



I LOVE AIJING 艾敬

I LOVE:
AIJING
艾敬

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I LOVE

艾敬

我出生在中国北方重工业城市，堪称为共和国之子的沈阳。母亲 19 岁那年为了逃避下乡，在国家政策允许的情况下与当时在国家工厂“沈阳机床一厂”工作的技术工人 23 岁的我的父亲结婚。父亲擅长多种民族乐器的演奏，母亲歌喉甜美擅长演唱评剧，在那样物资匮乏的年代，共同热爱音乐使他们情投意合。年轻的父母在结婚第二年就有了我，紧接着有了大妹妹艾红，7 年后又有了小妹妹艾丹，生活的重担压在工薪阶层的父母身上。

我生活的铁西区是重工业区，有很多工厂、很多的工人，一个大型工厂通常有上万工人，甚至几万人。与之相关的就是那些工人的家庭和孩子。工人们大多数住在由工厂提供的房子，周围邻居们也都是工友。因此大家的生活水平几乎是一样的，男孩子多的家庭生活上自然就更紧巴，但是同时男孩子可以在成年后接替父母在工厂里的岗位上上班，从此又有了一个生活保障，也因此，铁西区，周而复始、经年累月地轮流交替着工人和工人的孩子们继续当工人。

我就是工人的孩子，尽管我的祖辈都来自农村，但是我是工业“大跃进”下出生的孩子。我小时候常常随父母去工厂玩儿，我喜欢父亲车间里的机器之间润滑油的味道，那些擦拭机床的棉布里散发着的油香，神秘高大的机器在车间里转动，在轨道上来回行进。父亲与他的工友们都穿着款式一样的、质地厚实的、蓝色棉布衣服。穿着一样的工人们埋头苦干着，看上去有一种神圣的状态。工人们劳动时间长，工厂昼夜不停地旋转，赶上工厂“大干”时，工人们需要三个时间段轮流交替上班。劳动是光荣的，那些生机勃勃的景象我至今难忘。

北方城市四季分明，冬天特别寒冷，都在零下十几度至三十几度。工人妻子和母亲大多数都在工厂里工作。那个时代的城市里没有什么全职家庭主妇。姥姥和姥爷十几岁怀揣着两块银元从农村出来到了沈阳，在这里养育了一群儿女，因此北方女性既要工作，也要养孩子和照顾家庭。我从小穿着姥姥缝制的棉袄（用棉布和棉花缝制的冬衣）过冬。生活稍微好一些的时候，我母亲开始为我编制毛衣和毛裤，以及毛帽子和毛手套。这些羊毛线编织的秋冬衣服很昂贵，算是那个年代的奢侈品、时装。在工厂里工作的女性在午休时把家里的针线活带到工厂，与大家交流编织的技巧，也因此毛线编织在北方的工业城市里有着深厚的感情传达基础和编织技术能力，几乎没有女性不懂得编织。

我的家乡沈阳在时代的变革中蹒跚前进，过去由国家“铁饭碗”所享有的住房和工作职位以及相关的医疗等一切体制内的保障需要逐步改制，走向市场经济，走向独立和个体。这里面国家和每个与之交关的家庭都曾经历痛苦。我是工人家庭里从小就憧憬着改变的那颗不安定的心。我渴望独立，期盼崭新的体制可以使每个人有相对均等的机会而不是靠着体制里吃饭。也因此当初我是不能体会祖辈和父辈们面对改革的惶恐。

今天的中国在邓小平南巡后势不可挡地、激荡起伏地、前进了 30 年。沈阳，我的家乡，我的父母也顺应着这些变化。可是我的母亲仍然改不了为我们编织毛活儿的习惯，就在今年冬天她还塞给我一个袋子，里面装满了新编织的帽子和围巾和毛衣。她为我编织的衣服往往还都停留在我十几岁时的身材才能穿的尺寸。我一直被母亲的编织行为而苦恼，我已经不需要。如今的保暖衣物材料也不需要沉甸甸的羊毛线，可是母亲仍然改不了挑灯夜织的习惯。

这次我邀请母亲，以及她周围所有在沈阳的亲友、邻居、我的中学同学和他们的家人与邻居，邀请他们一起帮助我母亲完成

一个挂毯，采用家里的旧毛衣、毛裤、袜子、手套和围巾等废弃不用的毛线衣物，用这些旧线重新编织一幅以“LOVE”字为主的装置作品，颜色可以自由搭配，尽可能不要重复。就这样，在几十位亲朋好友的努力下，一条色彩斑斓、自由奔放的 LOVE 挂毯装置作品做成了。在这幅挂毯的尾部是以我母亲的形象为参考的雕塑形象。母亲坐在那里，正在孜孜不倦地编织着。

替换和转换，以旧的材料，以集体和个人的情感记忆为线索，重新找到价值，重新来定义。

多年来，我在音乐和视觉艺术领域里不断学习和转换中找出过去和今天的交汇点，不断地创作和探寻，尝试各种可能性，从情感和理性思维中培育出可以与今天和未来对话的作品，这就是我的爱。

2012 年 8 月 30 日

I LOVE

Ai Jing

I grew up in Shenyang, a city of heavy industry in northeastern China that is also known as the son of the republic. In order to avoid being sent down to the countryside, my mother, who was 19 at the time, married my father, a 23-year-old worker in the Shenyang No. 1 Machine Tool Factory. My father was good at playing several folk instruments and my mother, who had a sweet voice, excelled at singing the local opera *pingju* of northern China. Their love of music brought them together during those days of material deficiency. I was born the year after they married. After that, my mother gave birth to my younger sister, Ai Hong, and seven years later to my youngest sister, Ai Dan, a heavy burden on herself and my father who earned small wages.

The Tiexi District where I grew up was an area of heavy industry, with many factories and many workers. A large-scale factory would have more than 10,000 workers, with some having even as many as several tens of thousands. The workers and their children lived in a community of homes provided by the factory. So the workers were neighbors as well as colleagues. Everyone's living standard was more or less the same. Families with multiple sons were always short of money. However, when they grew up, the sons could take over their parents' positions in the factories and have a guaranteed livelihood. So life went on in Tiexi District with children replacing their parents, year after year.

I was born into a family of workers, even though my ancestors were from the countryside. I was born during the industrial Great Leap Forward. As a child, I often went to the factory to play while my parents worked. I loved the smell of lubricating oil in my father's workshop. The cloth for cleaning machine tools was drenched with the sweet smell of oil. While the mysterious and massive machines moved back and forth along their tracks, my father and his fellow workers, all wearing thick blue cotton uniforms, were quietly immersed in their work, as if in some sort of spiritual state. They labored for long hours, the factory never coming to a halt. When the factory was busy, the workers had to work in three shifts. Labor was a glorious thing in those days and I will never forget those scenes that were full of vitality.

The four seasons were distinct in the north, winters being extremely cold with temperatures ranging from negative 10 degrees centigrade down to negative 30 degrees. The majority of wives and mothers also worked in the factories. There was not such a thing as a full-time housewife in the days of Mao Zedong. My maternal grandfather and grandmother had left the countryside in their late teens and arrived in Shenyang carrying just two silver dollars. They raised several children here, and like other northern women who had to work, my grandmother had to raise her children and take care of her family while working. Since I was a little girl, throughout the winter I wore the cotton-padded jacket that my grandmother had made for me. When our life had improved a little, my mother started to knit woolen sweaters, pants, hats and gloves for me. Knitted woolen clothing was quite expensive in those days and was considered luxurious and fashionable. Female workers would bring their

needlework to the factory during mid-day break and pass on knitting skills. Therefore the industrial cities of northern China boast a fine tradition of skillful wool knitting rooted in emotional exchange. Almost every woman in the north knows how to knit.

My hometown of Shenyang hobbled forward during the reform years. As China moved toward a market economy, the old “iron rice bowl” system that used to provide everyone with housing, jobs, medical care and other social benefits had to be gradually reformed. On the road to independence and individualism, all families suffered. As a young girl from a working family, I was restless and yearned for change and independence. I looked forward to a brand new system in which everyone would have equal opportunity and not rely on the system to be fed. I therefore could not comprehend the fear that my elders felt in the face of reform.

After Deng Xiaoping’s Southern Journey, China has been surging forward with ups and downs for 30 years. In my hometown of Shenyang, my parents went along with these changes. But my mother never gave up knitting clothes for me. Just this past winter, she pressed upon me a bag full of newly knitted hats, scarves and sweaters. And all the things she knitted for me were of the measurements of me as a teenager. I have always been troubled by the knitted things that mother has made for me. I no longer need them and heavy yarn is not really the best material for warmth. But my mother will not give up her custom of knitting beside a lamp late at night.

Recently, I invited my mother, all her friends and relatives in Shenyang, our neighbors, my middle school classmates and their families and neighbors, to help my mother complete a tapestry. By knitting with yarn from old woolen sweaters, pants, gloves, scarves and other woolen items that we no longer wear, they made a tapestry with the word LOVE on it. The colors could be freely matched, but not overlapping when possible. Through the efforts of dozens of relatives and friends, a LOVE tapestry installation came into being, rich in color and free in style. A statue of my mother was put at the end of the tapestry, diligently knitting.

Substitution and transformation: Using old materials and through collective and individual emotional memories, we have rediscovered value and given it a new definition.

In the past few years, I have been continuously learning and transforming myself in music and visual arts. I have tried all possibilities, creating and searching, trying to discover the intersection between the past and the present and to use emotion and rational thoughts to develop works that can communicate with the present and the future. This is my love.

August.30. 2012





爱的精神缠绕

陈履生

进入 21 世纪的中国艺术界承接了 20 世纪后期的发展态势，更加在多元多样的方向飞驰。然而，人们在面对它的时候，感觉到了一种新鲜之后的习以为常，感受到了排山倒海之后的接受疲劳，静观其变则成为一种平常的心态。虽然市场仍然在亢奋中表现出了吸引眼球的力量，一夜之间和一以贯之的比照，通过偶然性和必然性沉淀了许多现实中的机遇。因此，人们对待艺术的心态也在悄然地发生着变化，敬畏、景仰的尊严被边缘化为一种新的大众文化或日常生活。可是，人们心存不甘，心中的理想或专业的期盼，还是希望艺术位尊于社会的神殿，能够被人们参拜和供养，抑或被有意义地收藏，成为文化的传承。人们也期望像对待历史上的一些名家那样，能够品读他们复杂的艺术渊源和曲折的发展脉络，通过文化的连接把它们看成是艺术的重要补充，并为之苦思冥想，或发现探索，让艺术在社会现实中发挥它应有的功能。

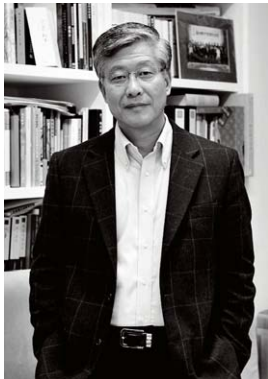
这不是一个缺少艺术家的年代。在这样一个年代中，艺术家如果能出人头地，哪怕是崭露头角，都需要大智慧。从 17 岁就离开沈阳踏进艺术圈的艾敬，在风起云涌的当代艺术界，不管是在北京，还是在纽约、东京，她总是以其特有的方式、用不同的艺术形式去表现自己的思想和理想，放飞梦想。由她作词作曲并演唱的《我的 1997》为开端，她将一种貌似平铺直叙的表达，变成流行于公众之中并为公众喜爱的流行文化，反映内在的深层意蕴，同时又链接了主流意识形态中的重大事件。《我的 1997》从个人情感出发，表现对香港回归的期盼，正是在小中见大的特殊关系中传达了作品所具有的独特的审美魅力。艾敬艺术都关联着她的生存体验，而在此基础上的累积到如今，身份在转化之中，艺术在发展之途，她给予我们的仍然是一以贯之的努力。

艾敬是一位充满梦想的艺术家的，她的女性特质使得她多了一份精致和委婉。以爱来支撑的艾敬艺术，将人类历史上的一个永恒的主题变成她自己的专属，不断努力挖掘和拓展，并变换语言方式使之呈现出当代的特点。她的爱是那么精心，却不深奥。她几乎是用最为平常的方式表现宏大叙事中的关联性，真真切切，犹如大珠小珠落玉盘。显然，艾敬艺术的观念性表达并非从抽象的概念中模糊人们的思维，她放弃了错综复杂的结构关系，还原了人们清晰的思辨，因此，在中国当代艺术圈中属于另类。她从“游子身上衣”——从她的母亲为她编织毛衣的爱心记忆中，想到古往今来千千万万的“慈母手中线”，从而通过爱来反馈人性中最基本的伦理，如此就有了《My Mom and My Hometown》。她以唤醒集体意识的方式，用母亲群体的编织行为表现了人之大爱。这里，爱这一主题是不需要阐释的，因为它不难理解；爱也不需要太多的观念缠绕，因为爱是最为直白和平易的。尽管，艾敬这一爱的编织是复杂的，包括了巨大的劳动量，可是，人们还是能够非常容易洞穿这一主题的真谛的。

艾敬艺术的特质除了在题材意义之外的就是她的观念表达。还是在爱的主题下，她对环境和生存的关注是以切肤之痛面向现实中的未来。一根一次性筷子来自自然中对应的树木，消耗筷子就是消费树木和森林，就是以环境的消费为代价。所以，艾敬以几万双一次性筷子所植造的一棵 3.5 米高的大树，并以乌鸦落在枝头完成她发自内心的警示。如果说《生命之树》是一种观念的编织，那么，《棋子》的观念构造就像棋子的蕴含那样更为简单、直白，却更容易生发多样化的阐释，也更富有文化内涵。人们由此会联想到错综的社会关系，以及人们像下棋一样的人生和事业的布局，还有类如战争中的各种谋划等，开篇和结局都如一盘棋处于精心的设计、周旋、抗衡、应对之中。艺术的观念、构成也是如同棋局一样处于难以蠡测的变化之中，耐人寻味。艾敬的观念表达就是这样小中见大，简中现繁。

实现艺术目标的手段有多种多样，方案也有个性差异，尤其是在材质的选择上更是不尽相同。在当代艺术的表现中，材质从来没有像今天这样受到重视，也没有像今天这样丰富多样，并且出现了许多想象不到。艾敬对于材质有特殊的敏感，由此形成了她另一方面的艺术特质。从用几万双一次性筷子，到用无数人的旧毛衣毛裤拆出来的毛线，再到紫铜的手工锻制与外表烤漆，这些都与主题相关，艾敬的刻意与选择都是她反复寻思的结果。材质对于艺术观念表达的重要性，在艾敬这里得到了充分的论证，以《棋子》而论，可以有无数种低廉价格的材料去替代紫铜，60个棋子也完全可以模压，可是，艾敬的判断是建立在精致艺术基础上的坚守，因此不计工本，追求的是与观念相符的最完美的艺术效果和心理安慰。材质的抽象性与表达观念的具体性，包括材质中的新与旧都反映了观念的切入点。一次性筷子的新是为了警示现实中的问题，而旧毛衣毛裤的毛线的旧是为了感受往日的爱的温暖，这种必须或唯一是艾敬对于材质选择的关键，是艺术的一种独特的讲究。

艾敬对于艺术的挚爱，决定了她对艺术的态度。因此，她能够费尽心机地处理艺术观念与材质的关系，不遗余力地投入巨大的工作量去完成一件又一件作品。她对于中国当代艺术的贡献是以爱心呵护艺术的情感，而她的艺术发展没有疆域，和她的爱一样，成为人们一个又一个期待。



陈履生，1956 年生于江苏扬中市。1985 年毕业于南京艺术学院美术系美术历史及理论专业，获硕士学位。在校学习期间两次获得刘粟奖学金。1985 年分配到人民美术出版社，先后任古典美术编辑室编辑、主任。2002 年调中国画研究院，任研究部主任，研究员。2004 年调中国美术馆，任学术一部主任，《中国美术馆》月刊常务副主编。2010 年调中国国家博物馆，任馆长助理。三十年来潜心研究美术历史及理论，并从事美术批评、美术创作。获中央美院首届“张安治教授美术史论奖学金”，获“北京市文联 2001 年文艺评论二等奖”，获《文艺报》2005 年“年度理论创新”奖，获第十六届中国新闻奖报纸副刊作品复评暨“2005 全国报纸副刊作品年赛”银奖，获文化部 2006 年优秀专家称号，获第五届北京中青年文艺工作者德艺双馨奖。出版著作（包括编著）五十余种，其中有《新中国美术图史 1949—1966》、《以“艺术”的名义》、《革命的时代：延安以来的主题创作研究》等；发表各种论文数百篇。先后多次在国内外举办个人画展，出版有个人画集五种、文集两种。建有私人博物馆“油灯博物馆”。现为中国国家博物馆副馆长。兼任中国美术家协会理事，北京美术家协会副主席，中国汉画学会常务副会长，北京文艺评论家协会副主席，北京博物馆学会副理事长，中国美术家协会理论委员会副主任，北京美术家协会中国画艺委会副主任，全国文物与博物馆专业学位研究生教育指导委员会委员，中国画学会常务理事，齐白石艺术国际研究中心学术委员会主任，南京艺术学院、吉首大学、广州美术学院、中央民族大学美术学院、台湾师范大学客座教授。

The Spiritual Tangle of Love

Chen Lusheng

Upon entering the 21st century, Chinese art adopts the trends of late 20th century and moves fast forward into diversity. However, initial enthusiasm soon dies away and weariness wins over. People start to sit back and want to see what happens next. The market still causes great excitement and attracts a lot of attention. Yet our attitude toward art is quietly going through changes. We try to compare what happens overnight to what remains constant. We put more thoughts into chance and inevitability. The dignity of awe and esteem has been marginalized into a new form of popular culture or ordinary life. But people are not content. Because of their ideal or professional expectation, people still wish to put art on a pedestal in the temple of society to be worshipped and sustained, or to be put in a meaningful collection so as to become cultural tradition. Like with old masters, we wish to gain a glimpse into the complex foundation and winding path of development of their art. Through cultural links, we wish to regard these works as important addition to art. We think, we search and we let art play its appropriate role in reality.

Artists are plenty. However, one needs wisdom to stand out or even to emerge from obscurity. Ai Jing left Shenyang and entered the art circle when she was 17. The contemporary art world has always been turbulent. Whether in Beijing, New York or Tokyo, in her characteristic ways and in different forms she always expresses her thoughts and ideal and let fly her dreams. With *My 1997*—a song she wrote and sang—she turned the seemingly relaxed story-telling way of singing into a popular culture. It brought out what lied deep inside her and connected with an important event in mainstream ideology. *My 1997* took a personal point of view when it expressed its wish for Hong Kong to revert to China. Its charm lies in its ability to address the big issue when talking about the small ones. Ai Jing's art works are all closely related to her experience. She has come a long way and her identity keeps changing. Her art is developing and she always tries hard.

As an artist, Ai Jing is full of dreams. Being a female, she is also refined and graceful. Her art is supported by love. She has chosen to work on a topic of which man never gets tired. She dives into it and expands it, changing her languages to incorporate the characteristics of our times. Her love is delicate but not abstruse. She uses the simplest of methods even when dealing with very grand events and, as a result, the effect is real and clear. Her art is conceptual yet she does not try to confuse us with abstract concepts. She has abandoned complex structural relationships and brought us back to clear thinking. Therefore she stands apart from mainstream contemporary art circle. Her thoughts went from “clothing on the back of a wanderer”—fond memory of sweaters her mother made for her, to the countless “threads in loving mother's hand” throughout time. Using love to reflect basic human ethics, she made *My Mum and My Hometown*, where collective consciousness is awaken and knitting by mother and other relatives is used to reflect the love of fellow human beings. Here it is unnecessary to discuss love because it is easy to understand. Love does not need any concepts since it is straightforward and unassuming. This knitting of love might have been complicated since it required much labor. But it is easy for us to see its true meaning.

Not only is her choice of theme significant, her conceptual expression is also unique. It is about love again and this time environmental and survival issues have caught her attention. She looks painfully to a bleak future. The throwaway chopsticks are made of wood and therefore of trees from the forest. Wasting chopsticks is equivalent to killing trees and forest that could lead to destruction of environment. Ai Jing made a big tree with a height of three and a half meters, using tens of thousands of

throwaway chopsticks. A black crow perching on the branches is ominous. If *The Tree of Life* is a knitting of concepts, then the conceptual framework behind *Pieces* is simpler and more straightforward, just as the board pieces themselves. But here multiple interpretations are allowed and there is more cultural content. It could allude to complex social relations, life and career arrangement, or even war strategies, all of which have starts and ends as in a game of Go. They all need to be planned, dealt with, fought and responded to. The conceptualization of art is as unpredictable as a game of Go, too. Again, Ai Jing successfully tackled a huge and complicated task in her small and simple way.

There are many ways to reach one's artistic goal. For one thing, there are many materials to choose from. Materials have never been emphasized as much as they are today. There has never been this much variety, either. As a result, we see many things that we never expected before. Ai Jing has a special sensitivity toward materials and this is another one of her characteristics. Throwaway chopsticks, yarn of old sweaters, or hand-forged copper—they all correspond to her theme and are the result of her deliberate choice and careful thinking. The importance to art expression of material is well proved here. There are many cheaper materials to use instead of copper. The 60 pieces could also be molded. But Ai Jing is persistent in her pursuit of refinement. She is not concerned with cost but the best way to achieve perfect artistic effect and psychological comfort that are in line with her concept. The choice of old or new material is also deliberate. The “new” of throwaway chopsticks is warning of problems in reality. The “old” of old sweaters and sweatpants is to remind us of love's warmth of past years. She must use this material and she will only use this material. It is how she makes her decision. Such refinement is distinct in art.

Ai Jing's love of art has determined her attitude toward art. She goes through great pains to achieve rapport between concept and material. She spares no effort when creating art works. She uses love to protect art and thus makes her contribution to contemporary Chinese art. Her art has no borders, like her love. We can always expect more from her.

Chen Lusheng was born in 1956 in Yangzhong City, Jiang Su Province. In 1985, he obtained his Master's Degree in Art History and Criticism at Department of Fine Arts, Nanjing University of the Arts, having been awarded the “Liu Haisu Scholarship” twice during his studies. In the same year, he began working at the People's Fine Arts Publishing House in Beijing, as an editor, and afterwards the director of the Department of Classical Art. In 2002, he became the director of Research Department at the Research Institute of Traditional Chinese Painting. In 2004, he became the director of the Research and Curatorial Department at the National Art Museum of China, and the deputy editor-in-chief of a bimonthly journal, *The National Art Museum of China*. In 2010, he was promoted to the post of assistant curator of the National Museum of China. For the past thirty years, he has been engaged in research into art history, theory and criticism, while persisting in his creative works in fine arts. He has won many awards, among which the “Professor Zhang Anzhi Scholarship for Criticism in the History of Fine Arts”, Second Prize of the “Beijing Literary Association Award for Art Criticism (2001)”, the “Annual Award for Theoretical Innovation” issued in 2005 by the newspaper *Wen Yi Bao*, a Silver Medal of the “2005 Annual National Competition of Newspaper Supplements”/ the final round of selection for the “The Sixteenth National News Award”. In 2006 he was enlisted by the Chinese Ministry of Culture as an “Outstanding Scholar”, and won the fifth “Award for Young Artists for Virtue and Artistic Achievements”. He has over 50 works published to his name, including “*The Art History of People's Republic of China: 1949-1966*”, “*In the Name of 'Art'*”, and “*Revolutionary Art: since the Yan'an Era 1942-2009*”, along with over a hundred articles. He has also frequently put on solo exhibitions, both in China and abroad, and has published five albums of his paintings and two anthologies. He has also founded a privately-owned “Oil Lamp Museum.”

In addition to being the deputy director of the National Museum of China, he is also a council member of the Chinese Artists Association, vice director of the Beijing Artists Association, and executive deputy director of the Chinese ‘Han Hua’ Association, deputy director of the Association of Artistic Critics in Beijing, deputy secretary general of the Beijing Museological Association, deputy director of the Theoretical Committee of the Chinese Artists Association, deputy director of the Committee of Chinese Painting of Beijing Artists Association, member of the Committee of Post-Graduate Education in Archeology and Museology, executive council member of the Society of Traditional Chinese Painting. He also serves as guest professor at Nanjing University of the Arts, Jishou University, Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts, Faculty of Fine Arts of Minzu University of China, and National Taiwan Normal University.