

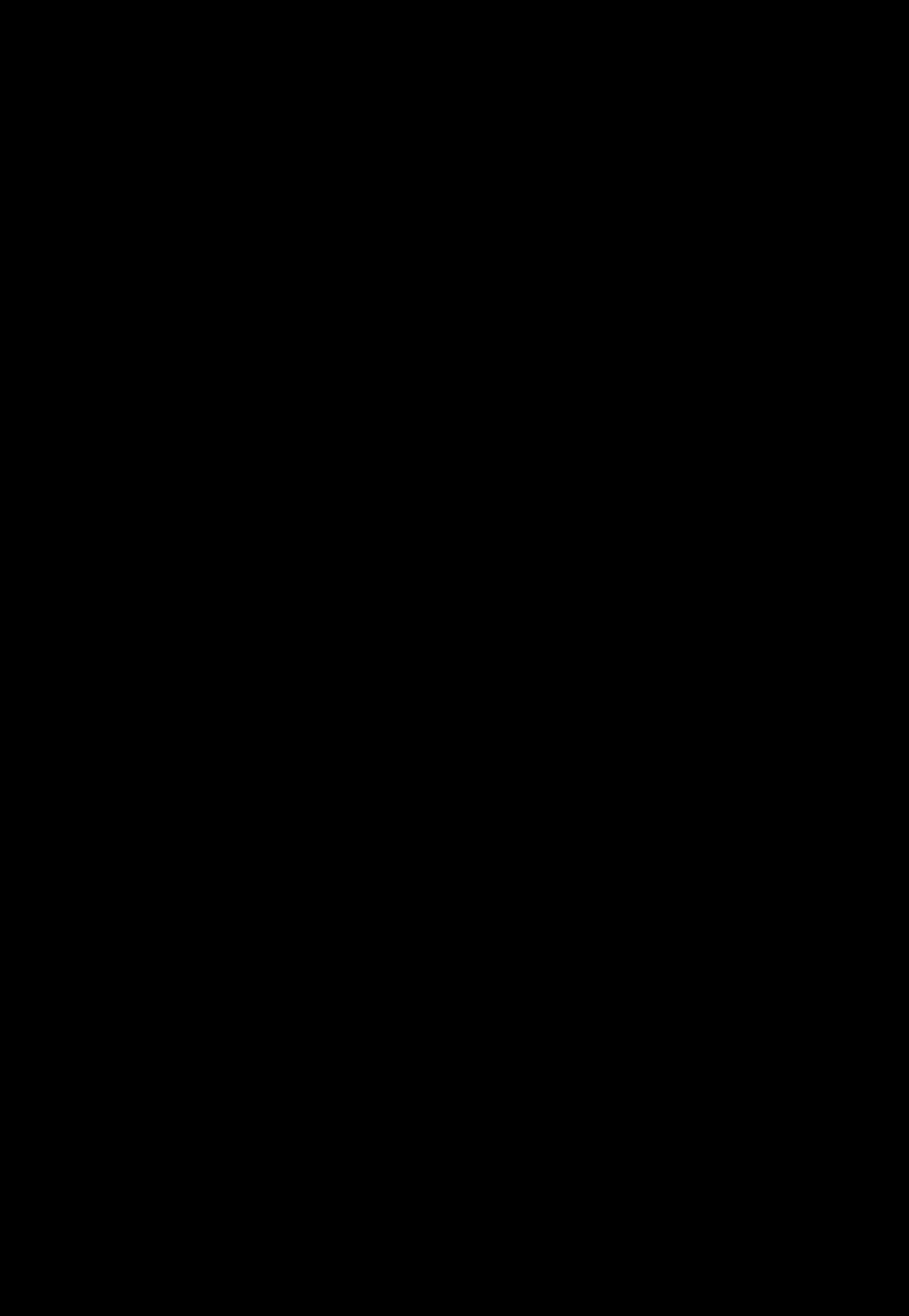


XU ZHEN[®]

ALIEN

-

ShanghART
2018



徐震® XU ZHEN®

异形
ALIEN

香格纳上海
ShanghART Shanghai
05.26-07.26. 2018

策展人: 鲁明军
Curated by Lu Mingjun

徐震[®]的世界： 贸易、冲突与进化共同体（节选）

文 / 鲁明军

普罗米修斯将文明带给了人类，但同时也成了人类异化的根源。从“完美有机体”（Xenomorph）到“异形皇后”（Xenomorph Queen）、“信使”（Runner）等，直至“新变体”（Neomorph），雷德利·斯科特（Ridley Scott）执导的系列电影“异形”悉数了未来人类的十余种异化形态。作为“异形”的前传，《普罗米修斯》（2012）无疑是他关于人类文明的终极追问。不同于达尔文的进化，异化没有目的，也无轨可循，在某种意义上它恰恰是对于进化带给人类的威胁和可能的灾难的恐惧与检讨。福柯的系列著作便是在揭橥文明的进步是如何异化人类社会的历史。然而，在马克思眼中，资本主义才是异化的源头，这其中普罗米修斯扮演的则是一个解救芸芸众生的殉道者的角色。在此，且不论他到底是人类异化的根源，还是作为解救众生的至高圣者，但有一点是肯定的，在技术的进步和社会、政治、文化的变异过程中，资本和资本主义无疑是最重要的推力。而今，由资本主义主导的全球化仿佛是一个异形的“巨兽”，我们每个人都寄生在这个巨兽的体内。

作为全球化的三个基本支点，“贸易—资本”、“冲突—战争”及其共构、催生的“进化—变异”是徐震—没顶公司自1990年代末至今艺术实践的三个“隐秘”主题，特别在近年来的实践中，这些主题及其结构逐渐浮出水面，并适时回应了当下世界的激烈变局。回看他（们）二十年的实践，三者始终相互交织、共生，在积极参与和渗透全球化的同时，想象着它可能的极端异化和超级变体。换句话说，它既是全球化的表征，也是一部未来共同体的寓言。

以赛亚·伯林（Isaiah Berlin）有一句名言：文明之间是不可通约

的。然而，在徐震—没顶公司的想象中，似乎没有什么文明是不可通约的，但又没什么文明是可通约的。在大型装置“永生—涅槃佛”中，通过巧妙的并置，他建构了一个“诸神共舞”的世界。不消说，它们都是资本主义的产物，隐伏着不同意识形态，并意图朝向一个真正化内外、去冲突（包括种族、阶级、性别等）的新大同世界。就像一百年前的康有为一样，徐震也在构想一个新的世界和宇宙的普遍法则。新展“异形”便是基于贸易与冲突、混合与进化的最新创制。

“异形”源自众所周知的虐囚事件。这一事件并非偶然。自19世纪的帝国主义殖民运动，到20世纪的冷战与社会革命，直至新世纪以来的利益之争与种族冲突，毫无疑问，这是一个世界性的历史进程。而维系这个历史过程的正是“贸易—资本”、“冲突—战争”以及“进化—变异”的疾速扩张和蔓延。徐震巧妙地用放大的、同样是跪姿的汉俑代替了“囚犯”的形象。这一嫁接不只是一种形式上的暗合，若将汉俑视为汉帝国的一个象征的话，那么它所牵涉的是早期西方、中东（包括中亚）与中国之间的交往史。当时，中东、中亚或者说是整个欧亚大陆正是连接罗马帝国与汉帝国的“丝绸之路”。而贯穿“丝绸之路”的除了贸易、冲突以外，还有文明之间的相互渗透以及由此衍生出来的种种“进化”和“变异”。一千多年后，欧亚大陆再次成了全球地缘政治聚焦的“心脏地带”。美国学者马汉在《海权论》中曾经指出，谁控制了大海谁就控制了世界，20世纪美国之所以成为超级大国就在于此；英国地理学家麦金德据此提出了“陆权说”，他认为谁控制了欧亚大陆，谁将会控制世

界。麦金德一百年前的说法是不是中国政府“一带一路”倡议或“西进路线”的预言，还在争议当中，但可以肯定的是，这一倡议的真正意图即是为了重建中国与欧美之间的关系，同时也是平衡全球地缘政治结构的一个重要的战略举措。不消说，支撑这一倡议的依然是贸易、冲突与进化。

在徐震的实践中，“进化”并非是全球这个巨型怪兽的“再现”或“表征”，而是带有一定自省的关于新的未来共同体的构想。这一构想一方面承认全球化是无力抗拒、也不必抗拒的事实，另一方面似乎又不满足于全球化的现状，而借以想象一个新的未来全球体系和共同体。在近作“进化”系列（2016-）中，他将非洲或印第安地区的原始雕像嫁接在敦煌壁画或古代宗教雕像上，抛开他天马行空的想象和话语不言，若从其背景及其逻辑而言，它恰好将《饥饿的苏丹》（2008）与“中东当代艺术展”（2009）连在了一起。敦煌壁画和中古时期的宗教肖像雕塑记载了西方、中东/中亚与中国的文明交往史和古代宗教的传播与流通，而非洲、印第安的原始雕像在西方本就事关殖民史和种族问题。这说明，徐震的嫁接、混合看似是一种无厘头的调侃，但实际上，猎奇的背后潜藏着复杂的历史与政治。

如果说“永生”和《优化》（2017）多少还在传递中国与西方两种文明之间能否通约的话，那么《异形1》不仅直指当下动荡的国际局势，而且还由此带出了同样事关西方、中东/中亚与中国三者之间的贸易史与战争史，进而通过汉俑或中国的“介入”，将当下美国与中东之间的关系拓延至全球地缘政治的框架中。《异形1》

作为装置，还预设了一个观看的结构。在观众眼中，无论是作为汉俑，还是作为“囚犯”，都是一个被看的对象。而此时的观众，既是想象中的“囚禁者”、“看护者”或“施暴者”，也可能是电视机前的普通观众或报纸的一般读者。因此，我们固然可视其为一种反抗的姿态，但同时不得不承认，这也是一个被消费的对象。况且，监狱事件最早就是通过媒体传播开来的。诚然，在资本的策动下，媒体似乎在传达着某种政治性，可同时，媒体的资本属性决定了它同时也在削弱着其政治性。于是，媒体常常制造着更多的真假和是非，但在徐震这里则不尽然，其艺术原本就不承载任何真假和是非，而多是一种无限混合的虚构，包括媒体、信息，也通常是其援引和混合的对象。

混合制造异形，异形在悬置或复合、化解资本及既有政治经验的前提下，打开了新的政治空间，也构成了徐震®的世界。与其说它依然无法避免作为消费对象而被强大的资本卷入，不如说资本被它强大的引力和能量所吸纳和化解。就像其最新系列绘画作品“运气”，晶莹剔透的绿色古代玉镯，在此被放大、分解并演绎为一个个像漩涡似的纵深空间。如果说玉镯是永恒性的象征的话，那么这里的视觉漩涡则仿佛是全球化的一个隐喻，它消解了原本的物质形态，摆脱了意识形态的束缚——或者说是在既有的意识形态框架彻底失灵的境况下，将一切坚固、永恒的东西演化为一个尚无法命名的感知黑洞。正是这一未名的混合的异形和虚构的深渊，暗藏着变革的动力和新的共同体将临的潜能。

Xu Zhen®'S World: Trade, Conflict And Evolution Community (EXCERPT)

Essay/ Lu Mingjun

Prometheus brought civilization to mankind, but also made it the source of their alienation. From "Xenomorph" to "Xenomorph Queen," to "Runner" up to "Neomorph," Ridley Scott has directed the series of film "Alien" showing dozens of alien forms of humanity in the future. As a prequel to Alien, the film Prometheus (2012) is undoubtedly concerned with his ultimate question about human civilization. Unlike Darwinian evolution, alienation has no purpose and no path to follow. In a sense, it is precisely the fear and self-criticism of the threats and possible disasters that evolution has brought to humanity. Foucault's series of works uncovers the history of how the civilization's progress has alienated human society. However, in the eyes of Marx, capitalism is the source of alienation. Among these, Prometheus plays the role of a martyr saving all beings. Here, regardless of whether he is the source of human alienation or a supreme saint who rescues sentient beings, one thing is certain: capital and capitalism are undoubtedly the most important impetus in technological progress as well as in socio-cultural and political variation process. Today, globalization dominated by capitalism is an alien "monster," and each of us is parasitized in this monster's body.

As the three basic fulcrums of globalization:

"trade and capital," the structure of "conflict and war" and the birth of "evolution and variation" have been Xu Zhen/ MadeIn Company's three "secret" themes since the late 1990s. Especially in recent years, these themes and structures have gradually surfaced as a timely response to the fierce changes in the current world. Looking back at his (their) two decades of practice, these three aspects are always intertwined and symbiotic-- actively participating in and infiltrating globalization, imagining the possibilities of "extreme alienation" and "super variant." In other words, it is both a representation of globalization and an allegory of a future community.

Isaiah Berlin has a famous saying: civilizations are incompatible. However, in the imagination of Xu Zhen/MadeIn Company, it seems that no civilization is incompatible, yet no civilization is compatible either. In the large-scale installation Eternity--(Buddha in Nirvana), he created a world of "gods dancing together" through clever juxtaposition. Needless to say, they are all the products of capitalism. They all hide different ideologies and intend to look toward a genuine interior and exterior -- a new world of harmony going into conflict (including race, class, gender, etc.) Like Kang Youwei one hundred

years ago, Xu Zhen is also conceiving a new universal law of the world. The new exhibition "Alien" is based on trade and conflict, combined to recent creations from the "Evolution" series.

The series of works "Alien" is mostly rooted in certain renown prison abuse incidents, which weren't random. From the colonial imperialism of the 19th century, the Cold War and Socialist Revolution of the 20th century to the conflicts of interests and ethnic struggles of this new century, there is no doubt that this a historical process taking place worldwide. Maintaining this historical process is the rapid expansion and spread of "trade and capital," "conflict and war," and "evolution and variation." Xu Zhen cleverly replaces "prisoners"' image with enlarged Han figurines in a similar kneeling postures. This insertion is not merely a formal coincidence. If the figurine is regarded as a symbol of the Han Empire, then it involves the history of interaction between the early West, the Middle East (including Central Asia) and China. At the time, the Middle East, Central Asia, or one could say, the entire Eurasian continent, was connected from the Roman Empire to the Han Empire via the "Silk Road." Through the "Silk Road," apart from trade and conflict, mutual permeations existed between civilizations, and various "evolutions"

and "variations" derived from them. More than a thousand years later, Eurasia has once again become the "heartland" of global geopolitical focus. American scholar Alfred Thayer Mahan points out in the *The Influence of Sea Power upon History* that whoever controls the sea controls the world; this is the reason why the United States became a superpower in the 20th century. British geographer Halford John Mackinder put forth in *Democratic Ideals and Reality* that the whoever controls Eurasia will control the world. Was Mr Mackinder's statement a hundred years ago a prediction of the Chinese government's "Belt and Road" initiative or the "Westward Route?" The answer is still in dispute, but it is certain that the real intention of this initiative is to re-establish relations between China and Europe and to be an important strategic measure to balance the global geopolitical structure. Needless to say, trade, conflict and evolution continue to underpin this initiative.

In Xu Zhen's practice, "Evolution" is not a "reproduction" or "representation" of the giant monster of globalization, but rather, a conception of a new future community with some self-reflection. This conception, while acknowledging that globalization is irresistible and does not have to be resisted, does not appear to be

satisfied with the current state of globalization, and thus imagines a new future global system and community. In the recent "Evolution" series (2016-), he attached the primitive statues from African and Indian regions onto Dunhuang frescoes or ancient religious statues, casting open unconstrained imagination and unspoken discourse, as if they were from their background and their logic. In fact, it precisely links the *The Starving of Sudan* (2008) with the "Middle East Contemporary Art Exhibition" (2009). The Dunhuang frescoes and religious portrait sculptures of the Middle Ages recorded the history of civilization exchanges between the West, Middle East/Central Asia and China, and the spread and circulation of ancient religions; the primitive statues from Africa and India originally related to Western colonial history and ethnic issues. This shows that while Xu Zhen's assemblage and hybridization seems to be a nonsensical banter, in fact, behind the playfulness hides a complicated history and politics.

If "Eternity" and *Optimizing* (2017) are still able to deliver a balance between the Chinese and Western civilizations, then *Alien 1* as a starting point does not only refer to the current turbulent international politics, but also brings us to the history of trade and war between the

West, the Middle East/Central Asia and China. Through the intervention of the Han figurines of China, the relationship between the United States and the Middle East has been extended to the framework of global geopolitics. Alien 1 as an installation also setups a viewing structure. In the eyes of the audience, whether it is a Han figurine or a "prisoner", it is an object of observation. The audience, at this time, is not only the imaginary "imprisoner," "caretaker" or "perpetrator" but also the ordinary viewer in front of the TV or the general newspaper reader. Therefore, we can certainly regard it as a gesture of protest, but at the same time we must admit that this is also an object of consumption. Moreover, the prison scandal was first spread through the media. The media no doubt seems to be conveying a certain political stance under the instigation of capital, but at the same time, the capital property of the media forces the weakening of its political nature. Therefore, media often creates more true and false, right and wrong, but this norm is not entirely true with Xu Zhen. His art originally did not carry any notion of objectiveness or morality: it is mostly an infinitely hybrid fiction of media and information, and oftentimes also an object of citation and amalgamation.

The hybrid creation of Alien opens up a new political space, under the premise of suspending or combining, dissolving capital and existing political experience. It also forms the world of Xu Zhen. It is not so much that it cannot avoid being a consumable object deeply involved in capital; it is better to say that capital is absorbed and resolved by its own powerful gravity and energy. Just like in his latest series of paintings "Fortune," translucent green ancient jade bracelets are magnified, decomposed and deducted into deep space like a whirlpool. If the jade bracelet is a symbol of eternity, the visual vortex here seems to be a metaphor for globalization. It dissolves the original material form and frees it from ideological shackles; or, in the case of complete failure of the existing ideological framework, it will transform all that is solid and eternal into an unnameable black hole of perception. It is this not-yet-named blend of aliens and fictional abyss that hides the impetus for change and the potential of a new community.

异形 1



ALIEN 1

这件作品完美的契合了人们对于文化冲突的想象。囚犯的跪姿和千年前东方汉代俑的跪姿如出一辙。在不同的时空和语境中，人类相似的基本行为，提醒我们思考人的本质几千年来是否有过变化。

作品中的国际语境和汉俑，都是充满了象征和意象。他们的结合提供了一种极大的想象空间与理解的可能性。每个观众都会从中产生不同的判断和结果。

Alien 1 responds to a certain notion of cultural conflicts in people's mind. The kneeling posture of prisoners is exactly similar to those of Eastern Han Dynasty figures, dating from a thousand years ago. Similar human basic behaviors in different times and contexts remind us to consider whether human nature has changed over thousands of years.

The international context of the work combined to the Han figurines present images filled with symbols and implications. Their fusion offers extensive possibilities of imagination and understanding. Each audience will produce different judgments leading to various results.





异形 1

Alien 1 2017~2018

28 尊俑, 矿物复合材料、丙烯等

Full space metal installation 350 m²

28 figures, mineral based composite, acrylic paint etc,

80x70x120 cm approx each

MI_2704

异形 2



ALIEN 2

《异形 2》的形象分别来源于希腊神话中的“雌雄同体”神与汉代女俑，二者呈现了如同“永生 - 涅槃佛”一样巧妙的并置。汉俑与西方雕塑以特殊的形式结合，营造出爱抚亲密的氛围。东西方文明在相互靠近中，因为不解、好奇和欲望彼此吸引。

Alien 2, in the same vein of Eternity-(Buddha in Nirvana), juxtaposes two sculptures: an "hermaphrodite" from Greek mythology and a female figure from the Western Han Dynasty. The Chinese figurine and the Western sculpture are combined in a certain attitude to create an intimate and caring atmosphere, reflecting the attraction of Eastern and Western civilizations for one another, as well as their reciprocal intricacies, curiosity and desire.



异形 2 - 沉睡的赫马佛狄忒斯、西汉陶抚瑟女俑
Alien 2 - Sleeping Hermaphroditos
Western Han dynasty Female
Musician Playing a Zither 2017~2018

矿物复合材料、丙烯、不锈钢
Mineral-based composite,
stainless steel, acrylic paint
130×200×165cm
Hermaphroditos 120×180×145cm
Female musician 85×120×80cm
Edition of 3
MI_1053

进化



EVOLUTION

“进化”系列由“永生”系列发展而来，它们都扎根于跨越时间与空间的文化素材，并始终关注全球化之下的文化立异。而二者的不同在于，“进化”系列跳脱经典文化的范围，将创作的触角扩散到亚文化与文化边缘地带的原始艺术。在令人欣喜的感官体验背后，徐震[®]呈现了互联网发展带来的认知转变——链接的便捷性与知识获取途径被不断增加之后，形成的复杂质变。

In the same vein as the "Eternity" series, the new series of works "Evolution" is based on cultural elements spanning time and space, and focusing on cultural differences within globalisation. However "Evolution" series escapes the realm of classical culture to spread its creation field to a certain primary art, brought by subculture and cultural borders. Through this joyful experience, XU ZHEN[®] presents the cognitive change resulting from internet development where web-link easiness-of-use and increasing access to knowledge allow a qualitative change.

进化 - 莫高窟 066 窟主室南壁、汤杜面具
Evolution-South Wall of Mogao Cave No.66,
Tundo Mask 2017~2018

布上油画
Oil on canvas
200×115cm
MI_1602



进化 - 莫高窟第 254 窟西壁画、塞那弗面具
Evolution-West Wall of Mogao Cave No.254,
Senufo Mask 2017~2018

布上油画
Oil on canvas
200×135cm
MI_9639



运气



FORTUNE

“运气”（绿环）将玉环抽取为独立的视觉元素，在变形、重复与叠加之后，形成了一种类似离心视幻觉的抽象图案，呈现出一个像漩涡似的纵深空间。这个视觉旋涡影射了全球化的状况，如同全球化对物质形态与固有意识形态的消解一般，同心玉环形成的螺旋将坚固、永恒的对象转化为感知黑洞；另一方面，也形象的再现了人们原初赋予玉环的文化意涵——对日月神崇拜的宇宙观。这一传统礼器自新石器时代以降，凝聚了人类几千年的文化与思想演变，在作品中被异化为兼具抽象与具象特征的全新对象。

"Fortune" (green rings) extracts jade ring as an independent visual element, through the deformation, repetition and superposition of the abstract pattern, a centrifugal illusion is formed, showing a vortex-like depth of space. This visual vortex alludes to the states of globalization. Just as globalization has dispelled matter and its inherent ideology, the spiral formed by concentric jade rings transforms the solid and eternal object into a perceptual black hole; on the other hand, it also reflects the cultural meaning of the original jade ring, which is the cosmic view of the worship of Sun and Moon divinities. From the Neolithic age, this traditional sacrificial ritual has concentrated the evolution of human culture and ideology for more than thousands of years, and has been alienated in this work into a new object with both abstract and representational features.



运气 05:38

Fortune 05:38 2017~2018

布上油画

Oil on canvas

Φ 250.0 cm

MI_5213



运气 11:18

Fortune 11:18 2017~2018

布上油画

Oil on canvas

Φ 250.0 cm

MI_3647



运气 09:06

Fortune 09:06 2017~2018

布上油画

Oil on canvas

Φ 250.0 cm

MI_4402



访谈

■ 你认为政治正确是一个问题吗？

政治正确是失去可能性的开始。

■ 此次展览的题目为“异形”的用意何在？因为很自然让人联想到电影《异形》，是否和这部电影有关？若有，请说说对你而言这部电影有什么特殊的意义与价值？

汉代跪俑被涂上了一层颜色之后，似乎这个雕塑就被赋予了一种丰富的意识形态。变成了一件充满矛盾和针对性的当代艺术品。从这个角度来说这个雕塑和这种意识形态化的意识就像电影中异形一样的奇怪、未知和恐怖。

■ 上一个个展是2017年在巴黎贝浩登的“文明迭代”，请问这两个展览之间是否有前后关系？

肯定有关系，总的来说都是徐震[®]关于全球化下对文明改造、变异和进化相关的主题。

■ 这一次的作品都是最新创作，是否可以解释一下这些新作触及的时代语境？可以分别介绍一下吗？或者重点介绍一下与展览同名的两件作品：《异形1》和《异形2》。

《异形1》这件作品是一个思维圈套，它吸引观众按照这个作品去思考和感受，这样就会导致一种似乎会逼迫观众表态和选择的境地。可能很多人会想到中国崛起/大国崛起之后的一种矛盾的境遇，一种自我的刷存在感和势必被外界扭曲妖魔化的现实。美国作为一个已经崛起的大国，类似事件是否会在新的大国的将来发生或者已经发生着。而此事件本身的所有语境，从某种角度来说可能对中国的未来也会相当适用。

我个人更看重一个简单的颜色本身能带动如此众多的因素最后形成一种新的动能，这可能也是当代艺术的最主要的特点之一。

而《异形2》表达的是对一种文明的触动，小心翼翼、充满不自信和欲望，两个巨大文明的代表在今天相遇表现出完全互相不能理解和完全被彼此所吸引。

■ 你的作品几乎很少指涉过十分明确的现实对象，但这次一反常态的将整个空间置换为具体的场景，这个素材对你而言有什么特殊性？是因为现实事件触发了你对这个对象的兴趣？

对我来说，这个事件不只是一个滞留在其原来语境的事件，它更是一种景观。当我看到几千年前的中国汉代跪俑的时候，马上就想到这个事件中跪着的人的姿势。两者如此一致。

这个对象对我来说有另外一层意义，即他者的社会与我有关吗？不发生在我身上的事件真的与我无关吗？每个人都能扯干净关系吗？我如何主动地改造现实？艺术是否就是一种办法，在现实逻辑之外的一种办法？或者艺术就是一种现实的漏洞，现实的可能性。

■ “权力”，是我们日常生活中经常遇到的一个概念，我们对它既有所忌惮又渴望垂涎。你怎么理解权力？

权力是生态。哪里有权力哪里就有斗争，哪里有斗争哪里就产生可能性。

■ 此展览中的“进化”系列结合了非洲面具与敦煌壁画的元素，你将此定位为“绘画装置”，可以解释一下这一界定吗？绘画史上通常将这种对非洲文化的援引指向“原始主义”，而迈克尔·莱杰在对纽约画派的诠释中，曾指出“原始主义”也是一种意识形态，人们对于“原始社会”的理解受到殖民主义、国家主义、帝国主义、种族主义和“第三世界”等现代社会机制的影响，你认同这样的说法吗？这种流动的“原始性”是否同样在你的作品中起作用？

进化系列绘画是一种像素写生绘画。绘者在画布上以每天5万-16万像素的效率推进画面。同时这类创作也是基于互联网搜索工具产生的一种文化观察、学习和判断的方法。这系列的核心是对这种方式创造的新审美的肯定。在这些前提下，已有的知识经验才有新的意义。

这系列不止是在强调非洲文化和敦煌文化之间的共通性、流动性。更重要的是作品体现出来的产生于这个时代对文化的大改造和重新定义的信心和方法。

- **“运气（绿环）”呈现出你久未涉足的抽象画面，但来源却是华人再熟悉不过的日常物件“玉环”，在这里抽象与具象的转换关系是你想表达的吗？玉环的符号性和与之附带的意识形态在作品中是如何被再译与重构的？**

这个系列是一种当代图腾。玉环的漩涡隐喻着今天人类在宇宙观理解上的加速。这里的抽象与具象的转换也契合着全球化中西方理性与东方感性混合的现实动能。玉环形象从几千年前至今被再次使用，恰如文明的密码被破解后再次重生。

你的关注点从艺术 & 商业—后波普—后全球化—文明进程，再到这次的“异形”，你觉得你的创作线索在逐渐触及一个什么样的问题，这些创作方向的转变是怎样一步步带你进入这个问题的？

从早期的反映现实到近期的创造现实，很明显我们的创作不断在表达一个理念，即“可能性”。在不同时代、困境和问题下的可能性。艺术充满未知。

- **你的作品创作一直在深入和推进，但与此同时徐震品牌和没顶公司的运作也一直并行不悖，在你看来，他们之间有互相关系和影响吗？**

公司或这个人在这个大时代背景下，必须也只能不断地求新求变。

艺术要给时代制造各种可能后自己也要有成为这个时代特点的能量。没顶公司或者徐震®品牌出现并非一种巧合，而是当代文化发展到今天必然会出现的一种方式。多元协作、快速迭代、高效管理等当代社会运行特点都在我们这里得到了良性的体现，以确保艺术就是我们公司最大的利润。

- **同那些关注点较为前后一致的艺术家的相比，你的关切似乎一直在加速更新，这样的状态是这个时代和文化环境导致的吗？**

我们应该是这个时代最具代表性的艺术现象之一。公司化运营，想法丰富、高产、高效、形式多元、跨界创作等等这些都在我们这里得到了充分的体现。我认为当代艺术需要不断进化出新的方式方法来应对多元、复杂和无法定义的现实。今天精英主义和政治正确越来越盛行且越来越容易被利用，当代艺术会不断有新的任务和激情的。

- **你认为当下这个世界正在发生什么？你怎么理解这样的动向？**

一切走向不确定性，什么似乎都可以被改变，世界在走向一个新的面貌。我们当然是要尽力去加速这种现状。

INTERVIEW

- Do you think political correctness is a problem?

Political correctness is the beginning of losing possibilities.

- What's the intention behind the title "Alien"? It reminds people of the movie "Alien". Is that intended? If so, what's the meaning and value of that movie to you?

The Han dynasty kneeling figurines, after colouring, are given a rich layer of ideology. They become a contemporary artwork filled with pertinence and contradictions. In this sense, this sculpture and ideology is strange, unknown and terrifying like the alien in the movie.

- Your previous solo exhibition is "Civilization Iteration" at Perrotin, Paris. Are these two exhibitions related somehow?

Of course, all of XU ZHEN®'s works are all about the reforms, mutations, and transformations of culture brought on by globalization.

- This exhibition contains all new works. Could you explain the context in which these works are created? Perhaps focus on the two works named after the exhibition Alien 1 and Alien 2?

The work Alien 1 is a think trap. It attracts the audience to think and feel about the work in a way that forces them to choose and express an opinion. It reminds people of the paradoxical

dilemma of China as a rising power, which is doomed to be demonized as its presence grows. Is something similar to such an event, which happened under the system of United States, waiting to happen, or is already happening, in China? The context of such an event is, in some ways, fitting for China of the future.

I personally value how a simple color can drive so many factors to form a new kinetic energy, which may also be one of the most important features of contemporary art.

And Alien 2 reflects a contact with civilizations, cautious, lacking in self-confidence and filled with desire, the encounter between two representatives great civilizations and they reciprocal inability to understand each other, while being completely attracted to one another.

- Your works are rarely referring to realist subject, but this time, uncharacteristically, a whole space is converted into a concrete scene. How is this material special to you? Is it because real events trigger your interest in the subject, or does it mean that the material has more than just political significance for you?

For me this event isn't only limited to this context. It is a kind of landscape. When I see the kneeling figurines of Han Dynasty from thousands of years ago, I was immediately

reminded of persons from this event kneeling on the floor. The two images are so identical.

This subject for me also has another layer. Is others' society related to me? Are events I wasn't involved in related to me? Can we really disassociate ourselves from these events? How do I actively change the reality? Is art a channel that exists outside of reality and logic? Or is art in fact a loophole of reality, a kind of possibility?

- Power is a concept we often encounter in daily life. We both fear and desire it. How do you understand power?

Power is ecology. Where there's power there's struggle, and where there's struggle there's possibility.

- The "Evolution" series in this exhibition, which combines the elements of the African mask and the Dunhuang frescoes, were defined as a "painting installation." Can you explain this definition? In the history of painting, this reference to African culture usually refers to the notion of "primitive", and Michael Leja in his interpretation of the New York school, argues that the "primitive" is also an ideology of people's understanding of "primitive society" through the lens of colonialism, nationalism, imperialism, racism and the contemporary social mechanisms such as the "Third

World". Do you agree with this statement? Does the "primitivism" of this flow play a role in your work?

The paintings of the "Evolution" series are pixel sketch paintings. The painter plots the picture on the canvas at a rate of 50,000-160,000 pixels per day. At the same time, this kind of creation is based on a culture of observation, learning and judgment method produced by the Internet search engine. The core of this series is the affirmation of the new aesthetics created with this method. Under these conditions, the existing knowledge experience creates new meanings. This series not only emphasizes the commonality and fluidity between African culture and Dunhuang culture, more importantly, it demonstrates the confidence and methodology in the transformation and redefinition of culture in this era.

- "Fortune (Green Ring)" presents the abstract image that you have not dabbled in for a long time, but the source is actually the "jade ring" which is a familiar daily object for the Chinese people. Is the transforming relationship between the abstract and representational something you want to express it? How is the symbolic nature of the jade ring and its accompanying ideology translated and reconstructed in the works?

This series is a kind of contemporary totem. The jade ring is a metaphor for the acceleration of people's understanding of the universe.

The transformation between the abstract and representational corresponds to the kinetic energy created by the mixture of Western rationality and Eastern sensibility. The image of the jade ring from thousands of years ago is being used again now, like the code of civilization is being cracked and reborn.

- Your focus went from art and commerce to post-pop to post-globalization to the process of civilization, and then to "alien". Do you feel that your creative clues are gradually reaching a kind of question? And how have these changes of creative directions taken you into this question step-by-step?

From the early reflection of reality to the recent creation of reality, it is clear that our works are constantly expressing a philosophy that is a "possibility": the possibilities under different times, dilemmas and problems. Art is full of unknowns.

- Your works have been deepening and advancing, but at the same time the XU ZHEN® brand and the MadeIn company's operation has been running in parallel. In your opinion, how have they been influencing each other?

The company or this person in the context of this great era must be constantly seeking change and novelty. Art has to create a variety of possibilities for its time, and also become the

energy of the characteristics of the era. The emergence of MadeIn Company and XU ZHEN® is not a coincidence, but a way in which contemporary culture must come into being today. Diverse collaborations, rapid iterations, efficient management, and other contemporary social characteristics have been benignly embodied by our company, to ensure that art becomes our greatest profit.

- Your concern seems to be accelerating changes in comparison with more consistent artists. Is this concern created by the time and cultural environment?

We should be one of the most representative art phenomena in this era. The operation mode of company, rich ideas, high yield, high efficiency, diverse forms, the mufti-disciplinary creations and so on are fully embodied in us. I think contemporary art needs to evolve in new ways and means to deal with the multiple, complex and undefined realities. As elitism and political correctness are becoming more prevalent and easily exploited today, contemporary art will continue to have new tasks and passions.

- What do you think is happening with the world? And how do you understand these trends?

Everything goes into uncertainty; anything, it seems, can be changed. The world is moving towards a new appearance. We are, of course, trying to accelerate this situation.

ShanghART

香 格 纳 画 廊

ShanghART Shanghai 香格纳上海

西岸，徐汇区龙腾大道 2555 号 10 号楼，上海，中国 200232
West Bund, Bldg. 10, No.2555 Longteng Avenue,
Xuhui District, Shanghai 200232, China
t. +86 21-6359 3923|info@shanghartgallery.com

ShanghART M50 香格纳 M50

普陀区莫干山路 50 号 16 号楼，上海，中国 200060
Bldg 16, 50 Moganshan Rd., Putuo District,
Shanghai 200060, China
t. +86 21-3632 2097|info@shanghartgallery.com

ShanghART Beijing 香格纳北京

朝阳区机场辅路草地 261 号，北京，中国 100015
261 Cao Chang Di, Old Airport Road,
Chaoyang District, Beijing 100015, China
t. +86-10 6432 3202|infobj@shanghartgallery.com

ShanghART Singapore 香格纳新加坡

吉门营房，LOCK 路 9 号 02-22，新加坡 108937
Gillman Barracks, 02-22, 9 Lock Road, Singapore 108937
t. + 65 6734 9537|info@shanghartsingapore.com

www.shanghartgallery.com