

THE LOST HEAVEN 失落的天堂

他们 THEY 1999-2009



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THEY | ABOUT "THEY"



在一种过度的个人小情趣的自我和自恋中体现的"个性"是他们艺术小组所怀疑的, 所以他们艺术小组没有使用上世纪70-80年代出生的人喜欢使用的卡通和拒绝成长等现实 感不强的艺术形式来创作, 而是继承了上一代艺术的现实主义传统, 强调画面的叙事性 和现实感,希望作品展现更多的社会现实意义,但作品又体现出与上一代略有不同的气 质和感觉,画面经常出现现实与虚拟的融合以及荒诞与真实的交错。许多作品在"同一 间房子"中探讨变与不变的艺术哲学,像同一场景的舞台剧和电影定格,也通过这间房 子同时呈现室外的现实都市风景与室内的各种人物和故事。艺术家后来又将"房子推倒", 从室内走到室外,以求获得更大的"空间"。他们艺术小组通过合作创作绘画的方式提出 了新的艺术问题,即在"新集体主义"之下能否诞生"新的个性",就像上一代艺术家反 抗的是那个时代的主流意识——极端的"集体主义"一样,他们艺术小组反抗的是这个 时代的主流意识——极端的"个人主义"。两个艺术家画一张画,并长期合作、共同创作, 这本身也许就是一个与上一代显著不同的特点。

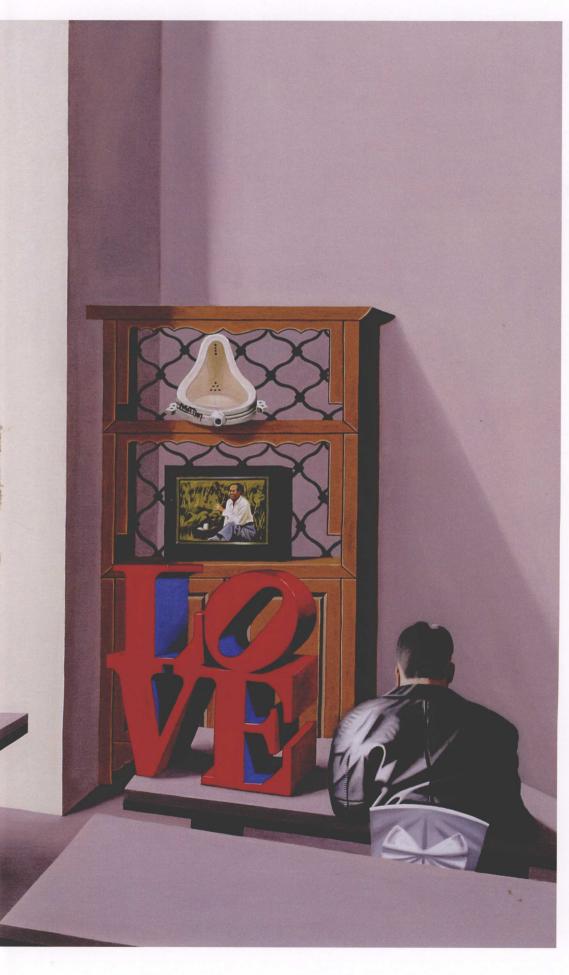


THEY were officially founded in 2002. But if one counts previous art collaborations between the two members, Lai Shengyu (Lai Sheng, Born in 1978) and Yang Xiaogang (Born in 1979), THEY started in 1999. The artists were classmates in the BA program at the Central Academy of Fine Art (CAFA) Print Department (1997-2001). The artists founded THEY based on common understanding and ideal of contemporary art. They named the collaboration THEY to slough off notions of 'self and individuality' which seemed fake and overwhelming at the time, replacing 'Self' with THEY, and through a 'New-Collectivism', sought out 'their individuality'. THEY doubt the 'self' and 'individuality' as advertised by their generation.

Different from their precursors, who sought a position of self-liberated 'individuality' after the extreme collectivism and oppressed individuality of the 1960s to 1980s, THEY feel the expression of "self and individuality' is overblown - that 'individuality' is presented as over-personal sentiment and narcissism.

THEY do not use the form and expression popular among their own generation from the 1970s and 1980s - such as cartoons and youth culture. Instead, THEY inherit the realist tradition from the previous generation, emphasizing visual narration and the sense of reality, in order to have their works convey social reality. However, their works also present the fusion of reality and fiction, as well as the mixture of fantasy and real. Many works debate the philosophy of change and question the nature of reality. For example 'a common room' may appear as the same scene in life, in live theatre or on film. The 'room' may also simultaneously present outdoors, a real cityscape, indoors or interior reality through characters and stories. The artists 'push down' or dismantle the 'room', and step from indoors to outdoors to seek larger 'space' in order to rethink boundaries. By co-painting THEY have raised a new question, that is, could 'new-collectivism' lead to 'new individuality' . Just as the artists from last generation revolted against the mainstream ideology of their time, THEY revolt against the mainstream ideology of their time - extreme 'individualism'. The two artists co-paint each work, and continuously co-operate and co-practice—may be the cooperation and collaboration itself distinguishes THEY from the last and present generation.





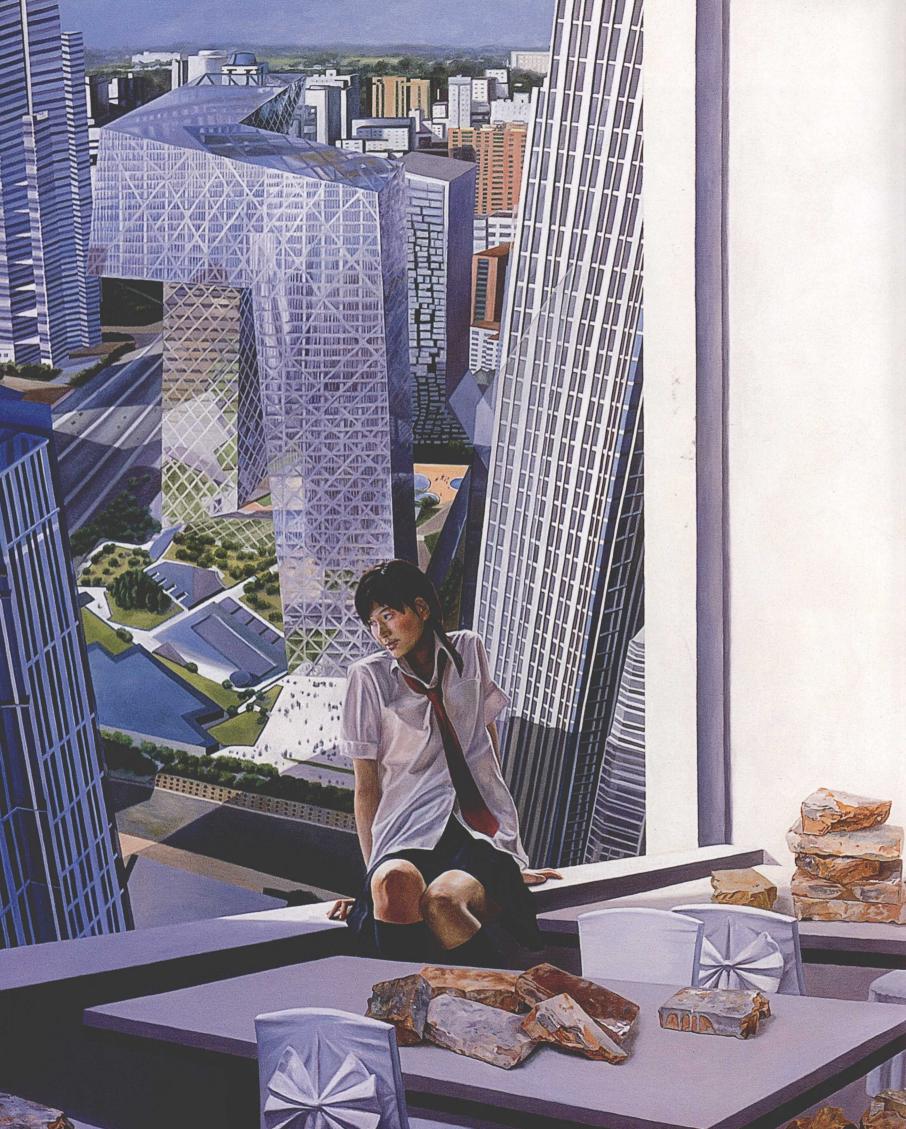
他们·杜尚与徐悲鸿

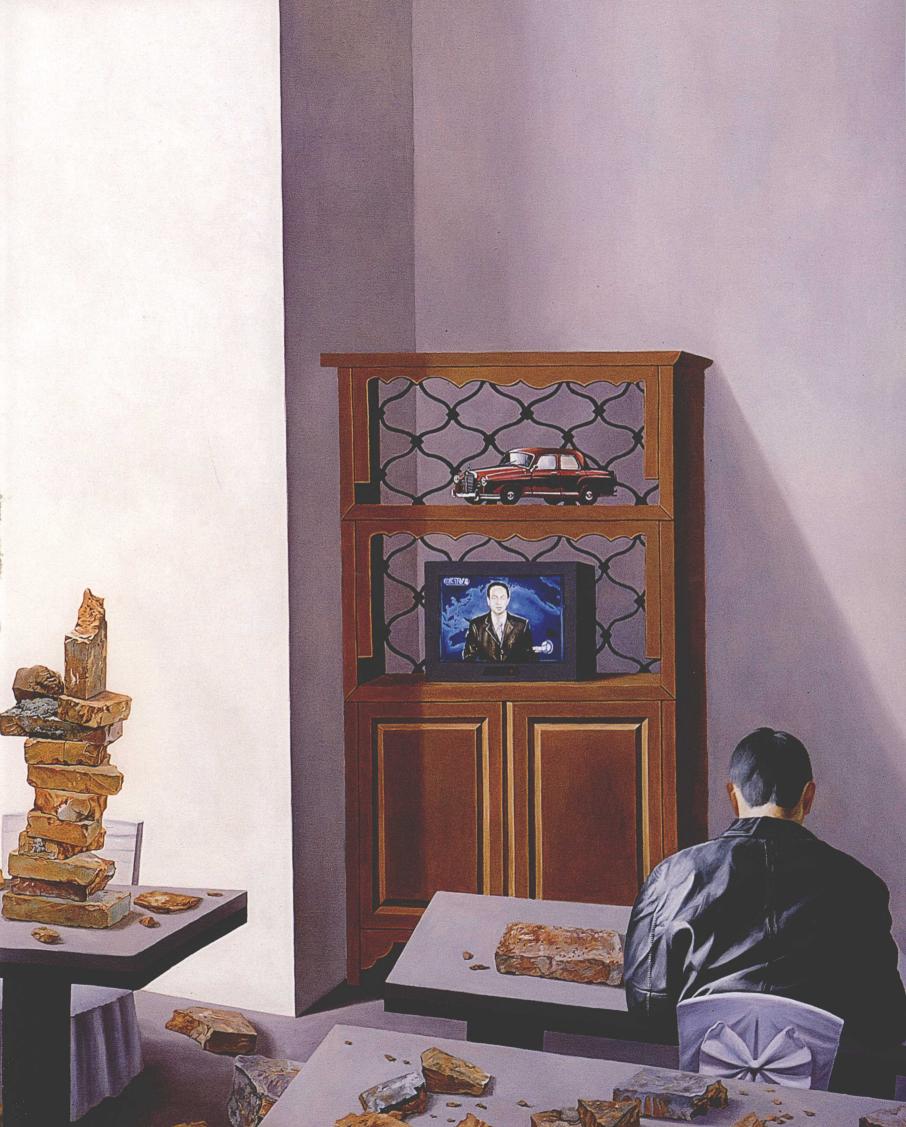
They·Marcel Duchamp & Xu Beihong

90cm×140cm

布面油画 oil on canvas / 2008

后页(following pages): 他们·中央电视台 | *They* · *CCTV* 180cm×280cm 布面油画 oil on canvas / 2006





66 在这个时代中,我们恰恰需要一种内心的平静,一缕午后的阳光,浮躁和诱惑是当代生活中的表象,而生于上世纪 70 年代末 80 年代初的青年们不得不面对社会现状,"他们"的作品正体现了这难得的宁静与创造性。

午后的阳光:已经有的和可能有的

范迪安 中国美术馆馆长

近两年来,我一直在关注"他们"这对年轻画家的工作进展,我在他们的艺术方式 和不断展开的画面中看到了许多新的东西。在当代艺术越来越趋于综合形态,许多画家 放弃绘画这种传统语言而转向新媒体实验时,"他们"却快乐而专注地沉迷在绘画上,相 信用绘画的语言足以表达他们的思考和感受,十分真挚地把绘画当做倾诉心理活动的媒 介。在当代绘画不断遭受其他媒体艺术的侵犯而失去自我表现力的时候,"他们"的绘画 采用了一种新的叙事方式,使画面的视觉性与艺术观念达成直接的默契。实际上,在联 系中国当代艺术整体状况观察"他们"时,我看到了他们正在以绘画新一代的姿态迅速 成长并悄然成熟起来,"他们"的艺术展现的是中国当代艺术一些新的征候。

在目前中国经济高速发展的背景之下,城市及商业文明日益剧变,人们的视觉经验和 内心体验发生了极大的转变。许多让人目眩神迷的社会现象以及混乱复杂的表象世界都强 烈地冲击着人们的生理及心理。"他们"的作品正是在这样一种背景底下,利用室内和室 外这两种相互独立而又相互关联的空间来表现外部世界的变化和人们内心世界的体验。

外部世界与内心世界之间的碰撞、交织与矛盾是他们艺术中最为本质和独特的地方。 虽然这种境遇是古往今来艺术家的基本境遇,但在"他们"这一代人身上,反映得更加 直接和强烈,他们的反应也更加直接和强烈。也许,欲望和焦虑的"具体化"是"他们" 艺术必然的选择,通过一个"具体"而极其普通的有限空间,他们将现实的、生活的以 及内心的现象直接地表现了出来,并把已经有的和可能有的存在并置在同一空间里,甚 至在情节和形象上推向无限。他们所绘制的景色、物体、人物等东西带有司空见惯的经验, 却在这个空间中变得独特和令人惊异,像电影语言般的叙事和片断的展开令人感觉亦真 亦幻, 在真中感觉到幻, 在幻中感觉到真。



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