

岩古水远

盛梅冰作品集

SELECTED PAINTINGS OF SHENG MEIBING

上海人民美術出版社

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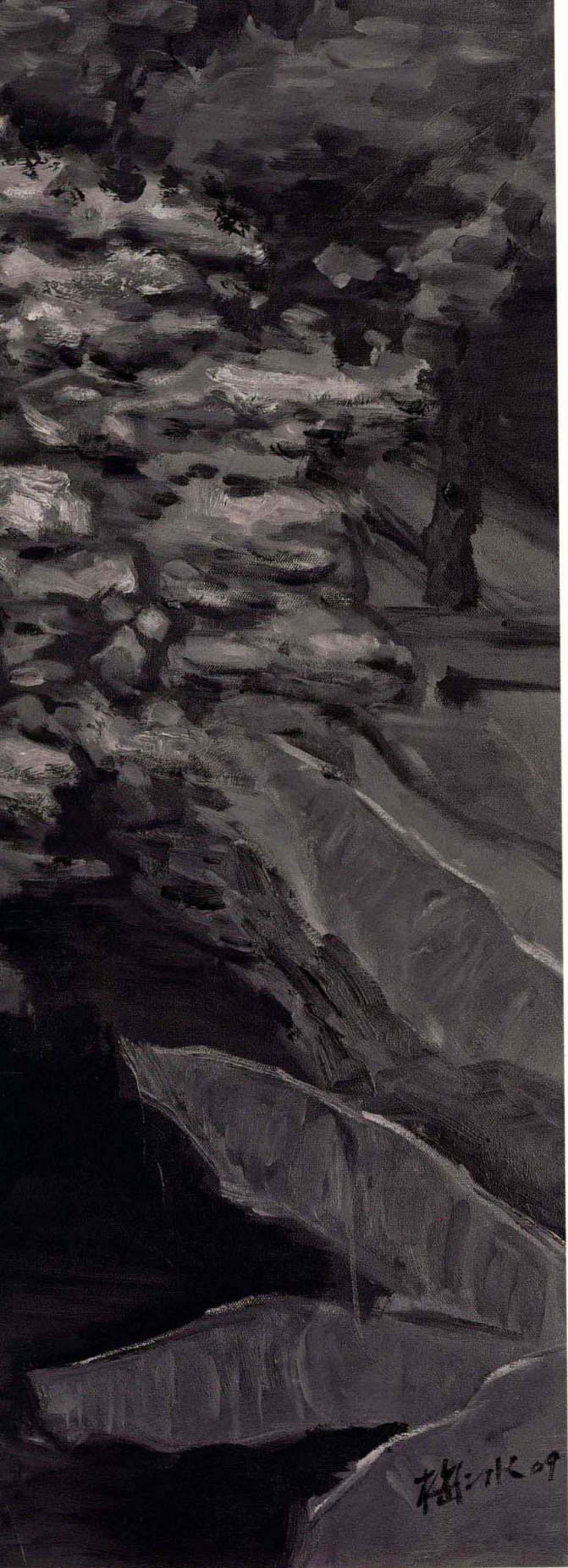
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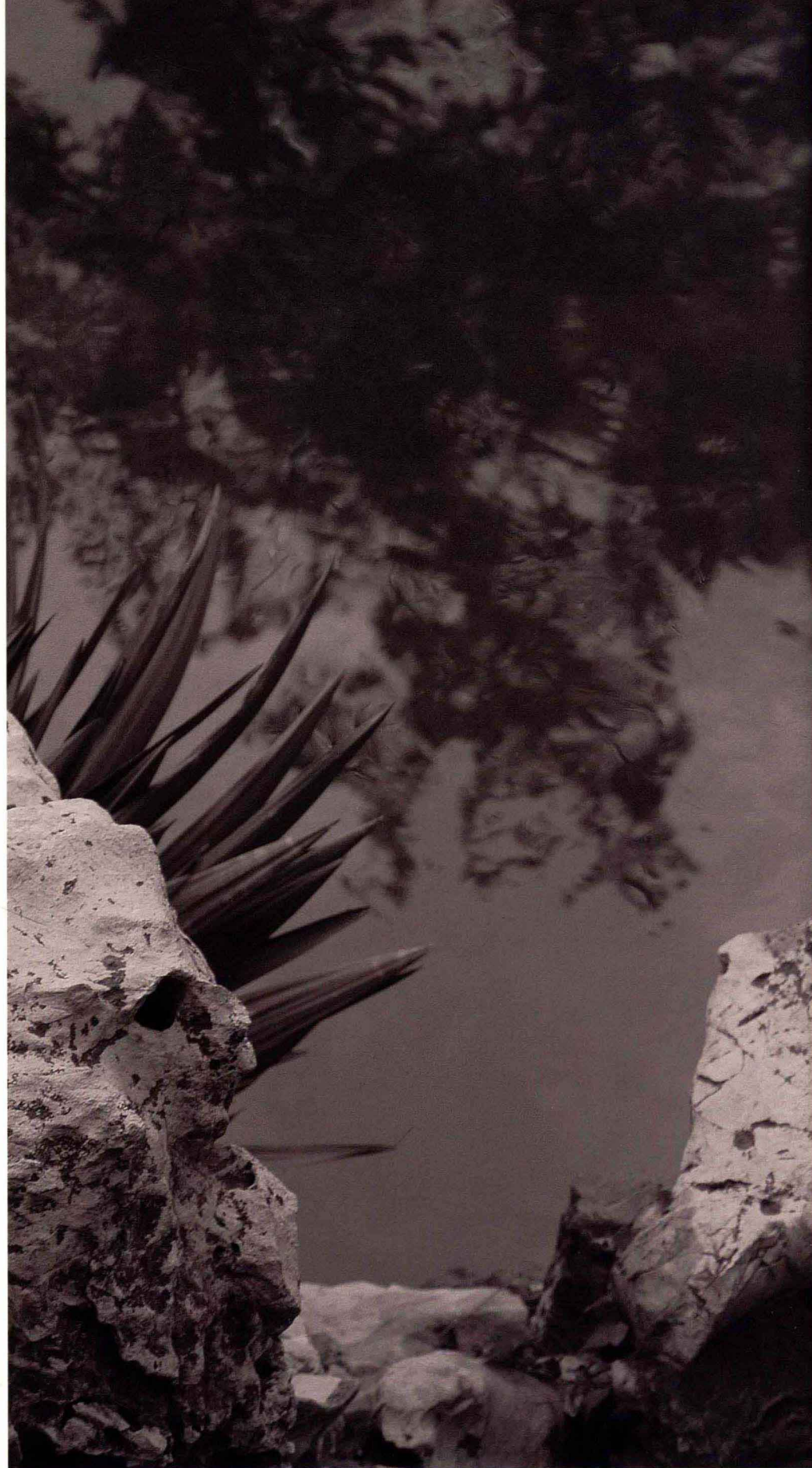
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对话与认同

文 / 曹意强

在现代开放的艺术世界里，艺术家无可避免地要面对后现代主义理论家称之为“双重解码”的困境。此“双重解码”具有横向与纵向的双向性。横向地看，任何画家必须处理其民族文化与世界艺术之间的关系，即其必须在世界艺术视野中工作。纵向地看，其必须处理自己的创作与传统的关系，亦即必须在传统的框架里从事当代创造。而这横向与纵向的“双重解码”又错综交织在一起。从某种程度来说，现代画家的成败全在此一举。现代主义艺术视革新为重中之首，可经过一个富有创造力的时期之后，不免会显露其弱点，一旦当革新走到尽头，难以设想更新的风格时，回归传统似乎成了唯一寻求的出路。后现代主义即此结果。然而，后现代主义是以某种玩世不恭的姿态挪用传统，并非旨在通过研究传统精华汲取其智慧。事实证明，任何时代的画家既在传统的框架里工作，又必然受其所处时代氛围的影响。

梅冰近年创作的一批油画具有奇特的后现代意味。他试图以流畅的油画技法来表达传统的中国古典精神。在人民美术出版社出版的《盛梅冰》画集（2008年）中所刊印的作品均体现了这种追求。一对男女，仿佛是我们学生时代所常见的中年男女，坐在自然形态的石桌旁，欣赏松、梅盆景，在高垣深墙、充满古意的环境中演绎了一场现在与过去的对话。其中，新近的历史与久远的时代，即体现于宋徽

宗《听琴图》的意境相神通。这也是中国古典诗意与现代油画语言的对话。梅冰出身于充溢着中国古典文学研习氛围的书香门第，他对中国古代世界及其文物有特殊的情结：秦汉漆器、唐宋雕刻、明清家具，对于他可谓是如数家珍，独具慧眼。除此之外，他也喜欢欣赏江南湖石与盆景，把玩文房四宝。这种爱好与兴趣不仅洋溢在他最近的作品中，而且提升了他的艺术品味。梅冰是一位现今难得的儒雅君子，其画如其人，我初见其作品时，就有如此印象。当时所见的《玉兰图》一画，素雅的色调，如诗般的白色花朵，创造了一种似花非花，不质不形的美妙意象。

梅冰1978年考入南京艺术学院油画系，1982年毕业后，在南京师范大学任教。在他学艺的岁月里，中国油画以前苏联写实风格为主导，列宾、苏里科夫的作品是当时的楷模，而《星火画报》则是画家们饥渴参照的唯一外国美术资料。我们所敬仰的前辈如靳尚谊、詹建俊等中国第三代油画家都是苏派传人，而我们江南习画者从留苏归国的全山石、徐明华等人那里领略到的是，苏派绘画的真谛：即重视素描明暗处理，强调写生与速写，关注色彩调子的和谐。梅冰学生时代的素描、油画与速写都旨在追求这些效果。

梅冰近年的油画探索显露出其另一个重要的师承关系。他的导师之一是中国第二代油画家的杰出代表苏天赐。如果说融合中西以创造鲜明的中国式油画



秋雨 |
布面油画 | Oil on canvas
2009 | 60cm x 50cm



昆石 | 高 40cm | 明代

是数代前辈的统一理想，那么苏天赐是迄今为止接近这个理想为数不多的画家之一，其作品充满中国艺术特有的诗情画意而不失油画媒质的特性。梅冰的油画颇具其师的笔韵。苏天赐画花，画的是花之韵、花之笔触。在他的画中，花即笔触，笔触即花，色即花，花即色，媒介、物象与意象熔为一炉，梅冰得其真传，且又在苏老浑然的色韵中参合些许印象主义和表现主义元素。梅冰今年画的《百合花》更如和风中白色仙女的轻舞，长方形的青瓷花瓶与浓重的绿色花叶团块起到稳定飞舞花朵的作用，使之动中寓静，凸现中国绘画的韵味，同时强化了油画的生动触感。

在与梅冰的私下交流中，我们经常探讨为何中国油画缺乏“油画味”的问题。从欧洲油画史上看，伟大的油画家都注重形体塑造的生命感、触感和色彩的音乐性，即充分发挥油画材质的美去塑造栩栩如生、仿佛有呼吸、有笔触、有音响的形体。康定斯基说，真正的油画作品往往令观者不禁想“抚摸”它，因为它具有生命与触觉，而雷诺阿说，他在绘画时，殚思竭虑地要使每一种色彩奏出高音。梅冰的近作在这些方面做出了可喜的努力，比之以前的作品更注重

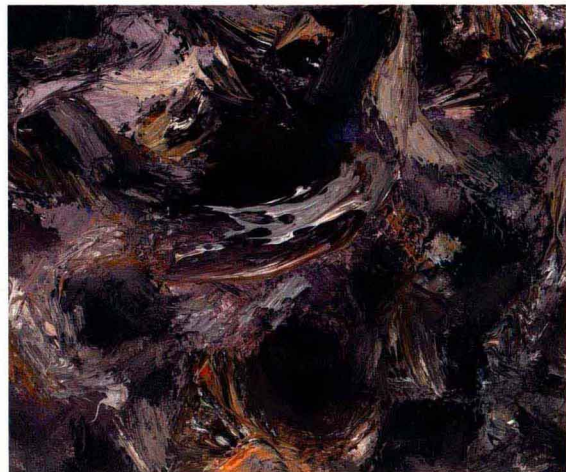
探究油画语言本身的魅力。《双松对话》便是一个突出的例证。在画面中，每一个物象：松枝、松叶、古朴的石桌、假山石、院门、院墙，以及点景人物，都是富有生命律动和音响乐感的笔触与色彩。在此，一如在《百合花》中，视觉和听觉通途变奏。以听通视，听声类形并非西洋美学独有，而我国古人也讲触、听两觉的相类通邮。孔颖达《礼记正义》对《礼记·乐记》的一段注解：“声音感动于人，令人心想其形状如此。”马融说的更明确：“尔乃听声类形，状似流水，又象飞鸿。泛滥溥漠，浩浩洋洋；长轡远引，旋复回皇。”我不知道梅冰是否有意识地在油画创作中寻求与这一传统通感说的联系，但观其近作，使我自然联想到这一点。

梅冰艺术的独特之处，在于以中国古典题材为引线探究油画的表现力。他在用以表达思古幽情的同时，把本不同位的载体与媒介融化一体，将之视为实验意笔油画的借口。例如，在《婴戏图》中，画家借用宋代风俗画戏童的动态与组合，表现似是而非的笔韵、光感和流动感，以呈现油画的“奶油味”。

梅冰在去年下半年神奇般地创作了一大批作



云起紫峰 |
布面油画 | Oil on canvas
2009 | 110cm x 130cm



云起紫峰(局部) |
布面油画 | Oil on canvas
2009 |

品，不同的画面可用一个主题加以概括，那就是“对话”。夜月独坐湖畔的茗茶者在与自然对话，月色枯树下的罗汉与猴儿对话，闲坐屏风前吸烟者与文房四宝对话，盘坐在冉冉香雾中的修行者与信仰对话，其他明显的对话场面不一而足。这对话其实是画家本人与两种不同传统——中国与西方，两个不同时间——当下与往昔的切切私语。依照流行的后现代话语，这是最具现代性的双重对话：一方面是对中国古典精神的现代阐释，另一方面是通过这个精神解码而把握外来油画的语言特质。在这个异质对话中，往昔化为现代，过去与现在，中国精神与西方意志相互超越，和谐相融。这一过程既使梅冰的古典品味得以升华，也促使我们能够从现代人的视觉角度去体味和联想构成中国古代情调特质，从运用外来的油画媒介加以表现的过程中，更为贴近波德莱尔所说的境界：“往昔之所以引人入胜，不仅仅因为艺术家可从中提炼对之而言乃属现时的美，而且恰恰因为它属于往昔，具有历史的价值。当下也是如此，我们从再现当下中获得乐趣，这不仅是由于当下可被赋予美，而且是由于其成为当下的本质特性。”

如果说梅冰上一本画册的主题是以人物为载体的现在与过去的对话，那么入选这本画册的作品所体现的对话媒介则是湖石，这是一种凝聚着中国古代文人趣味的艺术。我们知道，从宋代开始，文人就以石为题作画。他们崇拜奇石。据传米芾呼石为兄，清人郑燮步其后尘，认为“石也有灵，亦当为余首肯。”梅冰也爱石，苦心收藏，在他的画室和居室里摆设着其婉转多姿的藏品，他每天都在细心品味不同的石形、石质、石纹、石理。在他的心目中，这些奇石有骨有肉、有生命、有形式、有历史、有色彩、有笔触。清高兆《观石录》有一段形容石之皮相的话，也许可以概括梅冰对石的丰富体验：

凿山博取，而石之精者出焉。间有类玉者、琥珀者、玻璃、玳瑁、朱砂、玛瑙、犀若象焉者，其为色不同，五色之中，深浅殊姿。别有细者、縠者、绮者、縠者、葱者、艾者、黝者、黛者，如蜜、如酱、如鞠尘焉者，如鹰褐、如蝶粉、如鱼鳞、如鸬鹚斑焉者。旧传艾绿为上，今种种皆珍矣。其峰峦波浪，穀纹腻理，隆隆隐隐，千态万状。可仿佛者，或雪中叠嶂，或雨后遥冈；或月澹无



声，湘江一色；或风强助势，扬子层涛；或葡萄初熟，颗颗霜前；或蕉叶方肥，幡幡日下；或吴罗颭彩，或蜀锦攒文。又或如米芾之淡描，云烟一抹；又或如徐熙之墨笔，丹粉兼施。言夫奇幻，有不胜形。噫！亦异矣。夫土出之宝，无胜于玉。按王逸曰：“赤如鸡冠，黄如蒸栗；白如截肪，黑如纯漆。”而兹石之美，何必不然。又《滇志》：“点苍之石，白质青章，具山水草木之状。”今施诸屏风几榻，只一色耳，其精莹滑润不如也。由是观之，玄真备其采色，而不能得其波峦；点苍有其波峦，而不能如其采色。疑若帝遣鬼工，挟南海蚌泪之属，深入壘阿，雕镂点染而后然者。甚矣，造物化工，其不可思议至于如此也！

自然之石如画，画之至境如石。不独中国画家化石为艺，西方艺术家也莫不如此，从古希腊的雕刻家，到文艺复兴的米开朗基罗，直至现代雕刻家亨利·莫尔等，都将石头看作具有生命的形式，其任务就是把蕴涵于内的生命释放出来。

梅冰以石为主题作画，不仅体现了他深悟其所藏之石的自然之韵与文化内涵，而且以石为出发点探究油画的表现力，亦即这个题材为他提供了最佳借口去发挥油画的触感与张力。

全山石、靳尚谊等前辈油画家曾与我在私下经

常探讨为何中国油画缺乏油画应有的独特效果。靳尚谊指出了我们形体和边线处理的问题，全山石认为我们没有充分发挥色彩的表现力，而我想要补充的是我们没有注意油画笔触的触感问题。形体塑造、色彩表现和触感是造就欧洲油画的基础。在“边线与结构：靳尚谊油画中的欧洲传统和中国意境”一文中，我试图结合靳尚谊的艺术追求探讨欧洲油画的形态塑造传统，在为全山石今年出版的画册所撰的序言“饱满的笔触、交响的形色”中，在强调色彩的重要性时，我则着重论述了全山石油画“畅写”特质与由提香所开创的触觉价值的渊源关系。我认为，正是触感赋予了全山石的作品以耐人寻味的油画气韵，通过移情亦即与所表现的对象与媒介融合为一。

我猜想，梅冰画他所爱之石时，必定处于这样的心理状态：画家、石、颜料、笔，以及他的行动均相认同，你是我，我是你，没有分别。这种认同的境界都凝聚在梅冰以石为题的作品之中。观赏梅冰的近期油画，总让我想到亨利·莫尔的雕刻，这两者之间除了与石头有关，可以说没有什么相似之处，但之所以勾起这个联想，是因为它们之间有一种共同的看不见的东西：即其形体的发现仿佛不是通过视觉，而是经历心灵与身体的触摸而产生的触觉所发现的。

文艺复兴时代的雕刻吉贝尔蒂就谈到过这类本





冠云峰

布面油画 | Oil on canvas
2009 | 80cm x 60cm

体感觉的思想。莫尔以对其雕刻形体的“深刻感受”为起点进行创作，力图借助这些抽象的形式表达内在的生命力。他将之描述为“形体从内向外即将迸发的压力……试图让自身从内部的形体中解脱出来”的力量。我想，梅冰在石中感受到了这种力量并试图使之与绘画的行动和投射在画布上的形体、笔触相认同。他以雕刻映射身体的意念将莫尔吸引到骨头与化石之类有机物体之上，令观者感到它们是“所有生命形式的内在结构，它们的骨头是在从里面向外推；当其曲腿的时候，其膝盖就会在骨头表面变紧，而运动和能量正来源于此。”

没有比这段话能更恰当地引导我们去体验梅冰画册中的每一幅作品了，尤其是《冠云峰》这样的画。这种对话与认同不但使梅冰找到了其表现题材与媒介的合适交接点，更重要的是给予了他把自己对往昔文化的留恋和对现时的体验结合的恰当熔点。

往昔文化惟其有价值，就在于它能赋予我们智慧，使我们能够勇敢地面对现实的挑战。现在包含一切意在既包含过去又孕育未来。梅冰好古，但从泥古不化，他知道，古代文化与艺术乃是启迪灵智的盛宴，而这盛宴的殿堂只有一个，那就是现在。真正的画家必须认识这个现实，古今一切伟大艺术作品均无不由这样的现代性而存留史册。

曹意强 牛津大学博士 中国美术学院教授 《新美术》主编

Restriction and Creation

by Cao Yiqiang

Remarks on Meibing's recent paintings

It may be asserted that an environment that allows much freedom for artist is necessary for their prosperity. Freedom means more possibility and more individuality, but it could also mean more difficulties in making choices. On contemporary Chinese history, there was an era when artist had only restricted range of style choices, and had to compete with each other under established rules. Yet during this period standard for artistic quality were widely recognized and were shared by many. Artists were quite certain as to what action they should take as well as potential response they would receive. Meibing and I are of the same age, both belong to the generation that has lived to see great changes in Chinese art world for the past few decades. We feel the sharp contrast between old and new era, when artist are presented with different quests and were pushed into different choices.

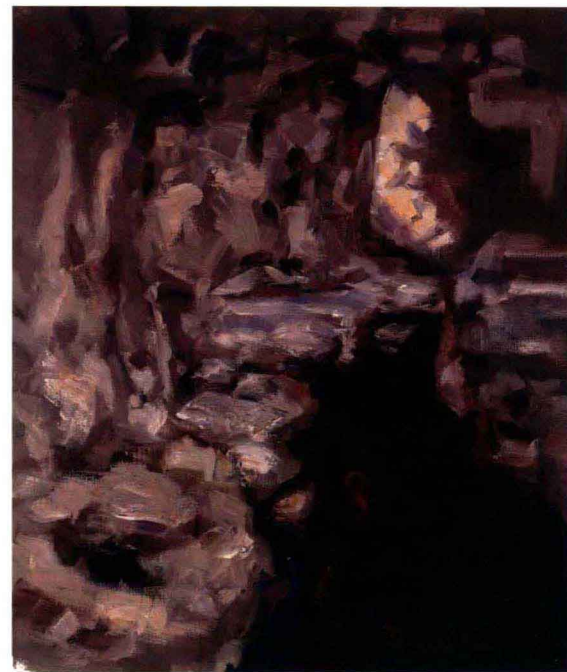
As professor of Nanjing Normal University, Meibing studied Oil Painting at Nanjing Academy of Arts from 1978 to 1982. At that time, realistic style promoted by former Soviet Union dominated the art world in China. Works of Ilya Y. Repin and Vasilii I. Surikov were established as official models, and Xinghuo Magazine was the only source where we could find reprints of paintings to imitate. Domestic painters whom are widely respected, such as Jin Shangyi and Zhan Jianjun, all followed Soviet manner. Students from south China also learned Soviet manner through Quan Shanshi, Xu Minghua --- they were both trained in former Soviet Union. We learned to do correct tonal sketches, make quick studies from life and render our colours in harmony. These qualities we can clearly see from sketches and paintings Meibing did during

his student days.

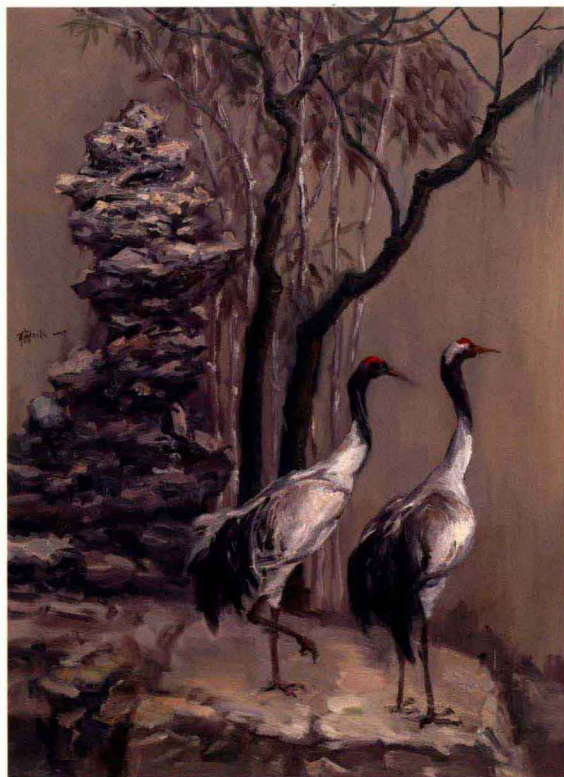
The so-called Soviet Style has its origin in French Impressionism. In 1977 an exhibition of French Impressionists was held in Shanghai. Young painters who were eager to see original works of Western painting had their first chance to face masterpieces of Manet, Pissarro and Sisley. The impact is so great that all of us, include Meibing, had to some extent changed our way of expression. For a period Meibing paid more attention to subtle variation of colour and glazing, his sketch also got bolder. The influence of the exhibition had left its mark on his work of this period.

In those years, artists in China still worked in more or less isolated state, thus showed a uniform tendency in their style. Personality and individuality suffered, but rigorous standard for quality established. With a uniform canon one could easily make judgment on art work.

We are now living in a time when personality is highly praised. Many artists mistakenly regard highly personalized expression as primary element of artistic creation. In fact, personality will always leave traces even on work of imitation. Throughout his life Manet had tried to imitate Velasquez, yet he made an unmistakable Manet out of Velasquez. Some modern masters with extraordinary style had been imitating old masters diligently. Among them abstract expressionist Pollock imitated El Greco, Freud admired Chagall. Imitation would not smear one's own manner. Personality and style are neutral elements. We can not judge art on these elements. Personality and style are inherited. They are like wild horses, and good artist reins horses, not indulging them. Through imitation of old



环秀山庄 |
布面油画 | Oil on canvas
2009 | 60cm x 50cm



冬日 |

布面油画 | Oil on canvas
2009 | 140cm x 100cm

masters, good artist learns to rein his personality so as to attain ideal quality. Too much care for one's own style has nothing to do with loyalty for art. Some artists have misunderstood Romantic proclamation that artist shall be loyal to his instinct. They blindly promoted their individuality and tried everything to pursue exceptional styles, only to find themselves lost, their loyalty for art in vain. Loyalty for art is constant challenge to oneself, to one's theme and media, and the courage one technique of expression. According to Wen Xin Diao Long, our ancestor had set up "three criteria" for literature criticism, in which "emotion", "theme" and "technique" could be respectively interpreted as inspiration, object and way of expression. Emotion changes with theme, while technique conform emotion. "Language must consider emotion, while emotion must in accordance with event (things); these three elements should conform each other and never interfere with each other." These remarks on literature are also true on painting. Nowadays artists can no longer keep the balance of the three principles. They pursue new for new's sake, or they painstakingly render details without emotion.

One problem of our time is that we have so few striking works. Artists seem to have lost their sensitivities. Meibing, however, has never forgotten the "three criteria". He draws inspiration from nature and trains his sense. The result can be seen in his works that were completed in snowy days of 2008. In order to fix his inspiration and what he senses on canvas, Meibing has thoroughly studied history of oil technique and theory of colour. He has been particularly nourished by Titian, Rembrandt, Cézanne and Modigliani. In 1993 Meibing visited the United States and spent a lot of time studying old masters in

museums. He held his one man exhibition soon, showing a series of landscape which were sold out immediately. The combination of 18 century Italian landscape and French Impressionism, plus Cézanne's treatment of space and structure, gave his work a special touch. Perhaps he failed to realize that his work, with slightly unsteady composition, solemn and cold tones, suggested the same mysterious, stern and weird expression seen in Goya and El Greco's work. This uncanny and delicate atmosphere also characterized Meibing's work of photography. Human expression and surrounding objects were fixed instantly in the dramatic world of light, which was only to be caught by sensitive eyes. Like his painting, these photographs are also works of art with independent aesthetic value.

Admitting the limitations of traditional media, Meibing never gave up easel painting. For him creativity does not necessarily mean "brand new", rather it means the ability to coordinate elements harmoniously and to create a new way of overcoming old difficulties. However, since China entered a new era, many artists have lost in a bewildering world of possibilities. Since Xu Beihong's time, Chinese artists had long cherished the ideal of nationalized oil painting. On one hand, the ideal had encouraged artists to explore the possibility of coordinating eastern and western artistic elements. On the other hand, it had also encouraged the narrow minded nationalism. The artists inevitably fell in predicament of so called "double coding" They have to work within the complex of national identity, globalization and cultural context of tradition. The revolutionary creativity of Modernism has exhausted, it then feel the need to turn back to tradition. Yet the postmodernism abused tradition in a cynical way. In fact, artists

would always bare marks of his own time while working in the framework of tradition.

There is an unusual atmosphere of postmodernism in Meibing's recent works. With fluent oil technique, he expressed traditional Chinese spirit. The couple under his brush reminds us the daily scene from childhood. They sat at a stone table, appreciating potted pines and plums. The surroundings took an air of antiquity, from which we can feel the dialogue between past and present, between Chinese classic poeticism and modern oil technique. This atmosphere could be traced back to Emperor Huizong's Appreciating Qin Music in Song Dynasty. Meibing, born in a family of intellectuals and was well educated in classic literature, has special affiliation to artifacts left from the past. His appreciation for lacquerware of Qing and Han dynasties, sculpture and carving of Tang and Song dynasties and furniture of Ming and Qing dynasties streams out naturally from his heart. Besides he is also quite familiar with desk items literati used to surround their studio. Recently these objects became repeated theme of his painting. Meibing is a gentleman who cherishes virtues that are rare to see in these days. The first time I saw his Yulan magnolia, which depicted white, poetic flowers with tranquil, elegant colours, I immediately had the feeling that the painting is just like the artist.

It is worth saying that Meibing has studied under supervise of Su Tianci, the distinguished painter who enjoy nation wide reputation. If nationalization of oil painting is ever to be realized, than Su Tianci is one of the few artists who are close to that ideal. He succeeded in presenting poetic quality of Chinese art tradition with the media of genuine oil technique. Meibing resembles his teacher in this respect. In recently painted work "Lily", the flowers and brushwork interact so with each other that we can hardly identify the moment when strokes switch into objects. Though inherited the manner of Su Tian-

ci, there are elements of Impressionism and Expressionism in Meibing's work. The square porcelain vase and thick greenish leaves add sense of stability to the composition, counterbalanced the stirring movement of flowers. The work shows clearly characters of Chinese tradition, but the pictorial surface certainly gives strong feeling of tactility.

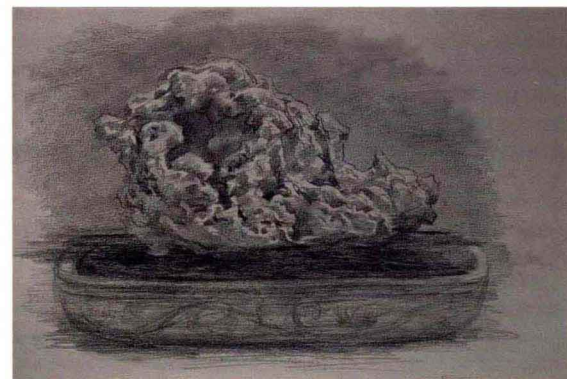
In my private conversation with Meibing, a repeated topic is why domestic painters often failed to present "the genuine character of oil painting". Turning our eyes to history, we questioned real masters of the media for what they had in common. They are all concerned with the vitality and tactility of form and modeling, and they all care about a music-like character of colours. That is to say, they all drive the best out of the media to create vivid, breathing, touchable and music like forms. Kandinsky once said a good painting lured one to reach out for it, for it does have vitality and tactility. Renoir in another case said that he always struggles to tune each colour to the highest degree. Meibing made particular effort to explore the oil language in his recent works. The best of these is "Communication between Two Pines", in which every single image, branches, leaves, old stone table, rockeries, gate and wall of garden, as well as people, are all beating with rhythm of vitality and tactility.

To describe form by analogy with sense of hearing is a method that has long been practiced by both Chinese and European artist. In his annotation of Music Chapter of the Book of Rites, Kong Yingda argued that "music could move people and let them imagine the form" Ma Rong went even further by declaring that "when we hear the sound, there comes in mind the image of water, or a flying swan; the water vast and mighty, the swan fluttering back and forth." I'm not sure if Meibing willingly made use of



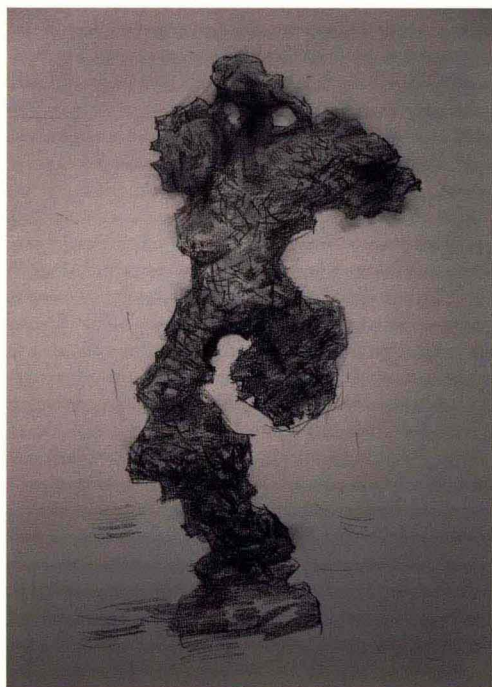
瑞云峰 |

布面油画 | Oil on canvas
2009 | 50cm x 60cm



英石 |

素描 | Sketch
20cm x 30cm



供石 |
素描 | Sketch
30cm x 20cm

the transformation of senses, but his new works certainly reminds me so.

The distinctive character of Meibing's art lies on his exploration of oil media through traditional Chinese themes. In *Playing Children*, the artist borrowed a motif from Song dynasty genre painting, and fully explored the "cream like" texture of oil painting.

It's amazing for Meibing to complete so much works in the past six months. The main theme of these works is "dialogue". The man who sit alone at lakeside sipping tea is having dialogue with nature; The arhat under the moon and withered tree is having dialogue with monkeys; The man enjoying his leisure aside an screen is having dialogue with items in the studio; The monk sitting cross-legged in a cloud of incense is having dialogue with his belief. These in fact can be seen as representation of artist's dialogue between Chinese culture and Western culture, past and present. Equipped with good knowledge of classicism, Meibing can put Chinese tradition into contemporary framework, and find the best expression with oil technique.

Only those who have good understanding of history, and those who accept and respect the limitations of media could possibly bring out the best of oil painting. Limitation will not harm art, on the contrary, it is necessary and nourishing for art. T. S. Elliot nominated Dante, Shakespeare and Goethe as three poets whose influence spread far beyond their language to reach every corner of the world. Those three create like God, and sublime humanity manifest through their work. Dante completed *Divine Comedy* with a pray:

*O Light Supreme, that dost so far uplift thee
From the conceits of mortals, to my mind
Of what thou didst appear re-lend a little,*

*And make my tongue of so great puissance,
That but a single sparkle of thy glory
It may bequeath unto the future people.*

Dante knew well that unlimited creation, that is to say, the ability of creating out of nothing, is God's privilege. All our mankind can do is no more than humble supplements for what God has created. Man can only work with what has already existed, by way of changing and coordinating, so as to make. Thus creation does not mean cheap, unrestricted new ideas. It is a restricted activity by itself. In art world, what we call creativity or originality has to satisfy two seemingly contradict requirements. On one hand an artist has to break the canon in genius way to be praised for his creativity, while on the other hand his new proposal would sooner or later become new canon. In other words, creation starts with extraordinary thought, but end with wide acceptance. Unlimited individuality is eccentricity rather than creativity. Obviously Meibing has already realized all these, though, like other artists of our time, he enjoys great freedom at work. Recently, Meibing started to pay more attention to the art of portraiture. This is a new challenge he put for himself, but with great conscious of the relation between creation and restriction, Meibing can be expect to reach a new height in the near future.