese generation that is living through a period of constant change. From Xinming's early series Black Hole of Memories to his most recent body of work A Sleepwalker's World and Journey to the East, Xinming addresses, in an evolving painterly style, how his peers and compatriots are casting into oblivion the past and its rich memories as an attempt to relentlessly attain a new stage of modernity.

Throughout it is identified how, employing a strong focus and gestural strokes, Xinming addresses the challenges brought on by continual development. Black Hole of Memories, for example, introduced how Xinming approaches the canvas as an extension of his cognisance, mind and memory. How privy to Xinming's deepest memories and thoughts, one feels approximate to a trespasser, an infringer upon a terrain that is very much the artist's own; these are visions from his childhood, a collage of his youth, laced with personal tremors and inveterate hauntings. Yet, Xinming's work very much lends itself for observation by virtue of its monumental scale and panoramic composition. Indeed, true to the Greek roots of the word "panorama", Xinming places all (pan) on view (horama): we are witnesses to every infinite detail. And although the subject of Xinming's work may not oblige to the strict tradition of panoramas, that of depicting national military battlefields or public events, one immediately recognises that these are the scenes of a much more personal conflictual history.

"A Sleepwalker's World" emphasises how each painting captures Xinming's inner turmoils with regards to constant political, societal and personal change. A highly introspective artist, Xinming observes himself, his position with regards to society and the values of those who surround him. Where words do not capture his sentiments, Xinming approaches the canvas with incredible vigour and treats it as an extension of his visions and internal tensions. The scenes depicted are not figments of a strict universal reality; rather, they are dramatic and subliminal visions that Xinming's mind has conjured. The series crucially does bear, however, a real-world relevance; each work is laced with secondary meaning, ranging from political to religious commentary. Indeed, this series brings out the narrative quality of Cui Xinming's paintings, which pervades his previous "Black Hole of Memories" series and his later "Journey to the East" series, too; we are not but viewers to his work but also omniscient readers of an insightful socio-political commentary.

"Journey to the East" follows from Xinming's previous practice yet displays a remarkably luminous development in his painting technique. The vibrant, red-toned glow that permeates these new works heightens how, at the heart of Xinming's oeuvre, there is a sense of hope. Whilst their mnemonic themes and distinct literary qualities seem to openly invite an aura of darkness, Xinming conversely finishes each of his istorias with a more hopeful twist: each narrative that draws on the emptiness of humanity, the animality of our society and breaks down perceived illusions of grandeur, is not destined for absolute disillusion.

Cui Xinming is a highly lauded emerging contemporary Chinese artist based in Chongqing. Recently selected for the prestigious 2015 "Luo Zhongli 10 Years Review Exhibition" at the Chongqing MOMA, he has previously held solo shows in Hong Kong and has been exhibited in Istanbul, Berlin, Beijing and Chengdu, amongst other locations. In 2010 he was nominated for the 1st Zhang Xiaogang Graduate Contemporary Art Scholarship and came in third place at the 2nd Chinese Institute Annual Art Exhibition. His work has been featured in multiple publications, including the South China Morning Post, Art Info, The Art Newspaper, Oriental Daily News, Flash/On, and Artron.

介紹

崔新明(1986年出生，現居於重慶)畢業於四川美術學院。這位新晉中國藝術家的油畫作品以遼闊視野和豪邁風格見稱，不時強烈地展現出中國年輕一代激盪多變的思想世界。 綜觀《記憶黑洞》系列以至近作《一個夢遊症患者的世界》和《東遊記》，崔新明以證人和評論家的身份，反思同胞為了鏗而不捨的現代化而選擇遺忘過去和與之相關的豐富記憶。

崔新明那強烈鮮明的焦點和細緻生動的筆跡無疑是一種針對城市持續發展所帶來的種種挑戰的一種揭示。以《記憶黑洞》為例：他把澎湃的氣勢付諸畫布，作為他的想像和內心的延續，把無數不能置信的畫面與幻想融合於畫作之中。在窺探崔新明的感受和視覺敘述時，不難發現他的創作均建基於內心的戰慄與不能抹去的陰霾。在欣賞同時，人們會不禁自覺是一名入侵者，肆意地侵犯他的童年回憶、青蔥歲月、個人內心的震顫以及根深蒂固、縈繞心頭的思緒。然而，崔新明的作品最令人印象深刻的是其巨幅尺寸與全景式的佈局構圖。誠然，他依據希臘詞源(panorama)，把所有(pan)投進視覺感觀(horama)而製成一幅全景作品，使觀者成為目擊一切無限細節的證人。雖然崔新明在主題取材上並沒有完全嚴格遵守傳統全景以國家戰役或公開場合為佈局的繪圖原則，但他卻能確實地描繪出一段更私人而充滿矛盾衝突的歷史。

《一個夢遊症患者的世界》系列旨於透過作品捕捉崔新明在面對政治、社會和個人持續的演變的同時，其成長中所經歷的思潮起伏。藉著藝術創作，他不斷反思社會與群眾的價值觀，並繼而反觀自身的身份與處境。當文字難以表達他的情緒和觀點時，崔新明便轉向繪畫，用驚人的創作活力，把畫布當成為幻想與內在張力的一種延伸，勾勒出有如幻覺有極具感染力的景象，令觀者留下極深印象。畫面中的場景並非一般常見的虛構幻象：這些充滿戲劇性的攝人場景，實在體現出藝術家對潛意識幻象的呼喚。這非意味著崔新明的作品與現實缺乏觀連，相反，每件作品往往隱藏另一重意義，從而描繪他的政治見解和宗教觀點。的確，這一系列帶出了崔新明作品獨特的敘事素質，而這種素質徹底地滲透他的舊作《記憶黑洞》以及隨後的近作《東遊記》。我們不僅僅是這些作品的觀者，也是無所不知的讀者，讀著一個富見地且極為敏銳的社會政治評論。

《東遊記》既秉持了崔新明以往的創作手法，更展示了他在繪圖技巧上的重大突破。作為這系列新作的標誌，油畫上鮮明而帶紅調的亮光道出潛藏在作品深處並充滿希望的訊息。畫作以記憶為核心的題材和其獨特文學特質彷彿在招惹一股令人不安的氣氛和意味，但崔新明往往在收筆之際為它們添上變局：每一個吐露人性空虛、社會獸性和偉大錯覺的故事背後，依然隱隱存在著甦醒的希望。

崔新明是一位備受欣賞的新晉中國藝術家，現居於重慶。最近獲選參與2014羅立中獎學金十年回顧展的他亦曾在香港、伊斯坦堡、柏林、北京及成都等地舉辦個人展覽。他在2010年獲提名第一屆張曉剛研究生當代藝術創作獎學金及在第二屆中國高校美術作品學年展獲得三等獎。他的作品在不同媒體均有報導，包括南華早報、ARTINFO、The Art Newspaper、東方日報、Flash/On及雅昌等等。

Just Arrived in this World
剛來到人間

Kiang Malingue, Hong Kong
馬凌畫廊，香港

16.09 - 21.10.23

Kiang Malingue presents on the twelfth floor of its Tin Wan studio space “Just Arrived in This World”, an exhibition of new paintings by Cui Xinming. The painter’s fourth solo exhibition with the gallery features more than a dozen oil paintings on wood board and canvas, expanding themes and series developed in the exhibition “Differentiation” in 2018. The artist’s sincere yet surreal depictions of everyday scenes with absurd elements respond to the profound impact on life by recent global and local crises.

Cui Xinming’s early painting practice revolved around theatrical narratives by highlighting the contrast between thematic, fiery elements in crimson or faded red and glooming backgrounds that were frigid and sombre. Long-term series such as *Black Hole of Memories* from 2011 and *Sleepwalker* from 2013 are exemplary of the artist’s intent to reflect psychological tension by building highly detailed architectural environments in which an isolated community is caught. For the exhibition “Differentiation” in 2018, Cui created a group of paintings organised in pairs, examining dichotomised relationships such as ancient—modern; exposed—concealed; lucid—chaotic, measuring the possibility of reconciling Chinese classical thought with western artistic traditions.

The paintings included in “Just Arrived in This World” crystallise the continued development of Cui Xinming’s artistic language, and are representative of the accumulated yet ruptured life experience due to the outbreak of the global pandemic in 2019. Among the earliest works in the exhibition is the small-scale *Genre Painting Study (Treasure Seeking)* (2019) which captures and transforms a mundane and absurd sight — a hawker vending an alligator snapping turtle dug up from a construction site. For Cui, this fragment of reality that is at once common and complex brings together a variety of topics including commerce, land and environmental change, exotic animals, and different traditions of mysticism. This full-length portrait of the man, evocative of poised cavaliers in Dutch golden age portraits, demonstrates the use of “scratching and white-piercing” techniques in a painting process described by the artist to be akin to a type of “total casting” — fully integrating disparate compositional parts as if in one unifying stroke.

Using a variety of instruments, Cui Xinming’s “scratching and white-piercing” techniques produce an amorphous white glow that radiates by scarring and bleeding into other objects and figures on canvas. Inspired by traditional Chinese painting’s notion of white-spacing, this unique process reveals delicate textures and introduces into the paintings a sense of mysticism. The artist has also been exploring the materiality and texture of wood board as a painting surface, carefully priming each wood board about twenty times before starting the painting process, rendering it texturally suitable for his “scratching” brushwork. *Genre Painting Study 13 (Smelting)* (2021) is another painting on board that depicts an isolated individual

at work, this time caught in a relationship with the environment that is more intense and aggressive: the masked man with a red, hot soldering iron in his hands scorches his environment. Based on an image of a gardener tending flowers and trees in a park, the painting deems great, uncontrollable global crises as the turning point from which a daily caring practice is transformed into a devastating act. Another pithy painting on wood board *Portrait Study 11 (Pope)* (2020) revisits the artistic tradition from Velázquez to Bacon, but totally erases the face of the sitter. It is instead focused on the strange, highlighted hair in place of the camauro worn by the pope. Cui thinks of hats and headwear alike as the index of an individual’s social status and roles; by replacing a hat with wig-like hair, Cui renders the majestic scene absurd, inserting an element of banality that breaks the originally mystical atmosphere.

Larger works on canvas such as *Genre Painting Study (Spring Outing 2)* (2022) and the diptych *Genre Painting Study (Junzi 1)* (2023) both pertain to outings in perilous times. The human figures are seemingly relaxed, and, out of confusion and boredom, apathetically or intensely fixated on an abrupt white hollow on the ground. A signifier of absence, this flat, amorphous, paradoxical cavity Cui has repeatedly painted since 2015 stands for misplacement, hollowness, error and otherworldliness, leaking enigmatic, illuminated ooze onto the canvas. Reminiscent of and readily opposed to the *Is it getting dark?* series of paintings of interior spaces from 2010, *It is almost dawn I* (2021) and *It is almost dawn II* (2021) created long before the ending of the pandemic candidly express the artist’s angst regarding the future, leaving the white hole beyond the highly textured, protective yet suffocating curtains: permeating could be the sunlight; not arriving yet could be the dawn.

馬凌畫廊榮譽呈現崔新明個展「剛來到人間」，於田灣工作室空間12層展出藝術家自2019年以來創作的十數幅繪畫作品。「剛來到人間」是崔新明在馬凌畫廊的第四次個展，諸多木板及布面繪畫作品延續發展了他在2018年「辨」展覽中首次呈現的多個作品系列，具象化了重大或微小社會事件對日常生活及藝術實踐帶來的深遠影響。

崔新明在早期的繪畫作品中常帶有戲劇性強烈的豐富敘事，以偏清冷的整體色彩強調猩紅、幽亮的敘事主題。始於2011年的《記憶黑洞》及始於2013年的《夢遊症》等長期作品系列均體現了藝術家通過細密雕琢建築環境反映激烈心理經驗的標誌性風格。崔新明於2018年在馬凌畫廊舉辦的「辨」展覽以雙聯畫創作的繪畫作品來考慮古與新、明與暗、清與濁等對立關係，在有超現實、神秘學意味的圖像中拓展古典中國思想與油畫傳統互為表裡的潛能。

「剛來到人間」中的作品既是崔新明繪畫語言持續發展的結果，也展現了自2019年疫情割裂全球社會現實以來不斷累積、崩塌的生命經驗。尺幅微小的《風俗畫研究（尋寶）》（2019）是此次展覽中創作時間最早的作品，轉化了庸碌且荒誕的景象——一位遊商正在兜售從建築工地挖掘出來的鱷龜。對於崔新明來說，此種常見但內涵複雜的現實片段將商業、土地變遷、珍稀動物與自古以來流傳的神秘學傳統聯繫在了一起。作品不僅奇異地創造了一種充滿英雄氣概的、如荷蘭黃金時期經典騎士畫像一般的全身像，也體現了藝術家用其長期青睞的「刮制與刺白」手法在小尺幅木板表面進行“整體澆鑄”的獨特過程。

崔新明使用多种绘画工具以「刮制與刺白」創造形狀含混曖昧、肌理複雜、與周朝遭色彩互相侵蝕的白色光芒。這種延展自中國傳統繪畫「留白」方式的手法，不僅為畫面帶來傷痕般的獨特肌理，也為之添加了神秘氣息。他也長期探索木板作為繪畫媒介的物理及色澤特質，在進行繪畫之前精細處理木板表面（

進行約二十次“制底”工作），為刮制畫法催生獨特肌理。同樣以木板為基礎創作的同系列作品《風俗畫研究13（炙）》（2021）也呈現了一個在工作姿態中的人物，但這人物與環境的關係更為緊張、激烈：舉著燒紅烙鐵的人物把背景中的樹木花草烤為焦炭。對於崔新明來說，與此種震撼景象直接對應的現實是公園中修葺植物的園丁，而將日常呵護工作轉化為摧毀工作的契機便是無法掌控的、裹挾了人們生命經驗的危機事件。另一幅洗練的刮制畫法木板作品《肖像研究11（教皇）》（2020）回顧了從委拉斯開茲到培根的教皇像傳統，卻完全隱去了人物的面孔，引領目光去關注那奇異的頭髮：在崔新明看來，人的冠帽是其身份地位的決定性因素，而用一頂看起來幾乎像是假髮的頭髮來替代冠帽既是荒誕的，又揭示了與神秘學傾向相悖的庸碌品質。

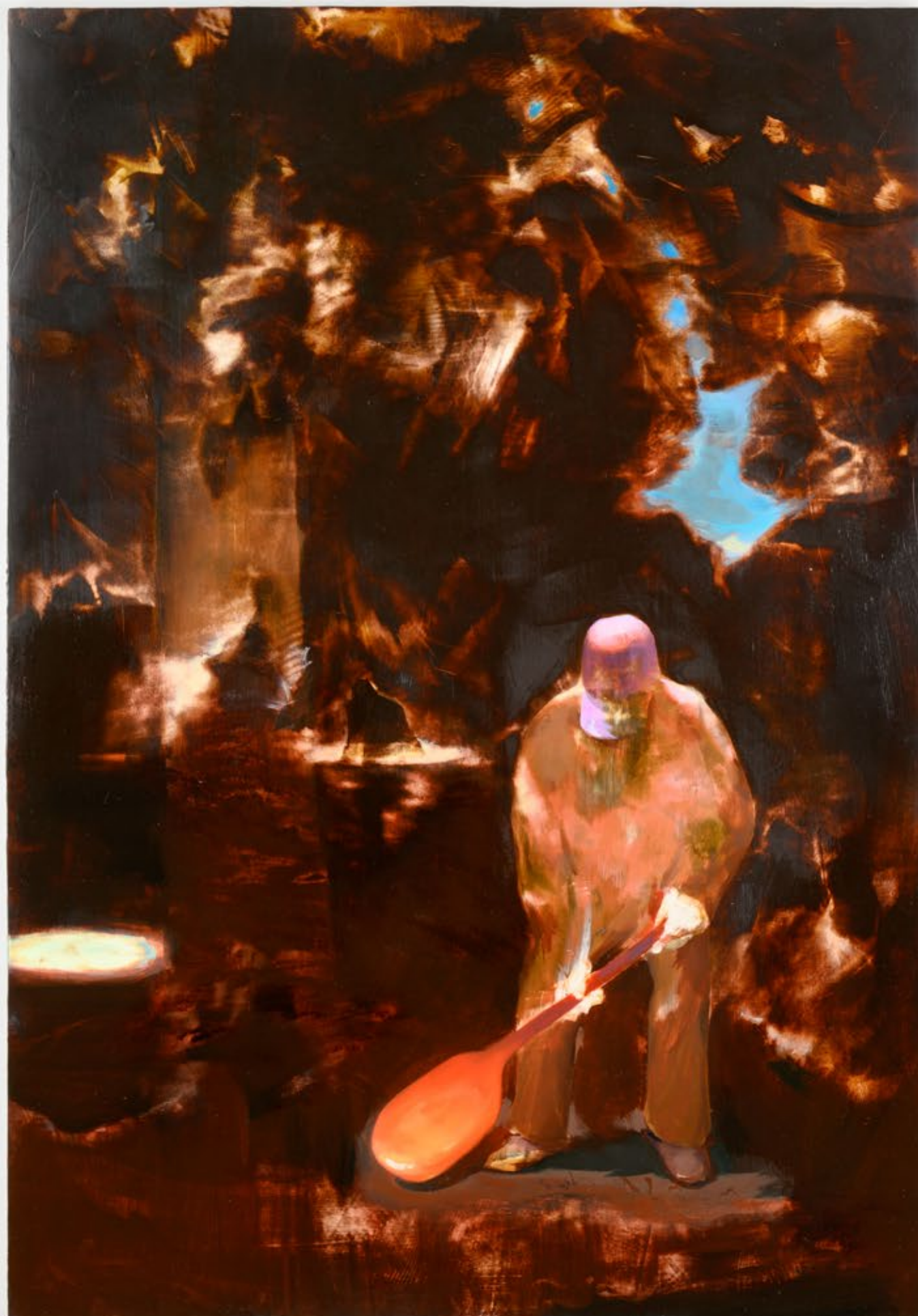
大尺幅布面畫作《風俗畫研究（春遊2）》（2022）及《風俗畫研究（君子1）》（2023）描繪了疫情后出遊的情景，畫中人物處於閒逸姿態，因困惑、百無聊賴、無端鬆弛或緊張的心情關注著兀地出現在地面上的乳白色孔洞。這個貌似扁平且褶皺的矛盾物就是崔新明自2015年以來反復探索的錯位、虛空、紕漏、出口——向畫面四處洩露神秘氣息並聯通多個繪畫空間的客體。

在疫情更早階段創作的《天快亮了1》（2021）及《天快亮了2》（2021）迂迴地呼應了藝術家在2010年創作的《天快黑了嗎？》系列作品，也更為直接地坦露了藝術家對未來的期許，將似有若無的白色孔洞置於窗簾之後——天似乎正在這輕盈、肌理豐富的簾幕背後亮起；光芒或許至今尚未穿透簾幕。



Installation view
展覽現場





Genre Painting Study 13 (Smelting)
《風俗畫研究13(炙)》
2021

Oil on board
木板油彩
75 x 55 cm



Portrait Study 13 (Roadblock)
《肖像研究13(路障)》
2022

Acrylic and oil on PVC panel
板面丙烯、油彩
Work 作品尺寸: 74.5 x 59.5 cm
Framed 連框尺寸: 75.4 x 60.5 cm





Genre Painting Study (Spring Outing 2)
《風俗畫研究(春遊 2)》
2022

Oil on canvas
布面油彩
180 x 150 cm





Portrait Study 11 (Pope)
《肖像研究11(教皇)》
2020

Oil on PVC panel
板面油彩
120 x 90 cm

Cui Xinning
崔新明
Just Arrived in This World
剛來到人世
16.09 - 21.10.2023





Installation view
展覽現場



Installation view
展覽現場



It is almost dawn 2
《天快亮了 2》
2021

Oil on board
木板油彩
90 x 60 cm



Genre Painting Study (Treasure Seeking)
《風俗畫研究(尋寶)》
2019

Oil on PVC panel
板面油彩
29.8 x 24.9 cm



Installation view
展覽現場





Portrait Study (Roadblock II)
《肖像研究(路障2)》
2023

Oil on canvas
布面油彩
45 x 60 cm





Genre Painting Study (Banner)
《風俗畫研究(錦旗)》
2023

Oil on PVC panel
板面油彩
39 x 37 cm



Genre Painting Study (Weed Removal II)
《風俗畫研究(除草2)》
2023

Oil on acrylic panel
壓克力板上油彩
Work 作品尺寸: 40 x 40cm
Framed 連框尺寸: 40.3cm x 40.3cm



Portrait Study (Sham Chun River)
《肖像研究(深圳河)》
2023

Oil on acrylic panel
壓克力板上油彩
Work 作品尺寸: 40 x 40cm
Framed 連框尺寸: 40.3cm x 40.3cm







Genre Painting Study (Junzi 1)
《風俗畫研究(君子 1)》
2023

Oil on canvas
布面油彩
150 x 240 cm (150 x 120 cm each 每幅)





It is almost dawn 1
《天快亮了 1》
2021

Oil on board
木板油彩
50x40 cm



Genre Painting Study 11 (Juvenile)
《風俗畫研究11(少年)》
2020

Oil on board
木板油彩
90x60cm

Sans Soleil
沒有太陽

Edouard Malingue Gallery, Shanghai, China
馬凌畫廊, 上海, 中國

22.03.19 - 05.05.19

If the task of the classical painter is descriptive persuasion, by which nature could be represented in a picture with an almost immersive accuracy, the five contemporary painters presented in this exhibition take the opposite approach, achieving the illusion of nature by describing that which cannot be described but spells out the relations between man and the world. Varying in style and concept, the works on display – equally subjective and experimental in nature – testify to the vitality of the genre in their seeming lack of curatorial connection. Untethered from the shackles of technique and style, these artists permit subtle hints of criticism, metaphor and eccentricity to grace their work, providing an articulation for a plethora of considerations.

Beyond a prolific painter across traditional ink, colour powder and woodcuts, Sun Xun is more often considered a film director. On display is an ink on silkscreen installation, replete with Sun's signature ambiguity and phantasmagoria wherein intransigent conflicts and tensions fuse the line between deception and reality, scraping the uncontested surface of politicised truth. Sun's art thus acts as a theatre of the power play between authority, government, media and, crucially, those outside of its periphery.

Zheng Zhou is a painter of instinct: straddling an epistemological outlet and what Zheng calls “the divine will” beyond technical, aesthetic and moral considerations, each painting acts as a canvased portal unto a segment of observations from the world. Presented is imagery of death and monstrosity conceived from *The Legend of the White Snake*, a Chinese romantic tragedy through which Zheng articulates tales of humanity, desire and fateful causality.

At a distance, Yuan Yuan's elaborate oil on canvas paintings nearly resemble in their visual authority a photograph. His works, however, crucially do not represent reality per se. Rather, his protagonists – sumptuous yet depopulated interiors ranging between states of wealth and abandonment – are explorations of details, narrative threads rediscovered in the remembrance of things past. Charged by such sheer desire, or need to understand, Yuan's paintings evoke the sensorial organisation of the glitches or shifts between actualities: what could have been, could still be, or will eventually be. Akin to the process of tidying one's household, they reference the Düsseldorf School of Photography, in particular Candida Höfer, and French writer Alain Robbe-Grillet's work, in the sense that finality is never fully achieved. One grasps that Yuan's paintings are struck not with the sense of luxury and shock they appear to offer, but with the harmony between its subjective and objective actualities.

Marked by gestural vivacity, Cui Xinming's phantasmal paintings resemble displaced news stories or film stills as if recalled from distant mnemonic incidents. Permeating Cui's works is a pervasive sense of subjectivity and critique – a distinct pulse from Zheng and Yuan's practice – augmented by a series of historical, social and art historical references. As such, Cui captures the spirit of an environment we are familiar with, but one that is under the undefined auspices of political and ideological flux.

There is this experience, when we stare long enough at an object and its form unnervingly blurs. It represents the variances of our visual experiences when we approach Wang Zhibo's paintings, whose protagonists, upon closer examination, are never depicted quite as they are. The two still life paintings which capture two distinct moments in an anonymous kitchen, for instance, present a compositional practice through which Wang explores the meta-language of painting, whilst *The history of body, the history of sprite* (2019) experiments with, and challenges, multiple manifolds of the body according to spatial, light and emotional variances.

Ultimately, *Sans Soleil* is a pictorial travelogue, bringing together Edouard Malingue Gallery's five painters to weave a meditative visual essay that harks back to French writer and director Chris Marker's seminal piece of the same title. Taking subjectivity and fiction as a departure point, as does Marker, one is left privy to the nature and nuances of contemporary painting and how, as a result, the perception of personal and collective histories is affected.

如果說古典畫家的使命是把事物描述得盡量有說服力，讓畫作給人身臨其境般的感染力，那麼，當代畫家譬如此次展覽中的五位，他們更願意去描述那些不可描述的東西，那些時空不明、虛實難辨的東西，從而轉譯人與世界的關係。形式及觀念各異，這五位藝術家的作品都極具主觀性和實驗性，把他們放在一起，會發現無法找到任何既有的概念或詞彙可以用來概括他們的創作，這正好證明了繪畫仍然充滿了生命力和可能性，拋開表面的技巧與風格，繪畫可以夾帶的狡黠的評論，私密的隱喻，古怪的癖好，畫家盡可以在其中暢所欲言，無窮無盡。

與其它四位相比，孫遜很少被稱為「畫家」，雖然他有大量的水墨畫、炭畫、版畫等各類媒材的繪畫作品，但在一般印象中他的身份更接近一個電影導演。本次展覽，孫遜展出一組黑白水墨畫屏風裝置，其中奇幻的意象及晦澀的敘事一直都是孫遜愛用的修辭，謊言與真理相互交織，人神鬼獸難分難解，突顯出歷史與個人回憶之間的荒謬矛盾，尤其關注歷史如何被操縱，探尋權力機構、政治家和官方媒體的敘事，與處於非政治中心的普通人的敘述之間的差異。

鄭洲的繪畫是對外界刺激的本能反饋，這種本能反饋被他稱之為「天意」。他依靠直覺收集來自外界的信息，轉換成圖像呈現在畫布上，並在這個過程中儘力拋開一切的技巧、審美趣味及道德評判等附加之物。在這一次展出的作品中，鄭洲藉助神話找到了關於死亡和怪物的意象，《白蛇傳》的傳說源遠流長，是幾百年來被不厭其煩的傳頌着的愛情悲劇，鄭洲再拾這一主題，看到愛情以外的人性、慾望、因果，作品中充滿了一種幽邃感。

袁遠的畫神似古典繪畫：細節具體而豐富，無人的建築物或室內場景隱約透露出永恆感。細看之下，卻發現其實他對畫中細節處理不旨在追求精確，往往只是輕描淡寫。擠滿畫面的旁枝末節，不是炫技的手段，而是主題本身。不妨如此想像：在一個沒有他人、沒有行動的情景中，畫家沒有選擇走向內心回憶，而是溫和地讓眼前的一切細節逐漸變得清晰，沒有目的，而僅僅為了對面前一切儘可能的瞭若指掌，就好比去整理一屋雜物，只是並非物理意義上的整理，而是感知意義上的整理。在很大程度上，袁遠的實踐上承了杜塞爾多夫攝影學派、尤其是Candida Höfer，及文學中的阿蘭·羅伯-格里耶等顯赫先驅所開創的探索，這場探索遠遠沒有結束，因為其理想絕非去製造某種令人震驚的形式，而是通過觀察和整理以求達致主體性和客體世界之間的完美平衡。

與袁遠正好相反，崔新明的畫中充滿了行動。他的繪畫往往看似一張新聞圖片，或一幀電影畫面，但被置換了其中某個人物，或被換了裝束，或賦予其魔幻的色彩，各種來自歷史事件、社會現實和美術史中的圖像元素，被拼貼其中，令畫面獲得一種全新的邏輯。這種工作方式剛好是鄭洲的反面。雖然崔新明不認為他的作品具有任何的批判性，但這種主觀性極強的繪畫行動本身已經表明了作者的態度。回到最初的這張新聞圖片，這一幀電影畫面，往往是一張極具政治意識形態的宣傳圖像，作為接收對象的藝術家也曾深受其影響，繪畫給了崔新明一次撥亂反正和自我審視的機會。

王之博繪畫的對象往往顯得距離很近且富飽和感，就好像太過使勁地盯着某物看，直到它甚至有點變型。兩張靜物畫，是一個構圖的重複練習，是發生在廚房裡的兩個時刻。王之博似乎總是在探索繪畫的元語言，她實驗性地將對象放在不同的空間距離、不同的光線、不同的主觀情緒下，讓同一具身體呈現出儘可能不同的樣貌。在《身體史，精神史》中，王之博完成了對同一個對象處於不同時刻和契機下的拼貼。

展覽題目「沒有太陽」借用自法國導演克里斯·馬克的名作。克里斯·馬克用一封信，把一些旅行影像串聯起來，創造成一部結構鬆散卻富含哲思的散文電影。「沒有太陽」是馬凌畫廊匯聚了畫廊代理的五位繪畫藝術家，呈現給觀眾的一次圖像之旅，同樣將主觀性和虛構性作為切入點，一探當代繪畫的使命和意義。



Installation view
展覽現場



Installation view
展覽現場



Installation view
展覽現場







Genre Painting Study 10 - Surrender
《風俗畫研究十 - 投降》
2019

Oil on canvas
布面油畫
280 x 210 cm



Festival - Zoo 3
《節日 - 動物園 3》
2019

Mixed media on canvas
布面綜合材料
120 x 160 cm



Festival - Comrade
 《節日 - 同志》
 2019

Oil on canvas
 布面油畫
 Diptych 200 x 300 cm
 (each 200 x 150 cm 每幅, 兩幅聯)

Differentiation

辨

Edouard Malingue Gallery, Hong Kong
馬凌畫廊, 香港

08.02.2018 - 21.03.2018

 Exhibition Documentation

Swarms of ochred colour flush the canvases; figures huddle in the foreground, conversant, anonymous; spectral homes occupy the painterly surfaces. As if recalled from distant mnemonic incidents, the various elements populate *Differentiation*, the new series of works by Cui Xinming (b. 1985, China), presented for the first time at Edouard Malingue Gallery, Hong Kong. Marked by shifts in tone and gestural vivacity, Cui's latest paintings are defined by a fine balance between distant observation, atmospheric flushes and intimate delving. As such, the viewer is privy to oscillations, alterations between dynamic gest and stillness.

Differentiation has a distinct pulse from Cui's previous series, which over the last years have been mounting a tonal crescendo towards brightness and fluorescence. The aura is conversely more somber, the vivid reds of prior comparatively burnt (see *Genre Painting Study 1 & 2* (2017)), the impressions overall earthy rather than flash. Indeed, there seems to be an atmospheric hark back to several earlier works albeit with changes of form; an increasingly abstract swarm prevails, the filamentesque strokes giving way to a comparatively aqueous melding of form and detail. Upon first impression the pictorial range is wider, the spectrum between interpretational expression and depiction, expanded.

Despite the shift in aura there are various recurring characters and encounters in Cui's rich visual narrative. Punctuated by bouts of nostalgia, one notices the familiar scenario of two figures interacting - crouched, conversant, in motion. Similarly, a domestic structure reappears, fractured, resembling through its tweaked edges the delineations of a temple. A couple of works, however, such as *Portrait Study 6 (How to explain painting to my hometown)* (2017) introduce a novel and curious scenario, which seems to hint at European art history, in particular the emblematic image of a reclining female nude: a nod to Titian's romantic *Venus* (1548-9); a reference to Manet's controversial *Olympia* (1863). Cui's lounging figures, however, are conversely clad and visually indistinguishable, his responsive characters dashed with protective anonymity.

The voice running through *Differentiation* is ultimately an omniscient one: the reflections of an observer, one who is somehow close to the subjects portrayed yet vaguely distant, able at once to straddle objective deliberation and sentimental evocation through melanges of subject, technique and tone. Whilst an element of outworldliness still prevails, the depicted visions seem to be grounded in a darker world, one inflicted by ruminations, shifts, changes. As such, Cui captures the spirit of an environment we are familiar with, one we describe and live through everyday, but one that is under the undefined auspices of flux.

中國文化形成的基礎——象形文字，是“近取諸身、遠取諸物”的具像類比思維。這直接影響了中國人十分具象的思維方式，因為每一個字其實是在試圖用一幅畫來描繪事物的本質。在古代，一個字即是一幅畫，每個字都是獨立的意思表達，複合詞不成立。如池塘，“池”指方形水池，而“塘”指圓形水塘；道路，“道”指人工修築的筆直大道，“路”指人無意識踩出的蜿蜒小路。孔洞，“孔”指內部有空腔，表面卻不豁然開一個大窟窿，“洞”指內部有空腔，表面也開一個大窟窿。至今，情況已演變為我們使用大量複合詞來描述表達事物。但其本意已發生變化，如池——塘——池塘，又圓又方的說法不成立。這種變異的過程——我們通過複合詞的概念內容來理解它所描繪的客觀世界，和錯位的描述所帶來的關於對象本質的問題特別吸引崔新明。對像是客觀世界還是鋪就在思想通道基礎上的概念？我們腦海中關於自身生命經驗的意識哪個更接近於真實和本質？“辨”是藝術家崔新明在馬凌畫廊香港空間的新展標題，這個典型的象形文字為左中右結構，左邊和右邊有細微的差異，其含義就是找出差異。這個字也與展覽裡的作品相呼應，幾乎所有作品都一左一右，兩張一組，以相似的意象呈現不同層面的真實。

崔新明的繪畫作品中充滿了光怪陸離的超現實感和強烈的宗教氣息。高中畢業後崔新明前往重慶求學，至今一直生活在那裡，但家鄉山東省青州市以及他在那裡多年的成長經驗，常常會以各種形式的意象出現在他的作品中。有感於中西方文化的巨大差別和衝突，目睹了現代文明進程與農村根深蒂固的自有文化雜交之後的鮮活現場，崔新明產生了強烈的表達慾望。他曾描繪自己的工作狀態：“工作時我最大的興趣就是試圖用繪畫描繪一個舞台，藉此去探討我的境遇和由它產生的困惑”。

《肖像研究3(家鄉)》，左邊一張以綠色為基調，樹木、勞作的農人、牆上的壁畫，都還透露了農村生活的勃勃生氣，右邊一張如燃燒之後灰燼的顏色，荒涼的場景裡只有一面刷了廣告標語的牆格外刺眼。最諷刺的是“根治疼痛”四個字，“疼痛”是生命的感受，是活著的體驗，“根治疼痛”便是要抹去這最後的一絲生氣。這是中國農村的普遍現狀，青壯年勞動力流失，城市化城鎮化發展導致農村耕地的不斷減少。崔新明的焦慮正是來自今日農村的落魄面貌——他早已回不去的故鄉。

《肖像研究1(肉)》中，左右兩組人物場景均來自新聞圖片，左邊是兩名獄警羈押了一名曾經的中國高官，右邊是兩名農民工從領導手中接過慰問物資——一大塊豬肉。崔新明用一片紅色的發光體替換掉原圖中的重要部分，而標題中的“肉”隱約透露著某種真相。巴洛克肖像畫中常有的天空和自然風光的背景卻為這一切蒙上了一層祥和靜謐、留影紀念的氛圍。《風俗畫研究4》中則混合了更多的意象碎片，莫奈的“睡蓮”充當了事件發生的舞台；左邊岸上試圖施以援手卻無能為力的男人，其意象來自一張中國風俗畫裡一個馬匹落水的場景；右邊站立的製服工作人員目睹老虎溺水這一景象——來源於一則“海上漂來老虎”的新聞報導。

崔新明從地域性歷史信息、日常生活議題和美術史中尋找各種元素，將其拆分成大量潛藏著無限可能的基礎圖形進行推演，並最終融合成豐富的視覺圖像來探討真實是什麼——圖像本身也因它來源的多樣性獲得了一種新的邏輯，以此為方法，崔新明通過繪畫的途徑逐漸發現一個別樣世界。



Installation view
裝置現場



Installation view
展覽現場



Installation view
展覽現場





Installation view
展覽現場





Installation view
展覽現場



Installation view
展覽現場



Installation view
展覽現場





Genre Painting Study 5
《風俗畫研究五》
2017

Left 左: Oil on canvas
布面油畫
70 x 60 cm

Right 右: Oil on wood panel
木板油畫
50 x 40 cm



Portrait Study 1 (Meat)
《肖像研究一(肉)》
2017

Oil on canvas
布面油畫
121.1 x 92 cm each / 每張



Portrait Study 3 (Hometown)
肖像研究三 (家鄉)
2017

Oil on wood panel
木板油畫
40 x 50 cm each / 每張



Genre Painting Study 2
《風俗畫研究二》
2017

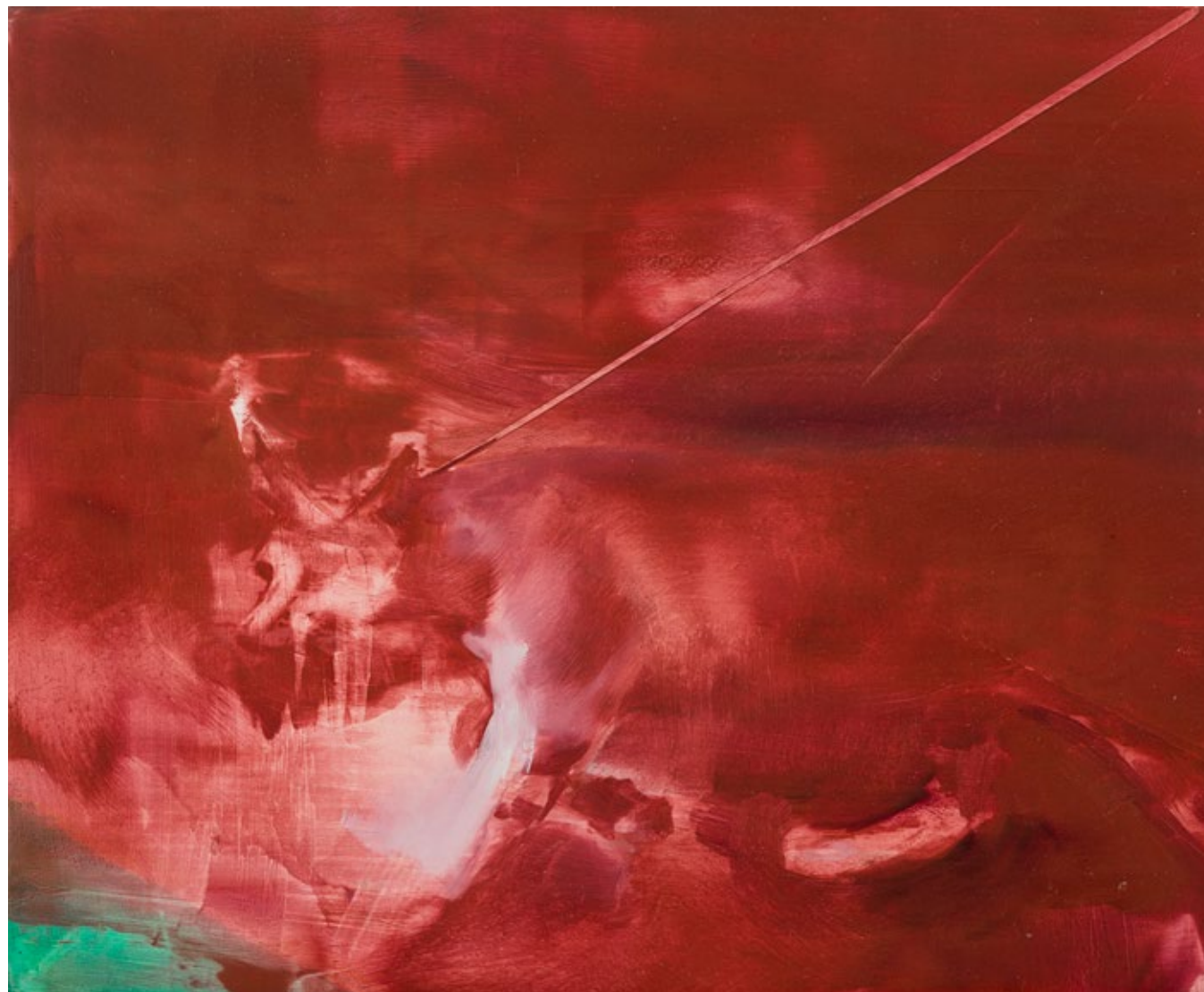
Left 左: Oil on canvas
布面油画
70 x 60 cm

Right 右: Oil on wood panel
木板油畫
50 x 40 cm



Portrait Study 8 (Pamper)
《肖像研究八(哄)》
2017

Oil on canvas
布面油画
216 x 163.2 cm



Portrait Study 5 (Espionage)
《肖像研究五(耳目)》
2017

Left 左: Oil on PVC
PVC 板上油畫
17.7 x 15.8 cm

Right 右: Oil on wood panel
木板油畫
20 x 24 cm



Genre Painting Study 4-L
《風俗畫研究四-左》
2017

Oil on canvas
布面油畫
242.5 x 121.1 cm



Portrait Study 6 (How to explain painting to my hometown)-R
《肖像研究六(如何對我的家鄉解釋繪畫)-右》
2017

Oil on canvas
布面油畫
203.3 x 326.5 cm

The Solo Exhibition of Cui Xinming – “Differentiation”: Binary Dialectics under Pluralistic Perspective

by Eddie Cheung Wai Sum

Artist Cui Xinming held his latest solo exhibition, “Differentiation” at Edouard Malingue Gallery, Hong Kong. In contrast with his previous exhibition, “Journey to the East”, you can find subtle changes in the artworks presented at “Differentiation”: The oeuvres have adopted the diptych approach comprising of pairs of paintings, such as “Genre Painting Study 5” (2017). In this diptych, two miners are depicted on each of the canvases with different dominant tones; one painting in shades of purple and another in shades of brown. To juxtapose the two contrasting paintings, you shall find the lighthearted brushstrokes filled with dramatic scenes. Relinquishing such details as the characters’ facial expression and leaving only their contour, the paintings exude an air of mystery. In addition to setting the ambience, more visibly, his usage of colours bear implicit referential information elements. “Portrait Study 6 (How to explain painting to my hometown) - R” made reference to and borrowed “Maja” from Francisco Goya’s masterpiece, “La Maja Desnuda” (c.1797-1800), onto the artwork. The category, art history as well as various materials of the painting had all been applied and transformed into the visual presentation of artist.

If painting appreciation can be regarded as visual cognition to a certain extent, it can equally be regarded as a subjective and intimate journey. Cui Xinming’s paintings radiate to its viewers a bizarre feeling. Be it his lighthearted brushstrokes on the canvas, his unique scratches on the drawing board, or the interaction of the borrowed characters from various masterpieces, all of which demonstrate that his skillful painting technique has reached the artistic style of the artworks produced in the Renaissance and Baroque period. Judging through the contemporary aesthetic lens, his artworks may carry a hint of old style; it may even be said that his painting style and techniques are conservative. On the other hand, in terms of the research spectrum, Cui Xinming often combines visual elements in a symbolic and fragmented manner by breaking up the whole into pieces in his paintings and incorporating such elements as his personal experience, news images, information, memory and history. This arrangement and alignment is closely related to the contemporary information consumption era. All things considered, hidden behind the creation of his artworks manifest a dialectical coexistence of the visual “oldness” and the ideological “youthfulness”.

The binary dialectical handling technique and the integration of various visual elements are usually exercised after meticulous consideration and due arrangement of the artists. Although it is not a simple task to clarify the complex visual narrations, with the distinctive use of the frame's physical and visual arrangement, Cui Xinming manages to create the boundaries between multiple layers and binary separation that can also be interpreted as a parallel visual presentation to create tension by juxtaposing visual elements that are unrelated to or even fragmented from each other. The clearest example of this is that the majority of the artworks presented at this exhibition have adopted the diptych approach. The two paintings of “Genre Painting Study 5” are physically separated. The long-pole that the miner holds in his hands has not only created a horizontal separation of the painting into upper and lower halves, but also created a vertical visual boundary to prevent the audience from emerging into the world that has been portrayed in the painting. Although “Portrait Study 8 (Pamper)” (2017) is not a diptych painting, the visual elements in the painting are displayed in a parallel fashion, which can be interpreted as a wrestle between different states. The inspiration of the rear view of the female figure originated from the daughter who had been admonished by her family in “Gallant Conversation”, a work created by Dutch painter, Gerard ter Borch (1617-1681). Another figure in the painting is dressed in a Chinese emperor's costume with roses in his hand. This surreal scene creates a murmuring worldview, subtly and freely presented the message on the wrestle between genders, power relationship, and the choice between religion and politics through symbolic visual elements.

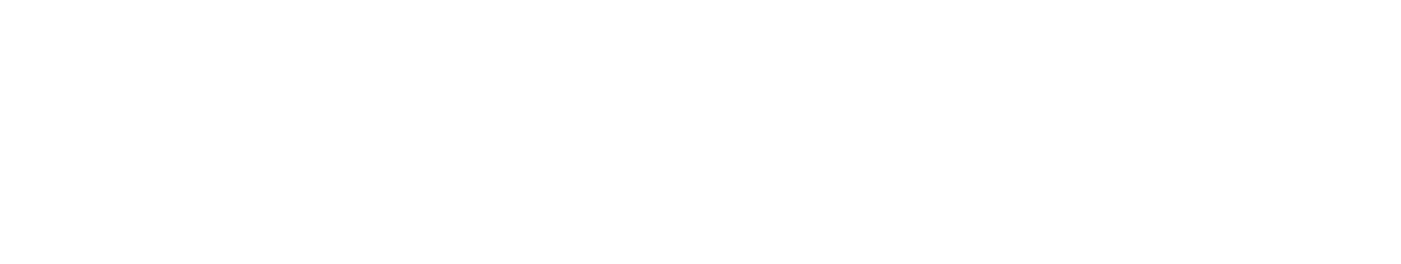
In addition, “Genre Painting Research 4 - L” (2017) made reference to the painting of Monet the impressionist. In this painting, you can find water lilies and a tiger in the same pool. The character and scenes in “Portrait Study 1 (meat)” (2017) had been taken from embellished news photos. The painting on the left originated from a news photo of a Chinese senior officer who had committed a crime and was detained by two prison guards, while the one on the right depicted two migrant workers taking the “pork” from the leader's hands, which was provided as comfort relief. However, in this painting, the original senior officials were replaced by a chunk of meat. “Portrait Study 3 (hometown)” (2017) demonstrates the psychological reflection of the memory of rural life back home; the two nearly monochromatic paintings depicted the same village house. One of the village houses has a mural painting of rural landscape hanging in front of the house, while the other one has an advertising slogan bearing four Chinese characters with the meaning of “curing the pain” hanging on the same place. From private to societal topics, Cui Xinming always makes reference to masterpieces, the interaction between news photos and the contrast between the past and the present, etc. At the same time, uncoordinated elements such as the unexpected chunk of “meat” and the advertising slogan of “curing the pain” are also incorporated in the paintings. The stark contrast and differences between his artworks are quite reserved, and yet bizarre and motley.

It is true that this creative pattern of opposing relationship created through the collage of various information elements such as history, news, daily lives cannot only be traced back to the artist's creative approach, but its long history also allows Cui Xinming to travel in time and enter into the arteries and values of Western art history in the name of painting. With regards to the artist's creative approach, even if it is a personal memory or experience, many artists would choose to record it by taking photographs. In other words, this viewing or creative approach through the process of reviewing the artist's own memory and photo records is actually a de-personalisation process. The same applies to Western art history and all news and information. In the absence of artists, artistic atmosphere or the cultivation of such factors as history and environment, both the artists and audience can only be bystanders. Another aspect of the artwork is to demonstrate its awareness to the outside world and aspiration to the surrealism. These elements add to the feeling of alienation. Even if the artists consciously establish the boundaries of binary dialectic as mentioned above, they can still be read under the combination of the pluralistic visualisation. Nevertheless, they often remain at the viewing level and may not produce a profound relationship or reach the reading level. This situation is similar to gravitational pull between planets and satellites; this pull is not immediately relevant to us and is hard to be noticed.

Placed in the contemporary context, there is almost no explicit rules or ideology for creation and reading under the current multiplex landscape. However, Cui Xinming uses different categories of painting as the tone and spectrum of artistic practice or research. At the level of the public cognition, each category owns its own structure and condition, which means the artist has specific objects and backgrounds to correspond to and overturn. This also means that the artist's visual world cannot transcend the recognition of the various categories. As for the reserved elements, including the artists' usage and variation of art history, news and information, as well as the visual materials are all based on certain grounds. We can also recognise different views about people, society, politics, and so on in those artworks, where the personal and public fields and issues can coexist. The visual world in the artworks is not a cautionary tale nor a stranger to us, and perhaps this approach will face the formulaic crisis, but at the same time, it will be the most powerful cultural support and source of the artists.

崔新明個展「辨」：多元視覺下的二元辯證法

文：張煒森



藝術家崔新明在香港馬凌畫廊的最新個展「辨」，先拿他之前個展「東遊記」來比，這次個展的作品有著微妙的轉變：眾作品由雙聯畫組成，《風俗畫研究5》（2017）雙聯畫同時畫上兩名礦工，一幅的主色調為紫色，另一幅則用上了啡色，從兩幅不同的畫作比讀下，爽朗的筆觸依然，充滿戲劇性的畫面仍在，放棄了人物的表情細節只剩下輪廓，色彩依舊神秘。但除了氣氛營造以外，更明顯地用色上帶有信息的指涉成分；《肖像研究6（如何對我的家鄉解釋繪畫）- 右》挪用 Francisco Goya名作《La Maja Desnuda》（c.1797-1800）中的Maja到作品上，畫作的類型、藝術史與各種素材一一被挪用與轉化成藝術家的視覺述演。

要是看繪畫某程度是一種視覺認知，也可以是一種相當主觀與私密的過程。看崔新明的繪畫就予人一種吊詭的感覺。無論他畫在畫布的爽快筆觸、木板上獨有的刮痕，還是挪用經典畫作的人物干涉，其純熟技巧，直指文藝復興、巴洛克時期的藝術風格，以今天的審美來說，或是略帶老調子甚至保守的繪畫風格與技巧。另一方面，藝術家的「研究」系譜中，他往往將親身經驗、新聞圖像、信息、記憶、歷史等不同的元素視覺符號化與碎片化地拼合，透過繪畫化零為整。這種部署與取向卻跟現時信息消費的時代息息相關。視覺上的「老誠」與創作背後意識形態的「年輕」辯證地存在。

這種二元辯證中的處理與各視覺元素的拉扯關係，往往是經過藝術家的深思與梳理。雖則複雜的視覺敘事不易釐清，但崔新明還是明顯利用畫面物理上或視覺上的營造，以及互不干涉甚至割裂的視覺元素拼置，來產生不同層面及二元立分的界線，亦可以視之為平行的視覺演述來產生張力。最明顯的莫過於這次展出的作品大部分以雙聯畫的方式展示，《風俗畫研究5》既是兩幅畫作物理性的分割，礦工手持的長竿既是將畫面橫向地上下分割，也是縱向地造成視覺上的界線，阻礙觀眾投入畫面內的世界；《肖像研究8（哄）》（2017）雖不是雙聯畫，但畫內視覺元素間平行展現，當中可詮釋成不同狀態的角力，畫面中的女性背影挪用荷蘭畫家 Gerard ter Borch（1617-1681）的《Gallant Conversation》內被家人訓誡的女兒，另一人物則是身穿中國皇帝服飾手執玫瑰，這個不可能在現實中存在的畫面裡成為一個喃喃自語的世界觀，當中男女性別、權力關係中的角力、宗教與政治間的取捨等的信息，也隱約地通過這些符號化的視覺元素自由地詮釋出來。

除此之外，《風俗畫研究4 - 左》（2017）中挪用印象派莫內的睡蓮與虎同池；《肖像研究1（肉）》（2017）畫中的人物場景均來自新聞圖片加以修飾--左邊一幅來自一名中國犯罪高官被兩名獄警羈押的新聞照片，右邊一幅是兩名農民工從領導手中接過「豬肉」這一大塊慰問物資，而在繪畫上，原有的高官卻換成了肉；到《肖像研究3（家鄉）》（2017）關於家鄉農村生活的記憶的心理反映，兩幅幾近單色的繪畫中描繪了相同的村屋，一幅屋前掛著山景壁畫，另一幅則是掛上「根治疼痛」的廣告標語。崔新明由私密到社會的議題上挪用經典、新聞照片的干涉、今昔對比等，與此同時卻出現突兀如肉、「根治疼痛」的廣告標語等不協調的元素，作品的對比與差異既內斂又光怪陸離。

誠然，這種通過不同歷史、新聞、日常等各項資訊元素拼貼產生對立關係的創作套路，既能追溯到藝術家的創作方法，也因著繪畫之名，其悠久的傳統亦可讓崔明新穿越時空地進入西方藝術史的脈絡與價值中。對於藝術家的創作手法，就算是親身的記憶與經驗，很多時藝術家還是會以拍攝等方法將之記錄。換言之，從藝術家再次審視自己過往的回憶或再觀這些圖片記錄的過程中，這種觀看／創作方法實際上是一種去個人化的抽離過程。之於西方藝術史與種種的新聞資訊亦然，藝術家在沒有在場的情況下與藝術氛圍的缺席下，在缺乏歷史、環境等脈絡培養與襯托，不論藝術家或觀眾也只能站在「旁觀者」的立場而言，作品的另一面，就是呈現出對外在世界的認知與嚮往並不實在。這些元素亦令作品充滿疏離的效果，就算上文提及到藝術家有意識地建立二元辯證的界線，但各種不同的多元視覺元素拼合下，它們可以被閱讀，但往往停留到觀看的參考層面中，彼此未必產生深刻的關係以至閱讀的層次。情況有點像行星與衛星彼此以引力拉扯，但這引力對我們而言並不切身，也不易察覺。

繪畫置於當代的語境，在多元當代性的格局下幾乎已沒有太多明確的規條或意識形態來創作與閱讀，然而，崔新明以「類型畫」作為藝術實踐或研究的基調與系譜，在公共認知領域的層面上，每項類型畫有其結構與條件，即代表藝術家是有具體對象與背景來對應與顛覆，一體兩面，這亦代表著藝術家的視覺世界並不能過於光怪超越了類型畫的認知。當中內斂的成份，包括藝術家對藝術史、新聞資訊、視覺素材的挪用與變奏都有理可依，這種亦可從作品中意識到個人、社會、政治等不同的面觀，個人與公共的領域與議題能在作品中共存。作品中的視覺世界其實並不陌生，也不是什麼警世寓言，也許這種方式會面對公式化的危機，但同時能成為藝術家最有力的文化支撐與來源。

Festival
節日

Edouard Malingue Gallery, Shanghai
馬凌畫廊, 上海

07.11.2016 - 31.12.2016

 Exhibition Documentary

Edouard Malingue Gallery opened its space in Shanghai in 2016 with a solo exhibition ‘Festival’ by emerging Chongqing-based artist Cui Xinming (b. 1986). A recent graduate from the Sichuan Academy of Fine Arts, Cui is a rising Chinese artist who creates expansive oil on canvas works that express, in an elaborate and vivid painterly style, the tumultuous thoughts and reflections of a younger Chinese generation that is living through a period of constant change. From Cui’s early series ‘Black Hole of Memories’ to his most recent bodies of work ‘A Sleepwalker’s World’ and ‘Journey to the East’, Cui continually addresses, in an evolving painterly style, how his peers and compatriots are casting into oblivion the past along with its rich memories in an attempt to relentlessly attain a new stage of modernity.

Featuring an entirely new series of works, ‘Festival’ presented the artist’s apprehension of the self and his perception of a shifting reality over the past two years. Taking inspiration from the four distinct seasons of Northern China, and the memories Cui harbours of his hometown, the paintings point to the forgotten corners of China’s second and third tier cities. Through the use of vivid imagery and bright tonal varieties, Cui reflects on how these towns, ever more prevalent, have been hesitantly turned into bizarre, near surreal scenes by the repercussions of an era, embedded in development. Stemming from Cui’s position as a now distant onlooker, the viewer becomes privy to his personal perspective regarding his hometown, fleshing out at once a state of recollection as well as one of discontinuity.

Old friends, ceremonies and celebrations set against empty, desolate backgrounds; human life, or the shifting nature of, highlighted through the emphasised dimensions of plants and domestic settings; the pervasive use of fluorescent green throughout the paintings, heightening the festival atmosphere; an implied vigilance regards the notions of momentary glory and success. These are but snippets of the visual cues pervading Cui’s recent works: assuming the role of film director, Cui writes scripts, draws rough sketches and undergoes a regular selection of ‘actors’. Replete with coincidence, his works detach elements from their traditional meanings, seeking to unravel the fringe where reality and imagination coincide. “Capturing moments at a specific point in time to reflect the real world” - this is Cui’s expressive platform or channel of exchange with the outside world.

Such dialogue between the instant and the actual provides Cui with a focus that he continually develops. The chief protagonists are working class, yet, he rarely depicts their facial features, opting rather for general anonymity. Indeed, the subjects of his paintings often have their backs turned or faces blurred, leaving solely their dress and movements as sources of reveal regards their background and identity. For example, the people depicted in ‘Glory – 201512’ are based on a photograph, in which Cui accidentally captured a cluster of motorcycle-taxi drivers. Since, as individuals or as a group, these figures reappear throughout his work, continual actors in his evolving visual play. Cui’s obsession with fable-style narratives may be traced back to his hometown of Qingzhou, where ancestral folk tales placed background roles in centre stage. Lacing an ambiguous mix of animals, gods and everyday objects into each story, it is possible that these influenced Cui’s notion of the ‘real’.

By comparison to his previous works in ‘A Sleepwalker’s World’ (2013) and ‘Journey to the East’ (2014), the recent paintings in ‘Festival’ appear to behold a sense of restraint. A complex storyline continues to pervade them but there is an increased emphasis on delicate strokes. By building layers of paint and subsequently scraping them away, Cui is able to transform an expansive monochromatic waterfall into a cluster of rosy clouds, for example. Additionally, whilst Cui’s works continue to include religious elements - his manner of emphasising mankind’s sense of helplessness via entrusting hope in Gods - the scenes of shrines and sacrifice, which were easily recognisable in his earlier paintings, are now hidden amidst the details. They have rather become symbols, such as the bishop’s red hat in ‘Glory - 201602’ or the characters’ clothing in ‘Untitled (Watering the Tree)’. The overall painting process, however, has still been overall shortened, with traces being left of each layer rather than complete coverage, an effect that gives each painting a feeling of slow movement and real time.

Ultimately, Cui unwaveringly depicts notions of recollections and stories from Northern China. His works are tools for self expression and reflection in times of confusion and conflict, carrying with them an inherent sense of weight and consciousness. The real world in which we live is so distant and absurd that it feels akin to facing a ‘living fossil’. Dramatic and allegorical, Cui’s works are inadvertently extensions of social observations and analysis - forms of verification regards the absurdity of existence. As surmised by Cui: “I hope to present an independent, parallel and alternative world, which allows you to imagine rather than recollect a painting.”

馬凌畫廊(上海)於2016年呈獻中國新晉藝術家崔新明(1986年生於山東,現居於重慶)在中國內地的首次個展《節日》(Festival)。崔新明畢業於四川美術學院,這位新晉中國藝術家的油畫作品以遼闊視野和豪邁風格見稱,不時強烈地展現出中國年輕一代激盪多變的思想世界。綜觀《記憶黑洞》系列以至近作《一個夢遊症患者的世界》和《東遊記》,崔新明以證人和評論家的身份,反思同胞為了鏗而不捨的現代化而選擇遺忘過去和與之相關的豐富記憶。

《節日》一系列全新的作品呈現了藝術家過去兩年間對於自我與現實的重新思考,也標誌著其藝術創作上的重大突破。崔新明的繪畫總是源自四季分明的北方和對故鄉的回望。處於遺忘角落的中國二三線鄉鎮城市被時代的餘波扭擰成奇異的場景,出現在藝術家對故里的遠觀和一次次牽引式的回溯時所產生的巨大落差之中,其中的暈眩感促成了作品中的光怪陸離。《節日》系列從崔新明回鄉記錄的畫面展開:故人、儀式、慶典置於空蕩落寞的背景上,植物、房子的體量遠大於人類的生活痕跡,貫穿在畫面中的熒光綠色和光斑渲染著節日氣氛,也暗指著藝術家對於瞬間榮耀和光明的警覺。首次出現的自畫像回應著近年的沉澱和自省。

展覽沿襲了崔新明電影感的畫面和創作方式。他像導演一樣編撰劇本、記錄分鏡草圖,通過日常拍攝選擇“演員”,充滿巧合地把各個元素從慣有意義中抽離,試圖尋找現實和想像之間的不謀而合。“似乎某一秒鐘的某一個切片會契合這個世界的真實感。”這是他和外界交換的平台與通道,排除單純依賴靈感的被動,形成可以不斷推演的基礎圖形。他對社會底層人群具有極其獨特的敏感,卻鮮少刻畫面部特徵,畫面中的人物往往背轉身體,僅靠衣著和動作透露著背景和身份。如《榮光-201512》中的人物形像,源自偶然拍到的摩的司機,不時在他的作品中以群體或個體的形像出現。他對寓言式敘事的迷戀或許來自於童年時期祖輩講述的青州民間故事,脫離背景的角色常被安插在劇情玄幻的舞台中,混雜著動物、神明、日常事物,以誌異式的方式講述著藝術家洞察的某種“真實”。

相較於展覽《一個夢遊症患者的世界》(2013)和《東遊記》(2014)時期的作品,崔新明的近作變得簡化而內斂。複雜的故事情節轉化為更為凝結的情境,從加法的敘述文變為現代性詩體。以細膩筆觸和豐富畫面見長的他離開了自己的舒適區域。曾經層次多變的紅雲被刮成大面積的單色瀑布;偏愛的灰藍色也歸於黑濁的背景和被壓平的透視。作品中仍具有宗教元素,指涉人類寄希望於神明的無力感,而之前畫面中直觀的佛龕和祭祀的場景如今全部暗藏在細節裡(如《榮光-201602》中像徵主教的紅色帽子、《無題(澆樹)》里人物的衣著)。但作畫過程並沒有減少,他不再完整地覆蓋顏料,而是留下每一層痕跡,保留畫面所蘊含的緩慢而真切的時間感。

崔新明執拗於繪畫、記憶、北方。他的創作是面對困惑和衝突時自我梳理的工具,帶有與生俱來的沉重和焦灼。面對“活化石”一般早已超出想像的現實世界,他亦以戲劇寓言式的作品驗證存在的荒誕,無意為之卻自然延展出對社會的觀察 和剖析。”我希望呈現一個獨立之外的平行的另一層世界,能讓你想像一個畫面,而不是想起。”



Installation view
展覽現場

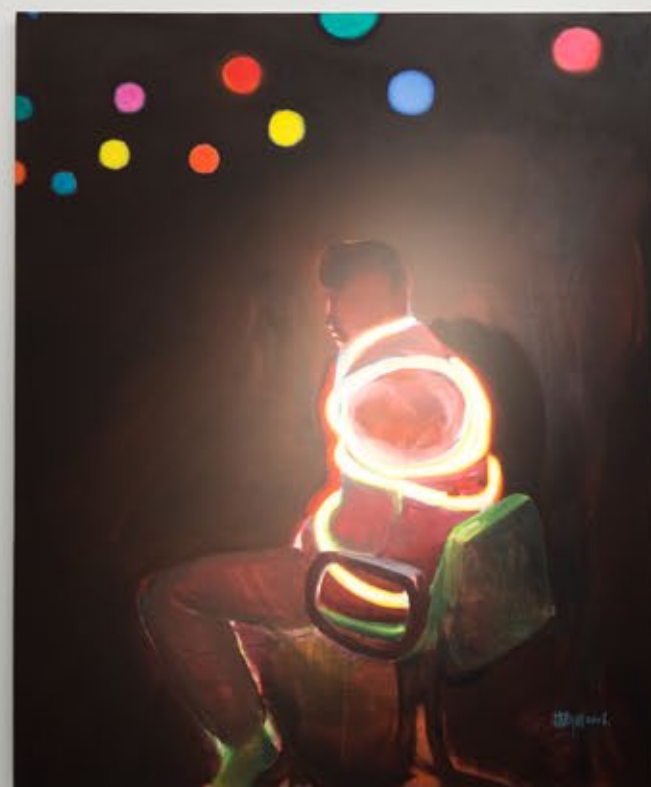


Installation view
展覽現場



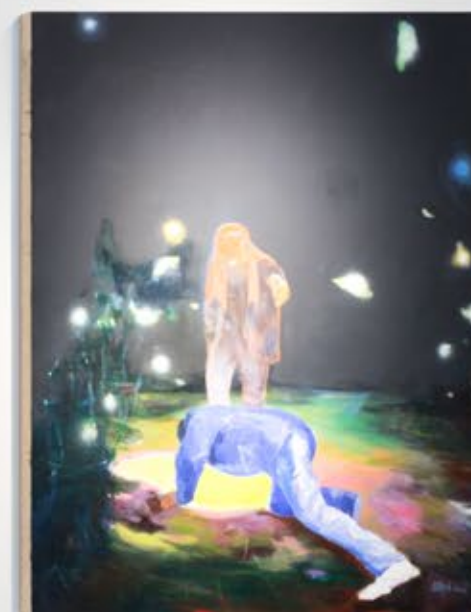
Installation view
展覽現場







Installation view
展覽現場





Installation view
展覽現場



Festival - 201606
《節日 - 201606》
2016

Acrylic and oil on canvas
布面丙烯、油畫
210 x 252 cm



Festival - Zoo 1
 《節日 - 動物園 1》
 2016

Acrylic and oil on canvas
 布面丙烯、油畫
 Left 左: 150 x 120 cm, Right 右: 180 x 150 cm



Festival - Zoo 2
《節日 - 動物園 二》
2016

Acrylic and oil on canvas
布面丙烯、油畫
200 X 300 cm



Festival - Man sitting in chair
《節日 - 坐在椅子上的人》
2016

Oil on canvas
布面油畫
155 x 100 cm



Glory - 201512
《榮光 - 201512》
2015

Acrylic and oil on canvas
布面丙烯、油畫
120 x 90 cm



Glory - 201602
《榮光 - 201602》
2016

Acrylic and oil on canvas
布面丙烯、油畫
200 x 150 cm



Glory - 201507
《榮光 - 201507》
2015

Oil on canvas
布面油畫
200 x 150 cm



Self portrait lying on the ground
《躺在土地上的自畫像》
2016

Oil on canvas
布面油畫
150 x 180 cm



Untitled (water trees)
《無題(澆樹)》
2016

Acrylic and oil on canvas
布面丙烯、油畫
180 x 150 cm

Journey to the East
東遊記

Edouard Malingue Gallery, Shanghai
馬凌畫廊, 香港

08.10.2014 - 15.11.2014

Edouard Malingue Gallery presented ‘Journey to the East’, a solo show with the emerging Chinese artist Cui Xinming (b. 1986, lives in Chongqing). A recent graduate from the Sichuan Academy of Fine Arts, Cui Xinming creates expansive oil on canvas works that express, in an elaborate and vivid painterly style, the tumultuous thoughts and reflections of a younger Chinese generation. Presenting a new body of work, the exhibition follows from Xinming’s previous practice yet displays a remarkably luminous development in his painting technique. The vibrant, red-toned glow that permeates these new works heightens how, at the heart of Xinming’s oeuvre, is his unique ability in capturing the inner turmoils experienced when undergoing a phase of personal development. Indeed, Xinming is an observer, a highly introspective artist who examines himself, his position with regards to society and the values of those who surround him. Where words do not capture his sentiments, Xinming approaches the canvas with incredible vigour and treats it as an extension of his visions and internal tensions, casting upon it incredulous scenarios and hypnagogic happenings.

Although Xinming’s paintings borrow elements from the quotidian, these scenes are not figments of a universal reality; rather, they are dramatic and subliminal visions that Xinming’s mind has conjured. This is not to say, however, that his works do not bear a real-world relevance; on the contrary, each work is laced with secondary meaning, ranging from political to religious commentary. In *Empire is a dream* (2014), for example, Xinming depicts three figures in ornamental Empirical dress standing behind an altar upon which incense sticks have been placed as well as a red card bearing the sign of luck. Despite the details of their robes, the faces of each of the figures are concealed, creating a sense of eeriness, a feeling that is heightened by the surrounding monkeys, which given their animated postures, seem even more alive than the figures themselves. As such, Xinming comments on the emptiness of humanity, the animality of our society and breaks down perceived illusions of grandeur.

Privy to Xinming’s thoughts and visual narrative, one feels approximate to a trespasser, an infringer upon a terrene that is very much the artist’s own, for these are visions that stand on the border of personal tremors and inveterate hauntings. The painting *Don’t hurt me* (2014), for example, follows from Xinming’s interest in capturing an altered domestic and shows to the left of the canvas what seems to be a commonplace home interior; an ornate dark sofa, faced by a low-rise wooden coffee table. As your gaze traverses to the centre of the canvas, however, it becomes fixated on a fiery glow and the profiled outline of a kneeling figure. Face turned, it is uncertain whether the character is seeking to put out the mounting blaze, trying to protect himself, or is indeed caught in a limbo between the two acts. From the title of the oeuvre though, one can deduce the existence of a threat, a state that seems all the more peculiar given the usual comforts of a homely interior. Xinming thereby addresses the challenges of the domestic, the flame both acting and symbolising the variety of possible perils.

Overall, ‘Journey to the East’ presents a series of narrative paintings that are omniscient in quality and insightful in their socio-political commentary. Following from Xinming’s previous works, these oeuvres have a distinct literary angle in their visual recounting of a story. Fraught with complexity, Xinming’s paintings voice the qualms of his generation - its evolving relationship with traditions, values and beliefs.

馬凌畫廊於2014年呈獻中國新晉藝術家崔新明(1986年出生，現居於重慶)最新個人展《東遊記》(Journey to the East)。當時，崔新明剛於四川美術學院畢業不久，他創作的大型油畫描劃細緻而生動，流露出中國年輕新一代狂野的想法與反思。《東遊記》展示的是崔新明一系列的全新創作，這些新作既秉持了他以往的創作手法，更展示了他在繪畫投巧上的重大突破。作為這系列新作的標誌，油畫上鮮明而帶紅調的亮光突顯了他如何擅長於捕捉個人成長時經歷的內在焦慮，並將之潛藏在作品深處。崔新明實際上是一個觀察入微的人，常常反省與檢視著自己、他在社會身處的位置，以及他身邊的人的價值。每當言語無法道出他內心所想時，他就把澎湃的氣勢付諸畫布，作為他的想像和內心糾結的延續，把無數不能置信的畫面與幻想融合於畫作之中。

縱然崔新明的畫作均是取材於每日司空見慣的日常事物，但這些畫面卻不能稱為虛構自真實世界的影像。反之，它們更像是從藝術家腦海中魔術式地幻化而來，種種充滿激情及下意識的憧憬。與其說他的作品脫離現實，不如說他每一件作品都以政治上或宗教上的隱喻為綴更為貼切。在作品《帝國是一場夢》(2014)中，三名身穿龍袍的人站在上了香及貼上象徵幸運的紅紙的香爐後。他們每個人衣袍上的細節及面容都一片模糊，建構出一股令人不安的氣氛。更添詭異的是，他們旁邊的猴子動作靈活而富動態，比畫中的人物更富生命力。在此崔新明抒發了他對社會中去人性化及獸性表現的看法，試圖粉碎大眾對社會種種偉大的錯覺。

在窺探崔新明的感受和視覺敘述時，不難發現他的創作均建基於內心的戰慄與不能抹去的陰霾。在欣賞同時，人們會不禁自覺是一名入侵者，肆意地在侵犯他的個人領域。畫作 *Don’t hurt me I* (2014) 承繼了他對繪畫變形的家居的愛好，畫中左方是慣常可見的室內環境，擺放著華麗的深色梳化，面向一張木製茶几。但當觀者聚焦畫作的中心時，卻會發現一團熊熊烈火和一位只帶有基本輪廓的人物膝跪在地上。人物的轉側的臉令我們無法確定他究竟是想撲滅烈火，是企圖保護自己，還是在兩者之間猶豫不決。但可以肯定的是，作品的名稱已暗示了當中的危險意味，罕有地強調即使在家居如此給予人舒適印象的場所，也無法擺脫對威脅的恐懼。創在者由此道出家庭面對的難題，火焰就是實際上和象徵意義上都有可能發生的危險。

"東遊記"展示一系列在社會及政治層均具有巨大潛力與前瞻性的敘事畫。正如崔新明前期的創作，這些作品的視覺敘事手法滲透出獨特的文學角度。他懷著複雜的心情，以畫作吐露了與他同一年代的人感受到的不安，以及與傳統思想，社會價值與信仰不斷演變的關係。











Installation view
展覽現場





Don't Hurt Me I
2014

Oil on canvas
油彩 畫布
140 x 180 cm



Black Hole of Memories No. 4 - Permitted Memories
《記憶黑洞四號 - 被允許的記憶》
2014

Oil on canvas on PVC foam board
布面油畫裱於PVC泡沫板
135 x 100 cm



Sleepwalker No.5
《夢遊症五號》
2014

Oil on canvas
油彩 畫布
150 x 200 cm



Sleepwalker No.6
《夢遊症六號》
2014

Oil on canvas
油彩 畫布
150 x 110 cm



Sleepwalker No.7 - Permitted Space
《夢遊症7號--被允許的空間》
2014

Oil on canvas
油彩 畫布
200 x 120 cm



Sleepwalker No.9 - Observation
《夢遊症九號 - 觀望》
2014

Oil on canvas
油彩 畫布
120 x 150 cm



Railway No.2
《鐵路二號》
2013

Mixed media on canvas
布面混和媒體
60 x 70 cm



Journey to the East - Confucius' Hometown
《東遊記 - 孔子故里》
2014

Mixed media on canvas
布面混和媒體
60 x 70 cm



Journey to the East - Confucius' Hometown II
《東遊記 - 孔子故里 二》
2014

Mixed media on canvas
布面混和媒體
120 x 150 cm



Nightwalk
《夜巡》
2014

Oil on canvas
布面油画
140 x 180 cm



Empire is a Dream
《帝國是一場夢》
2013

Oil on canvas
布面油畫
180 x 150 cm



Empire is a Dream II
《帝國是一場夢 二》
2013

Oil on canvas
布面油畫
150 x 200 cm

The Recent Works of Cui Xinming

by Su Wei

At first glance, one is engrossed in the revealing light amid the dismal images that comprise Cui Xinming's (b. 1986 in Qingzhou, Shandong) latest body of work. Such light does not appear as a decorative aperture or spot; it is always centralised somewhere in the painting, manifesting various senses of volume and weight pertaining to the environment, or rather, the artist's creation of a discourse. We are unable to identify the source of light; at times it rises from the surface of the earth ("Noctambulism - Call", 2013), at others it entices the figures like a black hole ("Night Watch", 2014), or positions itself as the centre piece in the crowd ("Sleepwalker No. 8 – Consecrating for this Land" 2014). The existence of the light confers on the image a sense of exposure, which, by defying the rules of photography, draws a paradoxical relationship between brightness, human, and object. The light does not simply diffuse itself over the depicted people and objects - it seems to transform the constructed connotation, thus permeating the texture of figures, changing their original statuses as the core of the painting. Simultaneously, its presence largely weakens the transparency of the image - evidently, in the act of expression, the artist is also experimenting with a unique language of his own. What is the symbolic significance of this light? What kind of position does it hold in the artist's ideological system?

Born in Qingzhou, Shandong province, Cui Xinming received his MFA from the prestigious Oil Painting Department at Sichuan Fine Arts Institute, and has since then resided in Chongqing, one of the national central cities in China. Qingzhou was once the capital of Southern Yan during the Eastern Jin Dynasty, as well as the centre of the Buddhist clan of Xianbei Murong. In 1996, the discovery of the Long Xing Temple ruins from the Tang Dynasty and the excavation of hundreds of Buddha figures sublimated the unknown city in Central Plains China to a hub of ancient culture.

Being the largest city in Southwest China, Chongqing served as the cradle of such voices as Pan Dehai, Mao Xuhui, Zhang Xiaogang and Ye Yongqing, who established the "Southwest Art Group" in the 1980s to celebrate the idiosyncratic culture of the Southwest that is distinguished from the Central Plains, thus rapidly raising themselves as the essence of Chinese contemporary art history. Rather than blending the trajectories of his life and art seamlessly, Cui Xinming, seeks to challenge the ancient and contemporary traditions - his artistic practice, in that sense, takes scepticism as a point of departure.

In Cui Xinming's colossal painting, "Memory Hole - Hometown Autumn" (200x500cm, 2012), distinct images of wheat fields, mountains and the firmament comprise the landscape of his memory. Sombre and slightly sterile colours stretch up to five metres in width, devoid of dramatic juxtapositions whilst defining the top, centre and bottom layers as three distinct sections of a natural scene in its most original texture. Contrary to the title of the painting, history and time cease to exist whereas personal memories are buried in the depths of void: such is the standard form of a black hole. Cui Xinming's mastery lies in his creation of premonition: it may seem that the wheat fields are conspiring to disguise a path to the mountains, or that the clouds are concealing something ominous, whilst the detailed wheat leaves in the foreground connect to the distant mountains in dissonance. The painting in its entirety manipulates one's sense of anxiety and rage, which speaks to the emotional discourse that is spinning amid China's social context – one of transformations and uncertainty. This context has, on the one hand, resulted in a historical narrative that seems singularly vulnerable in the monochronic tautology of modernisation, a historical perspective conducting areas of social life to fulfil political ideologies.

On the other hand, individuals are unable to position themselves in the fast-paced and ferocious metropolitan life; the deeper one ventures into its crux, the more anxious he feels as an outsider. These sentiments in "Memory Hole" point towards a much wider implication of the social and historical circumstances, whose various forms are difficult to hold in their totality. At this time, Cui Xinming, has yet to experiment with a more microscopic and specific enquiry into paintings, but rather presents an instinctive sense of scepticism towards the existing histoire.

This scepticism already emerges in Cui Xinming's work from the previous year, "Memory Hole I" (2011), in which the artist depicts a dark interior. The narrative of this scene begins on the left, where a middle-aged woman, whilst clutching a letter, rests her head against the bed leg. The projected triangle between the bed, the woman and the adjoining debris thus transcends beyond the nominal perspective point. As the narrative extends itself towards the centre of the painting, it abruptly meets a rail that leads to a large rupture in the wall. Beyond the hole is an everyday railroad scene: tracks lie amidst overgrown weeds, clusters of scarlet clouds gather, half enshrouded, half exposed. Beneath the railway are pieces of common furniture: vintage sofa, coffee table, kettle, vanity mirror and so on. These simple, domestic furnishings speak of a mechanic existence, and by this the artist seems to imply a certain decadent consciousness of the ordinary, accentuated by a towering Confucian statue on the right side of the scene. An indistinct figure kneels before the statue (characteristic of Cui Xinming's paintings is the ambiguity of human faces), seemingly concerned with that which also preoccupies the woman by the bed leg. We cannot interpret this painting, however, by explaining dreams - as it obviously lacks the necessary elements of incredulous scenarios to surpass common logic.

Rather, one may say the connection between the scenery beyond the east wall and the interior space implies a conceptual inevitability: no possibility to escape from the repressive and distressed life, whilst the outlet is merely a deception. The dramatic social transformation has caused no alternation to individual consciousness, or family ethics or worldview, for the modern thinking pattern of pursuing speed and spatial sense creates only a social illusion. Futile is the attempt to elude the degenerate notions of morality and vulgar aesthetic cognisance. Through his efforts at the composition of this painting, Cui Xinming uproots the very piece of flesh that is most common yet most difficult to confront in our body.

This is not to say that Cui Xinming's paintings exist merely in a metaphorical realm to reflect an age. In his latest series, presented by Edouard Malingue Gallery, Cui Xinming attentively explores the theme of absurdism. This absurdism is not merely a satire of real life, nor an unconscious labyrinth to imitate surrealism. Rather, Cui Xinming seeks to construct a semi-mythical atmosphere in the scenes and to create a metaphor for absurdism as a life-transcending medium of expression – a kind of absurdism that is at once artistic and more engaging with the production of scenes. At this point, Cui Xinming seems quite traditional in his treatment of scenes as an extension of the artist's body: by deconstructing their imagery, one can catch a voyeuristic glimpse of the artist's creative process – this mysterious instant is, to Cui Xinming, a metonymy of creation.

This new series of paintings, in the artist's own words, is the product of tyrannical control. Inspired by the late Sigmar Polke, Cui Xinming attempts to explore the transforming relationship between sculpture and graphics through the language of painting, and at the same time, questions how to deal with the emotional intensity of scenic narratives. These two focal points organically combine in his works "Lucian Freud I" and "Lucian Freud II", in homage to Freud. What fascinates the artist is the tension between Freudian images' simultaneously nervous and powerful characterisation and the symbolic narrative of everyday scenes, whose emotional intensity materialises in the images' elements of formulation. Such Freudian creative form lends itself to Cui Xinming's unique methods, but before proceeding to analyse these two works, one must first examine the influence of Freud on Chinese contemporary painting.

In fact, Freud's impact on Chinese painting can be observed as far back as from the late 1980s. In 1989, Fan Dian published the article "Lucian Freud" in "World Art" (April 1989) and soon after the journal also published a large number of papers taking Freud as the focus of their analyses. The full force and directness in Freud's approach to depicting the human body, alongside his acute inspection of everyday reality, imposed a remarkable impact on enlightening artists from the naivety and idealisation of the 80s. To them, Freud seemed to offer a point of reference as regards the implementation of such archetypical aspirations of the 80s as ultimacy, humanity and mystique on more microscopic and experimental planes of creation, as well as the reinterpretation of the realism forsaken by post-Cultural Revolution artists.

Yet it was also these arts practitioners, in the spirit of such strong demands from Chinese experimental art itself, who dismissed Freud's work as a cultural critique. This had also, to a certain extent, affected the Chinese Pop Art and “Cynical realism” as they rose to prominence in the 90s.

Cui Xinming should have some knowledge about this history; discontent and sceptic towards such cultural reading of Freud, he attempts to flesh out the bowels of Freud's paintings that belong to artists. In “Lucian Freud I”, the confined space is filled with three colours: red, black and white. An indistinct woman, sat on the bed on the left, seems fascinated by a lump that is casting a white flame in the centre of the painting. The flame faces the door, but owing to the deliberately flattened shapes and wiped strokes, the perceived depth of the painting appears vague and ambiguous. Meanwhile, “filthy colours” constitute a recurrent theme in the series. This “filth” has various detailed changes: the fume, the woman, and the blurred images of plants behind the woman are all products of strong and vigorous brushes, creating a distinct contrast with the door on the left side, the door, wire and wall sockets, which are angular and solid: the mystique and uncertainty of the female protagonist in this environment represent precisely the kind of emotions that the artist is desperate to express. Through the transformation of ordinary space (the transforming relationship between sculpture and graphics as Cui Xinming explains), as well as the organic control over colours, colour lumps and lines, Cui Xinming creates an idiosyncratic emotional intensity and integrates into the painting his own creative experience (the appearance and the hidden moment of mystery as he says). A similar approach also appears in “Lucian Freud II” which is based on cool tones. At the centre of the painting remains a similar mass in the shape of a white and purple flame. The door is left ajar; a dramatic plot emerges in the form of a portrait hung on the left of the door, presenting a work scene of Freud and a female model.

Cui Xinming's interpretation of Freud is inseparable from his contemplation of painting creation over the years. His acute observation of the works by his predecessors is manifested in his exhibition at Edouard Malingue Gallery, featuring a set of personal notes and sketches as a fragmentary presentation of his understanding of some important painters from Mainland China. These two years have seen heated discussions on the notion of the “painterly” in Mainland China, wherein certain arts practitioners attempt to describe works emerging from the 90s, 10 years after 2000, as well as some recent works, from the perspective of “painting ontology”.

As a departure point, these discussions are keen on distancing themselves from the discourse of Political Pop and Cynical Realism, and to unearth new historical clues from the “bowels” of paintings. Whilst the desire to defy the existing arts histoire is quite understandable, its vision of the “bowels” remains unsettled, and is therefore much less adequate. Departing from the obsolete perspective of cultural criticism does not necessarily imply a sound foundation of contemporary painting creation. As regards the cases studied in these discussions, one rarely encounters in-depth analyses on the tension between the historical experience and the contemporary experience, or new subjective possibilities for creation and criticism. Guided by their zeal for the ordinary and the artisanship of the representation of everyday scenes, participants seem to believe their approach can dissolve the sociological readings emanating from the exterior of scenes, as well as hollow discussions on “presentation,” “representation”, and “abstraction”. Yet one may note in these specific case studies that many creations have merely opened up new areas of enquiry mostly associated with the visual language and narrative of scenes, that paintings are still treated as a “medium” for studies. As such, the discussions' lack of awareness weakens the force of individual and human experience that is characteristic of art as a medium of existence, as well as the potential of its radicalism and historical imagination when confronted with new social contexts.

Observing Cui Xinming's work in parallel with this background, one will notice the intention to experiment with a more microscopic mode. Pertaining to the scepticism as mentioned earlier, Cui Xinming does not concur with the independence of paintings as a medium. Rather, he seeks to find out the limits of depths that art can continue to reach, and to excavate the necessity of art from art itself. Certainly, this requires a long-term project, which Cui Xinming has just commenced.

This series of paintings centres on ritualistic sacrifice and “circuses”, implying the artist's reflection on historical and everyday experiences. The scenes show an abundance of overlayed details, which integrate into the artist's well-designed compositions and manifest the attempt to flesh out the rich connections between painting's language and expression, as well as the dynamic balance between the two. Cui Xinming's work “ The Bewitched Years” (2013) revives the living room scene in “Memory Hole I”, except that recurrent objects such as the sofa, coffee table and TV cabinet now seem to have been coated with paint, hence their much cruder and richer details. Using charcoal, Cui Xinming puts in the foreground random strokes that vaguely resemble weeds, and wipes with cloth the passive light and its surrounding crowd at a distance. On the edge of the crowd stands a weasel – symbolic of the nocturnal and insidious - watching the crowd engrossed in the light.

Whilst the same image also appears in “Sleepwalker No. 5 “ (2014), “Empire is a dream” (2013) conversely focuses on an altar. Unexpectedly though, three emperors with indistinct faces replace the Buddhist iconography as the subject of worship. Animals are still indispensable to the imagery; this time, a monkey, signifying the evolutionary ancestor of humanity, satirises history’s absurdity. In exploring the degenerate cognisance of morality, the mindless idolisation of power and the seduced consciousness to evade reality in Chinese people’s everyday life.

Cui Xinming tries to avoid putting his own criticism above the scene itself, thus the traditional binary system of form and content retain their significance as the centrality in his practice. It is based on this notion that one may decipher the inter-textual relationship between the trees and the group of ordinary people heading into the depths of the woods as depicted in “Sleepwalker - Summons” (2013), or the correlation between the bridge, the pavilion, the water and the sky – inanimate objects of hardness and volume functioning as the only protagonists in “Hometown of Confucius” (2014).

Undoubtedly, Cui Xinming’s new series of paintings may cause some discomfort and reflection on the viewer’s part. Speaking of colours, these scenes are filthy, dark and mottled; composition-wise, the artist underscores the marked proportional relationships and the physical modelling of perspective distinguished from the usual approach. The lump of light that appears in the centre from a distance, on the ground or from the outside of the room, is like a catalyst for the organic collision between the symbolic significance and formal sense of the creative language. This light serves at once as the entrance to our interpretation of the scene, the unknown and formidable black hole in depths, the outlet through which we escape from the corrupt world created by the artist, and the opportunity to, at the same time, reflect on the world that we inhabit. From the artist’s personal experience, this light is ominous, ironically reminiscent of the gloom of childhood memories and their accompanying accumulation of actual experiences. Yet, once deconstructed to the realm of artistic practice, this light appears to suggest a political attitude of artistic creation – one that relates to scepticism, loneliness and profundity. This is only the beginning, and we look forward to what lies in store hereafter.

崔新明近作

文:蘇偉

初看崔新明 (1986 年生於山東青州市) 最新的這組畫,目光會被陰暗的畫面中透出的光亮 吸引。這些光的形態不是修飾性的光圈、光斑、光點,它總是集中在畫面的某處,因環境,或者說畫家有意的語言結構塑造而呈現出不同的體積和質量感。我們無法辨識來光的來源,它或是從地面升騰起來(《夢遊症-召喚》,2013年),或是黑洞般吸引著畫中人物進入(《夜巡》,2014年),或是處於人群的中心被觀看(夢遊症 8 號-為這片土地開光,2014)。因為這 些光的存在,畫面被賦予一種違背攝影規律的曝光感,光線和人、物的關係是悖反的。這些 光線不是鋪灑在畫面中人和物之中,它似乎改變了畫面所構造的語境,滲透進人、物的肌理,並且改變了它們在畫中原本的主人公地位。而同時,這些光的存在也很大程度上弱化了畫面的透視感,顯然,藝術家在表達的同時也試圖實驗屬於自己的形式語言。這團光具有什麼樣的象徵意義?它在藝術家的表意體系中處於什麼樣的位置?

崔新明是山東青州人,畢業於以繪畫教學聞名的四川美術學院,也留在了重慶這座龐大的川城中生活。青州,曾是東晉時期南燕國的都城,崇信佛教的鮮卑慕容氏定都於此。1996年,青州發現唐代龍興寺遺址,數百尊佛像出土,這座本來默默無聞的中原城市突然變成古文化中心。重慶,中國西南第一大市,20世紀80年代,潘德海、毛旭輝、張曉剛、葉永青等 以繪畫創作為主的藝術家組成“西南藝術群體”,就在西南這片有別於中原文化的土地上發出自己的聲音,很快進入到中國當代藝術史敘述的核心地位。但在崔新明這裡,生活的軌跡並未和藝術創作了無衝突地融合在一起,他不想順從地繼承古代或者當代的傳統,他 的藝術實踐是從不信任開始的。

在2012年崔新明創作的一幅尺寸巨大的畫作《記憶黑洞故鄉的秋》(200x500cm,2012年)中,麥田、山川和天空三組界限分明的意象組成了記憶的風景。凝重而稍顯枯澀的色彩呈現在長達五米的畫面寬度中,沒有強烈的戲劇衝突,畫面被上、中、下三層自然 物象條理分明地鋪滿。與畫的標題相悖,歷史時間在這裡消失,個人記憶也藏在最深處,正 是個標準的黑洞形態。崔新明很善於通過畫面塑造不安的暗示,麥田中似乎隱藏著一條通向遠山的路徑,天空的雲層似乎掩蓋了什麼不祥之物,前景中刻畫細緻的麥葉和堅硬的遠 山不協調地連接在一起。整幅畫作傳遞出緊張又稍帶憤怒的情緒。這種情緒應該和巨變中 運轉的中國社會語境相關,這一語境導致了:一方面,歷史敘述在現代化的線性時間邏輯中顯得單一而貧弱,社會生活領域被這種歷史觀牽引著去填充政治意識形態的理想;另一方面,個體在快速、粗暴、躁動的城市生活中無法尋找到相應的位置,越進入城市的內部, 越感受到局外人的惶恐。《記憶黑洞》中的情緒所針對的是一個寬泛的、難以摸索出全部形態的社會和歷史現狀,崔新明此時還沒有開始嘗試更微觀和具體的繪畫研究,而是充分 展現出不信任現有敘述的本能。

這種不信任的情緒,在崔新明稍早一年的創作中已經有所展露。在作品《記憶黑洞I》(2011)中,藝術家描繪了一幅陰暗的室內場景。畫面的敘述從左側開始,一個中年女人手拿著一封信,耷拉著頭倚靠在床腳。床、女人、雜物所構成的臃腫的三角明顯高於透視點,畫面向中間延伸時突然接上了一條鐵軌,通向牆壁上露出的大洞。洞外是一片我們常見的的鐵 路風景,鐵軌臥在叢生的荒草中,猩紅的雲聚集著露出半個面目。鐵軌下方是普通的家具 場景,老式沙發、茶几、熱水壺、梳妝鏡.....這種簡易而模式化的家居佈置在中國再普通不過,藝術家似乎在通過它暗示一種腐朽的日常意識。這一點,在畫面右側一個突兀的儒者 塑像上極大地凸顯了出來。塑像前跪拜著一個人,我們看不到他的面孔(崔新明的畫作中 很難見到人的臉部刻畫),他應該與床腳邊的女子關心著同一件事情。我們不能用夢境來 理解這幅畫,顯然這裡缺乏夢境所必需的超越日常邏輯的元素。牆東外的風景與室內空間的連接毋寧說是一種構思上的必然:壓抑、困苦的生活中是沒有出逃的可能性的,出路只 是一種假象。劇變的社會環境完全沒有引起個體意識、乃至家庭倫理觀和世界觀的改變, 追求速度和空間感的現代化思維模式只塑造了一個社會幻象,切身的生活裡,人們仍深深地困在腐朽的道德意識和庸常的美學思維中無可脫身。在這幅構圖上花費了巨大力氣的 作品裡,崔新明翻出了我們肌體裡最普通、又最難以面對的那塊肉。

但這並不是說,崔新明的畫僅僅停留在影射時代的象徵層面。在馬凌畫廊展出的最新一組畫作中,崔新明非常用心地探討了荒誕這一主題。這種荒誕,並不僅僅是對現實生活的諷 刺,也不是模仿超現實主義風格的無意識迷宮。他力求在畫面中塑造出一種半神話的氛圍,並用這種超越日常性的表現形式隱喻荒誕一種“藝術家的”、更關涉畫面是如何生成的,荒誕。在這一點上,崔新明顯得傳統,畫面變成了藝術家身體的延伸,似乎剝開畫面 的意象結構,就能窺見到藝術家創作的某個瞬間 這個神秘的瞬間,在崔新明看來,就是 創作的全部。

這組新畫,用藝術家本人的話說,是強控制下的產物。他受到去世不久的藝術家 Sigmar Polke 的啟發,試圖在繪畫語言中探討chongmanliliang雕塑和平面之間的轉化關係,同時,如何處理畫面敘事的情感強度,也是他關注的焦點。這兩者在作品《盧西恩·弗洛伊德I》和《盧西安·弗洛伊德II》兩部作品中有機地結合在了一起。兩張作品都在向弗洛依德致敬, 藝術家對弗氏畫中那種緊張而充滿力量感的人物刻畫筆觸與日常場景的圖像敘事之間所 產生的張力所吸引,這種張力所引發的情感強度完全通過畫面的形式因素得到了體現。崔 新明通過獨特的方法引用了弗氏的這種創作形式。不過在我們分析這兩幅作品之前,有必 要提及弗氏對中國當代繪畫的影響。

實際上,從20世紀80年代末開始,弗洛依德對中國繪畫創作的影響就已顯現。 1989年,範 迪安就在《世界美術》(1989年4月號)雜誌上發表了《盧西恩·弗洛伊德》一文,該刊也在隨後多期雜誌中發表了大量有關弗氏的論文。弗氏刻畫肉體時那種力量感和直接性,他對日常現實的深刻考察,對當時很多還沒有走出懵懂、理想化的80年代語境的藝術家震動很大。對他們來說,如何從終極、人性、神秘這些典型的80年代宏大訴求中落實到更微觀和實 驗性的創作層面上,如何重新理解文革結束後被藝術家放棄了的現實主義繪畫風格,弗氏提供了一個參考。 但也正因為這種強烈的源自中國實驗藝術自身的需求,使得弗氏的創作很快被中國藝術實踐者賦予了一層文化批判的意義,這也在某種程度上波及了後來90年代蔚然成風的中國波普藝術和“玩世現實主義”創作。

崔新明對這個歷史應該是有所了解的。他不滿足、也不完全信任這種對弗式的文化閱讀, 而是試圖挖掘弗氏繪畫語言內部的秘密,這個秘密很多時候是屬於藝術家這一族群的。在《盧西恩·弗洛伊德I》中,局促的空間充滿了紅、黑、白三種顏色。偏左側坐在床上、面容模糊的女人目光被畫面中央形似白色煙火的一團東西吸引,焰火正對著門口,但由於故意平面化的形體塑造和有意用布擦抹的筆觸,整幅畫的縱深感顯得模模糊糊,非常曖昧。同時,“臟顏色”是崔新明這組畫一個顯見的因素,這個“臟”中又有著豐富的細節變化,焰火、女子、女子背後模糊的植物形像都是筆觸激烈而富有動感的,這與左側的門、地板、電線、牆壁電線插口等等棱角分明、堅硬的物形成了對比:畫中女子在這一環境下的顯得神秘 而充滿了不確定,這恰是藝術家需要表達的某種情感。崔新明通過對日常空間的改造(崔 新明所說的雕塑和平面之間的轉化關係),以及對色彩、色塊和線條有機控制,調動出獨特的情感強度,並且在其中融入了藝術家自身的創作感受(即他所說的神秘時刻的出現與隱 沒)。相似的方式也出現在《盧西恩·弗洛伊德II》這幅冷色調為主要的作品裡。畫面中心仍是一團焰火形狀的東西,透著白紫色,門變成了半敞的,戲劇性的情節出現在門左側一幅帶有透視關係的畫像上,畫像呈現了畫家弗洛伊德與女模特在一起工作的場景。

崔新明的弗氏解讀與他這幾年對繪畫創作的思考分不開。他善於觀察前輩畫家的工作,比如在這次馬凌畫廊的展覽上,他就展示了一組自己的筆記和草圖,片段地呈現了他對大陸一些重要畫家工作方式的理解。最近兩年,中國大陸內部發生了大量針對“繪畫性”的討論,一些藝術實踐者試圖從“繪畫本體論”的角度描述一些90年代、2000年之後的十年、包括最近發生的繪畫創作。這一討論的出發點,顯然是要與90年代盛行的以政治波普、玩世現實主義為代表的圖式語言保持距離,希望從繪畫“內部”挖掘出新的歷史線索。如果說這一討論所暗示的打破現有藝術史敘述的慾望還可以理解,它對“內部”的想像卻是非常模糊、難以令人滿意的。離開十幾年前的文化批判視角,並不意味著就獲得了當下繪畫創作的基礎。在這個討論裡涉及到的個案中,我們很難見到深入的、對於歷史經驗和當下經驗 之間形成的張力的分析,也沒有看到創作或是批評的新的主體性可能。討論者對於繪畫的日常性、手工性非常熱衷,似乎認為這可以消解來自畫面外部的社會學解讀,以及消解那種空泛地談論“再現”、“表現”、“抽象”的方式。但在具體的案例分析中我們發現,很多藝術家的創作不過是被給予了一種新的範疇,這些範疇的建立大多與畫面的視覺語言和視覺敘事相關,繪畫仍然被當做一種“媒介”來考察,這使得整個討論缺乏認識的強度,藝術創作作為一種存在方式所具有的那種關聯個體和人類生存經驗的力量、它面對新的社會語境時所潛在具有的激進性和歷史想像力,被這個討論弱化了。如果從這個背景觀看崔新明的創作,我們會發現他有意在進行一種更加微觀的工作。正如上文談到的那種不信任的態度,崔新明對並沒有認同繪畫作為一種媒介本身的獨立性,而是更想看看,藝術創作還能達到什麼樣的深度,從藝術創作本身來挖掘藝術的必要性。當然,這是一項長期的工作,崔 新明剛剛開始。

這組新畫大多圍繞祭祀和圍觀的主題展開,這裡面暗含著藝術家對歷史經驗和日常經驗的思考。畫面呈現了諸多痕跡疊加的細節,這些細節融入在藝術家精心設計的構圖裡,看得出, 崔新明試圖深挖繪畫語言和表達之間豐富的聯繫,以及二者之間動態的平衡。作品《被蠱惑 的歲月》(2013年)中,畫面又一次呈現了《記憶黑洞I》裡的客廳場景,但是,沙發、茶几、電視櫃等等物件彷彿是在顏料罐中蘸了一遍,細節粗糲而豐富,崔新明又用木炭在畫面上隨意畫上了一些雜草狀的線條佈在前景,還用布擦抹遠景處那片無源的光以及圍繞著它指指點點的人群。人群邊上,一隻站立著的黃鼠狼一個在中國人的理解中常常畫伏夜出、卑微陰險的動物形象“圍觀”著被光吸引的人群,這個形像也出現在作品《夢遊症五號》(2014年)之中。《帝國是一場夢》(2013年)則集中描寫了一個祭台場景,出人意料的是,被祭祀的對像不再是常見的佛道形象,而是換成了三個面孔不清的皇帝。動物形象仍然不可或缺,這次則換成了曾是人類始祖的猴子,似乎在諷刺歷史的荒誕。藝術家在探討中國人日常生活中腐化的道德意識、盲目的權力崇拜以及不敢直面現實的“抹漿糊”心態時,盡量避免著讓這種內容批判凌駕於畫面本身之上,形式與內容這一傳統的二元體系在崔新明的創作中仍是重中之重。把握這一點,我們就可以理解《夢遊症-召喚》(2013年)中一群走向林子深處的普通人形象與樹木之間的互文關係,以及在《孔子故里》(2014年)這幅沒有人群、具象的動物的風景 作品中,具有硬度和體積感的橋、亭與水面、天空是如何呼應的。

崔新明的這組新畫無疑會引起觀者的不適和反思。從色彩上說,畫面髒亂、陰暗、斑駁;從構 圖上說,藝術家尤為強調異於慣常透視法的比例關係和形體造型。而那團時而出現在畫面中心、時而在遠方、時而又從地面或者屋外透出的光,像是一劑催化劑,使得創作語言的象徵意味和形式感發生更有機地碰撞。這團光,是閱讀畫面的入口,是景深處那個未知而恐怖的黑洞,是我們逃離藝術家筆下這個腐敗世界的出路,是我們得以在某一時刻反思自己身在世界 的契機。於藝術家的私人經驗而言,這光是不祥的,它與童年灰色的記憶和伴隨這記憶生長的現實體驗有關,但深入到藝術創作的層面,這團光也許正暗示了一種藝術創作的政治態 度,一種與不信任、孤獨和深刻性相關的態度。這是個開始,讓我們期待。

A Sleepwalker's World
一個夢遊症患者的世界

Art Basel Hong Kong, Hong Kong
香港巴塞爾藝術展, 香港

23.10.2013 - 26.05.2013

Cui Xinming's solo exhibition entitled 'A Sleepwalker's World' features a series of new works, which capture the inner turmoils experienced when undergoing a phase of personal development. A highly introspective artist, Xinming observes himself, his position with regards to society and the values of those who surround him. Where words do not capture his sentiments, Xinming approaches the canvas with incredible vigour and treats it as an extension of his visions and internal tensions, casting upon it incredulous scenarios and hypnagogic happenings.

Indeed, these scenes are not figments of a universal reality; rather, they are dramatic and subliminal visions that Xinming's mind has conjured. This is not to say, however, that Xinming's works do not bear a real-world relevance; on the contrary, each work is laced with secondary meaning, ranging from political to religious commentary. For example, in 'Story (2)' (2013), Xinming depicts two dogs approaching an offering stand in a highly vegetated setting, which two Buddha's overlook. While one dog seems incredulous to the site's sanctity and chews on the presented fruit, the other stands aback and overlooks his compatriot's animalistic urges. Xinming thereby creates, and depicts, an allegory for the disparate respect of religion amongst living beings.

Privy to Xinming's thoughts and opinions, one feels approximate to a trespasser, an infringer upon a terrene that is very much the artists own for these are visions that stand on the border of personal tremors and inveterate hauntings. Yet, Xinming's work very much lends itself for observation by virtue of its monumental scale and panoramic composition. Indeed, true to the Greek roots of the word 'panorama', Xinming places all (pan) on view (horama): we are witnesses to every in nite detail, from the vibrant crepuscular sky in 'The Bewitched Years' (2013) to the delineated face of the threatened buddha in 'Taboo Game' (2013). Although Xinming does not oblige to the strict tradition of panoramas, that of depicting past national military battle elds or public events, he does depict a conflicted world of high contemporary relevance.

'A Sleepwalker's World' therefore presents a series of narrative paintings that are omniscient in quality and insightful in their socio-political commentary. Indeed, Xinming's works have a distinct literary quality and openly share an affinity with Franz Kafka's fictional novella Metamorphosis that follows the inexplicable transformation and subsequent alienation of the lead character Gregor Samsa. While Kafka and Xinming's works share a distress regards isolation, society and change, Xinming conversely nishes each of his istorias with a more hopeful twist: by virtue of his deliberate depiction of vivid skies, each luminescent and radiating, Xinming re ects that behind his troubles, and those of a young Chinese generation, there is a sense of hope.

馬凌畫廊在2013年5月，馬凌畫廊在香港巴塞爾藝術展中呈獻，呈獻新晉中國藝術家崔新明首場香港個展。崔新明生於1986年，畢業於四川美術學院，他的油畫作品以遼闊視野及豪邁風格見稱，不時強烈地展現出中國年輕一代激盪多變的思想世界。透過展出崔新明等藝術新星之作，馬凌畫廊致力呈獻更多矚目新晉藝術家的多元傑作。

此場名為《一個夢遊症患者的世界》之特展，將帶來崔新明的新作系列，以捕捉個人在成長中所經歷的思潮起伏為主題。藉著藝術創作，崔新明不斷反思社會與群眾的價值觀，並繼而反觀自身的身份與處境。當文字難以表達他的情緒與觀點時，崔新明轉向繪畫，用驚人的創作活力，把畫布當成為幻想與內在張力的一種延伸，勾勒出有如幻覺又 極具感染力的景象，令觀者留下極深印象。

畫面中的場景並非一般常見的虛構幻象：這些充滿戲劇性的攝人場景，實在體現出藝術家對潛意識幻象的呼喚。這非意味著崔新明的作品與現實缺乏關連，相反，每件作品往往隱藏另一重意義，有描繪他對政治的見解、亦有滲透他的宗教觀點。例如，在2012年創作的《故事II》中，崔新明描繪在叢生的植物中，兩隻狗走近祭壇，兩尊佛像高聳其上；一隻狗看來並未受神聖氣氛所感染，並不敬地咬食著用作供奉神靈的水果，而另一隻狗則站在後面，遠遠眺望同伴充滿獸性的衝動。崔新明由此創造了一則寓言，以藝術方式呈現出眾生對宗教迥異的觀者越走近崔新明的想法與觀點時，應越會感到自己像一個入侵者，侵入到藝術家極 其個人的領域中。這些圖景其實是藝術家個人內心的震顫，與根深蒂固、縈繞心頭的思緒之邊界。此外，崔新明作品最令人印象深刻的是其巨幅尺寸與全景式的佈局構圖。無 論是《被蠱惑的歲月》(2013年作)中充滿活力的黃昏天空，到《被禁忌的遊戲》(2013年作)中受到威脅的佛像之面容，都描繪得相當仔細，展現出細緻入微的視角。雖然崔新明並沒有完全嚴格遵守全景的繪圖原則，但他卻能確實地描繪出充滿矛盾衝突的當代 世界。

本次個展呈獻的一系列敘事繪畫作品，均透現出崔新明對社會與政治之見解與評述。的確，崔新明的作品有著一種獨特文學特質，它們與卡夫卡的虛構小說《變形記》之間具有某種相似之處，似乎延續著書中主角格利高里。雖然兩者同樣帶有關於疏離隔絕、關於社會與改變帶來的痛苦，崔新明的作品卻每每帶出充滿希望的訊息：畫中的天空色彩強烈並散發著光亮，反映出在煩惱背後，中國的年輕一代仍然懷抱希望。



“A group of young people, their backs turned to the viewer, stand huddled in a familiar room minimally adorned by a large sofa and a coffee table. The focus of this painting is not on the domestic, however, but rather the supernatural red cloud that has caught these persons attention. Completely mesmerised, the group looks upon a window into a colourful and shiny world. Xinming creates a commentary on their naivety and blindness by depicting the presence of a yellow weasel, which in Chinese culture has an evil connotation due to its ability to fool those who are weak or sick. Xinming therefore prompts a reflection upon members of China’s young generation who have fallen for a world that seems full of promise but is in fact created by slyness.”

“一群年輕人,背對著觀眾,在一個由一個大沙發和一個茶几簡約修飾的熟悉房間裡,縮成一團的站立著。這幅畫的重點不在於居家佈置,而是那團矚目的超自然紅色烟雲。年輕人們透過一扇窗,如癡如醉地凝望著一個豐富多彩的璀璨世界。黃鼬的存在代表了崔新明針對年輕人的天真和盲目的審視(黃鼬因欺騙弱者或病患,在中國文化中象徵一種邪惡的內涵)。藝術家以此反思當代中國年輕一代的處境:他們被貌似充滿希望但實際上狡猾險峻的世界而蠱惑。”

The Bewitched Years
《被蠱惑的歲月》
2013

Oil on canvas
布面油畫
150 x 180 cm



“A military-clad man stands with his back turned to the viewer and authoritatively raises his hand against a giant Buddha, which appears caught in blue flames. Insouciant to the man's dictatorial stance, the Buddha appears to be releasing its shackles and taking on an animate form. Xinming hereby depicts the conflict between religion and state control, while simultaneously addressing where the true balance of power between the two axes lies.”

“一位軍人背對著觀眾,權威地舉手反對眼前一尊陷入藍色火舌之中的佛像。對獨裁者漫不經心的大佛似乎擺脫了身上的枷鎖而開始呈現活動的姿態。崔新明在此描繪宗教和國家控制之間的矛盾,同時探究平衡的真正所在。”

Taboo Game
《被禁忌的遊戲》
2012

Oil on canvas
布面油畫
150 x 200 cm



“In an interview conducted with Cui Xinming, he expressed his admiration for artists in the West, such as Lucian Freud, who have a conviction vis-à-vis their painting technique and have plowed ahead, fuelled by their determination and foresight. In this painting Cui Xinming casts his hand at a subliminal genre of portraiture. The painting depicts a painter sitting on his bed, hands held together between his knees, looking intently at everything in his studio; all that he has is in that painting of him. The entire scene is depicted in vivid shades of burgundy red, that are interrupted by bursts of white light that add a spectral element.”

“與崔新明一次採訪中,他表示非常欽佩西方藝術家,如盧西恩·弗洛伊德有著與其繪畫技巧相對的信念以及由決心和遠見策動的前瞻性。在這肖像畫作品中,崔新明貫以他個人畫風,描繪畫家坐在床上,雙手互握緊扣在雙膝之間,目不轉睛地注視他工作室內的一切。他所擁有的一切就這樣構成了畫面的全部。整個場景以鮮明的酒紅色色調描繪,中間添加幾串突兀的白色,間斷凝造出一道道光譜效果。”

Lucian Freud I
《盧西恩·弗洛伊德 一》
2013

Oil on canvas
布面油畫
135 x 100 cm



“Another reverence to the great British painter Lucian Freud, this painting pays homage to the artist’s genius by depicting a room solely inhabited by a canvas that stands atop an easel. Now that the artist is gone, Xinming remarks that all we are able to admire or criticise is what he has left.”

“另一幅向偉大英國畫家盧西恩·弗洛伊德致敬的畫作描繪一個房間,由畫架上的一幅畫布構成畫面的全部。崔新明透過作品表示:藝術家離去以後,我們能夠欣賞或批評的對象就只有他所遺留下來的。”

Lucian Freud II
《盧西恩·弗洛伊德 二》
2013

Oil on canvas
布面油畫
60 x 70 cm



“A panoramic work, Cui Xinming adheres to the Greek etymology of the word and puts all (pan) on view (horama). Here we witness different generations working by a railroad against the backdrop of a gigantic tree. A direct reference to industrialisation, Xinming prompts us to reflect on the contrast between nature and what has been man made, as well as the significance of those who have built the world we currently live in.”

“崔新明依據希臘詞源,把所有(PAN)投進視覺感觀(horama)而製成一幅全景作品。我們可以在這作品看到不同世代在一棵巨大的樹前從事鐵路工作。延伸至社會工業化,崔新明促使我們反思人為和自然之間的對比,以及在我們生活現況背後的建築者的意義。”

World of a Sleepwalker I
《一個夢遊症患者的世界 I》
2013

Oil on canvas
布面油畫
3 panels of 200 x 150 cm (total 200 x 450 cm)



“A dog, which looks directly at the viewer, sits atop a coffee table in the middle of the highly familiar domestic setting of a living room. The dog is not afraid of the human arrangements; on the contrary, he is centrally placed and dominates the space. This painting reflects Xinming’s Kafka-esque interest in the absurd as well as that of creating a clash between the strange and the familiar, the ridiculous and the cohesive.”

“一隻狗,直接與觀眾對望著,坐於熟悉的客廳中間的一個茶几上面。狗並不怕人類活動;相反,他置於中央並佔據著這空間。這幅畫反映了崔新明對荒誕及為了創造存在於陌生和熟悉、荒謬和凝聚力之間的卡夫卡式的興趣。”

Story I
《故事 一》
2012

Oil on canvas
布面油畫
100 x 135 cm



“In a dark and tenebrous yet highly vegetated setting, two dogs approach an offering stand, which two Buddha’s overlook. While one dog seems incredulous to the site’s sanctity and seemingly chews on the presented fruit, the other stands aback and overlooks his compatriot’s animalistic urges. Xinming thereby creates, and depicts, an allegory for the disparate respect of religion amongst living beings.”

“在黑暗和晦澀高度覆蓋的環境里,兩隻狗正在接近由兩尊佛像看守的祭地。一隻狗似乎對該祭地的神聖充滿著懷疑,看似嚼著水果;另外一隻站在遠處,俯瞰著同胞的獸性衝動。崔新明透過這作品創造和描繪一個為尊重眾 生之間不同宗教的寓言。

Story II
《故事 二》
2012

Oil on canvas
布面油畫
120 x 150 cm

Sleepers Awake!

A Sleepwalker's World: Allegory in the work of Cui Xinming

by Luise Guest

"Somnambulism (noun) also called sleepwalking: a disorder which falls under the parasomnia group: a condition that is characterised by walking while asleep or in a hypnotic trance."

Sleepwalking is a phenomenon at once a part of the everyday world, and separate from it. Acts are performed – walking, talking, even eating - of which the sleepwalker, once awake, has no memory. The acts themselves are quotidian, yet the notion of sleepwalking makes us profoundly uncomfortable. It shakes our assumption that we understand our world and operate comfortably within it. Perhaps sleepwalking is a little like the experience of growing up and living in China today. The world you see when you wake is absolutely unlike the world you knew when you fell asleep. Everything is different, and continually changing, in ways both subtle and profound.

Cui Xinming's exhibition, 'A Sleepwalker's World', reveals an artist with an unexpected perspective and a dark vision of this brave new world. All is not as it seems, and the world seems to have shifted on its axis. The viewer will "gain experiences from this realm that are strange and remote to them," he says. The place that Cui Xinming presents to us is indeed a strange and unsettling one. Human and animal forms emerge out of deep shadow, positioned within the everyday – a sofa, a coffee table, a living room painted with a technical virtuosity that commands attention. Cui Xinming, born in 1986 in Shandong Province and only recently graduated from the Sichuan Academy of Fine Arts, acknowledges that Chinese and Western viewers will approach his work with different understandings; but painting is a form of communication, he says, that "provides a window that allows people under the same blue sky to have a peek at how others live."

Like artists everywhere, Chinese painters today seek a visual language with which they can express their responses to contemporary life. The dislocations of social transformation, demolition and urban renewal which have swept away the past, ushering in a world filled with uncertainty, have rendered many of the tropes of the first wave of contemporary painting irrelevant. A new pictorial language is emerging. In recent years two major directions in contemporary Chinese painting have become evident: those artists whose practice is grounded in their love for the traditions of literati painting, 'gong bi' realism and the scholarly traditions of 'Shan Shui' painting; and a second group who have absorbed the lessons of Western academic painting from the earliest days of Chinese modernism and its revival in the 1980s after thirty years of Socialist Realism. Cui Xinming's practice places him in this latter group, although his work also evidences his deep knowledge of ink painting and other traditional forms, particularly through his dynamic and gestural brush marks.

Cui Xinming is representative of a rising generation who have little interest in, or direct experience of, the Cultural Revolution that provided so much of the imagery of the painters who gained international recognition in the 1990s – imagery that was avidly consumed by western audiences hungry for art that appeared 'exotically' Chinese. Instead, these younger artists are forging a new path, grounded in their own realities. They are living in a world in which great prosperity coexists with appalling poverty; where the considerable personal freedoms of 'Socialism with Chinese characteristics' co-exist with censorship and authoritarian social control; a world in which public awareness of greed and corruption breeds cynicism and a kind of moral malaise.

At first sight Cui Xinming's paintings appear to depict a virtual world; the dystopian universe of a bleak video game in which his protagonists operate in a darkness both literal and metaphoric. There is a sense of deep foreboding – if these are allegories, they hint at the most dreadful of outcomes. This is a world of desolation in which anything could happen. One thinks of Goya, of Saturn devouring his children. Wild dogs, foxes, and rats lurk in the darkest corners of a liminal zone where human life is eked out in the ruins of civilisation. Crumbling buildings are overtaken by plants, and grass grows through the bricks. We remember that this artist has emerged from his studies in the megalopolis of Chongqing, the largest and fastest growing city on the planet, where the impact of the dislocating waves of change that have utterly transformed Chinese cities in the last twenty years is even more dramatic than elsewhere. This 'Rip Van Winkle' experience of awakening to an unrecognisable world, is apparent in Cui Xinming's dream-like vistas. "Where I live," he says, "human morals are disappearing and there is a clash between people and a soulless system." His paintings immerse us in a post-apocalyptic universe where at times even the laws of physics appear to be temporarily suspended; where solid forms liquefy through the painter's ability to effect magical transformations. These are paintings in which childhood memories and nightmares collide with the fears of a generation facing the contradictions of today's China.

Cui Xinming's practice may be understood as the new embodiment of a particular tradition in Chinese painting. In the early years of the 20th century, a number of Chinese artists studied in Europe and returned to take up teaching positions in Chinese art schools. Later, during the 1930s and 1940s, artists such as Wu Guanzhong returned from studies overseas filled with the utopian idealism of early Modernism. Wanting to move away from 'literati' painting, they saw Western painting techniques as a form which could convey new ideas for a new society. In the Reform period after 1976, and through the 1980s and 1990s, significant experimentation in figurative painting occurred in different urban loci. The extraordinary degree of technical accomplishment resulting from the rigorous academic training of Chinese art schools produced new forms of painting in a realist idiom. Young artists such as Cui Xinming are the inheritors of this tradition, with its emphasis on moral and psychological truth.

A difference between this earlier generation of artists and their younger counterparts is the unapologetic subjectivity and introspection of the emerging generation. This may well be a global feature of Generations X and Y, but in a context still dominated by discourses of collectivism, this scrutiny of the inner world of the individual artist is initially surprising. However, further investigation will show that this tendency is not entirely unprecedented, particularly with painters from Sichuan Province. Wu Hung has noted that Sichuan oil painters of the post-Cultural Revolution ‘Scar Painting’ movement focused on a ‘lost generation’ of Chinese youth, expressing their melancholy as well as a new hopefulness. In 1981 one of these artists, Wang Chuan, wrote in Meishu Magazine, “I, along with my peers, continue to fervently explore the question of how we should live our lives... When I follow the meandering trail of thoughts looking for my future I am confused, distraught and hesitant.” This intensity of soul searching and the desire to find a visual language which would allow artists to express new truths in what they imagined would be an entirely different China continues today in the practice of a new generation of painters. He Sen, who himself graduated from the Sichuan Academy of Fine Arts a generation earlier than Cui Xinming, said, “Why should we deal only with what we see on the surface? In traditional Chinese art, meaning is not always on the surface; it involves the imagination and ideas.”

Today, in response to the absurdities and cruelties he sees in his world, Cui Xinming's practice searches the deepest recesses of the subconscious. In works such as ‘Story (2)’ and ‘Taboo Game’ the artist's technical command of his medium reveals figures emerging from a deep chiaroscuro, illuminated by ambiguous light sources, in mysterious environments – part decaying urban ruin, part mystical temple. In ‘Story (2)’ a stray dog stands in front of two statues of Buddha, alert, observing carefully. Another dog, half hidden in the shadows behind burning joss sticks, slinks in the background, apparently eating the food intended as temple offerings. The location seems to be an abandoned ruin, yet the burning incense hints at an unseen human presence. Painterly, gestural and powerful, the work is an allegory of the position of religion in an authoritarian state.

In ‘Taboo Game’ a uniformed figure stands with arm raised in salute (or is it in warning?) to a large statue of Buddha, which shimmers and appears to be about to dissolve. He has his back to us. We do not know if this man is a soldier, a police officer, or maybe a security guard, but he clearly represents authority. The artist has said he is an intruder, “attempting to control everything”. It is possible to read this image in different ways: as the state attempting to control the dreams, aspirations and spiritual longings of its citizens; or as the futility of human political systems in the face of the eternal. Hungry-looking dogs lurk in the foreground, observing the action. One of them turns around and engages us with his baleful gaze. In the foreground, rich red paint suggestive of pools and drips of blood echoes the red of the smoking joss sticks. Cui Xinming's mastery of translucent veils of oil paint allows him to dissolve the solid architectural forms of the space in which this mysterious confrontation is taking place. Light is filtered through clouds of vapour and dust particles, creating a Tiepolo-like vision of another world beyond, inaccessible to the denizens of this one. “Behind the dark clouds, still some light is shining” says the artist.

‘The Bewitched Years’ depicts a group of young people. They stand with their backs to us, apparently in a domestic setting with an ornate sofa and a coffee table. However the far wall of the room appears to have exploded outwards and they are facing towards a glowing red light. Is it transcendent or terrifying? The artist very deliberately leaves us guessing. The sense of unreality is heightened by the over-sized ferret- or marsupial-like creature which incongruously stands beside the figures, observing the scene. Once again this ambitious figurative composition may be read in many ways. Are his figures bewitched by the hollow promises of material wealth and glamour, a consequence of China's position as a global economic powerhouse? Is the red sky a false dawn? Perhaps they stare longingly back towards a past vision of China, when the East was Red. Or does the red atmosphere signal something even more disquieting? This is an age in which people queue to buy milk powder from Hong Kong, doubting the safety of their own food supply. People are living with catastrophic levels of pollution and environmental destruction, the unsought consequence of industrialisation. From here it is only a short step to fears of complete annihilation.

Cui Xinming admires painters such as Lucian Freud and Gerhard Richter, who themselves turn an unflinching gaze on people in order to convey truths deeper than surface appearances. His practice is exhaustive, involving many preparatory drawings, arranging what the artist calls his “protagonists and props” before he develops larger drawings and colour studies. Finally he is ready to start working on the canvas, which he begins by compiling a structural, linear composition of formal relationships. The artist describes this process as a form of text. “I use the basic language and structural relationships of painting as an attempt to construct a narrative that is similar to a ‘graphical text’,” he says. Like many of the painters he admires, Cui Xinming uses photographs as reference material; pointing out that even in the 19th century innovators such as Courbet did the same. He sees the amount of visual information available to artists today - through the internet, newspapers, and magazines - as a rich source of ideas and imagery. However, these sources are combined, recombined and transformed in order to create his mysterious narratives.

His influences and ideas may be eclectic, but Cui Xinming's creation of powerful allegories speaks of his lived experience – the pain as well as the exhilaration of China's emergence as a powerful market economy. The creation of a coded language of symbolism and allegory is a feature of much contemporary art in China. It harks back to a rich tradition, as well as to the necessity at times to veil harsh truth in metaphor. At the same time, he is painting for a global audience, and his work is absolutely universal. We are all prey to the sense of dislocation resulting from the too rapid pace of change, of the overthrowing of past values and beliefs. A sense, in fact, of being ‘sleepwalkers’ in an unfamiliar universe. “I cannot change how reality is,” says Cui Xinming, “I can only express it.”

睡者醒來!

夢游症患者的世界:崔新明作品中的寓言

文: Luise Guest

「夜遊症(名詞)也叫作夢游症:是一種深眠倒錯的失調:症狀包括在睡眠中步行 或沉於催眠狀態。」

「夜遊症(名詞)也叫作夢游症:是一種深眠倒錯的失調:症狀包括在睡眠中步行或沉於催眠狀態。」夢游是日常生活中常見的狀態,也同時與日常生活離異。夢游可以包括多種行爲走路、說話、甚至吃喝可是夢游者醒來以後卻沒有任何相關的記憶。這些行爲其實司空見慣,但夢游這個概念卻令我們心底裏覺得不安,動搖了我們慣常的一種設想:就是我們了解自己所身處的世界,而且安逸 舒適地游走於其中。也可以這樣說,今天在中國生長與生活的經驗,與夢游有一些共同點。我們醒來觀察的世界與我們睡眠中所看到的世界截然不同。一切都不一樣,它們不斷地蛻變,方式既微妙且深 奧。

崔新明的展覽名為「夢游症患者的世界」,展出令人料想不到的角度,而用灰暗的視野面對現今的美妙新世界。看到的一切與現實不相符,而世界的軸綫都被移動了。藝術家說:「觀者在這個領域所獲得的經驗,陌生而遙遠。」崔新明所展示給我們的領域,名副其實的令人不安與感到陌生。人類與動物形狀從黑影中冒出來,被擺設於日常生活環境之中一張沙發、咖啡桌、客廳而畫作裏的描繪技術細膩之至,十分矚目。崔新明於一九八六年在山東省出生,剛從四川美術學院畢業。他承認,中國與西方的觀眾對他的作品會有不同的解讀方法;但是,畫作是溝通的一種方式,「它提供一扇窗戶,讓同一個藍天下的人,有機會窺看其他人的生活。」

就像世界各地的藝術家一樣,中國的畫家都在尋找一個視覺語言,從而應對當今的生活現狀。社會蛻變、拆卸工程、城市重建都把從前的一切抹掉了,引出了一個沒有定律的世界。這種斷層效果層出不窮,因此很多早期的當代藝術到了今天已經顯得脫節。正因如此,一個新穎的畫作語言從而萌生。在 過去幾年,當代中國繪畫呈現了兩個大方向:有些藝術家的作畫基礎源自他們所敬愛的文人畫作、工筆技巧的現實主義以及有識之士的傳統山水畫;另外一批藝術家則吸收了中國早期的現代主義與過去三十年社會現實主義后再次蓬勃,即上世紀八十年代復蘇的西方學派。雖然崔新明的作品顯示了畫家把握水墨畫與傳統藝術形式的深厚功底,但他的藝術理念畢竟屬於以上的第二批,尤其是他那些生氣勃勃而富生動表情的筆跡。

崔新明代表了現今嶄露頭角的一代,他們對文化大革命談不上有過直接經驗,也沒有感到興趣。對於那些在上世紀九十年代贏得國際聲譽的藝術家來說,文革提供了多種形象,而這些形象正是西方觀賞者所渴望的,標誌著「異國風情」的中國符號。比較年輕的藝術家現卻闖出一條創新的,建在 他們所認知的現實的道路。他們生活的世界之中,包含極大的財富與駭人聽聞的貧窮;「中國特式 的社會主義」與審查制度、獨裁主義的社會控制並存;而貪贓舞弊令大衆產生犬儒主義與對道德規 範的莫名不安。

乍看之下,崔新明的畫作像是描述一個虛擬的世界;它像是冷酷的電子遊戲,主人公在一個漆黑或充滿隱喻的黯淡環境下,他所面對的是個敵托邦。那裏深藏著不詳的徵兆如果它們是寓言的話,那麼全都象徵最壞的結果。這是一個荒蕪的世界,在那裏什麼都可以發生。我們聯想起戈雅,腦海裏浮出農神把自己的兒子吞噬一景。野狗、豺狼、田鼠在一個人類文明的廢墟中,在闕限的空間 潛藏。荒廢的建築被野生植物掩蓋,磚頭之間生長著雜草。大家不要忘記,這位藝術家在重慶這個 世界上發展最快,規模最大的大都會冒起的。在過去二十年來,一波波脫臼的變化把中國城市徹底地改造了,而重慶的蛻變最爲劇烈。像「瑞普·凡·溫克爾」那樣醒來發現世界已經改頭換面的感覺, 在崔新明的那些夢幻般的情景中十分明顯。他說:「在我居住的地方,人的道德觀逐漸消失,人與一個沒有靈魂的系統正在衝撞。」他的畫作讓我們浸濡在一個末日后的世界。在那裏,連物理定律都暫時被延緩。在那裏,因爲畫家他那魔術式的處理手法,連固體都可以變成液體。在這些畫作裏,兒 時記憶與惡夢碰撞著現今這一代人面對今天中國的矛盾與恐懼。

我們可以說崔新明的實踐具體地表現了中國油畫派系中某一個傳統的一個新動態。在二十世紀初期,中國藝術家到歐洲學習後回國,在國內各美術學院任教。後來,到了上世紀三、四十年代,從海外回國的藝術家比如說,吳冠中他們都滿懷早期現代主義烏托邦般的理想主義。他們意圖遠離「文人」畫作的傳統,認定西方油畫技巧更可表達新社會新意念的模式。自一九七六年改革開放後,直至上世紀八、九十年代,具象畫作在不同的大都市裏,都經歷過一些意味深長的實驗模式。中國藝術學院那些嚴格訓練出來的學生駕馭驚人的技術,帶動了現實油畫的新風格。崔新明的這一代年輕畫家秉承了這個傳統,尤其注重道德與表現心理。

上一代藝術家與年輕一代的區別,就是新生代那種永不膽怯的主觀性與內省,也很有可能是全球性X與Y世代的一種特徵。鑒於集體主義這個大前提,個別藝術家這樣周密的表達內心世界,乍看亦令人覺得驚訝。可是,這種趨向其實也有先例的。我們要是深入研究的話,會發現來自四川的藝術 家都有這種特徵。巫鴻曾經提出以下的論點:文革後「傷痕油畫」運動中的四川畫家們都把焦點放在中國年輕人「失去的一代」,表達他們的憂傷與對新時代的希望。早在一九八一年,四川畫家王川 在《美術》雜誌這樣寫道:「與我的同輩一樣,我熱切地探索如何應對生活這個問題……當我跟蹤那些探索未來、蜿蜒的思路時,我覺得困惑、心煩意亂、遲疑不決。」到了今天,新一代藝術家要表達他們想像中的中國,與上一代同樣抱著熱誠,探索的精神與尋找視覺語言的渴望。何森比崔新明老一代,同樣是四川美術學院畢業生。他也曾經這樣說:「我們爲什麼只處理表層看得到的東西?在傳統中國藝術,意義不一定在表層出現;還需要幻想與概念。」

今天,爲了反映他看到這世界的荒謬與殘酷,崔新明作畫時,致力尋找潛意識裏最深層的藏匿處。在《故事II》與《被禁忌的遊戲》中,藝術家純熟地把握媒介要求的技巧,人物從深深的明暗法冒出來,光線的來源含糊,而周邊環境也顯得富有神祕感一部分像個腐朽的城市廢墟,一部分像個玄妙的廟宇。在《故事II》裏面,一頭迷失的野狗站在兩個佛像前,牠警覺地、仔細地觀望。另外一頭狗被燒香的投影掩蓋了一半。牠在背景偷偷摸摸,顯然在吃供奉在廟宇的祭品。這個地方好像一個被棄置的廢墟。但是,燃燒的香火暗示人的存在,只是我們看不到罷了。畫作富有油畫的特質,姿態豐富,令人信服,正好隱喻宗教在獨裁社會的地位。

在《被禁忌的遊戲》裏,一個穿著制服的人舉起手敬禮(還是示意警告?),面對著發出微光又好像將要溶解的佛像。這個人物背向我們,因此我們不能識辨他是個軍人、警察、或者警衛,但他肯定待代表了權力。藝術家曾說,這個人物是個入侵者,他「企圖控制一切」。這個境況,我們可以有不同的解讀:國家政府意圖控制國民的夢想、志向、對宗教的渴望;或者是人類的政治系統面對永恒總會是徒勞無功。一群餓狗在前景盤旋,觀察一切。其中一隻回望我們,目露凶光。漲紅的油彩看起來像一灘灘、一滴滴的鮮血,與燃燒的香火透出的紅色互相輝映。崔新明操控油彩純熟之極,在畫面上營 造了一面薄紗,因此在這個令人費解的衝突發生的空間裏,建築物再不是固體,卻像溶化了一樣。光線透過水蒸氣霧與塵埃 的過濾,造成超出現實的另一個世界,類似提埃波羅的與世隔絕的景象 一般。「黑雲後照耀著光明。」崔新明說。

《被蠱惑的歲月》描述一群年輕人。他們都站起來,背向我們。地點似乎是一個有豪華沙發與咖啡桌的家中。可是,房間的後牆顯然被炸掉了,人物都面對著一個紅亮的光源。光源超羣非凡,竟令人 心生畏懼?藝術家故意讓我們猜疑。非現實的感覺更顯突出,因爲一隻看起來像大雪貂或疑似袋鼠的動物就站在人群旁邊,觀察整個境況。這個富有隱喻、滿懷大志的作品,有很多不同的解讀方式。畫裏的人物被中國現今身為全球經濟強國的物質財富與華麗堂皇所迷倒嗎?紅色的天空是虛假的晨曦嗎?或者他們帶著願景渴望的,是從前的中國,是「東方紅」的年代?又或者這個紅色的氛圍標誌著更令人不安的事物?我們生活的這個年代,人們擔心食物的來源以致在香港買奶粉都出現人龍。在生活中,工業化引起的污染與環境破壞,已經達到災患的程度。再邁多一小步,大家恐怕要憂 慮的,是全面的毀滅。

崔新明仰慕盧西安·弗洛伊德與格哈德·里希特等畫家。這兩位大師都果敢地凝視人物,從而表達那些蘊藏在更深層的真理。崔新明作畫時下很多工夫;他會擬多份初稿,好讓把「主角與道具」編排 好,然後才延伸至更大面積的平面,試驗不同顏色。到了最後,他終於可以在畫布上工作了。他先彙編了一個用綫條劃分及有條理的結構。藝術家曾用文字來作譬如:「我運用油畫的基本語言與結構上的互聯關係,把故事講出來,正如一種‘圖案文字」,」他這樣說。就像很多他欽佩的畫家一樣,崔 新明利用照片作參考;他指出,連十九世紀藝術改革者庫爾貝都用過如此的方法。從他的角度來看,今天藝術家可以運用的視覺資訊 通過互聯網、報紙、雜誌 是概念與意象的豐盛泉源。可 是,崔新明把這些泉源合併、再合併、或改變來編造他那些富有神秘色彩的故事。

雖然崔新明受到的影響與他的思維好像都很折衷,但是,他那令人信服的、帶有隱喻的創作,充分 表現了他自身的生活經驗那就是中國市場經濟勃起所帶來的傷痛與歡欣。中國當代藝術含藏不少暗諷的象徵主義與寓言體。這個現象可以追溯至一個豐富的傳統,也還有因爲時局國情的影響,藝術家只可以用隱喻來遮掩殘酷的真理。與此同時,崔新明也是爲了全球的觀者而創作畫作; 他的作品毫無疑問是具有宇宙性。我們都是因爲過快速度變化而產生脫臼,大家活在過去的價值與信念都給推翻的日子,就正是這種像「夢游者」在一個陌生的宇宙的感覺。「我不可改變現實,」崔 新明說,「我只可以把它表達出來。」

Black Hole of Memories
記憶黑洞系列

With a strong focus and gestural strokes, Cui Xinming has created two particular series that address the challenges brought on by continual development. In his previous 'Black Hole of Memories' series, Cui Xinming approaches the canvas as an extension of his cognisance, mind and memory. At the centre of this series is 'Black Hole of Memories – Hometown in Autumn' (2012) in which Cui Xinming depicts an endless sea of grass blades that jab and lead to a procumbent mountain in the far distance; a reference to where he grew up, a stark contrast from the city of Chongqing, where he currently works and resides.

Pervading through this series and later ones is a sense of domestic nostalgia; the places he has known, where lots of time has been spent, and which have changed with the tests of time. He casts these scenes of the familiar, however, with sightings of the incredulous or hypnagogic. 'Black Hole of Memories I' (2011), for example, portrays a forlorn individual, who bowing his head and clutching a letter, is surrounded by the detritus of what would seem to be home. Similarly, 'Black Hole of Memories II' (2011) reveals an older lady, cocooned in bed, solely accompanied by the traces of adjoining natural debris.

崔新明以鮮明的主題和示意動作的筆觸創作了兩幅特別的系列畫作。通過這兩幅作品來試圖應對由持續發展帶來的各種挑戰。在他之前所繪的《記憶黑洞》系列中，崔將畫布視為自己認知、思想和記憶的延伸。作為這一系列的代表作《記憶黑洞 - 故鄉的秋天》(2012)，崔描繪了一片一望無際的青草原，一直延伸到遠處橫臥的山陵。這幅畫是催回憶中的出生之地，和現在其居住工作的城市重慶有着天壤之別。

滿滿的本土懷舊感貫穿這一系列以及後來的作品：他熟悉的地方既敘述青蔥歲月的軌跡，卻也隨著時間的考驗而蛻變。崔新明描繪這些熟悉的場景，然而投放懷疑的、似醒非醒的踪跡。例如「記憶黑洞系列I」（2011），描繪了一個孤獨的個體，垂下頭，緊握著一封信，圍繞身邊的就只有似乎是代表家的零碎雜物。同樣，「記憶黑洞系列II」（2011）呈現一位年長的女士捲縮躺在床上，伴隨相鄰的只是一些自然零碎的雜物。”



“A vision from his youth, a ‘Black Hole of Memories – Autumn in Hometown’ (2012) is a panoramic painting laced with nostalgia that depicts an endless sea of grass blades that jab and lead to a procumbent mountain in the far distance. Presented as an antithesis to his current abode, the painting presents a sharp contrast to his residence in the rapidly developing metropolis that is Chongqing.”

“源於他少年時的記憶,‘記憶的黑洞系列-故鄉的秋’(2012)為一幅透著鄉愁的全景,描繪一片一望無際的青草原,一直延伸到遠處橫臥的山陵。這幅作品呈現出一個對立面,與他現在居住的迅速發展的大都市重慶形成鮮明的對比。”

Black Hole of Memories – Autumn in Hometown
《故鄉的秋》
2012

Oil on canvas
布面油畫
200 x 500 cm



“An example of Cui Xinming’s thematic focus on domesticity and religion, ‘Black Hole of Memories I’ (2011) portrays a forlorn individual, who bowing his head and clutching a letter, is surrounded by the detritus of what would seem to be home.”

“崔新明以家庭生活和宗教為探究題材的一個例子,就是'記憶黑洞系列I'(2011)◦作品描繪了一個孤獨的個體,垂下頭,緊握著 一封信,圍繞身邊的就只有似乎是代表家的零碎雜物◦”

Black Hole of Memories I
《記憶黑洞系列 一》
2011

Oil on canvas
布面油畫
145 x 330 cm



“A lady lies cocooned in bed, solely accompanied by the traces of adjoining natural debris. A contrasting vivid light shines in the background; a running motif throughout his work.”

“一位年長的女士捲縮躺在床上,伴隨相鄰的只是一些自然零碎的雜物。一個鮮明的對比光線照射在背景,驅使一種意念在作品中運行。”

Black Hole of Memories II
《記憶黑洞系列 二》
2011

Oil on canvas
布面油畫
183 x 426 cm



When I woke up, everything was gone II
《當我醒來,一切都已不在系列 二》
2012

Oil on canvas
布面油畫
100 x 240 cm



“A seemingly endless rock wall, adorned by mythological lionlike creatures, Cui Xinming depicts a remaining section of tradition. The landscape, devoid of buildings but covered in dark light, hints to the ominous passing of time.”

“一個看似無盡的岩壁,以富神話色彩的石獅子裝飾,崔新明描繪傳統經過興衰後的殘餘。缺乏建築的景觀貫以暗光覆蓋,暗示歲月的流逝。”

Black Hole of Memories III
《記憶黑洞系列 三》
2012

Oil on canvas
布面油畫
40 x 50 cm

Kiang Malingue Cui Xinming

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Education

2008 MFA, Oil Painting Department, Sichuan Fine Arts Institute

Awards

2011 Luo Zhongli Scholarship

Solo Exhibition

2018
"Differentiation", Edouard Malingue Gallery, Hong Kong

2016
"Festival", Edouard Malingue Gallery, Shanghai, China

2014
"Journey to the East", Edouard Malingue Gallery, Hong Kong

2013
"A Sleepwalker's World", booth of Edouard Malingue Gallery, Art Basel Hong Kong, Hong Kong

Group Exhibitions

2022
"The Jolt of Image: New Paintings by Chinese Millennials", Chengdu Art Museum, Chengdu, China

2019
"Sans Soleil", Edouard Malingue Gallery, Shanghai, China

2015
"Tenth Anniversary Retrospective Exhibition of Luo Zhongli Scholarship", Chongqing Art Museum, Chongqing, China

2014
"Hi-Art Prize", Beijing, China
"Survival Experiment", Beijing DeZi Art Center, Beijing, China
"Anatomy of Anxieties", curated by Rowing project, Edouard Malingue Gallery, Hong Kong

2013
"Colour Boundary", 'CYAP' Istanbul Exchange Exhibition, Mimar Fine Art College Center, Istanbul, Turkey
"Cross Boundary – Exhibition of China Modern Young Artists", China culture Exchange Center, Berlin, Germany
"Colour Temperature: Exhibition of Top 27 Emerging Chinese Artists", Istanbul, Turkey
"China Young Artists Project (CYAP) ", Beijing International Exhibition Centre, Beijing, China
"HdA Kunstsalon", Berlin, Germany

2012
"Ignite, BOOM! ", China Young Artists Project (CYAP), Beijing International Exhibition Centre, Beijing, China
"Differential Public Body", Blue Roof Museum, Young Sound Art Center, Chengdu & Shenzhen, China

2011
"Black Hole of Memories", Luo Zhongli Scholarship Exhibition, Chongqing Art Museum, Chongqing, Sichuan, China
"Black Hole of Memories II", The Opening of June, Graduation Exhibition of Masters in Fine Arts, Sichuan Fine Arts Institute, Sichuan, China
"Installation work Sinkhole", The 18th Annual Student Exhibitions, Sichuan Fine Arts Institute, Sichuan, China

2010
"Nomination Awards – It's getting dark and sick body", The 1st Zhang Xiaogang Graduate, Chongqing, Sichuan, China
"Contemporary Art Scholarship", Chongqing Art Museum, Chongqing, Sichuan, China
"Walking as Three: The Fascination of Language", Chongqing 3 Huangjiaoping Art Space, Chongqing, Sichuan, China

2009
"Portrait of a Lady", Chengdu International Art Biennial, Chengdu Contemporary Art Centre, Chengdu, Sichuan, China

2008
"Big Chongqing – Lone", Chongqing, China

K

M

崔新明

1986年生於山東，現工作生活於重慶

學歷

2008 四川美術學院油畫系攻讀碩士研究生學位

獎項

2011 油畫作品《記憶黑洞》系列獲得“2011年度羅中立獎學金”

個人展覽

2018 “辨”，馬凌畫廊，香港
2016 “節日”，馬凌畫廊，上海，中國
2014 “東遊記”，馬凌畫廊，香港
2013 “一個夢遊症患者的世界”，馬凌畫廊展位，香港巴塞爾藝術展，香港

群展

2022 「圖像的震撼——80、90中國新繪畫」，成都美術館，成都，中國

2019 「沒有太陽」，馬凌畫廊，上海，中國

2015 「羅中立獎學金十周年回顧展」，四川美術學院重慶美術館，重慶，中國

2014 「Hi-Art Prize」，北京，中國
「生存實驗」，北京德滋畫廊，北京，中國
「焦慮之解剖學」，Rowing Pro-ject 策展，馬凌畫廊，香港

2013 「色溫：CYAP」伊斯坦布爾交流展 思南美術大學，伊斯坦布爾，土耳其

「越界 – 中國當代青年藝術家作品展」中國文化交流中心，柏林，德國
「色溫：27 位中國新藝術家展覽」，伊斯坦布爾，土耳其
「CYAP」青年藝術家扶持推廣計劃」，中國文化交流中心，柏林，德國

2012 「CYAP青年藝術家扶持推廣計劃——『引爆』BOOM!」，北京國際會展中心，北京，中國
「差異公共體」，藍頂美術館，雛聲初引藝術服務中心，成都／深圳，中國

2011 《記憶黑洞》系列獲得「2011年度羅中立獎學金」，重慶當代美術館，重慶，中國
《記憶黑洞系列2》參加四川美術學院「開放的六月」研究生畢業展裝置作品，四川美術學院，四川，中國
《天坑》參加四川美術學院油畫系第18屆學生作品年展，四川美術學院，四川，中國

2010 油畫作品《天快黑了嗎》《病體》系列獲首屆「張曉剛研究生當代藝術創作獎學金」提名獎，重慶，中國
油畫作品《游戲劇照》獲第二屆中國高校美術作品學年展三等獎，成都蓉城當代藝術中心，成都，中國
「三人行：語言的迷戀」當代藝術展，重慶黃桷坪正街3號藝術空間，重慶，中國

2009 油畫作品《仕女圖》參加2009中國蓉城國際美術作品雙年展，成都蓉城當代藝術中心，成都，中國

2008 油畫作品《大重慶—孤獨》參加西南地區研究生展，重慶，中國

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Published by Kiang Malingue, 2024

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