

MAGICIAN SPACE 魔金石空间

史国威 Shi Guowei

精选文章 Selected Articles

史国威

文/李振华

摄影在中国并不隶属于当代艺术，而自有其天地，摄影从新闻、纪实、观念、记录、剧场、电影、偶发等等领域汲取资源，从图像发展到超越图像的人文关怀，从任意而为，演变出文化视觉之种种。

史国威的新作《世界的尽头》、《倾斜》属于大画幅手工上色作品，底子是数字摄影拼合而成的自然图像，这些自然景物有着风和地理上的形态，从一个方向散落到周围，任何一个点或线，即可以是眼光汇集透视之综合，也可以自然的游开，到远近处，仿佛是没有主体的。史国威试着让这些大画幅的作品，成为电脑技术和绘画的混合，从便捷的拍摄手段，到繁复的后期制作，通过艺术家对现实的印象，重新着色。不断重复的工作，让真实呈现出一种另外的自然，平淡无奇之处，疏离之当代，人面对的还是那个没有变的荒野，植物任意的滋长。

对比史国威早期的工作，针对艺术史和人类文明，有故事和叙事，是插画和脸谱化的，有着非常醒目的图像释义关系。这可能是为什么史国威在有意的将这些通过时间一代代谢掉。史国威到底要去掉什么？是自身身份的困境，是图像化带来的空无，还是时间和事件所刻画的世界。

他之前的作品，更切合时代中国的现实，更符合观念摄影的标准，可以将其理解为“素人艺术”阶段，一种兴起于六十年代末期，后被理论家于1972年描述为生猛的、粗糙的艺术。史国威早期的作品，更接近这一状态下，其处理图像和叙事的直接关系，故事是停在画面上的，所见即所得。

新作所表现出的风景和色彩趋于真实本身，手工着色和大画幅的存在，面对作品的人，都被画面的尺度所压制，处于无所适从的状态。史国威并不探索什么，对观念也不以为然，他不太容易被日常的冲突所感动，也不愿意介入到全球化的困境，他疏离于这个世界，却通过每天的工作，对自然的截取，来满足其需要，而如何完成一件艺术品，都会涉及到方法和尺度，以及时间。

我看他的作品，不太容易被带入和感动，也不作用于现在的艺术事件，在“后网络艺术”轰轰烈烈的时刻，史国威的工作却在现场，并通过手工的方式把握着颜色和笔触，风景中是否会看到空气在流动，是否看到细节明暗、色彩交错。这样的作品是作用于内心的。因其等待的心理时间，作用于方法的操作时间，关于描绘摄影的色彩遮罩，可以想象一下这个人正在工作的场景，而当代的艺术不正是关于一个人怎么去做，如何讲述着属于自己的故事。

史国威的近作，是特别荒芜的，是对这个世界投射的内心。

不驯服的肉体

文/李迺

史国威一直在用一种冷静、笃定、肃穆而宏大的现实叙事推进着日常的奇迹，但当我们面对这些巨幅的细腻而变幻莫测的图像时，却感受到某种不明的能量，这能量仿佛能从图像的深处逐步瓦解那些远离尘嚣、煞有介事、不可撼动的景观。

承载这一图像的材料，是在艺术家看来无力至极的——摄影。由于人眼所见的色域远远大于光学呈像的范围，即便是这些手工上色的画面也未能达到肉眼所见的色彩厚度，作者主观感受到的色彩决定了图像的现实，但远远不及现实。通常，史国威会将C-print本身的色彩抹除，使其变成黑白的底，并用透明水色反复罩染。染色之后的图像不是还原，而是比现实更主观，是对现实图景的怀疑和不满足。

于是色彩在史国威巨幅的影像中变成了一个述说者，并且在那些大得具有压迫感的画面中，用不同深浅、强度、情感的递进和色彩之间变换莫测的关系，使画面变得具有“表演性”。绿色在“有风景的房间”系列（2013）中变得不那么确定了，掺杂了红、蓝、紫的绿，变得有了厚度、情绪以及不可捉摸的距离感，透明水色附着在C-print相纸上，带来了清透的不确定性。然而此时，大面积对比色（红色）的并置却降低了整幅画面的纯度，让人意识到到图像中并没有确凿的颜色，每一缕色彩都是有表情、流动并具有包容性的，更接近人眼的色域。史国威在用摄影这种具象的语言来打抽象又主观的“哑语”。

然而颜色哲学只是图像的表层，那些层叠或倾斜的树（《倾斜》2016）、鳞次栉比的仙人掌（“有风景的房间”系列 2013）、群鸟标本（《沉默之语》2015），都是在用密集的一致性来暗合某种不易察觉集体意识，以及个体在群体意志之下的不确定性。《稀薄的压力》（2015）中高海拔特有的连绵低矮的松林，在高压缺氧的环境中吸纳养分变得吃力，甚至不堪山顶轻薄的积雪。画面中整齐的松林由远及近压向观者，那些密集的松树经过艺术家的反复思考、试探、对比后精确地裁切，使画面看起来稳定、完整、不可撼动。沿45°角溢出画外的松林随着绿色的递进，显现出了潜在的威胁与不稳定感，山坡的走势以同样的角度加强了画面的视觉压迫，而此时直立的松林就像一个个确凿的证据，将个体裹挟并归顺于既定的姿态之中。让人想起福柯在《规训与惩罚》中描述的权利和宗教（集体意识）是如何用温和的方式逐步灌输和矫正人们的认知，使其成为一个乖顺的肉体。但如果仔细看，则会注意到松树间不止有

浅绿、黄、白、灰之间可能还笼罩着一层潜在的品红。色彩之间的“合力”使得画面整体开始松动起来，有了呼吸感。史国威用相互矛盾又“咬合”着的色阶，带有压迫感却不稳定的群像，着色在黑白照片（现实）上的“虚构”景观，渗透了个体逆反的讯息。

此时我们不仅看到了一个艺术家的日常创作，可以想象，一个在后文革时期出生，成长于体制的松动和转型的节点，在社会意识形态聚变中形成自我意识和艺术认知，在曾经的西德（科隆、多特蒙德）研习摄影术后，又回到本土语境的创作者来说，集体、个体、权利、体制似乎变得混杂、深刻和绝对。我们不但看到了史国威对于集体意志的警惕，更能看到他跳出自我角色的动作，以及作者对于自我身份的延伸、确认、想象、反思和否定。

而与之重合的另一条线索是85’新潮、后八九以及1990年代以来的玩世现实主义，与观念的大行其道。这些都是以对西方艺术中心主义的模仿为起点，在意识形态的异化上走向边缘化。这时艺术家审视自我以及本土意识形态之间关系的自觉性决定了他的立场。史国威用手工上色的图像，逆反了景观美学（居伊·德波式的景观社会所代表的西方现代社会意识形态）和图像的神性，在泰然自若的景象中渗透着个体意识的能量。

此时我们可以像作者一样站在山石之间，感受目光所及的光线、气味、温度、风……或许能觉察到这寂静景观深处传来的不安的频率，那可能来自某个不驯服的肉体。

The Intractable Body

By Li Li

Shi Guowei has always used cool, calm, solemn, and grand narratives about reality to highlight everyday miracles, but when we are confronted with these exquisite yet unpredictable pictures, we perceive a vague energy. It is almost as if this energy from the depths of the image gradually dissolves those distant, disingenuous, and unshakeable landscapes.

In the artist's view, the material that supports the photograph is powerless. The range of color perceived by the human eye is much larger than the optical imaging range, but even these hand-colored images do not achieve the depth of color perceived by the naked eye; the colors subjectively perceived by the artist determine the reality of the image, even if that is not anywhere close to reality. Usually, Shi Guowei scrapes the color from the C-print until a black-and-white base is all that remains. Then, he utilizes translucent watercolors to add the colors once again. The colored images are not a return; they are more subjective than reality and they express doubt about and dissatisfaction with real scenes.

Colors become a narrator in Shi Guowei's massive pictures. In those immensely oppressive

images, the gradual addition of depth, strength, and emotion, as well as the changeable and vague relationships between colors makes the images more expressive. In *Lab* series (2013), green becomes less certain; green is mixed with red, blue, and purple to create a deep, emotional, and unpredictable sense of distance. When the watercolors were applied to the C-print paper, they gave the pictures a transparent uncertainty. Thus, the juxtapositions of large areas of contrasting colors (red) reduce the purity of the entire image, causing the viewer to realize that there are no absolute colors in any image. Every color has an expressive quality, a flow, and a level of tolerance, which allows them to more closely approach the colors seen by the human eye. Shi Guowei uses the figurative language of photography to create an abstract and subjective "sign language."

The philosophy of color simply deals with the surface of an image. In those layered, leaning trees (*Slant*, 2016), those rows of cacti (*Lab*, 2013), and those bird specimens (*Silent Speech*, 2015), a dense continuity meshes with an imperceptible collective consciousness and the individual uncertainty within collective

consciousness. *Thin Pressure* (2015) features the low, continuous pine forests unique to high-altitude areas. In high-pressure, low-oxygen environments, absorbing nutrients becomes more difficult and the trees cannot survive the dense snows on the mountaintops. The neat pine forests in the picture press toward the viewer, and the artist carefully cuts out these densely-packed pine trees after intense consideration, exploration, and comparison, which gives the images stability, integrity, and immovability. The pines flow outside the frame at a 45° angle, and the introduction of green reveals hidden perils and a sense of instability. Similarly, the slope of the mountain increases the visual oppression of the image. In that moment, the straight pine trees are like pieces of irrefutable evidence, coercing each one into existing postures. This is reminiscent of Foucault's *Discipline and Punish*, in which power and religion (collective consciousness) are gentle means of gradually instilling and correcting perceptions, transforming people into obedient bodies. But upon closer examination, we note that there are colors besides green between the pines. Dark green, light green, yellow, white, and grey are also enveloped in a layer of faint pink. The cohesion between the colors relaxes the

painting and allows it to breathe. Shi Guowei utilizes conflicting yet interlocking color levels to create an oppressive yet unstable group of pictures. Color is a “fabricated” spectacle in these black-and-white pictures (realities), permeated with messages of personal rebellion.

In this body of work, we see more than an artist's daily output. The artist was born after the Cultural Revolution and grew up in a time of systemic loosening and transformation. His consciousness and artistic ideas were formed during this period of fusion in social ideologies. After he studied photography in western Germany (Cologne and Dortmund), he returned to the Chinese context, but the relationships between the collective and the individual, between power and the system, seemed to become complex, deep, and absolute. Shi Guowei is guarding against collective consciousness, but he also leaves himself behind, so that he can extend, confirm, imagine, consider, and negate his own identity.

Coincidentally, a related theme is the wide acceptance of the concepts of the '85 New Wave, the post-1989 era, and 1990s Cynical Realism. The art of these periods began with the imitation

of Western-centric art, and this ideological alienation pushed it to the margins. Here, the artist's examination of his awareness of his relationship to Chinese ideology decided his position. Shi Guowei utilizes hand-colored pictures to oppose the aesthetics of spectacle (the modern Western ideology of Guy Debord's society of spectacle) and the sacredness of the image. Shi's self-possessed spectacles are permeated with the power of individual consciousness.

Like the artist, we stand among the mountains and stones, perceiving the light, the smell, the temperature, and the breeze... Perhaps we can detect the frequency of unease that emerges from this silent landscape, which may emanate from a certain intractable body.

与史国威林中漫步

文/凯伦·史密斯

自德国多特蒙德高等摄影学院学成归国后，史国威逐渐形成了自己持恒不变，令人叹服的视觉表达方式，在摄影和绘画间寻得细腻精巧的融合。他观察并记录景象，创作出传统摄影风格的黑白照片，随后对其进行长时间的手工上色。这一过程不仅要求相机镜头背后的眼手协调，亦需精准把控笔刷的涂抹方式；而其中诸多材料与手法的结合，也使其作品承载的内涵远超“手工上色照片”这一标签的字面意义。

从外观上粗看，史国威的近期创作的主要对象是祛除了个体特征的风景（或不如说是自然），呈现出宽泛或稍显抽象的形貌。倘若考虑到直接影响他的文化架构语境，这一内容与表现手法着实不令人意外：在水墨与文人画的美术传统中，风景几乎向来是心领神会之物；作为召唤人们心性精神的源泉，风景的语汇库是隐喻的，而非纯粹描述性的。与之相似，史国威不甚追求对大自然外观形态的摹仿，而更多地寻求阐明由抽象经验与情感构成的内在世界。得益于此，他的“摄影绘画”不禁充满形而上学的超自然力量，散发出崇高的光晕。

史国威称其作品为“摄影绘画”。其中照片是每件作品的起始，来自艺术家四处游历时的亲自拍摄。他全然沉浸在自然与某处的气象天候中，这一身体力行的动作在识别场景的过程中至关重要：确认场景，便是确认其构图的基础。然而在用大画幅相机作细致入微的取景后，最终的摄影绘画却从不将艺术家所见悉数展示；若观者站在同一位置，眼前景象也绝不相同。在史国威这里，照相机不是创造成品的工具，而是产出源素材的手段。

照片冲印出后，便到了绘画登场的阶段：这并不是从某一材质到另一材质的简单挪用。在德国攻读研究生数年，令史国威练就了精湛的摄影技术，暗房冲印的工艺也使他沉迷。这些技法之一便是用油墨为黑白照片上色——它的历史长达一百多年，能令照片呈现为彩色，将现实渲染出更加生动的模样。自然，这一技术开始实践时，彩色摄影不仅尚未发明，且为不敢想象的技术。于是，照片中略为超现实的色调不仅仅是人造附加品，却被全然视作是近乎真实的，即便带着做作的夸张和陌生感。在中国摄影历史上，亦在早期便出现为黑白照片上颜料的做法，画师们以卓越的上色技巧，在单色图片上创作出相当栩栩如生的色彩层次；而到了二十世纪中叶，大量意识形态图像的出产使得手工上色成为一种原则，用以营造温暖向上的光辉和坚定不移的革命氛围，饱和的色调完美地契合了图像意图传达的政治信息，满足了意识形态上的视觉要求。然而，史国威所追寻的却是一条迥异的道路，他将装饰性与意识形态双双抛开，选择了远更缥缈如幻的形式。

不可否认的是，作为一名优秀摄影师的史国威，对绘画也有着同样强烈的兴趣。他所选择并发展的创作方式同时满足了两种兴趣，为二者无交集的担忧提供了简洁的解决方案。与此同时，这种方式有意地模糊了绘画和摄影的界限，用绘画的观念虚构来破坏照片的表面现实，但他的方式并不显山露水，故而极具欺骗性。

史国威在这一领域的最早探索，其题材与内容专注于自然历史中的物件，如博物馆中用剥制术保存的动物标本等。随着时间推移，他将目光转向大自然中的鲜活例证，创作的尺幅也远超出最初预期。有了成功探索的铺垫，他的近作透出自信与简练，尺幅也进一步变大。这些作品不可简单地被解读为自然景象，在此，自然不仅仅是艺术家的缪斯，更是一个高效的道具，作品透过其传达情绪与精神的感悟。每一版照片的巨大尺幅，意味着绘画也要覆盖诸多区域。“由于手工上色是一个长时间的过程，我深深地沉浸在这些图像中，透过自己的情感，逐渐破译图像中深藏的内容。”史国威解释道，“这些情感，个人的情绪波动，直接影响了我的色彩运用和笔法。我常常好似每天在依据完全不同的叙事创作。”漫长的时间成为了上述情感波动的温床；情绪或精力的变化，专注力的渐逝，都通过色彩与强度的变化，无可避免地记录在了最终作品中。

在照片上绘画似乎看上去仍是一个相当简单的过程。然而，恰若中国画里举重若轻的细致技法，照片上色比起数字填色游戏到底复杂得多。复杂是因为艺术家希望照片上覆盖的薄薄一层颜料是不显眼的，使得观者第一眼几乎上当：他们感觉到图像里有什么，但却无法加以干涉，于是不安的疑惑驱使着他们再次观看。为达到这一目的，艺术家对尺幅的控制力无疑是难题之一。手工上色使用带有水彩质感的透明水性颜料，而同样与水彩相似的是，下笔前须胸有成竹，没有修改的余地，也无法用颜料覆盖更正任何失误，机会只有一次。这不仅需要手的灵巧，更需要持续的专注和用心。而使这一过程愈发复杂的是，史国威凭借的是记忆来描摹他的现实幻象——独属于照片地点的记忆，是艺术家的主焦点。与此同时，大脑有一个自然惯习：在不完全笃定或注意力涣散的时刻，它往往回溯过去有意无意积累起的素材，这些素材来源于现实生活，也来自观察理解自然微妙变幻的经验。对于艺术家而言，比起诉诸观看习惯或是描绘自然的习得技法，抛下一切，依靠直觉总是更难的。“我一直认为‘色彩’是一种极其个人化的感知。”艺术家如是声称，“对同一种颜色，每个人都有自己的理解，这便是为什么我相信情绪色彩才是最真实的。我为作品的准确和生动选择合适的色调，但以更能调动自己情绪的方式，主观地突出一些颜色。最终呈现出的色调是只有人工干涉才能获得的，说其真实也不尽然，说其虚幻也并非如此：它处在中间地带。”

和许多年轻艺术家一样，史国威最初也在创作中思考宏大的概念，赋予艺术表达豪言壮语与改变世界的的能力，认为每一件艺术作品都应成为一纸宣言。他的早期作品试图用视觉形式探讨社会与文化问题，但史国威随即感到这些作品阐释性太强，跳不出他有意引导建构的直白叙事的藩篱。或许他从那时起已经意识到，将某一时代背景下的社会政治作为主题有诸多局限，又或仅仅是直觉促使他改变自己的工作方式。不论如何，他开始更加关注自己生平际遇中的各种感受，用他的话来说，是听从内心的渴望，想要“去发现并感受事物之间的共振，找到通过图像传达性情的方式。”如是历程最终引领他创作了“林中漫步”中的作品，而这些新作无疑实现了他的目的——矛盾不易察觉地内嵌其中，情感巧妙地藏身于图像内，乃至一眼望去似乎只有冷静的美感。“然而近看时，图像背后却袒露出强烈的焦虑。”艺术家表示。而实际上，其更早的作品中也有着同样的特质，如《蓝色树林》（2016），《灰色树林》（2014），甚至在看似直白的《夏》（2015）中也有完美体现。画面的色调赋予场景以超现实的诱惑力：幽闭恐惧，密集得难受，非要诱使愚人进入悬在眼前那应许的天堂不可。相似的紧张感也从近作《相互重叠的植物》中散发出来。事实上，几乎所有史国威近作（往往以森林树木的形式出现）的光晕正是缘于程度各异的紧张感，同时也为我们提供颇有见地且引人深思的，进入外部世界的参照点。

一些理论家认为，今时今日的摄影向我们展示了“我们是如何理解任何事物的”¹。也许展示这种方式的不是摄影本身，而是快门所定格的主体或瞬间。我自己也曾是一个年轻有抱负的艺术家，在艺术学院读大三时，我拍下了许多不同地点的树的黑白照片，有的近，有的远，有的环绕着我。

我喜欢树木，直到现在也是。它们的形态和运动具有人类般的情感表现力，而我的回应是冲动的——虽然到了美院的第三年，已经耗尽了許多热情在创作、理论、更多创作、更多理论上，也意识到创作是最困难的部分，而想得太多常常对最终作品的成功无甚益处。当一个人遇到心智上的瓶颈，总是会凭直觉驱使回到最基本，最简单的东西，去寻找深埋内心的真言，了解自己，明白自己真正想表达的是什么。抑或正相反，会回到无需太多思考的事物，能令思维暂时憩息，单凭形式产生共鸣。在我的照片中，树的感觉既亲切又咄咄逼人：观者的情绪既能使它们成为呵护的荫蔽，也能成为障碍的围栏；这和《冷清的松林》引发的观感不无相似之处。那时的我全凭冲动，并未想太多自己在创作什么，或者试图表达什么。那之后，我见到了越来越多的艺术作品，才发觉原来有如此多艺术家为树木所吸引——无论身处其艺术生涯的哪一阶段，无论其创作观念与追求是什么——也以树木为对象有着相似的表达：欣赏但却犹豫，有刻

¹ 杰里·L·汤普森，《摄影为何重要》，麻省理工学院出版社，2016，第4页。

也依靠直觉；他们观看，细察，为那壮丽而倾倒；那幽魂，那生机勃勃的场景，抑或只是一堆直线，曲线，形状与暗影……都令人们着迷。大自然的神秘远比我们广博得多，世世代代恒久不变。

诚然，在中国的文化语境下，水墨传统赋予了风景独特的隐喻内涵。从其摄影绘画主体的选择上来看，史国威似乎很清楚这一点。他的图像将观者传送至自然与风景的世界，由大小远近各异的树构成，它们拥有惊人的细节，同时却也保持着些许抽象。与之相伴的是一种无意识的冲动，驱使着我漫步在森林中。它们既以主体为中心，同时却也与主体毫无关系。它们表示自然，描述诸物，却又不止于此。“（在貌似记录现实的图像中，）我的干预契合了我看待世界的方式。”艺术家如是说，“也契合了我对色彩及其对感官影响的理解。我用熟悉的语言（即自然与摄影）来讲述无需词语表达的故事。图像即是一种手语。”

之所以说史国威的创作过程从崭新的角度切入摄影的客观性问题，原因之一在于其进一步玩弄了我们所谓“客观”的感受，或是说狡猾莫测的大脑。实际上，每一张“照片”都不只是单张，而是数张的合成产物。每幅摄影绘画作品都是由多个不同的取景无缝拼接而成的。若想看出这障眼法需得具备极其敏锐的目光。艺术家得以将观者的注意力从照片的本来构图上挪开，其技巧首要在于精妙的上色呈现出与现实的对比——那是一个弥漫着怀旧气息，属于过去的世界——色彩令我们分了心。然而，若是我们屈从于内心的不安，自问“这些图像投射的现实’哪里不对’？”，我们将发现这图像汇编的微妙效果，意识到史国威的照片不像惯常的摄影那样拥有单一的灭点和焦点。异曲同工的是，英国艺术家大卫·霍克尼也用静物照相机与录影机来制造不可能存在的视觉空间。霍克尼曾经搭建了一个可以安装多个摄影机的装备，他将该装备固定在车顶，一边驾驶，一边令多个摄影机记录下同样的场景，最终得到多重的时间与视角。阿瑟·克拉特写道：“不像（霍克尼的）早期照片拼贴作品中那样包含着众多连贯的时刻，《四季》和《沃德盖特树林》系列（2010-2011）既拥有连贯不断的时间，也存在同步发生的时间。”²

史国威的全景画面亦是如此，以最不易察觉的方式使我们失去平衡。《倾斜》（2016）即是明显的一例：这件迷人的作品中，一排树木不是如我们熟悉那般直指天空，而是失调地向一侧歪斜，造成了奇妙的视觉效果。这是一排即将倒下的树吗？还是这不过是它们的生长方式？作品宁静平缓的气氛，令人想起拥有相似构图的《世界的尽头》（2015），而后者引发的疑问不是奇异的生长特征，反倒是其中元素的平平无奇。

² 工作生活于芝加哥的艺术写作者，艺术史学者阿瑟·克拉特（Arthur Kolat），发表于“大卫·霍克尼：时间与更多，空间与更多”，理查德·格雷画廊展览画册，芝加哥，2018。

史国威的摄影绘画邀请观者流连于图像空间之中（当然也有例外），也因此有着堪比文人画的特质。在艺术家的情绪光谱中，《人造风景》（2015）是一首低调而疗愈的田园牧歌。我们穿过表面，跨过画中物，画面奏起的序曲引我们走入一个更远的、中性的空间……我们就这样忘我地徜徉在思绪中。而其近作则流露出更多不协调的感觉：艺术家表面上似乎邀请观者漫步林中，作品却时常主动地抵抗着我们。假使将《桦》与《生长》并置，我们将发现后者呈现出密集而近乎单色的特征，乃至将人冷冰冰地拒之门外；相较之下，《阳光下的树林》稍稍敞开了自身，但仍不愿完全接纳我们探索那阳光斑驳的林中空地。即使一些作品显出开放的模样，也略显腼腆忸怩，呈现的不是自然的坚韧，而是其脆弱，若要进入其间，将会侵犯领地造成伤害。这样的伤害总归令人不安。

19世纪美国文学家罗伯特·路易斯·史蒂文森（Robert Louis Stevenson）所写：“森林摄人心魄的不是它的美，是它那微妙之处，那古老树木散发出的气息，才能真正使疲倦的灵魂重获新生。”这一见解颇有先见之明，而对拥有中国文化根源的敏感嗅觉的人来说，这句话更是再合适不过。

史国威的近作传达出某种氛围和光晕，催促着观者自我反思与修行，沿着古时文人画匠毕生追求的道路——他们避开世事纷扰与蝇营狗苟之人，纵情于诗情画意中，几乎与世隔绝，这样的生活方式正是他们一心坚持的价值观。到今天再提及这样的行为多少有些不合时宜，但这一风骨仍然残留着，尤其在一些艺术家身上。他们自知难以改变社会，于是选择了与积极入世相对的另一条路。他们的作品提醒我们自己的缺点与失败，如祷文一般鼓励我们成为更好的人。

只是，史国威绝不会如此明确地表露出意图。正如那微妙的上色一般，他寻求表达的观念与陈述永远是不易察觉的，也许仅仅是凭他的直觉，而接下来的解读则全权交给观者。但其中不可动摇的，是在所有摄影绘画中起作用的错觉，还有将所有作品紧紧相连的崇高感。春秋末期，老子提出，外在于内在心象之物皆是幻觉。这一试图阐明人类与外在世界的关系的论点，在各个文化，各个时期的哲学中均有探讨。穿越历史长河，类似的哲学论述大大影响了艺术创作的观念，尤其在中国。两千年前老子对人感知现实的疑问，在数码图像时代的今天找到了回响——图像假定自身在社会注视下扮演着追求真实的角色，但事实上任何图像都有可能被操纵。幻与真之间的界限从未如此流动不定。若作进一步讨论，试比较《仙人掌公园》与《野草》，到更加抽象的《山花》，直至愈发抽象、具有强烈感情表现力的《泡沫》与《地衣》……它们全都有着莫测的美感，从各方面诗意地挑动感官。这里的观念，与视觉对大脑经验的影响，在法国哲学家加斯东·巴什拉（Gaston Bachelard, 1884-1962）的“诗意想象论”中得到了相

阐释。巴什拉认为，想象是在视觉经验，文本经验与知觉经验产生的语言中形成的；这些经验成为被我们的大脑接受的数据，使我们理解，解读或破译外在于我们的世界；而想象力诗意地超越了特定时空中的外在世界，超越了对科学可证事实的依赖。这些经验滋养了我们内心保留的记忆景象，塑造了我们观看世界的方式，以及我们观看时的选择。

此理论契合了大多在作品中探讨现实与幻象的艺术家，但史国威的作品尤甚。这一理论解释了绘画过程之长的原因（除了手工劳动的修行与愉悦层面之外）。“我一直相信艺术与工艺是密不可分。”他如此解释道，“抛开工艺只谈观念是不行的，如果观念不能实现，就不存在作品，也不存在意义。因为透明水色不允许有失误，我必须每一笔都极其专注，控制笔刷上颜料的同时，连呼吸也要控制。”

在这样极其当代的创作实践中，却处处体现着文人的价值观。史国威表示：“慢慢创作是一件宝贵的事情。人的生命如此短暂，我们只有慢下来才得以欣赏生活的意义。我的创作是为了描述文字无法描述之物，激活钝感的神经。这是艺术的主要意义之一。”

也许这便是为什么在史国威的作品中，自然能够发出如此强烈的声音。如德国作家赫尔曼·黑塞所说：“树木是圣物。谁能同它们倾诉，明白如何倾听它们，谁就能获悉真理。它们不宣讲学说，不受细枝末节所缚，一心传达生命古老的法则。”³

赋予史国威的艺术以独特气质与存在理由的，恰如其分，正是这一法则。

³ 赫尔曼·黑塞（Hermann Hesse），《漫游随想录：手记与速写》，1972，Farrar Straus & Giroux出版社

The Intractable Body A Walk in the Woods with Shi Guowei

By Karen Smith

In the recent years, since his return from studies at the Fachhochschule Dortmund in Germany, Shi Guowei has evolved a singular, and compelling, style of visual expression. This resides in a subtle, and deft, combination of photography and painting. Specifically, between black and white photographs that he makes in conventional fashion by observing scenes and documenting his observations, and an approach to hand-colouring the photographs that unfolds over an extended period of time. This process requires steadfast coordination of eye and hand, first through the camera lens and then via the highly controlled daubing of a brush. And, similar to the successful deployment of many artistic forms through history, the combination of materials and execution together expresses much more than might be assumed from a pragmatic description, or the label “hand-coloured photo”.

Outwardly, superficially, the subject of Shi Guowei’s recent endeavour, as evidenced in the group of new works presented in “A Walk in the Woods”, is landscape, or rather nature, used in a generic or slightly abstract form that eschews the particular. Within the context of Shi Guowei’s immediate cultural framework, this content and

approach to using it may not be surprising, since, in terms of the traditional arts, of ink and literati painting, landscape is almost always esoteric, a resource deployed to conjure a spiritual state via means of a metaphoric, rather than a purely descriptive, lexicon of motifs. Similarly, Shi Guowei is less concerned with depicting a physical resemblance of nature, than with finding means to illuminate an inner world of experiences and abstract emotions. This, he does, with a quiet, subtle skill. So much so that, courtesy of his masterful combination of straight documentary photography with a lengthy manual process of colouring, his “photo-paintings” are imbued with a metaphysical force, and an aura of the sublime.

Shi Guowei himself uses the terms “photo-painting” to describe his works. Each individual piece begins from a photograph, and is always one he has taken himself first, by going out and discovering a place. This physical motion, as an act of self-immersion in nature and the climatic atmospherics of a particular location, is important to the process of identifying the scene that will be the basis of a composition. Working with a large format camera, he makes a careful set of frames. None of the final photo-paintings are intended to present the scene as it might have appeared to

the artist on site, nor how it might appear to us were we to find ourselves on the same spot. Shi Guowei is an artist who turns to a camera as a tool for producing source material rather than a finished product.

Once the photograph is made, then the painting portion of the process begins. The thinking here is not a simple appropriation of one medium to another. Shi Guowei spent several years obtaining a masters’ degree in photography in Germany, where he acquired mastery of photographic techniques and experienced an immersion in the craft of dark-room printing. One of those techniques was the hundred-odd-year-old method of applying coloured ink to black-and-white photographs, which made them appear to be colour photos and a livelier rendition of reality. This practice naturally began in an era when colour photography had yet to be invented and was hard to imagine. And, when the slightly surreal results of the added-on hues were not only understood as manmade additions, but were wholly accepted as approximations of the real, in spite of their affected exaggeration and strangeness. The pigment toning of black-and-white photos was a feature of photography in China early in its history, when technicians

showed remarkable mastery of inking (relatively) life-like layers across monochrome images. Not least, through the mid-20th century, which produced a rich array of ideologically-inspired pictures, hand-coloured by turn to the tenets of a positive, warm glow and unmistakable revolutionary timbre. In this period, the saturated tonality was rather perfectly suited to the visual requirements of the political messages that images were conceived to convey. The approach that Shi Guowei pursues takes a rather divergent course, eschewing the decorative or the ideological, in favour of a form far more illusory.

So, whilst Shi Guowei may have made a fine photographer, he was also possessed of a strong interest in painting, which could not be denied. Thus, the practice he has adopted and evolved satisfies both interests, offering a neat solution to these parallel concerns. At the same time, it consciously blurs the boundary between painting and photography, undermining the apparent reality of a photograph with the conceptual invention of a painting in ways that are deceptive because they are barely apparent.

The very earliest examples of Shi Guowei's experiments in this field were focused in their subject-matter and content upon objects from natural history; the kind of specimen preserved using taxidermy that are found in natural history museums. Gradually, over time, he turned to living examples of nature in the outside world, and to

working on a far larger scale than initially envisaged. And with some success; the most recent works are confident, succinct, and noticeably large. They show that nature is less his Muse than a highly efficient prop, for they are certainly not intended to be read simply as natural scenes, but as musings on mood and psychological states. "Because the process of hand-colouring takes time, I become deeply engaged with the images," he explains, "gradually interpreting the content that lies within the pictures through the prism of my emotions. These emotions, the fluctuations in my own mood, directly influence my use of colour and the manner of the brushwork. It often seems that day to day I am working to a different narrative."

The large scale of each print means significant ground has to be covered – quite literally – hence the time it takes for a photo-painting to be completed. It is this expanded element of time that gives rise to the fluctuations alluded to above. Changes in mood or energy levels, lapses in concentration and attention are inevitably documented in the finished work as shifts in tone and intensity.

Painting on a photo still sounds like a fairly simple process, and yet, like the delicate skills required to master Chinese brush painting, with which it has much in common, it is more complex than a paint-by-numbers style of filling in blank spaces on a monochrome map. Complex because Shi

Guowei's application of a thin layer of colour to a photograph is not meant to be obvious. He wants viewers to be almost duped by a first impression, and feel drawn to look again by a nagging doubt about something in the picture they can't quite put a finger on. To achieve this, the managing of scale is certainly one of the challenges. Hand-colouring uses a water-based ink with the qualities of water-colour pigment. And like water-colour painting, it has to be done with aforethought – there is no means of altering, or correcting mistakes by painting over them. The artist has but one chance to get it right. That requires not only manual dexterity, but consistency in mental attention, and emotional intensity. This is complicated by the fact that Shi Guowei relies upon memory to complete his illusion of reality. There are memories specific to the place in the photograph, which are Shi Guowei's primary focus. At the same time, it is a natural habit that, in moments of uncertainty, or of lapses in concentration, the brain falls back upon the conscious/unconscious resource it accumulates through life experiences of reality, and of seeing and absorbing nature's subtle atmospherics. As such, it would be easy for an artist to resort to acquired habit of seeing or learned skill at describing nature, rather than letting go and working intuitively. "I have always thought that 'colour' is a highly personal perception," he asserts. "Each person has their own understanding of the same colour, which is the reason I believe emotional colour to be the

most real. I chose tones I think are suitable to make the work lively and accurate, but subjectively highlight the original colours in ways that are more stimulating to my mood. Such tones can only be obtained through human intervention, so the effect is not entirely unrealistic, nor entirely fantasy. It is somewhere in the middle.”

Like many young artists, Shi Guowei began with grand concepts, and the idea of art's role in making big statements, its ability to change the world, each piece its own manifesto. Thus, early works attempted to explore, to visualise, social and cultural issues, but were, he felt, too illustrative, never transcending a literal narrative which the artist directed or constructed in too conscious a fashion. Perhaps he was already becoming aware of the limitations of time-specific social or political topics, or moved by intuition to make a change to his way of working. Either way, he found himself paying more attention to his own feelings life's encounters, in Shi Guowei's words, following a desire “to find and feel the resonance between things, and to find means to convey temperament through an image.” It is this journey that has brought him to the recent works in “A Walk in the Woods”, which certainly achieve his goal. Here, contradictions are discreetly embedded, and emotions subtly concealed in images that, at first glance, are seemingly calm and attractive. “But look closely and there's an intense anxiety behind those images,” Shi Guowei suggests. In point of fact, this was also perfectly

represented by previous works like *Blue Forest* 2016 and *Grey Forest* 2014, or even the seemingly straight forward *Summer* 2015. The tonality here projects a seductively surreal allure over scenes that are profoundly claustrophobic, cloyingly dense and promise to consume anyone fool enough to be lured into the promise of paradise they dangle before the eyes. A similar intense sensation emanates from the recent example *Overlapping Plantlife* (相互重叠的植物). In fact, the aura of almost all Shi Guowei's recent works centres on various degrees of intense sensation, whilst offering thoughtful, and thought-provoking, points of reference to the external world, often in the form of forest, wood or tree.

Some theorists believe that photography today shows us “something of how we understand *anything*.”¹ Perhaps not photography *per se*, and more the subjects or moments that are frozen in each frame. As a young aspiring artist once myself, I made a series of black-and-white photographs that I took in not one but multiple locations, of trees, near, far, and surrounding me. I did this in my third year of art school.

I had always liked trees – still do. There is an expression to their form and resonance to their motion that is distinctly lifelike, emotive. My response was impulsive at the time, although by the third year in art school, one has already expended a great deal of enthusiasm for doing, for theory, for more doing and more theory, and

realised that it is the doing which is the hard part; that thinking too much at times does not overly contribute to the success of the final piece, in whatever form that might take. Intuitively, when you reach a mental roadblock you go back to the basics, to simplicity, in search of *something*, a mantra perhaps to meditate upon, as a means to understanding yourself and what it is you *really* want to express. Or, conversely, things that don't require too much thinking, and that resonate for formal qualities alone and allow the mind time out. The trees in my pictures feel both friendly and threatening; a cossetting enclosure and obstructive barrier, depending upon the viewer's mood, which is not unlike the sensations prompted by *The Deserted Pine Forest* (冷清的松林). At the time, driven by impulse, I didn't think too much about what I was doing, or what I was trying to say. Later, as I looked at more and more art, I realised just how many artists, at all stages of their career and of all conceptual persuasions, have been drawn to making similar statements about trees. Admiring, yet hesitant, conscious, yet intuitive, each one looking, observing, struck by magnificence, a spirit, a living scene, or simply a mesh of lines, curves, shapes and shadows; the mystery of nature, as something bigger than ourselves, generation after generation.

Of course, in the cultural context of China, courtesy of the ink tradition, landscape retains a distinctive metaphoric resonance. Through his choice of subject for his photo-paintings, Shi Guowei seems to recognise this. His pictures transport us into a world of nature, of landscapes, of trees large, small, near and far, and in extraordinary detail, whilst simultaneously remaining somewhat abstract. They are aligned with that unconscious impulse that drove me to walk in a wood, being both about their subject, and having nothing to do with it at all. They signify nature, the objects they depict, but at the same time so much more. “My manual intervention (in images that appear to document reality) suit my way of looking at the world,” he says, “as well as my understanding of colour and its affect upon the senses. I use the familiar language (of nature and photography) to tell stories beyond words. The images are a sign language.”

One reason why Shi Guowei’s process comes at the question of objectivity in photography from a fresh direction lies in a further manipulation of our so-called

“objective” senses or astute mind. Each “photo” is in fact not one but a combination of multiple images. Each single photo-painting is constructed from multiple frames seamlessly stitched together. To spot the illusion requires careful attention. Shi Guowei’s skill in deflecting attention away from the actual structure of the photographs lies primarily in their delicate colouration, which suggests a contrast with the present; a world from the past, suffused with an air of nostalgia. We are first distracted by colour, but if we allow ourselves to succumb to that nagging doubt about the “*something* not quite right” about the reality they project, we discover the subtle effect of the compilation of images, and that Shi Guowei’s photographs lack the single vanishing or focal point of a conventional photograph. There is an echo here of how British artist David Hockney uses the (stills and video) camera to produce impossible visual spaces. In one example, Hockney constructed a rig upon which multiple video cameras were mounted to each record the same scene as he drove the car atop of which the rig was fixed, resulting in a multiplicity of time and perspectives. As writer Arthur Kolat notes,

“Unlike (Hockney’s) earlier photo collages which included a multitude of consecutive moments, *The Four Seasons, Woldgate Woods* 2010-2011, includes both consecutive time and simultaneous time.”²

This is true of Shi Guowei’s panoramic scenes, which throw us off-balance in the subtlest of ways. To being with an obvious example, the intriguing *Tilt* from 2016 shows a line of trees with the familiar sky-ward thrust of the tree skewed off true. The visual effect is curious. Are the trees falling over? Did they simply grow this way? The mood is quiet, still, not unlike a similarly composed work *The World’s End* 2015, which prompts questions less for the odd nature of growth than for the absolute ordinariness of the elements featured.

One of the ways in which Shi Guowei’s photo-paintings share comparable traits with literati paintings is the invitation they extend to meander through the pictorial space – for the most part; there are exceptions, as we shall see. An example like *Manufactured Landscape* 2015 shows the more idyllic end of the emotional spectrum. Unobtrusive,

² Chicago-based writer and art historian Arthur Kolat, in his catalogue essay to “David Hockney: Time and More, Space and More”, accompanying the exhibition at Richard Gray Gallery, Chicago, 2018

modest, and comforting. We pass through the surface, over the objects, into a neutral space beyond to which the scenes provide an overture. And then we lose ourselves in our own thoughts. The recent works exude more jarring sensations. While Shi Guowei seems to invite viewers to talk a walk in the woods, some works actively repel us. One might compare the shimmering beauty of *Birch* (桦) with *Growth* (生长), the latter a dense, almost monochrome piece in which the density of the trees conspires to keep us out. Following on, a work like *Woods in Sunlight* (阳光下的树林) opens up to us slightly, but still does not exactly extend a warm welcome to explore its sun-dappled glades. Where others works appear to open up, they feel somehow coy, and evoke the fragility of nature rather than its enduring spirit. To enter would be to infringe upon place, to cause damage in some way. This is more or less disturbing depending on your attitude towards trees or woods in general. As American author Robert Louis Stevenson wrote back in the 19th century; "It is not so much for its beauty that the forest makes a claim upon men's hearts, as for that subtle something, that quality of air that emanates from old trees, that so wonderfully changes and renews a weary spirit." I think this statement is prescient, and particularly apt for those sensitive to China's cultural roots.

There is something about the mood and aura of the recent works that encourages the viewer to reflect upon the self, that speak of refining self along the lines that literati painters once sought to

articulate through their lifestyles, their retreat from the world of (muddy) daily affairs of less-than-transparent men, of an immersion in poetry and painting and a life that demanded little from the external world, as an expression of the values they hoped to uphold. Today, such activities or comparisons may feel out of place, and yet they continue to exist in many of the choices by which people live their lives today, especially among those, like contemporary artists, who turn away from an active engagement in a society they have little chance of affecting. Shi Guowei's photo-paintings could be understood as reminding us of our flaws and failings, and as mantras created to encourage ourselves to be better people.

Shi Guowei himself would never be so explicit in intent. Like the subtle, almost invisible nature of the colour he adds to his works, any direct comment or concept he seeks to express is barely apparent, to be intuited, possibly. And then, depends on your own perspective. What is not in doubt in the illusion at work across all the photo-paintings, nor the quality of the sublime which unites them. In the sixth century BC, the influential Chinese thinker Laozi offered the idea that the world external to our individual consciousness is but illusion. This topic has been the subject of philosophical endeavour in every culture and almost every age since, in philosophies that sought to articulate the interior-external relationship between Mankind and the world-outside-of-ourselves. Treatises on the subject, like

that of Laozi, have become integral to the concepts that artistic expression, through history, and especially in China, came to embody. Today, the doubts Laozi expressed towards human perception of reality two thousand years ago resonate with this digital age of image-making and the manipulation to which any image maybe subject before it assumes its role as purveyor of truth before the societal gaze. The border between truth and illusion has never been so fluid. From a further point of discussion, we might compare a photo-painting like *Cactus Garden* (仙人掌公园) with *Grass/Field* (草地), or the more abstract *Mountain of Flowers* (山花), before moving on to the further abstract, wholly emotive aspects of *Foam* (泡沫), or *Lichen*. These are poetic provocations in every way, beautiful and subtle in their sensations. There is resonance here in the concept and the effect that the visual has upon cerebral experience with the concept of poetic imagination articulated by French philosopher Gaston Bachelard (1884-1962). Bachelard attempts to explain how the imagination is formed through a convergence of the language we speak being laid over experiences that are as much visual, as literary and perceptual. And, how these elements, as the data upon which the brain draws to understand/read/interpret what is seen of the world exterior to oneself, acquire their rose-tinted nature; and how this capacity for imagining, in a poetic sense, the external world within a particular space and time, and beyond recourse to verifiable or scientific fact.

It refers to how these experiences feed the interior landscape of memories we retain, which then shape the way we look at the world; or what we seek to see when we look.

This is rather well reflected in what artists do generally with the illusions of reality they invest in their art, but is expressed with particular eloquence in Shi Guowei's photographs. It is why, aside from the meditative and pleasurable aspects of the manual labour, the painting portion takes so long. "I have always believed that art and craft are closely related," he explains. "You can't abandon craft and simply talk about concept; if you can't realize your concept, then there is no work and no meaning. Because the inks don't allow for any mistake, I have to pay close attention to each brushstroke, to control my breathing as much as the amount of pigment on the brush."

The hint of literati values that infuses a very contemporary practice is marked where Shi Guowei says "Working slowly is a very precious thing. Human life is so short that we only have the chance to appreciate the meaning of living when we slow down. I work to describe what words cannot; to activate dulled nerves. It is one of the central meanings of art."

Perhaps that is why nature has a compelling voice in Shi Guowei's art. As German author Hermann Hesse once wrote, "Trees are

sanctuaries. Whoever knows how to speak to them, whoever knows how to listen to them, can learn the truth. They do not preach learning and precepts, they preach undeterred by particulars, the ancient law of life." 3

This is, succinctly, the law that lends Shi Guowei's art its ethos and *raison d'être*.

与史国威林中漫步艺术家史国威访谈

——节选自蝴蝶效应摄影先锋论坛

蝴蝶效应：在德国的毕业创作您第一次尝试了黑白照片手工上色的技法，当时为什么会选择这个技法，在之后的作品中为什么又对这个技法特别的情有独钟？

艺术家：手工上色是因为我对绘画比较感兴趣。2006年我在德国多特蒙德摄影学院研究生的毕业创作，也是自己在德国生活的一次总结，那一次我决定冒险尝试将绘画运用到摄影上。在这个过程中，我发现我特别喜欢这个方式，之后便一发不可收拾。随着手工上色工作的逐渐推进，我慢慢觉得彩色摄影相对于手工上色显得枯燥和苍白无力，反而通过手工的介入更符合我观察世界的方式，也符合我对色彩的理解。手工上色是我个人的喜好，我喜欢手工的介入，也非常享受这个过程，相当于在黑白作品上又进行了一次创作，当上完颜色之后，作品会脱胎换骨自成一种特有的气质。这也深深地吸引我不断探索下去。

蝴蝶效应：很多人可能更着重于摄影的观念性，但是在我看来，尤其是对于摄影的古典技法而言，它是有很强的技术性的。请问您是如何实践技法的，可以和我们分享一下过程吗？

艺术家：手工上色对色彩的要求、色彩的把握和染色的技法是一个比较复杂的过程。我认为《平民贵族》（2009）系列是我手工上色技法进步的一个转折点，从这时候起，我对大面积复杂色彩的把握更自如了，手法也逐渐完善。

这一时期的创作主题都跟西方艺术史中的名作有关，这也是我当时研究的一个课题。我用西方文艺复兴时期典型的作品作为框架，来替换上中国的一些人物或者符号化的东西。这是我当时一种尝试，并且也做了大量的有关这个题材的作品。

我一直认为艺术和技艺是紧密结合的，不能抛开技艺单纯聊观念，无法实现的艺术观念，是没有意义的。技艺在艺术世界里是不可或缺的一个重要环节。

技艺精进的方法是建立在大量的失败基础上的，手工上色的其中一个特性是不可修改性。上色过程中我需要特别注意每一笔的动作，包括呼吸、颜色的深浅、水分的多少等等，这些都需要精确的控制。但是近期的作品，我反而会突出所谓的“瑕疵”，我认为现在细致精确的色彩对我来说已经不是问题了，反而想放松一些，让笔触发挥的余地更大一些。就像是松开缰绳，让它随着自己的感觉去驰骋，这也更符合我目前创作的方向的技法特点。

从作品《祭》（2012）开始，我的创作风格开始有了一些变化，人物题材基本上淡出我的视野，反而向平常无奇的，平面化、抽象化的方向发展。如果说之前关于人物的作品是所见即所得，直抒其意的话，那么近期的作品可能寓意会更多一些。我现在不想用那么强烈的色彩或者是画面构成来“大声”讲故事，反而趋于用一种平和的语调描述一个深刻的话题。

从作品《门》（2013）到《有风景的房间》（2013），这一系列都是大场景、大尺幅黑白照片手工上色的作品，这样的风格在我目前的作品里逐渐占据主导。所以我认为，这个过程是由人物到景物的转变；由具像转向抽象；由表象转入内涵。这个转变过程是与我的生活、经历和对事物的看法、理解有着密切关系的。

蝴蝶效应：从2006年到2016年这十年，我们能看到您的创作风格有一些改变，您说不希望把想说的话直接表现在画面里，而是用更精确、更微妙，或者说像细雨暗藏在作品当中。请问是什么令您有这样的变化的呢？

艺术家：之前我的作品大多是表现社会的表象——由表象到表象的。然而之后我对事物的认知逐渐接近本质，这种变化直接或间接地影响和改变了我创作风格。我试图用一种比较柔和的语调来说一个沉重的话题，或者是矛盾的现实。对于我个人而言，目前作品里蕴藏的矛盾和内心的焦灼不安相比早期作品更加

强烈了，我把它隐藏在一个表面平静的画面里，但是如果仔细观察其实背后是种无法形容的残忍和不安的焦灼。

我借助这种大尺寸的画面，经过反复地一遍又一遍地手工上色，最后形成一个具有压迫感的图像，摆在观众面前。我希望凭借图像本身的这种气质就可以震撼观者的心。我试图努力做文字不可形容的，触动人们麻木神经的图像。这是我对作品的追求，也是我认为艺术存在的一个意义。

我现在的创作在有意识地模糊摄影和绘画的界限，摄影对我来说就像是一个工具，就像毛笔、颜料，摄影作为工具的特征是客观性的。我试图用一个大家都熟悉的语言来讲述一个不可言说的事情，是用图像打的哑语，我个人理解这种描述可能对我目前的创作更形象一些。

运用摄影记录下场景。然后再通过手工介入的方法，一次次模糊摄影的客观性，让这种客观性变得越来越弱，绘画的主观性愈加强烈，这种图像是既熟悉又陌生的，就像我拍的那些道路、公园，通过手工的罩染和笔触的叠加，人们会怀疑它的真实性。这也是我的目的，世界真的是我们所看到的样子吗？

蝴蝶效应：您的作品好像有很多的秘密，很多的轻声细语藏在各个角落，但是最终的答案是你自己的反射。

艺术家：是的，因为拍完一张照片后，我都会有一个非常漫长的手工上色过程，由于时间被拉长了，所以我有机会面对一个巨大的黑白画面，缓慢地演绎一个图像情感的过程。这种情感的变化直接影响我用色和笔触的深浅，几乎每天都有不一样的叙事方法，而这些反复上色的动作同时又被压缩在一个瞬间的影像里，正是由于时间的沉淀，才使画面产生了这种疏离的效果。我们都是社会机器极速运转下被裹挟的个体。这时候我们能否停下来歇口气，不要如此麻

木，给自己一些时间去观察和感受这个世界。我认为“慢下来”是非常珍贵的事情，人的生命是短暂的，只有“慢”才有机会体会到活着的意义。

An Interview with Shi Guowei: Excerpted from the Butterfly Effect Photography Pioneer Forum

Butterfly Effect: It was in your graduation series in Germany that you first attempted to hand-color black-and-white photographs. At the time, why did you choose this technique? And why did you become so enamored of the effect in your later work?

Shi Guowei: I added color by hand because I'm interested in painting. My master's graduation series for the Fachhochschule Dortmund in 2006 was also a summary of my life in Germany. At the time, I decided to risk it and attempt to bring painting into my photography. In this process, I discovered that I really liked this method, and then there was no turning back. With the gradual progress of my hand-coloring, I began to think that color photographs seemed dull and lifeless compared to hand-colored pictures. In addition, manual intervention better suited my ways of looking at the world and my understanding of color. Hand-coloring is a love of mine. I like manual intervention, and I very much enjoy the process. Compared to the single process of coloring black-and-white photographs, the work is reborn through hand-coloring and given a unique atmosphere, which in turn inspired me to explore deeper.

BE: People may place more emphasis on the concept behind the photographs, but in my view, and especially with regard to a classic photography technique, these pictures are very technical. Can you tell us how you came to practice this technique, and can you tell us more about your process?

SGW: In hand-coloring, the color requirements, the color mastery, and the application techniques are rather complex. I think that "Common Nobles" (2009) was a turning point in my hand-coloring technique. From that point onward, I had better command of the complex coloring of large areas, and I gradually perfected my methods.

My work during this time was related to famous works of Western art, because this was something I was studying at the time. I took classic Renaissance pieces as frameworks, then switched in Chinese figures or symbols. This was something I was trying at the time, and I made a lot of works in that vein.

I have always believed that art and craft are closely related. You can't abandon craft and simply talk about concept; if you can't realize your

concept, then there is no work and no meaning. Craft is an indispensable part of the art world.

The energy of craft is founded on numerous failures, and one of the traits of hand-coloring is that it cannot be changed or fixed. In the coloring process, I had to pay close attention to each brushstroke, including my breathing, the depth of the color, and the amount of water. All of this must be precisely controlled. But in my recent work, I actually highlight the "flaws." Now, precise, accurate colors are not a problem for me, so I wanted to relax a bit and give the brushstrokes a bit more latitude. It was like loosening the reins, allowing the piece to run where it wanted. This technique better suits my current creative direction.

Beginning with "Sacrifice" (2012), my style began to change. The figures became less interesting, and so I moved in a prosaic, planar, and abstract direction. If what you saw is what you got in my previous figurative works and the meaning was straightforward, then my more recent work might be more implied. Now, I don't want to use intense colors or pictorial structures to "shout" a story; I tend to use moderate tones to relate a deeper subject.

From “Door” (2013) to “Lab” (2013), these series have focused on large black-and-white pictures that I hand-colored, and this style is gradually taking over my current work. Personally, I think that this process is a shift from figure to object, from figuration to abstraction, from surface to content. This transformation has been closely linked to my life, my experiences, and my views on and understanding of things.

BE: In the decade from 2006 to 2016, we can see a few changes in your creative style. You say that you don't want to put what you want to say directly in the image; you want to use subtler or more precise ways to “sprinkle” meaning into your works. What caused this change?

SGW: Previously, the majority of my works dealt with the surfaces of society, working from surface to surface. Later, I wanted to approach the essence of these objects, and this change directly or indirectly influenced and changed my style. I wanted to use gentle tones to discuss a serious topic or to conflict with reality. Personally, the hidden contradictions and internal anxieties are more intense compared to my earlier work. I hide them in images that are calm on the surface, but if you look closely, there is an indescribable cruelty and intense anxiety behind those images.

I use these large images, which are repeatedly hand-painted, to create an oppressive picture to be placed in front of the viewer. I want the

atmosphere in these images to shock the viewer. I work to describe what words cannot, and activate people's dulled nerves. This is what I pursue in my work, and I think this is one of the meanings of art.

My current work consciously blurs the boundary between painting and photography. For me, photography is a tool; like brush and color, photography as a tool has objective characteristics. I attempt to use a familiar language to tell an unspeakable story. I use images as sign language, and I realize that this description may make my current work more figurative.

I use photography to record scenes, then through manual intervention, I blur the photograph's objectivity, such that this trait becomes weaker in the work. I strengthen the subjectivity of painting, such that the picture is both familiar and strange, like the roads and parks I capture. After the hand-coloring and the layering of brushstrokes, people begin to doubt its authenticity. This is my goal; is the world really as we perceive it to be?

BE: Your works seem to hold a lot of secrets, with whispers in every corner, but the final answer is that it is a reflection of yourself.

SGW: Yes, because after I take a photograph, there is a long process of hand-coloring. Because this takes more time, I have the chance to engage with these massive black-and-white images, and

gradually interpret the emotional processes of the pictures. These emotional changes directly influence my use of color and the depth of my brushwork, and it seems that every day I have a different narrative. Thus, these repeated applications of color are compressed into a momentary image. The images are alienating precisely because of this accumulation of time. We are individuals coerced by the lightening operation of the social machine. At this point, we should stop for a break. We don't want to be too numb, so we should give ourselves time to observe and experience the world. I think that working slowly is a very precious thing. Human life is so short that we only have the chance to appreciate the meaning of living when we slow down.

史国威谈“过四姑娘山”

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艺术论坛

史国威近期展览“过四姑娘山”秉承其一贯的创作手法，呈现了一系列“自然景观”和“现有图像”的C-print手工上色照片。本文中，史国威阐述了他的近期创作在突破绘画与摄影界限上的尝试，以及作品中的色彩处理如何对应艺术家关于主观与客观，真实与非真实的个人思考。

我在早期作品中试图探求当下的一些社会和文化问题，对西方经典题材的挪用也是当时我感兴趣的一个表现手法。整个过程更像讲故事：将西方经典的框架挪到现在的生活环境，通过设计拍摄场景达到一个具有指向性的图像。话题有政治的，也有文化的戏弄等。这样的作品我闷头做了很多，但是渐渐觉得这些图像越来越无力，是表面的表现。可以说，这一时期的创作是由社会的表象到作品的表象反映。随着时间流逝，作品也有了一定数量的积累，我渐渐对社会题材，或者政治题材失去了兴趣，转而更加关注自身对周围事物的感触，探究事物的本质。我不再设计被摄物体，而是努力发现和感受它们与我之间的共鸣，同时会更加严谨地对待图像所传达的气质。通过长时间的渲染和绘画，图像本身就带有一种属于它自己的独特气质，这既不是摄影，也不是绘画，而是在两者之间成立的一个独特逻辑。这也是我最想达到的一个目标：打破绘画和摄影的界限。沿着这条线索，“过四姑娘山”里展出的系列作品慢慢成形。

我不想直接用绘画或摄影来做图像，因为两者都没法实现我想要表达的东西，或者说无论用哪一方都无法做到“精确”传达我想传达的信息。我一直认为世界本身就是混沌的整体，单纯把某种媒介切割出来是不成立的。摄影和绘画之间的关系自它们诞生起就纠缠不清，这个话题我们讨论至今。我想正是由于摄

影本身所具有的“客观”性，才使它在艺术界成为了一个怪胎。但这种介无与伦比的媒介特性刚好符合我的艺术世界的逻辑，即：用非常客观的，不可动摇的“语言”来说一个非常主观但又抽象的事情。从前期摄影的“真实”到后期漫长的“非真实”绘画部分，两者的特性得到了很好的融合。它们从怪胎里诞生，被我放大成了怪物。这样它就有了自己的标签，和一种独特的气质。单纯抛开哪一部分都不成立。这也是我努力追求的艺术：不设定界限，但能打动心灵。

大量运用对比色，其实是我对事物的理解在绘画上的体现。当你用较大面积的对比色时，这片区域的颜色从整体上看就是互相消减，呈现一种复色，及灰色。这种灰色非常丰富和奇妙，其实科学上说更接近“自然”，同时体现了我对事物的认知，也符合我长期观察物体色彩得出的结论。当然，每件作品的版数上色后，无法做到完全一样，但我也不能改变每版的颜色，因为有手工的介入。

我一直认为“色彩”是非常个人化的认知。每个人对同一片颜色有着不同的感受。既然没有一个“客观”色彩，抛开科学对光谱的分析，这种带有感情的色彩才是最真实的。由我眼睛看到的，或者感受到的色彩才最符合我对事物的体验，而作品本来就是非常自我的范畴。因此，自言自语的色彩体系在我的语境里是成立的。我会主观地突出某些更能刺激我心情的“客观”色彩，这样我所描述的和我希望观众看到的就一致了，因为它既明显带有我的情感感知，也是我建立并展现给大家的视觉王国。你既不能说它不现实，又不能说它太梦幻。它就处在中间的某个位置，就像作品本身即不是摄影，也不是绘画。

史国威 平静之下的涌动

文 / 王晓睿

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史国威艺术创作的变化不仅仅是在图式上从人物走向了场景，更是艺术语言上的改变——从之前的颇为黑色幽默的戏仿走向了平静和深沉，而看似平静的外表之下却是暗涌丛生，让作品中充满了更多的焦虑和不确定。这样的沉默反而让试图隐藏的情绪变得更加凶猛，正如他自己所言，愤青还是那个愤青。愤怒到极致是一种沉默。

798艺术：2015年、2016年的新作跟之前的创作相比，在面貌上有一个很大的不同，这样的转变从什么时候开始的？最初的创作契机是什么？

史国威：早期的作品以人物为主，常常用一些元素替代和戏仿西方经典，但是到2011年的时候就有了一些变化，当时还处在不断地实验和探索中，不确定会往哪个方向走。那个时期我是非常纠结的，总是处在跟自己较劲的状态。从2013年的《大事件》开始才真正往现在这个方向过渡，作品中没有再出现人物，更多的是一些景观的图式，告别了从表面到表面的表达方式。作品的面貌的变化也在某种程度上也体现了我内心的变化——从过去的“愤青”走向成熟和委婉，表达也更加深沉。

798艺术：这次在魔金石的展览《四姑娘山》基本呈现了从2013年到2016年这个期间的创作，在你看来，与之前相比近年来在创作上有哪些变化？

史国威：与之前相比，现在的创作更纯粹了，也更加以自我为出发点，没有了社会性或者文化性的包袱，显得越发自在和从容了。我会寻找真正能够打动我的，与我产生共鸣的画面，然后以严肃的方式去呈现我想要表达的。回想一下，这些场景之所以能够打动我，是因为它的群体意志，比如一大片树林或者

无边蔓延的叶子，他们以漫山遍野的方式大面积的存在，必然有自己独立的特性，但是植物的群体意志常常被我们忽略，人类总是把自己的意志凌驾于自然之上，用自己的喜好来评判其他物种，而快节奏的生活也让我们对周围的环境更加麻木。我在作品中以一种平面化的方式，不突出也不削减任何一个部分，让群体的状态在大尺幅的画面中铺展开来。虽然在选择的时候，我没有特别去强调哪个部分，但是取景框的选择却更为“主观”，在画面的边缘线，我会非常严谨地一厘米一厘米来缩减和放大，找到最合适的位置，再加上之后的上色，让整个画面明明看着熟悉却又很陌生。

798艺术：你的作品既有摄影的元素，也有绘画的成分，这无疑模糊了摄影和绘画的界限，你是如何看待的？

史国威：我的作品很难被归类，它既是摄影也是绘画，但也可以二者都不是，就像一个“怪胎”很难被界定。我有意模糊了摄影和绘画的界限，就像人们不停地讨论摄影是不是艺术这一问题，而我把这样的不确定放大了。其实摄影在产生之初是在模仿绘画，后来有了自己的特性想要独立出来，但是艺术本身有自己的规则，摄影因此又不断受到质疑。在我看来，这本身就不是一个问题，只要能够打动我的就是艺术，这样的界定本身就不成立，所以我在作品中故意挑战这个界限，把它推到观者的面前让大家自己来判断。我也不会对我的作品做刻意的解释，它只是在不断地实践中自然形成的语言。

798艺术：作品中似乎有多重时间性的重叠？

史国威：摄影的特点在于对一刹那的捕捉，它把一瞬间定格成为永恒，是一种

对时间的凝固。绘画则需要长时间的覆盖，画面经过了不断的思考和反复酝酿，是漫长时间中的再叙事。上色的时候是画面带着我走，我总是以某一个开始逐渐往下推，其中有很多的不可预料性，即便之前有预想，着手的时候也会发生变化，融入了我个人太多的情绪和想法，但是在我的作品中，绘画这一漫长过程中的情绪变化都被定格在黑白摄影作品这一瞬间的切片里了，所以你看的是曾经那个熟悉的场景，但是又经历了很多，变得熟悉又陌生。对我来讲，不论是绘画还是摄影，都无法准确传达我的想法，抛开任何一个都不成立。我想用看似客观，没有任何欺骗性的语言来描绘一个并不真实的世界，这是一个对真实问题的探讨。

798艺术：能否谈谈你的创作过程？

史国威：我的创作既需要拍摄黑白照片，还需要通过绘画来上色。其实风景在人的眼中是动态和全息，没有一个固定的点，我把它固定在某一个平面上，这与油画、素描最初的起形过程相似，只不过整个过程不是用线条来勾勒，而是通过镜头，镜头的运用似乎避开了起形不准的麻烦，但是整个过程是非常复杂的。首先，在画面的选择上经过了长时间的思考。创作的时候，我没有带着任何预设去试图寻找什么，作品是在平常的观察和思考中自然产生的，所以同一个地方我会反复去很多次，看看是不是能够真正打动我，而把某一个瞬间真正固定下来，包括具体的位置和细节又经过了很长的时间。在上色的时候，我则以自己的记忆和感受为基准，建立一个属于自己的“色谱体系”，以我的记忆为出发点在相片上再创作，绘画的过程大约要持续一个月左右。可以说，整个创作的过程是非常慢的，刻意的“慢”其实是对当下社会的无声反抗，在这个讲求效率的时代，大家都嚷嚷着要跑的很快，但是为什么不试着停一停，认真对待周围的人和事，活得像人一点，不要像机器。当我把心沉下来面对作品，面对这一切，它给我的感受，和我之间的对话远远大于作品本身。

798艺术：《沉默之语》这件作品中有众多的鸟类标本，它们本是叫声动听的生物，现在却在画面中沉默，能否谈谈你的创作动机？

史国威：《沉默之语》这件作品中的鸟类标本看似美感十足，但是它的制作过程非常血腥，一件标本如果要保持最生动的状态，必须在动物活着的时候把皮毛剥下来。于是，在博物馆中陈列着的动物标本看似活灵活现，却被剥夺了生命和叫声，人类总是根据自己的审美需求来随意处置非人类的物种。我在参观的时候，受到很大的冲击，也深感人类本性中的野蛮一直存在着，只是披上了一件所谓文明的外衣。于是我以一种看似平静的方式来表现一个非常残酷的事实，看似平静的画面隐藏着内心的焦灼，巨大的画幅更是让画面产生压迫感。不管是植物还是动物都是有痛感的，人类却随便抹杀它，所以一直带着质疑面对这个所谓的文明世界。

798艺术：虽然现在的作品和之前相比表达方式上有了很大的变化，但是还是感觉到了其中一以贯之的脉络。

史国威：是的，之前的作品可能有比较明显的政治隐喻，而2015年、2016年的作品其实还是和人性相关，只不过是艺术语言更加隐晦，更加深沉了。要知道愤青还是那个愤青，愤怒到极致是一种沉默，这样的情绪却更加凶猛。只不过是在艺术语言上，选择了更沉静和冷静的方式来表达。

这些年我一直不懈地尝试，试图打破摄影与绘画的边界，就像打破一道腐朽的墙。更确切地说；我正努力使自己游离在边缘线上，活像个走钢丝的杂技演员保持着平衡，不倒向任何一边，即摄影或者绘画。因为只有这样才能使我更加清醒和冷静地面对周遭的事物，使自己不迷失，也使自己更丰富。就像河流的边缘，总是长着比别处更肥美的野草，那里的养分才最丰富。

我的作品也越来越趋向没有主题。我认为任何带有强烈主题的做法在现实面前都是片面的无趣的甚至是愚蠢的。“去主题化”的画面使作品呈现出更加单纯和深刻的气质。我拍摄一片草地，一堆石头，一片树林，并使它们充满画面，当你审视它们时，就如同你不曾那么仔细地观察过自己配偶的脸；那是多么熟悉却又陌生，而且令人感动。接下来我不断地用绘画的方式，缓慢认真地用毛笔蘸着颜色描摹这些熟悉的轮廓，使他们看起来符合逻辑。当最终完成了在黑白图像上的绘画后，再看此时的画面，你会自问：“这还是那片之前我拍过的树林么？”，“好像是吧……”。这种不确定性的答案或许就是我们一直追求的所谓艺术的意义所在吧，也是我不断追求的，努力使作品处在摄影与绘画的边缘。

史国威
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Over the past years, I have been trying to break the boundaries between photography and painting, to tear down that dated and stale wall in-between them. In a more precise way, I'm straddling the borderline, keeping balance as if I were a tightrope walker on the wire, not to lean towards either side, not photography, nor painting. This is the only way to keep me conscious and calm when facing the objects around me, to not get lost, and to enrich myself. The weeds always grow better on the riverbank - that's where the richest nutrients are.

My work has been more and more themeless over recent years. I believe that any intention to create a strong theme is just unilateral, flat, even silly, in facing reality. "De-theming" brings a purer and more profound feeling to the works. First of all, I'll take a photo of a meadow, or a pile of rocks, or a forest, and fill up the entire frame with them. When you look at the pictures, they are like the face of your spouse that you've never looked at in such detail - familiar yet strange, somehow touching. Next, I will paint over the photos, tracing these familiar outlines slowly and carefully with brushes, to make them look logical. Now the painting is completed over a black-and-white photograph, when you look at it again, you will be wondering, "is it still the forest that I shot a photo of?", "It seems so ..." Maybe this uncertainty is the meaning of this so-called "art" that we have been going after all this time. It is also what I have been pushing towards - to create on the borderline between photography and painting.

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