自有我在



Contemporary Chinese Art Expressions



當代 中國藝術表現



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I AM IN IT:

CONTEMPORARY CHINESE ART EXPRESSIONS

BY YIGUO ZHANG

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Preface

Last October, the well-known composer Professor, Chou Wen-chung gave a speech at Nankai University entitled "The Twenty-First Century Mission of Chinese Culture", in which he raised the question of art's cultural content, emphasizing the significance of research on traditional art. His thought-provoking statement that "our future is in the past", parallels the famous architect I.M. Pei's view of the development of China's millennia-old cultural spirit. During the Louvre Museum tribute and gala dinner "Asia Achievers in a Global Setting," Mr. Pei expressed his belief "modernity is rooted in tradition" (I.M. Pei, *Essences*, 1997).

I have worked with contemporary art in Hong Kong for many years, and today I feel ever more deeply the profundity of the issues raised by the accomplished artists who have achieved success in the West. Hong Kong is a nexus of Chinese and Western cultural exchange, as well as the birthplace of the fusion of modern ink painting and Western art. My life and work have both led me to think constantly about the question of cultural fusion.

Chinese ink painting and calligraphy date back to ancient times. They have been continually re-interpreted through the ages as economic, cultural and social values have changed, distilling the finest essence from tradition, while continually absorbing elements from foreign cultures. Both two-

dimensionally and three-dimensionally, artists have shown powerful vitality and creativity.

I have always loved the innovations that Chinese ink painting has made during its more than three-thousand-year history. I feel that they have a contemporary spirit, even as they stay rooted in tradition. To this end, I recently curated an exhibition titled "New Ink Art: Innovation and Beyond" as part of the Hong Kong Museum of Art's 2008-2009 "Hong Kong Art: Open Dialogue" series.

Curated by Dr. Zhang Yiguo, the exhibition "I am in it: Contemporary Chinese Art Expressions" was first shown at Florida Gulf Coast University in January 2008. The four participating artists Shao Yan, Pu Lieping, Lan Zhenghui and Yi Liao attended the opening ceremony and participated in a two-week academic exchange. In addition to being a connoisseur of Chinese painting and calligraphy, Dr. Zhang also understands Western art history. Throughout his many years of studying ancient Chinese art, he has paid close attention to the development of contemporary Chinese art and its relationship to Western traditions. His study of Chinese contemporary art has led Dr. Zhang to examine the background and evolution of calligraphic and writing culture. For the Florida exhibition, he chose four

artists with completely different approaches. Shao Yan has sought out the future of calligraphy and writing; Pu Lieping has conducted a multi-dimensional exploration of Chinese characters; Lan Zhenghui's explorations take Chinese materials, tools and writing style and organically merge them with Western compositional ideas; and the works displayed by Yiliao are typical of conceptual calligraphy, always leading the viewer to think about his own condition of existence and presenting a dialogue between Chinese and Western culture.

This important exhibition is a record of the fusion of modern and traditional forms and stands as an unprecedented Chinese art event. It uses the heritage of cultural change and traditional calligraphy training to support this spirit of personal creativity and the influence of individual experience, and to search for artistic identity.

Alice King
Director
Alisan Fine Arts, Hong Kong
November 2008

序言

去年10月,著名音樂家周文中教授,曾在南開大學做過題爲 "二十一世紀中國文化的使命"的演講,他特別提出當代藝術的文化內涵,强調對傳統藝術研究的意義。他的名言"我們的將來在過去"發人深省,和著名建築學家具聿銘先生提倡中國幾千年文化精神的發展不謀而合。在巴黎盧浮宫博物館舉辦的"在世界框架中亞洲貢獻者"的晚宴中,貝先生表述了他的信念, "現代根基於傳統"(貝聿銘,《實質》,1997)。

我在香港從事當代藝術方面的工作已經多年,現在更覺得這些在西方成功的藝術大家提出問題的重要與深刻。香港是中西文化匯流的中心,也是西方藝術和現代水墨畫結合的發源地。我的生活、工作都讓我不斷 體會和思考這個文化融合的問題。

中國的書畫、水墨藝術源遠流長。隨着不同時代的經濟、文化、社會價值觀的變化,他們亦不斷重新演繹,從傳統中擷取精華,也不斷接受或吸收西方外來文化。無論是二度空間還是三度空間,都展示了强大的生命力與創造力。

我一直熱愛有三千多年歷史的中國水墨的創新作品,感到它們既扎根傳統,又具有當代氣息。爲此,我最近策劃了"新水墨藝術——創造、超越、翱翔"展覽,這是香港藝術館2008至2009年度"開放、對話"系列展覽之一。

這個"自有我在:當代中國藝術表現"展覽,是2008年1月在美國佛羅里達海灣海岸大學首先舉行的。參展的四位藝術家邵岩、濮列平、藍正輝和一了到美國出席了開幕式,并進行了爲期兩周的學術交流和訪問。張以國博士既是中國書畫的鑒賞家,又了解西方藝術史,在長期對中國古代藝術的研究中,一直關注中國當代藝術的發展狀況。在對中國當代藝術的探討中,張博士考察了中國書法與書寫這一文化背景與現象。在佛羅里達的展覽中,他從四個完全不同的角度選出四位藝術家。其中,邵岩是一位成功的書法家,也是成功地從書寫中尋找未來的藝術家,濮列平則是將漢字進行多維度藝術探索的藝術家,藍正輝的探索將中國的材料和工具用書寫的方式與西方的構成觀念進行有機結合,而一了展出的作品則屬于典型的觀念行爲書寫,他的作品總能引起人們對于自身存在狀況的聯想,顯示中西文化的交流和對話。

這個重要的展覽記録了現代和傳統的融合,是空前的中國藝術運動。藝術家以文化變化傳承、傳統的書法訓練爲基礎,來支撑起這個個性創造精神以及個體經驗影響,以尋求藝術的角色。

金董建平 香港藝倡畫廊主持人 2008年11月

Foreword

China is arguably the most dynamic country in the world today — economically, technologically and culturally. In only a few short years, as a result of market-oriented economic reforms, China's growth has outstripped that of any other nation on the planet. In 2001, China was inducted into the World Trade Organization, catapulting Beijing and Shanghai into economic stardom. Launching astronauts into orbit in 2003 sent a clear message to the world that China has indeed arrived at the forefront of science. Most recently, the 2008 Olympic Games led the way for tourism on a national scale, showcasing to the world the previously hidden treasures of this land and its people.

Recognizing the emergence of China as a global power, Florida Gulf Coast University sought to position its students, faculty and the broader region for even greater success on an international level. In September 2005, FGCU signed partnership agreements with Nankai University, one of China's finest institutions of higher education. Florida Gulf Coast University also encouraged the region's relationship with Yantai, China, a significant port city with a population of 6.5 million people and a diverse economy similar to Southwest Florida's that includes manufacturing, agriculture and tourism. In June 2006, Southwest Florida government and business officials signed a "Sister City" agreement with the City of Yantai. At the same time, the University established partnership agreements with

Yantai University and Binzhou Medical University.

Dr. Richard Pegnetter, dean of the Lutgert College of Business and interim president of FGCU, established the Institute of Chinese Studies (ICS) to foster these academic partnerships and to cultivate business and cultural relationships between Southwest Florida and the People's Republic of China. In addition to establishing student exchange programs and other joint academic programs, the ICS hosts academic and business delegations in the US and in China, and helped to establish and continues to host the Southwest Florida Chinese Language School, a popular not-for-profit organization dedicated to offering instruction in Chinese language and culture to Southwest Florida residents.

Florida Gulf Coast University's Institute of Chinese Studies initiated a discussion with Dr. Yiguo Zhang that has culminated in the visual and scholarly interpretation of a historically unprecedented development in China that has been spurred by the influx of Western influences. The *I Am in It: Contemporary Chinese Art Expressions* exhibition, this publication and related educational offerings focus on the work of fovr leading contemporary artists from the People's Republic of China: Shao Yan (Shandong Province), Yiliao (Henan Province), Lan Zhenghui (Guangdong Province), and Pu Lieping (Sichuan Province). These

accomplished artists have solid foundations in classical Chinese writing styles and have achieved significant fame professionally as traditionally-trained calligraphic artists. Now, in support of their individual creative spirits and influenced by their personal experiences with recent cultural changes, their work springs from traditional Chinese writing in favor of self-expression. The result is a powerful, surprising and exciting visual experience. Enjoy these masterworks.

Wilson G. Bradshaw, Ph.D.

President

Florida Gulf Coast University