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太和艺术空间

Taihe Art Gallery

库艺术

KuArt

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中国当代水墨走向欧洲
CHINESE CONTEMPORARY INK TOWARDS EUROPE

本书简介

INTRODUCTION

“自由的尺度”中国当代水墨邀请展，是太和艺术空间创始人贾廷峰先生耗时九年所打造的极富学术价值的品牌展览，其系列巡展已先后在世界各地举办五届，参展艺术家上百位，参展作品近千件，系统梳理了中国当代水墨的历史脉络、现实境遇及未来走向，基本囊括了该领域内最具实验性和东方精神的创作动态，已然成为中国当代水墨具有“风向标”意义的最高水准展览。

在“自由的尺度（第五回）——中国当代水墨走向欧洲”举办之际，太和艺术空间携手《库艺术》共同策划、推出同名专题大型画册，以个案研究的方式将每位参展艺术家的访谈、自述以及代表作品收入其中，以便观众能全方位地了解艺术家的学养背景、艺术立场和创作观念。全书文字均采用中英文双语，是一本难得的深入剖析中国当代水墨独特魅力和语言特征的学术文献，具有极高的收藏价值。

The Chinese contemporary water ink invitational exhibition the “Boundary of Freedom” is an extremely academical brand exhibition, which Mr. Jia Tingfeng spent 9 years forging, while there has already been 5 rounds of the touring exhibition around the world. Hundreds of artist signed up, and almost a thousand pieces of works was exhibited on the exhibition, it has systematically organized the history of ideas towards Chinese contemporary water ink paintings, our current condition, and the path to the future, and basically included the most experimental and oriental spirit for the trend of creation nowadays. Therefore, it's considered to be the highest standard exhibition, and a bellwether for the Chinese contemporary water ink art.

During the exhibition of the “Boundary of Freedom(Fifth Round)-Chinese Contemporary Ink Towards Europe”, Taihe art gallery cooperates with Ku art to publish this massive painting album/book, and use the method of case studies, self narratives, and the most typical works of the artists to make it easier for the viewers to have an all-round understanding to the backgrounds of the artists, as well as their concepts of art and art creations. The whole album was translated from Chinese to English. It's an extraordinary academic and documentation book that delivers a deeper analysis to the unique charm of Chinese contemporary water ink art and its language characteristics, which has extremely high collectable value.



太和艺术空间

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_ Jia Tingfeng

_ 贾廷峰

北京 798 艺术区太和艺术空间董事长，原《艺术收藏》杂志主编，现为雅昌艺术网首页特邀专栏作家，《财富堂》《中国经济周刊》《中国文化报》特邀专栏作家，自由撰稿人，策展人，独立批评家，当代艺术推手。

从事艺术行业近三十年，属于国内最早一拨艺术市场的从业者。创建了 798 首家以当代水墨为主推方向的艺术机构，在各大艺术媒体发表过几百篇学术文章，对于当代艺术，特别是当代水墨的市场和学术研究均颇有建树。

The president of Taihe Art Gallery, which built in 798 art zone, Beijing.

Former chief editor of the magazine "Art Collection".

Special invited author of the most famous art website "Artron.net".

Special invited columnist of magazines "Fortune Art", "China Economic Weekly", "China Culture Daily".

Mr. Jia Tingfeng has been working in the art industry for 30 years who is the first practitioner in the Chinese art market. He has built the 1st ink art institution in the 798 art zone in Beijing. Hundreds academic articles of his have been published by many major art medias. He is also a successful scholar in the field of contemporary art, especially contemporary ink market and academic researches.



自由的尺度（第五回） ——中国当代水墨 走向欧洲

出品人、太和艺术空间
董事长贾廷峰先生专访

库艺术 = 库：“自由的尺度”展览即将举办第五届了，这些年来，这个主题展览已经走遍世界各地。最初为何会萌生这样一个想法？

贾廷峰 = 贾：2009 年金融危机最猖獗的时候，798 很多画廊撤离，此时我选择创办太和和艺术空间。当时抱着一个理想：在中国的当代艺术区，没有一家以水墨为主的画廊是说不过去的。说实话，到今天为止，中国当代艺术的规则 and 标准还是由西方人制定的，想超越它比登天还难。虽然三十多年来中国的艺术家很努力，也出现了很多优秀的艺术家，但想跟西方当代艺术平起平坐对话的机会几乎不存在。这些年来世界各地的展览看下来，卡塞尔、军械库、威尼斯、巴塞尔等等，越看越觉得悲哀，你所做的一切话语权都在别人那里，人家经过上百年的经营，已经非常成系统，就像一个坚固的堡垒很难攻破。我们一方面需要国际的文化来刺激本土艺术，因为中国的艺术文化确实非常程式化，需要被激活；另一方面，我们也真的没有必要自卑，我们自身有非常优秀的传统，完全自成体系。所以我要开一家画廊，这里呈现的是中国本土当代艺术。

2009 年，我找到栗宪庭，请他策划了“‘自由的尺度’第一回——中国当代水墨走进 798”，当时与老圃、王秋人、郭艳几个人商量，我们都认为中国的艺术发展与西方差异性很大，我们的文化艺术是建立在传统基础之上慢慢地演变、推进，而西方是建立在观念更新基础上的颠覆和创造。因此我借用了孔夫子的一句话“随心所欲不逾矩”，就有了这个题目。中国的艺术讲究章法，崇尚人文精神，无规矩不成方圆。但如果不打破规矩，艺术最终还是停留在传统的层面，毫无意义。

就这样，我在 798 一连做了“自由的尺度”三回展，老栗主持了三届，我也很感恩他的支持。“‘自由的尺度’第四回——中国当代水墨走进巴塞尔”由范迪安担任学术主持，邀请了二十多位艺术家，全面展示了我对水墨实验性的一种推动。十年来，我已记不清做了多少水墨艺术家的展览，一路走来非常艰难，很多人对这个领域没有认知，我是在夹缝中寻找一条通道。艺术家在开辟一条史无前例的道路，我没有任何经验，一方面艺术上不断实验，另一方面画廊还要正常运营，很多年来可以说是惨淡经营。但这些年来，当代水墨开始产生一些影响，开始有人关注，也有了一些交易，现在逐渐处于一种稳定观察与盘整的阶段。

去年一个偶然的的机会，我筹划的方案被意大利一家顶级博物馆选中，因此今年将举办“‘自由的尺度’第五回展”，邀请到二十多位中国优秀水墨艺术家，是中国当代水墨走进欧洲的一次大型展览。我也很期待通过这些艺术家的精彩作品，在原来的基础上进一步诠释“自由的尺度”的艺术主张并有所突破。

库：“自由的尺度”可以说是太和艺术空间和您个人文化理想的集中体现，但在最初这也只是一种直觉，并不具体，也是通过一次次的展览和摸索越来越明晰。

贾：开始时很朦胧，但现在我的文化立场越来越坚定，只有当代水墨的观念才可以与西方当代艺术平起平坐地对话。这里不仅限于水墨材质，比如像梁绍基、徐冰、谷文达等人的作品，无论采用装置、行为或什么媒介，但我认为他们的艺术中也包含水墨的观念，具有东方气质。这一点很重要。

库：回看这些年来您选择过的艺术家和策划过的不计其数的水墨展览，能否从中找到

某种共通性的特质和未来的方向？

贾：我们可以先说中国当代艺术的问题，问题找到了，也就找到了未来发展的方向。针对目前的中国当代艺术，有几条死路。第一，复古。现在很多人拿复兴传统说事，但传统不激活，不生发，不完成现当代的语言转换，沉睡的传统毫无价值。第二，跟在西方人后面玩当代艺术。该玩的人家都玩过了，他们有一个非常庞大严密的系统，像一座高山无法逾越。第三，取悦于意识形态。艺术来源于心灵深处的创造和自由独立的意志，这是关键。否则艺术是不彻底的，或者是伪艺术。

怎么办？植根于中国古老文明内部；汲取世界艺术的养分；具有针对当下的人文关怀；个人独创性的艺术 DNA。这四者，缺一不可。只有如此才可能将中国的艺术推向未来。那么，何谓“中国文明”？这一点众说纷纭，在我看来主要包括这几个方面：一是道家思想与“天人合一”的自然观、逍遥精神，这么说好像很老套，但中国的文化确实跟自然非常接近；再就是佛教中国化的集大成者——禅宗，中国禅宗无疑是世界的珍贵文化遗产。再加上这两者与经典儒家思想的不断碰撞及与世界其他文明交融优化的能力，这就是中国文明能够提供于当下艺术创造的资源与营养。

因此，这次“自由的尺度”的艺术家，也是从这几个方面来选择的，基本上可以分为三类：一种是从中国文化内部生发出来具有当代书写表现性的，比如王冬龄、邱振中、张大我、陈光武等；一种是东方水墨意境与西方抽象主义的融合，比如姬子、刘子建、郑连杰、侯珊珊等；还有一种从道家或是禅宗思想生发出的当代艺术，比如樊洲、茅小浪、老赫等，体现了太和“和而不同，品质为尚”的一贯艺术主张，这次展览的画册我没有选择任何批评家的文章，而是希望艺术家通过作品和自己的言语来表达说话。因为有时感觉很多批评家不知所云，这样反而更为直观可信。

库：水墨在中国是传统模式化程式化最为严重的艺术形式；另一方面，把当代水墨推向世界，在外人看来可能又觉得不够当代前卫。所以这真是一条夹缝中的道路，是否也面临很大挑战？

贾：我在很多公开演讲中的第一句话，就是“我是一个孤独求败者”。这可能就是我的性格，孤独是肯定的，我也没有想过“胜利”，意识到这条道路价值的还是少数人。但正因为难，才值得我去做。我知道自己在做一件几乎不可能的事情，但如果大家都能做，还要我干吗呢？我是用身体力行来证明自己的理想，做大于说。以前还写文章，现在文章也很少写了。还是做出来给大家看，总有人会明白的。

库：您将“自由的尺度”推向世界，在展出过程中，西方人对于水墨，对于东方文化的理解，有没有特别令您记忆深刻的例子？水墨中是否具有全人类均可欣赏、领悟的文化“因子”？

贾：西方人首先是好奇，想深入了解。如果你解读到位的话，他会很激动。我在迈阿密展出的时候，一个非洲裔美国人居然在我带去的水墨作品前跳舞，从第一幅跳到最后一幅，不同的作品，舞姿也不同，我从来没有见过，在中国也不太可能出现。如果不是有这样一些东西在激励我，我不见得能坚持到现在。有的西方人非常精通中国文化，上次一位意大利博物馆的馆长来太和艺术空间，他非常喜欢我们所展示的作品，他是个“中国通”，他说这就是我要寻找的中国当代艺术。

实际上，随着全球一体化的进程，东西方的艺术成果可以共享。历史上西方艺术家从东方拿走很多东西，现在更像是你中有我，我中有你，只不过每个艺术家自身的 DNA 和取舍不同。至于说水墨能否“领先”世界，这在现在还是不可能的，我们只是去做好自己份内的一点点，能做多少做多少。至于更大的目标，需要全社会的努力和国家的力量，几代人的积累，我只能算是一个布道者。

库：这些年来艺术家们的生活都好了，但真正的严肃讨论艺术的氛围，创作的活力，不受功利影响的纯粹创作热情并不是越来越多，有时反而感觉恰恰相反。中国的文化在经过了十几年的开放和发展、革新之后，将走向何处，更加开放还是后退？您是乐观还是悲观？

贾：有一点忧虑。回是回不去的，我们只能越来越开放。无论从宏观还是到个人，没有回头路可走，别无选择。特别是搞艺术，只有彻底打开，才能解放人性，在这个基础上才能谈论艺术，否则艺术一直处于压抑状态是不可能搞好的。但一个国家这么大，总是有一些人奋不顾身，无所谓成败，做自己的艺术已经成为他的生活方式。我的一些合作艺术家让我很感动，他们已经退到无路可退了，拒绝社会的干扰，具有顽强的意志和对艺术的献身精神，这样的人值得我去为他们做一些事情。因为少，才珍贵。我经常说，我是为少数人服务的。其实我跟他们是一起在战斗的，十年来在太和展出的艺术家，十有八九是被体制和社会主流遗忘或边缘化的人。这样的画廊恐怕世界上也不多见。但没关系，我就做我自己。我们都是“草民”，都是从地底下拱出来的，这其实与我的精神、生活、修行完全吻合。我没有去摘现成的果子，我一直在种树。能一以贯之坚持自己的立场比登天还难，要面临许多取舍，有时甚至给钱也不能要。虽然有时我也很窘迫，但这个底线我坚持住了。

库：在您眼中，中国当下有世界一流水准的艺术家吗？

贾：当然有。一个十几亿人口的大国怎么可能没有？就我所选择的艺术家，在 21 世纪至少会出现两到三位大师级的人物。我不说人名，因为还有待时间的检验和大众的持续认知。

库：有没有什么时候是让您感觉几乎困难到坚持不下去了？

贾：一直都很困难，包括这次“‘自由的尺度’第五回展”。艺术家有时不见得理解你的理想。我不是简单卖两张画就算了，我要代表中国当代水墨的成就去向世界展示。如果要卖钱，我做齐白石、黄宾虹这些传统生意比做这些艺术卖钱多多了，我也擅长。但我认为这个活动的意义远远超过那些，中国不缺少“倒爷”和贩子（当然我也很尊重他们），但缺少有文化担当的艺术推手。

库：支撑您一直在努力的，那个您心中理想的愿景是怎样的？

贾：当我每次在国际上策划水墨大展，在开幕式上致辞的时候，那一瞬间我是非常自豪的。当很多外国人坐在台下，听你讲中国的文化和艺术，用钦佩和羡慕的眼光看着你的时候，这一刻，再苦再累都值得了。这种文化的自豪感和成就感远远超越一幅画卖多少钱。发出自己的声音：我，跟你不一样。所以我还是希望通过很多人的努力，能在世界艺术舞台上赢得中国艺术的尊严，这一天能够早一点到来。当然有一些艺术家用艺术之外的东西说事我也了解，但我还是希望用艺术本身说话，因为我认为真正的艺术超越政治。那种艺术可以取悦一时，但取悦不了一世，只在这个时间段有价值，它不永恒，不经典。

库：这个宏大的文化理想和画廊的商业目的是否一致？

贾：不可能一致，也很难一致。这些年来让我最为撕裂的就在这里：商业还是学术？坚持还是放弃？这在中国的现实下往往是矛盾的，很难平衡。一方面，我要改变一些固有的思维，找志同道合的人来合作，吸纳一些资本进来。另一方面，也不能过于理想化，要多方兼顾，否则理想没实现你已经死在半路上了。但最终的信念不能变，赚钱不是我的最终目标，把我的理念推广传播出去，从我这里走出一两位世界级大师，这是我努力的方向。

Boundary of Freedom(Fifth Round) -Chinese Contemporary Ink Towards Europe

The interview with Mr. Jia
Tingfeng (producer and
board director of Taihe Art
Gallery)

KuArt=Ku: Boundary of Freedom (Fifth Round) is about to kick off. In recent years, a series of exhibitions under this theme have been held all over the world. How did you come up with such an idea at the very beginning?

Jia Tingfeng = Jia: When the financial crisis ran rampant in 2009, a lot of galleries withdrew from 798 Art Zone. At that time, I chose to establish Taihe Art Gallery, cherishing an ideal: In the contemporary art zone of China, there was no gallery focusing on Chinese ink painting, which was hardly justifiable. To be frank, so far, the rules and standards of the Chinese contemporary art have been set by Westerners. It can hardly be changed under current circumstances. Although Chinese artists have worked hard, and a lot of excellent artists have emerged in the past 30 odd years, our opportunity of dialoging on an equal footing with the circle of Western contemporary art is almost non-existent. In these years, we have been more than sad after visiting the exhibitions throughout the world, including those in Kassel, Armory, Venice and Basel, because the right to speak belongs to Westerners no matter what we have done. Based on operation of more than one century, a very mature system has already come into beings in Western countries, just like an impregnable fortress. On one hand, we need international culture to stimulate our local art, because Chinese art culture is indeed much programmed, which needs to be activated; on the other hand, our self-abasement is really unnecessary, because we have a very excellent tradition with its independent system. Therefore, I planned to establish an art gallery to present Chinese local contemporary art.

In 2009, I invited Li Xianting to act as the curator of Boundary of Freedom (Exhibitor 1) - the Chinese Contemporary Ink Painting walkd into 798". At that time, I discussed with Lao Pu, Wang Qiuren and Guo Yan. We all held the opinion that Chinese art developed differently from the Western art: Chinese culture and art slowly evolves and advances on the basis of tradition, while Western culture and art are a kind of subversion and creation based on the renewal of concepts. Therefore, I drew on a remark of Confucius: Follow that your heart desire, without transgressing what was right. Therefore, this title came into being. Chinese art focuses on composition, advocates the humanistic spirit and emphasizes the importance of rules. However, if we do not break the rule, our art would eventually stay at the traditional level and would come to nothing.

Thereupon, I launched three exhibitions entitled "Boundary of Freedom" in succession in 798. Li organized them. I feel grateful for his support. Fan Di'an served as the academic organizer of Boundary of Freedom (Exhibitor 4)- Chinese Contemporary Ink Painting Walks into Basel". More than twenty artists were invited. This exhibition displayed a kind of my experimental boosting of ink painting in an all-round way. I cannot clearly remember how many artists were invited to the exhibitions in the past ten years. I feel it's very hard for me to have done so. A lot of people do not have any cognition to this field. I am searching for a passage in crevice. Artists are blazing an unprecedented trail. I do not have much experience either. On one hand, I have been experimenting on art continuously. On the other hand, I am duty-bound to operate the gallery normally. It is not too much to say that the gallery has been operated very painstakingly for many years. However, in these years, the contemporary ink painting has begun to produce some impact and begun to arouse the attention of some people. Some transactions have also been done. So far, the gallery has been gradually entering the phase of steady observation and consolidation.

Last year, the scheme planned by me was selected by a top museum in Italy by chance. Therefore, "Boundary of Freedom" will be launched this year. More than 20 Chinese excellent ink painting artists will be invited. It will be a large-scale exhibition for Chinese contemporary ink painting to enter Europe. I also expect to, through the wonderful works of these artists, I can further interpret and make a breakthrough in the artistic idea of "Boundary of Freedom" on the original basis.

Ku: It is not too much to say that “Boundary of Freedom” is the epitome of Taihe Art Gallery’s and your personal cultural ideal. However, it was nothing but an intuition at the very beginning, and was not concrete at all. It has been becoming clearer and clearer based on repeated exhibitions and explorations.

Jia: It was very dim at the very beginning. However, my cultural position is firmer and firmer now. Only the concept of contemporary ink painting can dialogue on an equal footing with Western contemporary art. Here, the limitation is not merely that of ink painting materials. For example, no matter what device, behavior or media is adopted by the works of Liang Shaoji, Xu Bing and Gu Wenda, I hold the opinion that their art also contains the concept of ink painting and has the oriental disposition, which is very important.

Ku: Looking back on the artists you have selected and the countless ink painting exhibitions you have planned in these years, can you find out a certain common trait and future direction therein?

Jia: We can first discuss the issue of Chinese contemporary art. Finding the problem means finding the direction of future development. There are several blind alleys for Chinese contemporary art: 1) Retro. A lot of people now emphasize the renaissance of tradition. However, if the tradition remains unactivated or undeveloped, or if the tradition does not go through its modern and contemporary language transformation, the soundly-sleeping tradition would come to nothing. 2) Develop contemporary art by imitating and following Westerners. Do not forget that they have already developed what they are supposed to, and they have a very huge and rigorous system, which cannot be spanned just like a high mountain. 3) Lay too much emphasis on ideology. Art comes from the creation in the depth of soul and the free and independent volition, which is crucial; otherwise art is halfway or is pseudo-art.

What should we do? Deep-rooted in the Chinese time-honored civilization; absorbing the nutrient of world art; having the humanistic care against the contemporary; the personal original art DNA. Each of these four is indispensable. Only by doing so, can we boost Chinese art to the future. Then, what is “Chinese civilization”? There are numerous opinions on it. In my opinion, it chiefly includes the following aspects: 1) The nature outlook and leisurely spirit of Taoism and “the unity of the man and heaven”. This seems very stereotyped. However, Chinese culture is indeed very close to the nature. The next is the epitome of the chinization of Buddhism - Zen. Chinese Zen is no doubt valuable cultural heritage of the world. Plus the ability of the two to continuously collide with classic Buddhist thought and mingle and optimize with other civilizations of the world. This is exactly the resources and nutrition that Chinese civilization can provide the contemporary art creation.

Therefore, artists participating in Boundary of Freedom exhibition are also selected in these aspects, who can be basically classified into three types: 1) Those who represent the contemporary calligraphy in terms of Chinese culture, e.g. Wang Dongling, Qiu Zhenzhong, Zhang Dawo and Chen Guangwu; 2) Those who combine oriental ink painting art conception with Western abstractionism, e.g. Ji Zi, Liu Zijian, Zheng Lianjie and Hou Shanhu. 3) Those who represent the contemporary art in terms of Taoism or Zen thought, e.g. Fan Zhou, Mao Xiaolang and Lao He, embodying the constant art idea of Taihe: harmony in diversity; quality first. For the picture album of this exhibition, I have not selected any critic’s article; instead, I hope that artists can express their thought with their works and their speech, because I sometimes feel that a lot of critics do not make any sense, and so this would be more intuitional and credible.

Ku: Ink painting is an art form with the most typical feature of traditional modularization and

programming in China. On the other hand, if we push the contemporary ink painting to the world, the outsiders would feel it to be not contemporary and avant-garde enough. Therefore, this is really a road in crevice. Do you also face a huge challenge?

Jia: The first sentence in many of my public speeches is “I am a lonely defeat-seeker”. This may be my character. Loneliness is absolute, because I have never thought of “victory”. Only a few people realize the value of this road. However, because it is difficult, it deserves to be done by me. I know that I am doing an almost impossible thing. However, if everyone can do it, my doing it would make no sense. I am testifying my ideal by my own practice. Doing is superior to speaking. I wrote articles before, but now I rarely write. I feel that I can do it and show my achievement to others.

Ku: You are pushing “Boundary of Freedom” to the world. Are there any especially unforgettable examples with regard to Westerners’ understanding of ink painting and oriental culture? Does ink painting contain any cultural “gene” that can be appreciated and understood by all human beings?

Jia: Westerners would first show curiosity and desire for further understanding. If you interpret thoroughly, they would feel much excited. When I launched an exhibition in Miami, an African American unexpectedly danced in front of the ink painting works that I had taken there, from the first piece to the last piece of works, with different dancing postures in front of different works, the postures that I had never seen. This scene can be rarely seen even in China. If there aren’t such things encouraging me, I may have given it up halfway.

Some Westerners are very proficient in Chinese culture. Last time, an Italian museum curator came to visit Taihe Art Gallery. He was very fond of the works on display. He is a “Chinese expert”. He said that this was exactly the Chinese contemporary art that he had been searching for.

As a matter of fact, in the process of global integration, the oriental and Western art achievements can be shared. In the history, Western artists took away a lot of things from the Orient. Now, the oriental art and Western art share some common elements, although different artists have different DNAs and selections. It is impossible for ink painting to take the lead in the world now. We only do a little of what we are supposed to do. A loftier ideal entails the effort of the entire society, the national power, the accumulation of several generations. I am nothing but a sermonizer.

Ku: In these years, artists have been living a better and better life. However, the genuine atmosphere of solemn art discussion, the energy of creation, and the pure creative passion free from material gain have been becoming less and less. Where will Chinese culture go after decades of opening-up and development and revolution? Opener or backward? Do you feel optimistic or pessimistic?

Jia: I feel a little worried about this. We will certainly become opener and opener. From both macro and personal perspectives, there is no way back. Art can liberate human nature only by opening it thoroughly. Only on this basis can we discuss art; otherwise art would always be in a depressed state and could not develop well. However, there are always some people who would dash ahead in spite of all and who would not care success or failure. Doing their own art has become their life-style. Some of the artists who cooperate with me have moved me very much. They have already retreated to where there is no way back. They say no to social interruption. They have a very tenacious volition and a spirit of dedication to art. Such people make me feel it worthwhile for me to do something for them. They are rare, so they are more valuable. I often say that I serve the minority of people.

As a matter of fact, I am fighting with them. Almost all the artists whose works have been exhibited in