

Calmness And Conflict
Sui Cheng

宁静与冲突

隋丞

深圳报业集团出版社
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无遮无拦的黑白和 无处不在的“冒犯”

——看隋丞作品

广军 中国美术家协会版画艺委会主任 中央美术学院教授、博士生导师

隋丞以前做的木刻都是寄情之作，是把再平常不过的东西理想化了，看了会觉得亲切。因为是运用黑白的语言，就特别地无遮无拦，好似听他讲一件事情，不掺假、不修饰。

后来，作品里常常出现水波浪和那个半截子人形，我感觉他是抓住了什么，要变。

好多年前，在北京的街墙上，总是有人画侧面的人头，一笔画成的，永远的一个模样。画的人锲而不舍，这东西看得久了，居然能让人不忘，简直成了魅影。画画的人看了和不画画的人看了，大概都有印象。前者明白那是艺术的行为；后者会觉得是玩儿闹，存心污染环境。倒是长久不见那个人头型了，也许，拆墙的速度太快，画了等于白画。

隋丞也整出了一个人型来，但是，这东西所有看过的人都会说是艺术的。他叫它是“浮水”的人，意思是能浮在水上淹不死的人吗？还是正在“凫水”的？可是它明明摆放在各种场所，还是让人联想到水或是不死吧？真像是“土遁”过来的，不知哪里又会冒出一个来，说不定就在脚下，这种难以捕捉的无处不在，会着实吓你一跳！也是怪了，因为摆放的地点不同，那些个白色的人型板子，居然在我的想象当中变换着不同的角色，有着不同的身份，但是我只感觉他终归是城里人：在林子里的那些，有贵族气，显得优雅；挪到庄稼地里的那些，让我想到“四体不勤、五谷不分”者们的郊游；伟人像下的理想主义者；村落小巷里的招摇……又都像是隋丞派下来的一个个“探子”，蒐集着人间世相。与其说是个“偶像”，不如说那就是隋丞自己，但如果真的是话，那便另要有一种说法才是。

我看得肤浅。我想说，他运用的是抽象的手法，又

不敢确定，因为“符号”不就是人吗？不就是水吗？不就是指示性标志吗？说它是“元素”好些吧？具象的，一旦凑起来就抽象了，是不是？康定斯基规定过几何符号的性质，这几个凑起来是个事儿，那几个凑起来又是个事儿。我看老康他也未必都是那么干的，最后他自己也未必信。反正，看着是个啥，果然就是那啥的那种画，歧义少，观看者最不济的也能获得一点认知的快意。抽象一下就不同了，看法就多了，因此，能够满足各种各样人的想象，空间很大，这是抽象的好处。不过，我会觉得它有点暧昧，可别人不这样看，这又是它的好处了。

很多的人都写了他，但是，大家就这么猜着“谜”，猜得热火朝天、花团锦簇的，对于作画的人来说，倒是一件趣事。“始料不及”的这种经历，画画的人常遇到。画，会给人带来不同的感受，见仁见智，这就是艺术与受众的关系吧？溢美之词，听起来还是顺耳，怕是过去的那种“扣帽子”，说的“鼻子是鼻子眼是眼”的，则是不讲理了。画画是自由，说画也是自由，这就是画和评的关系吧？画归画，说归说。照别人说的去画，是画画的人没出息；你说的自己再怎么觉着正确，画画的也要掂量……反正，这一切都正常。我只是更喜欢去感受，不喜欢解释罢了。感受了，我也不大想说，更不劳动画家掏心窝子。隋丞能“冒犯”，干嘛不也留给我一回胡说八道的自由？

当今做版画，尚能有独立的审视角度与想象空间，再加上独立的表述方式，那就很了不起。隋丞有。

最后，总得有个正经的评价，那就让我借用他儿子“小活佛”的话说：

他的画很亮，很健康，以后画得更好。

2008年4月22日

Undisguised “Black and White” and the Limitless “Offense”

—on Sui Cheng’s Works

Professor Guang Jun Central Academy of Fine Arts

Director of Printmaking Committee, Chinese Artists Association

The woodcut works created by Suicheng several years ago were expressions of his feelings, which have idealized the common things, and touched our hearts. The black and white in those works are undisguised. It seems that he was telling stories through these works.

Recently, there often appeared waves and the semi-human figures in his works. It seems to me that he has grasped something and wants to change.

Several years ago, on the walls along the streets in Beijing, there were always some silhouettes of human heads drawn in one stroke. They were always the same. The person who drew those things worked with perseverance. After a period of time, people, no matter whether they are artists or not, have remembered these things. The artists understood those as art actions and the latter ones regarded them as environment pollution. Now the silhouettes have gone. Maybe the reason is the walls are removed so fast that the drawings have been painted in vain.

Suicheng has also created a human figure. But this is regarded by all as a work of art. He named it “swimmer”. Is it a person who can float on water or is it swimming? It has been put in different places. Wherever it is, people will think of swimming or floating on water and immortality. It seems to have come out of the ground. People can’t predict where and when it will come. It is strange that because of the different places it is in, those white figures are changing. But anyway, he is a person lives in a city. When he is in the wood, he is a graceful aristocrat; when he is in the field, he is a visitor who can neither toil his four limbs nor tell the five cereals apart; when he is under the statue of the great persons, he is an idealist; when in the lanes of a village, he is ostentatious..... They are scouts sent by Suicheng to collect different forms of human lives. It’s more like Suicheng himself than an “icon”. But if it is, there should be another explanation.

Maybe I haven’t understood thoroughly. I think he has made the

images abstract, but I’m not so sure, because the symbols in his works are human beings and water. These are indicative symbols, or maybe elements. These concrete things become abstract when they are put together. Kandinsky had regulated the characteristics of symbols in his works: one thing with these elements and another thing with other elements. But I don’t think Kandinsky had always done in this way. Anyway, the work which is what it looks like seldom cause disagreement because the viewers can at least get a pleasant sensation of cognition. But an abstract work is different. It can lead to different understanding and can satisfy different imagination. This is the advantage of abstract works. But I feel it is somewhat ambiguous. However, some other people don’t think so. And this is its another advantage.

Many people have written comments on Suicheng’s works and have made different guesses. This is amazing for the artist. Works of art can bring different feelings to different people, and this is the relationship between art and audience. Artists have their freedom to create their works, and people have their own freedom to understand the works. This is the relationship between works and comments. They are independent on each other. The artist will not be successful if he follows others’ comments. Whatever the comment is, the artist will make his own decision. I just want to feel and don’t like to explain. Even after I feel, I don’t want to speak it out. Since Suicheng can offend us, why can’t I have the freedom of talking nonsense?

Nowadays, in the field of printmaking, very few have independent examination view and imagination space, or independent expressing way. But Suicheng has, all of these.

In the end, there have to be a formal comment. I’d like to quote the words of his son, who is called “Little Buddha” by us:

The works are bright, and healthy, and will be better.

4/22/2008

激跃中觅宁静 秩序中蕴冲突

——隋丞黑白版画的矛盾特质

齐凤阁 中国美术家协会版画艺委会副主任 《中国版画》杂志主编

隋丞是黑白版画领域中执着的追求者，自1983年刻第一张木刻始，至今20余年一直钟情于黑白的世界。当我国的黑白版画在市场经济与西方现代主义艺术两股大潮的冲击下日显式微之时，在油印套色与水印色彩版画于展览会上及艺术市场中走红抢眼的情况下，他初衷不改，一直在黑白两极中表达他对人生的感悟及对现实人文与自然环境的关注。就视觉形态与内在品质而言，其创作经历了两个阶段，前者在激跃中寻求宁静，后者于秩序中呈显冲突，其矛盾结构正是他艺术特质的感性显现。

激跃中觅宁静主要体现于他上世纪80年代后期至90年代末期一批版画作品中，《舞会》、《咖啡馆》、《海》、《过街的人们》等，以随意的刀触、无序的黑白、写意的造型，甚至一种异乎寻常的氛围，表现一种躁动不安的情绪，一种忙乱、繁杂的功利社会对人精神世界的侵扰。就艺术取向而言，是以先锋的姿态对传统审美模式的反叛，但其主旨是对焦虑、烦躁的心灵的抚慰，对一种宁静、纯真的精神世界的渴求。《舞会》中跟影灯的光束与《咖啡馆》中琐碎的光斑把静谧的画面切割得支离而凌乱，画家有意弱化空间关系，对画面进行主观化、平面化处理，随心所欲的布局、跳跃无序的印痕，使寻求宁静、躲避纷扰的人们陷入了另一个繁杂的世界。难道现代文明就一定以破坏和谐、牺牲纯静为代价？这是一个在当时乃至今天仍令人反思的课题。

如果说以上两件作品是以画面的视觉形态对客观现实的隐喻，那么《平静的湖》、《海》则是对现代人渴望回归自然心境的直呈。在作品《海》的说明词中作者这样写道：画中两个动作重复的少女与白云相呼应，雕塑般的造型与剪纸般粗放的线条使画面张力极强，不完整的脚、船、云的切割，企图冲破边框的限制，海意喻着超越生命表象的深沉永恒，古船意喻着时间的移动与积淀，少女则

意喻着生命的鲜活与激情。这些意象的组合表达了人们对自然的热爱，对自由的向往，对生存空间的超越。当现代工业社会经济高速发展的同时，污染、噪音使大自然被异化，使蓝天、碧水改变了往日的容颜，使人们无法逃避纷扰，那么这种超越心境的出现是可以想见的。

秩序中蕴冲突主要体现在《浮水者》及《都市与浮水者》系列作品中。从21世纪初开始，隋丞的黑白版画创作一改以往的激跃、纷杂、粗放，而为图案化、规则化，但宁静有序中蕴含着某种矛盾与冲突。画家将中国传统绘画中的水纹图案化，进行复制、排列、重组，以单纯而繁密的波浪背景作为浮水者活动的空间。同时以立交桥式的工业交通符号切割画面，以理性的交通标识点缀其间，既活跃了景观，又使虚拟的交通呈现出一种秩序感，而活跃其中的浮水者则完全是一个象征性的标记，他左突右冲，表现出一种生命的活力，但在规则的限制中又表现出一种孤独和无奈。这是作者对当代都市生活的某种感受，所表达的是人的欲望、冲动与规则、秩序、工业化管理方式的冲突，是活跃的生命形态与冷静、严峻的现实社会间的矛盾，具有发人深省的启迪作用。

这批作品使隋丞的艺术个性得以显现，他以一种与众不同的视觉样式叩开了风格的大门，以现代的观念和新的视角使传统的黑白版画别开生面。由第一阶段的激跃、纷杂、粗放，到此阶段的冷静、秩序、精致，由前者激跃中对宁静的寻觅，到后者秩序中蕴含的冲突，从两极诠释着其黑白版画的矛盾特质。矛盾使事物呈现个性与差别，矛盾是事物衍化的内在动力，正是对矛盾、对立统一规律的艺术把握与活用，使隋丞在单一的黑白版画创作中，保持着活力与热情，在众多的个性纷呈的版画家群中，固守着属于他自己的一池清水与一片蓝天。

Calmness in Intensity; Conflict in Order

The Contradictory Characteristics in Sui Cheng's Black and White Printmaking Works

Professor Qi Fengge Vice-director of Printmaking Committee, Chinese Artist Association

Editor-in-chief of China Printmaking

Suicheng is a persevering striver in black and white printmaking field. Since he created his first woodcut work in 1983, for more than 20 years he has been deeply in love with black and white world. Despite the fact that Chinese black and white prints are on the decline under the pounding of market economy and western modernist art trend, and that mimeograph color process (chromatography) and watercolor block printing are stealing the show on art exhibitions and markets, Suicheng doesn't want to change his original intention and insists on expressing his feelings in life and his concern in reality and nature by means of black and white. From the point of view of visual form and inner qualification, his creation has gone through two stages. The first one is to seek calmness in intensity, and the second one is to show conflict in the order. The contradicting structure is just the perceptual expression of his art characteristics.

The characteristic of seeking calmness in intensity can be found in his first printmaking works from late 80s to 90s. In *Dance*, *Café*, *The Sea*, *People Crossing the Street*, etc. with casual knife touch, disordered black and white, free image, and even an unusual environment, the artist has expressed a restless emotion, an aggression to human being's spiritual world from the busy and complicated utilitarian society. On art orientation, he has taken avant-garde attitude to fight against the traditional aesthetic mode. But his intention is to comfort the restless and upset souls and to long for a calm and simple spiritual world. The light beam in *Dance* and the light faculae in *Café* separate the still image into fragments. The artist weakened the space relationship on purpose. The subjectively treated image, casually arranged composition, and the disordered print mark have made those people seeking calmness and escaping from turmoil lost in another miscellaneous world. Is modern civilization bound to destroy harmony and calmness? This is so far a subject worth introspecting for most of us.

If the visual form of the above mentioned two pieces of works is metaphor of objective reality, *Calm Lake* and *The Sea* show directly the longing of people in modern society for returning to nature. In the illustration of *The Sea*, the artist wrote as follows:

The two young girls who repeat the same action are harmonious with white clouds. Sculpture-like figures and paper-cut like lines make the image stretch hard. The incomplete cut of feet, boats and clouds intend to break the restriction of frame. The sea implies the deep eternity surpassing life surface, the boat symbolizes time passing and settlement,

and the young girls symbolize the freshness and passion of life.

The combination of these images shows people's love of nature, longing for freedom, and surpassing the living space. As modern industrial economy developed rapidly, pollution and noise have dissimilated the nature and transformed the blue sky and clear water. People have nowhere to avoid these turmoil. Then the appearance of this surpassing mood is reasonable.

The characteristic of showing conflict in the order can be found in his *Swimmer* and *Metropolis* and *Swimmer* series. From the beginning of this century, Suicheng's black and white print works are no longer intense, disordered or free, but have become patterned and regular. However, this calmness and order contain some conflict and contradiction. The artist has redesigned, copied and rearranged the water waves in Chinese traditional painting, and used simple and dense wave as the swimmer's background space. Meanwhile, the interchange similar to industrial traffic symbols separate the image with some rational traffic signs adorned among it. This makes the scene vital and the fictitious traffic orderly. The swimmer in it is just a symbolic sign. He moves back and forth showing a great vitality, but meanwhile he is lonely and helpless within the limit of regulations. This is the artist's feeling of modern urban life. What he wants to express is the conflict between human being's desire and impulse and the regulations, order, and industrial management way, and the contradiction between active life and the calm and grim real society. It has the function of calling for deep thought.

These works show us Suicheng's artistic characteristics. He has opened the door of a unique style with a different visual form, and made traditional black and white print fresh and original with modern idea and new visual angle. From the intensity, disorder, free style in the first stage to the calmness, order and delicacy in second stage, from the former calmness in intensity to latter conflict in order, he is explaining the contradiction characteristics in black and white prints. Contradiction can present personality and difference and promote development. Just because of the artistic grasp and application of contradiction and the law of unity and opposites, Suicheng keeps his vigor and enthusiasm in the unitary black and white printmaking, and sticks to his own world among the printmaking artists with different personalities.

思想与虔诚

——读隋丞的版画作品有感

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隋丞是一位既强调思想，又重视体验的艺术家。在中国当代艺术界流行红光亮的艳俗风格和肆意宣泄感官欲望的时候，隋丞对黑白木刻版画的执着追求显得如此地特立独行，以至于给人一种宛若隔世之感。但是，隋丞显然是个当代艺术家，而不是保持某种技术的技师。按照丹托（A. Danto）的说法，今天的艺术已经进入了它的后历史阶段，关于艺术史的宏大叙事业已结束。由此，艺术不再有进步的历史，不再有先进与落后的区别，历史上出现过的各种艺术形式在今天都可以再次出现。当然，历史上曾经出现过的各种艺术形式，在今天要想再次成为艺术，必须有所不同。这里的不同，并不是体现在“外显”（exhibited）特征上，而是体现在“非外显”（non-exhibited）特征上。这种“非外显”特征，不是我们凭借直观就能够识别的，而且不是任何人都能够识别的。只有专家或者艺术界中的成员，凭借某种特别的敏感或嗅觉，才能识别艺术的“非外显”特征。总之，由“非外显”特征构成的区别，类似于“见山是山”与“见山还是山”之间的区别，丹托在说明某物是艺术而跟它完全类似的他物却不是艺术时，就引用了青原禅师的这个经典说法。

那么，构成艺术的“非外显”特征的因素究竟是什么？按照丹托的说法，是有关艺术作品的理论解释。丹托的说法，很容易被庸俗地理解为批评家与艺术家之间的合谋：某物是否是艺术，关键不在于该物自身，而在于是否有理论家、批评家、艺术史家去言说该物，从而形成一个环绕该物的理论氛围，将该物纳入“艺术界”（art world）中。简单地说，某物之所以是艺术，完全是理论家解释的结果。丹托的理论的确包含这层意思。不过，丹托强调，理论解释不能任意进行。理论家并不会点金术，不能任意将某物“变容”（transfigure）为艺术作品。理论家的解释，必须建立在某物自身就具有某些潜在的“非外显”特征上。某物必须有所言说、有所指涉（about），它才能成为理论家言说的对象，才能因为理论家的言说而“变容”为艺术作品。因此，今天的艺术在外在形态上也许与过去的艺术没有差别，但今天的艺术一定得有“说法”（aboutness），一定得指向某种自身之外的思想。从这种意义上来说，今天的艺术家都是思想家。这是丹托艺术哲学的核心内容。但是，正如丹托自己所说的那样，当艺术家变成思想家，当艺术去言说思想的时候，艺术就终结了，如同黑格尔（G.W.F. Hegel）预言的那样，艺术被哲学取代了。

但是，艺术并没有终结。因为艺术还有另外一个“非外显”特征，它几乎为今天所有艺术哲学家所忽略。这个“非外显”特征与言说对象无关，与言说方式有关。当然，我

里所说的言说方式，并不像一些艺术家所说的那样，指的是某种艺术手法，而是指某种艺术态度。艺术手法属于外显特征的范围，艺术态度属于“非外显”特征的范围。用同样的手法做出同样的东西，一种是艺术，另一种不是艺术。关键不在于手法上的区别，而在于态度上的区别。艺术需要一种虔诚的态度。这是贝尔（C. Bell）在现代艺术家那里发现的一种品质，它在今天不是被人遗忘就是被人嘲笑，然而，我却认为它是维持艺术身份的另一个必不可少的“非外显”特征。虔诚是一种宗教态度，但艺术不会因此终结到宗教中去，因为还有思想这个非外显特征。如同虔诚可以抑制艺术终结为哲学一样，思想可以抑制艺术终结为宗教。历史上曾经出现过的各种艺术形式在今天还想博得艺术的光环，就必须加上理论的氛围和虔诚的态度。

我之所以说隋丞的木刻是当代艺术而不是延续的习惯，原因就在于他的作品中具有这两个特征。木刻艺术并不年轻，它的各种可能性在前人的实践中都有所体现。尽管隋丞有高超的技术，但这不是我们将他的作品视为当代艺术的主要理由。如果我们回顾一下隋丞的艺术历程，就会发现技术的因素不仅没有加强，反而被适当地弱化了。因为当代艺术的关键不是显示技术，而是让艺术去言说。最好的言说工具就是符号。因为言说的需要，隋丞放弃了写实的技术和表现主义风格，而选择了明显的象征风格或符号表达（symbolization）方式，这在《都市与浮水者》系列中表现得尤其明显：人被固定为人的符号，水被固定为水的符号，再加上挪用的交通标志，整个作品都是由符号构成的。

既然采用符号表达方式的目的是为了更好地言说，那么人们自然想知道隋丞用这些符号究竟表达了什么东西。在这个问题上，不同的读者会读到不同的内容。即使作者自己的解读，也不能终止读者解读的多样性。尽管隋丞的作品使用的符号并不复杂，但符号之间的组合或碰撞出来的意义却异常丰富。都市与浮水者，两个相隔有距又暗中有关的事物，它们的并置可以引起人们的无限遐想。它们让我想起了波德莱尔（C. P. Baudelaire）笔下的“游荡者”（flaneur）。一群游手好闲的年轻人，从都市的一个街区到另一个街区游荡，永远不知道自己的下一个目标，直到疲乏和饥饿袭来，进入一个陌生的房间歇息。这种游荡者的形象在本雅明（W. Benjamin）那里被再次提起，并且被推向了一个新的哲学高度。游荡成为人的生存的一个根本冲动。对于现代社会的游荡者来说，理想的地点不是森林，而是城市。城市既有空旷的广场，又有隐蔽的建筑，如同森林一般能够满足游荡者“瞭望”和“庇护”的不同要求，为游荡者提供无限

的可能性。现代都市给人们提供了理想的游荡场所，但并不是所有的都市居民都是游荡者。要成为游荡者必须要学会让自己迷路，要学会用无功利、无目的的眼光来看待周围事物。实际上，波德莱尔和本雅明笔下的游荡者，就是审美者（aesthetician）的化身。与康德（I. Kant）将审美视为无利害的静观不同，波德莱尔和本雅明将审美视为无目的的游荡。人只有在无目的的游荡中，才会去掉各种身份的束缚，而成为自身。正是在这种意义上，我将审美理解为自我在无身份状态下的逗留（lingering）。隋丞的《都市与浮水者》系列版画，成功地将“游荡者”的形象图像化了。

然而，如果将隋丞的作品视为对“游荡者”的图解，视为波德莱尔和本雅明的文本的插图，就有可能将隋丞的作品寓意过分简单化了。事实上，我根本不知道隋丞是否熟悉“游荡者”的形象。从隋丞的作品中，我们可以发现许多与波德莱尔和本雅明所描绘的场景不同的地方。隋丞的都市是用道路和交通标志来象征的，并不像波德莱尔和本雅明笔下充满拱门、广场和街道的都市丛林。但是，隋丞用交错的高速公路和交通标志象征的都市，其迷惑性一点也不亚于由拱门、广场和街道组成的都市，而且因迷路而造成的后果也远为严重，因为一旦迷路，那些流畅的高速公路就会将我们带向更为遥远的地方，进入都市之外的领域。

波德莱尔和本雅明笔下的“游荡者”是都市漫步者，按理用高速公路和交通标志来象征都市的隋丞，其“游荡者”应该是驾车族。然而，隋丞却选择了更为原始的浮水者作为“游荡者”的形象。隋丞之所以选择浮水者，除了要建立起与早先的《浮水者》系列的关联之外，与中国文化对“游”的理解也不无关系。从汉语的字源上来看，“游荡”、“浮游”都与“水”有关。生命最初是在水里浮游，然后才在地上漫游，最后可能到空中遨游。隋丞用浮水者来象征“游荡者”，不仅体现了他自己的创作的延续性，而且与自己的文化发生了关系，同时还让游的方式与游的场景发生时代错位。隋丞对自身的文化身份的认同，在他所选取的用来象征水的符号中可以找到更加有力的佐证。无论对中国传统绘画是否熟悉，都会从隋丞笔下那些象征水的符号中感觉到明显的中国趣味。熟悉中国绘画的人们，也许还能发现这种符号的演化步骤，找出它的谱系来。事实上，这些象征水的符号，是隋丞从中国画描绘水的图像中提炼出来的。在20世纪90年代，隋丞做了一段时间的实验，用现代木刻重画传统名画。当然，经过隋丞提炼为符号的水，既不是自然的水，也不是传统文化中的水，而是具有标志性和设计感的当代艺术中的符号。水与路是矛盾的，是不同时代的游的载体，隋丞喜欢通过并置矛盾来加强作品的张力。

让我最感兴趣的既不是象征城市的符号也不是象征文化的符号，而是那个象征人的符号。与挪用水的形象又背离水的形象类似，隋丞笔下的那个“浮水者”既有意无意地挪用了“游荡者”又有意无意地背离了“游荡者”。在波德莱尔和本雅明笔下，“游荡者”因为他的无拘无束而挣脱了社会赋予他的各种面具，成功地展示了他的真实存在。如果说面具将各种各样的人生匀质化为标准的人的概念的话，那么“游荡者”就是不受概念束缚的千差万别的个体存在。套用阿多诺（T. Adorno）的术语来说，“游荡者”展示的是人的存在的“非同一性”（nonidentity），是对理性推行的同一性（identity）思维的抗拒。按照这种思路，“浮水者”的形象应该是各种各

样，然而，隋丞却把它们归结为一个高度同一的符号，一个人的标志，类似于涂鸦中的那个人的标志。我认为，隋丞的这个高度同一的符号似乎更能够表达当代人的生存状态。在波德莱尔、本雅明和阿多诺等人那里，多少还保持着对于个人自由的浪漫幻想。这种浪漫主义幻想将人的异化视为社会压迫的结果，一旦人摆脱了压迫，获得自由，就能充分呈现他的个体特征。然而，随着消费社会的来临，这种浪漫主义幻想破灭了。人的异化，不是社会压迫的结果，而是自由选择的结果。人自由地选择成为非人，成为高度同一的符号。就像我们在世界各地的涂鸦中所看到的那样，尽管这种艺术形式享有极大的自由，但其中的人物形象却差不多一致。由此，我们可以看到，在隋丞的作品中，自由显露出了它的荒诞的一面：人总是在自由地追求最不自由的结果。缺乏自由的人们渴望自由，一旦拥有自由却选择了盲从。

如果这样来解读隋丞作品中的主要符号，我们就会发现，事实上隋丞是在用象征的方式，阐述当代中国人充满矛盾的生存状态。这种矛盾状态的高潮，就是人生的荒诞性。由于未来的无穷后退，人所追求的东西永远无法实现；唯一能够实现的刚好是人竭力躲避的，那就是人生的终点。人在向自己的终点奋进！就人作为有理性的动物来说，没有什么比这更荒诞的了。

关于人生的荒诞性，在存在主义哲学家那里有很多深刻的阐发，如果隋丞的作品只是对这种思想的重写或者图解，那么它们就无法令人感动，就只是哲学宣讲而不是艺术表现。当代艺术在追求观念性和批判性的同时，往往忽略了艺术的感性特征或在场特征。与哲学用命题言说事物不同，艺术仿佛有一种魔力，让事物直接出场。当代许多艺术作品都缺乏这种魔力，成了直接的哲学宣讲或政治宣言，以至于丹托公然宣称艺术终结了。隋丞的作品仍然具有艺术的魔力。这种魔力究竟从何而来？在幻觉主义作品中，魔力来自于二维平面产生三维空间的幻觉。在表现主义作品中，魔力来自于艺术语言传达了艺术家燃烧的激情。在隋丞的这种具有象征主义色彩的作品中，魔力来自他对艺术的虔诚态度。本雅明在区分原作与复制品时，曾经用到“灵光”（aura）这个概念。复制可以在各个方面跟原作类似，唯一失去的就是原作的“灵光”。这种“灵光”不是理性分析的对象，而是生命感受的对象。本雅明所说的“灵光”类似于我这里所说的“魔力”。无论是“灵光”还是“魔力”，都与艺术家的生命体验有关。今天的艺术家热衷于追赶潮流，制造一些与自身存在毫无关联的图像或观念，在享受商业上的成功的时候忘乎所以。这样的艺术家的生存仿佛飘浮在空中，无法获得由生命的根底上发出来的坚实力量。他们的作品有技术，有思想，但无论多么高超的技术和深邃的思想都不会“变容”而焕发“灵光”。与那些追赶潮流的艺术家不同，隋丞对待自己的艺术有一种类似宗教般的虔诚。没有这种虔诚的态度，我们很难想象他能够做到几十年如一日地执着于黑白木刻。正是这种虔诚的态度，让他能够接触到生命的根底，并让作品分享生命的“灵光”。

如同思想一样，虔诚也属于艺术作品的“非外显”特征的范围。但是，我从隋丞的作品中的确能够感受到思想和虔诚带来的某种异样的感觉，或许这就是艺术的“灵光”或“魔力”吧，它们既是如此地清晰可见，又是如此地捉摸不定。

2008年11月17日于北京大学蔚秀园

Thinking and Piousness

Thoughts on Sui Cheng's Printmaking works

Professor Peng Feng Beijing University

Suicheng is an artist who focuses on both thinking and experience. In contemporary Chinese art field, the red and bright vulgar style and the wantonly expression of sensual desire are very popular. Comparing to this trend, Suicheng's perseveringly striving for the art of black and white woodcut appears so unique that it gives people a feeling of an interval of the whole generation. However, Suicheng is obviously a contemporary artist, not a technician who has obtained a certain technique. According to A. Danto, the art today has stepped into its post-historical stage, in which, its magnificent narrative career has come to the end. Thus, the art will no longer keep its progressive history, and there will be no longer differences between the advanced and the backward. All sorts of art forms appeared in the history can reappear today. Of course the forms appeared in the history should have somewhat changed if they want to become the art again. The change here is not seen in its exhibited characteristics, but in its non-exhibited ones, which can not be recognized by everyone or someone's sense. Only those experts or the members in the art field can recognize the non-exhibited characteristics of art by their special sharp senses. Above all, the difference from non-exhibited characteristics is similar to the one between "the mountain is the mountain" and "the mountain is still the mountain". Danto quoted this famous saying of Master Qingyuan when he tried to explain a certain thing is the art, but a thing similar to it is not.

What are the non-exhibited characteristics which form art? According to Danto, it is the theoretical explanation about artistic works. This is often understood vulgarly as the conspiracy of the critic and the artist, that is to say, whether a certain thing is the art depends on whether there are critics, art historians or theorists say it is the art, not on the thing itself. Thus a theoretical atmosphere is formed around the thing, which brings it into the art world. Nevertheless, Danto stressed that the theoretical explanation cannot be given wantonly. The theorists cannot transfigure a thing into a work of art as he pleases. The explanation of the theorists must depend on the potential non-exhibited characteristics of the thing itself. The thing must be about and express something before it becomes the object of the theorist's explanation and is transfigured into a work of art. Therefore, maybe the exterior forms are the same as those in the history, but the art today has to have "aboutness" and lead to the thought beyond itself. From this point of view, the artists today are all thinkers, which is the core

of Danto's art philosophy. But as Danto has said, when artists become thinkers and the art starts to express thoughts, the art dies. Just as Hegel had predicted, the place of art would be taken by philosophy.

However, the art still exists because of its non-exhibited characteristics, which have been ignored by all thinkers and philosophers today. The characteristic has nothing to do with the expressed object, but something to do with the expressing way. Of course, the expressing way here refers to a certain art attitude, not a certain art technique as some artists thought. The former is non-exhibited, while the later is exhibited. The things made in same way can be a work of art or not a work of art. It is not decided by techniques, but the attitudes. The art needs a pious attitude. This is a quality found by C. Bell on modern artists, which is either ignored or ridiculed today. But I think it is an essential non-exhibited characteristic to keep the artist an artist. Piousness is a religious attitude. But the art will not end in religion because it has the non-exhibited characteristic—thinking. Just as piousness can keep the art from ending in philosophy, thinking can keep the art from ending in religion. Any form of art appeared in history has to have its theoretical atmosphere and pious attitude if it wants to keep its art halo.

The reason I said that Suicheng's woodcut is a contemporary art instead of a continued habit is there exist these two characteristics in his works. The art of woodcut is not young. And every possibility of it has been embodied in predecessors' experiments. Although Suicheng has superb technique, this is not the reason we regard his works as contemporary art. When we retrospect Suicheng's art route, it can be found that the technique in his works has not been strengthened, on the contrary, it has been properly weakened. This is because the key point in contemporary art is not the technique, but the expression of art. The best tool of expression is symbols. For the purpose of expression, Suicheng gave up his realistic technique and expressive style and turned to symbolization, which is especially clear in his Metropolis and Swimmer series. In these works, human beings are fixed as human symbols and water is fixed as water symbols. Together with the borrowed traffic symbols, the whole work is made up of symbols.

Since the purpose of symbolization is to express better, people would like to know what these symbols used by Suicheng have expressed. Different viewers will have different understanding, which can't be stopped

even by the explanation from the artist himself. Although the symbols used by Suicheng are not complicated, the combination or the collision of them means a lot. Metropolis and the swimmer, the two separated but linked potentially things are put together, can induce fantastic reveries. They make me think of the "flaneur" written by C. P. Baudelaire. A group of young people, never knowing the next destination, idled from street to street until they were tired and hungry, and went to a strange room for a rest. The image of the flaneur was mentioned by W. Benjamin again and was pushed to a new height of philosophy. Idling has become people's instinct for existence. For a modern flaneur, the ideal place is not in the forest, but in the city. The city offers both open squares and hidden buildings, which can meet the needs of the flaneurs for both "watch-out" and "protection". Modern cities offer people the ideal idling places, but not all people living in the cities are flaneurs. To be a flaneur, one has to learn to be lost and to see the things around oneself without utility or purpose. In fact, the flaneurs under the pen of Baudelaire and Benjamin are the embodiment of aestheticians. Different from I. Kant's opinion regarding aesthetics as no gains and no losses, Baudelaire and Benjamin regarded aesthetics as aimless idling. Only when people are idling aimlessly, can they get rid of the trammels of all sorts of status and become themselves. Therefore, I understand aesthetics as a lingering under the condition that one gets rid of his self status. Suicheng's Metropolis and Swimmer series have patterned the images of "flaneurs".

However, if Suicheng's works are regarded as the illustration of the "flaneur" or that of Baudelaire and Benjamin's words, they are misunderstood. From Suicheng's works, it can be found there are many points different from those described by Baudelaire and Benjamin. Suicheng's metropolis is symbolized by roads and traffic signs, while the works of Baudelaire and Benjamin are full of arches, squares and streets in the cities. But the perplexity of Suicheng's metropolis symbolized by interchanged expressways and traffic signs is no less than the cities made up of the arches, squares and streets. On the contrary, the effect caused by the sense of loss is stronger, because once one is lost, the expressways will take him to somewhere far away outside the cities.

The "flaneurs" under Baudelaire and Benjamin's pen are wanderers in the city. Theoretically, Suicheng's "flaneurs" in the metropolis which is symbolized by expressways and traffic signs should be the "driving family". But Suicheng chose the more primitive swimmers as his "flaneurs". The reason of this is, besides to set up the relationship with his former Swimmer series, the understanding of "wandering"(swimming) in Chinese culture. From the source of Chinese character, both "wandering" and "swimming" in Chinese have something to do with "water". The beginning of life starts in the water, then wanders on the land, later in the space. Suicheng uses swimmers to symbolize "flaneurs" to embody the continuance of his creation and to relate to his own culture. Meanwhile he dislocates the time of swimming ways and swimming places. Suicheng's recognition of his own culture is embodied in his symbols of water. No matter whether one is familiar with Chinese traditional painting or not, he can find clear Chinese preference in these symbols. Those who are familiar with Chinese painting maybe find the history of these symbols. In fact, these symbols are refined from the Chinese paintings describing water. In the 1990s, Suicheng did some experiments to recreate some famous Chinese traditional painting in his woodcut works. Of course, the water refined as symbols is not the natural water, nor is it the water in traditional culture, but the modern symbol with marking and designing quality. Water and expressways are opposites, because they are the medium in different times. Suicheng likes to strengthen his works with contradictions.

What attracted me in Sui's works is not the symbols of the cities nor the symbols of the culture, but the symbols of human beings. Similar to the image which both makes use of and deviates from the water, the "swimmer" in Sui's works makes use of and deviates the "flaneur". In Baudelaire and Benjamin's works, the "flaneur" has got rid of all sorts of

social binding and expressed successfully his existence in the world. If we say the masks on the "flaneurs" standardized different people and their life, then the "flaneurs" are different individuals existing in the world free from the binding of the concept. According to T. Adorno, "flaneurs" showed human beings' nonidentity and resistance to the thinking of identity. In accordance with this, there should be various sorts of the swimmers' images. However, Suicheng has summarized them into one symbol--a symbol of human beings, which is similar to that in the scribbling works. In my opinion, this highly identical symbol of Suicheng can show the existence condition of modern people. Baudelaire and Benjamin's works kept the romantic fantasy for personal freedom. This romantic fantasy regarded the alienation of human beings as the result of social oppression. Once one gets free from the oppression, he can show fully his individual characteristics. However, as the consumer society came, this romantic fantasy was shattered. The alienation of human beings is not the result of the social oppression, but that of free choice. Human beings chose to be non-human beings, to be the highly identical symbols. Just as what we have seen in the scribbling works all over the world, although this sort of art style has great freedom, the figures in them are almost the same. Hence, we can see that in Sui's works, freedom has shown its ridiculous side, i.e., people always run after the least free result. The people who lack freedom long for it, while those who have it choose to follow blindly.

If we decode the key symbols in Suicheng's works, we can find that Suicheng is, in fact, describing the contradictory living condition of contemporary Chinese in a symbolized way. The climax of this contradictory condition is the ridiculous nature of life. Due to the endless backwardness of the future, the object people are running after will never be realized. The only thing people can realize is just what people are trying to avoid, that is, the end of one's life. People are marching to his end. To human beings, the only animal who can reason, what can be more ridiculous than this?

This ridiculous nature of human beings' life has been stated many times by existentialist philosophers. If Suicheng's works simply illustrate this thought, they are not art expression, nor can they touch people's hearts. The perceptual characteristic of art is neglected when contemporary art is running for its conception and criticism. Different from philosophy, the art seems to have a magic to present the thing directly. Many contemporary art works are lack of this magic, thus become direct philosophical statement or political declaration. This is the reason Danto declared that art was dead. But Suicheng's works still have the magic. Where is the magic from? It is from his pious attitude to art. Benjamin had used the word "aura" to distinguish between the original works and copied ones. The copied work can be very similar to the original one. The only thing lost in it is the "aura" in the original one. This "aura" is not the object of rational analysis, but that of feeling. Benjamin's "aura" is similar to my "magic". Both of them have something to do with the artists' experience in life. The artists today are keen on following the trend and making some images or ideas irrelative to their own existence or life. They have lost their heads in front of the commercial success, and have no way to obtain the power from the root of one's life. These artists are skillful and have their own thoughts, but their works have no "aura". Suicheng has his religion-like piousness to his art. Without this piousness, we can not imagine that he can be so persistent on black and white woodcut. This pious attitude makes him touch the root of life and his works share the vital "aura".

Just like one's thinking, piousness is also a non-exhibited characteristic of art works. However, I can sense a certain unusual feeling in Suicheng's works. Perhaps this is the "aura" or "magic" of the art. They are so clear in his works and meanwhile so unpredictable.

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