

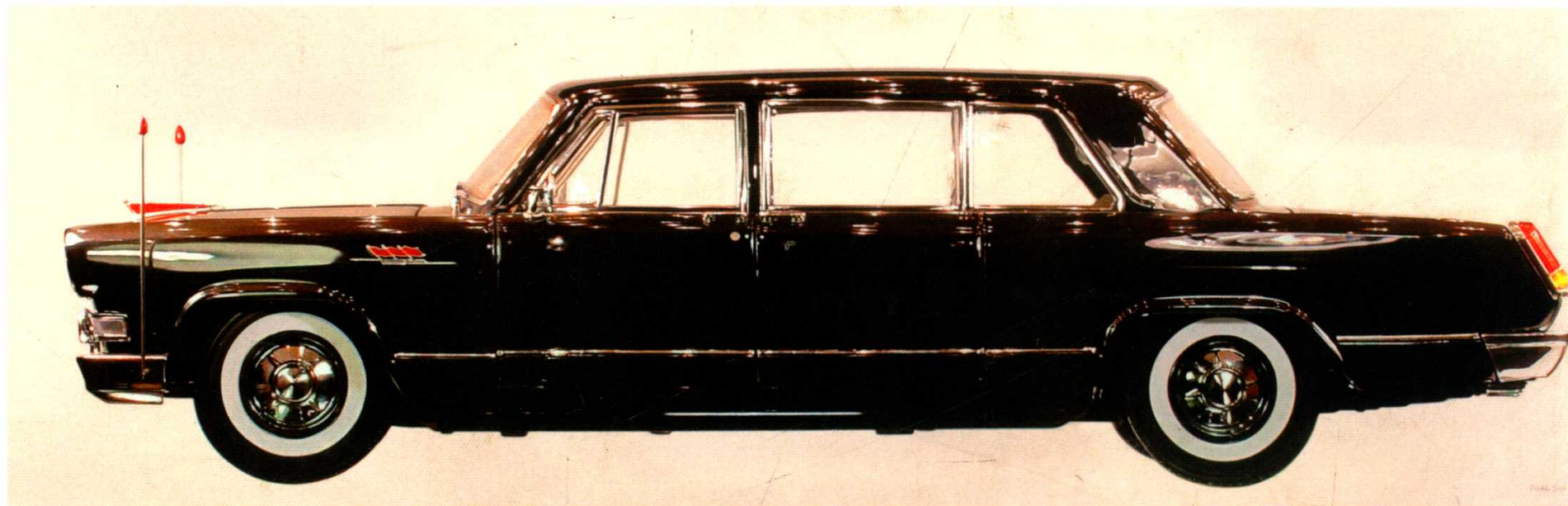
---

# 历史与现实

## HISTORY & REALITY

---

周向林 / 绘



---

# 周向林

---

李颖 / 主编

---

## Zhou Xianglin

---

文化艺术出版社  
Culture and Art Publishing House

1456022

# 历史与现实

## HISTORY & REALITY

周向林 / 绘

# 周向林

李颖 / 主编

## Zhou Xianglin

文化艺术出版社  
Culture and Art Publishing House



淮阴师院图书馆1456022

图书在版编目（CIP）数据

历史与现实：周向林 / 周向林绘. -- 北京：文化艺术出版社, 2011.10  
ISBN 978-7-5039-5194-7

I. ①历… II. ①周… III. ①油画－作品集－中国－现代 IV. ①J223

中国版本图书馆CIP数据核字(2011)第189441号

历史与现实：周向林

绘 者 周向林  
主 编 李 颖  
出 品 对画空间画廊  
责任编辑 阡 陌  
翻 译 François Sastourné，郭学滨  
书籍设计 杨林青 + 张利  
出版发行 文化艺术出版社  
地 址 北京市东城区东四八条52号（100700）  
网 址 www.whyscbs.com  
电子邮箱 whysbooks@263.net  
电 话 （010）84057666 84057660（总编室）  
（010）84057696 84057698（发行部）  
经 销 全国新华书店  
印 刷 北京雅昌彩色印刷有限公司  
版 次 2011年10月第1版  
印 次 2011年10月第1次印刷  
开 本 635 × 965毫米 1/8  
印 张 13  
插 页 1  
字 数 30千字  
图 片 37幅  
书 号 ISBN 978-7-5039-5194-7  
定 价 230.00 元

版权所有，侵权必究。如有印装错误，随时调换。



1456022

# 历史与现实

## HISTORY & REALITY

周向林 / 绘

# 周向林

李颖 / 主编

## Zhou Xianglin

文化艺术出版社  
Culture and Art Publishing House



淮阴师院图书馆1456022



---

## 目 录 | CONTENTS

---

- 4    **引言**  
     范迪安
- 6    **过去的、现在的**  
     赵力
- 10   **让过去与现在同时性存在**  
     ——关于周向林的历史题材绘画  
     鲁虹
- 16   **看向林的画**  
     方方
- 46   **芭比化**  
     周向林
- 48   **给周向林先生在LA BOX的个展写的前言**  
     王度
- 78   **周向林的大手笔**  
     ——《1969年11月12日·开封》  
     罗世平
- 82   **历史画与历史题材绘画**  
     周向林

- 
- 4    **Introduction**  
     FAN Di'an
- 6    **Past, present**  
     Zhao Li
- 10   **Let the past and the present exist simultaneously**  
     About the paintings of historical themes by Zhou Xianglin  
     Lu Hong
- 16   **On Zhou Xianglin's painting**  
     Fang Fang
- 46   **“Barbie-ization”**  
     Zhou Xianglin
- 48   **A foreword to Mr. Zhou Xianglin solo exhibition in L.A. BOX**  
     Wang Du
- 78   **Zhou Xianglin's masterpiece**  
     *November 12th, 1969 · Kaifeng*  
     Luo Shiping
- 82   **History Painting and Painting of History**  
     Zhou Xianglin
-

---

# 引言

---

# Introduction

---

范迪安

中国美术馆馆长

Fan Di'an

Director of National Art  
Museum of China



作为在改革开放时代发展自己艺术的画家，周向林有着这一代人共同的经历，特别是共同的文化心理，但同时经历了自身文化认知和艺术观念的变革。他尊重传统，深知传统的价值，对传统中那些庄严的内涵和永恒性的形式美感有着内在的领会，甚至一直将之视为自己艺术的基础支持；另一方面，他又深刻地感怀现实的变迁，意识到艺术反映时代文化特征的重要性，由此也同样是内在地生发不断探索创造的热情。在当代画家中，他突出地表现出在文化思考上投入持续心力的特性，这也几乎成为他的性格——在一个急剧的社会环境中，与其说艺术家的性格来自于天赋本真，不如说更多来自于人生经历的积淀——周向林总是以思考作为绘画的前提，也将思考贯穿于探索的过程之中，这成为他艺术生涯的习惯，即使是在那些看上去十分视觉化的作品形式上，也渗透出他思想性的根本，基于思想的视觉表现，恐怕是周向林艺术的总体特征。

周向林曾经以历史主题画闻名，除了人物之外，他的那些老工业品牌的汽车，拖拉机肖像，也可以视为历史主题。他为历史的印记塑造可视形象时，力求在单一整体的形象中传达出历史气息，因此给人留下深刻印象。后来，他有一段时间专注于当代童话的主题，通过“芭比娃娃”系列反映生活的现实，尤其传达了光怪陆离的世态百象，这可以看作他艺术感受的展开，确切地说，是一种思想的穿行。从历史到当代，从严肃的、庄严的追述到感性的活泼的表现，其间跨越度很大，但隐含在作品内部的思考是一脉相承的。他近年的作品，呈现出将历史与当代结合的特征，犹如经历了“正”“反”两极之后的“合”——在他新近的作品中，庄严的结构与炫目的质感奇妙地混合成了一种新的视像，关于历史的叙述已经脱离了历史的具体情境，而被置放在当代图像的表达语言中。他画上那种光亮感和色彩的感悟让人从今天的视角看待历史的存在，历史的遗存褪去了沉重的色泽而被并置在当下的文化感受之中，在这个意义上，周向林更多地走向了当代。

变化是这个时代的趋势，周向林的艺术历程呈现出他在感受上的变化，但他贯注于艺术的思想与精神没有变，这是这一代艺术家身上可贵的品质。无论作为对象的形象以何种方式出现，他始终坚持了艺术语言的深度也即绘画的质量，从而使作品总是在拥有视觉的新颖感的同时拥有视觉的强度。

看周向林的单幅作品已经能够获得视觉的满足，看他一路走来的历程，或可看到一代中国艺术家在变化与恒定、混合与坚执的矛盾关系中穿行和前行的精神追求。

As an artist who developed his art during the era of reform and opening, Zhou Xianglin shares with his contemporary fellow artists common experiences and a common cultural psychology, but at the same time he underwent his own mutation as regards his own cultural awareness and artistic concepts; he respects tradition, he knows its value, he has an inner understanding of the majestic contents of tradition and the beauty of eternal form, he even sees it as the basis of his art, and on the other hand, he has a deep sensation of the changes of reality, he is conscious of the importance of the fact that art reflects the characteristics of its time, which enables him to continue enthusiastically his search and creation. Among contemporary painters, he stands out as one who shows a continuous effort to invest in a reflection about culture, which seems to characterize him – in this hectic society’s environment, an artist’s character might come from his true talent, but perhaps even more from the accumulation of his own experiences. Zhou Xianglin always makes reflection precede painting, and he’ll use reflection throughout the process of exploration. It has become a habit of his artistic career and even in the form of his works that seem completely visual, his reflective character emerges clearly, as well as his visual acuity based on his thinking, I daresay that is the general characteristic of Zhou Xianglin’s art.

Among the famous historical themes of Zhou Xianglin, apart from the historical figures, his objects from the old industrial brands like the portraits of tractors can also be seen as historical themes, and while he shapes his visual image on these marks of history, he strives to convey a historical atmosphere through a single image, and that is what leaves such a strong impression. Later, he went through a period focusing on contemporary children tales as a theme, reflecting the reality of life through “Barbie” dolls, conveying particularly the grotesque and fantastic multiple aspects of the world’s way, something that we can see as a development of his artistic perceptions, or, more precisely, a conceptual passage. From history to the present times, from the serious recounting of the solemn past to the expression of lively feelings, there is a giant step, but the reflections contained in the works are of the same vein; his works of recent years, showing the features of history and of the present times, seem to swing between the two extremes of “recto” and “verso” before integrating both aspects – solemn deconstruction and a dazzling mix of textures unite to make a new kind of vision, and the narrative about history is departing from history’s concrete conditions, to be put right into the language of contemporary images. His bright and colourful language makes the audience see the presence of history from the present perspective, the traces of history then fade away and are placed in the contemporary cultural perception, and in that sense, Zhou Xianglin is indeed most contemporary.

Change is the trend of our era, and while the artistic course of Zhou Xianglin reflects his own changes of perceptions, his spirit and idea about art have not changed at all, which is a precious quality among artists of his generation. And whatever the manner in which the image of the object appears, it can sustain the depth of the artistic language and the quality of the image as well, and can thus make the work seem to have a vision that is at once novel and intense.

By looking at a single work of Zhou Xianglin, one can get visual satisfaction, and by looking at the path he has been treading, one can see a generation of Chinese artists changing and being constant, mingling and being tenacious within its contradictory relations, clearing the way as it goes forward in its spiritual quest.



---

# 过去的、现在的

---

# Past, present

---

赵 力

中央美院教授

Zhao Li

Professor of CAFA



1991年周向林创作了他那幅著名的作品《1969年11月12日·开封》，作品以“文革”中刘少奇逝世为题材，展现的却是画家对于“历史画”的深刻认识。周向林认为，“历史画”和历史题材绘画是两个不尽相同的概念，“历史画”是在再现和复原某个历史场景的基础上，最大程度地去还原历史事件和史实，进而表达自己的思想观念和对现实世界的看法。也是基于这样的认识，周向林开始将“历史画”作为自己创作的重要方式，通过“历史画”的创作借古喻今或借题发挥，融入自己的思考并使得自己的创作具有更强的思想性和精神内涵，从而形成更强的文化的或者现实的针对性。

事实是通过自上世纪90年代以来的“历史画”创作，周向林逐渐建立起了隶属于自己的“历史观念”：他借助于“历史画”的指向性的强烈诉求，突破了“历史画”记录或复原历史的既有功能，将自己的创作提升为超越“历史画”的文化责任。与此同时，所谓的“历史观念”也让周向林能更敏锐地意识到在“过去的”、“现在的”乃至“未来的”的时间轴向上的自我地位，进而有助于艺术家建立起自己和当代之间的文化关系。

虽然周向林戏称“历史画”的创作仅仅是一个借口、一个契机，但是对应于“历史画”的传统画家仍然首先接续了“写实”的语汇。在1991年的《1969年11月12日·开封》中，“写实”不仅是周向林在历史和艺术之间求得某种合适度的表达方式，同时更强调为一种异乎寻常的“冷峻”的历史态度：“这是一段历史，我用历史的眼光去看，用理性的思维做出判断，选取这一片段是对我们国家和民族命运的思考，而不是为了评价某个人的功过得失”。而从1993年创作的《红色机器·之一》、《红色机器·之二》开始，“写实”已经远离了“写实”本身，逐渐发展为具有强烈审视意义的“历史的眼光”。借助于这样的转向，周向林将自我创作推至了“陈列的历史画”。

关于“陈列的历史画”的具体定义，周向林是这样认为的：“所谓陈列就像历史博物馆陈列的展品那样，将历史实物展示给大家看，由实物联系历史，我试图用陈列的实物感贯通符号的上下文关系，将原先被掩盖的历史情境转换成心照不宣的明示。这样的历史画是介于历史事件与静物之间的，浓缩在物上的历史烙印提供了时代符号转换的契机，实存的意义与超现实的感受拢在同一个空间里，使其价值和意义在陈列中显示出来。”

从作品而言，1992年创作的《红色背景·打字机》无疑是周向林自“历史画”向“陈列的历史画”的过渡之作，它的位置恰好处于《1969年11月12日·开封》和《红色机器·之一》、《红色机器·之二》之间。在《红色背景·打字机》中，“实物”已经取代了具体的历史人物，“实物”在此的意义，即在于它既是“过去的”同时也是“现在的”。换句话说，“实物”是历史性的符号，更是介入现实生活的存在。于是，“实物”在历史和现实的上下文中结构出了一种独特的叙事。

自1993年创作《红色机器·之一》、《红色机器·之二》开始，周向林的作品逐渐确定为三个基本特征：实物的表述、实存的意义和超现实的感受。在具体的创作中，周向林开始使用某种“抽离”的方式：艺术家首先将所要描写的对象——“拖拉机”，从原有的历史语境中“抽离”出来，从而形成具有独立价值的“时代符号”，然后又借助于“符号”本身所浓缩的历史烙印，结构出具有当代感的“观看效应”。所谓的“观看效应”对应的是当代性的观看语境，从画面来看“拖拉机”更像是一件陈列在历史博物馆中的“历史文物”，它的“历史性”由于诸如“东方红”等的细节性标记以及深红的色调而得到了进一步地“明示”，而它的“现实性”又因为观众的当下观看而得到了进一步地强调。

1996年的《红色背景·之二》，在充分坚持“实存的意义”与

In 1991, Zhou Xianglin painted the tableau entitled *November 12, 1969, Kaifeng* the subject of which is the demise of Liu Shaoqi in the middle of the Cultural Revolution. This work definitely shows the painter's profound conscience of "historical painting". Zhou Xianglin contends that "historical painting" and "painting of historical" subjects are two quite different concepts: the former consists of the reproduction of some historical scene just like the original, to replicate as much as possible historical events and reality, and then to instil in it one's own thoughts and ideas, and one's vision about reality. It is based on this conscience that Zhou Xianglin started to use "historical painting" as one of his main creation methods, to use the past as an example to understand the present, or as a pretext to develop some idea, integrating his own reflections to give strength to the conceptual and spiritual content of his work, and thus strengthening its cultural or realistic accuracy.

In fact, through his "historical paintings" works since the '90s, Zhou Xianglin has been slowly and steadily building his own personal "conception of history": leaning on the strong indicative requirements of "historical painting" to break its records or to resuscitate the functions of history, he raises his creations up to a level of cultural responsibility that goes beyond "historical painting". At the same time, the so called "conception of history" lets Zhou Xianglin have a more accurate conscience of his place in the hub of time, in other words in "the past", the "present" and even the "future", which helps the artist to found the basis of his cultural relation with his own time.

Even though Zhou Xianglin says in jest that "historical painting" is merely a pretext, an occasion, he nevertheless carries on its tradition of "realism". In *November 12, 1969, Kaifeng*, "realism" is not only his way of attaining a certain degree of compatibility between history and art in his expression, it highlights as well a kind of unusually "cold" historical attitude: "This is an historical episode, unto which I throw an historical look, upon which I exercise my rational thinking to make a judgment; the choice of that very episode is a reflection upon the destiny of our country and our people, and not a critic of someone's faults or merits." And since the beginning of the series *Red Machine I* and *Red Machine II*, "realism" departs from authentic "realism", and gradually evolves into an "historical vision" with a profound reflection. With such a change of direction, Zhou Xianglin pushes his work to the new stage of "exhibit historical painting".

As to the definition of "exhibit historical painting", Zhou Xianglin holds this view: "By exhibit I mean it is like an exhibition in a historical museum, in which historical objects are displayed for people to see, linking history with real objects. I try to use the displayed real objects to get a physical sense of the contextual relations, so as to expose the originally hidden historical situation and make it explicit. This type of historical painting lies somewhere between historical incidents depiction and still life, it concentrates on the traces of history that are on the objects to provide the symbols of the era turning points, so that the existential meaning and the surreal sense are squeezed in the same space, thus making its value and significance more obvious."

From the perspective of the works, the painting *Red background -*



“超现实的感受”之并存不悖的同时，周向林随即又有意识地淡化主观性的价值判断，积极地回避图像化的风格标签。艺术家从“陈列的历史画”出发，激发出对历史碎片关注的灵感：《红色背景·之二》，不是对于完整的“拖拉机”刻意描写，而是对其最具标记性的某个局部的详加描绘，即如博物馆中那些陈列著的美丽瓷片，亦如周向林的慨叹——“过去的历史是不可能还原了”。于是，《红色背景·之二》转而直面的是“过去的过去性”的宿命，却更脚踏实地地借助于这些历史的碎片去阐释自我的历史观点。

阐释的过程基于的是细致的分析过程，同时又带有考古的现场感，最终又将“实存的意义与超现实的感受拢在同一个空间里”。而由此激发出的热情也令周向林对于案例性的分析乐此不疲。1996年开始的“幸福生活”、2004年开始的“虚幻空间”、2005年开始的“红色旅游”，看似与周向林“历史画”创作的主线不尽符合，但是从更深层次加以观察则是艺术家个案性分析的深入结论，同样反映了周向林在这一阶段的思考方式。创作的中心仍是“实物”，只不过是“芭比娃娃”取代了原先的“拖拉机”。周向林说灵感的源头是自己的女儿，但是由此引申出来的却不是亲情的表达，同样是对“真实与虚伪、梦想与现实、华丽外表和空虚内壳”的剖析和对现实生活的折射。在长达十年的案例分析中，周向林以“芭比”为对象所进行的历时性研究，积极形成了针对历史和现实本身的介入性实验，并在自身不断历史化的过程中构成了针对于现实的不断审视和强烈质询。

2007年至今的“模型系列”更具有了某种的综合性特征，也就是说这一系列是立足于之前所有创作的基础之上，而不是别出新枝：“模型系列”与“红色机器”的关联是显见的，周向林似乎又回到了“历史画”的创作轨道，然而与“幸福生活”等系列的关系也并非疏离，因为艺术家开始提出了“模型”的概念，并依旧注重分析性的思考。如果仔细地观察，观众不难发现“模型系列”更近于“幸福生活”等的系列，而与“红色机器”的系列渐行渐远。因为“浓缩在物上的历史烙印”已被逐渐淡化，“实物”因此而焕然一新。

事实上周向林试图强化的是“历史被压缩后再也不可能放大还原”的认识和观念，由此他的创作原型不再是对历史性的“实物”的直接引入或者分析研究，而是将分析研究的过程直接视为创作，并将绘画作为分析研究结论的最终呈现。于是乎在创作中，周向林“给汽车模型打上灯光，然后放大，努力将它们还原，但此‘车’早已非彼‘车’，过去的历史是不可能还原了。在这里，历史题材只是一个引子，我对历史的看法，也就是我的历史观才是我要表达的。”于是乎通过自己的创作，周向林跳离开对历史的繁琐记录和孜孜追溯，他的工作既是关乎历史的也是关乎现在的更是面向未来的，既是复杂的整体也是整体的复杂，从而形成了开放性的结构和开放性的结论。

2011年9月15日

*typewriter* of 1992 is undoubtedly the one that marks the transition of the painter from “historical painting” to “exhibit historical painting”, its place is right between *November 12, 1969, Kaifeng, Red Machine I* and *Red Machine II*. In that painting, the “object” represents a historical character, its meaning here is that it is “past” as well as “present”. In other words, the “object” is a historical symbol, and it penetrates even more into real life. As a result, the “object” constitutes a unique narrative in the context of history and reality.

Since the 1993 paintings *Red Machine I* and *Red Machine II*, Zhou Xianglin's work has gradually been defined by three characteristics: expression of real things, existential meaning and surreal sensations. Concretely, Zhou Xianglin starts to use a “detached” approach: The artist first takes the object he depicts – a tractor – out of its historical context, then he makes it into an “era symbol” with independent value, and finally he creates a contemporary “visual effect” based on the concentration of the “symbol” itself and its historical marks. This so called “visual effect” corresponds to the contemporary viewing context: looking at a tractor on a painting seems more like something displayed in a historical museum, its “historicity” is exposed even more clearly because of the Red Flag and other small signs and the deep red colour, while its “reality” is highlighted even more by the fact that the audience is watching it right now.

In the 1996 painting *Red Background II*, while maintaining firmly the coexistence of “existential meaning” and “surreal sensation”, Zhou Xianglin quite consciously dilutes the subjective value judgment, and actively avoids the style label of “picturisation”. The artist starts from “exhibit historical painting”, and stimulates his inspiration by taking interest in historical fragments: *Red Background II* is not about achieving a painstakingly detailed description of a “tractor”, it's about depicting the details of certain parts of it, just like the beautiful porcelain fragments displayed in museums; as Zhou Xianglin laments “History cannot be restored”. As a result, *Red Background II* faces the fate of the “pastness of the past”, and interprets in a quite down-to-earth manner the historical fragments.

This interpretation process is based on a very detailed analysis, as well as an archeological approach, and thus it achieves the result of having “the existential meaning as well as the surreal sensation in the same place”. And it stimulates the enthusiasm of the artist and makes the analysis process happy rather than boring. *Happy life* (begun in 1996), *Visional space* (begun in 2004) *Red tour* (begun in 2005) on the face of it all seems to correspond to the artist's main line of “historical painting”; yet, seen from a deeper level, they carry the conclusion of the artist's careful analysis. At the core of the painting there is still an “object”, but this time it's a “Barbie doll” and not a “tractor”. Zhou Xianglin says his inspiration came directly from his daughter, but it's not just the expression of kinship, it is as well a reflection on “truth and falseness, dream and reality, external beauty and internal emptiness”. In this decade long analysis, the reflection on the passing of time in which Zhou Xianglin used “Barbie” as an object formed a penetrating experience focusing on history and reality, and in the continuous process of the artist “historicisation” it formed a strong questioning and continuous judgment of reality.



The “Model” serie from 2007 have a kind of general characteristic, that is to say they are founded on the basis of the previous works, rather than being a new branch. The relation between “Model” serie and “Red machine” is obvious: Zhou Xianglin seems to get back on the tracks of “historical painting”, and then these works are not so different from the “Happy life” series, because as the artist starts to propose the concept of “models”, he draws the attention on analytical reflections, like he did before. If we observe carefully, we can easily see that “Model” serie are even closer to “Happy life”, and more distant from the “Red machine” series. Because “the historical marks concentrated on the object” have already started to fade and the “real object” looks brand new.

In fact, what Zhou Xianglin is trying to convey is the idea that “history cannot be restored nor enlarged after having been reduced”, and therefore his original works are not an analytical research or a direct introduction to history, but rather a creation through analytical research of historical “objects”, the tableau being the final display of that process. Thus the artist “highlights a model, enlarges it, makes it look like the original thing, but the ‘vehicle’ is not a ‘vehicle’ anymore, for history cannot be restored. Here, the historical theme is just a prelude, my view as regard history is precisely what I want to express.” Thus Zhou Xianglin steers clear from the boring complexities and the painstaking pursuit of history, his work is concerned about the past but also about the present and the future, so that the complex entirety is also the entire complexity, forming an opened structure and an opened conclusion.

September 15, 2011



---

# 让过去与现在 同时性存在<sup>[1]</sup>

——关于周向林的历史题材绘画

---

Let the past and  
the present exist  
simultaneously<sup>1</sup>

About the paintings of  
historical themes by  
Zhou Xianglin

---

鲁虹

深圳美术馆艺术总监

Lu Hong

Art director of Shenzhen Art  
Museum



因为年底要召开的“第五届深圳美术馆论坛”主题是“中国当代艺术与社会主义经验”，所以近一阶段我都在查阅相关文献资料。其中包括专著《后社会主义》<sup>[2]</sup>、《新社会主义》<sup>[3]</sup>与国内外专家的相关理论文章。再以这样的背景来看艺术家周向林的作品，我不禁发现：其实他自上世纪90年代以来一直把“社会主义经验”作为重要的内容来处理，这也使他能够以特殊的方式涉及历史题材绘画，并从个人角度梳理了历史与现实的关系。

稍稍对新中国历史有过研究的人都知道，所谓“社会主义经验”在本质上分属于两个不同的历史阶段，更包含着完全不同的内容。具体地说，第一个阶段是从1949年新中国建立到1976年粉碎“四人帮”；第二个阶段是从1978年中共十一届三中全会的召开到现在；而处在两者之间的则是具有过渡性质的“后文革”时期。正如大家所了解的那样，第一个阶段突出的核心概念是“阶级斗争”与“自力更生”；第二个阶段突出的核心概念是“经济建设”与“改革开放”。现在常有人误将二者混为一谈，是极其错误的。从这样的角度出发，我认为周向林在他的作品中，更多涉及的是第一个阶段的“社会主义经验”。其直面过去，反思现在做法，相对于上世纪80年代以来，许多当代艺术家更倾向于学习西方的做法，无疑十分有启示意义。因为这一方面有利于艺术家表达个人真实的现场感受；另一方面，在全球化的情况下，也有利于突出作品的民族身份与文化属性。更加重要的是，这类作品在开辟创作新领地的同时，也为世界当代艺术带来了巨大的活力。其要旨是强调艺术与现实、历史的关联性或追求意义的表达。事实上，这一创作趋势既可在国内一系列重大展览与学术活动中看到，也可在前苏联、前东德、前南斯拉夫等已经解体的前“社会主义国家”或仍是“社会主义国家”的越南、古巴等国看到。而且，在国内外已经有一些学者在潜心研究这一类艺术创作现象。比较有影响的是斯洛文尼亚学者阿莱斯·艾尔雅维茨与玛丽娜·格里茨尼克等人。前者还在著作《图像时代》<sup>[4]</sup>中，专门用两个章节的文字谈论了相关问题。关于这些，请容我在其他文章中再谈。

在一篇不太长的文章中，周向林对历史画与历史题材的绘画加以了严格区分。他明确指出，“历史画和历史题材绘画，是两个不尽相同的概念。历史画主要的着眼点是还原历史，多为特定的展览、陈列所作；而历史题材的绘画所包含的范围要宽泛得多，除包括了前面所说的历史画，更多的是作者为表达自己的思想而创作的，这类绘画更强调作者对历史的看法和对现实的关注。”<sup>[5]</sup>这足以表明：周向林所画的历史题材绘画，是超越于主流意识形态的，是他本人对于历史深刻反思后的结果。从周向林寄给我的光盘中，我感到他的历史题材绘画大抵可分为三大类：第一类是以传统现实主义方法表现的重大历史事件；第二类是以卡通方法表现与历史相关的虚拟场景；第三类则是以超级写实主义方法表现积淀着历史记忆的文化物。比如，以宾卡斯式技法创作的油画《1969年11月12日·开封》就属于第一类。很明显，画中图像的处理是以一个带有故事情节的文本为支撑的，于是，前国家主席刘少奇赤裸而孤独地死于床上的情境被极写实地表现了出来，而那横直线的构图与沉重的色调的运用则有效突出了画面的悲剧气氛。由于这一切就好像发生在人们眼前，所以不仅极有震撼力，也促使人们会从新角度去反思“文革”，还有我们国家的法制或民族的命运；又比如《红色旅游·景点H》理应属于第二类。与前者不一样，画中图像的处理是以一个带有虚拟情节的文本为支撑的。与此相关的是，周向林以卡通手法塑造了处于前景或身着红军服的女导游，背景则是红色景点与革命口号。这当然带有超现实的意味，可这不但将革命元素与消费元素巧妙地并置在了一起，还很好地突出了如下观念，即现如今，一切都可以成

Since the main topic of “the Fifth Shenzhen Art Museum seminar” which opened at the end of the year was “Chinese Contemporary art and the experience of socialism”, I’ve been researching lately materials and documents related to it. Among them were papers by Chinese and foreign specialists about *Post socialism*<sup>2</sup> and *New socialism*<sup>3</sup>. Looking once more at Zhou Xianglin’s works in this context, I could not help realizing that since the nineties he has all along used “socialist experience” as an important theme, which enabled him to paint tableaux of historical themes in a very singular manner, interweaving from his own perspective the relations between history and reality.

Anyone who has studied a little bit the history of new China (i.e. the People’s Republic) knows that “the experience of socialism” refers actually to two distinct historical periods with completely different contents. In fact the first one goes from the founding of the People’s Republic in 1949 to the dismantlement of the “Gang of Four” in 1976; the second one goes from the third plenum of the eleventh congress of the Chinese Communist Party in 1978 to today; and in between lies the “Post-Cultural Revolution” period with all its excesses. As everyone knows, the foremost concepts of the first one were “class struggle” and “self-reliance”, whereas the second one was characterized by “economic building” and “reform and opening”. There are people nowadays who mix up the two, which is a huge mistake. From this perspective, I think that Zhou Xianglin’s works relate much more to the first of these two periods. Facing the past directly and reflecting on current practices is undoubtedly very enlightening as compared to the way many artists of the eighties were trying to imitate the West. That’s because on one hand it’s good for the artists expression of their real feelings about the reality that surrounds them; and on the other hand, in the present globalization, it’s good to highlight the national and cultural characteristics of the works. More importantly, while this type of works open new roads and explore new realms, they bring a very great vitality to the world’s contemporary art. Their main aim is to emphasize the relevance of art, reality and history, and the pursuit of a meaningful expression. Indeed, this trend of creation can be seen in a series of exhibitions and artistic activities in China, as well as in the former “socialist states” like the Soviet Union, the Democratic Republic of Germany or Yugoslavia, or in countries that are still socialist like Vietnam or Cuba. Moreover, some scholars at home and abroad have been researching this kind of phenomenon in artistic creation. The Slovenian scholars Ales Erjavec and Marina Gržinić are among the most influential. In his book *The era of image*<sup>4</sup>, the former discusses related questions. With your permission, I’ll discuss these in other articles.

In a rather short article, Zhou Xianglin makes a very clear distinction between historical painting and painting of historical themes. He points out: “Historical painting and the painting of historical themes are two conceptually different things. The main focus of historical painting is the restoration of history, mostly for specific exhibitions and displays; whereas paintings of historical themes has a much broader scope: in addition to the previously mentioned aspect, it gives more room to the expression of the





红色背景·打字机  
Red background · Type writer

布面油画  
Oil on canvas  
90 × 83 cm  
1992

为商品，并成为消费对象，人们应该有所警惕才是。按我的理解，画家对于卡通手法的采用，主要是为了从视觉上突出消费社会的特点，而绝不是为了追求形式上的时髦。

不过，就作品所达到的艺术效果、思想境界与个性特点而言，我更喜欢周向林创作的第三类作品。在处理这一类作品的图像时，艺术家虽然取消了带有明确故事情节的文本支撑，却使用了一个更有力的、潜在的文本，那就是携带着深刻历史记忆的文本，它存在于许许多多有着相关背景的中国人心中，永世不能忘怀！也正是基于这样的想法，艺术家方用超级写实的方式将上个世纪50年代到70年代具有象征意义的物品——如东方红牌拖拉机、北京牌吉普、上海牌轿车、解放牌卡车等等——精致入微地画了出来。这既是对许多中国人共同记忆的深情回望，也从今天的角度重新思考了计划经济时代的重大历史问题。这很有利于人们从政治、经济、社会、文化方方面面，全方位地反思中国在改革开放后的转型过程以及第一阶段的社会思潮和历史事实所造成的一系列后续影响。而那带有虚拟特点的空白背景处理则可能促进观众与作品产生良性的互动。比如，面对东方红牌拖拉机，人们不免会由它的符号象征意义联想到一个特定的时代；面对苏式打字机，人们又会由上世纪50年代中苏友好的情境，联想到中苏交恶的60年代至90年代；而看到北京牌吉普，则会由特殊年代的军工产品联想到毛主席接见红卫兵的情境……关于这方面的内容很多，在此我就不一一评介了。我注意到，艺术家在这一类绘画中运用了两种决然不同的处理模式：其一是根据实物直接进行艺术处理——如《红色机器·之一》、《红色机器·之二》与《红色背景》等等；其二是根据玩具模型进行放大化的艺术处理——如《模型· $\frac{1}{18} \times 18$ ·北京212》、《模型· $\frac{1}{24} \times 24$ ·解放CA10》与《模型· $\frac{1}{18} \times 18$ ·上海760》等等。就前者而言，实际上是强调实物与历史的联系。按艺术家的说法，是想使作品中的表现对象如同博物馆陈列的展品那样将“实存的意义与超现实的感受拢在同一个空间里，并使其价值和意义在陈列中显示出来。”<sup>[6]</sup>；就后者而言，却是将玩具模型放大成实物一样的效果，以期重新取得与历史的联系。<sup>[7]</sup>后一类作品带有较强的观念性。由于那些50、60年代生产的经典车型，如红旗牌轿车、解放牌卡车和北京牌吉普等，不光代表着一个特定的时代，还包含着无数的故事，所以艺术家采用此种手法就有可能揭开历史的尘封，并还原历史本身。在一定的程度上，车模仅仅是一个引子，为的是帮助人们去理解过去的



author ideas and creativity, it highlights his vision of history and his concerns about reality”<sup>5</sup>. This shows clearly that Zhou Xianglin's historical theme painting transcends the mainstream ideology. It is the result of his own deep personal reflection on history. From the paintings CD that Zhou Xianglin sent me, I would probably divide his historical theme paintings into three categories: the first is the expression of a historical event through traditional realism; the second is the expression of imaginary scenes related to history by means of the technique of cartoons; the third is the expression of cultural objects that accumulate historical sediments by way of surrealism. For instance, the tableau *November 12, 1969, Kaifeng* using the Pincas technique belongs to the first category. Obviously, the image processing here is supported by a text based on a real story, and the former President Liu Shaoqi, lying dead and lonely on the bed is depicted with extreme realism, the composition relies on the use of horizontal lines and heavy colors, so that it effectively highlights the dramatic atmosphere of the painting; and because the scene seems to be happening right before our eyes, it not only shakes our emotions, it makes us reflect deeply on the “Cultural Revolution” from a new angle. Whereas *Red Tour - Scenery H* belongs to the second category. Unlike the precedent, the image processing here is supported by a text based on an imaginary story. In correlation, Zhou Xianglin creates with the cartoon technique a female tour guide wearing a “Red Army” uniform or placed in the forefront, while the background is made of the “Red Scenery” and “Revolutionary Slogans”. This of course has a taste of surrealism, but it not only mixes together the revolutionary essence with the consumerism essence, it also highlights very well the following idea, namely that nowadays, anything can become a merchandise, an object of consumption, and viewers just should be aware of it, that's all. According to my understanding, the use of the cartoon technique in this painting is to visually highlight the consumer society specificities, and not to pursue a fashionable form.

Yet from the point of view of the artistic effect, ideological realm and personal characteristics, I prefer Zhou Xianglin's works of

the third category. Here, when the artist processes the image, he eliminates the support of any clear story, but uses a text that has a latent strength, a text that carries deep historical remembrances, a text that lies deep in the back of the mind of many Chinese, that is unforgettable for them. It is based on such a concept that the artist uses extreme realism to paint a meticulous and finely detailed image of objects symbolic of the fifties and the seventies - like “East is Red” tractors, Beijing Jeeps, Shanghai limousines or Jiefang trucks. For many Chinese this is a collective memory that they remember fondly, and at the same time, from today's perspective, it is a reason to reflect on the difficulties of the planned economy era. This will help the people to reflect from a political, economical, social, cultural perspective on the transition process in China after the reform and opening policy, and on the series of sequels left by the first phase of socialist thought and historical realities. And the treatment of the characteristically blank background might just produce a beneficial interaction between the audience and the work. For instance, when facing the East is Red tractors, the symbol it represents is such that people will not help thinking about a certain period of history; when facing the soviet style typewriter, people will think about the sino-soviet friendship of the fifties, and the hostility between the two countries from the sixties through the nineties ; and seeing a Beijing Jeep, an army factories product of a particular time, will remind them of Chairman Mao meeting the Red Guards... There are too many such examples, I'll just stop mentioning them. I noticed that the artist in this type of works uses two radically different methods: one is to treat the subject by sticking as close as possible to the real thing - like *Red machine I*, *Red machine II* and *Red background*, etc; the other does it by blowing up or enlarging models made from the real object, like *Model 1/18x18 Beijing 212*, *Model 1/24x24 Jiefang CA10* and *Model 1/18x18 Shanghai 760*. In the first case, this amounts to emphasize the link between history and the real object. As the artist puts it, the idea is to display the object of the painting as if it were in a museum, thus making the “existential meaning and surreal experience cohabit in the same space, so as to highlight its value and



布面油画  
Oil on canvas  
200 × 135 cm  
2006

“过去性”与“现存性”。

在这里，我想指出的是，上段文尾的一段话其实是对美国诗人艾略特说法的借用。这位大诗人一向强调传统意识对于文学创作的意义，他曾说过：“历史的意识是对于永久的意识，也是对于暂时的意识，也是对于永久和暂时的合起来的意识。就是这个意识使一个作家成为传统性的，同时也是这个意识使一个作家最敏锐地意识到自己在时间中的地位，自己和当代的关系。”<sup>[8]</sup>我认为，虽然艾略特的话是对文学家说的，但对美术家同样适用。周向林无疑深谙艾略特话中的深刻含义，所以他的作品才能与过去有一个同时性的存在，并组成了一个同时性的局面，这非常不容易。

进入新世纪以后，一些思想敏锐的中国当代艺术家为解决中国当代艺术的“再中国化”问题，十分强调从中国出发，他们不仅关注1911年以前已有的老传统，也很重视1949年以后出现的新传统，进而使中国当代艺术呈现出了全新的活力。周向林艺术探索就属于后者。其独特之处是：他从来没有一味追求艺术形式的变化，而是强调用艺术作品来表达对于历史与现实的反思或评论，并强调体现集体与个人的记忆。可以说，正是在这样的过程中，周向林的艺术才与社会、历史、生活有了内在或紧密的联系，因此特别值得人们认真对待与研究！

2011年7月29日于深圳美术馆

