



中国当代
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2006

Chinese
Contemporary
Art
Document

主 编：邓平祥

Editor in Chief : Deng Pingxiang

执行主编：邵 琦

Executive Editor in Chief : Shao Qi

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Executive Editor in Chief: Shao Qi

责任编辑: 张卫

Assistant Editor: Zhang Wei

封面设计: 楚智程

Cover Designer: Chu Zhicheng

特约校对: 杨莉

Proofreader: Yang Li

英文翻译: 陈俐 (美国), 黄娥

English Translators: Lily Hope Chumley (USA), Huang E

作品翻拍: 刘才云

Photographer: Liu Caiyun

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历史性和当代性

——《中国当代艺术文献2006》（代序）

邓平祥

文献，从辞义的角度说，原指典籍与宿贤。朱熹注：文，典籍也；献，贤也。二个注解都说明文献既是经典的、又是德性的，功在历史的。

《中国当代艺术文献2006》，既为文献，当然在编辑时就应按“文献”的意旨来要求，然而“历史”总是在一定距离才能看得清楚，否则就会“不识庐山真面目，只缘身在此山中”了。但是一旦有了历史的距离（时间的跨度和时间的量），由于时间的屏蔽和消解作用，又势必失去很多真实的东西（感性材料和直觉判断），这就是一个矛盾。

我们在编辑《中国当代艺术文献2006》一书时充分考虑到上述因素，故本着尽量客观如实地编选，力求能为文化的多种需要和历史提供一个真实的，可供研究、参考、查证、索引的艺术文献性书籍。当代人编辑当代艺术文献的优势在于：由于入选的艺术家和入编的材料都是现实的“存在者”，故可资编辑的材料都是第一手的，可信度大；由于是在历史的“第一时间”内，材料基本没有流失，亦少有讹传，故能收到“立此存照”之效。

作为《中国当代艺术文献2006》，“当代性”是我们编选的一个原则。“当代性”从辞义上说可以有二义，即当代发生的文献；当代性的文献。在二义中，我们主要取后者，即当代性的。所谓当代性的，系指文献的文化状态。本着这一宗旨，我们编选的艺术及其作者，基本上都是具有当代文化意义的，亦即是代表这一时代的，在艺术的精神法则和形式法则上都是具备当代意义的艺术家和他们的作品。

这样“当代艺术文献”在进入历史之后，就会自然地呈现出“断代史”的特征。和编年史比较，“断代史”是历史的一个断面，它无须交待历史的上下文关系，但它却是历史不可缺少的一个环节。而正是许多这样的历史的环节构成了整个的历史。

如果将20世纪发生的“85思潮”，作为中国当代艺术的一个标识性的起点，那么中国的当代艺术已经有二十多年的历史了。在这短短的二十多年历史中，中国的艺术经历了从未有过的变革，而变革的一个根本特征就是艺术和中国整体的文化思潮和思想运动共起落、共命运。在这个过程中，艺术作为文化的一个同构体系表现得这样的鲜明，鲜明性显示出了艺术（视觉艺术）在文化变革中的敏锐性和前卫性。

“思潮的迭起是文化的昂进”。（梁启超）

中国当代艺术和文化思潮的这种自律（文化自律）的关系，同时反映出中国当代艺术的发生和拓展是在一个相对开发和自由的文化环境下发生的和展开的。这就使得在这种情况下编辑的《中国当代艺术文献2006》可能具备真实而又有历史性的精神文化价值。

“一切历史都是当代史”。这句具有历史哲学意义的名言，无疑又将是审视我们这部《中国当代艺术文献2006》的一个价值的前提，我们无需回避我们的“当代判断”，而正是这当代判断构成了“历史之历史”。

当然在表面上看，我们并没有判断，我们只是编选和呈示，但我们的态度和立场是存在于这种“无判断”的编选和呈示之中的。

精选的218位艺术家和他们的作品，大多是当代具有代表意义的。他们的作品从整体上看，都具有鲜明的个人性特征。个人的视角、个人的经验、个人的生命体验都不同程度地内在于他们的作品之中。也是由于他们作品中的个人性使得他们的艺术呈现出了丰富和复杂的景象，折射出了鲜明的时代性特征和当代性特征。后人在欣赏和审视这些作品时，不但可以明确地看到他们在形式表达上的推进和成果，同时还可以感觉到形式语言后的精神和情感状态。

在编选的艺术家中，人们可以看到在当代中国艺术中很熟悉的名字，事实上他们是当代艺术的一些标识性和符号性的人物，是他们的探索造就了中国当代艺术风起云涌的景观。

应当特别提出的是，在美术界功成名就的一些人物，在本书编选之时，却正在进行形式语言或者符号图式的转型探索。一个功成名就，其艺术的图式和符号又为人们所熟知的艺术家，在自己事业的辉煌之期要进行“自我毁灭”而以新的面目出现，其中的难度和风险是可想而知的。他们之所以要犯难图新，我想是：一是出于自己的心性，二是基于艺术的形式逻辑。

另一方面，在入选的艺术家中，也有一些暂不为人知的名字，他们或许还很年轻；或许尚未成熟；或许无缘进入人们的视野；或许还一时还不为人们所理解，等等。但他们的作品在整体品质上所呈现的精神趋势和文化趋向，却大多是具有明确现代文化性的，并且以他们的执着和才情我们完全有理由相信，他们之中的一批将在不久的将来成为中国当代艺术的中坚力量。

Historicity and the Contemporary

Chinese Contemporary Art Document 2006

Deng Pingxiang

From the perspective of lexicography, the word “document” (*wenxian*) originally referred to two kinds of classical records, *dianji* and *suxian*. Zhu Xi notes that “*wen*” here refers to *dianji* and “*xian*” to *suxian*. His annotations explain that since documents are classics (*jingji*), they are also concerned with morality, and their significance is primarily historical.

As a form of document, Chinese Contemporary Art Document 2006 must of course base its requirements for inclusion on the significance of “documents”. It is true that “history” can only be seen clearly from a certain distance; otherwise we risk “failing to see the true face of Lu Mountain, because we are standing on it”. However, when we achieve historical distance (a breadth and span of time), we are sure to have lost many concrete realities in the refining screen of time (emotional substance and intuitive judgments). This is a contradiction.

In compiling this text, we have fully considered this problem, and have tried to balance considerations of objectivity with an on-the-ground immediacy. We strove to produce a book that could satisfy the various demands of culture and history, and serve as a resource for research and reference, indexing the many facets of contemporary art today. When contemporary people edit a work on contemporary art, they have the advantage that all the works and artists they include are presently existing; they have firsthand experience of all the materials they select, and can be confident in their understanding. Because this is the first period of history, and materials have not yet been washed away or distorted, it is possible to achieve certainty.

As a “Chinese Contemporary Art Document”, contemporaneity was a principle factor in our selections. From the perspective of lexicography “contemporariness” has two meanings, the first being documents produced in the present, contemporary documents. But we stress the second meaning, on which “contemporariness” refers to the cultural conditions of the documents. Consequently, the artists and writers we have selected generally possess a sense of contemporary culture; they are representative of this era. The spiritual and formal principles of the art presented here encompass the contemporary perspective of artists and their work.

After this “Chinese Contemporary Art Document” has entered the record of history, it will take on the character of “dynastic history”. Compared with the annals and chronicles, “dynastic history” is a segment of history, which need not explain contextual relationships; but it is a segment that is indispensable to history, because any complete history is composed of many segments, of just this kind.

If in the future the 1985 ideological trend comes to symbolize the starting point of Chinese contemporary art, we can say that even now Chinese contemporary art already has more than twenty years of history. In these brief twenty years, Chinese art has already passed through numerous transformations. A fundamental characteristic of these transformations is that art rises and falls with the whole of Chinese cultural trends and intellectual movements; they share a common fate. In the process of cultural change, art shares its structure with other cultural systems, but displays a distinctive feature: art (that is, visual art) is particularly acute and avant-garde.

“The recurrence of ideological trends is the progress of culture.” Liang Qichao.

The kind of autonomous relationship that Chinese contemporary art and intellectual trends have (cultural autonomy), also indicates that contemporary art developed in a relatively free and open cultural environment. This allows the kind of documents collected here to possess authenticity, historical spirit, and cultural value.

“All history is the history of the contemporary.” This dictum has philosophical significance, and will surely be the criterion on which our Chinese Contemporary Art Document will be judged. There is no reason to escape our “contemporary judgments”, and in fact “history as history” is composed of such contemporary judgments. Of course, we have ostensibly made no judgments, but only arranged and presented these materials. But our attitudes and perspectives still guide our “objective” arrangement and presentation.

The artists and works presented in this anthology overwhelmingly represent the contemporary. Examined from the perspective of the whole, their works possess distinctive individual characteristics. Individual vision, individual experience and life history, are all to different degrees inherent in these works. It may be that this individuality caused their works to present rich and complex scenes, to refract the distinctive aspects of modernity and the contemporary. When later generations examine and appreciate these artworks, they will not only clearly see the progress and achievements made by these artists in terms of formal expression, but also see the emotional and spiritual conditions that lie behind the formal language.

Among the artists collected here, you will see familiar names from the field of contemporary Chinese art; in fact, these artists have become representative and even symbolic characters. Their explorations gave rise to the popularity of contemporary Chinese art. Even as this book was being compiled, they were in the process of exploring and transforming their formal languages and symbolic schemes. A famous and accomplished artist, with whose designs and symbols we are all familiar, in the most brilliant period of his career must carry out “self destruction” and produce a new appearance; one can well imagine the difficulty and risks of this process. There are two reasons why these artists suffer in pursuit of the new, I believe: the first is individual temperament, and the second is the formal logic of art.

On the other hand, among the artists collected here you will also see artists whose names are not, for the present at least, familiar to art audiences, or who are very young; artists who have not yet matured, those who have had no opportunity of entering the public view, and those who, for the time being, are not understood. But on the whole, from the perspective of quality, the cultural tendencies and spiritual trends presented by their works, possess a clear modernity and contemporary quality. Moreover we have reason to believe in their perseverance and talent, and to predict that some of these artists will, before long, become a central force in Chinese contemporary art.

破碎的镜象

——考察中国当代艺术的一个角度

邹跃进

中国的当代艺术就像一面破碎的镜子，尽管它还能呈现出形象，但这个形象已不再完整，开始变得飘忽不定。生活在这面镜子周围的艺术家的，也慢慢明白，不是镜子的破碎使他们无法从镜中辨别清晰的事物，而是呈现在镜中的世界本身已变得支离破碎。

破碎化自然成为这个时代最鲜明的表征。这首先表现为语言的破碎化，即能指与所指发生断裂，不再互相匹配；它们不是陷入拉康的“能指循环”，就是沉浸在德里达所说的“异延”中，因为能指与所指的关系不再是确定而唯一的。随之而来的就是形象与意义的断裂，它们不再依靠对方而存在，可以自足的表现自己，彼此处于游离的状态。正如在大多数当代艺术家作品中看到的，虽然画面中充满形象，但意义已不再不言自明。

当然，破碎化不仅体现在语言，符号这个基础层面，更渗透于具体的社会文化生活中。自改革开放以来，随着市场经济体制的不断完善，市场社会的雏形开始显现。城市化、商品化、信息化冲击着艺术家的生存空间。遍布城市间的高速公路和立交桥，拔地而起的高级公寓和写字楼，在明确城市功能区划的同时，也给人们造成了空间上的区隔和沟通障碍。市场经济的引入，使人在劳动过程中发生异化，具有商品属性，被物所统治。财富（金钱）成为衡量人的价值最重要的标准。当代艺术品拍卖完美成就了中国当代艺术的“F4”，人们在惊讶他们作品创造的天价的同时，更是发出了无数的羡慕之声。当我们的脑袋被这些片断化的事件和图像包围的时候，才猛然发现文字阅读的时代已经悄然远去，图像杂陈的时代已经到来，生活中充满了既熟悉又陌生的图像碎片和事件的无序发生，总之，我们完全失去了语境，无法辨别它们属于谁，发生在什么年代。

其实，造成当代中国社会这种从语言、符号到社会，再到生活与政治事件的零乱与破碎的原因，就是各种相互冲突的立场和价值标准，都只具有实用主义的价值，或者换句话说，正是我们采用实用主义的方法，才使古今中西的一切东西失去了本源的意义和本体的依据。有用就是硬道理的观念，既使相互敌对的东西能和平共处，也使本为同一立场和路线上的主张能相互敌意。对此，我们可称其为一种当代中国的时代特色。正是在此历史情境中，中国艺术家在辨别是非和进行审美判断的时候，不再能够借助以往的经验，而更多的是凭借自己的经历。当下社会使他们的经验不断丧失，结果便是传统的丢失，个人对社会投入体验的丧失和人类记忆的遗忘。但由于中国社会的集体意识依然潜藏于部分艺术家的潜意识里，从他们的作品中我们不难体会到昔日生活所残存下来的模糊记忆对他们创作的影响。而对于大多数艺术家而言，他们在描绘这个世界的时候，依靠的则是个人的直观感悟和自我体验（我称之为经历）。这里的经历，是指艺术家面对强大冲击时一种瞬间的反应。它带来更多的随意性和自主性，也更具有创造力。因而，他们可以给观者带来一次次的震惊：耸入云天的巨石，遍布展厅的钢管和琉璃瓦，空中飞翔的天使，哈哈大笑的人群。观者在享受一连串的视觉盛宴后，才发现根本不知道自己身处何地。现实和仿真哪个更真实成为他们思考的主题。艺术在变成个人玩耍嬉戏的实验场的时候，也就彻底的世俗化了。神圣成为嘲讽的对象，无聊成为最值得颂扬的品质，活着的意义就是活着，艺术从此失去了可依据判断的标准。我们虽然无法对此作出好与坏，是与非的判断，但在我看来，作为破碎的镜象的中国当代艺术，它的活力及其挑战都源于这破碎的现实。

2006/12/15于上海国际饭店

Images in a Broken Mirror

——a perspective on the study of contemporary Chinese art

Zou Yuejin

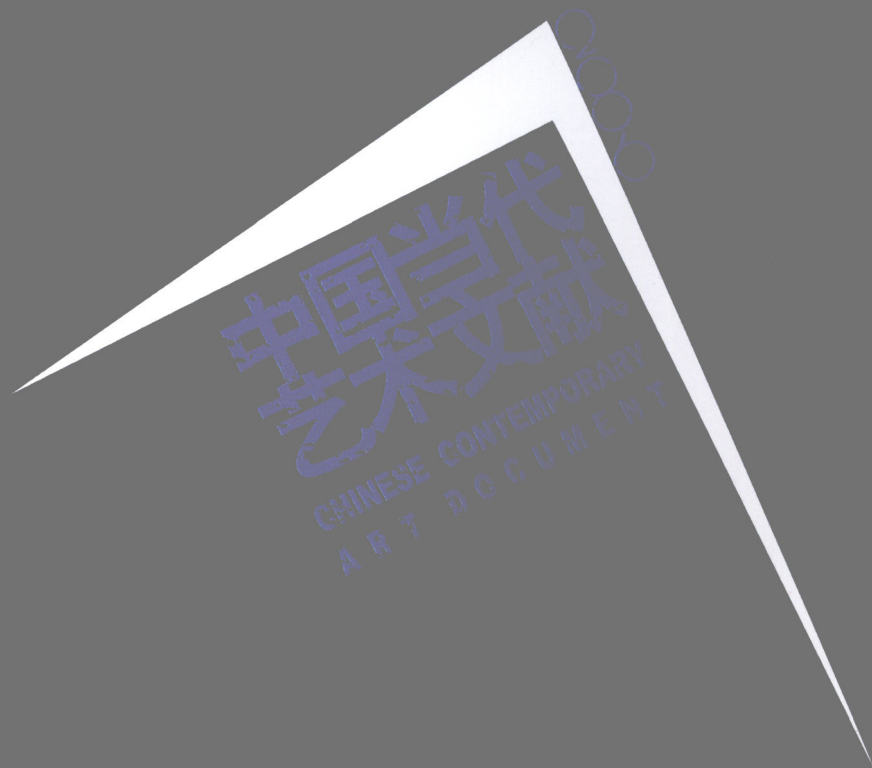
Chinese contemporary art is like a broken mirror: it is always presenting new images, but these images are no longer coherent, they are becoming indeterminate, desultory. The artists who live inside this mirror are beginning to realize that they can't distinguish things clearly, not because the mirror is broken, but because the world it reflects is fragmented.

Fragmentation has naturally become the most distinct symbol of this era. Above all else, the symbolism of "breaks" expresses the fragmentation of language, the parting of signifier and signified, which no longer fit each other. If they do not fall into what Lacan called the circle of signification, they remain immersed in the state of "difference" described by Derrida, because the relationship between signifier and signified is multiple and unstable. As language comes apart, image and meaning likewise become estranged; they exist without depending on one another, present themselves independently. With respect to one another, they are in a state of drift. In just the same way, the works of most contemporary artists are full of imagery, but their meaning is no longer self-evident.

Of course, fragmentation is not only realized in language, or at the fundamental level of symbols, but even more thoroughly permeates the concrete society and its cultural life. With the start of the reform period in China and the continuous perfection of the market economy, the embryonic market society began to emerge. Urbanization, commodification, and the information age have seriously affected artists' living space. The expressways and overpasses that crisscross the city, the high-rise apartment complexes and office buildings that rose overnight, serve to divide the city into distinct districts, and present spatial boundaries and obstacles to communication. Being drawn into market society causes people to become alienated from the process of labor, to take on the characteristics of commodities, and be dominated by things. Wealth (money) becomes the most important standard by which people are judged. Contemporary art auctions produce Chinese contemporary art's pop stars. People are shocked by the astronomical prices artworks command at auctions, but they are even more envious; the "oohs" and "aahs" of admiration are infinite. Only when our brains are enveloped by such fragmentary events and incidents, do we finally realize with a start that the age of written language, of books and reading, has already slipped quietly into the distance. The age of hybrid images has arrived. Life is full of shattered images and disordered events, simultaneously strange and familiar; we have completely lost the sense of (linguistic) context, and are helpless to determine to whom these images belong, in what period these events took place.

Actually, the chaotic and partial causes that produce this kind of contemporary society, from language and symbols to society, and further to the conditions of life and government, are actually many kinds of mutually conflicting standpoints and standards of value. All have only practical value, or in other words, are the method by which we adopt pragmatism. Only when we adopt pragmatism do all things—ancient and modern, Chinese and Western—lose their original meanings and ontological foundations. The view that "utility" is hard rationality can make things that are mutually antagonistic peacefully coexist, and make the advocates of the positions and paths that are to be united, become mutually hostile. In view of this fact, we can take "usefulness" for a special feature of contemporary China. In these historical circumstances, when artists are distinguishing good and bad, are in the process of making aesthetic judgments, they can no longer draw on past experience, let alone rely on personal history. Contemporary society causes people to continuously lose the accumulated knowledge of experience, and the result is that traditions are lost, the individual willingness to contribute to society is lost, and human memory is forgotten. But because the collectivist mentality still lurks in the subconscious of China's artists, in their works we can see the influence of the blurred memories left behind by a time now long past. As far as most artists are concerned, when they depict this world, they rely on the conclusions of individual observation and experience, what I am calling "personal history". "Personal history" refers to the instantaneous reaction of artists to formidable assault. The more the artist does as he likes, the more autonomous he is, the more creativity he has. This kind of artist can shock audiences every time: rocks stand up among the clouds, steel pipes and clay tiles spread out across the exhibition hall, angels circle in the sky, crowds laugh uproariously. Only after enjoying a banquet of such works spread out in a row, does the viewer realize that he really doesn't know where he is. Reality and simulation, which one has actually become the motif of artists' thought? Art has become a field for experimentation in individual amusements and games; at the same time, it has become thoroughly worldly. The sacred has become the object of mockery, and boredom has become the character most worth of praise. The meaning of life is just to live, and so art has lost any standard of judgment. We also no longer have any way to judge whether this phenomenon is good or bad; but in my opinion, as Chinese contemporary art is images in a broken mirror, its vigor and its challenge both arise from a fragmented reality.

15, December, 2006, in Shanghai International Hotel



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