

当代艺术家个案丛书
CONTEMPORARY ARTIST SERIES

静

Mindfulness

夜

Mystery

白明物语

Bai Ming's Metaphor

思

Philosophy

广东美术馆
GUANGDONG MUSEUM OF ART

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静·夜·思——白明物语

罗一平（广东美术馆馆长）

白明的作品有一种极致的雅，雅中的温和源自艺术家自身的“大儒”。

白明的作品有一种极致的静，静中的禅定源自艺术家的自律和修为。

白明的作品有一种超然的心性，飘渺而玄远的意境源自艺术家在世俗中的举重若轻。在看轻一事物时，他知道摆脱，在看重一事物时，他知道执著。

白明的作品有一种极致的东方情怀，哲思中透露的文人气质，在纷繁的当代艺术表现中，恬静地展现出一种源自传统的，跨越时空的，永恒审美。他成名于油画，是中国当代陶瓷集大成者。他在创作中不断地自我超越，却将审美精神浸泡在中国传统的文脉之中。他的作品无论水墨、装置，都能在当代语境下儒雅而含蓄地表达出古典东方精神中的禅宗哲思和道家意境，其中独具的性格可用李白的一首著名的诗名——《静夜思》来概括。

一、静

我认为白明作品中呈现的静有如禅宗中的定。禅宗的第一层定境所追求的是身心的宁静。白明的作品用色极为清雅，浓淡虚实的墨色与大块留白所构成的空间感，营造出一种不近喧闹的沉淀的气质。线的语言干净而洗练，起伏折转被不断地重复、叠加直至纯粹，蕴含着动中的静。附于瓷光洁肌理之上的陶的皱褶和手工的痕迹，是高贵之中藏匿着的朴素，有着“机锋”般的睿智——禅宗的修养。这种温雅而含蓄的语言，将其对生命和艺术的体悟以大型若缺之形，直指人心。《坛经·坐禅品》中曾提及：“何名禅定？外离相为禅，内不乱为定……外禅内定，是为禅定。”白明的作品外在表现出一种收敛的张力，而其内在则追求一种能抵抗岁月侵蚀的更为持久的本质——恰如人性与时间的关系，外禅而内定。他敬畏时间，将时间视为一种隐喻的语言——历史沉淀中动态的静态表达。而这种敬畏，并不展现为人在时间中的脆弱，而是以一种“中庸”即“合

度”的心态，呈现出温绵、柔韧的心性。他的陶瓷作品瓷质温润如玉，造型简洁、明快、素雅，具有水一样的韵律，单纯中不乏精致、巧美，充分地表现出形的变化和瓷质的品格，蕴含着优雅和刚柔结合的儒家文化气质，是古典的诗性的表现，具有中国传统文化“把玩”的美学意味。

这样的作品是让人留念的，是让人不忍离去而反复思考的。白明是定的，不盲从，不随流，所以他作品的灵性带有禅定的修行；白明是思想者，所以作品才有与生命对话时的倾听。

二、夜

我用夜来定义白明作品中的一种虚清神秘的意境，因为这种意境悠远而隐逸，它和夜的朦胧神秘悠远又十分的相近，而道家的思想恰恰表达的就是一种玄远。白明的陶瓷在造型上具有道家文化“朴素”、“自然”和“玄远”的审美特征，其系列作品《器——形式与过程》着重张扬的是一种自然生命本身在合规律的运动中所表现出来的自由精神。在这一系列作品中，文化意识与材料运用有机的结合，使道家“玄远”抽象的表达方式和现代体验的意向图式结合为一体，形象和意义构成了完整的比喻关系。同时，他的作品兼有东方性的抽象。今道发信曾经描述过这样一种美：根据说不清的事，理解能说清的事，由此而发现鉴赏的实质，这种大的沉默……以“无”支撑“有”的象征充分表达了东方思想。在白明创作中，这两者是统一的。抽象是主体意识对客观世界过滤和纯净之后的非具象表现。东方的抽象经历了从形象到象征的过程，白明的抽象中有对自然、山河神秘而变化的写意，也有对天人关系的思考。似有象而实无，在虚静间营造出一种玄远的意境。虚静，在于抽象性语言内敛而含蓄的表达，有言之不尽却余音绕梁的情趣。而玄远又体现为作品主题的超然，于社会性激辩的主题之外，回归到对自然、万物、宇宙的思考，对自我内心和情感的观照。它肃静不媚俗，却让人有一种未可名状的感动，它简单却不单薄，又有一种可以生出万端变化的想象。这是

一个人丰富的情感，也是一个人单纯的理想。

三、思

思则是哲思，是白明作品中幽冥的灵感。在他《参禅——形式与过程》的系列中，结构简洁，形式纯粹，随意卷起的泥片所形成的自然肌理形态给人的视觉提供了极大的可视性和神秘感，流线的韵律和团块的扭转中似乎寓示着某种逃离现实喧嚣和躁动的情感，显示出一种东方文化特有的参禅的时间意识，那些神秘的短线刻痕暗示着某种内心的迷径，而所有作品整体的组合又似乎是在重塑当代人的存在意识和生存观念——人生如参禅。参禅的本质是直达生命的真谛，对白明来说，每一件作品的创作过程都是参禅，其目的都是表达他对人生最真实的感受，这也许是白明将这组作品取名为《参禅——形式与过程》的本意。它不仅是指作品本身，也是指他所理解的“参禅”方式，更是指他理解的人生方式。

没有变化的作品不具有现代性语义，然而没有思想的作品，则难有生命力成为经典。白明的作品中有着广泛深刻的人文性思考，对于艺术自身的发展更有着自己独立的态度。当中国当代陶艺开始探索自身发展之时，虽将传统技法与当代观念相结合，然而在审美判断上依然在东方与西方、古典与现代的矛盾中摸索着。白明选择了向传统精神寻找审美渊源。他将这种历史文脉当中的文化心理的共识，沿着其自身逻辑向前发展，使传统中精粹的民族性成为其艺术作品展现于当代世界平台中的独立的个性。他对传统的工艺技法和形式语言潜心钻研；他追求物质媒介自身表达的极致；他放任香火燃烧宣纸的痕迹，水墨的交融，陶土延展自身的纹理……如果说杜尚的《泉》消解了艺术原有的边界，颠覆了艺术的传统，那么白明的“物语”则是一种对传统的继承和扩写，对东方精神的回望和致敬。当代之下，未尝不可有隐喻的表达；手工与材质间交流所传递出的自然朴素的气质也有机械化无法取代的语言中的古雅……这样的思辨在白明的作品中形成了一家之言。

此次由广东美术馆主办的“静·夜·思——白明物语”展览是首次对白明艺术的整体性呈现。穿插的水墨、油画、陶瓷、装置所构成独立的静、夜、思、诗四个主题，多样性地展现了白明艺术内在的文化性和一脉相承的审美气质。在激变社会文化背景下，白明的自律和人文情怀让他作品以一种大东方的温雅智慧糅合古、今、中、外；以对传统审美的继承来表达当代的观察——两者之间不是对立，不是矛盾；于传统不落窠臼，于当代而具有艺术的独立精神。这，就是他的态度。

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静·夜·思——白明物语

MINDFULNESS MYSTERY PHILOSOPHY
— Bai Ming's Metaphor

 广东美术馆
GUANGDONG MUSEUM OF ART

Mindfulness Mystery Philosophy -- Bai Ming's Metaphor

LuoYiping (Director of Guangdong Museum of Art)

There is an exquisite elegance rests in Bai Ming's art, the tenderness of which comes from the artist's Confucianist thoughts.

There is an exceptional peacefulness dwells in his art, the dharana of which lies in the artist's discipline and cultivation.

There is a supreme mind threads through his art, the profound conception of which is originated by the artist's easiness in the secular world. When treating a matter lightly, he knows to let go; when taking a thing seriously, he knows to persist.

There are ultimate oriental thoughts and a unique literati temperament in Bai Ming's artworks which peacefully presents a tradition-derived eternal beauty surpassing time and space. Be famous for his oil paintings, Bai Ming turns out to be a master of Chinese contemporary ceramic. He never stops transcending himself to immerse aesthetic spirits into Chinese traditional contexts in the process of creating. His artworks, no matter ink creations or installations, all bear classical oriental spirits, philosophy of Zen as well as of Taoist conception in an implicit and elegant style. Their artistic concept is significantly similar to that of a well-known poem of Li bai, In the Quiet Night.

I. Mindfulness

In my view, the mindfulness harbored in Bai Ming's works considerably resemble to the peacefulness of Zen, which is exactly the primary level of the pursuit of mind. By use of a simple and elegant color scheme, the spatial impression created by various shades of ink and large blocks of blank contributes to a serene temperament. Lines are clean and clear, repeated or overlapped to form a purity that possesses a unique quiescence within motion. The corrugations and handcrafts attached to bright and clean texture of his ceramics are the humbleness hidden

in the midst of nobility, which bears a keen wisdom enlightenment of Zen. By means of a formless shape, the artist translates his perceptions toward life and art to an elegant and implicit art language pointing directly at humans' minds. It is explained in 'Mandala Sutra dharana' that Dhahran is to sustain concentration of mind which emphasizes a meditation of surpassing all the superficialness as well as resting oneself from all external disturbances in order to obtain an inner peace of mind. Bai Ming's artworks, which externally display an inward tension while internally pursue an enduring characteristic, can be applied to reflect the relations of human being and time. He reveres time as a metaphorical language, a static presentation conveyed by dynamic in the history of sedimentation. What is worth mentioning is that this kind of reverence aims not to express human fragileness to time, but an aloof state of mind advocating Golden Mean, that is, moderation. Created in clear, lucid and pure shapes with water-like rhythm, his ceramic works are never lack of refinement and technical beauty within simplicity, which fully delivers changes of forms and diverse characteristics of ceramics. Carrying Chinese traditional aesthetic of 'playing', it is a classical, poetic representation of Confucian culture that combines both strength and kindness,

His works have a power to pause and force people to rethink. Neither following blindly nor going with the stream, Bai Ming is a thinker at peace who creates his art with Dhahran cultivation and acts as listener of varied dialogues with life.

II. Mystery

I adopt Mystery to define the pure yet mystical mood of Bai Ming's art, for its haziness and obscurity are remarkably resemble to that of nighttime, which is precisely the metaphysics of Taoism. The forms of

Bai Ming's works possess the aesthetics of Taoist culture, such as simplicity, nature and profound. Take one of his serial creations, 'Object -- Form and Progress' as an example, what it places a stress on is a free spirit presented by a regular movement of lives. In this series, the combination of cultural awareness and material applications lead to an integration of abstractive expressions and schemas of contemporary experiences, through which an absolute metaphorical relations of image and meaning can be achieved.

In addition, oriental abstractionism can also be detected in his works. Imamichi Tomonubu once described this particular kind of beauty: "to comprehend the explainable based on the inexplicable, so as to reveal the nature of appreciation. That is a powerful silence..... to support 'something' with 'nothing' -- its symbolism fully demonstrates oriental ways of thinking". These two elements, "nothing" and "something", are integrated as one throughout Bai Ming's works. Abstraction is a clarified, purified non-figurative presentation of subjective respond to objective world. As oriental abstraction progresses from imagism to symbolism, Bai Ming's abstraction not only expresses the mysterious, changing landscape and nature, but invites contemplation on the connections between human and nature. Seems to be recognizable but in fact unidentifiable, his abstraction builds up a mood of profound mystery in an absolute peacefulness relying on implicit and introverted expression of abstractive language overflowing with artistic delights. Profoundness, embodied within the detachment of subjects, is free from social controversy thus returns to nature, living creatures, the pondering of universe and reflection of inner self and sensibilities. Being solemn and refined, it offers human an indescribable touch; having an imagination where enormous changes can take place, it is simple but by no means little. It is a person's varied emotions, meanwhile an individual's pure ideal.

III. Philosophy

Philosophy serves as an inspiration of Bai Ming's art. In his series "Zen -- Form and Progress", its clear structure, pure form and spontaneous texture generated by randomly curled clay pieces provide viewers with strong visuality and a sense of mystery. The rhythm of lines and the twisted blocks seem to imply an impulse to escape the uproar and restlessness of reality, which delivers a Zen time-consciousness exclusive to eastern culture. Those mystical short carving lines indicate an internal lost. The design of his art seems to attempt to rebuild the consciousnesses of existence and survival of contemporary people -- life is like a pilgrim to Zen. The essence of Zen lies in exploitations to the truth of life. To Bai Ming, the creation of every single work is a Zenist pilgrim, whose purpose is to express the artist's most earnest feelings toward

life. It is probably the reason why he names this series of works "Zen -- Form and Progress", for it not only refers to the works themselves, but represents his understanding of ways of Zen, of styles of life.

Works without changes are not likely to reflect any modern context; those without thoughts are impossible to turn to be classic. Enclosing profound thinking of humanity, Bai Ming's artworks represent his distinctive attitude to the development of art. By connecting traditional skills and modern concepts, Chinese contemporary ceramics began to explore its own development. From an aesthetic point of view, it is still lingering around the East and the West, ancient and modern. In such a quandary, Bai Ming insists on seeking the truth of aesthetic under the guidance of traditional spirit. Following his own principles, he devotes himself to translate cultural psychological consensus of historical contexts as well as nationality of tradition into his art creations in order to project his individual characters onto the stage of modern world. Besides, Immersed himself with the research of traditional techniques and expressive forms, Bai Ming attempts to reveal the self-expressiveness of various media. For instant, the mixture of ink and wash, the extensive texture of ceramic, the burning traces preserved on papers.....if Duchamp's fountain eliminates conventional boundaries of art and overturns art traditions, then to my mind Bai Ming's metaphor is an inheritance and extension of tradition, a retrospective and a salute to oriental spirits. Metaphorical expressions have a part to perform even in modern time; the simplicity transported by the interaction between handcrafts and materials possesses a quality of quaint elegance that can not be replaced by mechanization. The theoretical thoughts mentioned above to a certain extent become a distinctive language of Bai Ming's art.

Organized by Guangdong Museum of Art, 'Mindfulness Mystery Philosophy -- Bai Ming's Metaphor' is the first overall exhibition of Bai Ming's art. His ink paintings, oil paintings, ceramic and installation will be presented according to four themes: Mindfulness Mystery Philosophy and Poem. This exhibition highlights the artist's successive while distinctive aesthetic through diverse contexts. In the light of oriental wisdom, Bai Ming not only employs traditional aestheticism to express his observation of contemporary world, but combines ancient, modern, oriental and western under the progressive upheaval cultural background with his disciplines and concerns for human beings. In the face of tradition he develops his own style while of modernity he insists his independence -- that is his philosophy.

水墨
文化虫系列

Ink Painting
Cultural Worm Hole series







空山静影 / Still Shadows in Empty Mountains / 160cm x 320cm / 2009



文化虫洞 · 宇宙木纹 / Cultural Worm Hole The Universe Like The Wood Grain / 70cm x 140cm / 2013





文化虫洞 · 席纹如书 / Cultural Worm Hole Straw Mat Veins Like Books / 160cm x 960cm / 2009

局部 / Part



