



指印——张羽

FINGERPRINTS——Zhang Yu

1991 • 2001—2008

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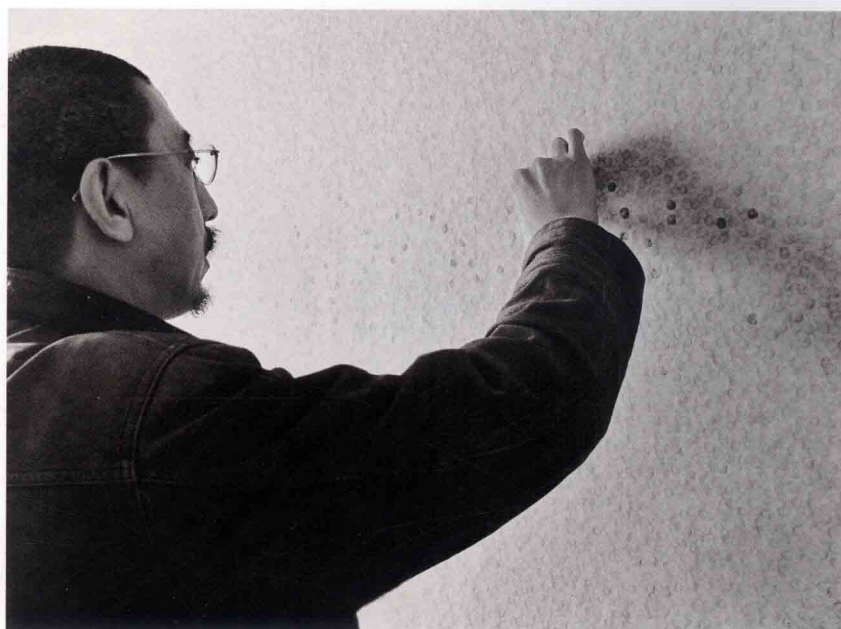
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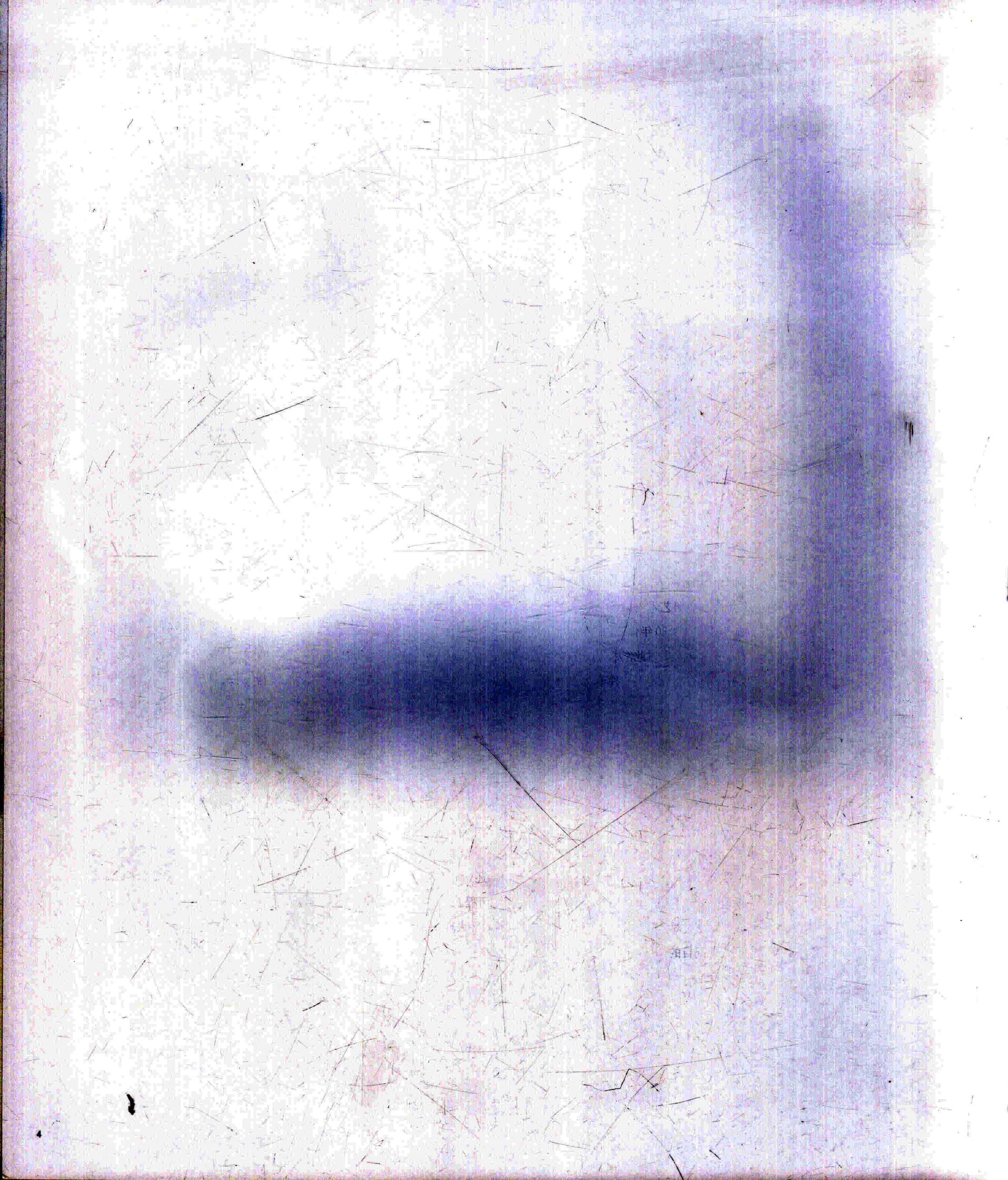
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2005, 张羽在天津工作室
2005, Zhang Yu's Tianjin Studio





张羽的指印——画面外的自我冥想

文/高名璐

张羽于上世纪80年代后期开始了他的实验水墨之旅，成为实验水墨运动的主要创始人和发起者。他不愿效仿众多寻求“笔墨复兴”的现代水墨艺术家，后者认为，只有水墨技法革命才能带来新的文化价值和品位。在西方现代艺术的冲击下，中国的艺术家和批评家们早在80年代中期就开始谈论传统水墨的危机。讨论涉及数个议题，其中最引人关注的就是传统水墨的美学和技法向当代形式的转变。对此，尽管人们莫衷一是，可是他们的理论出发点是相同的。几乎所有的对于传统水墨危机的讨论，都是基于同样的信仰：只有找到一种革命性的笔墨，才能变传统为当代。于是，这种追求把笔墨抬高到了神话般的地位，却束缚了当代的水墨艺术家。因为他们只注目于物体本身，只注目于画作表面，却忽视了作品与大环境间的联系，如艺术家的生活，环境的影响，尤其是全球化这个大背景。

在从事实验水墨的创作时，张羽一贯排斥使用传统的水墨技法，尤其是明清和19世纪时文人们的“抒怀”风格，尽管他早期接受的是传统技法的教育。从传统角度而言，张羽的作品也许缺乏“笔意”价值，因为他刻意避免使用带有个人风格的“皴笔”吸引观众。恰恰相反，他往往采取形状和大小类似的笔触，甚至干脆反复在宣纸上按下指印，以求获得抽象，破除具象。

张羽花了十年时间创作他的《灵光》系列，以全新的方式颠覆了传统意义上的笔墨表达。画作中没有“笔”，只有“墨”。张羽创作的最终目的是为了构造一种符号、一种标记、一种神秘的图像，以呈现太初的混沌和灵光，而非沉溺于使用私人的、感性的笔触来抒发个人情怀。然而，无论是他笔下的宇宙，还是他采用的技法，都有着极为浓厚的东方哲学气息。宇宙是世界的起源，画作中无数的墨点则记录了张羽在构造符号时的心路历程。因此，他所表达的世界和自我，便得到了对立和统一。他的近作《指印》系列更是通过对“笔”的极度排斥，大大超越了自我表现主义。该系列秉承了《灵光》中的“太初混沌”之感，但少了几分象征意味和布局目的。

张羽早在1991年就开始创作《指印》系列。观众不难发现早期的《指印》作品和后期的《灵光》作品间存在着布局上的相似。指印从画作的边缘汇集到中心，构造出的符号颇有灵光或太初混沌之感，令人想起后期的《灵光》。从2003年起，张羽的创作热情完全从《灵光》转移到《指印》，并且画作的焦点也不再是一个符号性的球面，而是残缺的指印片段——它们既蕴藏着某些文化含义，又体现了作者的个人历程。

人们有时用指印来认可契约。指印的特殊性在于，它被视作个人身份的物质体现。因此，它承载了社会关系和个人生命的双重含义。在张羽的近作中，他并没有把这种含义用二元的形式表现出来，而是采取了在纸面上极其随意地敲按指印的方式。正如

张羽在他的随笔中写道：“《指印》就像对日常的冥想做出的片段记录，在留下自然随意的印迹的同时，凸显其中的‘含义’”。因此，诸如布局原则、层次结构，或者类似“整体性”的布局概念，在张羽的《指印》中，也就变得无所谓了。作品并不强调主观与客观、精神与物质或者中心与边缘的对立，它并不是宇宙精神或艺术家自我思索的体现，也不是纯粹的物理运动产物。每一枚指印都没有清晰的边缘，作品本身记录了一个自然的、重复的、断续的过程。张羽的意图，并不是要让观众单纯地“看见”作品，或是单纯地“思考”作品，而是使他们想象手指落在纸面上的每一个瞬间。

由此可知，《指印》系列和佛教禅宗渊源颇深。指印的创作过程暗示了社会含义只存在于个人经历中，这正符合了“冥想”的直觉神秘主义。《指印》背后的理念也常常与艺术家的生活哲理暗合——倡导清心寡欲，向往安分守常，盼望人们摒弃奢侈浮夸的风气，追求朴素简单的生活。

事实上，在我谓之“极多主义”的中国抽象派艺术家中，张羽是最重要的一位。该学派的许多艺术家刻意远离主流艺术及中国当今的城市时尚，安静地从事他们自己的“劳动”。而之所以称他们的艺术为“极多主义”，是因为尽管这些作品或许貌似西方抽象艺术（尤易令人想起“极少主义”），但是其观念诉求却与西方“极少主义”运动截然相反。尽管中国的极多主义艺术家们同样反对二三十年代欧洲早期的抽象艺术观念（即把抽象形式作为一个图式去表现某种乌托邦理念——所谓的“物质乌托邦”），但是“中国极多主义”不认同“极少主义”对精神表现意义的极端排斥。（后者把画面的形式完全看成物质本身，如Stella所说：“你看到什么就是什么。”）简而言之，“中国极多”并不排斥主体和精神性。恰恰相反，它强调的是艺术家在创作过程中的精神历程以及在作品之外的自我冥想。知道了这些，不仅能使我们更深入地理解张羽的艺术，也能使我们对“中国抽象现象”更有心得。（该现象与中国的现代性问题息息相关。）

2006年9月于北京

注：2003年在北京和纽约布法罗两地举办了由美国州立大学布法罗美术馆和中华世纪坛美术馆共同主办的画展，该画展由高名潞策划并收录在“中国极多主义”同名目录当中。

Zhang Yu's Finger Prints — A Self-contemplation Beyond the Painting Itself

Gao Minglu

Zhang Yu began his experimental ink painting creation in late 1980s. He has since been involved into the experimental ink movement as a major founder and organizer. He resists to follow the way in which most modern ink painter have pursued for a “renaissance of brush and ink”. They believe that the foundation of new cultural value and taste only lay on the revolution in ink technique. Facing the impact of Western modern art, Chinese artists and critics have been talking about the crisis of traditional ink painting since the mid-1980s. The debates about this crisis focus on many issues. Among them, the most prominent is the transformation of the aesthetic and technique of traditional ink painting into contemporary form. Although the answers have been various and even contradictory, the theoretical ground of the debates remains the same. Almost every discussion of the crisis has been carried out with a belief that the only way to make traditional ink painting contemporary is to find a revolutionary *bimo*, or “brush and ink”. Consequently, this dream has made a *bimo* myth which has trapped the minds of contemporary ink painters for they have only gazed at the object, that is, a painting's surface itself, while ignoring any contextual linkage with the artists' real life and the impact of the surrounding, in particular the environment of globalization.

In his experimental ink painting, Zhang Yu always resists to adopt traditional ink and brush technique, in particular the literati self-expression style in the late dynasties and 20th century, although Zhang Yu came from this tradition in his early training. From the point of this tradition, Zhang Yu's work may lack brush value, because Zhang avoid to attract viewer by leaving any stylish personal brush stroke (*cun*) on paper. On contrary, he always paints his stroke in similar shape and same size, or simply repeatedly presses his finger on rice paper. The purpose of the repetition is to obtain abstraction and demolishing representation.

It has taken Zhang Yu more than ten years to create his *Divine Light* (*lingguang*) painting series. He has undermined traditional literati's *bimo* expression from a different approach. For Zhang, there is no *bi* (brushwork), but only *mo* (inkwash) in his painting. The ultimate goal of his painting is to construct a symbol, a sign, a mystery image of the primeval chaos and its divine light, rather than to engage a self-expression through the intimate, sensitive brushstroke.

The universe his paintings touch and the technique Zhang employs, however, deeply fall into Oriental philosophical sentiment. The universe is the origin of the world and the numberless dots indicates Zhang's personal experience in configuring the symbol. Therefore, it is a balance as well as a unification between the world he is presenting and the person presenting. His recent Fingerprints series (*zhiiyin xilie*), even moves far beyond self-expressionism with the extremity toward anti-brushwork, while the atmosphere of primeval chaos from the *Divine Light* still remains in this series but with less symbolic touch and compositional end.

Zhang Yu began his *Finger print* series as early as in 1991. In his early works, however, one may easily find the linkage between this early stage of *Fingerprint* and later *Divine Light* series for the similarity in composition. The fingerprint traces move from margin to center in configuring a symbol of divine light or primeval chaos, which we can frequently find in later *Divine Light* series. Since 2003, Zhang Yu has completely shifted his interest from *Divine Light* to *Fingerprint*. The focus of *Fingerprint* series is no longer a symbolic sphere, rather fragments of finger prints, which present certain cultural meaning as well as Zhang's personal experience.

Fingerprint is a form of contractual confirmation. The unique pattern of fingerprint is considered materialization of an individual identity. Therefore, it conveys both social relationship and individual life. In his recent *Finger print*, Zhang Yu attempts to incorporate these meaning not by composing a two dimensional form, rather through a simple process of pressing his finger patten on paper very randomly. As Zhang Yu wrote in his notes, *Fingerprint* is very much like the incomplete and fragmented records of daily meditation, emphasizing the "meaning" out of the action of making natural trace. Therefore, there is no such thing as compositional principle with any hierarchical form, nor any compositional idea like "wholeness" in Zhang's *Fingerprint*. It does not lay emphasis on the oppositions of subject and object, and spirit and material, center and margin. The work is not the reflection of the self-thought of the artist or the universal spirit, nor is it a purely physical object. Every finger trace is in transformation without a clear boundary and artwork it self turns into a record of a natural, repetitious, fragmentary process. Therefore, Zhang Yu does not attempt to involve the beholder in either purely "seeing" the work, nor abstractly "thinking" about the work, rather to let the viewer to imagine the moment when each finger is touching on the paper.

From what we have illustrated above, we know that *Fingerprint Series* has a close affinity with Zen Buddhism. Finger printing process stipulates that any social meaning lies only in the personal experience, which is the same as the intuitive mysticism of the "meditation". Often, the theory of *Fingerprint* is in agreement with the life principle of the artist. It advocates a peaceful frame of mind, lack of desire, and aspiring to an almost itriviali life and tranquil nature. It urges people to avoid boastful and inflammatory tendencies and extravagance, in order to lead a simple life.

In fact, Zhang Yu is one of the most important artists from the Chinese iabstracti painting school as what I call Maximalism. It is true that many artists of this school keep themselves away from the mainstream and what is in vogue in current Chinese urban life, and are quietly engaged in their own "labor". The reason for the name "Maximalism" is that although the works may carry with the appearance of Western abstract art, in particular the Minimalism, their conceptual approach is distinctly dissimilar from that movement. Although, like Minimalism, Chinese Maximalist artists rejected the philosophy of early European abstract art of the 1920s and 1930s that treats painting as a representational vehicle to present a utopian world by embodying it to different abstract patterns-the "material utopia", Chinese Maximalism disagrees with Minimalist philosophy that shut out spiritual meaning and treated painting forms as an object in their own right, as remarked by Stella that "what you see is what you see". Simply speaking, "Chinese Maximalism" did not reject the elements of subject and spirituality. On the contrary, it emphasized the spiritual experience of the artist in the process of the creation as a self-contemplation outside and beyond the artwork itself. With this philosophical approach, we can get better an understanding not only about Zhang Yu's artworks, but also the phenomenon of Chinese "abstraction" which deeply involves the issue of Chinese modernity.

Beijing , Septem ber, 2006

¹ It was an exhibition sponsored by the University of Buffalo Art Galleries and the China Millennium Art Museum, and curated by Gao Minglu along with a catalogue with the same title "Chinese Maximalism." It took place in Beijing and Buffalo, New York in 2003. See Gao Minglu, *Chinese Maximalism*, Chongqing. Publishing House, 2003.



2004,深圳国际水墨双年展(深圳画院展览馆,深圳,中国)

2004, 4th Shenzhen International Biennial of Ink Wash, Guan Shanyue Art Gallery, Shenzhen, China

指尖上的宇宙——评张羽的《指印》系列

文/李旭

转变的历程

张羽是中国大陆实验水墨的重要代表人物，自20世纪90年代初期他的《灵光》系列创立以来，他就一直是一个形式上的开创者、理论上的建设者和活动上的组织者。与众多实验艺术家一样，他的风格原本也是从写实一路走来，在经历了象征、表现和意象的阶段后，最终进入了抽象语境。

在1990~1993年的写实与表现阶段，他的画面中开始出现大量游动的蝌蚪和漂浮的椭圆体（精子和卵子的象征），并由这些零散而单一的元素整合汇聚成为更大的人物形象，这种由单一元素组成整体叙事架构的“语法”，后来在张羽不同阶段的作品中以不同的方式得以延续。1994年，《灵光》系列开始以残缺的圆形、破裂的正方形与悬浮的碎片构成三个最基本的图式元素，画面所呈现出的整体效果是厚重、沉郁、紧张而神秘的，仿佛混沌初开时的宇宙图景，又好似微观世界中的科技狂想……张羽通过繁复的皴擦晕染把他那带有独特个人风格的、富有玄妙意境的形象表达得淋漓尽致。《灵光》是视觉艺术的形式实验，同时也是现代人心理征候的写照，历史破碎、前路迷茫，传统理念与当下经验在不断碰撞中碎裂、拼接并融合着，稳定的结构中隐隐透露着崩塌的危险，沉重的背景里常常浮现出熹微的光芒……

在2003年，张羽突然暂停了前后延续九年并曾为他赢得众多声誉的《灵光》，转向了全新的系列《指印》。这是一个令人备感陌生的系列，作品上遍布张羽本人的密集指印，由单一的红、灰或黑色构成，在未经装裱的宣纸上，凸凹不平、错落有致的印痕显示出丰富的明暗色相和肌理层次。

形式的极致

《指印》是迄今为止张羽个人形式语言创造中所达到的一种极致。

在工具材料方面，《指印》在最大程度上“去笔墨化”，把毛笔这一传统中国画中最重要的工具省略了。尽管前人曾经探索过“指画”，但张羽的“指印”颠覆了那种对毛笔运行痕迹的刻意摹仿，使手指的印痕直接以…原本面目出现在绘画里，并在复数重叠的过程中形成全新的个人图式。

在视觉构成方面，《指印》在最大程度上“去形式化”，把《灵光》系列以来几乎所有点线面的构成都舍弃了。在制作每件《指印》作品时，张羽所考虑的并不是传统的谋篇布局，他可能从纸面上的任意一点开始“劳作”，在这样的创作中，最重要的是“过程”和“痕迹”的高度统一，以及整体气息的贯通流畅。

在审美心理方面，《指印》在最大程度上“去意象化”，把类比和隐喻的信息缩减到最少，在形式上走向最低极限。其实，选择了视觉上的彻底的抽象也是选择了意义上的彻底开放，张羽并不试图引导观看者进入任何既定情境，而是把释义的权利拱手相让，面对这样的画面，任何角度的解读都是可能的。

通过三年多来的实验和操练，张羽的《指印》系列在形式上逐步达到了特殊的境界——单纯而不单调，简洁而不简单。张羽认为，在每个人的早期经历中，都会充满各种各样的“加法”，对经验、知识和财富的狂热追求，也常常是盲目的，而当人生步入中年，做“减法”的时候就必定到来，对艺术语言的大胆舍弃和高度提纯于是就变得至关重要。《指印》其实也是这样，从一点开始而至于无限，而无限的点最后又合而为一，无中生有，有归于无。

行为与修炼

岁月的声音，默默无语，随时光的流逝在空气中渐渐弥散；生命的痕迹，缓缓延伸，伴手指的动作于纸面上慢慢沉积看似单调重复的指印，在手工劳作的日积月累中逐渐闪烁出意蕴丰富的智慧光彩，如古琴般舒缓平和的音符所构成的听觉经验一般，《指印》系列以执著淡定的心境持续地给人以返璞归真的感觉。

在中国传统生活中，“指印”象征着严肃的“契约”，张羽用无数指印的重叠，造就了重大契约般的心理震撼，但张羽对于指印的使用并不仅止于其社会学意义，他说：“《指印》的视觉反映是数以万计的红色印痕在宣纸上叠压的结果。其利用宣纸纸质材质的可塑性，以指印按压的力量使纸质材料改变了原有的结构，纸面上形成了窝状的浮雕感，同时光的自然进入所发挥的魔力使指印痕迹完全消解了原初的意义，呈现的是指印痕迹的视觉质性。”为了增强按压对材料所造成的质性改变，张羽最近开始尝试着做一些雕塑，在他刚刚完成的几个小稿上，指印在密集堆砌的大量陶质小球体上留下了更为明确的凹陷效果。

这种日复一日、平心静气的创作过程，类似对“功夫”的修炼，尽管形式上借助了视觉，结果上却又超越了视觉：以指蘸色类似“接气”，接触纸面是“运气”，而对纸面的按压则是“行气”，以这样的方式不断重复，最后达到“以气写空，以空显迹，以迹达象、以象得神、以象幻化”的效果。对于观看者来说，作品上的每一个点，都可以被当成是作者社会身份和生命痕迹的体现；对于艺术家本人来说，这样的方式更能够直指内心，把最复杂的内涵用最单纯的语言表达清楚。

视觉之上的观念

《指印》系列，以充满禅意的行为和修炼为开端，塑造着实验水墨的全新视觉印象，在密集交错、叠加重合的形式之上，充满生命感的影像又开启着直指绘画原初意义的观念之门。

绘画，在所有视觉艺术品类之中，应该是最古老、最基本的形态。自从摄影出现以来，关于“绘画将要死亡”的预言就不绝于耳，但一百多年来的经验证明，绘画仍然活着，倒是那些预言家们都已经去世了。今天，新媒体艺术在国际艺术界大行其道，世界各地仍然从事着绘画的艺术家们也都在思考着绘画的命运和未来的走向。实验水墨，作为中国当代绘画的一部分，所经受的挑战也是空前的。

张羽对《指印》系列的研究，既是对传统笔墨工具的进一步反叛，也是对绘画基本观念的颠覆。通过循环往复的劳作，张羽试图探测一个语言的底线在抽离了用笔的惯性思维后，新的绘画究竟能够多大程度地疏离旧有观念？

在风格逐步走向极简和对笔墨的追求进行舍弃的同时，张羽持续探索着自己心目中的艺术本源。绘画究竟是什么？绘画的终极意义何在？是再现客观世界，是表现主观情绪，还是呈现不可见的心象？他的解决方案是把单纯的行为记录在单纯的媒介上，借助巨量的“行为”和被改变的“物质”二者之间所产生的互动呈现永恒的力量。“一花一世界，一沙一宇宙”，在他的指尖下，新的绘画观念被塑造成了超越视觉符号的特殊表达方式，内在精神因素在此过程中被不断强调和凸显，小小的指印，也因此点化出了时间的流逝和宇宙的浩瀚。

宣纸之轻，与时间之重，始终是在张羽画面上形成鲜明对照的两极，这种对照所产生的心理张力，必将在每一位观看者的体验中延续下去。

2007年2月5日于上海

Universe on the Fingertip: A Comment on Zhang Yu's *Fingerprints* Series

Li Xu

The Course of Transformation

Zhang Yu is an important representative figure of experimental ink and wash in the mainland of China. Since the beginning of his *Divine Light* series in the early 1990s, he has been an initiator of forms, a producer of theories, and an organizer of activities. Like numerous other experimental artists, he originally adopted the realistic style, and via the stages of symbolism, expressionism and imagery, has eventually entered the abstract context.

In the realistic and expressionist stage from 1990 to 1993, a large number of swimming tadpoles and floating ellipsoids (symbols of sperms and ova) appeared in his paintings, and these scattered and single elements were combined into larger human figures. This "grammar" characterized by the integral narrative structure made up of single elements was continued afterwards in Zhang Yu's works of different stages in various ways. The year 1994 witnessed the beginning of the *Divine Light* series in which incomplete circles, broken squares and floating fragments constituted three basic schematic elements. The total effect was heavy, gloomy, tense and mysterious, as if what was depicted was the scene of the universe when earth was first separated from the heaven, or the fantasy about science and technology in the microcosmos... By means of repeated and complicated shading, rubbing and dyeing, Zhang Yu gives an incisive and vivid portrayal of the wondrous images with distinctive personal style. The *Divine Light* series is an experiment of visual art in terms of forms, and at the same time a depiction of the mental symptoms of the modern people. The history is fragmented, the future is uncertain, traditional ideas and present-day experience collide, break, join and merge with each other. The danger of collapse is faintly shown in the stable structure, and dim light often appears in the dark background...

In 2003, Zhang Yu suddenly brought a pause to the creation of the *Divine Light* series, which he had engaged in for nine years and which had brought him much reputation, and he turned to an entirely new series: *Fingerprints*. This is a very unfamiliar series. The work is densely studded with Zhang Yu's own fingerprints, red, gray, or black. On the unmounted rice paper, the concave or convex fingerprints in graceful disorder show rich color phase, light or dark, and texture.