

湖畔·花园

邓国源作品集

水墨篇

邓国源
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I. ①湖… II. ①邓… ②蒋… III. ①艺术—作品综
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目录

湖畔·花园

记邓国源西湖水墨、装置作品展 / 02

纪录片：《湖畔·花园》 / 03

邓国源艺术经历 / 04

自然美与被艺术所驯化

论自然的理想 / 10

纪录片：《贝亚特与诺亚花园》 / 10

纪录片：《水墨·花园》 / 22



小书大视野
About This Book

Lakeside · Garden
Deng Guoyuan's Art Works

从表面上看，邓国源先生的“水墨”与他的“花园”好像没有什么联系，而且把它们并置在一个展览中也感觉到突兀，可是，细细地品味，却发现其中的联系是那么具有特别的感觉，能够让人联想到当代艺术的许多问题。其中的核心问题紧密地联系在一起，这就是作为一位中国艺术家在观念影响下的对于题材和语言的把握，与往日的思维表现出了大相径庭，从而凸显了艺术的时代特征与艺术家的个人特质。然而，他的基因并没有让他在纷繁中忘记祖源，相反，却在有效的利用中，把中国的水墨语言提升到观念的台面，从而与他的“花园”又发生了关系。

中国的花鸟画是文人画家来自花园的感受和书房的滋养，他们把趣味与品格浓缩成文人艺术的精华，这就是文人的观念，画花若人，所以，有了如君子的梅兰竹菊，有了世界艺术中的一个最独特的品种——花鸟画。它完全有别于西方的静物——西方的静物写实，中国的花鸟写意。这个“意”在一定程度上可以表述为古代社会主流文化中的观念，因为它突破了目之所见，画心之所想。邓国源先生在中国水墨的基本格局中，将物象演变为由水墨的干湿浓淡所构成的抽象内容，而这之中最核心的留白，是中国审美中的计白当黑的高妙之处。他像魔术师那样，巧妙地变化其中的重叠与交叉，使之以水墨的趣味表现他的观念内容，而这一切可以看成是一个属于他的独特花园——水墨花园。当然，其中我们可以看到石涛和八大，也可以看到与西太湖相关的具有地方文化特点的常州的恽南田。

关键是看你怎么看。

显然，装置也有个怎么放和放哪里的问题。邓国源先生将他的《花园》放到了西太湖和雅集园这个大花园之中，无疑，这有着不同于在博物馆、美术馆或其他公共空间的感觉。而当这种人造的艺术景观与自然景观发生对话时，正如同“以形而上的方式向大师致敬”一样，他所表述的以及给人所感受的，还是希望能够找到一个合适的场域来表达自己的观念中的“花园”。他想借自然之力焕发观念的精神，从而为他的观念增添与之相关的特别的视觉和想象的空间。由此再看看那些特别的水墨，又何尝不是一种中国园林的借景，又何尝不是一种中国水墨的还魂。

作为一位曾经受85思潮运动影响的实验艺术的先锋人物，邓国源先生受过完整的西方写实绘画的教育，有着坚实的基本功。他和同时代的许多艺术家一样，在放弃之后又重新拾起中国美学和东方精神，并把创作的方向引入到人与自然和天人合一的古老哲学命题之中，因此，不管是用传统水墨语言的表现，还是用装置观念的表达，都反映了他对这个时代的思考和把握，反映了他艺术中的“想象之境界”与“自然之心灵”。



陈履生：中国国家博物馆副馆长



纪录片
《湖畔·花园》
Video of
Lakeside · Garden



邓国源

天津美术学院院长 | 教授 | 博士生导师



邓国源艺术经历
About Deng Guoyuan

Deng Guoyuan

President of Tianjin Academy of Fine Arts
Professor
Doctoral Supervisor



Naturally Beautiful and Domesticated by Art

On the Ideal of Nature

By Beate Reifenscheid
(Curator of Ludwig Museum)

Deng Guo Yuan is a master of Chinese brush painting with a keen sense of the rhythm of iridescent colorfulness that he brings alive through the mere modulation of tonal values ranging from black to gray and white. For many years now he has been defying the tide of all-too facile modernisms and contemporary trends in developing an artistic repertoire that draws entirely on the tradition of Chinese painting and that takes as its central theme nature. His works regularly carry the title “In the Garden,” illustrating the artist’s virtual obsession with the subject of the cultivated, circumscribed and therefore surveyable precinct of the garden. With him, the garden becomes a very particular kind of hortus conclusus, a nucleus of life expressed in a manner that could hardly be more symbolical. What at first glance appears to be repetitive imagery reveals itself upon closer scrutiny as a seamlessly progressing roundelay of natural processes and perceptions of life. Underlying the works of his important “In the Garden” series is – besides the virtuoso application of painterly technique – a concept of nature that, in formal terms, radically transcends traditional Chinese painting. The latter advances not nearly as resolutely into abstraction, instead always seeking the narrative context and expressing

it in, by and large, figuratively based painting. Deng Guo Yuan, on the other hand, ventures on a translation of nature into purely abstract pictorial terms, which are transferred into a readable, narratively intended context – and traced to their origin in garden and nature – only through a mode of seeing on the part of the viewer that can be described as recognitive perception. This is particularly interesting considering that Deng Guo Yuan’s most recent works leave the realm of painting behind and, instead, “grow” into three-dimensional objects and entire environments. At first glance the latter do not seem to have anything in common with the ink paintings, yet one follows from the other according to a compelling logic.

When viewing the brush and ink paintings of Deng Guo Yuan, we instantly become aware of an oscillating relationship between abstract imagery and objects references. The painting we see seems to be focused in the details, yet made up of nothing but bold abbreviated lines and clustered dots. Contrasts appear only as a result of the brushwork, as the painter alternates between applying strokes in rapid succession, causing them to be laid out like bold hatching,

and depositing soft, light-toned passages or darkly clouding areas that absorb all the white of the paper support. Some parts are just filled with light, while others are shadowed and dusky. Throughout, his manner of painting remains entirely abstract and the closer the viewer moves up to the painting, the more “non-objective” it seems to become. Nevertheless, even a brief glimpse will convey the impression of something nature- and landscape-like. In the process of deciphering the abstract marks, the eye repeatedly has to refocus, like when an old picture scroll is unrolled and the whole image reveals itself gradually – seeing as an act of reading, of deciphering in the course of viewing. Only then does the abstract whole generate its intrinsic imagery and the viewer thinks he or she is looking from above at a flower bed, as if the wind were waving in the grass or the flowers were bursting open and unfurling their colors. In 20th century art theory, Max Imdahl elucidatingly differentiated between what he called *sehendes Sehen* and *wiedererkennendes Sehen* – “seeing as seeing” versus “seeing as recognizing” –, drawing, among other sources, on English art historian John Ruskin who described central aspects of the perception of works of art in his “Elements of Drawing and Perspective” (1857).

In this volume Ruskin outlines the various possible modes of perception in a way that would later prove to be fruitful in dealing with abstract painting as well: “... it is only by a series of experiments that we find out that a stain of black or gray indicates the dark side of a solid substance, or that a faint hue indicates that the object in which it appears is far away. The whole technical power of painting depends on our recovery of what may be called the innocence of the eye; that is to say, of a sort of childish perception of these

flat stains of color, merely as such, without consciousness of what they signify, – as a blind man would see them if suddenly gifted with sight.”^[1]

In his brush painting, Deng Guo Yuan exploits the ways and means of tradition in order to, on the one hand, specifically continue in its spirit and develop it further and, on the other, to step out of it out as he feels the need to take it toward abstraction. It is only in total abstraction that he reveals the spiritual substance his hymn to nature holds. In this way he successfully unfolds an atmospheric scenario that appears alternately light-drenched and submerged in shade and that takes in both the momentary and the eternal. It is in this duality of comprehensive perception and interpretation of nature that Deng frames his world, thus placing himself squarely in the context of Taoist reflections.

Yu Shinan, one of the most celebrated Taoist calligraphers, noted: “When taking the brush in hand, one should cancel out one’s vision, invert one’s hearing, dismiss all thoughts and focus on the spiritual reality. When the mind is mute and the breathing harmonious, then the work will penetrate the most refined.” Yu Shinan (558-638) is regarded as one of the four masters of the early Tang Dynasty. Or, as it would be phrased in the West: it will be able to penetrate the sublime. Deng’s painting is itself given to the sublime, incessantly seeking that inner truth content of nature, its perpetually unfolding life and growth, its beauty and the riches it reveals so readily. Yet there is another side to the works of Deng Guo Yuan, one that addresses, rather, the flickering turmoil, the confusion and the entrapment. It marks the complementary realm, the actual downside to the

side that is turned toward the light, thus expressing the yin yang concept that is at the heart of the Asian tradition.

Our experience is different when confronted with the installations of Deng Guo Yuan in which his plants are cooped in Plexiglas cubes, sometimes showing themselves in all their beauty and sometimes appearing moribund. Interestingly, he has dedicated his recent installations to two distinguished professors, Pan Tianshou and Huo Chunyang, who are recognized as great teachers of Chinese brush painting. Even in this different medium, Deng professes his profound affinity to tradition. But what do his installations show and what do they aim at? In “Saluting Chinese Painting Master Tan Tianshou, with metaphysics” (2010), he takes rolled-up palm fronds with their almost graphic structural quality and aligns them relationally and visually with his brush painting. The metaphysical is hinted at, but its presence is not so much visual as language-based. In another work he piles seven plants on top of one another inside Plexiglas cubes, arranging six of them in such a way that their direction of growth is toward the ground, while placing the plant at the very top in a normal direction facing the light – nature turned on its head, all topsy-turvy and thrown off balance ... shipped in sterile boxes and eventually squeezed into test tubes (cf. “No III, born in a way of metaphysics” [2010]). This rigorous transition to a nature that no longer thrives but in artificial containers had already been implemented in “Nos. I. and II, born in a way of metaphysics” Glasses of the kind sometimes used to grow cuttings are grafted onto truncated tree trunks. It is only in this irreducibly confined protected area that life can sprout. Though aesthetically charged, the ensemble epitomizes the

vexing relationship between man and nature to the point that growth is, indeed, no longer possible but within the space predefined by man. The kind of free development and flourishing that nature allows for is reduced here to complete absurdity.

In his most recent environment, Deng Guo Yuan carries this artificiality to extremes, pushing his aesthetics to the point where beauty threatens to tip over into terror. Eight historic Chinese chairs are arranged in pairs, with each pair standing back to back (cf. “Untitled,” 2011). From the seats, backs and crosspieces of the chairs heavy masses of gold “flow” down, with small, narrow test tubes filled with plants plugged into the bodies of each of them. Hanging above the chairs is a series of red painted birdcages with plants growing in them. The consonant contrast between black (the chairs) and gold, between red (the birdcages), shimmering glass and the green of leaves could hardly be more beautiful and harmonious. There is a sense of the contemplative, of the self-contained to this arrangement. However, this quickly changes into irritation. For all its beauty, the arrangement makes us faintly, yet irksomely aware that the freedom of nature has been abandoned in the usurpation – made manifest by man – of all things creaturely. Deng thus adopts a view of nature that critically internalizes the signs of the times and, in reflecting on them, passes them along to the viewer. Criticism turns against what is conceivably feasible, against the transgressing of natural boundaries, in favor of protecting nature and committing it, in all its opulence, entirely to the cycle of becoming, growing and decaying. Deng likely pursues that very ideal that Adorno aptly encapsulated in the concept of *das Naturschöne*, or

“natural beauty,” “seeing in ‘natural beauty ... the trace of the nonidentical in things under the spell of universal identity.’ In Adorno’s thinking, art, in fact, has this ability as well. ... Since both – nature and art – can be sites of remembrance and of utopia, artistic beauty and natural beauty are, to him, closely related.”^[2]

In his major painting series, Deng develops an intense, exhilarating and sometimes disturbing view of nature. This fascination continues in his installations, which break up the aspect of dread in their own distinct visual and formal language. In the process Deng draws a picture that contains within itself the potential of nature and at the same time attempts to elevate nature to the sublime. In adopting a view of interventions in nature that is, by all means, intended to be critical, he takes a stance against any all too careless notions

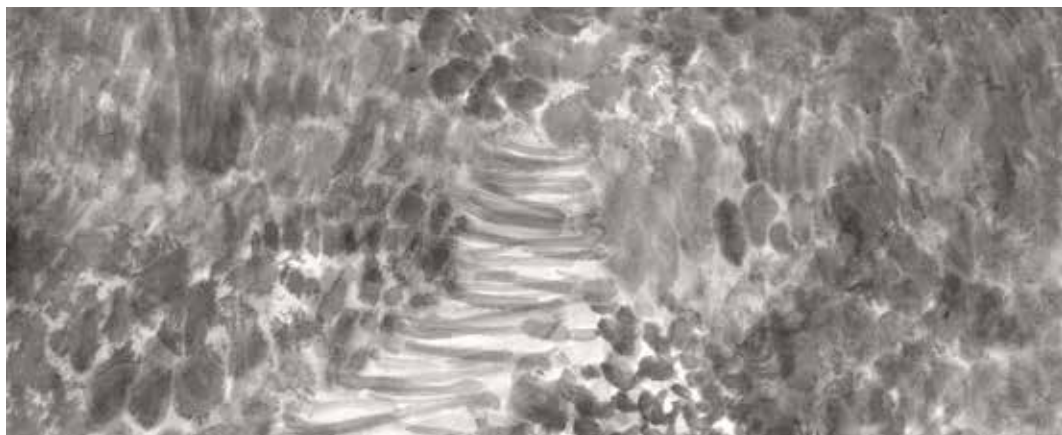
of nature, as nature finds itself more than ever teetering on the brink and struggling to survive. Deng’s works share this apocalyptic pessimism, while at the same time spelling out the potential possibilities residing in the radiance of natural beauty.

Translated by Bram Opstelten

Notes:

[1] John Ruskin, *Elements of Drawing and Perspective* (1857). Ed. by Ernest Rhys. London, New York: Everyman’s Library, 1932, p. 3-4.

[2] Bernd Wagner, “Ästhetik - Ökologie, Natur - Kunst. Gedanken, Materialien, Fragestellungen.” Edited by the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung Hessen, 11/96.



自然美与被艺术所驯化

论自然的理想



纪录片 《贝亚特与诺亚花园》
Video of Beate and Noah Garden

贝亚特·莱芬莎伊德博士

（路德维希博物馆馆长）

邓国源作为中国当代著名的实验艺术家，对斑斓艳丽的色彩的韵律有着敏锐的感觉，而他单凭调节从黑到灰再到白的色调就营造出色彩斑斓的效果。多年来，他一直对抗过于肤浅的现代主义趋势和当代的潮流，创立了一套完全利用中国绘画传统和以自然为中心主题的表达方式。他的作品通常以“在花园”为题，表明艺术家实际上思源于经过栽培的、有边界的、因此是可以考察的花园胜地的主题。在他的笔下，花园成为一种十分独特的hortus conclusus（封闭的园），以一种无以复加的象征手法予以表现生命的核心。初看起来本来似乎是不断重复的意象，细看上去却是生命的自然过程与对生命的知觉的一首回旋曲，其进展简直天衣无缝。构成他的重要的“在花园”系列作品的基础——除了绘画技巧的娴熟运用之外，是一种面对自然的观念。就形式而言，这一概念从根本上超越了传统中国画。后者与其说近乎不如说坚定地步入抽象，却总是寻求叙事的语境，并大体上用以具象为依托的绘画来加以表现。从另一方面说，邓国源大胆地只通过观者的可称为认知知觉的观看模式将自然转译为纯抽象的绘画表达方式，这些表达方式又被转变成为一种易懂的、意在叙事的语境——并追溯到它们在花园和自然中的起源。考虑到邓国源最近的作品将绘画领域丢在身，反而“成长”到三维物体和整个环境，这一点特别有趣。初看起来，后者似乎与水墨画毫无共同之处，然而却是一个按

照一种无法抗拒的逻辑得出的另一个结果。

观赏邓国源的水墨作品，我们即刻就意识到抽象、意象与客体指涉之间的一种摇摆不定的关系。我们看到的绘画似乎专注于细节，然而只是由粗犷、提炼的线条和密集的点组成。画家时而使用迅疾连续的笔触，将它们排列得像粗犷的影线，时而又画出柔和的、浅色调的片断或者吸收了纸的基底的全部白色的、黑暗的、朦胧不清的区域。对比只是作为笔法风格的结果表现出来。有些部分光线明媚，有些部分幽暗朦胧。总体上，他的绘画手法仍然是完全抽象的，观者越是接近画面，它就似乎越是变得“非写实”。然而，哪怕是匆匆一瞥，也会给人一种似是自然和风景的印象。在解读抽象符号的过程中，眼睛不得不反复重新聚焦，恰如展开一幅古老的画卷，整个形象渐渐显露出来时那样——观看作为阅读行为，作为观赏过程中的解读行为，只有在那时，抽象整体才产生了它的内在意象，观者可以体会到自身在俯视一个花园，仿佛风在芳草中吹拂，或者鲜花正在破蕾怒放，展现出绚丽的色彩。在20世纪的艺术理论中，马克斯·伊姆达尔清晰地区分了他所称的sehendes Sehen 和 wiedererkennendes Sehen——“作为观看的观看”和“作为认知的观看”——除其他原始资料外，利用了英国艺术史家约翰·拉斯金的原始资料，拉斯金在他的《素描与透视中的元素》（1857年）中描述了对艺术品的知觉的种种主要方面。

在此书中，拉斯金略述了各种不同的可能的知觉模式，其论述方式后来在探讨抽象绘画时也是富有成效的：“……只是通过一系列实验我们才弄清，一个黑或灰的斑点表示一个固体物质的暗面，或者一个暗淡的色调表示它出现于其中的物体在远处。绘画的整个技术能力依赖于我们对可称为眼睛的纯真的事物的恢复；也就是说，对一种对于这些平的彩色斑点的孩童般的知觉的恢复，把它们仅仅看作彩色斑点，而没有意识到它们表示什么——如一个盲人倘若突然复明时会看到它们的那样。”^[1]

在他的水墨作品中，邓国源探索了种种传统的方法与手段，一方面是为了明确地延续传统的精神并进一步予以发展，另一方面是为了走出传统，因为他觉得需要将它引向抽象。只有在完全的抽象中，他才能揭示出他的大自然颂歌所拥有的精神实质。以这种方式，他成功地展露出一一种朦胧的梗概，它似乎时而沐浴在光亮中，时而浸没在阴影中，既含纳短暂的事物又含纳永恒的事物。邓国源正是以对自然的全面的知觉与解释的两重性营造他的世界，于是明确地将自己置于道家冥思的语境中。

最著名的道家书法家之一虞世南写道：“欲书之时，当收视反听，绝虑凝神，心正气和，则契于妙。”虞世南（558—638）被视为初唐四大家之一。或者如在西方会描述的那样：它能契于崇高。邓国源的绘画本身沉溺于崇高，不断地寻求自然的那种内在的真理内容：它不断展现的生命与成长，它的美和它欣然揭示的丰富性。然而，邓国源的作品还有另一面，它所表现的是闪现的骚动、混乱和诱骗。它标志着补充的领域，朝向光明的那一面的实际的阴暗面，从而表明了处于亚洲传统的核心的阴阳概念。

在面对邓国源的装置作品时，我们的感受就迥然不同了，在那些作品中，他的植物被囚禁在有机玻璃方盒中，有时显得美丽异常，有时又呈现垂死之状。饶有趣味的是，他将两件作品献给两位杰出的教授——潘天寿和霍春阳，他们被公认为中

国水墨画大师。甚至在这种不同的媒介中，邓国源也显示出与传统的深刻的密切关系。但是，他的装置作品表现了什么？它们针对什么？在《以形而上的方式向中国画大师——霍春阳致敬》（2006年）《以形而上的方式向中国画大师——潘天寿致敬》（2008年）中，他使用了几乎具有图形结构性质的卷起的棕榈叶，从关系上和视觉上将它们与他的水墨画排成一行。形而上性得到暗示，但是它的存在与其说是视觉的，不如说是以语言为基础的。在另一件作品中，他将7棵植物装在有机玻璃方盒中摆在一起，其中6棵以朝向地面生长的方式予以安排，而顶端的那棵植物以朝向光的正常方向放置——自然被颠倒过来，一切陷入混乱，脱离了平衡……装在了无生气的盒子中，最终被塞入试管（参照《在花园——以形而上的方式诞生Ⅰ》[2009]）。向着不再蓊郁繁茂而是囹圄在人造容器中的自然的这种严密的过渡已经在《在花园——以形而上的方式诞生Ⅰ和Ⅱ号》中进行。有时用来种植插条的那种玻璃容器被嫁接到截短的树干上。只有在这种无法再狭窄的受到保护的区域中生命才能萌芽。尽管富有美感，总的效果却集中体现了人与自然的令人苦恼的关系，以至生长甚至不再可能，而是囹圄在被人预先规定的空间内。自然所允许的那种自由发展与蓊郁繁茂在此完全成为荒谬之事。

在他最近的展场中，邓国源使这种人为状态臻于极端，将他的审美推演到这样的表达：极端的美让人不安。8把深具历史感的椅子以不同的形式排列组合，（参照《在花园——以形而上的方式诞生Ⅲ》（2011年））。沉重的金的团块从椅座、靠背“流”了下来，隐喻了异物的入侵。它们的身体上各自都插着填满植物的小小的、狭窄的试管。悬挂在椅子上方的是一系列涂成红色的鸟笼，里面都长着植物。黑色（椅子）与金黄色之间，红色（鸟笼）、闪光的玻璃和叶子的绿色之间的协调对比恐怕无法再美，再和谐了。这一安排有一种冥想感、自足感。然而，这又很快变成了愤怒。尽管它很美，但这一安排却使我们朦胧而厌烦地意识到，自然所拥有的自由被侵犯，而人

使这种侵犯变得显而易见。因此邓国源采取了这样一种自然观，它批判地将时代的符号内在化，在对它们进行反思时，将它们传递给观者。批判所针对的是思想所及的事物，对自然边界的侵犯。他赞成保护自然，尽管它丰富繁茂，也让它完全遵循萌发、生长和凋零的循环。邓国源很可能追求阿多诺在das Naturschöne或者“自然美”的概念中所适当地概括的那种理想，“在‘自然美中看到……被普遍的同质性所迷住的非同一性的事物的痕迹’。在阿多诺的思想中，艺术实际上也拥有这种能力……由于两者——自然与艺术——都可以是记忆与乌托邦的场所，因此在他看来，艺术美和自然美密切相关”。^[1]

在他的主要绘画系列中，邓国源发展了一种强烈的、令人兴奋的、有时令人不安的自然观。（这种感受在他的装置作品中得到延续）。邓国源在创作中，画作的本身包含了自然的潜能，同时试图将自然提升到崇高。在呈现了人对自然进行干预的同时进行了批判，他采取了反对任何过于草率的自然观念的立场，因为他发现自然比以往任何时候都徘徊在危险的边缘，为了继续生存而极力挣扎。邓国源的作品也具有这种富于启示性的悲剧元素，而同时又清楚地阐明了蕴含在璀璨的自然美中的种种潜在的可能。

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李本正 英译汉

注释：

[1] 约翰·拉斯金，《素描与透视中的元素》（1857年）。欧内斯特·里斯编辑。伦敦，纽约：人人丛书，1932年，第3—4页。

[2] 贝恩德·瓦格纳，《美学—生态学，自然—艺术。思想，材料，问题》。黑森海因里希-伯尔基金会编辑，11/96。





《在北方》No.28 | 水墨，宣纸 | 122cm×122cm | 2004 年
In the North No.28 | Ink and Water, rice paper | 122cm×122cm | 2004

