

Tiger —— 著

艺术

TIGER'S
ART
JOURNEY

不再擦肩而过



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前言

1

当我开始写这本书时，我的前一本书《Tiger 的艺术笔记——现代艺术为什么是这样》刚刚定稿印刷。这使我不由自主地回望自己过去三年中因渴望感知艺术而走过的地方——德国、美国、意大利、比利时、荷兰、希腊……我想，无论是我过去几年中对艺术的探索，还是我每天的学习生活，其实都是一场旅行，充满探索，也充满收获。旅途让我看到无尽的新鲜风景，也让我感受到一种莫名的前进的动力——不断前往新的地方、探索新的事物，并感受其中的美好。

于是我想：为什么不写一本关于我的“艺术之旅”的书呢？

我的上一本《Tiger 的艺术笔记——现代艺术为什么是这样》偏重介绍了西方现代主义的九个重要流派，最终回答了为什么现代艺术是今天这个样子。而在本书中，我则想写一写我走过的城市、看过的博物馆，并且将我对各个城市的观察、我的一些感悟写下来，试着在更加广泛的意义上聊聊艺术，探索它究竟在怎样影响着我们的生活。或许，这可以从一个不同的角度展现艺术在我们这个社会中的多姿多彩。

2

这本书是关于我的艺术之旅，里面的每一章都会讲到一座城市的艺术。在芝加哥，我们会一窥现代艺术与当代艺术的不同，以及艺术世界中经典和垃圾的差

别。在纽约，我们会看到这里为什么是世界的艺术中心。在华盛顿，美国艺术界的精英会告诉我们如何管理世界顶级博物馆。在佛罗伦萨和罗马，古罗马艺术和文艺复兴至今仍对我们的社会有着深远影响。在阿姆斯特丹，北欧的艺术作品虽然会被世人忽略，但这丝毫不影响它们的灿烂。在安特卫普，我们能感受到艺术作品中法国、荷兰与德国的巧妙融合……

我会尽力把每座城市中最著名、最独特的艺术作品介绍给大家。其中绝大多数作品，旅游团是不会去观看的，旅行手册中也不会介绍，但是，它们却往往是一座城市、一个国家的精神所在。于是想来想去，我决定还是把这本书的标题定为《艺术不再擦肩而过》，希望你读后，可以不再错过那些伟大但很可能并不起眼的艺术作品。

3

今年春季，我在学校上了一门叫作“艺术与社会”的课程，学习了近几十年来当代艺术对社会的影响。记得在一堂课上，老师给我们播放了一位美国说唱明星的音乐视频。其中充满着低俗、污秽的用语，但却拥有几千万的播放次数。看看这些流行视频、这些被誉为我们这个时代的代表作品，再看看《蒙娜丽莎》，我们都会不由自主地问：“我们的文化发展到今天这样，到底是进步了还是退步了？”

近年来新媒体与科技的快速发展让艺术囊括了比以往更多的表达形式。举个简单例子：我今年在美国时，就听说国内兴起了一阵“网红”文化。很多人把关于自己的各种稀奇古怪的视频放到网上，还有人在网上直播自己的各种活动，谁的观众多，谁的商业效益就大。有的“网红”甚至被估值上亿元、得到融资上千万，

这都是莫奈那个时代的艺术家所不能想象的。以前画家通过几十年努力成就的事业和影响力，可能还不如今天一个发了几个视频的小青年。

从某种意义上说，这些“网红”其实就是当今最受欢迎的艺术家，而他们的视频也成了价值连城的作品。他们创作艺术的形式与几十年前不同，更不要说与上百年前相比了。目标客户、传播方式、艺术价值等，都已经不可同日而语。无疑，我们要用一个不同的视角去看今天的艺术。

我想问：艺术的平民化到底提升了还是降低了艺术的价值？传统和当今的艺术能相容并包吗？商业到底是推动了艺术的发展还是让艺术堕落？再说大一些，艺术的定义以前是什么，今天又是什么？

我能回答这些问题吗？不完全能。但我和很多人讨论过这些问题，也愿意和大家分享自己的想法。无论是在卢森堡市郊的乡村，还是在纽约市中心的画廊，艺术与社会都有着不可分离的联系。我希望这本书能成为一个镜头，带给大家一些不寻常的视角。

4

写完《艺术不再擦肩而过》后，有人问我为什么喜爱艺术，我却突然语塞，不知说什么了。艺术史涵盖的思想太多，我也说不清这个学科究竟在什么方面吸引了我。接下来的两个月，我天天思考着自己与艺术的联系。

我小时很少接触艺术，所以对艺术的喜爱并不是长期积累的结果，更多应该是“一见钟情”。在我见到现代艺术的刹那间，一种莫名的情感在我心中产生，让

我深深地感受到了艺术不为人知的一种力量。

今天，我静静地站在梵高的作品前，似乎能进入画中那个绚丽的世界与梵高对话。从富有激情的麦田到灿烂的向日葵，我不仅能感受到梵高对生活的认识，而且感到，这也正是我心中的麦田和向日葵。就这样，我和艺术似乎存在一种非理性的、精神上的连接，而不仅仅是学术上的积累。艺术对我来说，更多是感情和精神上的意义。

随着我看到越来越多的画作，我逐渐明白，艺术品就是艺术家创造出来的一个世界，而站在艺术品前的一刹那，我们的灵魂和内心会与这个世界沟通。如果我们喜欢这件作品，就说明我们的内心与艺术家的世界建立起了联系。这样说虽然有些抽象，但是，看艺术其实就是一个内心与艺术世界沟通的过程，也是一个内心不断成长的过程。

很多人不喜欢艺术，要么是因为内心并不认同那个世界，要么是因为并没有尝试与那个世界沟通。我之前也从未与那个世界沟通过，但是认真审视现代艺术的世界后，我发现自己的内心是可以与那个复杂世界建立情感联系的，而且，在这种联系过程中，我也在不断发现自己——原来，在我的内心深处，有许多我并未意识到的、或者被忽略的情感和意识，它们现在逐渐被唤醒了，并且在成长。我希望这本《艺术不再擦肩而过》能简单一窥艺术家的世界，或许很多人能在这里找到一些久被自己遗忘的东西。

5

《艺术不再擦肩而过》看起来透着阳光的气息，但其实大部分稿件是我在深夜

完成的。我虽然热爱艺术与写作，但写书其实是一件累人、甚至有时感到枯燥的事情；大量的介绍和研究极其繁琐，需要很多耐心和沉静。我原本的设想是把这本书写成一本游记，白天看博物馆，晚上轻轻松松写一点，结果没想到，写作的过程成了冗长的持久战。

今年6月到8月间，我走过了芝加哥、华盛顿、佛罗伦萨、罗马、米兰、比萨、阿姆斯特丹、海牙、布鲁塞尔、安特卫普、卢森堡……，欧美各地的艺术作品看得我目不暇接，虽然我每一天都很快乐，但是白天的暴走加上晚上的熬夜写作，让我身心俱疲。记得在荷兰的最后一天，我早上6点钟就起了床，坐火车去梵高博物馆与首席策展人见面；我在博物馆里呆了五个多个小时，错过了午饭，之后拖着疲惫的身躯跑到“安妮·弗兰克之家”；从那里出来后，我又走到市中心广场的星巴克，用两个小时的时间赶紧把和首席策展人的对话记录下来，结果错过了晚饭；晚上，我又到阿姆斯特丹城南去看难得的“世界脱口秀艺术节”表演，直到午夜时分才回到住所。终于，我在回北京的前一天累倒了，病毒入侵，得了神经炎，回到北京的第一件事就是看病。老中医说，我看似走南闯北挺厉害，其实身体已经虚弱到极限，能“活着回家”真是个奇迹。

我“拼了命”写这本书，倒不是为了证明艺术是我生活中最重要的一部分，而是想说，艺术的力量比我们想像的要大，艺术家能带我们走到普通人走不到的地方。

这不是一本试图给你洗脑的书，而是一本我在艺术之旅中真实感受的记录。

Tiger

2016年9月18日

Preface

1

When I started writing *Tiger's Art Journey*, my previous book *Tiger's Art Notes* was just printed. The book's publication helped me reflect on places I went for art in the past three years – Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, Greece... I thought, my travel experience and daily study are, in fact, an art journey. The idea of having a journey for art motivates me to always march forward in life for new ideas and discoveries.

“Why not name this new book *Tiger's Art Journey*?” I said to myself.

Tiger's Art Notes introduced nine crucial modern art movements that largely shaped the definition of art. In *Tiger's Art Journey*, I want to write about a broader range of art and culture through the lens of my travel experience; there will not only be introductions of art movements, but also explorations on how art influences different societies' culture and our lives. I hope this book can really show art's power in changing our world from a perspective that's different from traditional art history books.

2

Since this book is about my journey, each chapter will cover a city. In Chicago, we'll see the distinctions between modern and contemporary art, as well as the

trashy, pretentious artworks in my eyes. In New York, we'll explore how this city is the current art center of the world. In Washington, D.C., the elites of American art world will tell us how they run top-notch museums. In Florence, ancient Roman and Renaissance art continue to inspire the Italian society. In Amsterdam, we'll discover the often ignored beauty of Northern European art. In Brussels, we can observe how this city brings French, German, and Dutch art together...

I'll write about the best museums and art I saw in each city and the fascinating ideas behind them. A lot of the artworks I write about aren't part of the traditional tourist routine, but they're often the symbols of a city, a country, or a culture. While a lot of people will miss these significant art treasures during their trips, I hope you won't pass by and ignore them after reading this book.

3

This spring, I took a course at school called *Art and Society*, exploring how modern and contemporary art influence our society. One day, our teacher showed us a music video by a famous American rapper. Though the video was filled with vulgar words, it received millions of views and was rated as a top song of the month. When we finished watching that video, I think everyone wanted to ask: "From *Mona Lisa* to this rapper video, something considered to be the pinnacle of our era's culture, did our culture 'progress' or 'regress' in the past hundreds of years?"

In recent years, the rise of new media and technology has definitely allowed art to incorporate more forms of expression than ever. For instance, when I was in the U.S. earlier this year, I heard that a new online celebrity culture had started in China. These celebrities were called “Wang Hong” (网红); they posted all kinds of quirky videos online and live-streamed their daily activities. The more viewers a celebrity had, the more valuable he or she was. Some celebrities were even valued and invested with millions of dollars. This sort of pop culture was definitely unimaginable in Claude Monet’s time. The influence artists used to work for decades to achieve might not come close to what a few teenagers can now accomplish in a few days by posting funny Vine videos.

In a way, these Chinese online celebrities are the most popular artists today, and their videos are the artworks that really shape the Chinese society and culture. However, their targeted audience, communication platforms, and artistic values are drastically different from what artists had hundreds of years ago. No doubt, we must use a different perspective to look at art nowadays.

I wonder: Does popularizing art increase or decrease art’s value? Can traditional and contemporary art forms be inclusive of one another? Is our heavily capitalistic art market facilitating or impeding the development of art? In an even broader sense, what was the definition of art before, and how has it changed to what we have today?

Am I able to answer these questions? Not really. However, I’ve discussed these topics with many people and would love to share my thoughts with you. Whether

it's in a small village outside Luxembourg City or at the center of Boston, art has an inseparable connection with our society. I sincerely hope that this book can provide you a unique perspective to look at art and society.

4

After I finished writing *Tiger's Art Journey*, someone asked me one day why I love art, and to my surprise, I didn't know what to say. Art history encompasses so many ideas that I couldn't pinpoint what exactly attracted me. In the following months, I reflected every day on my relationship with art.

I didn't spend much time with art when I was young, and my parents never did any art-related work, so my current passion for art definitely didn't result from a long-term accumulation of interests. On the contrary, something must have happened suddenly that made me fall in love with art. While I used to think that art didn't have any concrete meaning to our society, I was eventually drawn by artists' emotion conveyed through their works.

Today, when I stand in front a painting by van Gogh, I feel as if I could enter his colorful world and start a conversation with him. Rationally, I know that van Gogh was not accurately depicting physical reality as I see it. But emotionally, I feel myself resonating with his colors and composition. In a way, his wheatfield and sunflowers are exactly what I see in my heart. Empathizing with artists and entering their worlds

make me realize that I have an emotional connection with art, rather than an intellectual one. I fall for art not because of my rational knowledge on artistic techniques or color schemes, but because of my emotional and spiritual connections with it.

As I see more artworks around the world, I gradually realize that each artwork is a world created by artists. When one stands in front of an art piece, his or her soul would communicate with the world behind it. Many people don't like art; I think that's because they either don't identify with the spiritual world behind certain artworks, or haven't attempted to communicate with that world at all. Though this idea sounds very abstract and vague, I do believe there's an irrational connection between art and us.

Through this process of connecting with art, I discovered a lot about myself as well. Art awakened much undiscovered emotion in me that my normal life had failed to evoke. When I saw Vermeer's *Woman in Blue Reading a Letter* in Amsterdam, the emotional intensity conveyed through the girl's clutching hands and upright stance pulled me into her mysterious world. I imagined my mom, in our living room, reading the postcard I had just sent days before. As I thought about how we had been separated for six months, acute nostalgia engulfed me. While I'd been in boarding school for three years and thought I was used to being away from home, staring at this painting stirred up emotions I had neglected for years. I hope *Tiger's Art Journey*, just like Vermeer's paintings, can open up a window to the art world for you, where you might also find much undiscovered emotion for yourself.

Tiger's Art Journey seems to be about my joyful travel experience, but it was in fact written at exhausting late nights. As much as I love art and writing, this book has been quite a challenging task. I had to do heavy research and think deliberately about my messages. While I thought this book would require only a little bit of writing every night, much like keeping a diary, it turned out to be hours of intense writing past midnights.

From June to August of 2016, I traveled through Chicago, Washington, D.C., Florence, Rome, Milan, Pisa, Amsterdam, The Hague, Brussels, Antwerp, Luxembourg City... I took art history classes at local institutions in the morning, visited museums in the afternoon, and wrote this book at night. Every day, I indulged myself in the joy of seeing art, but the trip really depleted my energy. On the day before I returned back to China, for example, I woke up at 6 am to catch a train to Amsterdam's Van Gogh Museum, where I spent five hours meeting with the chief curator and looking at exhibitions. In the afternoon, I went to Anne Frank House and then to a Starbucks downtown to jot down my conversation with the curator. At night, I hurried to Toomler – a comedy club hosting the Amsterdam International Stand-Up Comedy Festival – to watch a special by Moshe Kasher and Natasha Leggero. I returned to my residence at midnight and got sick due to excessive fatigue on the following day. Luckily, I flew back to Beijing in time and got the chance to rest. My doctor told me that though it seemed I was energetic enough to travel around, my body already got very close to crash down; it was a “miracle” that I finished my

two-month art journey alive...

I “risked my life” writing this book not to prove that art is the most significant aspect of our lives, but to show how art is far more powerful than a lot of us have imagined. This is not a book that tries to brainwash you, but a series of notes on my genuine feelings during my art journey.

I hope you’ll enjoy reading it!

Tiger

September 18, 2016

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