



美国当代油画艺术

CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN
OIL PAINTING



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序

当今的艺术，不能不关注美国。这并不是仅仅因为美国已成为世界文化艺术的中心或者形成主流，而是任何艺术形式以及艺术形态的出现都源于一个相当简单的原因即她的时代性。

时间改变着我们的思考和接受新事物的心态。长期以来，我们对美国油画艺术的了解大多集中在几位当世著名者。自然这于我们一贯的思维心态有关。这部《当代美国油画艺术》画集的收集和出版使我们有机会把视线从诸多大师身上移开，从一个较之广泛的领域和角度感受一番美国绘画艺术普遍的发展形态；留心体察这些画家在创作中各具本原的创造潜能，社会背景和文化精神。当把时代性放在广泛的、普遍的意义上去感受时，更多地展现给我们的是一种单纯平实和直截了当。我们与广泛相关，才会接近著名。曾记起十年前，一位深具实力的画家在考察许多大师和作品后，深切地呼喊道：我（们）达到大师已极具可能。十年后，又一位移居美国的朋友对我讲：当时他初到美国，在画廊里经常见到一位相当平常的画家的作品，而今，这位画家却成为美术博物馆所瞩目的大师。两位画家朋友的两段感受，证明的问题十分简明扼要。

也许这部画集并不能完整的概括当今美国油画艺术的全貌，但很明确，编辑者的用意企图是很潜在的。

随着绘画跨越了漫长的艺术进程之后，我们已经不自觉地就适应了新时代的精神而带来和产生的惊心变化。极少主义、形式主义、过程艺术、波普艺术、抽象艺术、概念艺术等等。一个又一个观念变化以及流派诞生于美国和西方，却影响极为广泛。我们无法明确我们自身就属于什么，也无法掌握思想在那一瞬间接受了什么。而艺术进入后现代、超前卫、新意象等等思潮中，艺术的词汇、概念又变得散乱繁杂、模糊不清；潮流的脉络也变得纷乱纠结了，因其繁衍出更多难以捉摸的新的陌生面孔。谁是主流文化，谁是边缘，谁会由支流成为主流，谁之地域会成为艺术的中心。越来越难以预测。

我们在历史和现实双重的觉悟中预示到整体的人类文化越来越进入到一个多元性的文化格局，艺术的大环境，愈发受之经济制度和文化制度的牵扯与抗衡；杂乱不固定的文化分配必然是艺术的各自游离，而为艺术家的个性表现提供了更广大、更自由的天地。但无论如何关注自身、关注生命本原与艺术的连结才是尤为使我们时时牵挂的。

一本著作里曾有一句明白的话：不要变成一位艺术家，要做为艺术家。做为艺术家，似乎象做个男人和做个女人那般自然，是不经刻意思索的生命状态。一个男人不知什么时候，不知怎样就学会了吸烟。完全是一种自自然然的过程。渐渐有人会成为习惯；有人会改变习惯；有人会吸烟成瘾甚至上瘾，而成为生命中不可缺少的部分。一种嗜好会给生命里注入内容，会使生命同它建立起一种必须，成为一种真实的存

在。这种比喻虽然平常渺小，却十分平白的道出人和艺术的本源关系。当绘画成为一个人的嗜好时，体验一旦深厚，绘画就是生就的骨头，造成的肉。顺其天性，方得其发达。而那欲变成艺术家的人，则对这种生命中诞生的创造力，望尘莫及。

艺术家的形态愈单纯，艺术与其本质就愈近。画集里这些艺术家懂得善待自己，自尊、自爱。他们都是紧紧抓住了自己生命中的血脉固守不放，捕捉偶然的发现而炼就广大。如象卡罗琳喜欢以讲故事的方式来展示所好；彼德·德雷尔喜欢彻底的荒谬，就在画面中极力搜捉虚无的气氛；塔尔·沃马顿则喜欢象征……。总之，作品就象他们的脸一样，能让你深记他们的不同。芸芸众生中确有某种隐匿在生命的内核中影响着我们每个人的个性，不管我们是否在意。这与创造相关。

我们与画集里的艺术家生活方式和哲理观念的确因地而异。地域、政治和社会气候，使我们在这样的环境中，无法苟同一个国家一个民族、一个人所持有的个人意志，而为此无形中也我们的个性塑造起来。尤为当今，艺术走向一个个人语言方式的时代，心态、状态等等在微妙中可将一切改变。我们的所想使我们成为今天的样子，我们的所能也将使艺术成为我们所做的样子。艺术愈发成为纯属个人的事情，使艺术成为一种冒险，也可是一场恶做剧，是一番孤独，也可是不可解释的咒语，完全以个人主观体验的创造，我们将越来越无法可寻。每个艺术家的经验都属个案性，当我们深入其中就会感到与其参与的权力会越来越来少。于他于己都无从参照。唯一的出路归于创造。

天才的艺术家能够向我们提供比天才更多的东西，优良的作品仍更需具领悟的人来赏释。走近这些艺术家幻想的领地，体感不同艺术家的经验，相信我们不无启示。我们自己的生活、背景和出身，这些都紧紧地跟随着我们，我们只要遵守生态的平衡对生命持有创造的欲求，艺术的鲜生活力与生命之间一定会在某段时空中产生必然。我们就会离艺术太远。

用如此多的文字为这部画集作序，必然把绘画形容得复杂，而力足深刻但全非也。我画画多年，总是想说绘画是简单的，而且是有性情滋味的。不成想又误会一次。全当画集的扉页。再次感激吉林美术出版社和编辑张学杰先生为读者推出的一本好书以及对我的信任。

贾海非

1999.5.8

Preface

In Art today we shouldn't ignore America. It's not simply that the United States has become a world center for art and culture and source of current trends, but that the emergence of any art form or concept is simply a reflection of the present era.

Our attitude toward and acceptance of the new changes with the times. For many years our understanding of American oil painting focused on a few contemporary masters. Naturally this has had a bearing on our conception of current art. This collection, *Contemporary American Oil Painting* features works that give us an opportunity to shift our perspective away from these masters. By taking into account the full scope of contemporary American painting, we can sense its overall pattern of development. Each artist's creation when carefully considered reveals the influences of society, culture and creative drive. What becomes most evident in the current idiom when viewed broadly is its simplicity and directness. Only by being involved in the broader scene can we hope to achieve greatness. I remember ten years ago there was a very promising Chinese painter who left for the U.S. to seek out these modern masters. After studying their paintings he felt optimistic that his own artistic achievements would reach their level. Ten years have past and another Chinese painter who had emigrated to America told me that while visiting art galleries he would often run across a certain artist's rather unexceptional paintings. Since then this same artist has become famous and attracts serious attention from museum curators. The experiences of these two artists illustrate this point.

Though this book can't provide a complete and comprehensive overview of American oil painting, it's representation is accurate and fulfills the intent of the editors.

As we skim over years of artistic progress, taking in its evolution and recent developments, we subconsciously adapt to the astonishing changes engendered by the modern spirit. Theories change with each new artistic movement that emerges from the West. We've witnessed the rise of Minimalism, Formalism, Pop, Abstraction, Conceptualism among others. Yet their influence is far reaching. We are left with no means to identify where we belong and cannot be expected to embrace and absorb at a moment's notice each and every ideology that comes along. As art progresses along post-modern, avant-garde, new imagist, etc. trends of thought, the vocabulary of art and artistic concepts change at a baffling rate. The lines along which artistic ideas progress have become irresolvably tangled. How can we stay abreast of this protean art scene? How can we distinguish the main trends from the minor ones? Which among these will end up on the art world's center stage? It's increasingly difficult to predict.

We can see from the past and the world around us a trend toward pluralism in world culture. The art world must function within cultural and economic systems. That these are in disarray certainly has an alienating effect on the arts. On the other hand, the effect may be one of broadening the scope of artistic activity and allowing more artistic freedom. We should in any case concern ourselves primarily with art as it relates to our inner lives.

I recall reading this apt statement: Don't become an artist, be an artist. It should come as naturally as being a man or a woman; a state of being that owes nothing to self-determination. Consider for example smoking cigarettes. Who gives

serious thought to how or when to take up this habit? Those who take it up do so in accordance with their inclinations. As habits form, so can they change. Some can kick a habit while for others it becomes an addiction that weaves itself into the pattern of their existence. In the same way, a passion can be inseparable from one's life, indispensable to one's existence. This illustrates the essential relationship of art to the artist. When painting is one's passion, practise and experience quickly yield mastery. Painters must follow their inclinations in order to develop. But those who have the idea of "becoming" an artist try in vain to acquire a creative instinct.

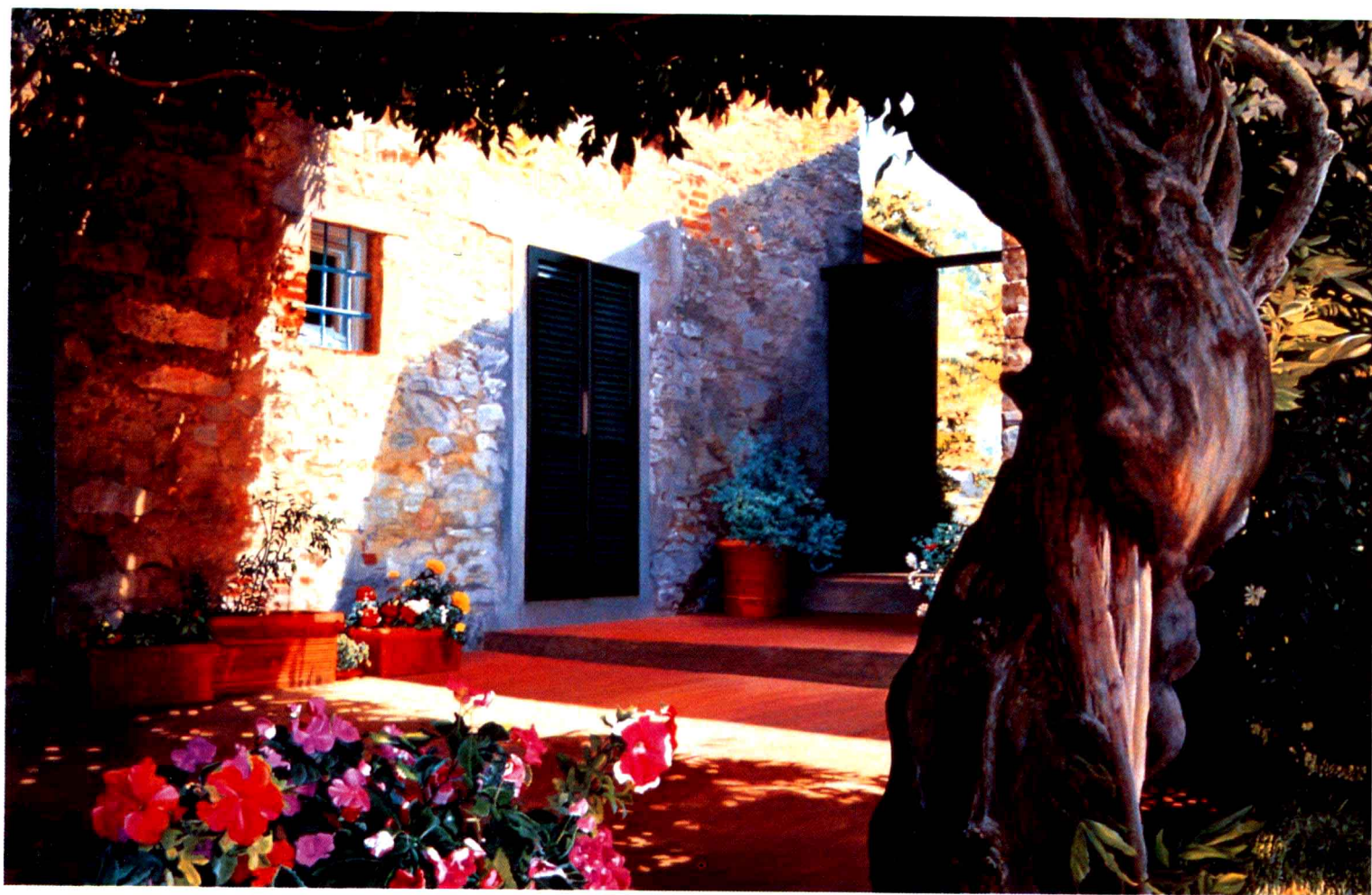
The more fundamental an artist is in spirit, the closer his art will be to his innate self. The artists featured here understand and respect this innate self and its influence on their art. They give free rein to their creative instincts drawn from this inner well-spring and invite the chance discoveries which broaden their means of expression. This is evident in the works of artists such as Carolyn Singh whose paintings reveal her affinity for the narrative idiom. Peter Drake's preposterous juxtapositions loom like roadsigns marking his search through a psychological void. Tal Walton's work reveals his inclination toward the symbolic. In short, memorable paintings, like faces, impress us with their distinctive features. The key to our personalities is hidden at the core of our being which, without our being conscious of it, ultimately finds expression in our art.

Our life styles and ideologies as with those of the artists represented here differ with our respective localities. Regional, political and social variance precludes us from subscribing to the agenda of any particular country, people or individual. The environment leaves its mark on our individual characters, especially in an era dominated by the individual idiom. Our world is subtly altered by our moods and states of mind. We are the sum of our mental activity. Skill allows us to express ourselves through art. Art becomes purely a matter of the individual, manifesting itself perhaps as an exploration, a solitude, a mute incantation, or even a joke, each creation the result of the artist's subjective search. But such investigations are unlikely to produce any unifying theory. Each artist's experience is a uniquely personal proposition. We find we have a diminishing hand in its determination. We haven't practical means to confer amongst ourselves. We can only respond through creative effort.

Gifted artists provide more than genius. Their work deserves a knowledgeable public to appreciate them. Experiencing the richly diverse imaginative worlds of these artists is enlightening. We each have our own lives with different backgrounds and origins. As long as we observe balance in our lives and maintain our desire to create, we will continue to enjoy renewed artistic vitality and the muse will remain always at our side.

Using so many words here on the question of painting is bound to make it sound complicated. Perhaps I have digressed. I mean to say that painting is simple and possesses character. I'm grateful to Jilin Fine Arts Publishing House and Editor, Zhang Xuejie, for bringing to the reader such a fine book and for their trust in me.

Jia Difei
May, 1999



鲜花装点的院子 艾丽斯·多尔顿·布朗 油彩 画布 132x203cm 1995
Patio with Flowers Alice Dalton Brown oil on canvas 52"x80"



秋之遐想 艾丽斯·多尔顿·布朗 油彩 画布 66x94cm 1997

Autumn Reverie Alice Dalton Brown oil on canvas 26"x37"

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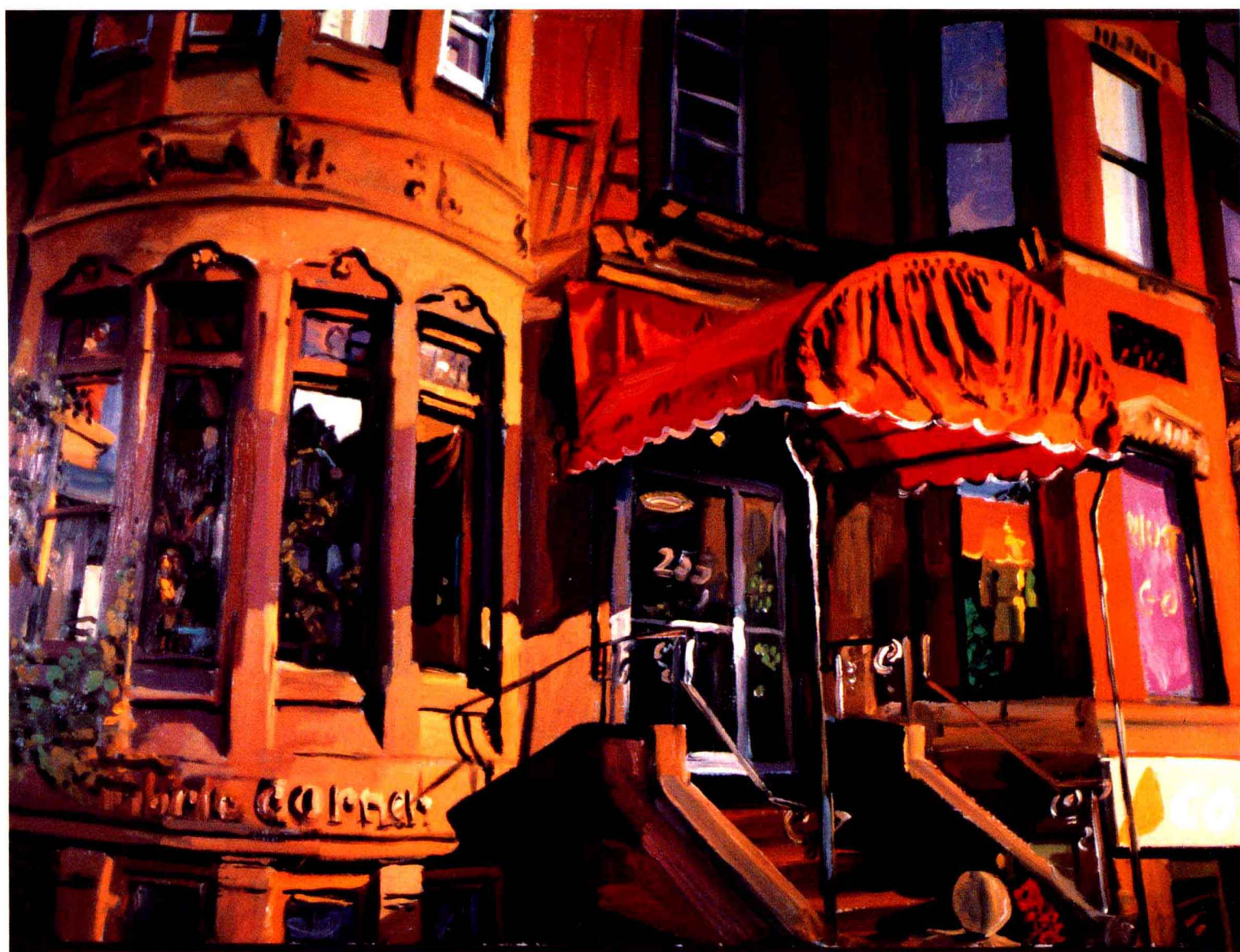
午后的宁静 艾丽斯·多尔顿·布朗 油彩 画布 114x178cm 1998
Afternoon Calm Alice Dalton Brown oil on canvas 45"x70"



记忆中的家 利·本克 油彩 板 46x107cm 1997
Memory Abode Leigh Behnke oil on panel 18"x42"



横跨西部 利·本克 油彩 板 51x132cm 1997
Passage West Leigh Behnke oil on panel 20"x52"



必须走 乔治·尼克 油彩 画布 76x102cm 1996
Must Go George Nick oil on canvas 30"x40"



老贵妇 乔治·尼克 油彩 画布 102x102cm 1988
Dowager George Nick oil on canvas 40"x40"



巴黎系列画：圣洁曼 格伦·汉森 油彩 板 61x61cm 1996
Paris Series: Saint Germain Glen Hansen oil on panel 24"x24"