

郭鸿蔚 Guo Hongwei

精选文章 *Selected Articles*

車快行、閃亮星、所有的光明

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每當我們似乎快要弄清郭鴻蔚實際上是個怎樣的藝術家時，他便改換了模式，而為觀看他的畫面樹立起一副新的框架來。首先是技法上，他開創和改良了使用水彩的特殊方法。其次是他的收集者系列，在這一項目中，他的單幅和系列作品把圖像當做物體一般收集起來，而在他的拼貼作品裏，他將藝術史上的經典圖像重新進行了編輯。再者是他自己的工作室旁邊創辦了另類展覽空間“分泌場”，並在那裏持續展覽他在北京的朋友和同好的作品。這套偶裝是一種保護的姿態——郭鴻蔚不僅拒絕被代際及風格標籤所桎梏，這些標籤嚴重迷惑着他的觀眾——他還流露出的一種對存在于慣性中的繪畫的不滿，至少是不滿于當今中國藝術界裏用成功學來理解繪畫的方式。郭鴻蔚工作于其間的是一個極其當代的（智能的、物質的、觀念的、彈性的）大環境，而這大環境掩蓋了他所制造出的事物表面上那順而易見的美。

他最近的項目着重于探討那些幽暗之光：郭鴻蔚首先備好以平坦、均勻的啞光黑色顏料作底的畫布，接下來便在它們的表面堆砌厚厚的一層層上光油，這樣一來，畫面就不僅在此時所塗抹出的正空間裏浮現，同時也在這兩層不同反光的塗層對比之間顯露。畫面從某些角度很難被看到，觀眾需要彎腰躲閃——栖身于各種姿勢，以便把握觀看對象的整體。這些作品根據主題可以被劃分為幾類，它們共同回應着郭鴻蔚意欲回答的那些問題。

這批作品中尺寸最大的所刻畫的是建築，畫布的尺寸回應着身體處於遠望中的比例。這些作品包含兩類：其中的多數作品題為《光群》，它們由一些建築組成，這些建築從啞光顏料所塗抹出的負空間浮現出來，只有窗戶是在上光油塗層顯現；而《夜窗》則通過表現一扇窗外的世界而反轉了這種視覺。《光群》只描繪了建築的某一些面，它們僅由三四排發光矩形所組成，這些矩形布局緊密，色調為藍色和橙色，矩形下面是起伏波動的形式——透過語境，我們認為，這些可能是天黑之后某處辦公環境內的桌椅，另外一張作品描繪了某座建築的角落，或甚至是從畫家（及觀眾）的視角出發，描繪了幾座相互交疊的建築；眼睛在捉弄誘騙之下，想象出每個建築面之間的某種內在結合，從而將這些場景縫合在一起，但事實上，每幅作品僅僅是由依透視法排列的矩形所構成。

在第二類作品——比如《夜窗》——當中，事情變得有些更為複雜了。我們必須想象自己此刻正處於這些建築中的某一座內，向外觀看夜色，畫作的中部是完全反光的，畫作的某一側由無光澤的畫布條縫邊。由于上光油的鏡面質感，作品表面有了反光效果，于是我們透過戶外場景的斑駁質地看到了自己的映像。這些畫面原本只是由紅色的模糊形狀以及另外的一些光所組成，像是一個停車場或一條道路。還有一組作品聚焦于單個物體，它們也被置于此片啞光

平面的中央；由于缺少更為妥當的說法，我們姑且稱之為靜物。題為《光亭》的作品彌合了建築與物體之間的差異：一尊崗亭既散發光芒，又明確了被照亮的空間的範圍。其他物體還包括：一個迪斯科球，它被畫成好像是從某個特定方向被照亮了，並維持着同樣的暖橙與冷藍的色調平衡（《球體 No.2》）；喝威士忌時用的一只冰球（《球體 No.1》）；一塊棱角分明的晶體，被放大并占據了一小塊畫布；一大塊煤（《黑色礦物質 No.1》）；交疊的肥皂泡覆蓋了整個表面，以及一只空的塑料購物袋（《黑膠袋 No.1》）。選擇這些東西是有理由的：它們散發、過濾、反射或折射光。在最常見的情況下，它們把光從一個地方收集來，又在另一個地方依靠透明性或衆多反光面把光漫射出去。我們或許可以將這些視作試驗性案例，它們是為成就一套完整的技法而進行的演練。這些技法最終會在其他媒介和形式中被用到。

最後一個系列的作品，雖然規模最小，但却最豐富多樣。這個系列涉及的主題是人的形體。被描繪成使用中狀態的崗亭或許也可以納入這一類。不過，這一系列的合理切入點是《入口 No.1》。這幅方形作品上是一只人眼，其虹膜和瞳孔一并填滿畫布乃至漫到邊緣。正是藉由這幅作品，我們了解到，郭鴻蔚的興趣點并不在于歷史的表征或文脈關係（不同于其他一些使用黑灰色調來制造大量場景的畫家），而是在于視覺的可能性——從更為體驗性或現象學的層面上來講。順着這個系列往下看，是《背光的手》，它表現了一雙瘦削得古怪的手，從畫布的一個邊緣伸展到畫布中央；這些細節是從文藝復興時期的歐洲畫作中獲取的，出于對典型美術館裏那靜謐的黃色燈光的重重，這些細節在這些作品中被描繪成局部背光的样子。從複雜性上講，現在盛行使用隱喻的方式，但郭鴻蔚却成功讓你將這些人的局部解讀成孤立的物，最多只會含有這樣的一層隱喻含于其中；即這些其實是栖居于建築中的物，而正是這些物使光的形式得以充分體現。

郭鴻蔚從兩個方面思考光的問題：一是光對於他做畫家的影響；二是都市的環境。比起在北京東北五環黑磚工作室落腳工作的大多數藝術家來說，郭鴻蔚還是比較喜歡都市生活的——他是一個樂隊的主唱，對品威士忌也有幾分在行。我們或許可以猜測，村中夜色的黑暗與北京市中心愈發都市化的景象之間所形成的對比，同他對光的興趣不無關聯（畢竟，北京這個城市不過是在過去15到20年間才見證了小巷巷內路燈數量的增長）。對藝術家而言，光的問題不可回避，特別是在涉及到和光有關的媒介時，尤其關聯如何布展和展覽主題。郭鴻蔚依憑這兩個問題推進這個系列，他用繪畫的媒介去呈現除了在鏡頭下成為一張感光圖像的方式之外，一個物體是如何存在的可能性，進而設法將這種可能性安置到展覽空間當中，布展方式則進一步打亂了“物體-圖像-空間”之間被馴化的——對應關係。郭鴻蔚對光的興趣不僅在繪畫方面，也在策展方面，分泌場空間目前的展覽“當被光穿過”就集中了和郭鴻蔚同輩的最優秀的青年藝術家，共同研究這個問題。李姝睿和何岸展出了兩件他們的裝置作品；李姝睿用日光燈管填滿一間廢棄的老式電梯，只留一道打開的

狹縫；而何岸則將一枚閃亮的18K金幣嵌入水泥地面。張鼎為懸于牆上、呈網格狀分布的發光燈泡帶去一雙錘子；李燎則把他從深圳公寓帶來的所有的燈都接通電源（以告知觀眾，他自己的公寓在展覽期間一直處於黑暗）。林科最好的錄像作品之一是他用錄屏的方式記錄自己盯著一面電腦屏幕，屏幕上則是他用放大鏡造訪某片風景圖像——如長城沿途的烽火臺——中的小紅點。郭鴻蔚自己帶來的一件作品，是使用家用壁燈在平面上建造極簡的光影空間，而在另一件他同aaajiao（徐文愷）合作的作品中，拼接布滿整堵牆面的電腦顯示屏全都持續播放着黑屏（當然，其中沒有一個屏幕真的是黑的），而aaajiao（徐文愷）則對其中一個屏幕進行編程，使之模擬一個壞掉了的顯示屏上漏光的紋樣。不過，介入性最強烈的作品僅在燈光熄滅時才會顯露，這時人們才會發現，蔣調奕早已將展覽空間的每一寸都塗上了荧光粉。

這個項目說明了很多：光不只是作為一種條件出現，它也是一種物體，並也作為其他物體的一種屬性出現。藝術家們除了單純利用光來工作——如郭鴻蔚在展覽中他自己的作品中所做的那樣——他們還證明了，在對作品創作的預期上，光常常被低估，但它和其他東西一樣，也是一種文化構成物。不過，說回到即將到來的這個項目，我們必須記住，郭鴻蔚選擇繪畫是有原因的。想想和他的背景最為相近的那些藝術家，他們多是將繪畫優先看做是一場符號學上的實踐。媒介及與媒介介自身歷史的對話或者成為了一套關於符號的討論，在其中，視覺語言及語法為藝術家找到了穿越空間時間彼此交談的道路；又或者，它成為了某種符號貨幣，每張繪畫都在超越自身而進入觀念體系或經濟體系，并與之交融。當郭鴻蔚畫一只眼球時，重要的是眼球是以繪畫的方式存在的，而表征的問題則再次進入這個方向。但是最關重要的是，手的工作詮釋了心智的體驗，因為它讓藝術家得以充分思考，創造一種明顯不同于攝影等感光媒介的視覺感知方式意味着什么——尤其是在用來研究光的時候。

到目前為止，我們都是在圍繞工作室與展覽這一連續體兩種中的一種進行着討論，但光在這兩個極點皆對作品被解讀的方式起着作用。一旦作品離開工作室，郭鴻蔚就要非常小心地將他的繪畫裝置到展覽空間當中，注意它們被懸挂的位置，以及它們最終被人接收到的方式。這當中并不存在固定的規則；有些繪畫可能是以一種非常平整的方式被照亮，用白色LED燈全面打上一層淡淡的光，而另一些繪畫可能接受到的是來自單一角度的極具指向性的聚光燈照明；還有一些繪畫則可能被輔以室內落地燈。布展手段使人想到哈佛大學的羅斯科畫展在近期引發的爭議：1964年，藝術家將五幅巨型繪畫作捐贈并裝置于一間私人用餐廳，條件是作品會受到特殊幕布及其他措施的保護。在他去世后，他的指示被無視，而作品開始褪色；就在最近，一隊藝術品保護者被運去修復作品，但并非是用物理上改變作品色彩的方式，而是借助一種被稱為補償照明的方法——這是雷蒙德·拉方丹獨創的方法。發出特定色彩的數碼投影機被安置好，在白天時給畫作打光，制造出的效果能與原作匹敵，但又不會損壞或甚至以物理性

工藝的方式干預畫意。郭鴻蔚所做的是完全不同的事情，他為他作品的展示制造條件，同時也獲取特有的色彩體驗極具要求。而對羅斯科作品的修復，則不僅指向物理世界與數碼世界之間的糾纏，也指向創作與接受之間的分歧；即便是拿郭鴻蔚來說，作品多大程度上可以說是存在于畫面中，多大程度上又存在于對繪畫的記錄當中，多大程度上存在于觀看繪畫的體驗，又多大程度上存在于對作品的照明上呢？

借由這批作品，郭鴻蔚對視覺進行了一番審視。他將視覺分解還原成諸個構成部分，以此讓觀者充分思考藝術的整個過程，因為藝術不僅存在于藝術界的體制內，也存在于其外的體制中。這動作十分簡單——畫一件物體，調整它的照明——但為進行這一過程所做的審慎計劃卻很難到令人欽佩的地步。郭鴻蔚始終是個畫家，始終是收集者，始終是策展人。他就像一個黑洞，他所吸收的光比他散發出來的要更多。

Fast Cars, Shooting Stars, All of the Lights

Robin Peckham

Every time it seemingly becomes clear what kind of artist Guo Hongwei really is, he changes the paradigm and builds a new framework to look at his pictures. First it was technique, with his invention and refinement of special ways of working with watercolor. Then he opened Gland space, the alternative gallery across from his studio where he continues to exhibit work from his friends and peers in Beijing. Then it was his idea of collecting, in which works and bodies of work gathered images as if they were objects. Then there were the collages, in which he reordered canonical art historical images. This camouflage is a protective gesture—Guo refuses to be pinned down by the generational and stylistic labels that so captivate his audience—but also betrays a dissatisfaction with painting as a practice, at least how it is understood in the success-based metrics of the Chinese art world today. Guo works in an extremely contemporary (intellectual, material, conceptual, resilient) milieu that belies the evident prettiness on the surface of what he does.

His latest project revolves around light through the lens of darkness: Guo begins with canvases primed in a flat, even, matte black pigment, then proceeds to build above their surfaces thick layers of glossy oil, so that pictures emerge not only in the positive space of what is applied at this stage but also in the contrast between these two different sets of layers. From some angles the pictures are difficult to see, and the viewer is required to duck and dodge—inhabiting different positions in order to get a sense of the totality of the object. These paintings can be split into several categories by subject, collectively responding to the questions Guo sets out to answer.

The largest paintings in this body of work, canvases produced relative to the scale of the height and breadth of the outstretched human body, depict architecture. Within this group there are two types: the majority, “*An Array of Lights*,” consist of architecture that emerges from the negative space of matte pigment, as only its windows appear in the glossy oil, while a smaller group reverse this optics by framing the world outside a window. Several paintings depict only one facade, consisting simply of three or four rows of glossy rectangles, tightly spaced, in shades of blue and orange, with undulating forms beneath them—we assume, from the context, that these are the desks and chairs that might populate an office environment after dark. Others depict a building from the corner, or even multiple buildings that overlap from the perspective of the painter (and viewer); the eye is tricked into stitching these scenes together by imagining a quality of internal cohesion to each facade when, in reality, each composition consists simply of an exercise in perspective arraying rectangular forms.

In the second category, as with *Night Window*, things become a bit more complicated. We must imagine ourselves now within one of these buildings, looking

out into the night; the center of the painting is fully glossy, framed by strips of matte canvas on either side. Because of the finish, the surface of the painting is actually reflective, so we see our own reflection over the mottled texture of the outdoor scene, which otherwise consists primarily of red blurs and other pieces of light, like a parking lot or a roadway. Another set of paintings focuses on individual objects similarly centered over this flat ground; for lack of a better term, we might call them still lifes. One composition, *Pavilion of Light*, bridges the gap between architecture and object: a telephone booth that both emits light and defines the lit space. Other objects include a disco ball, painted as if illuminated from a particular direction in the same balance of warm orange and cool blue tones (*Photoc Ball No. 2*); a ball of ice from a whiskey bar (*Photoc Ball No. 1*); an angular crystal, magnified to occupy a small canvas; a chunk of coal (*Black Mineral Substance No. 1*); soap bubbles overlapping to cover the entire surface; and an empty plastic shopping bag (*Black Plastic Bag No. 1*). These things are chosen for a reason: they emit, filter, reflect, or refract light, most commonly collecting it in one place and then diffusing it elsewhere via transparency or a multitude of angles. We might consider these the test cases, the exercises that contribute to a toolbox of techniques ultimately mobilized in other forms.

A final series of paintings, the most diverse even though it is the smallest, deals with the human form. The telephone booth, depicted in a state of use, might also fit into this category. The logical point of entrance for this project, however, is *The Entrance*, a square painting of a human eye, an iris and pupil that together fill the canvas to its edges. It is with this piece that we learn that Guo’s interest is not, primarily, with the history of representation or seriality (as is the case for other painters who produce large numbers of scenes in black and grayscale), but rather with the possibilities of vision on a more experiential or phenomenological level. Further down this spectrum, *Lucifugous Hands* captures oddly thin hands that stretch into the center of the canvas from one edge: these are details captured from Renaissance-era European paintings, and are depicted in partial shadow in these compositions out of deference to the hushed yellow light of the classic art history museum. In terms of complexity, it would make sense that the figurative category should be the most developed, but Guo manages instead to make these parts of humans to read more like objects in isolation. At the most, the suggestion is that these are the objects that inhabit the buildings that make for the fullest realization of the light project.

Guo Hongwei comes at light from two sides: first, there is the question of how it affects him as a painter; then, there is the urban environment. More than most artists working out of the Heiqiao studio cluster on the northeastern fifth ring road in Beijing, Guo enjoys urban life—he sings in a band, and is something of a whiskey connoisseur. We might speculate that the contrast between the darkness of the village night and the increasingly metropolitan scenery of downtown Beijing might have something to do with this interest (Beijing,

after all, is a city that saw streetlights proliferate in smaller streets in the city center only in the last 15-20 years). As an artist, light is an unavoidable question, particularly with reference to lens-based media, and to the installation and exhibition context. Guo draws on both of these problems for this painting project, using the medium of painting to work through how an object might be presented other than its light-based image captured in the lens, and then seeking to install this in the exhibition space in a way that further interrupts the naturalized one-to-one correspondence of object to image to space.

Guo’s interest in light is as much a curatorial one as a painterly one. The current exhibition at Gland Space, “illumination,” brings together some of the best young artists in Guo’s peer group to investigate the problem. Li Shurui and He An install two of their classic works: Li fills a decommissioned old-fashioned elevator with fluorescent tubes, leaving open only a crack, while He An embeds a shiny coin in the concrete floor. Zhang Ding takes a hammer to a grid of illuminated light bulbs hanging on the wall, while Li Liao plugs in all of the lamps from his Shenzhen apartment (telling viewers that his own apartment remains dark for the course of the exhibition). In one of his best videos, Lin Ke records himself staring at a computer screen on which he runs over small red dots in a landscape—like signal towers along the Great Wall—with a magnifying glass. Guo Hongwei himself includes one piece in which small lamps project looping areas of light and shadow across a white board, and another—a collaboration with aaijiao—in which collaged computer and video monitors all play black loops (none of them, of course, truly black), while aaijiao programs one screen to mimic the light patterns of a smashed monitor. The strongest intervention, however, appears only when the lights are out, when it becomes evident that Jiang Pengyi has coated every inch of the exhibition with a glow-in-the-dark powder.

This project says a lot: light appears not only as a condition, but also as an object, and as a property of other objects. Beyond simply harnessing light to do things—as Guo does in his own contribution to the exhibition—the artists prove that light is often underestimated in the anticipation of composition of work, and that it is as much a cultural formation as anything else. But, to return to the project at hand, it is important to remember that Guo Hongwei chooses painting for a reason. Looking to the artists in his immediate context, most treat painting as a primarily semiotic pursuit. The medium and its historical conversation become either a discourse of symbols, in which visual language and composition form a way for artists to speak to one another across space and time, or a form of symbolic currency, in which the individual painting comes to stand for something as it enters into and interacts with a conceptual or economic system beyond painting itself. When Guo paints an eyeball, it is important that his eyeball appears painterly, and that questions of representation again enter into the equation. It is of paramount importance that the work of the hand interprets the experience of the mind,

because this allows the artist to think through what it means to create visual sensation in a way that is markedly outside of the lens-based media typically used to investigate light.

So far, this speaks to one of the two ends of the studio and exhibition sequence, but light plays a role in how the work is read at both points. Once the work leaves the studio, Guo installs his paintings in exhibition spaces with very careful attention to how they are positioned and, ultimately, received. There are no fixed rules; some might be lit in a very flat way with an overall white LED wash, while others might be illuminated by highly directional spotlights from single perspectives; still others may be accompanied by domestic floor lamps. The approach calls to mind the recent controversy over Harvard’s Rothko murals, five large pieces the artist donated and installed in a private dining room in 1964 with the understanding that special curtains and other provisions would be made to protect the work. After his passing the instructions were disregarded and the work began to fade; just recently, a team of conservators elected to restore the work not by physically altering their color but by a method known as compensating illumination, the brainchild of Raymond Lafontaine. Digital projectors with particular chromatic outcomes programmed in illuminate the paintings throughout the day, creating an effect to rival the original without damaging or even intervening in the painting as a physical artifact. Guo Hongwei is doing something else entirely in creating the conditions for his work to be displayed, and makes not insignificant demands on himself in terms of capturing a particular chromatic experience. But the Rothko restoration points to the divergence between creation and reception as much as it does the increasing entanglement of physical and digital worlds; even with Guo, how much of the work could be said to reside in the painting, how much in its documentation, how much in the experience of viewing it, and how much in its illumination?

With this body of work, Guo Hongwei takes a look at vision. He breaks it down into its constituent components in a way that allows the viewer to think through the entire process of art as it exists in institutions both in and beyond the art world. The gesture is simple—paint an object, adjust its lighting—but the calculations that go into the procedure are admirably complex. Ever the painter, ever the collector, ever the curator, Guo is like a black hole, absorbing more light than he emits.

OCULA

Guo Hongwei on Seeing Patterns
That Don't Exist
TEXT: Sherry Paik

21 February 2020

Guo Hongwei on Seeing Patterns That Don't Exist

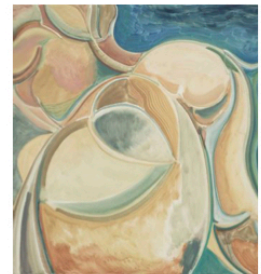
Sherry Paik
New York
21 February 2020

Pareidolia—defined as the tendency to identify a specific image in a random or ambiguous visual stimulus—accounts for why we see animals in the clouds or faces in the front of cars. At *Guo Hongwei: Pareidolia* (3 March–4 April 2020), presented by **Chambers Fine Art** in **New York**, such phenomena can be encountered in the **Beijing**-based artist's recent watercolours.



Guo Hongwei, *Cosmic Candies No.3* (2018). Watercolour on paper, 67 x 102 cm. Courtesy the artist and Chambers Fine Art.

A good place to start is *Poem* (2017), where rows of elongated, curved, or rounded specks dot the paper. Using an earthy colour palette ranging from light beige to dark brown, Guo has spaced the forms horizontally, grouping them in twos and threes in some places to mimic the visual composition of words in a poem. Yet viewers may also read these pseudo-letters as crudely drawn numbers or, upon closer inspection, make the unexpected discovery that they recall plant seeds—the teardrop-shaped units perhaps resemble sunflower seeds, while the larger, bulbous ones describe peanuts.



Guo Hongwei
[VIEW ARTIST PROFILE](#)

In *Fig 1* and *Fig 2* of *Affine Transformation*, both completed in 2017, sunflower seeds and peanut shells reappear in rhythmic, linear waves on paper. A term used in mathematics, 'affine transformation' denotes a linear mapping method that conserves parallel relationships after it has been performed. In his paintings, the artist demonstrates examples of affine transformation—reflection, rotation, and scaling—as he portrays each seed from a different angle from its immediate neighbours in a determined study of the changes in his subjects' appearances.



Guo Hongwei, *Fig. 2 of Affine Transformation* (2017). Watercolour on paper, 57 x 76 cm. Courtesy the artist and Chambers Fine Art.

Guo's affinity with botanical specimens goes back to *Painting is Collecting* (2012), his three-part solo exhibition held across the Beijing, Hong Kong, and New York spaces of Chambers Fine Art that included watercolour paintings of natural specimens. Inspired by the presentation format used in natural history museums, the artist arranged depictions of plants and minerals into grids, or birds and insects into irregular but balanced compositions.

Painting is Collecting – Stones No. 16 (2017) offers an example in the variously shaped and coloured stones that are locked into an orderly grid of ten by seven. Containing an abundance of related but different subjects, the painting also displays the artist's technical mastery. Where several colours exist within one specimen, he manipulates the ratio of pigment and water to capture them while leaving the unevenly distributed paint to dry with cloudy textures evocative of a stone.



3 MAR–4 APR 2020
Guo Hongwei
Pareidolia 幻想性错视
CHAMBERS FINE ART, NEW YORK
[VIEW EXHIBITION](#)



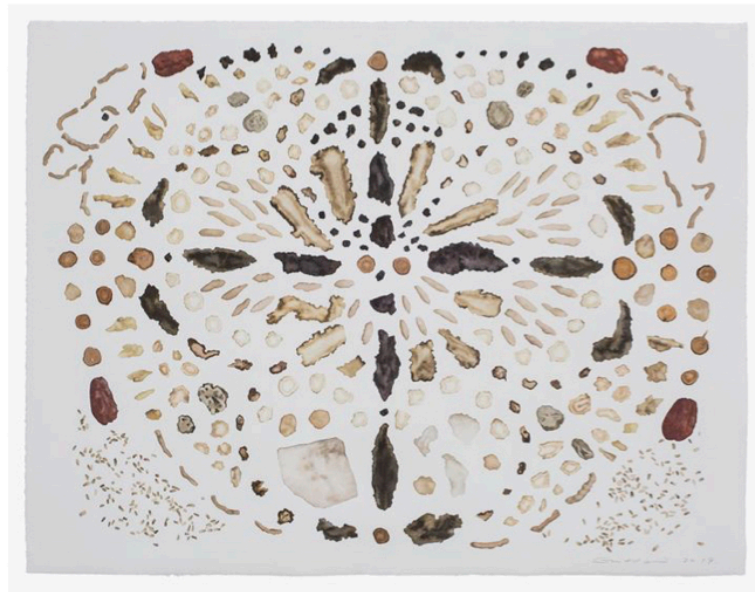
Guo Hongwei, *Cosmic Candies No. 1* (2018). Watercolour on paper, 67 x 102 cm. Courtesy the artist and Chambers Fine Art.

An understanding of tonalities is perhaps better seen in *Cosmic Candies No. 1* (2018), which shows a grid of 'cosmic candies' that shifts from light grey to yellow in overall tint as the eyes move from left to right. This evident control of the paint medium has precedents in earlier works such as the oil and watercolour paintings featured in *Things*, his first solo exhibition at Chambers Fine Art in Beijing in 2009. By then, he had been experimenting for some time with diluting oil paint with turpentine, then splashing water on the canvas before painting.



Chambers Fine Art
[VIEW GALLERY](#)

In *Chair No. 1* (2009), the paint has dried with a crystallised texture reminiscent of oil pastel drawings. With watercolour, the artist first explored painting on moist paper as in 'Chiaroscuro' (2008–2009)—a series of monochrome paintings based on old photographs in which details become lost in the amorphous washes of greys and black. *Red Plastic Bag No. 4* (2009), by contrast, has the same precise outlines as *Stone No. 16* or *Cosmic Candies*, a result of Guo Hongwei first drawing with water-soluble coloured chalk, splashing water, then painting.



Guo Hongwei, *Remedies for Sorrow Diagram No. 4 – Spirit Healing Tea* (2019). Watercolour on paper, 50 x 65 cm. Courtesy the artist and Chambers Fine Art.

From the stillness of *Stone No. 16* and *Cosmic Candies*, a more intuitive and enlivened turn occurs in *Remedies for Sorrow Diagram No. 1 – Remedy for Depression*; *Remedies for Sorrow Diagram No. 3 – Cough Remedy*; and *Remedies for Sorrow Diagram No. 4 – Spirit Healing Tea* (all 2019).

Stemming from the artist's research into botany, these diagrams are composed of ingredients traditionally used in Chinese medicine—here, arranged in a way to encourage pareidolia. In *Remedy for Depression*, it is possible to make out a face with an angled eyebrow in the upper right corner, and potentially another wearing a surprised expression, while the almost symmetric, kaleidoscopic scene in *Spirit Healing Tea* spans outward from the face with a pair of rounded eyes and a joyful mouth in the centre.

The title *Remedies for Sorrow* recalls St Thomas Aquinas' 'Five Remedies against Sadness', in which a priest and doctor recommends five ways of self-care: granting yourself pleasure, permission to cry, to turn to the companionship of friends and loved ones, to contemplate, and to sleep and bathe. Guo Hongwei's watercolours may also provide that: an uplifting exercise for the mind and eyes. —[O]

HYPERALLERGIC

HYPERALLERGIC

The Art of Perception

TEXT: Edward M. Gómez

March 14, 2020

The Art of Perception

In a new exhibition, the Chinese artist Guo Hongwei uses watercolor to vividly depict nature's forms — and gently tease the eye.



Edward M. Gómez March 14, 2020



Guo Hongwei, "Remedies for Sorrow Diagram No. 4 – Spirit-Healing Tea" (2019), watercolor on paper, 19.5 x 25.5 inches (all images courtesy Chambers Fine Art, New York)

Traditionally, in the West, serious art history likes its art made from durable stuff that withstands — or defies — the passage of time. Stone, bronze, oil on canvas, or even Corten steel — such materials often command attention, while certain kinds of drawings or works on paper may be regarded, however unfairly, as somehow possessing less heft.

Consider watercolors: With their inherently delicate, even fugitive-feeling wisps of color and strange luminosity, which sometimes seems to radiate out from pigment-soaked washes, works made with watercolor on paper can feel lightweight to viewers who favor the meat-and-potatoes solidness of oil painting. Never mind that, in the hands of such disparate artists as J.M.W. Turner, John Marin, or Yayoi Kusama, watercolor can become a remarkably expressive, potent, imagination-expanding medium.

The contemporary Chinese artist Guo Hongwei was born in Sichuan in 1982 and studied oil painting at the Sichuan Fine Arts Institute in Chongqing, from which he graduated in 2004. Over the course of his career, beyond his specialized training, he has explored very different media, from video to watercolor; now, he is focusing on the latter medium in *Guo Hongwei: Pareidolia*, an exhibition on view through April 4 at Chambers Fine Art's new location on the Lower East Side.



Guo Hongwei, "Painting is Collecting - Stones No. 16" (2017), watercolor on paper, 26.25 x 40.25 inches

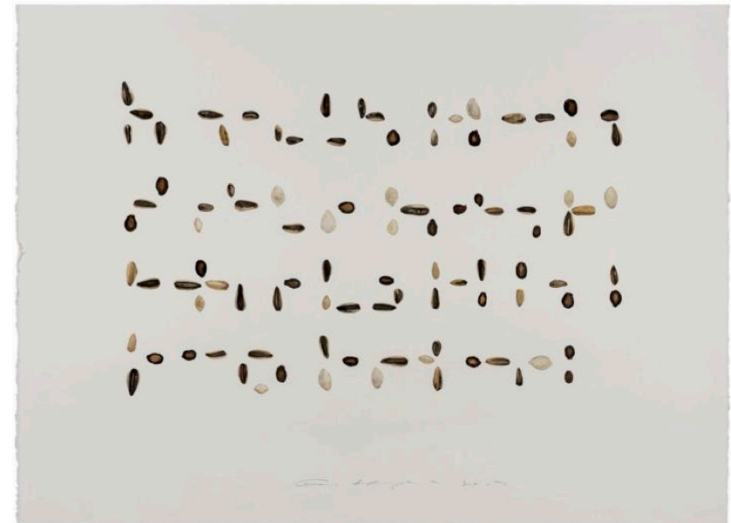
For more than a decade, watercolor's properties and expressive potential have been a mainstay of Guo's art. The works on display in this new presentation offer a concentrated, illuminating look at just how far this Beijing-based artist has pushed his investigation of watercolor in the service of a distinctive vision.

As the exhibition's title suggests — "pareidolia" refers to the detection of meaningful images in ambiguous or random patterns (think Rorschach inkblot tests) — the act of seeing and how images are perceived are as much Guo's subjects as the stones, birds, and seeds that he so deftly depicts.

In a recent e-mail exchange, the artist told me (his Chinese comments were translated by Ying Zhou, Chambers Fine Art's associate director):

I first became interested in watercolor in the third and fourth years of college. I didn't want to be an ink artist but I was very interested in various marks created by water. When the binder — water or oil — reaches a certain amount, the process of painting then becomes half-controllable and half-out-of-control, which involves a lot of natural factors.

Like experienced ink-wash painters, skilled watercolorists like Guo understand the inextricable relationship between the basic elements of their art — the proportion of pigment and water on a brush and its effect in creating certain tones; the absorbency of the paper; and the essential role of time: how long it can or should take to make a stroke, or for paint to soak into a paper's surface, or for single strokes or passages of color-rich liquid to dry.



Guo Hongwei, "Letter" (2017), watercolor on paper, 22.5 x 30 inches

Remarkably, Guo, whose father was a calligrapher, and whose mother was a maker of Chinese ink-wash and mineral-pigment paintings, never formally studied watercolor technique. Instead, he explained, he experimented and taught himself how to manipulate a medium whose characteristics are considerably different from those of oil paint.

During his childhood, he recalled, “I lived in my father’s study.” There, he noted, he examined “all kinds of catalogues of ancient Chinese artists’ works, as well as ink stones and the seals of different dynasties my father had collected.” The paintings that impressed him when he was young were those that had been made with, as he noted, “large amounts of water or oil.” Such pictures became his favorites.

Guo never formally studied traditional Chinese painting either, but indicated, “I have been studying Western art since I was a child, including pencil, gouache, and sketching [techniques].” Later, he learned about Edgar Degas’ painted fans, made with watercolor, ink, and metallic colors, and Anselm Kiefer’s watercolor seascapes. During a trip to Europe, he had an opportunity to examine what he calls “Turner’s various daubing methods” in the 19th-century Romantic painter’s watercolors on view at Tate Britain, in London.

Several years ago, Guo began developing an ongoing series of watercolors titled “Painting is Collecting,” in which he has depicted groupings of mushrooms, birds, colored stones, plant leaves, and other subjects from nature. (Typically, he sets them all against plain, unpainted white backgrounds.)



Guo Hongwei, “Bird No. 4” (2011), watercolor on paper, triptych, each sheet: 39.5 x 26.25 inches

Some of these works are several feet wide; they all show tidy arrangements of varied specimens, evoking the look and feel of illustrated natural-history books from the 19th century, with their preoccupation with the minute details of different genres and species.

In them, delicate applications of watery pigment give recognizable form to Guo’s subjects, but what looks like scientific precision in his luminous images is not always self-conscious verisimilitude. Instead, Guo allows himself plenty of room in which to interpret his stones and other subjects — to propose the *idea* of representing such objects even while depicting them with what looks like scientific accuracy. (One of the signature details of his pictures — his use of chalk to outline a form — serves to hold a meniscus of pigment-filled water as it soaks down into his thick, absorbent paper, depositing a dollop of color on its surface.)

“I’ve always liked natural science,” Guo explained in his e-mail, referring to its ability to “physicalize the very mysterious experience [of nature].” Additionally, he noted, pursuing the different fields of natural science can lead to an even “more mysterious experience” of their respective subjects, because “there are always more secrets behind the scientific explanations.”



Guo Hongwei, “Cosmic Candies No. 2” (2018), watercolor on paper, 26.25 x 40.25 inches

The works on view in *Pareidolia* invite viewers to discern meaningful shapes or patterns in compositions featuring depictions of real or imaginary stones, or seeds, or dried leaves and other ingredients of traditional Chinese herbal remedies. Sometimes, as in “Cosmic Candies No. 2” (2018), Guo lines up his precious subjects — dozens of translucent, colored, glassy stones — in neat, horizontal rows. Elsewhere, as in “Remedies for Sorrow Diagram No. 4 — Spirit-Healing Tea” (2019), a voluminous cloud of colorful flecks representing brown-toned seed pods and other dried ingredients of a curative potion creates an image that can be appreciated as much for its abstraction as for its specific cultural and historical references.

I asked Guo about the status of watercolors in China’s art scene today. He replied:

In Chinese contemporary art, the most common media [and genres] are installation, video, and conceptual, new-media, and online art. Ancient-method painting is at the bottom of the art-medium “discrimination ladder” [...], let alone watercolor. Painting is still the most commonly used medium, although we often joke that a new medium always “laughs” at the old media, because they are not “contemporary” enough.

Still, as Guo explained, in Asia, the use of paper as a support for painting has had a long history, so Asian viewers might be “more receptive” than Westerners “to the various textures” artists can produce on paper. He wrote:

At the beginning, many people called my watercolors “ink works,” and I didn’t like that. But then I discovered that I was influenced by too many traditional Chinese paintings in my childhood, and my painting style grew from this. Although they share many common traits — leaving blank space and transparency, blending and fluidity produced by using water as a medium — watercolor and ink also have many differences.



Guo Hongwei, “Remedies for Sorrow Diagram No. 3 – Cough Remedy” (2019), watercolor on paper, 19.5 x 25.5 inches

The artist noted that the “Western color system” is reflected in and expressed through watercolor’s varied hues. He added, “Because watercolor was not a major medium in the history of Western art history, it aroused my curiosity and my desire to use it.”

The big themes of Guo’s art — nature’s rich diversity and power, the mysteries of visual perception, and even longevity and the passage of time — belie the supposed delicateness of his medium. It is a technique he has harnessed and developed for his own purposes, placing him in a league that includes such artists as the late Belgian watercolorist Jean-Michel Folon (1934-2005), whose gently humorous fantasy images are imbued with a deep sense of humanism; David Levine (1926-2009), who was best known for his clever caricatures of literary figures in the *New York Review of Books* but who also painted exquisite watercolor views of Coney Island, Venice, and Rome; and Gabriel Garbow, a Minnesota-born, California-based contemporary artist whose homoerotic images of men and water revel in watercolor’s transparency and its ability to convey emotion evoked by light. (Check out Garbow’s Instagram feed.)

Guo has been thinking expansively about watercolor's expressive potential — and appears committed to his ongoing experimentation with it. As he noted in his recent e-mail message, "Using painting to study natural forms has opened up the distance between man and nature." At the same time, his approach has allowed him to "merge man and nature together."

About the inherent ambiguity that characterizes the partly realistic, partly abstract images he often creates, Guo observed, "Maybe I am also eager to use art to understand 'a logic of the imagination.'"

Guo Hongwei: *Pareidolia continues at Chambers Fine Art (1 Rivington Street, Lower East Side, Manhattan) through April 4.*



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郭鸿蔚：界面

2015.03.15

2015.03.09-2015.04.09 A307

当“视线”用切割的方式从眼前正在发生的“空间层”切取出一块平面的图像时，那图像的“时间性”也会瞬间停滞，层之间的空间也会被时间挤压成相对的平面——甚至很难辨别事物之间的前后所指和关系。这也可以说明我们一旦抛开时间的牵制，来位移图像中所代表的任何平面时，它还依然能达成空间的表象。所以既含有空间，又无空间的关系在此成立了。这种关系无疑接近“界面”的概念——两种不同性质的物象相交的面。界面恰恰也是A307郭鸿蔚个人项目“界面”的关系所指，只不过郭鸿蔚在其中提取的是他在平面与空间之间行使的一种“混淆关系”。

他同样为这种“混淆关系”移植了一层表皮。这是郭鸿蔚一贯的手法——拼贴。按照他以往的作品来看，拼贴的“嵌入力”始终成为他穿透“界面”概念的根本，也就是在平面的表层如何嵌入空间并且让这个平面和空间之间保持一种视觉的“合法性”，但同时又是暴露的。在他对每一个切割出来的图像进行平面的位移和空间的“仿表”时，平面和空间之间的“中界”关系成为促使艺术家去实施这种“嵌入力”的力度。往往既在新的空间中，又剥离回平面的“视觉因果论”是郭鸿蔚一直感兴趣的点，这里的动机可能并非理论性的，更倾向于他的感性和诗性。

而这一次的“界面”，在空间的维度上有别于以前的“平面造空图”。闯入A307室内，首先会被一种转折、重叠的转折所迷惑，同时又被眩晕的吊顶所压迫，拟造的灯光气氛也在反复掩盖空间中很难直面的错位感。郭鸿蔚以一种独特的空间生成方式激发了想象，并通过“移错”人们的真实感受力贯穿于对空间的“寻位”之中。通过剥皮式的解读，会发现吊顶的压迫完全是郭鸿蔚使用拼贴的嵌入方式，并利用灯光的形状制造的体量感。他将A307的房间置于特殊光线下进行拍摄，在照片上进行不增不减的拼贴以特别极简的方式去重新组织在平面里的空间，最后将拼贴之后的空间图像制成墙纸贴回原有的墙面。

如此的玄机，不只是承担了“形式”的原因在于郭鸿蔚及时吸取一种现时空间“时效性”的经验，并利用视觉让人们来消费这种经验，这或许才是这一次“界面”与以往拼贴作品的不同所在。能看到这种平面视觉的感性与空间理性的混杂把“界面”的概念拉置到一个极具边缘的地带，这也同时交代了，当用移动的空间观看来贴近平面的空间时，平面与空间的“界面”关系也变得极度立体。它的这层表皮将观者所感知的空间和它背后圈围这个空间的平面连接起来，而观者也将以平面的方式去体会空间。

—文/ 李宁

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REVIEW | Artforum

OCTOBER 01, 2014



View of "The Great Metaphorist," 2014.

BEIJING

Guo Hongwei

CHAMBERS FINE ART | BEIJING 前波画廊
 Red No.1-D, Caochangdi
 September 13 - October 19

In the series of three videos that share the exhibition's title, "The Great Metaphorist," artist Guo Hongwei appears in his car, muttering a rapid-fire stream of surreal, off-

pitch metaphors as he accelerates before pausing for a smoke. A policeman (played by an actor) stops him for a random check of identification papers, and Guo replies with absurd yet profound reflections on life. In another scene, two rappers appear in Guo's backseat, where their tumultuous performance and lyrics—to the screeching of the mic—become metaphors for the artist's mix of turbulent emotions. Later, a fortune-teller appears in the passenger seat, with Guo asking the oracle to discuss his commute home as a metaphor for his life.

Videos are not the only works in the show: In one installation, the covers of classic tomes have been replaced by silk-screen prints, with authors' names substituted by Guo's own. The piece subtly poses combative questions about media and the market: Is a book's cover here—as art—meant to be purchased while its contents remain free? Elsewhere, a watercolor depicts Guo's commute from home to studio, the map's legend and markings depicting a world filled with almost novel-like narratives.

Gallery-goers here seem both curious and puzzled. Perhaps that's because the show is meant for the artist himself more than for an audience. As a student, Guo yearned to be a storyteller, and now, after spending years immersed in a studio practice that's traversed various visual modes, the prolific artist has apparently returned to his love of narration. Perhaps that early dream of his will finally be fulfilled.

Translated from Chinese by Dawn Chan.

— Chen Xi (陈熹)

SHARE

GUO HONGWEI: THE GREAT METAMORPHIST

Text: Lida Zeitlin Wu | 2014年09月19日

review 网站专稿



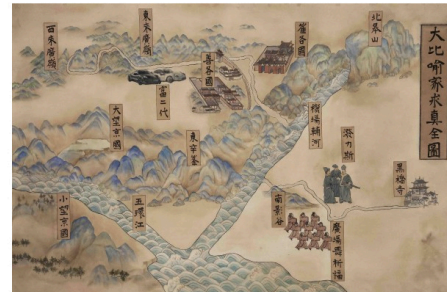
The Path of the Metaphorist, 2014. PVC pipes and digital inkjet photo collage. Image courtesy Chambers Fine Art Beijing.

GUO HONGWEI (b. 1982) moves beyond his signature watercolor paintings in his latest show at Chambers Fine Art Beijing. "The Great Metamorphist." At first glance, you might question unbelievably that all the works in the show— which include video, sculpture, and 2D works— were created by the same artist. Yet it turns out that true to the exhibition's title, these seemingly discrete pieces have a symbolic relationship— *metaphorically speaking*. A metaphor is by definition a correlation between two seemingly unrelated objects (here Guo interprets "objects" as "art objects"). Metaphors are by nature conceptual. We might even say that all conceptual art deals with metaphor in one way or another. Guo is clearly interested in the relationship between the literary and the artistic, as reflected by his translation of verbal ideas into visual form.



The Great Metamorphist, 2014. Multi-screen video installation. Image courtesy Chambers Fine Art Beijing.

The "focus" of the show is a five-screen video installation of the artist making the twenty-minute drive between home and his studio. While the videos alone don't provoke much discussion, Guo builds on this everyday routine by converting it into various media. He takes film stills and collages them over PVC pipes, and displays a series of his own (fictional) "artist books" based on sources he consulted while planning the show. In a playful attempt at psychogeography, this modest commute is made epic through a series of maps employing both traditional Chinese and Medieval European tropes (one map is humorously signed "Sir Guo Hongwei").



The Map of the Great Metamorphist, 2014. Watercolor and ink on paper, 100 x 150 cm. Image courtesy Chambers Fine Art Beijing.

Of course, an English metaphor isn't the same as a Chinese metaphor, and there's a certain amount of Guo's show that becomes lost in translation. Like reading a novel saturated with symbols or motifs, we have to decide to what extent we should read between the lines. Is metaphor a strong enough device to unite such a seemingly disparate collection of objects? "The Great Metamorphist" leaves us wondering: Is Guo sincerely attempting to contemplate the poetics of objects, or are we being manipulated into "over-reading?"

"Guo Hongwei: The Great Metamorphist" is at Chambers Fine Art Beijing until October 19.

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郭鸿蔚：大比喻家

2014.09.16

2014.09.12-2014.10.19 前波画廊 | Chambers Fine Art

在与展览同名的3屏录像《大比喻家》(2014)中，郭鸿蔚背对镜头，一望空阔，嘴巴如连珠炮，欲止不得，踏下油门、比喻连篇、荒腔走板，然后停车抽烟，郭鸿蔚似乎正在享受着某种燃烧般的快感。录像中有一段郭鸿蔚被警察随机拦下来查验驾照身份证的镜头，郭鸿蔚腴腆而突兀地声称自己在思考人生，“人生好像一条路，警察叔叔来保护”。当然，这里是艺术家事先安排妥当的演员，警察叔叔是不会轻易放过满嘴奇谈伪饰的驾驶者的，哪怕说的是有深意和诚意的谎言。郭鸿蔚还安排了一位富二代朋友驾驶保时捷超车的场景，这种场景在平时能有效唤起尊敬与嫉妒，而在录像里却如梦境的边缘、释然之后的和蔼。

同处在前波左翼展厅里，录像《大比喻家—Freestyle》(2014)也在入口的位置高悬放映。艺术家邀请两位说唱歌手入座后排，他俩立刻陶醉于自己的持续不断的激昂喘息，大脑飞速运转，一边关照四周的景致一边倾听自己的声音。在密闭的小空间里，麦克风的尖叫、玻璃的震动、扭动的臀部使座椅发出的呻吟，都被纳入到艺术家营造的百感交集里。前波画廊右翼展厅的小放映室呈现的录像是《大比喻家—命为本卦为喻》(2014)。郭鸿蔚和算命先生坐在前排，郭鸿蔚希望算命先生将这趟驾车的回家路当成自己的人生缩影来谈。他试图在控制谈话中那些敏感的起伏，而这谈话又同艺术家自己的“命运”相关。这些近乎令人嘴角迸发强烈抽搐的对话，将这场由某种伪装引发的对话弥漫成了一个虚构的故事，通过以上3件录像，郭鸿蔚显然成功的使观众牢牢的沉浸到近乎是小说的情境里。

《大比喻家名著集萃》(2014)陈列在右翼大展厅，郭鸿蔚把每本名著的封面重新设计，将作者换成自己，然后印成丝网版画，替换原书的封面。除了有换汤不换药这类不深的比喻，似乎还有更加不仁慈的暗示：艺术(版画封面)是需要购买的，里面的内容(现成书)是白送的，又或者这类名著披上艺术的外衣后使人更加不愿也不敢去翻阅里面“真实”的内容了。郭鸿蔚在《大比喻家求真全图》用没有达到古代相应水准的画法描绘了从家到工作室的旅程。路本身用金粉颜料铺染而成，“黄金路”这种直白反而使人看了舒心。

郭鸿蔚虚拟出一位大比喻家，摒除了平日水彩画追求的非叙事的柔软的质感，举手投足间呈现出小说式的叙事游戏，遁入一个超乎预料、荒谬危险的世界。这个世界崇尚自娱自乐、自导自演、自说自话、自酌自饮、自嘲自讽——“写本厚厚的诗集拿来打老婆；做个假大空的作品送领导；开超跑来比喻下自己的人生”。有些观众摆出介于好奇与疑惑间的表情，郭鸿蔚在调整方向吗？应该不是。因为一声放肆的呼吸，绝对可以从平常的咳嗽中找到根基，也许比起面向观众，这或许更是一个郭鸿蔚需要为自己呈现的展览——学生时代喜欢写作，心里常常讲着故事，在工作室画了7年水彩后，早期对叙事的热情最终走回来，这次，梦会把自己做完。

— 文 / 陈熹



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2014.09.16



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乡村诗学

2013.08.29

2013.08.17-2013.09.28 分泌场 | Gland

艺术家郭鸿蔚在其位于黑桥艺术区的空间“分泌场”策划的展览“乡村诗学”，将审视那些工作室位于城乡结合部的艺术家们的创作与他们所处生态环境的关系，从社会公用性的角度回归到艺术家自身直觉，每一件参展作品都试图探讨日常与艺术的界限。展览题目“乡村诗学”（Rural Poetics）让人联想到了鲍里斯·格洛伊斯在《走向公众》（Boris Groys, Going Public）一书中所提及的美学到诗学的转变。在格洛伊斯看来，艺术家是美学经验的提供者和制造者，而当代艺术应该从诗学，即制作者的角度给予分析。从社会学角度分析，艺术品被视为一种存在现实的折射，艺术品的制造是在一种真实社会环境中发生的。但是艺术不能完全被解释为一种“真实”文化和社会环境的化身，因为它所关联与凸显的环境本身也是人造的。而相对于这个展览，人造环境不仅包括策展人观察到的黑桥近年来被忽视的变化，还体现在“乡村”这一复杂的政治与社会现象中。而当代艺术的制作与生产，如格洛伊斯所说，不能单一归类为社会学与政治学的分支，那么它与所在环境两者之间的逻辑关系也同样不能用一些表象的演绎来界定。

梁远苇和谢墨凇的抽象绘画分别重叠在黑桥周边景象的喷绘图案上，从直观的角度上讲，或许观者会试图从作品的颜色或文理上寻求某种它们与所在背景间的逻辑关系。但是了解这两位艺术家创作线索的观者同样清楚两者间的格格不入，就如同我们无法借用纽约纺织区工作室的背景来解读马克·罗斯科。而展厅门口的两个洗手池中喷向彼此的两股水和厉槟源的短片《臭水沟的春天》似乎更直观的把观者带入了乡村语境，我们不难在其中找到乡村环境与其创作间的某种紧密关系；同时，艺术家随心所欲的对他在所在环境的干预也表达了某种浪漫主义情怀。郭鸿蔚自己的作品是用有机玻璃罩着的一些用不同型号电钻在地上打的孔，以及打孔时留下的粉尘。石灰地上的孔是乡村城市化过程中最通常的景观，而在有机玻璃的保护下，它作为一件艺术作品还是乡村一景的临界性被演绎得淋漓尽致。另外两位绘画艺术家则以截然不容的形式展现了自身创作中的诗学成分。廖国核近似童真的涂鸦创作则被他倒着写在画布上的诗句“黑珍珠猩红的含羞盒子宛如开启”带入某个精神层面。相反，一直因描绘物体光线而贴有“城市诗学”标签的艺术家陈文波，也在父亲希望得到一幅归隐田园的绘画的要求下，开始在他工作室前的小树林里寻觅自然的高光。他笔下的“喜马拉雅山”不仅没有脱离对物体的理性构造，扭曲的自然图像还为喜马拉雅山注入了人造的神圣感。在开幕现场，一直生活在东莞的艺术家李景湖安排了一场即兴的足球比赛，但两边队员们踢来踢去的只是一个被踩烂的易拉罐。这一在乡村常见的场景被带入一个艺术空间时，我们解读它的逻辑到底应该依赖我们惯用的艺术名词——表演，行为，现场——还是可以把它延伸到更日常的景观中？综上所述的这些作品，它们的名称并没有以单件作品的形式被标示在墙面上，而是以整体的形式展现。无论与所在环境的关系是共存，抑或是日常形式感中的临界，艺术家们创作的诗意打破了社会学、政治学以及美学解读作品的公用性，由每个主体的直觉带给观者更多解读的可能。

—文/贺潇 (Fiona He)

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展评 | Artforum

2013.08.29

艺术界 2013 年 6 月号

郭鸿蔚：编辑
文：孙冬冬

2013 年 07 月 19 日

郭鸿蔚在 2011 年曾做过三件纸上拼贴作品《阴影里的阴影》、《阳光后的阳光》与《高光中的高光》，之后又有过零星的几次实践——在与某艺术时尚杂志的一次合作中，郭鸿蔚采用手工切割与位移局部的方式，将杂志提供的平面广告印刷品，重新粘贴成了一个内部充盈着视幻感的结构形式。如果从物理角度来看，郭鸿蔚的行动既未增加也未减少印刷品平面内信息的物质总量，他所做的只是对其进行了一次重新的编码。

相比郭鸿蔚之前的纸上拼贴——比如文章开头提及的那三件作品，强调的是相似形（相似性）聚合下产生的差异与普遍性之间的思辨关系，与他同期绘画的实践逻辑一脉而出：成为一个形式表征的“收集者”，但相比自己的绘画，郭鸿蔚最初的纸上拼贴更接近于某种工作室内的实验，虽然，这些聚合的印刷品局部提示了光的时空状态，以及光在不同物质表面反射出的视觉差异，但其语言形态却属于一种消极的修辞，艺术家更多顾及的是对个人感受力的玩味，而投诸于观众的物质形式则相对单调——与杂志的那次合作中，郭鸿蔚似乎找到了一种更为积极的方法，随之就有了近期在上海个展的“编辑”——一个几乎完全由纸上拼贴作品组成的个展，加工对象替换成了他所喜欢的艺术家画册里的作品图片。

这份艺术家名单包括，罗伯特·史密斯森、卡尔·安德列、菲利克斯·冈萨雷斯·托雷斯，还有奥拉维尔·埃利亚松等等。虽然，他们的艺术观念各有所重，但在作品画册中时，取景框内的视觉形态所营造出的是一种“距

离感”的观看，对于读者而言，他们似乎看到了作品，但又缺席现场，他们真正面对的是一个平面化的形式关系，例如卡尔·安德列的“极少主义”所强调的物质的原本的材料质感，为了呈现作品的全貌而在图片中被牺牲掉了，使得另一种表征——空间中的秩序感被凸显出来。而郭鸿蔚个展中的拼贴之所以积极，不仅仅因为他基于不同的秩序感所重构的视错觉，更为重要的是他破坏了极少主义、大地艺术或者观念艺术等等概念在方法论上的阈限，将它们从艺术常识的文本世界中拽出，回复到活生生的视觉感知中——“形式是任何理论的必要前提”（保尔·德曼），郭鸿蔚以此与其他艺术家建立了一种私人化的联系，虽然，看似是一种武断的交流，但却是艺术家内部的职业观看所促生的行为。

对于郭鸿蔚个人而言，“编辑”中的拼贴作品，回避了他近期绘画实践中日益显著的“拜物性”，比如他标本题材的画作中，“物自体”时常会逾越出外部表征相互对比所建立的形式关系。而在此次拼贴中，郭鸿蔚则是将绘画中的“图-底”依存关系反转，图像的变化是为了生成多维的形式空间——虽然，这仍旧是在一种画家的思维逻辑之下展开的视觉修辞，但在观念的践行上却显现出未曾有过的清澈。

LEAP 21

GUO HONGWEI: EDITING
TEXT: Sun Dongdong

July 19, 2013

In 2011, Guo Hongwei created three collage works, *Shadow in Shadows*, *The Sunshine Behind the Sunshine*, and *Highlight of Highlights*. His practice fragmented somewhat, and he engaged in various different projects; in a collaboration with an art and fashion magazine, Guo again employed manual, cut-and-paste collage techniques, transforming advertisements into a formal structure, illusory in its effect. However, from a physical perspective, Guo's practice neither bolsters nor weakens the informational capacity of the 2D print medium—he simply recodes it.

Comparing Guo Hongwei's previous collage work—such as the three pieces mentioned above—emphasis is placed on the speculative relationships between difference and commonality, produced by the assemblance of resemblance (similar forms). Alongside his concurrent painting practice, Guo becomes a “collector” of representational form. However, in comparison to his painting formal studio

experiments, and although they pay closer attention to the temporal and spatial states of light, as well as to the visual discrepancies produced by light reflecting off the surfaces of different materials, their linguistic forms actually possess a passive rhetoric; the artist instead focuses on the powerful subtleties of individual perception, while the material forms projected onto the audience are relatively monotonous. In his recent magazine collaboration, however, Guo appears to adopt a more active approach, which is extended into his recent solo exhibition—made up almost entirely of collage works, the focus of which shifts onto images taken from the books of his favorite artists.

These artists include Robert Smithson, Carl Andre, Félix González-Torres, Olafur Eliasson, and others. Although the concepts behind each are quite different, the uniform rectangular format of the “artist book” creates a sense of distance from which to observe them. With a book, the reader views artworks removed from their physical settings. Instead, he/she is faced with a kind of flattened formal representation of the work. Take the minimalism of Carl Andre, for example, which focuses on the essential textures of materials. In an attempt to present the complete image of the work, the image itself is sacrificed, which in turn creates a different kind of representation—the arrangement of the space itself is magnified. The collages featured in this solo exhibition are active in two senses: not only do they construct

illusions out of the artist's essentially new arrangements, but, more importantly, they break out of the theoretical boundaries outlined by the minimalist, land art, or conceptual art concepts of the artists which feature within them. They are dragged out of their world of recognizable art texts and returned to the living realm of visual perception—to invoke Paul de Man, form is a necessary prerequisite of any theory. In this way, Guo establishes a kind of personal relationship with other artists. Although the exchange sometimes appears somewhat arbitrary, it is still one which springs forth from the artist's own visual perspective.

According to Guo Hongwei himself, the collage featured in “Editing” consciously avoids the increasingly prevalent “obsessive materiality” of his recent painting. In his most exemplary painting, for example, the material's “inner form” is more prominent than the formal relationships established by the contrasts of its external representation. In these collages, Guo instead inverts the mutually-reliant relationship between the image and its background—the image is transformed in order to create a multi-dimensional formal space. Although this is still demonstrated via the visual rhetoric of a painter, this painter has, through his application of concept, arrived at a clarity never before seen.

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郭鸿蔚：编辑

2013.04.29

2013.04.25-2013.06.02 LEO XU PROJECTS

编辑的工作就是在出版成书之前对现有的材料、文字亦或图像，进行排列、整理和校对的过程，这也就是艺术家郭鸿蔚在展览《编辑》中所做的工作。这一次，在Leo Xu Projects的空间里，被艺术家重新排列整理的是印在纸面上的照片：钟的表面，大理石的地板，堆砌着黑白方块的角落和陌生男人的肖像。无论画面如何不同，他们重复的主题都是在平面中可以生出的三维空间，打破平衡衍生出的错位的感觉。我们看到表盘被填上了倒置的数字，黑白大理石地板的阴阳反衬中呼之欲出的立方体，密集的楼房玻璃窗起伏的韵律在凝视中开始生出自己的生命，一呼一吸有了节奏。郭鸿蔚制造这种错觉的方法很简单，他就是在现成的平面图上切割、移位、粘贴、剪辑，新的图像的诞生即在对现成图像的破坏中，生成在观看者的意识中，如水中月，镜中烛，“你看到的就是你看到的”，这是极少主义重要的代言人之一Frank Stella对极少主义艺术的经典概括，而Stella的言外之意其实是在说你看到的是你能看到的、想要看到的和愿意看到的。

极少主义艺术无疑是郭鸿蔚的创作追寻的线索：物品的有序排列，被忽略的负面空间（negative space）和身体感知在体验艺术中的重要作用。不同的是郭鸿蔚的制作是从平面开始而最终也终结于平面，它们被圈于镜框，摆上白墙，展出于一个充满海上风花雪月的高雅画廊的现实，同极少主义艺术在上世纪六十年代出现的历史背景和初衷早已是大相径庭/背道而驰。当年Donald Judd, Robert Morris, Carl Andre等艺术家把工业大漆涂在木板箱上、把耐火砖搬到画廊地上的举动，打破的就是之前的抽象表现主义艺术家在画布上制造的精神体验与灵魂感动，“没有幻象，没有暗示”，拿出真东西来。极少主义名为极少，而作品往往甚是庞大，在空间的展示调动的是观者身体力行的艺术现象体验。而郭鸿蔚的作品最多只是调动了观者的眼神，被刻画后的纸经重新剪贴后宛若传统心理测验中用到的复杂图案，而这些图案徘徊在手工性和技术性的两可中，一种清寡的小意境道出了不痛不痒的一些小意思，有点好看，但又略显平淡。

郭的作品让我联系到在欧洲的老城市里去传统的游乐场的体验，有一种叫做“趣味房子”的游乐项目：参观者踩着两个不同旋律运动中的梯子才能进入，当他终于登上顶端时，展现在眼前的则是柳暗花明的稀奇景致。在Leo Xu Projects的法式洋房中看郭的作品，上楼下楼的体验仿佛也是这种错位后才能抵达的彼岸，区别是上一层后看到的还是下一层景观转椅似的轮回。在这里，郭把编辑工作需要的耐心严谨呈现出来了，而完成的作品是否满足我们期待的艺术惊喜？答案和心理测试的图像在每个人眼中生出的联想一样，尽在观看中。

一文/王凯梅

展评 | Artforum

2013.04.29

PACE BEIJING

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《石No.5》，2011年
纸本水彩，67 × 101 厘米
Stone No. 5, 2011
Watercolor on paper
67 x 101 cm

5月5日，郭鸿蔚的新展“收集者”在前波画廊北京空间开幕。
借此机会，《艺术界》同他一起回顾了他绘画语言的发展史。

On May 5, Guo Hongwei's new exhibition "Painting is Collecting" opened at Chambers Fine Art in Beijing. LEAP took the opportunity to look back with him at the development of his painting language over time.

在大学时，郭鸿蔚热衷于琢磨笔触技巧在艺术史上形成的不同风格，随后，他却开始尝试消解它们。2005年至2007年，郭鸿蔚的油画多取材于自己和亲属的童年照片，而无论这些照片是否彩色，均被处理为单色油画，并集中在2007年香港的首个个展“擦拭记忆——郭鸿蔚的绘画”上展示。他首先临摹照片，然后把松节油滴落其上，随着媒介剂的扩散，画面便同画布上曾展现过的炫技痕迹一道氤氲开，直至模糊不清。同主题延续到了2008、2009年创作的“Chiaroscuro”系列之中，不同的是，绘画尺幅缩小了，而他也开始尝试使用扩散

性更强的水彩颜料直接在湿润的水彩纸上绘画。

媒介剂能使得画面呈现出难以预期的走向，郭鸿蔚不仅以此质疑和消融绘画的技巧和风格，也希望凭借它凸显画面中“偶然得之、浑然天成”所带来的快感。而之所以选择儿时的老照片，是因为它们作为无可辩驳的证据，可以衬出记忆的模糊两可，暗中呼应了最终呈现出的形象的朦胧。然而，这些照片也很容易被误解为一种“煽情的自白”：不难想象，与那些晕染扩散的细节相比，观者更容易被老照片中延绵的怀旧伤感情绪所触动。

文 / TEXT: 杨紫 / Yang Zi

AT UNIVERSITY, GUO Hongwei was obsessed with analyzing the different styles of brushwork techniques corresponding to different periods of art history. But shortly after, he began attempting to abandoning them. From 2005 to 2007, Guo's oil paintings mostly drew inspiration from his and his relatives' childhood photographs. Regardless of whether these photos were in color, he converted them all into monochrome paintings, putting them together for his first solo exhibition in Hong Kong in 2007, "Dissolving Memories: Guo Hongwei's Paintings." He first copied the photographs, then dripped turpentine on them, and as his chosen medium spread, the dazzling marks of the images reproduced on the canvas thickened to the point of becoming blurred. Guo focused on the same theme until 2008. Then, in 2009, he shifted toward something different with the "Chiaroscuro" series, which featured smaller paintings, and saw him beginning to experiment with more diffusive watercolors directly on moist watercolor paper.

Media can make the way the image appears take unpredictable directions. Guo not only took advantage of this concept to question and reduce his

《鸟No.3》，2011年
纸本水彩，67 × 101 厘米
Bird No. 3, 2011
Watercolor on paper, 67 x 101 cm



painting techniques and styles, but also to emphasize the "occasional, natural" pleasure brought in the picture. He chose old photographs from his childhood because they could serve as irrefutable proof, because they could show off the ambiguity of the memory, and because they stealthily echoed the haziness of the final images. These pictures could also be very easily mistaken for a "sensational confession": comparing those smudged, spread-out details, it is not hard to imagine that a viewer would be more moved by the ongoing feeling of nostalgia in the old photos.

In order to put the position of his paintings into focus, in 2008 Guo created the oil painting series "Parallels": he used a projector to reproduce the same full body photograph of a child on eight 150 cm by 200 cm canvases, sketched the same identical draft (of him), and then, on the basis of previous stylistic dissimilarities, drew the figure of the young boy on the empty background of each picture plane. When he finished each painting, he proceeded to record the mood and scene (the music he had listened to, the weather, and so on) that had accompanied the creative process at the time. The repetition of the monotonous image made it hard for the viewer's attention to remain focused on content, turning instead on the textural difference resulting from spreading the turpentine—an act in response to an inner crisis: he had already passed the exploratory stage of his early techniques, and in the wake of his growing experience and increasing familiarity with his media, he gradually became more and more acquainted with the artistic effects he could produce on canvas, and by the pleasure brought by the occasional spread of paint—and when these paintings were displayed crosswise, neighboring each other, the surface color shifted even more vibrantly, recreating the subject through functional existence.

Even using this approach, the portraits were still rich in content, complex, and deep, leading easily to diverse associations. Yet it was difficult to make the texture stand out with

郭鸿蔚的“平行”系列中的每幅绘画相似却略有不同
The paintings of Guo Hongwei's *Parallel* series might all appear similar, but each is distinct in its own way.

为了摆正绘画侧重点的位置, 2008年郭鸿蔚创作了油画“平行”系列: 他用投影仪把同一张儿童的全身照投影到八张150厘米乘200厘米的画布上, 打出相同的素描底稿, 再按照先前的方式分别把小男孩的形象绘制在背景空空如也的画面上, 并在每一幅创作结束时, 把当下的心情和情景(听音乐、天气等)记录在一个笔记本上。此后, 他又如法炮制了四张小尺幅的画作。如此, 重复单调的图像使得观者的注意力难以停留在画面内容上, 从而转向松节油扩散时呈现出的纹理差异——此举也是为了应对他此时较为内在的危机: 他已度过早期技法的摸索阶段, 随着对介质的熟悉和经验的积累, 对媒介剂在画布上产生的效果的日趋熟悉, 颜料偶然扩散所带来的快感相应地日渐淡薄而亟待强化——当这些绘画横向罗列、毗邻而居时, 表面的颜色转折便强于了再现描摹事物的功用性存在。

即使运用此法, 人像终究信息丰富、形象繁复、体量深沉, 容易引发联想, 也难以用自身的单纯反衬凸显介质的肌理, 以及由此产生的美学趣味。于是, 在2009年第二次个展“东西”上, 他生活中的椅子、牙刷、纸杯、塑料袋、仙人掌均被“转移摹写”, 出现在展场的墙壁上。展览中相当一部分作品沿袭并发展了“平行”系列中防止画面被过度诠释所采取的措施——当相似却略有不同的生活用品凑在同一张画面上, 原本细微、隐蔽的差异变得油然醒目; 而素净无色的背景上, 色彩活泼、造型准确的物件显得赏心悦目、和蔼可亲, 构成一种郭鸿蔚所说的“基本的好”, 又因为它们内涵稀薄而难以引发联想, 观众的注意力便被集中在画面之内。此外, 两个技术上的细节也值得注意: 在其中的油画部分中, 郭鸿蔚放弃了挥发性强的松节油, 使用含树脂胶的粘土上光油来稀释颜料, 风干后分泌出的结晶, 好像封存了介质消解笔势的痕迹; 在水彩画部分中, 他先用易溶于水的色粉笔勾出描绘对象的轮廓, 再把轮廓之内的面积都涂上清水并在其中绘画。这样, 颜料会在湿润的区域扩散, 到了干涸的边缘, 无序的扩散戛然而止, 形成确凿清晰的剪影, 强化了物与物之间形象的差异对比。这种画法持续至今。



将日常用品进行具有秩序感的排列, 这一举动不经意间透露出摆弄者对其支配和占有的位置。在现实中, 同样的“占有感”在博物馆的陈列方式中四处弥漫——现代公共博物馆的兴起便源于欧洲富裕家庭罗列私人收藏的“奇观室”。自述从小对自然充满好奇的郭鸿蔚, 发现了自然博物馆的展览方式与自己之前作品的形式契合, 并且通过采样自然科学图书中“平铺直叙”的说明性图像及标本绘画, 避免从图像中过度榨取意义。他在2010年上海展出的“博物馆”系列中开始描绘动物标本及骨骼, 而在最新个展“收集者”中, 动物、植物和矿石标本的水彩画几乎占据了所有的展览空间。

郭鸿蔚并没有在这个题材中放大媒介剂肆意挥洒的特性, 反而更加追求一

种节制。如果说, “博物馆”系列中的《生物No. 6》中形形色色的猫头鹰还保留着早期使绘画变成“污渍”的意图, 那么, 新近展出的鸟类标本画作, 远远望去显得更为冷静和布满细节, 甚至略有丢勒《野兔》的兴味, 只有画面近在咫尺时, 润泽的细微之处才呼之欲出。这种视觉差异在矿石标本的绘画中更为突出: 冰冷刚硬的矿石标本细部在他笔下甚至透露出了天鹅绒般的质感。愈发隐晦的、偶然发生的细节减淡了对形象的破坏, 艺术家的意图羞怯地藏匿于绘画的细节之中。也许, 郭鸿蔚的绘画的精髓只为耐心的注视者服务, 但我们也能看出, 在展中, 描绘对象的表征复杂和引人入胜的程度均有增补, 难说他未使用了一些善意的伎俩, 让人群在画前驻足的时间长一会儿, 再长一会儿, 以便发现其间的妙处。

only their simple contrasts and the resulting aesthetic taste. Therefore in 2009, with his second solo exhibition “Things,” Guo “trans-copied” everyday objects like chairs, toothbrushes, paper cups, plastic bags, and cactuses, displaying them on the exhibition walls. A considerable part of the exhibition expanded on the same measures taken in the “Parallel” series to avoid the over-interpretation of the picture—with similar yet slightly different daily objects gathered on the same picture, their originally minute, concealed differences becoming involuntarily striking; a plain, colorless background, vivid colors, and eye-pleasing and amiable subject matters rendered with precision, came to form Guo's so-called “basics.” Because their connotation was subtle and difficult to understand, the viewer's attention was focused on the image within. In addition, two details of his technique became worthy of attention: in the series' oil paintings, Guo abandoned the volatile turpentine, and applied instead a thick varnish containing resin glue to dilute the paint. Once dried, the crystallized substance seemed like a frozen mark of the medium's dispelled power, while in the watercolors, he first used water-soluble colored chalk to delineate the silhouette of the objects, then splashed water on the surface inside the silhouette and painted within it. In this way, the paint spread within the damp area, and as the edges dried up, the irregular distribution of the tint stopped spon-

taneously, creating a distinctively clear outline that intensified the contrasting difference between the object and the image within in. Guo continues to use this painting technique today.

Undertaking a systematic arrangement of everyday objects is a move that inadvertently reveals the tinkerer's proclivity for control and possession. As a matter of fact, the same “feeling of possession” can be found in the display of items in a museum—the rise of the modern public museum stems from those wealthy European families who made the “wonder rooms” of their private collections public. As Guo recounts, he has been extremely inquisitive about nature since he was a child. He later discovered that the exhibition method adopted by natural museums fitted the form of his previous works, and, through sampling the “straightforward” descriptive images and the specimen drawings of natural science books, he managed to avoid the over-exploitation of the meanings in the images. The “Museum” series he displayed in Shanghai in 2010 began portraying animal specimens and skeletons, and in his latest solo exhibition, “Painting is Collecting,” watercolors of botanical, animal, and mineral specimens occupy almost the entire exhibition space.

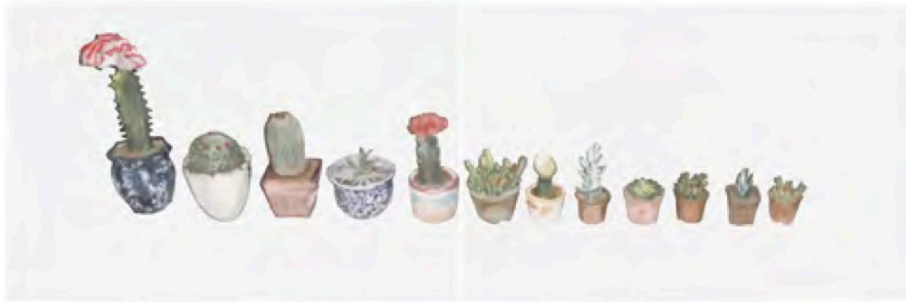
For this subject matter, Guo Hongwei has not broadened the unpredictability of his medium, but on the contrary, he has pursued an even greater control. If in *Still Life No. 6*

from the “Museum” series all kinds of owls still retained the artist's early-period intent of turning the painting into a “stain,” then the paintings of bird specimens displayed in his new show seem, from afar, increasingly still and filled with details, to the point of resembling Albrecht Dürer's *Young Hare*, and only when the images are observed closely do their moist nuances vividly stand out. This visual difference is even more prominent in the paintings of mineral specimens: under Guo's brush, their ice-cold, hard details reveal a velvety texture. The increasing obscurity of the occasional details is less disruptive, and the artist's intent is shyly hidden in the particulars of the painting.

Perhaps the essence of Guo's paintings serves only patient observers, but we also can see, in his latest exhibition, that the complex and fascinating levels of representation of the portrayed objects have expanded, and it is hard to say that he has not used some good tricks, making the crowds stop before the paintings for a while, and then for a bit more still, so as to discover the subtlety in between. (Translated by Marianna Cerini)



《仙人掌No.1》, 2009年
纸本水彩, 66.5 × 203 厘米
Cactus No.1, 2009
Watercolor on paper, 66.5 x 203 cm



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REVIEW | Artforum

MARCH 17, 2012



Guo Hongwei, *Give Me a Hand*, 2012, collage on paper, 15 x 17 1/2".

SHANGHAI

"Boy: A Contemporary Portrait"

LEO XU PROJECTS

Lane 49, Building 3, Fuxing Xi Road | 复兴西路49弄3号 Xuhui District | 徐汇区
 February 19 - April 8

Challenging conventions typically associated with young men, the first group exhibition at this new gallery in Shanghai features installations, collages, paintings, videos, and photographs that create a compelling, unorthodox portrait of boys: melancholic, puzzling, sensuous, and whimsical.

Apichatpong Weerasethakul's video installation *Faith*, 2006, is a dreamlike scenario of two male astronauts floating in a minimalist

spaceship interior. In contrast to the perpetual changes of reality—where loss and pain are inevitable—the universe created in *Faith* reflects the artist's longing for an eternal dimension in which any sense of time or space is absent. Sharing a similar emotive impulse, an arrangement of Wolfgang Tillmans photographs offers a realistic approach and diaristic narrative. Made between 2000 and 2010, these eight snapshots capture everyday moments wherein young men's bodies, identities, and intellectual complexities are interwoven. In *Buying Everything on You* (*Su Zuoqiang*), 2007, Liu Chuang explores male portraiture by deliberately omitting the figure altogether: A group of personal items acquired from a stranger—such as socks, IDs, and a bus pass—are presented neatly organized by type, in a taxonomical manner.

Situating the exhibition in a historical framework, a black-and-white photograph by Zhou Haiying from 1950 documents a provocative scene: a truck of young men wearing only underwear during a parade celebrating Shanghai's liberation. Yet closer observation reveals patriotic slogans such as "Unite and Guard the Country." Still, the symbolic sublime of the male body is drastically undermined in Guo Hongwei's collage *Give Me a Hand*, 2012. Here, cutouts of "hard bodies" are jammed together to create a congested and distorted pattern.

— Xiaoyu Weng

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Frieze

Artists' Artists
TEXT: Guo Hongwei

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Artists' Artists - Guo Hongwei

Artists write about a work of art that has influence them

Edgar Degas, *Examen de Dances* (The Dance Class), 1874

Edgar Degas, *Examen de Dances* (The Dance Class), 1874, oil on canvas, 83x77 cm.
Courtesy: Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

Apparently Edgar Degas never willingly admitted to being an Impressionist, even though he took part in every Impressionist exhibition (the first was held in 1874), apart from the one in 1882. Degas took the traditions of figurative painting and combined them with his individual sensibility. This allowed his work to retain certain academic qualities while, at the same time, side-stepping conventions. Degas explored Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres's ideas of beauty and Gustave Courbet's realism, all the while trusting — like his fellow Impressionists — his intuition and perception with regard to colour and paint application. In the 20th century, Francis Bacon, in turn, inherited Degas's sense of the sublime, his interest in tradition and a profound recognition of the importance of individualism. Every time I look at Degas's work, I am more convinced of the spirituality that a painting should embody — it reminds us that reality is full of glittering inspiration.

Guo Hongwei lives and works in Beijing, China. Earlier this year, his short film *Miss Oyu* (2014) was included in the 8th Yebisu International Festival for Art & Alternative Visions at the Metropolitan Museum of Photography, Tokyo, Japan. He had a solo show at Gallery 100, Taipei, Taiwan, in 2015. Between 2011 and 2016, Guo founded and ran the alternative space 'The Gland' in Beijing's Black Bridge Village.

MAGICIAN SPACE 魔金石空间

Frieze

Portfolio: Guo Hongwei
By: Guo Hongwei

18 APR 2016

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BY GUO HONGWEI
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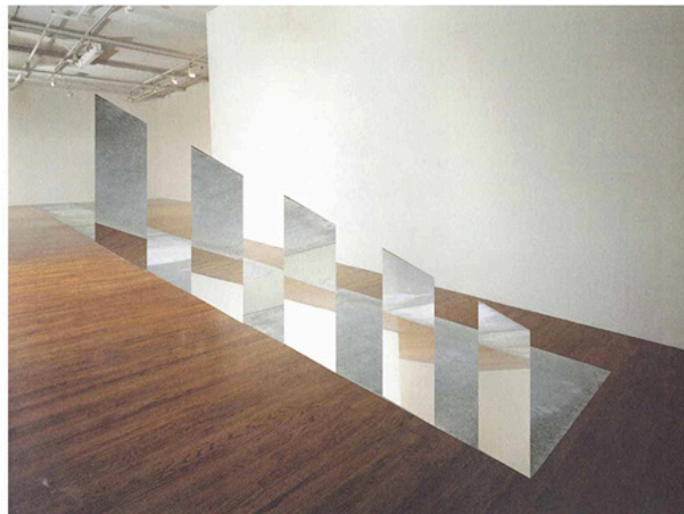
A Sichuan steel factory and a mineral collection in London: the Beijing-based artist shares a series of important images



Rolled sheet stainless steel being made in a factory in Sichuan province, China. Courtesy: the artist

Stainless Steel Factory, Sichuan, China

As research for a new project I went to a stainless steel factory in Sichuan province, Southwest China. The factory has advanced production lines for making high quality stainless steel sheet. The production line uses a cold-rolling method which rolls the sheet up when it has been finished. I find the whole process fascinating: the transformation of material form, the changing shapes, colours, qualities and properties. All of these transformations happen one after another on the line. It's almost like magic.



Guo Hongwei, *Snowy River*, 1989/2013, collage on paper, 79 x 106 cm. Courtesy: the artist and Leo Xu Projects, Shanghai

Carl Andre's *Snowy River*

I always find collage to be a good way to read images, no matter whether the image is abstract or narrative. I was staring at this image of Carl Andre's *Snowy River* (1983) in a catalogue and it struck me that, with minimal intervention, I could create an image on the image without adding or reducing information. Andre's minimal sculpture gave me the outline of a shape to cut, and the cuts gave shape to spaces. The result looks like more steel plates are growing from the ones lying on the floor, but it's all happening on the surface of the image.



Tom Friedman, *Untitled*, 1996, polystyrene tower, 81 x 91 x 91 cm. Courtesy: Luhring Augustine Gallery, New York

Tom Friedman, *Untitled*

We transform material with our actions everyday and even transform our selves from second to second. Materials transform too of course, but far slower, Humans seem to be constantly finding ways to instigate change and accelerate it. Tom Friedman's works during the 1990s are good examples of how an artist guides the transformation of material in a humorous direction. These works also have a good balance between the conceptual and the visual, a nice escape from mind / body dualism.



Jérôme Bel, *Disabled Theater*, performance documentation, 2014, Frieze Projects in partnership with Dance Umbrella, London. Photograph: Ursula Kaufmann

Jérôme Bel's *Disabled Theater*

Jérôme Bel's performance *Disabled Theater* is the only piece of contemporary art which has made me want to cry. I saw it towards the end of 2013, as part of Performa, when I was visiting New York. All of the performers in it have different cognitive disabilities. Not your typical professional dancers, their actions are distinct from an expected 'standard' and makes you question what that 'standard' really is. Their movements seem truer, from a place of pure enjoyment. It's an amazing piece. It forces us to question what performance is.

MAGICIAN SPACE 魔金石空间



Ignacio Acosta, Mineral Collection,
Natural History Museum, London,
UK, 2012, 50 x 63 cm. Courtesy:
the artist

The Mineral Collection, The Natural History Museum, London

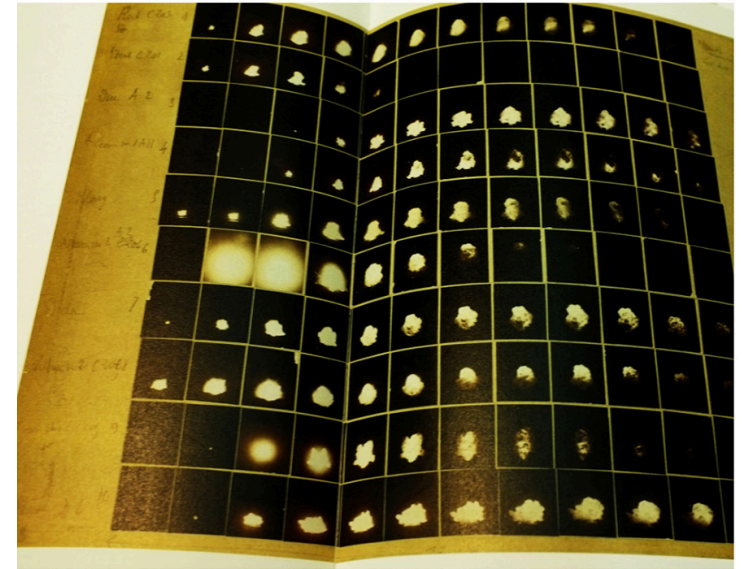
When I entered the gallery containing the mineral collection in the Natural History Museum in London last October I almost dropped to my knees. It's the earliest official collection of mineral samples in the world and fills this huge space. Here you can see the plenitude of pure natural form. Its different way of growing, delicate and colourful. Humans treat themselves as the measure of all things, and using visual methods to distinguish, by seeing differences and similarity.



Courtesy: the artist

Old Printed Matter

I like all kinds of printing but especially old books and their material. I love that old books were handmade and that people would put a lot more physical energy into the production and design. The format of the printed word has long been settled, but these three dimensional diagrams are ingenious. It looks like an exhibition on paper.



Courtesy: the artist

Scientific images showing how different minerals burn

Natural scientific images usually have a particular visual structure: they look like a slice from the physical world, isolating a phenomenon for study. Without context, these functional images seem closed to further explanation - purely formal presentation.

GUO HONGWEI

Guo Hongwei (b.1982) is an artist who lives in Beijing, China. Recent solo exhibitions include 'Lustrous and Dazzling', Gallery 100, Taipei (2015) 'Interface', A307, Beijing, (2015), 'The Great Metaphorist', Chambers Fine Art, Beijing (2014), 'Miss Oyu', Frieze New York, New York (2014) and 'Editing', Leo Xu Projects, Shanghai (2013). As well as his own practice he runs and curates the project space 'The Gland' in the Black Bridge area of Beijing. The group show he curated, 'The Rural Poetics', was shown at Leo Xu Projects's booth at Frieze London, 2015.

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