



王 迈

尤伦斯湾海峡

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目 录

CONTENTS

王迈的《尤伦斯湾海峡》 / 002

Wang Mai's Dire Straits / 008

王迈 鬼马造景师 / 012

Wang Mai Master of the Otherworldly Tableau / 020

尤伦斯湾海峡——诗赞 / 026

Dire Straits——Song of Praise / 027

诗谶 / 026

An Omen / 027

海天油气平台——诗颂 / 048

Sea and Sky Oil Rig——An Ode / 049

四季 / 134

The Seasons / 135

目 录

CONTENTS

王迈的《尤伦斯湾海峡》 / 002

Wang Mai's Dire Straits / 008

王迈 鬼马造景师 / 012

Wang Mai Master of the Otherworldly Tableau / 020

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诗谶 / 026

An Omen / 027

海天油气平台——诗颂 / 048

Sea and Sky Oil Rig——An Ode / 049

四季 / 134

The Seasons / 135

王迈的“尤伦斯湾海峡”

田霏宇

王迈以艺术建构并表达了一种主观性——对于一个由各类大事件牵动，并随之不断演变的世界，他有着具体而独特的观察视角。他将自己视作特定历史时刻的一部分，而他的素材直接来源于建构这一时刻的力量。与王迈对话会发现他是一个欢乐的反对派、真诚的批评家，他对世界现状和中国地位有独到见解，也知道该如何思考，如何生活。正如冯·克劳塞维茨曾说战争是“另一种政治”，对于王迈来说，艺术也一样。在 20 世纪初涌入废弃 798 工厂的大批艺术家当中，王迈的作品以其环环相扣的结构显现出最大的意义。多年来，他挖掘 798 工厂的遗物：工具、模具和家具，在一种早期的生产力形态中甄选艺术语言的种子。北京的后工业化状态是王迈艺术实践的根本立足点而绝非顺手拈来。

2012 年夏，王迈在尤伦斯当代艺术中心（UCCA）的个展“尤伦斯湾海峡”将这些相似点与历史重叠性提升到全新的水平。运用作为物理与心理中心的高耸的 UCCA 大展厅，展览营造了一个半是水路半是森林的壮观而荒诞的景象，使人完全沉浸其间。王迈的“环境雕塑”解析了正在消逝的过去与不确定的未来。通过海峡的隐喻——一条狭窄的、兵家必争的、常常制造麻烦的分界线——王迈引出了展览所在的实体空间与其背后更广泛的地缘政治背景之间的平行关系。作为一种明显充满隐忧的自然环境中的地理与地质标记，海峡在概念化的统一中制造出一种物理性的分割。它既是一个分离者，又在分离的同时起着连接的作用——想想横亘中国大陆与“叛省”台湾之间的台湾海峡，或者直布罗陀海峡——大陆与文明的分界线。此外，英文名称“Dire Straits”其实是中译英时有意的误译（原谅此处对流行音乐的借用），更准确的翻译应当是“Straits of Ullens”。UCCA 崛起于 798 艺术区的中心位置，它恰好成立于王迈准备离开 798 之时。UCCA 明确利用自身的地理优势——作为标志性的艺术和文化之都，它授予肯定、提供机会、驱动价值。正因为如此，王迈将 UCCA 视同一个可能发生军事对峙与冲突的场所。

王迈对地缘政治的浓厚兴趣最明显地体现在他的材料选择上。展览的墙壁上裱满了“中南海”香烟盒的蓝色铝箔（“中南海”是一个北京的香烟品牌），地板上铺满蓝色的瓦楞状蓝色金属板。这直接取材于王迈在附近的工作室的屋顶，与遍布华北地区的轻型工农业建筑的屋顶没什么两样，也是建筑材料中最基础的一种。为了这次展览，王迈真的可以说是贡献了自家屋顶，把他在环铁的工作室（位于 798 的东北方向）暴露在日光之下。如同天注定一般，2012 年 7 月 22 日开幕式当天恰巧赶上了北京近年来最具破坏性的一场暴雨，与作品中所预示的某种天启出奇地一致。

在蓝色墙壁和蓝色地板营造气氛紧张的通道里，王迈还展示了一连串抽象拼贴画。构图的中心位置悬挂着用桦树皮制成的超大摇篮和一顶摇摇欲坠的干鱼皮营帐。这些材料粗犷且令人惊讶，灵感来自于艺术家家乡黑龙江的少数民族——游牧的赫哲族人民。即便是反复晾晒处理过数月，鱼皮还是持续地散发出刺鼻的味道，而裂片状的白桦皮也让近者感到不适。这些材料之间放置着一组有棱有角的金属机器人和八目鳗状的石油怪物，雕塑胸前及其它部位都佩戴着跨国石油公司的标志。这些雕塑和石油公司标志在过去十年的大部分时间中反复出现在王迈的作品里，围绕着它们的石油与政治对于王迈来说是一个无法忽视的残酷现实，是他任何艺术探索的自然出发点与回归点。

如果说《尤伦斯湾海峡》代表了王迈思想与方法上的进步，那么这种进步最能体现在展览超越了简单的大国间力量冲突与利益角逐等问题，而转向对环境恶化及其对人类生活影响的关注——面临这一严峻挑战的绝不仅仅是某个国家，而是全人类。这是地缘政治竞争的潜台词，也是王迈美学触角的灵感之源。整个展厅散落着一些能直接体现这一暗淡主题的物件：并不通往何处的黄色塑料管道好像是输送油气，一只白色的百叶窗箱在上空徘徊，是通常用来安放气象仪器的那种。这些曾经随处可见的，一度扮演重要角色的“天气盒”如今成为指向前数字时代集权社会主义制度的怀旧物证，以及该制度为收集周边世界的信息而依靠的大量人力物力。如今，它们沦为有讽刺意味的装饰品。现场笑谑的反乌托邦场景，恳请我们去思考，哪怕只是片刻的：中国在这个不稳定的新世界和生态秩序中到底处于怎样的地位。

绘画永远占据着王迈艺术实践的中心。他的工具是最普遍的，从不受制于某种传统或主题。他既可以在宣纸上着墨，也可以在画布上涂抹，绘画对他而言就是一本可以持续不断地生发出一系列符号与角色，以及它们之间的可能关系的覆写本，在这些符号与角色升格为雕塑以前。他的绘画语言受民俗传统、政治话语、流行文化，以及个人回忆的启发。他还专门为本次展览创作了一个绘画系列《屌丝回忆录》，将艺术家的主观性置于其历史基质中去考量，引用的文字来自如《少女的心》，一部名噪一时的软色情小说，改革开放初期以手抄本的形式在中国青年男子中广为流传。王迈对自己的定位是一名关心苍生的普通人，而非艺术英雄。他为如何作为一名今日的共和国公民提供了一种可能的图景。王迈试图将古代与现代，永恒和瞬间并置，与此同时一次又一次地重返展览潜藏在表面之下的母题——石油。

王迈的展览中最震撼人心的大概是其布展方式——尽管用香烟包装纸和预示着即将到来的毁灭的符号装饰的房间营造了森然恐怖的氛围，但也带给观众浓浓的乐趣。家长们得费劲地看着在摇摇欲坠的屋面板上奔跑嬉戏，或者想去摸展厅两侧的白桦树的孩子们。即便资深的观众也得艰难地从海峡的一头走到另一头，因为屋面板总是阻挡着他们的去路。总体的展厅效果有点像个游乐场，观众似乎沉浸其中并无限期被困。王迈指给人们这样一种思路：假如毁灭在即，我们倒不如活在当下。

田霏宇（Philip Tinari），北京尤伦斯当代艺术中心（UCCA）馆长。他携 UCCA 通过一系列展览关注中国本土及国际的知名艺术家以及正在崛起艺术新秀，每年吸引超过五十万人次的访问量。在执掌 UCCA 以前，田霏宇在现代传媒集团旗下的国际双语艺术杂志《艺术界 LEAP》任编辑总监。他还曾任瑞士巴塞尔艺术博览会中国顾问、ArtForum 杂志中文版特约编辑、中央美术学院人文学院客座教授。他广泛撰写并讲授有关中国当代艺术的内容，是多个国际顾问及咨询委员会的成员，其中包括古根海姆亚洲艺术委员会及亚洲协会香港中心画廊委员会。2014 年他策划了纽约军械库艺术博览会中的“聚焦：中国”单元。



王迈与策展人田霍宇
Wang Mai with Curator Philip Tinari



1. 军民共同制作的桦树皮画《喜迎十八大》
Birch skin pictures 《Welcome the Eighteenth National Congress of the CPC》 made by soldiers and civilians
2. 鄂伦春族文化艺人进军营传授技能
Oroqen culture artists going to the barracks to impart skills.
3. 生活在白银纳的关桃芳是鄂伦春民族的民间画家，她制作的桦树皮画已被国内许多商家订购
Yao Fang Guo is an oroqen nationality folk artist living in Bai Yinna. The birch skin pictures she made has been ordered by many domestic business.
4. 在宗教仪式上身着鱼皮服饰的妇女
Women who wearing fish-skin dress in the religious ceremony.
5. 20 世纪 40 年代中国东北摇篮中的婴儿
baby in the Chinese cradle in 1940s.
6. 鱼皮套裤 赫哲族 黑龙江同江 裤长 105 厘米 鱼皮
Fish-skin Leggings. Hezhe Minority. tongjiang, heilongjiang. Trousers length 105cm. fish skin.
7. 身着鱼皮服饰、头戴桦树皮帽子、手持捕鱼叉的猎人
Hunter dressing in fish-skin, wearing birch skin hat, holding fishing fork.
8. 鱼皮靴 赫哲族 黑龙江同江 鱼皮
Skin boots. Hezhe Minority. tongjiang, heilongjiang, fish-skin.
9. 阿尔山特产—阿尔山桦树皮摆件
Arxan specialty — Ornaments made by Arxan birch skin.
10. 白布 鱼皮男袜 赫哲族 黑龙江 20 世纪 50 年代 底长 29 厘米 高 23 厘米 鱼皮、布质
White cloth man socks made by dancing fish' s skin. Hezhe Minority, heilongjiang. 1950s. 29cm
11. 赫哲族的渔猎工具
The fishing and hunting tools of Hezhe Minority.
12. 饶河县四排乡付占祥的桦皮画之六
Birch skin pictures No.6 made by Zhanxiang Fu, who lives in Sipai Xiang, Raohe County.
13. 用桦树皮制成的摇篮
The cradle which is made of birch skin.



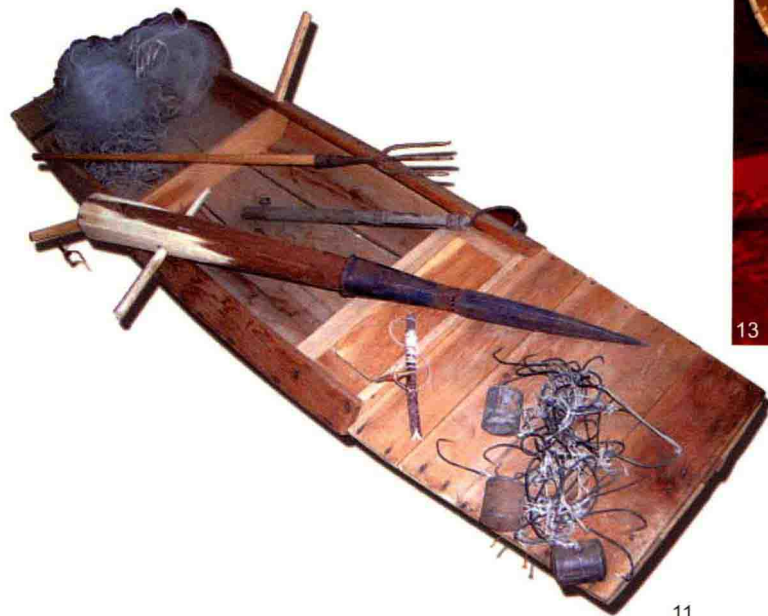
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10



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11



13

Wang Mai's Dire Straits

Philip Tinari

Wang Mai uses art to frame and express a subjectivity—a specific and unique perspective on the world that is informed by, and constantly changing alongside, the development of larger events. He understands himself to be a part of a particular historical moment, and his materials to derive directly from the forces that structure that moment. To talk with Wang Mai is to encounter a joyous naysayer, a heartfelt critic of the state of the world and China's place in it who still knows how to think and to live. For him art is, as Carl Von Clausewitz famously called war, “politics by other means.” Of all the artists who moved into the decommissioned chambers of Factory 798 in the early years of the new century, his work somehow makes the most sense in its cavernous context of one order superseded by another. For many years and to great effect, he mined the artifacts left by the bygone factory, its tools and die and furniture, finding in the forms of an earlier sort of productivity the seeds of an artistic language. The postindustrial condition of Beijing, far from being incidental to his practice, was substantively at its very root.

Held during the summer of 2012, Wang Mai's exhibition *Dire Straits* took these similarities and historical overlaps to an entirely different level. The exhibition consisted of an immersive environment that completely filled the soaring Nave at the physical and mental center of the Ullens Center for Contemporary Art, transforming it into a spectacular, absurdist landscape that was part waterway and part forest. Wang Mai's environmental sculpture offered an analysis of both a disappearing past and an uncertain future. The metaphor of the strait — a narrow divide that must be controlled and that often creates tension — allowed Wang Mai to posit a parallel between the physical space in which the exhibition took place and the wider geopolitical background against which it unfolded. Through expressing a geographic and geological feature of an implicitly fraught nature, the strait creates a physical divide alongside a conceptual union. It is the separator, that in separating, brings together—think here of the Taiwan Strait which lies between the mainland and Taiwan, or the Strait of Gibraltar, which demarcates a boundary between continents and civilizations. Add to this that the English title “*Dire Straits*” (pardon the pop-music reference) was an intentional mistranslation of the Chinese title, which would be more accurately rendered as “*Straits of Ullens*”. For Wang Mai, the UCCA—an institution which arose at the center of the Factory 798 area just as he was preparing to leave it, and which makes explicit use of its position there—functioned as a symbol artistic and cultural capital, is able to confer

approval, offer opportunity, and drive value. For this reason he saw it as analogous to a site of military confrontation and conflict.

Wang Mai's deep interest in geopolitics is made most clearly manifest in his choice of materials. For this exhibition, the walls of the space were papered in blue foil wrappers taken from Zhongnanhai cigarette boxes—an iconic Beijing brand named after the compound where the central leadership reside. The floors were covered in pieces of corrugated blue metal cut directly from the roof of Wang's own nearby studio, pieces of painted steel are like those which top so many light industrial and agricultural buildings throughout Northern China, instantly recognizable as architectural fittings of the most basic variety. For the exhibition, Wang Mai literally contributed his own roof, exposing his studio, situated alongside the Circular Railway Line, which runs just to the northeast of 798, to the elements. It seemed almost preordained that the opening date of July 22, 2012 saw one of the most damaging rainstorms in Beijing's recent history, as if hinting at the same apocalypse foretold in the work.

Within the tense passageway created by his blue walls and floor, Wang Mai presented a walk-through collage. At the center of the composition hung an oversized cradle made from birch bark and a perilously suspended tent covered in cured fish skin. These materials, which take their inspiration from the nomadic Hezhen people—an ethnic group native to Wang's home province of Heilongjiang—were visceral and surprising. The fish skin continued to emit pungent odors, even after having been dried and treated for many months, while the splintery bark threatened to disturb anyone who came to close. Together the materials played host to a grouping of boxy, metallic robots and lamprey-like “oil monsters”—sculptures which bore the insignia of global petroleum companies on their chests and elsewhere across their bionic bodies. These figures, and the logos of oil companies, have recurred constantly in Wang's practice for the better part of a decade; petroleum and the politics which surround it form for him the one hard truth that can never be ignored, a natural point of departure and return for any artistic investigation.

If Dire Straits represented an advance in Wang Mai's thinking and projection, this was most evident in how he used the exhibition to address themes beyond simply those of rising-power tension and

competing interests, turning instead to the deep challenges faced not by a single nation but by all of humanity—environmental degradation and its implications for our lives. This is the subtext of geopolitical competition, and the deep inspiration for Wang Mai's aesthetic sensibility. Thus sprinkled throughout the exhibition space were a number of objects referring directly to these dim prospects. Yellow plastic pipelines led nowhere, as if transporting oil and gas; a white louvered box hovered ominously over the scene, of the sort generally used to house meteorological instruments. These "weather boxes", once ubiquitous and essential, now serve as nostalgic relics of a centralized yet pre-digital socialist system and the mass cooperative effort to gather information about the world around on which that system relied. Here they are reduced to ironic ornament. The overall effect of the scene was one of a playful dystopia, entreating us to ponder, if only for a second, China's place in a newly unstable world and ecological order.

Painting has always been central to Wang Mai's practice. His brush is ecumenical, never confined to particular conventions or subject matter. He is as likely to work in ink on paper as oil on canvas, and his paintings are palimpsests that allow him to work out the range of symbols and characters, as well as their possible relations, before they assume more exalted places in his sculptural tableaux. His painterly vocabulary borrows from folk traditions, political rhetoric, popular culture, and personal memory. For this particular exhibition, he created a new sequence of paintings entitled "Memoirs of a Loser", (Diaosi Huiyi Lu) which position the artist's own subjectivity against this historical matrix, reminiscing on texts such as "Heart of a Maiden", a popular soft-porn romance novel that was transmitted mainly among young men in early reform-era China by hand copying. In positioning himself not as an artistic hero but as a concerned everyman, Wang Mai offers one vision of what it might mean to be a citizen of the People's Republic today. At this crucial meeting point, Wang Mai attempts to juxtapose the ancient and modern, the lasting and the fleeting, all the while referring constantly back to a motif in his work that in this exhibition lies just beneath the surface: oil.

Perhaps the most striking thing about Wang Mai's exhibition was the way in which despite its ominous and macabre connotations—this was after all a room coated in cigarette wrappers and filled with symbols of coming destruction—the site offered its viewers a deep sense of fun. Parents struggled to



左：油气台 4m×6m、高 3m、PVC、木 2012 年 798 艺术区公共雕塑展

left: Oil and gas station, 4m×6m, 3m height, PVC, wood, Public Sculpture Exhibition in 798 Art District.

右：束河气象站 2012 局气 COART 亚洲青年艺术现场

right: SuHe weather station 2012. Fair Play – COART

keep hold of children who ran back and forth across the creaky roof panels, or touched the tree trunks which lined either side of the space. Even more sophisticated viewers found themselves struggling to walk from one side of the strait to another, as the panels resisted and restrained their steps. The overall effect was one of a playground, in which the viewer was immersive and indefinitely trapped. If destruction is imminent, Wang Mai leads us to think, we have no better option than to enjoy the moment.

Philip Tinari is director of the Ullens Center for Contemporary Art in Beijing. There he oversees an exhibition program devoted to established figures and rising talents both Chinese and international, aiming at an annual public of more than half a million visitors. Prior to joining UCCA in 2011 he was founding editorial director of the bilingual, international art magazine LEAP, published by Modern Media. He previously served as China advisor to Art Basel, founding editor of Art Forum's Chinese-language edition, and lecturer at the Central Academy of Fine Arts. He has written and lectured extensively on contemporary art in China, and sits on advisory boards including the Guggenheim Asian Art Council and the Asia Society Hong Kong Center Gallery Committee. In 2014, he curated the Focus: China section of The Armory Show in New York.

王迈 鬼马造景师

文 / 罗颖

“艺术家首先得敏感，要不就是对技术很敏感，成为一位手艺精湛的人；要不你的智慧能敏感洞察我们的世界，那你可能是一位有思想的人。如果两者兼具，那你就是大师，或者是大师傅。”——王迈

成功 hold 住中央甬道

2012 年 7 月 21 日，一场六十年不遇的暴雨彻底冲走了京城焦灼的空气。这一天，令人叹为观止的不止是这场暴风骤雨。这一天，王迈在高九米、长三十米的尤伦斯中央甬道搭建的“尤伦斯湾”也在正式对外开放。屋外的自然景观与馆内的人文造景交相呼应，似乎注定任何的港湾都无法平静，就像步履艰难地行进在蓝色彩钢瓦上感受波浪带来的汹涌一样。

其实，“尤伦斯湾海峡”的方案雏形在王迈的脑海中酝酿已久，直到去年年底尤伦斯馆长田霏宇向他正式发出邀请，方案才得以付诸实现。但令王迈最担心的事情却发生了：田霏宇将“对艺术家的挑战不亚于泰特美术馆涡轮大厅”的尤伦斯中央甬道留给了王迈，再次考验了他对空间的驾驭能力。不过，从成型效果来看，王迈成功 hold 住了中央甬道——铺满两万多张烟标的高耸墙体和彩钢瓦铺成的地面形成的水天一色的蓝色调，波光粼粼的“海面”被明黄色的石油管道连接的“油井平台”打破了宁静，半空中悬挂着用白桦树皮做的巨型摇篮，两侧的白桦木和通道尽头的行军鱼皮帐篷带来的地域错位感无法让人用单一的线性思维去理解王迈的作品。你可以驻足细读工业模具上的符号和文字，也可以穿行而过欣赏沿途的风景，或享受色彩的愉悦。在拼贴重组和非现实的表象背后隐藏的是王迈对材料、对问题的敏感，以及多维度的思维能力。

控制“飞”的想法

王迈的想法总是很“飞”，他从不墨守成规地遵循某一种创作模式，朋友对他的评价也是“想一出是一出”，就像机灵古怪的鬼马，虽无厘头，却总能迸发出思想的火花，而装置恰恰给了王迈不断实现自己奇思妙想的小舞台。对材料、对事件的敏感正是一个艺术家的天赋所在，他丝毫不谦虚地告诉我：“这是我的能力。就像踢球一样，你能控制从各个方向来的球，可以从任何一个角度打门，这就是你的能力，你不能说你在左下角打门最舒服。张旭、怀素臻于化境

的草书也需要控制，所以控制力是创作中很重要的一点。”现在的王迈更能控制自己的心性，同时也可以随时调动自己的激情。

20岁就出道的王迈，短发，戴精巧的黑框眼镜，咬字肯定，对任何问题都反应迅速，睿智且不隐锋芒。关于他的作品、他的经历，已经被媒体和批评家们解读得足够多。

这早已不是王迈第一次推出与展览空间互动的作品了，类似的作品还有2003年的《徽宗在798》、2009年的《加油东站》、2010年的《西湖气候交易所》等。这实际上依旧根植于王迈的古典情节，就像古人行至一处便题诗作画一样。但是现在这样的传统却被摒弃，而王迈正想借古人的情怀与展览空间形成语言上的对话，他说：“或许尤伦斯艺术中心将来不存在了，但是人们会记得王迈当时造了一个虚拟的叫尤伦斯湾海峡的场景。”

通过视觉传达一种思想

从圆明园到798、通县，再到如今的环铁，意味的不仅是工作室的位置变迁，更折射出20岁的王迈和不惑之年的王迈在精神立场上的转折。当初留着一头象征叛逆的长发，过着颠沛流离的生活，受过没钱做作品的痛苦折磨，甚至到了想要靠兜售作品方案给没有创造力的艺术家来生活的地步。用王迈的话总结那段经历就是：“我差不多把自己逼到了一个墙角。”所以王迈常常回想过去那段“绝望的青春”，忆苦思甜，激励自己不要停下创作的步伐。

“行为艺术”在许多人眼中已是被许多极端行为贬义化了的词语，或则不堪入目，骨子里贮满叛逆；或则隔靴搔痒，全无诚恳之心。而王迈在1996年的《行为规范：我在同一天下午》，除要言不烦外，也让人看见了他繁复沉郁心绪之一角——对名利的反思，对虚假与不公的批判。王迈希望借此给出答案。

从小愤青到“高更式的无奈”，王迈站在二元对立的角度去做的行为艺术止步于2000年左右。“因为之前我觉得还有可以批判的对象，现在我已经找不到绝对对立的批判对象了，”王迈显得更心平气和，“过去老抢答，最后却发现老错。所以我现在选择用另外一种方式去看待复杂的事情，这也是我使用各种材料的原因。我试图通过视觉传达一种思想、一种感受，但绝对不