

**CUI XINMING**

**崔新明**

## INTRODUCTION

A recent graduate from the Sichuan Academy of Fine Arts, Cui Xinming (b. 1986, lives in Chongqing) is a rising Chinese artist who creates expansive oil on canvas works that express, in an elaborate and vivid painterly style, the tumultuous thoughts and reflections of a younger Chinese generation that is living through a period of constant change. As a witness and critic, Cui Xinming addresses how his peers and compatriots are casting into oblivion the past and its rich memories as an attempt to relentlessly attain a new stage of modernity. This publication presents an overview of Xinming's major series' of work 'Black Hole of Memories', 'A Sleepwalker's World' presented as a solo project at Art Basel Hong Kong in 2013, and finally his most recent body of work 'Journey to the East' (2014) exhibited at Edouard Malingue Gallery. Two critical essays by the Chinese art critic and curator Su Wei, and the Australian arts writer Luise Guest develop this examination.

Throughout it is identified how, employing a strong focus and gestural strokes, Xinming has created three particular series that address the challenges brought on by continual development. 'Black Hole of Memories', for example, introduced how Xinming approaches the canvas as an extension of his cognisance, mind and memory. How privy to Xinming's deepest memories and thoughts, one feels approximate to a trespasser, an infringer upon a terrain that is very much the artist's own; these are visions from his childhood, a collage of his youth, laced with personal tremors and inveterate hauntings. Yet, Xinming's work very much lends itself for observation by virtue of its monumental scale and panoramic composition. Indeed, true to the Greek roots of the word 'panorama', Xinming places all (pan) on view (orama): we are witnesses to every infinite detail. And although the

subject of Xinming's work may not oblige to the strict tradition of panoramas, that of depicting national military battlefields or public events, one immediately recognises that these are the scenes of a much more personal conflictual history.

'A Sleepwalker's World' emphasised how each painting captures Xinming's inner turmoils with regards to constant political, societal and personal change. A highly introspective artist, Xinming observes himself, his position with regards to society and the values of those who surround him. Where words do not capture his sentiments, Xinming approaches the canvas with incredible vigour and treats it as an extension of his visions and internal tensions. The scenes depicted are not figments of a strict universal reality; rather, they are dramatic and subliminal visions that Xinming's mind has conjured. The series crucially does bear, however, a real-world relevance; each work is laced with secondary meaning, ranging from political to religious commentary. Indeed, this series brings out the narrative quality of Cui Xinming's paintings, which pervades his previous 'Black Hole of Memories' series and his later 'Journey to the East' series, too; we are not but viewers to his work but also omniscient readers of an insightful socio-political commentary.

'Journey to the East' follows from Xinming's previous practice yet displays a remarkably luminous development in his painting technique. The vibrant, red-toned glow that permeates these new works heightens how, at the heart of Xinming's oeuvre, there is a sense of hope. Whilst their mnemonic themes and distinct literary qualities seem to openly invite an aura of darkness, Xinming conversely finishes each of his historias with a more hopeful twist: each narrative that draws on the emptiness of humanity, the animality of our society and breaks down perceived illusions of grandeur, is not destined for absolute disillusion.

Cui Xinming is a highly lauded emerging contemporary Chinese artist based in Chongqing. Recently selected for the prestigious 2014 'Luo Zhongli 10 Years Review Exhibition', he has previously held solo shows in Hong Kong and has been exhibited in Istanbul, Berlin, Beijing and Chengdu, amongst other locations. In 2010 he was nominated for the 1st Zhang Xiaogang Graduate Contemporary Art Scholarship and came in third place at the 2nd Chinese Institute Annual Art Exhibition. His work has been featured in multiple publications, including the South China Morning Post, Art Info, The Art Newspaper, Oriental Daily News, Flash/On, and Artron.

## 介紹

崔新明(1986年出生,現居於重慶)畢業於四川美術學院。這位新晉中國藝術家的油畫作品以遼闊視野和豪邁風格見稱,不時強烈地展現出中國年輕一代激盪多變的思想世界。崔新明以證人和評論家的身份,反思同胞為了鏗而不捨的現代化而選擇遺忘過去和與之相關的豐富記憶。這本目錄呈獻崔新明主要作品的概貌,包括《記憶黑洞》、香港巴塞藝術展2013個人展覽《一個夢遊症患者的世界》和近作《東遊記》(2014),並以中國藝術評論家暨策展人蘇偉和澳洲藝術作家Luise Guest的兩篇文章作考究基礎。

崔新明那強烈鮮明的焦點和細緻生動的筆跡無疑是一種針對城市持續發展所帶來的種種挑戰的一種揭示。以《記憶黑洞》為例:他把澎湃的氣勢付諸畫布,作為他的想像和內心的延續,把無數不能置信的畫面與幻想融合於畫作之中。在窺探崔新明的感受和視覺敘述時,不難發現他的創作均建基於內心的戰慄與不能抹去的陰霾。在欣賞同時,人們會不禁自覺是一名入侵者,肆意地侵犯他的童年回憶、青蔥歲月、個人內心的震顫以及根深蒂固、縈繞心頭的思緒。然而,崔新明的作品最令人印象深刻的是其巨幅尺寸與全景式的佈局構圖。誠然,他依據希臘詞源(panorama),把所有(pan)投進視覺感觀(horama)而製成一幅全景作品,使觀者成為目擊一切無限細節的證人。雖然崔新明在主題取材上並沒有完全嚴格遵守傳統全景以國家戰役或公開場合為佈局的繪圖原則,但他卻能確實地描繪出一段更私人而充滿矛盾衝突的歷史。

《一個夢遊症患者的世界》系列旨於透過作品捕捉崔新明在面對政治、社會和個人持續的演變的同時,其成長中所經歷的思潮起伏。藉著藝術創作,他不斷反思社會與群眾的價值觀,並繼而反觀自身的身份與處境。當文字難以表達他的情緒和觀點時,崔新明便轉向繪畫,用驚人的創作活力,把畫布當成為幻想與內在張力的一種延伸,勾勒出有如幻覺有極具感染力的景象,令觀者留下極深印象。畫面中的場景並非一般常見的虛構幻象:這些充

滿戲劇性的攝人場景，實在體現出藝術家對潛意識幻象的呼喚。這非意味著崔新明的作品與現實缺乏觀連，相反，每件作品往往隱藏另一重意義，從而描繪他的政治見解和宗教觀點。的確，這一系列帶出了崔新明作品獨特的敘事素質，而這種素質徹底地滲透他的舊作《記憶黑洞》以及隨後的近作《東遊記》。我們不僅僅是這些作品的觀者，也是無所不知的讀者，讀著一個富見地且極為敏銳的社會政治評論。

《東遊記》既秉持了崔新明以往的創作手法，更展示了他在繪圖技巧上的重大突破。作為這系列新作的標誌，油畫上鮮明而帶紅調的亮光道出潛藏在作品深處並充滿希望的訊息。畫作以記憶為核心的題材和其獨特文學特質仿若在招惹一股令人不安的氣氛和意味，但崔新明往往在收筆之際為它們添上變局：每一個吐露人性空虛、社會獸性和偉大錯覺的故事背後，依然隱隱存在著甦醒的希望。

崔新明是一位備受欣賞的新晉中國藝術家，現居於重慶。最近獲選參與2014羅立中獎學金十年回顧展的他亦曾在香港、伊斯坦堡、柏林、北京及成都等地舉辦個人展覽。他在2010年獲提名第一屆張曉剛研究生當代藝術創作獎學金及在第二屆中國高校美術作品學年展獲得三等獎。他的作品在不同媒體均有報導，包括南華早報、ARTINFO、The Art Newspaper、東方日報、Flash/On及Artron等等。



*Journey to the East*  
東遊記

Edouard Malingue Gallery, Hong Kong  
馬凌畫廊, 香港

08.10.2014 - 15.11.2014

Presenting a new body of work, 'Journey to the East' follows from Xinming's previous practice yet displays a remarkably luminous development in his painting technique. The vibrant, red-toned glow that permeates these new works heightens how, at the heart of Xinming's oeuvre, is his unique ability in capturing the inner turmoils experienced when undergoing a phase of personal development. Indeed, Xinming is an observer, a highly introspective artist who examines himself, his position with regards to society and the values of those who surround him. Where words do not capture his sentiments, Xinming approaches the canvas with incredible vigour and treats it as an extension of his visions and internal tensions, casting upon it incredulous scenarios and hypnagogic happenings.

Although Xinming's paintings borrow elements from the quotidian, these scenes are not figments of a universal reality; rather, they are dramatic and subliminal visions that Xinming's mind has conjured. This is not to say, however, that his works do not bear a real-world relevance; on the contrary, each work is laced with secondary meaning, ranging from political to religious commentary. In *Empire is a dream* (2014), for example, Xinming depicts three figures in ornamental Empirical dress standing behind an altar upon which incense sticks have been placed as well as a red card bearing the sign of luck. Despite the details of their robes, the faces of each of the figures are concealed, creating a sense of eeriness, a feeling that is heightened by the surrounding monkeys, which given their animated postures, seem even more alive than the figures themselves. As such, Xinming comments on the emptiness of humanity, the animality of our society and breaks down perceived illusions of grandeur.

Privy to Xinming's thoughts and visual narrative, one feels approximate to a trespasser, an infringer upon a terrene that is very much the artist's own, for these are visions that stand on the border of personal tremors and inveterate hauntings. The painting *Don't hurt me* (2014), for example, follows from Xinming's interest in capturing an altered domestic and shows to the left of the canvas what seems to be a commonplace home interior; an ornate dark sofa, faced by a low-rise wooden coffee table. As your gaze traverses to the centre of the canvas, however, it becomes fixated on a fiery glow and the profiled outline of a kneeling figure. Face turned, it is uncertain whether the character is seeking to put out the mounting blaze, trying to protect himself, or is indeed caught in a limbo between the two acts. From the title of the oeuvre though, one can deduce the existence of a threat, a state that seems all the more peculiar given the usual comforts of a homely interior. Xinming thereby addresses the challenges of the domestic, the flame both acting and symbolising the variety of possible perils.

Overall, 'Journey to the East' presents a series of narrative paintings that are omniscient in quality and insightful in their socio-political commentary. Following from Xinming's previous works, these oeuvres have a distinct literary angle in their visual recounting of a story. Fraught with complexity, Xinming's paintings voice the qualms of his generation – its evolving relationship with traditions, values and beliefs.



馬凌畫廊呈獻中國新晉藝術家崔新明(1986年出生,現居於重慶)最新個人展《東遊記》(Journey to the East)。崔新明剛於四川美術學院畢業,他創作的大型油畫描劃細緻而生動,流露出中國年輕新一代狂野的想法與反思。《東遊記》展示的是崔新明一系列的全新創作,這些新作既秉持了他以往的創作手法,更展示了他在繪畫投巧上的重大突破。作為這系列新作的標誌,油畫上鮮明而帶紅調的亮光突顯了他如何擅長於捕捉個人成長時經歷的內在焦慮,並將之潛藏在作品深處。崔新明實際上是一個觀察入微的人,常常反省與檢視著自己、他在社會身處的位置,以及他身邊的人的價值。每當言語無法道出他內心所想時,他就把澎湃的氣勢付諸畫布,作為他的想像和內心糾結的延續,把無數不能置信的畫面與幻想融合於畫作之中。

縱然崔新明的畫作均是取材於每日司空見慣的日常事物,但這些畫面卻不能稱為虛構自真實世界的影像。反之,它們更像是從藝術家腦海中魔術式地幻化而來,種種充滿激情及下意識的憧憬。與其說他的作品脫離現實,不如說他每一件作品都以政治上或宗教上的隱喻為綴更為貼切。在作品《帝國是一場夢》(2014)中,三名身穿龍袍的人站在上了香及貼上象徵幸運的紅紙的香爐後。他們每個人衣袍上的細節及面容都一片模糊,建構出一股令人不安的氣氛。更添詭異的是,他們旁邊的猴子動作靈活而富動態,比畫中的人物更富生命力。在此崔新明抒發了他對社會中去人性化及獸性表現的看法,試圖粉碎大眾對社會種種偉大的錯覺。

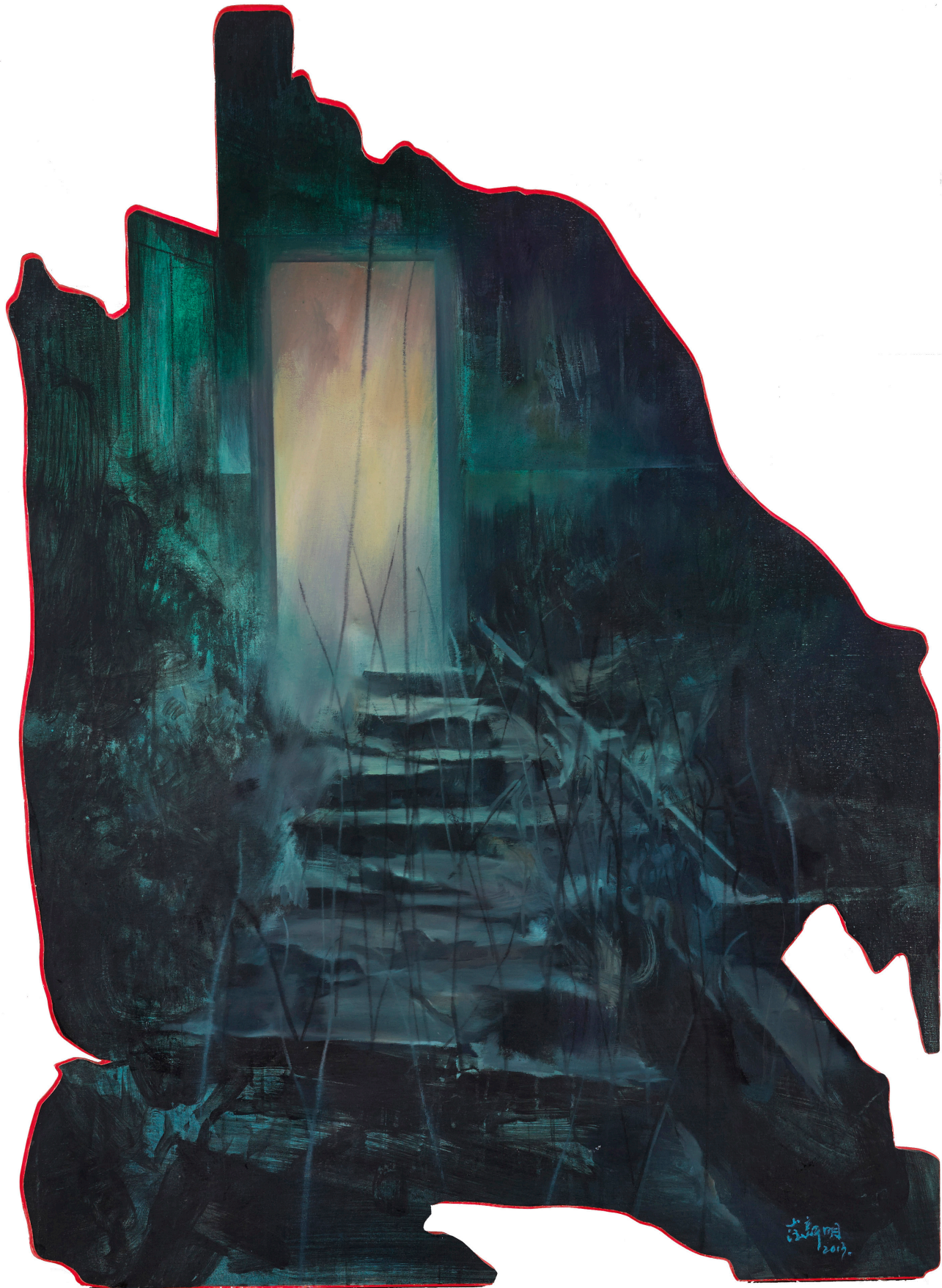
在窺探崔新明的感受和視覺敘述時,不難發現他的創作均建基於內心的戰慄與不能抹去的陰霾。在欣賞同時,人們會不禁自覺是一名入侵者,肆意地在侵犯他的個人領域。畫作 Don't hurt me I (2014)承繼了他對繪畫變形的家居的愛好,畫中左方是慣常可見的室內環境,擺放著華麗的深色梳化,面向一張木製茶几。但當觀者聚焦畫作的中心時,卻會發現一團熊熊烈火和一位只帶有基本輪廓的人物膝跪在地上。人物的轉側的臉令我們無法確定他究竟是想撲滅烈火,是企圖保護自己,還是在兩者之間猶豫不決。但可以肯定的是,作品的名稱已暗示了當中的危險意味,罕有地強調即使在家居如此給予人舒適印象的場所,也無法擺脫對威脅的恐懼。創在者由此道出家庭面對的難題,火焰就是實際上和象徵意義上都有可能發生的危險。

《東遊記》展示一系列在社會及政治層均具有巨大潛力與前瞻性的敘事畫。正如崔新明前期的創作,這些作品的視覺敘事手法滲透出獨特的文學角度。他懷著複雜的心情,以畫作吐露了與他同一年代的人感受到的不安,以及與傳統思想,社會價值與信仰不斷演變的關係。





*Don't Hurt Me I, 2014*  
Oil on canvas (油彩 畫布)  
140 x 180 cm



李明  
2017

*Black Hole of Memories No. 4 - Permitted Memories*  
*記憶黑洞四號 - 被允許的記憶, 2014*  
Oil on canvas on PVC foam board (布面油畫裱於PVC泡沫板)  
135 x 100 cm





*Sleepwalker No.5*  
夢遊症五號, 2014  
Oil on canvas (油彩 畫布)  
150 x 200 cm



崔新明  
cui xinming  
2014.



*Sleepwalker No.6*  
夢遊症六號, 2014  
Oil on canvas (油彩 畫布)  
150 x 110 cm



*Sleepwalker No.7 - Permitted Space*  
梦游症7号--被允的空间, 2014  
Oil on canvas (油彩 畫布)  
200 x 120 cm





*Sleepwalker No.9 - Observation*  
夢遊症九號 - 觀望, 2014  
Oil on canvas (油彩 畫布)  
120 x 150 cm





*Railway No.2*  
鐵路二號, 2013

Mixed media on canvas (混合媒體 畫布)  
60 x 70 cm







*Journey to the East - Confucius' Hometown*  
東遊記 - 孔子故里, 2014  
Mixed media on canvas (混合媒體 畫布)  
60 x 70 cm





*Journey to the East - Confucius' Hometown II*  
東遊記 - 孔子故里 II, 2014  
Mixed media on canvas (混合媒體 畫布)  
120 x 150 cm



*Nightwalk*  
夜巡, 2014  
Oil on canvas (油彩 畫布)  
140 x 180 cm



*Empire is a Dream*  
帝國是一場夢, 2013  
Oil on canvas (油彩 畫布)  
180 x 150 cm







*Empire is a Dream II*  
帝國是一場夢 II, 2013  
Oil on canvas (油彩畫布)  
150 x 200 cm





Installation View  
裝置現場





Installation View  
裝置現場





Installation View  
裝置現場







Installation View  
裝置現場





Installation View  
裝置現場





Installation View  
裝置現場



## *The Recent Works of Cui Xinming*

by Su Wei

At first glance, one is engrossed in the revealing light amid the dismal images that comprise Cui Xinming's (b. 1986 in Qingzhou, Shandong) latest body of work. Such light does not appear as a decorative aperture or spot; it is always centralised somewhere in the painting, manifesting various senses of volume and weight pertaining to the environment, or rather, the artist's creation of a discourse. We are unable to identify the source of light; at times it rises from the surface of the earth ("Noctambulism - Call", 2013), at others it entices the figures like a black hole ("Night Watch", 2014), or positions itself as the centre piece in the crowd ("Sleepwalker No. 8 - Consecrating for this Land" 2014). The existence of the light confers on the image a sense of exposure, which, by defying the rules of photography, draws a paradoxical relationship between brightness, human, and object. The light does not simply diffuse itself over the depicted people and objects - it seems to transform the constructed connotation, thus permeating the texture of figures, changing their original statuses as the core of the painting. Simultaneously, its presence largely weakens the transparency of the image - evidently, in the act of expression, the artist is also experimenting with a unique language of his own. What is the symbolic significance of this light? What kind of position does it hold in the artist's ideological system?

Born in Qingzhou, Shandong province, Cui Xinming received his MFA from the prestigious Oil Painting Department at Sichuan Fine Arts Institute, and has since then resided in Chongqing, one of the national central cities in China. Qingzhou was once the capital of Southern Yan during the Eastern Jin Dynasty, as well as the centre of the Buddhist clan of Xianbei Murong. In 1996, the discovery of the Long Xing Temple ruins from the Tang Dynasty and the excavation of hundreds of Buddha figures sublimated the unknown city in Central Plains China to a hub of ancient culture.

Being the largest city in Southwest China, Chongqing served as the cradle of such voices as Pan Dehai, Mao Xuhui, Zhang Xiaogang and Ye Yongqing, who established the "Southwest Art Group" in the 1980s to celebrate the idiosyncratic culture of the Southwest that is distinguished from the Central Plains, thus rapidly raising themselves as the essence of Chinese contemporary art history. Rather than blending the trajectories of his life and art seamlessly, Cui Xinming, seeks to challenge the ancient and contemporary traditions - his artistic practice, in that sense, takes scepticism as a point of departure.

In Cui Xinming's colossal painting, "Memory Hole - Hometown Autumn" (200 x 500 cm, 2012), distinct images of wheat fields, mountains and the firmament comprise the landscape of his memory. Sombre and slightly sterile colours stretch up to five metres in width, devoid of dramatic juxtapositions whilst defining the top, centre and bottom layers as three distinct sections of a natural scene in its most original texture. Contrary to the title of the painting, history and time cease to exist whereas personal memories are buried in the depths of void: such is the standard form of a black hole. Cui Xinming's mastery lies in his creation of premonition: it may seem that the wheat fields are conspiring to disguise a path to the mountains, or that the clouds are concealing something ominous, whilst the detailed wheat leaves in the foreground connect to the distant mountains in dissonance. The painting in its entirety manipulates one's sense of anxiety and rage, which speaks to the emotional discourse that is spinning amid China's social context – one of transformations and uncertainty. This context has, on the one hand, resulted in a historical narrative that seems singularly vulnerable in the monochronic tautology of modernisation, a historical perspective conducting areas of social life to fulfil political ideologies.

On the other hand, individuals are unable to position themselves in the fast-paced and ferocious metropolitan life; the deeper one ventures into its crux, the more anxious he feels as an outsider. These sentiments in "Memory Hole" point towards a much wider implication of the social and historical circumstances, whose various forms are difficult to hold in their totality. At this time, Cui Xinming, has yet to experiment with a more microscopic and specific enquiry into paintings, but rather presents an instinctive sense of scepticism towards the existing histoire.

This scepticism already emerges in Cui Xinming's work from the previous year, "Memory Hole I" (2011), in which the artist depicts a dark interior. The narrative of this scene begins on the left, where a middle-aged woman, whilst clutching a letter, rests her head against the bed leg. The projected triangle between the bed, the woman and the adjoining debris thus transcends beyond the nominal perspective point. As the narrative extends itself towards the centre of the painting, it abruptly meets a rail that leads to a large rupture in the wall. Beyond the hole is an everyday railroad scene: tracks lie amidst overgrown weeds, clusters of scarlet clouds gather, half enshrouded, half exposed. Beneath the railway are pieces of common furniture: vintage sofa, coffee table, kettle, vanity mirror and so on. These simple, domestic furnishings speak of a mechanic existence, and by this the artist seems to imply a certain decadent consciousness of the ordinary, accentuated by a towering Confucian statue on the right side of the scene. An indistinct figure kneels before the statue (characteristic of Cui Xinming's paintings is the ambiguity of human faces), seemingly concerned with that which also preoccupies the woman by the bed leg. We cannot interpret this painting, however, by explaining dreams – as it obviously lacks the necessary elements of incredulous scenarios to surpass common logic.



Rather, one may say the connection between the scenery beyond the east wall and the interior space implies a conceptual inevitability: no possibility to escape from the repressive and distressed life, whilst the outlet is merely a deception. The dramatic social transformation has caused no alternation to individual consciousness, or family ethics or worldview, for the modern thinking pattern of pursuing speed and spatial sense creates only a social illusion. Futile is the attempt to elude the degenerate notions of morality and vulgar aesthetic cognisance. Through his efforts at the composition of this painting, Cui Xinming uproots the very piece of flesh that is most common yet most difficult to confront in our body.

This is not to say that Cui Xinming's paintings exist merely in a metaphorical realm to reflect an age. In his latest series, presented by Edouard Malingue Gallery, Cui Xinming attentively explores the theme of absurdism. This absurdism is not merely a satire of real life, nor an unconscious labyrinth to imitate surrealism. Rather, Cui Xinming seeks to construct a semi-mythical atmosphere in the scenes and to create a metaphor for absurdism as a life-transcending medium of expression – a kind of absurdism that is at once artistic and more engaging with the production of scenes. At this point, Cui Xinming seems quite traditional in his treatment of scenes as an extension of the artist's body: by deconstructing their imagery, one can catch a voyeuristic glimpse of the artist's creative process – this mysterious instant is, to Cui Xinming, a metonymy of creation.

This new series of paintings, in the artist's own words, is the product of tyrannical control. Inspired by the late Sigmar Polke, Cui Xinming attempts to explore the transforming relationship between sculpture and graphics through the language of painting, and at the same time, questions how to deal with the emotional intensity of scenic narratives. These two focal points organically combine in his works "Lucian Freud I" and "Lucian Freud II", in homage to Freud. What fascinates the artist is the tension between Freudian images' simultaneously nervous and powerful characterisation and the symbolic narrative of everyday scenes, whose emotional intensity materialises in the images' elements of formulation. Such Freudian creative form lends itself to Cui Xinming's unique methods, but before proceeding to analyse these two works, one must first examine the influence of Freud on Chinese contemporary painting.

In fact, Freud's impact on Chinese painting can be observed as far back as from the late 1980s. In 1989, Fan Dian published the article "Lucian Freud" in "World Art" (April 1989) and soon after the journal also published a large number of papers taking Freud as the focus of their analyses. The full force and directness in Freud's approach to depicting the human body, alongside his acute inspection of everyday reality, imposed a remarkable impact on enlightening artists from the naivety and idealisation of the 80s. To them, Freud seemed to offer a point of reference as regards the implementation of such archetypical aspirations of

the 80s as ultimacy, humanity and mystique on more microscopic and experimental planes of creation, as well as the reinterpretation of the realism forsaken by post-Cultural Revolution artists. Yet it was also these arts practitioners, in the spirit of such strong demands from Chinese experimental art itself, who dismissed Freud's work as a cultural critique. This had also, to a certain extent, affected the Chinese Pop Art and "Cynical realism" as they rose to prominence in the 90s.

Cui Xinming should have some knowledge about this history; discontent and sceptic towards such cultural reading of Freud, he attempts to flesh out the bowels of Freud's paintings that belong to artists. In "Lucian Freud I", the confined space is filled with three colours: red, black and white. An indistinct woman, sat on the bed on the left, seems fascinated by a lump that is casting a white flame in the centre of the painting. The flame faces the door, but owing to the deliberately flattened shapes and wiped strokes, the perceived depth of the painting appears vague and ambiguous. Meanwhile, "filthy colours" constitute a recurrent theme in the series. This "filth" has various detailed changes: the fume, the woman, and the blurred images of plants behind the woman are all products of strong and vigorous brushes, creating a distinct contrast with the door on the left side, the floor, wire and wall sockets, which are angular and solid: the mystique and uncertainty of the female protagonist in this environment represent precisely the kind of emotions that the artist is desperate to express. Through the transformation of ordinary space (the transforming relationship between sculpture and graphics as Cui Xinming explains), as well as the organic control over colours, colour lumps and lines, Cui Xinming creates an idiosyncratic emotional intensity and integrates into the painting his own creative experience (the appearance and the hidden moment of mystery as he says). A similar approach also appears in "Lucian Freud II" which is based on cool tones. At the centre of the painting remains a similar mass in the shape of a white-and-purple flame. The door is left ajar; a dramatic plot emerges in the form of a portrait hung on the left of the door, presenting a work scene of Freud and a female model.

Cui Xinming's interpretation of Freud is inseparable from his contemplation of painting creation over the years. His acute observation of the works by his predecessors is manifested in his exhibition at Edouard Malingue Gallery, featuring a set of personal notes and sketches as a fragmentary presentation of his understanding of some important painters from Mainland China. These two years have seen heated discussions on the notion of the "painterly" in Mainland China, wherein certain arts practitioners attempt to describe works emerging from the 90s, 10 years after 2000, as well as some recent works, from the perspective of "painting ontology".

As a departure point, these discussions are keen on distancing themselves from the discourse of Political Pop and Cynical Realism, and to unearth new historical clues from the "bowels" of paintings. Whilst the desire to defy the existing arts histoire is quite understandable, its vision of the "bowels" remains unsettled, and is therefore much less adequate. Departing from the obsolete perspective of cultural criticism does not necessarily imply a sound foundation of contemporary painting creation. As regards the cases studied in these discussions, one rarely encounters in-depth analyses on the tension between the historical experience and the contemporary experience, or new subjective possibilities for creation and criticism. Guided by their zeal for the ordinary and the artisanship of the representation of everyday scenes, participants seem to believe their approach can dissolve the sociological readings emanating from the exterior of scenes, as well as hollow discussions on "presentation," "representation", and "abstraction". Yet one may note in these specific case studies that many creations have merely opened up new areas of enquiry mostly associated with the visual language and narrative of scenes, that paintings are still treated as a "medium" for studies. As such, the discussions' lack of awareness weakens the force of individual and human experience that is characteristic of art as a medium of existence, as well as the potential of its radicalism and historical imagination when confronted with new social contexts.

Observing Cui Xinming's work in parallel with this background, one will notice the intention to experiment with a more microscopic mode. Pertaining to the scepticism as mentioned earlier, Cui Xinming does not concur with the independence of paintings as a medium. Rather, he seeks to find out the limits of depths that art can continue to reach, and to excavate the necessity of art from art itself. Certainly, this requires a long-term project, which Cui Xinming has just commenced.

This series of paintings centres on ritualistic sacrifice and "circuses", implying the artist's reflection on historical and everyday experiences. The scenes show an abundance of overlaid details, which integrate into the artist's well-designed compositions and manifest the attempt to flesh out the rich connections between painting's language and expression, as well as the dynamic balance between the two. Cui Xinming's work "The Bewitched Years" (2013) revives the living room scene in "Memory Hole I", except that recurrent objects such as the sofa, coffee table and TV cabinet now seem to have been coated with paint, hence their much cruder and richer details. Using charcoal, Cui Xinming puts in the foreground random strokes that vaguely resemble weeds, and wipes with cloth the passive light and its surrounding crowd at a distance. On the edge of the crowd stands a weasel – symbolic of the nocturnal and insidious – watching the crowd engrossed in the light.

Whilst the same image also appears in " Sleepwalker No. 5 " (2014), "Empire is a dream" (2013) conversely focuses on an altar. Unexpectedly though, three emperors with indistinct faces replace the Buddhist iconography as the subject of worship. Animals are still indispensable to the imagery; this time, a monkey, signifying the evolutionary ancestor of humanity, satirises history's absurdity. In exploring the degenerate cognisance of morality, the mindless idolisation of power and the seduced consciousness to evade reality in Chinese people's everyday life,

Cui Xinming tries to avoid putting his own criticism above the scene itself, thus the traditional binary system of form and content retain their significance as the centrality in his practice. It is based on this notion that one may decipher the inter-textual relationship between the trees and the group of ordinary people heading into the depths of the woods as depicted in "Sleepwalker - Summons" (2013), or the correlation between the bridge, the pavilion, the water and the sky – inanimate objects of hardness and volume functioning as the only protagonists in "Hometown of Confucius" (2014).

Undoubtedly, Cui Xinming's new series of paintings may cause some discomfort and reflection on the viewer's part. Speaking of colours, these scenes are filthy, dark and mottled; composition-wise, the artist underscores the marked proportional relationships and the physical modelling of perspective distinguished from the usual approach. The lump of light that appears in the centre from a distance, on the ground or from the outside of the room, is like a catalyst for the organic collision between the symbolic significance and formal sense of the creative language. This light serves at once as the entrance to our interpretation of the scene, the unknown and formidable black hole in depths, the outlet through which we escape from the corrupt world created by the artist, and the opportunity to, at the same time, reflect on the world that we inhabit. From the artist's personal experience, this light is ominous, ironically reminiscent of the gloom of childhood memories and their accompanying accumulation of actual experiences. Yet, once deconstructed to the realm of artistic practice, this light appears to suggest a political attitude of artistic creation – one that relates to scepticism, loneliness and profundity. This is only the beginning, and we look forward to what lies in store hereafter.



## 崔新明近作

文：蘇偉

初看崔新明(1986年生於山東青州市)最新的這組畫，目光會被陰暗的畫面中透出的光亮吸引。這些光的形態不是修飾性的光圈、光斑、光點，它總是集中在畫面的某處，因環境，或者說畫家有意的語言結構塑造而呈現出不同的體積和質量感。我們無法辨識來光的來源，它或是從地面升騰起來(《夢遊症-召喚》，2013年)，或是黑洞般吸引著畫中人物進入(《夜巡》，2014年)，或是處於人群的中心被觀看(《夢遊症8號—為這片土地開光》，2014)。因為這些光的存在，畫面被賦予一種違背攝影規律的曝光感，光線和人、物的關係是悖反的。這些光線不是鋪灑在畫面中人和物之中，它似乎改變了畫面所構造的語境，滲透進人、物的肌理，並且改變了它們在畫中原本的主人公地位。而同時，這些光的存在也很大程度上弱化了畫面的透視感，顯然，藝術家在表達的同時也試圖實驗屬於自己的形式語言。這團光具有什麼樣的象徵意義？它在藝術家的表意體系中處於什麼樣的位置？

崔新明是山東青州人，畢業於以繪畫教學聞名的四川美術學院，也留在了重慶這座龐大的川城中生活。青州，曾是東晉時期南燕國的都城，崇信佛教的鮮卑慕容氏定都於此。1996年，青州發現唐代龍興寺遺址，數百尊佛像出土，這座本來默默無聞的中原城市突然變成古文化中心。重慶，中國西南第一大市，20世紀80年代，潘德海、毛旭輝、張曉剛、葉永青等以繪畫創作為主的藝術家組成“西南藝術群體”，就在西南這片有別於中原文化的土地上發出自己的聲音，很快進入到中國當代藝術史敘述的核心地位。但在崔新明這裡，生活的軌跡並未和藝術創作了無衝突地融合在一起，他不想順從地繼承古代或者當代的傳統，他的藝術實踐是從不信任開始的。

在2012年崔新明創作的一幅尺寸巨大的畫作《記憶黑洞——故鄉的秋》(200x500cm, 2012年)中，麥田、山川和天空三組界限分明的意象組成了記憶的風景。凝重而稍顯枯澀的色彩呈現在長達五米的畫面寬度中，沒有強烈的戲劇衝突，畫面被上、中、下三層自然物象條理分明地鋪滿。與畫的標題相悖，歷史時間在這裡消失，個人記憶也藏在最深處，正是個標準的黑洞形態。崔新明很善於通過畫面塑造不安的暗示，麥田中似乎隱藏著一條通向遠山的路徑，天空的雲層似乎掩蓋了什麼不祥之物，前景中刻畫細緻的麥葉和堅硬的遠山不協調地連接在一起。整幅畫作傳遞出緊張又稍帶憤怒的情緒。這種情緒應該和巨變中運轉的中國社會語境相關，這一語境導致了：一方面，歷史敘述在現代化的線性時間邏輯中顯得單一而貧弱，社會生活領域被這種歷史觀牽引著去填充政治意識形態的理想；另一方面，個體在快速、粗暴、躁動的城市生活中無法尋找到相應的位置，越進入城市的內部，越感受到局外人的惶恐。《記憶黑洞》中的情緒所針對的是一個寬泛的、難以摸索出全部形態的社會和歷史現狀，崔新明此時還沒有開始嘗試更微觀和具體的繪畫研究，而是充分展現出不信任現有敘述的本能。

這種不信任的情緒，在崔新明稍早一年的創作中已經有所展露。在作品《記憶黑洞I》(2011)中，藝術家描繪了一幅陰暗的室內場景。畫面的敘述從左側開始，一個中年女人手拿著一封信，耷拉著頭倚靠在床腳。床、女人、雜物所構成的臃腫的三角明顯高於透視點，畫面向中間延伸時突然接上了一條鐵軌，通向牆壁上露出的大洞。洞外是一片我們常見的鐵路風景，鐵軌臥在叢生的荒草中，猩紅的雲聚集著露出半個面目。鐵軌下方是普通的家具場景，老式沙發、茶几、熱水壺、梳妝鏡……這種簡易而模式化的家居佈置在中國再普通不過，藝術家似乎在通過它暗示一種腐朽的日常意識。這一點，在畫面右側一個突兀的儒者塑像上極大地凸顯了出來。塑像前跪拜著一個人，我們看不到他的面孔(崔新明的畫作中很難見到人的臉部刻畫)，他應該與床腳邊的女子關心著同一件事情。我們不能用夢境來理解這幅畫，顯然這裡缺乏夢境所必需的超越日常邏輯的元素。牆東外的風景與室內空間的連接毋寧說是一種構思上的必然：壓抑、困苦的生活中是沒有出逃的可能性的，出路只是一種假象。劇變的社會環境完全沒有引起個體意識、乃至家庭倫理觀和世界觀的改變，追求速度和空間感的現代化思維模式只塑造了一個社會幻象，切身的生活裡，人們仍深深地困在腐朽的道德意識和庸常的美學思維中無可脫身。在這幅構圖上花費了巨大力氣的作品裡，崔新明翻出了我們肌體裡最普通、又最難以面對的那塊肉。

但這並不是說，崔新明的畫僅僅停留在影射時代的象徵層面。在馬凌畫廊展出的最新一組畫作中，崔新明非常用心地探討了荒誕這一主題。這種荒誕，並不僅僅是對現實生活的諷刺，也不是模仿超現實主義風格的無意識迷宮。他力求在畫面中塑造出一種半神話的氛圍，並用這種超越日常性的表現形式隱喻荒誕——一種“藝術家的”、更關涉畫面是如何生成的，荒誕。在這一點上，崔新明顯得傳統，畫面變成了藝術家身體的延伸，似乎剝開畫面的意象結構，就能窺見到藝術家創作的某個瞬間——這個神秘的瞬間，在崔新明看來，就是創作的全部。

這組新畫，用藝術家本人的話說，是強控制下的產物。他受到去世不久的藝術家Sigmar Polke的啟發，試圖在繪畫語言中探討chongmanliliang雕塑和平面之間的轉化關係，同時，如何處理畫面敘事的情感強度，也是他關注的焦點。這兩者在作品《盧西恩·弗洛伊德I》和《盧西安·弗洛伊德II》兩部作品中有機地結合在了一起。兩張作品都在向弗洛伊德致敬，藝術家對弗氏畫中那種緊張而充滿力量感的人物刻畫筆觸與日常場景的圖像敘事之間所產生的張力所吸引，這種張力所引發的情感強度完全通過畫面的形式因素得到了體現。崔新明通過獨特的方法引用了弗氏的這種創作形式。不過在我們分析這兩幅作品之前，有必要提及弗氏對中國當代繪畫的影響。

實際上，從20世紀80年代末開始，弗洛伊德對中國繪畫創作的影響就已顯現。1989年，範迪安就在《世界美術》(1989年4月號)雜誌上發表了《盧西恩·弗洛伊德》一文，該刊也在隨後多期雜誌中發表了大量有關弗氏的論文。弗氏刻畫肉體時那種力量感和直接性，他對日常現實的深刻考察，對當時很多還沒有走出懵懂、理想化的80年代語境的藝術家震動很大。對他們來說，如何從終極、人性、神秘這些典型的80年代宏大訴求中落實到更微觀和實驗性的創作層面上，如何重新理解文革結束後被藝術家放棄了的現實主義繪畫風格，弗氏提供了一個參考。但也正因為這種強烈的源自中國實驗藝術自身的需求，使得弗氏的創作很快被中國藝術實踐者賦予了一層文化批判的意義，這也在某種程度上波及了後來90年代蔚然成風的中國波普藝術和“玩世現實主義”創作。

崔新明對這個歷史應該是有所了解的。他不滿足、也不完全信任這種對弗式的文化閱讀，而是試圖挖掘弗氏繪畫語言內部的秘密，這個秘密很多時候是屬於藝術家這一族群的。在《盧西恩·弗洛伊德I》中，局促的空間充滿了紅、黑、白三種顏色。偏左側坐在床上、面容模糊的女人目光被畫面中央形似白色煙火的一團東西吸引，焰火正對著門口，但由於故意平面化的形體塑造和有意用布擦抹的筆觸，整幅畫的縱深感顯得模模糊糊，非常曖昧。同時，“臟顏色”是崔新明這組畫一個顯見的因素，這個“臟”中又有著豐富的細節變化，焰火、女子、女子背後模糊的植物形像都是筆觸激烈而富有動感的，這與左側的門、地板、電線、牆壁電線插口等等棱角分明、堅硬的物形成了對比：畫中女子在這一環境下的顯得神秘而充滿了不確定，這恰是藝術家需要表達的某種情感。崔新明通過對日常空間的改造（崔新明所說的雕塑和平面之間的轉化關係），以及對色彩、色塊和線條有機控制，調動出獨特的情感強度，並且在其中融入了藝術家自身的創作感受（即他所說的神秘時刻的出現與隱沒）。相似的方式也出現在《盧西恩·弗洛伊德II》這幅冷色調為主的作品裡。畫面中心仍是一團焰火形狀的東西，透著白紫色，門變成了半敞的，戲劇性的情節出現在門左側一幅帶有透視關係的畫像上，畫像呈現了畫家弗洛伊德與女模特在一起工作的場景。

崔新明的弗氏解讀與他這幾年對繪畫創作的思考分不開。他善於觀察前輩畫家的工作，比如在這次馬凌畫廊的展覽上，他就展示了一組自己的筆記和草圖，片段地呈現了他對大陸一些重要畫家工作方式的理解。最近兩年，中國大陸內部發生了大量針對“繪畫性”的討論，一些藝術實踐者試圖從“繪畫本體論”的角度描述一些90年代、2000年之後的十年、包括最近發生的繪畫創作。這一討論的出發點，顯然是要與90年代盛行的以政治波普、玩世現實主義為代表的圖式語言保持距離，希望從繪畫“內部”挖掘出新的歷史線索。如果說這一討論所暗含的打破現有藝術史敘述的慾望還可以理解，它對“內部”的想像卻是非常模糊、難以令人滿意的。離開十幾年前的文化批判視角，並不意味著就獲得了當下繪畫創作的基礎。在這個討論裡涉及到的個案中，我們很難見到深入的、對於歷史經驗和當下經驗之間形成的張力的分析，也沒有看到創作或是批評的新的主體性可能。討論者對於繪畫的日常性、手工性非常熱衷，似乎認為這可以消解來自畫面外部的社會學解讀，以及消解那種空泛地談論“再現”、“表現”、“抽象”的方式。但在具體的案例分析中我們發現，很多藝術家的創作不過是被給予了一種新的範疇，這些範疇的建立大多與畫面的視覺語言和視覺敘事相關，繪畫仍然被當做一種“媒介”來考察，這使得整個討論缺乏認識的強度，藝術創作作為一種存在方式所具有的那種關聯個體和人類生存經驗的力量、它面對新的社會語境時所潛在具有的激進性和歷史想像力，被這個討論弱化了。如果從這個背景觀看崔新明的創作，我們會發現他有意在進行一種更加微觀的工作。正如上文談到的那種不信任的態度，崔新明對並沒有認同繪畫作為一種媒介本身的獨立性，而是更想看看，藝術創作還能達到什麼樣的深度，從藝術創作本身來挖掘藝術的必要性。當然，這是一項長期的工作，崔新明剛剛開始。



這組新畫大多圍繞祭祀和圍觀的主題展開，這裡面暗含著藝術家對歷史經驗和日常經驗的思考。畫面呈現了諸多痕跡疊加的細節，這些細節融入在藝術家精心設計的構圖裡，看得出，崔新明試圖深挖繪畫語言和表達之間豐富的聯繫，以及二者之間動態的平衡。作品《被蠱惑的歲月》(2013年)中，畫面又一次呈現了《記憶黑洞I》裡的客廳場景，但是，沙發、茶几、電視櫃等等物件彷彿是在顏料罐中蘸了一遍，細節粗糲而豐富，崔新明又用木炭在畫面上隨意畫上了一些雜草狀的線條佈在前景，還用布擦抹遠景處那片無源的光以及圍繞著它指指點點的人群。人群邊上，一隻站立著的黃鼠狼——一個在中國人的理解中常常晝伏夜出、卑微陰險的動物形象——“圍觀”著被光吸引的人群，這個形像也出現在作品《夢遊症五號》(2014年)之中。《帝國是一場夢》(2013年)則集中描寫了一個祭台場景，出人意料的是，被祭祀的對象不再是常見的佛道形象，而是換成了三個面孔不清的皇帝。動物形象仍然不可或缺，這次則換成了曾是人類始祖的猴子，似乎在諷刺歷史的荒誕。藝術家在探討中國人日常生活中腐化的道德意識、盲目的權力崇拜以及不敢直面現實的“抹漿糊”心態時，盡量避免著讓這種內容批判凌駕於畫面本身之上，形式與內容這一傳統的二元體系在崔新明的創作中仍是重中之重。把握這一點，我們就可以理解《夢遊症-召喚》(2013年)中一群走向林子深處的普通人形象與樹木之間的互文關係，以及在《孔子故里》(2014年)這幅沒有人群、具象的動物的風景作品中，具有硬度和體積感的橋、亭與水面、天空是如何呼應的。

崔新明的這組新畫無疑會引起觀者的不適和反思。從色彩上說，畫面髒亂、陰暗、斑駁；從構圖上說，藝術家尤為強調異於慣常透視法的比例關係和形體造型。而那團時而出現在畫面中心、時而在遠方、時而又從地面或者屋外透出的光，像是一劑催化劑，使得創作語言的象徵意味和形式感發生更有機地碰撞。這團光，是閱讀畫面的入口，是景深處那個未知而恐怖的黑洞，是我們逃離藝術家筆下這個腐敗世界的出路，是我們得以在某一時刻反思自己身在世界的契機。於藝術家的私人經驗而言，這光是不祥的，它與童年灰色的記憶和伴隨這記憶生長的現實體驗有關，但深入到藝術創作的層面，這團光也許正暗示了一種藝術創作的政治態度，一種與不信任、孤獨和深刻性相關的態度。這是個開始，讓我們期待。



***A Sleepwalker's World***  
**一個夢遊症患者的世界**

Art Basel Hong Kong, Hong Kong  
香港巴塞爾藝術展, 香港

23.10.2013 - 26.05.2013

Cui Xinming's solo exhibition entitled 'A Sleepwalker's World' features a series of new works, which capture the inner turmoils experienced when undergoing a phase of personal development. A highly introspective artist, Xinming observes himself, his position with regards to society and the values of those who surround him. Where words do not capture his sentiments, Xinming approaches the canvas with incredible vigour and treats it as an extension of his visions and internal tensions, casting upon it incredulous scenarios and hypnagogic happenings.

Indeed, these scenes are not figments of a universal reality; rather, they are dramatic and subliminal visions that Xinming's mind has conjured. This is not to say, however, that Xinming's works do not bear a real-world relevance; on the contrary, each work is laced with secondary meaning, ranging from political to religious commentary. For example, in 'Story (2)' (2013), Xinming depicts two dogs approaching an offering stand in a highly vegetated setting, which two Buddha's overlook. While one dog seems incredulous to the site's sanctity and chews on the presented fruit, the other stands aback and overlooks his compatriot's animalistic urges. Xinming thereby creates, and depicts, an allegory for the disparate respect of religion amongst living beings.

Privy to Xinming's thoughts and opinions, one feels approximate to a trespasser, an intruder upon a terrene that is very much the artists own for these are visions that stand on the border of personal tremors and inveterate hauntings. Yet, Xinming's work very much lends itself for observation by virtue of its monumental scale and panoramic composition. Indeed, true to the Greek roots of the word 'panorama', Xinming places all (pan) on view (orama): we are witnesses to every infinite detail, from the vibrant crepuscular sky in 'The Bewitched Years' (2013) to the delineated face of the threatened buddha in 'Taboo Game' (2013). Although Xinming does not oblige to the strict tradition of panoramas, that of depicting past national military battlefields or public events, he does depict a conflicted world of high contemporary relevance.

'A Sleepwalker's World' therefore presents a series of narrative paintings that are omniscient in quality and insightful in their socio-political commentary. Indeed, Xinming's works have a distinct literary quality and openly share an affinity with Franz Kafka's fictional novella *Metamorphosis* that follows the inexplicable transformation and subsequent alienation of the lead character Gregor Samsa. While Kafka and Xinming's works share a distress regards isolation, society and change, Xinming conversely finishes each of his *istorias* with a more hopeful twist: by virtue of his deliberate depiction of vivid skies, each luminescent and radiating, Xinming reflects that behind his troubles, and those of a young Chinese generation, there is a sense of hope.

馬凌畫廊將於五月舉行的首屆香港巴塞爾藝術展中，呈獻新晉中國藝術家崔新明首場香港個展。崔新明生於1986年，畢業於四川美術學院，他的油畫作品以遼闊視野及豪邁風格見稱，不時強烈地展現出中國年輕一代激盪多變的思想世界。透過展出崔新明等藝術新星之作，馬凌畫廊致力呈獻更多矚目新晉藝術家的多元傑作。

此場名為《一個夢遊症患者的世界》之特展，將帶來崔新明的新作系列，以捕捉個人在成長中所經歷的思潮起伏為主題。藉著藝術創作，崔新明不斷反思社會與群眾的價值觀，並繼而反觀自身的身份與處境。當文字難以表達他的情緒與觀點時，崔新明轉向繪畫，用驚人的創作活力，把畫布當成為幻想與內在張力的一種延伸，勾勒出有如幻覺又極具感染力的景象，令觀者留下極深印象。

畫面中的場景並非一般常見的虛構幻象：這些充滿戲劇性的攝人場景，實在體現出藝術家對潛意識幻象的呼喚。這非意味著崔新明的作品與現實缺乏關連，相反，每件作品往往隱藏另一重意義，有描繪他對政治的見解、亦有滲透他的宗教觀點。例如，在2012年創作的《故事 II》中，崔新明描繪在叢生的植物中，兩隻狗走近祭壇，兩尊佛像高聳其上；一隻狗看來並未受神聖氣氛所感染，並不敬地咬食著用作供奉神靈的水果，而另一隻狗則站在後面，遠遠眺望同伴充滿獸性的衝動。崔新明由此創造了一則寓言，以藝術方式呈現出眾生對宗教迥異的態度。

觀者越走近崔新明的想法與觀點時，應越會感到自己像一個入侵者，侵入到藝術家極其個人的領域中。這些圖景其實是藝術家個人內心的震顫，與根深蒂固、縈繞心頭的思緒之邊界。此外，崔新明作品最令人印象深刻的是其巨幅尺寸與全景式的佈局構圖。無論是《被蠱惑的歲月》(2013年作)中充滿活力的黃昏天空，到《被禁忌的遊戲》(2013年作)中受到威脅的佛像之面容，都描繪得相當仔細，展現出細緻入微的視角。雖然崔新明並沒有完全嚴格遵守全景的繪圖原則，但他卻能確實地描繪出充滿矛盾衝突的當代世界。

本次個展呈獻的一系列敘事繪畫作品，均透現出崔新明對社會與政治之見解與評述。的確，崔新明的作品有著一種獨特文學特質，它們與卡夫卡的虛構小說《變形記》之間具有某種相似之處，似乎延續著書中主角格利高里。雖然兩者同樣帶有關於疏離隔絕、關於社會與改變帶來的痛苦，崔新明的作品卻每每帶出充滿希望的訊息：畫中的天空色彩強烈並散發著光亮，反映出在煩惱背後，中國的年輕一代仍然懷抱希望。









"A group of young people, their backs turned to the viewer, stand huddled in a familiar room minimally adorned by a large sofa and a coffee table. The focus of this painting is not on the domestic, however, but rather the supernatural red cloud that has caught these persons attention. Completely mesmerised, the group looks upon a window into a colourful and shiny world. Xinming creates a commentary on their naivety and blindness by depicting the presence of a yellow weasel, which in Chinese culture has an evil connotation due to its ability to fool those who are weak or sick. Xinming therefore prompts a reflection upon members of China's young generation who have fallen for a world that seems full of promise but is in fact created by slyness."

“一群年輕人，背對著觀眾，在一個由一個大沙發和一個茶几簡約修飾的熟悉房間裡，縮成一團的站立著。這幅畫的重點不在於居家佈置，而是那團矚目的超自然紅色烟雲。年輕人們透過一扇窗，如癡如醉地凝望著一個豐富多彩的璀璨世界。黃鼬的存在代表了崔新明針對年輕人的天真和盲目的審視（黃鼬因欺騙弱者或病患，在中國文化中象徵一種邪惡的內涵）。藝術家以此反思當代中國年輕一代的處境：他們被貌似充滿希望但實際上狡猾險峻的世界而蠱惑。”

*The Bewitched Years*  
被蠱惑的歲月, 2013  
Oil on canvas (彩畫布)  
150 x 180 cm







"A military-clad man stands with his back turned to the viewer and authoritatively raises his hand against a giant Buddha, which appears caught in blue flames. Insouciant to the man's dictatorial stance, the Buddha appears to be releasing its shackles and taking on an animate form. Xin-ming hereby depicts the conflict between religion and state control, while simultaneously addressing where the true balance of power between the two axes lies."

“一位軍人背對著觀眾，權威地舉手反對眼前一尊陷入藍色火舌之中的佛像。對獨裁者漫不經心的大佛似乎擺脫了身上的枷鎖而開始呈現活動的姿態。崔新明在此描繪宗教和國家控制之間的矛盾，同時探究平衡的真正所在。”

*Taboo Game*  
被禁忌的遊戲, 2012  
Oil on canvas (油彩 畫布)  
150 x 200 cm



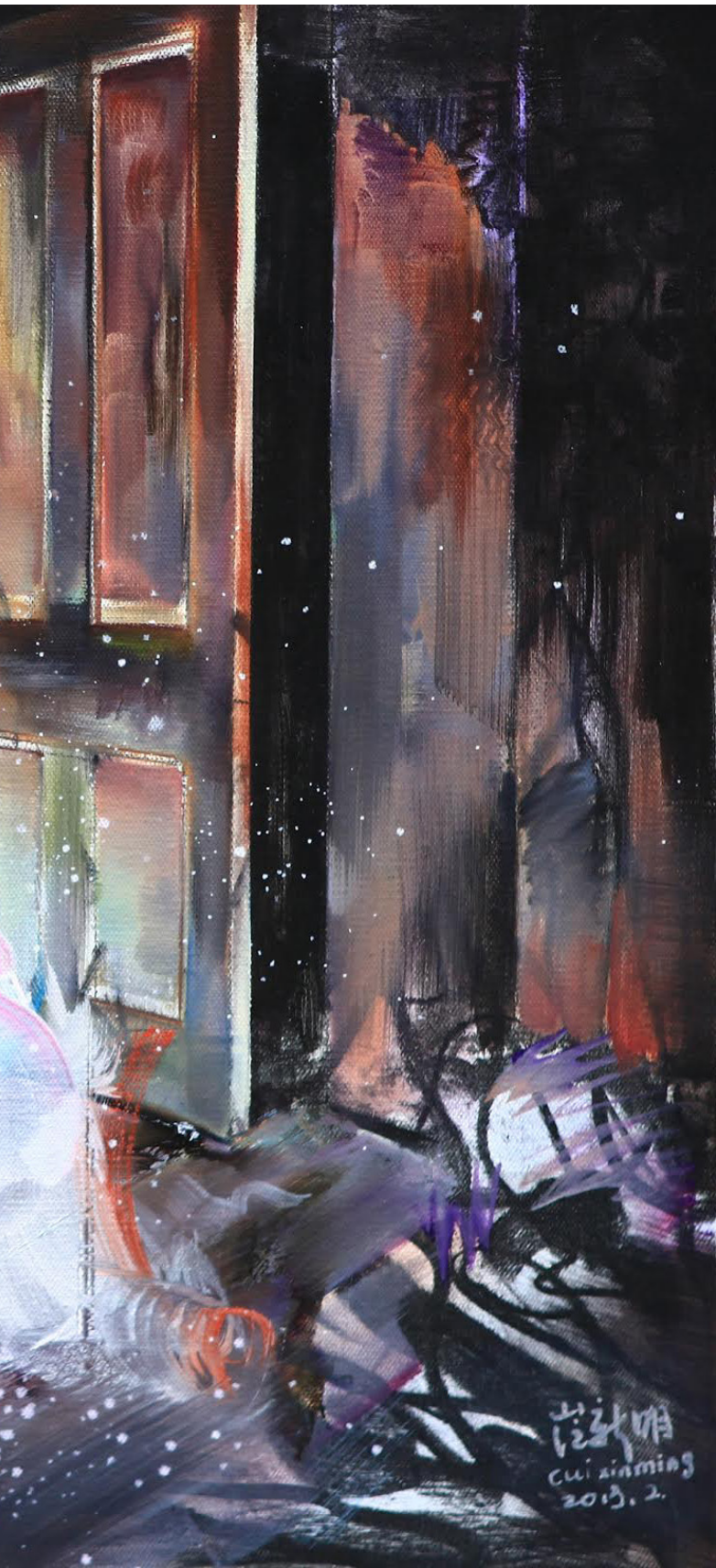
"In an interview conducted with Cui Xinming, he expressed his admiration for artists in the West, such as Lucian Freud, who have a conviction vis-à-vis their painting technique and have plowed ahead, fuelled by their determination and foresight. In this painting Cui Xinming casts his hand at a subliminal genre of portraiture. The painting depicts a painter sitting on his bed, hands held together between his knees, looking intently at everything in his studio; all that he has is in that painting of him. The entire scene is depicted in vivid shades of burgundy red, that are interrupted by bursts of white light that add a spectral element."

“與崔新明一次採訪中，他表示非常欽佩西方藝術家，如盧西恩·弗洛伊德有著與其繪畫技巧相對的信念以及由決心和遠見策動的前瞻性。在這肖像畫作品中，崔新明貫以他個人畫風，描繪畫家坐在床上，雙手互握緊扣在雙膝之間，目不轉睛地注視他工作室內的一切。他所擁有的一切就這樣構成了畫面的全部。整個場景以鮮明的酒紅色色調描繪，中間添加幾串突兀的白色，間斷凝造出一道道光譜效果。”

*Lucian Freud I*  
盧西恩·弗洛伊德 I, 2013  
Oil on canvas (油彩 畫布)  
135 x 100 cm







"Another reverence to the great British painter Lucian Freud, this painting pays homage to the artist's genius by depicting a room solely inhabited by a canvas that stands atop an easel. Now that the artist is gone, Xinming remarks that all we are able to admire or criticise is what he has left."

“另一幅向偉大英國畫家盧西恩·弗洛伊德致敬的畫作描繪一個房間，由畫架上的一幅畫布構成畫面的全部。崔新明透過作品表示：藝術家離去以後，我們能夠欣賞或批評的對象就只有他所遺留下來的。”

*Lucian Freud II*  
盧西恩·弗洛伊德 II, 2013  
Oil on canvas (油彩畫布)  
60 x 70 cm







"A panoramic work, Cui Xinming adheres to the Greek etymology of the word and puts all (pan) on view (horama). Here we witness different generations working by a railroad against the backdrop of a gigantic tree. A direct reference to industrialisation, Xinming prompts us to reflect on the contrast between nature and what has been man made, as well as the significance of those who have built the world we currently live in."

“崔新明依據希臘詞源，把所有（PAN）投進視覺感觀（horama）而製成一幅全景作品。我們可以在這作品看到不同世代在一棵巨大的樹前從事鐵路工作。延伸至社會工業化，崔新明促使我們反思人為和自然之間的對比，以及在我們生活現況背後的建築者的意義。”

*World of a Sleepwalker I*  
一個夢遊症患者的世界 I, 2013

Oil on canvas (油彩 畫布)

3 panels of 200 x 150 cm (total 200 x 450 cm)









"A dog, which looks directly at the viewer, sits atop a coffee table in the middle of the highly familiar domestic setting of a living room. The dog is not afraid of the human arrangements; on the contrary, he is centrally placed and dominates the space. This painting reflects Xinming's Kafka- esque interest in the absurd as well as that of creating a clash between the strange and the familiar, the ridiculous and the cohesive."

“一隻狗，直接與觀眾對望著，坐於熟悉的客廳中間的一個茶几上面。狗並不怕人類活動；相反，他置於中央並佔據著這空間。這幅畫反映了崔新明對荒誕及為了創造存在於陌生和熟悉、荒謬和凝聚力之間的卡夫卡式的興趣。”

*Story I*

故事 I, 2012

Oil on canvas (油彩 畫布)

100 x 135 cm







"In a dark and tenebrous yet highly vegetated setting, two dogs approach an offering stand, which two Buddha's overlook. While one dog seems incredulous to the site's sanctity and seemingly chews on the presented fruit, the other stands aback and overlooks his compatriot's animalistic urges. Xinming thereby creates, and depicts, an allegory for the disparate respect of religion amongst living beings."

“在黑暗和晦澀但植被的環境里，兩隻狗正在接近由兩尊佛像看守的祭地。一隻狗似乎對該祭地的神聖充滿著懷疑，看似嚼著水果；另外一隻站在遠處，俯瞰著同胞的獸性衝動。崔新明透過這作品創造和描繪一個為尊重眾生之間不同宗教的寓言。”

*Story II*

故事 II, 2012

Oil on canvas (油彩 畫布)

120 x 150 cm

## *Sleepers Awake!*

A Sleepwalker's World: Allegory in the work of Cui Xinming

by Luise Guest

*"Somnambulism (noun) also called sleepwalking: a disorder which falls under the parasomnia group: a condition that is characterised by walking while asleep or in a hypnotic trance."*

Sleepwalking is a phenomenon at once a part of the everyday world, and separate from it. Acts are performed – walking, talking, even eating – of which the sleepwalker, once awake, has no memory. The acts themselves are quotidian, yet the notion of sleepwalking makes us profoundly uncomfortable. It shakes our assumption that we understand our world and operate comfortably within it. Perhaps sleepwalking is a little like the experience of growing up and living in China today. The world you see when you wake is absolutely unlike the world you knew when you fell asleep. Everything is different, and continually changing, in ways both subtle and profound.

Cui Xinming's exhibition, 'A Sleepwalker's World', reveals an artist with an unexpected perspective and a dark vision of this brave new world. All is not as it seems, and the world seems to have shifted on its axis. The viewer will "gain experiences from this realm that are strange and remote to them," he says. The place that Cui Xinming presents to us is indeed a strange and unsettling one. Human and animal forms emerge out of deep shadow, positioned within the everyday – a sofa, a coffee table, a living room – painted with a technical virtuosity that commands attention. Cui Xinming, born in 1986 in Shandong Province and only recently graduated from the Sichuan Academy of Fine Arts, acknowledges that Chinese and Western viewers will approach his work with different understandings; but painting is a form of communication, he says, that "provides a window that allows people under the same blue sky to have a peek at how others live."

Like artists everywhere, Chinese painters today seek a visual language with which they can express their responses to contemporary life. The dislocations of social transformation, demolition and urban renewal which have swept away the past, ushering in a world filled with uncertainty, have rendered many of the tropes of the first wave of contemporary painting irrelevant. A new pictorial language is emerging. In recent years two major directions in contemporary Chinese painting have become evident: those artists whose practice is grounded in their love for the traditions of literati painting,

'gong bi' realism and the scholarly traditions of 'Shan Shui' painting; and a second group who have absorbed the lessons of Western academic painting from the earliest days of Chinese modernism and its revival in the 1980s after thirty years of Socialist Realism. Cui Xinming's practice places him in this latter group, although his work also evidences his deep knowledge of ink painting and other traditional forms, particularly through his dynamic and gestural brush marks.

Cui Xinming is representative of a rising generation who have little interest in, or direct experience of, the Cultural Revolution that provided so much of the imagery of the painters who gained international recognition in the 1990s – imagery that was avidly consumed by western audiences hungry for art that appeared 'exotically' Chinese. Instead, these younger artists are forging a new path, grounded in their own realities. They are living in a world in which great prosperity coexists with appalling poverty; where the considerable personal freedoms of 'Socialism with Chinese characteristics' co-exist with censorship and authoritarian social control; a world in which public awareness of greed and corruption breeds cynicism and a kind of moral malaise.

At first sight Cui Xinming's paintings appear to depict a virtual world; the dystopian universe of a bleak video game in which his protagonists operate in a darkness both literal and metaphoric. There is a sense of deep foreboding – if these are allegories, they hint at the most dreadful of outcomes. This is a world of desolation in which anything could happen. One thinks of Goya, of Saturn devouring his children. Wild dogs, foxes, and rats lurk in the darkest corners of a liminal zone where human life is eked out in the ruins of civilisation. Crumbling buildings are overtaken by plants, and grass grows through the bricks. We remember that this artist has emerged from his studies in the megalopolis of Chongqing, the largest and fastest growing city on the planet, where the impact of the dislocating waves of change that have utterly transformed Chinese cities in the last twenty years is even more dramatic than elsewhere. This 'Rip Van Winkle' experience of awakening to an unrecognisable world, is apparent in Cui Xinming's dream-like vistas. "Where I live," he says, "human morals are disappearing and there is a clash between people and a soulless system." His paintings immerse us in a post-apocalyptic universe where at times even the laws of physics appear to be temporarily suspended; where solid forms liquefy through the painter's ability to effect magical transformations. These are paintings in which childhood memories and nightmares collide with the fears of a generation facing the contradictions of today's China.

Cui Xinming's practice may be understood as the new embodiment of a particular tradition in Chinese painting. In the early years of the 20th century, a number of Chinese artists studied in Europe and returned to take up teaching positions in Chinese art schools. Later, during the 1930s and 1940s, artists such as Wu Guanzhong returned from studies overseas filled with the utopian idealism of early Modernism. Wanting to move away from 'literati' painting, they saw Western painting techniques as a form which could convey new ideas for a new society. In the Reform period after 1976, and through the 1980s and 1990s, significant experimentation in figurative painting occurred in different urban loci. The extraordinary degree of technical accomplishment resulting from the rigorous academic training of Chinese art schools produced new forms of painting in a realist idiom. Young artists such as Cui Xinming are the inheritors of this tradition, with its emphasis on moral and psychological truth.

A difference between this earlier generation of artists and their younger counterparts is the unapologetic subjectivity and introspection of the emerging generation. This may well be a global feature of Generations X and Y, but in a context still dominated by discourses of collectivism, this scrutiny of the inner world of the individual artist is initially surprising. However, further investigation will show that this tendency is not entirely unprecedented, particularly with painters from Sichuan Province. Wu Hung has noted that Sichuan oil painters of the post-Cultural Revolution 'Scar Painting' movement focused on a 'lost generation' of Chinese youth, expressing their melancholy as well as a new hopefulness. In 1981 one of these artists, Wang Chuan, wrote in *Meishu Magazine*, "I, along with my peers, continue to fervently explore the question of how we should live our lives... When I follow the meandering trail of thoughts looking for my future I am confused, distraught and hesitant." This intensity of soul searching and the desire to find a visual language which would allow artists to express new truths in what they imagined would be an entirely different China continues today in the practice of a new generation of painters. He Sen, who himself graduated from the Sichuan Academy of Fine Arts a generation earlier than Cui Xinming, said, "Why should we deal only with what we see on the surface? In traditional Chinese art, meaning is not always on the surface; it involves the imagination and ideas."

Today, in response to the absurdities and cruelties he sees in his world, Cui Xinming's practice searches the deepest recesses of the subconscious. In works such as 'Story (2)' and 'Taboo Game' the artist's technical command of his medium reveals figures emerging from a deep chiaroscuro, illuminated by ambiguous light sources, in mysterious environments – part decaying urban ruin, part mystical temple. In 'Story (2)' a stray dog stands in front of two statues of Buddha, alert, observing carefully. Another dog, half hidden in the shadows behind burning joss sticks, slinks in the background, apparently eating the food intended as temple offerings. The location seems to be an abandoned ruin, yet the burning incense hints at an unseen human presence. Painterly, gestural and powerful, the work is an allegory of the position of religion in an authoritarian state.

In 'Taboo Game' a uniformed figure stands with arm raised in salute (or is it in warning?) to a large statue of Buddha, which shimmers and appears to be about to dissolve. He has his back to us. We do not know if this man is a soldier, a police officer, or maybe a security guard, but he clearly represents authority. The artist has said he is an intruder, "attempting to control everything". It is possible to read this image in different ways: as the state attempting to control the dreams, aspirations and spiritual longings of its citizens; or as the futility of human political systems in the face of the eternal. Hungry-looking dogs lurk in the foreground, observing the action. One of them turns around and engages us with his baleful gaze. In the foreground, rich red paint suggestive of pools and drips of blood echoes the red of the smoking joss sticks. Cui Xinming's mastery of translucent veils of oil paint allows him to dissolve the solid architectural forms of the space in which this mysterious confrontation is taking place. Light is filtered through clouds of vapour and dust particles, creating a Tiepolo-like vision of another world beyond, inaccessible to the denizens of this one. "Behind the dark clouds, still some light is shining" says the artist.



'The Bewitched Years' depicts a group of young people. They stand with their backs to us, apparently in a domestic setting with an ornate sofa and a coffee table. However the far wall of the room appears to have exploded outwards and they are facing towards a glowing red light. Is it transcendent or terrifying? The artist very deliberately leaves us guessing. The sense of unreality is heightened by the over-sized ferret- or marsupial-like creature which incongruously stands beside the figures, observing the scene. Once again this ambitious figurative composition may be read in many ways. Are his figures bewitched by the hollow promises of material wealth and glamour, a consequence of China's position as a global economic powerhouse? Is the red sky a false dawn? Perhaps they stare longingly back towards a past vision of China, when the East was Red. Or does the red atmosphere signal something even more disquieting? This is an age in which people queue to buy milk powder from Hong Kong, doubting the safety of their own food supply. People are living with catastrophic levels of pollution and environmental destruction, the unsought consequence of industrialisation. From here it is only a short step to fears of complete annihilation.

Cui Xinming admires painters such as Lucian Freud and Gerhard Richter, who themselves turn an unflinching gaze on people in order to convey truths deeper than surface appearances. His practice is exhaustive, involving many preparatory drawings, arranging what the artist calls his "protagonists and props" before he develops larger drawings and colour studies. Finally he is ready to start working on the canvas, which he begins by compiling a structural, linear composition of formal relationships. The artist describes this process as a form of text. "I use the basic language and structural relationships of painting as an attempt to construct a narrative that is similar to a 'graphical text'," he says. Like many of the painters he admires, Cui Xinming uses photographs as reference material; pointing out that even in the 19th century innovators such as Courbet did the same. He sees the amount of visual information available to artists today - through the internet, newspapers, and magazines - as a rich source of ideas and imagery. However, these sources are combined, re-combined and transformed in order to create his mysterious narratives.

His influences and ideas may be eclectic, but Cui Xinming's creation of powerful allegories speaks of his lived experience - the pain as well as the exhilaration of China's emergence as a powerful market economy. The creation of a coded language of symbolism and allegory is a feature of much contemporary art in China. It harks back to a rich tradition, as well as to the necessity at times to veil harsh truth in metaphor. At the same time, he is painting for a global audience, and his work is absolutely universal. We are all prey to the sense of dislocation resulting from the too-rapid pace of change, of the overthrowing of past values and beliefs. A sense, in fact, of being 'sleepwalkers' in an unfamiliar universe. "I cannot change how reality is," says Cui Xinming, "I can only express it."



## 睡者醒來！

夢游症患者的世界：崔新明作品中的寓言  
通过 Luise Guest

「夜遊症(名詞)也叫作夢游症：是一種深眠倒錯的失調：症狀包括在睡眠中步行或沉於催眠狀態。」

「夜遊症(名詞)也叫作夢游症：是一種深眠倒錯的失調：症狀包括在睡眠中步行或沉於催眠狀態。」夢游是日常生活中常見的狀態，也同時與日常生活離異。夢游可以包括多種行為——走路、說話、甚至吃喝——可是夢游者醒來以後卻沒有任何相關的記憶。這些行為其實司空見慣，但夢游這個概念卻令我們心底裏覺得不安，動搖了我們慣常的一種設想：就是我們了解自己所身處的世界，而且安逸舒適地游走於其中。也可以這樣說，今天在中國生長與生活的經驗，與夢游有一些共同點。我們醒來觀察的世界與我們睡眠中所看到的世界截然不同。一切都不一樣，它們不斷地蛻變，方式既微妙且深奧。

崔新明的展覽名為「夢游症患者的世界」，展出令人料想不到的角度，而用灰暗的視野面對現今的美妙新世界。看到的一切與現實不相符，而世界的軸綫都被移動了。藝術家說：「觀者在這個領域所獲得的經驗，陌生而遙遠。」崔新明所展示給我們的領域，名副其實的令人不安與感到陌生。人類與動物形狀從黑影中冒出來，被擺設於日常生活環境之中——一張沙發、咖啡桌、客廳——而畫作裏的描繪技術細膩之至，十分矚目。崔新明於一九八六年在山東省出生，剛從四川美術學院畢業。他承認，中國與西方的觀眾對他的作品會有不同的解讀方法；但是，畫作是溝通的一種方式，「它提供一扇窗戶，讓同一個藍天下的人，有機會窺看其他人的生活。」

就像世界各地的藝術家一樣，中國的畫家都在尋找一個視覺語言，從而應對當今的生活現狀。社會蛻變、拆卸工程、城市重建都把從前的一切抹掉了，引出了一個沒有定律的世界。這種斷層效果層出不窮，因此很多早期的當代藝術到了今天已經顯得脫節。正因如此，一個新穎的畫作語言從而萌生。在過去幾年，當代中國繪畫呈現了兩個大方向：有些藝術家的作畫基礎源自他們所敬愛的文人畫作、工筆技巧的現實主義以及有識之士的傳統山水畫；另外一批藝術家則吸收了中國早期的現代主義與過去三十年社會現實主義后再次蓬勃，即上世紀八十年代復蘇的西方學派。雖然崔新明的作品顯示了畫家把握水墨畫與傳統藝術形式的深厚功底，但他的藝術理念畢竟屬於以上的第二批，尤其是他那些生氣勃勃而富生動表情的筆跡。

崔新明代表了現今嶄露頭角的一代，他們對文化大革命談不上有過直接經驗，也沒有感到興趣。對於那些在上世紀九十年代贏得國際聲譽的藝術家來說，文革提供了多種形象，而這些形象正是西方觀賞者所渴望的，標誌著「異國風情」的中國符號。比較年輕的藝術家現卻闖出一條創新的，建在他們所認知的現實的道路。他們生活的世界之中，包含極大的財富與駭人聽聞的貧窮；「中國特式的社會主義」與審查制度、獨裁主義的社會控制並存；而貪贓舞弊令大眾產生犬儒主義與對道德規範的莫名不安。

乍看之下，崔新明的畫作像是描述一個虛擬的世界；它像是冷酷的電子遊戲，主人公在一個漆黑或充滿隱喻的黯淡環境下，他所面對的是個敵托邦。那裏深藏著不詳的徵兆——如果它們是寓言的話，那麼全都象徵最壞的結果。這是一個荒蕪的世界，在那裏什麼都可以發生。我們聯想起戈雅，腦海裏浮出農神把自己的兒子吞噬一景。野狗、豺狼、田鼠在一個人類文明的廢墟中，在闕限的空間潛藏。荒廢的建築被野生植物掩蓋，磚頭之間生長著雜草。大家不要忘記，這位藝術家在重慶這個世界上發展最快，規模最大的大都會冒起的。在過去二十年來，一波波脫臼的變化把中國城市徹底地改造了，而重慶的蛻變最為劇烈。像「瑞普·凡·溫克爾」那樣醒來發現世界已經改頭換面的感覺，在崔新明的那些夢幻般的情景中十分明顯。他說：「在我居住的地方，人的道德觀逐漸消失，人與一個沒有靈魂的系統正在衝撞。」他的畫作讓我們浸濡在一個末日后的世界。在那裏，連物理定律都暫時被延緩。在那裏，因為畫家他那魔術式的處理手法，連固體都可以變成液體。在這些畫作裏，兒時記憶與惡夢碰撞著現今這一代人面對今天中國的矛盾與恐懼。

我們可以說崔新明的實踐具體地表現了中國油畫派系中某一個傳統的一個新動態。在二十世紀初期，中國藝術家到歐洲學習後回國，在國內各美術學院任教。後來，到了上世紀三、四十年代，從海外回國的藝術家——比如說，吳冠中——他們都滿懷早期現代主義烏托邦般的理想主義。他們意圖遠離「文人」畫作的傳統，認定西方油畫技巧更可表達新社會新意念的模式。自一九七六年改革開放後，直至上世紀八、九十年代，具象畫作在不同的大都市裏，都經歷過一些意味深長的實驗模式。中國藝術學院那些嚴格訓練出來的學生駕馭驚人的技術，帶動了現實油畫的新風格。崔新明的這一代年輕畫家秉承了這個傳統，尤其注重道德與表現心理。

上一代藝術家與年輕一代的區別，就是新生代那種永不膽怯的主觀性與內省，也很有可能是全球性X與Y世代的一種特徵。鑒於集體主義這個大前提，個別藝術家這樣周密的表達內心世界，乍看亦令人覺得驚訝。可是，這種趨向其實也有先例的。我們要是深入研究的話，會發現來自四川的藝術家都有這種特徵。巫鴻曾經提出以下的論點：文革後「傷痕油畫」運動中的四川畫家們都把焦點放在中國年輕人「失去的一代」，表達他們的憂傷與對新時代的希望。早在一九八一年，四川畫家王川在《美術》雜誌這樣寫道：「與我的同輩一樣，我熱切地探索如何應對生活這個問題……當我跟蹤那些探索未來、蜿蜒的思路時，我覺得困惑、心煩意亂、遲疑不決。」到了今天，新一代藝術家要表達他們想像中的中國，與上一代同樣抱著熱誠，探索的精神與尋找視覺語言的渴望。何森比崔新明老一代，同樣是四川美術學院畢業生。他也曾經這樣說：「我們為什麼只處理表層看得到的東西？在傳統中國藝術，意義不一定在表層出現；還需要幻想與概念。」

今天，為了反映他看到這世界的荒謬與殘酷，崔新明作畫時，致力尋找潛意識裏最深層的藏匿處。在《故事II》與《被禁忌的遊戲》中，藝術家純熟地把握媒介要求的技巧，人物從深深的明暗法冒出來，光線的來源含糊，而周邊環境也顯得富有神祕感——一部分像個腐朽的城市廢墟，一部分像個玄妙的廟宇。在《故事II》裏面，一頭迷失的野狗站在兩個佛像前，牠警覺地、仔細地觀望。另外一頭狗被燒香的投影掩蓋了一半。牠在背景偷偷摸摸，顯然在吃供奉在廟宇的祭品。這個地方好像一個被棄置的廢墟。但是，燃燒的香火暗示人的存在，只是我們看不到罷了。畫作富有油畫的特質，姿態豐富，令人信服，正好隱喻宗教在獨裁社會的地位。

在《被禁忌的遊戲》裏，一個穿著制服的人舉起手敬禮（還是示意警告？），面對著發出微光又好像將要溶解的佛像。這個人物背向我們，因此我們不能識辨他是個軍人、警察、或者警衛，但他肯定代表了權力。藝術家曾說，這個人物是個入侵者，他「企圖控制一切」。這個境況，我們可以有不同的解讀：國家政府意圖控制國民的夢想、志向、對宗教的渴望；或者是人類的政治系統面對永恒總會是徒勞無功。一群餓狗在前景盤旋，觀察一切。其中一隻回望我們，目露凶光。漲紅的油彩看起來像一灘灘、一滴滴的鮮血，與燃燒的香火透出的紅色互相輝映。崔新明操控油彩純熟之極，在畫面上營造了一面薄紗，因此在這個令人費解的衝突發生的空間裏，建築物再不是固體，卻像溶化了一樣。光線透過水蒸氣霧與塵埃的過濾，造成超出現實的另一個世界，類似提埃波羅的與世隔絕的景象一般。「黑雲後照耀著光明。」崔新明說。

《被蠱惑的歲月》描述一群年輕人。他們都站起來，背向我們。地點似乎是一個有豪華沙發與咖啡桌的家中。可是，房間的後牆顯然被炸掉了，人物都面對著一個紅亮的光源。光源超羣非凡，竟令人心生畏懼？藝術家故意讓我們猜疑。非現實的感覺更顯突出，因為一隻看起來像大雪貂或疑似袋鼠的動物就站在人群旁邊，觀察整個境況。這個富有隱喻、滿懷大志的作品，有很多不同的解讀方式。畫裏的人物被中國現今身為全球經濟強國的物質財富與華麗堂皇所迷倒嗎？紅色的天空是虛假的晨曦嗎？或者他們帶著願景渴望的，是從前的中國，是「東方紅」的年代？又或者這個紅色的氛圍標誌著更令人不安的事物？我們生活的這個年代，人們擔心食物的來源以致在香港買奶粉都出現人龍。在生活中，工業化引起的污染與環境破壞，已經達到災患的程度。再邁多一小步，大家恐怕要憂慮的，是全面的毀滅。

崔新明仰慕盧西安·弗洛伊德與格哈德·里希特等畫家。這兩位大師都果敢地凝視人物，從而表達那些蘊藏在更深層的真理。崔新明作畫時下很多工夫；他會擬多份初稿，好讓把「主角與道具」編排好，然後才延伸至更大面積的平面，試驗不同顏色。到了最後，他終於可以在畫布上工作了。他先彙編了一個用綫條劃分及有條理的結構。藝術家曾用文字來作譬如：「我運用油畫的基本語言與結構上的互聯關係，把故事講出來，正如一種『圖案文字』，」他這樣說。就像很多他欽佩的畫家一樣，崔新明利用照片作參考；他指出，連十九世紀藝術改革者庫爾貝都用過如此的方法。從他的角度來看，今天藝術家可以運用的視覺資訊——通過互聯網、報紙、雜誌——是概念與意象的豐盛泉源。可是，崔新明把這些泉源合併、再合併、或改變來編造他那些富有神秘色彩的故事。

雖然崔新明受到的影響與他的思維好像都很折衷，但是，他那令人信服的、帶有隱喻的創作，充分表現了他自身的生活經驗——那就是中國市場經濟勃起所帶來的傷痛與歡欣。中國當代藝術含藏不少暗諷的象徵主義與寓言體。這個現象可以追溯至一個豐富的傳統，也還有因為時局國情的影響，藝術家只可以用隱喻來遮掩殘酷的真理。與此同時，崔新明也是為了全球的觀者而創作畫作；他的作品毫無疑問是具有宇宙性。我們都是因為過快速度變化而產生脫臼，大家活在過去的價值與信念都給推翻的日子，就正是這種像「夢游者」在一個陌生的宇宙的感覺。「我不可改變現實，」崔新明說，「我只可以把它表達出來。」



*Black Hole of Memories*  
記憶黑洞系列

With a strong focus and gestural strokes, Cui Xinming has created two particular series that address the challenges brought on by continual development. In his previous 'Black Hole of Memories' series, Cui Xinming approaches the canvas as an extension of his cognisance, mind and memory. At the centre of this series is 'Black Hole of Memories – Hometown in Autumn' (2012) in which Cui Xinming depicts an endless sea of grass blades that jab and lead to a pro-cumbent mountain in the far distance; a reference to where he grew up, a stark contrast from the city of Chongqing, where he currently works and resides.

Pervading through this series and later ones is a sense of domestic nostalgia; the places he has known, where lots of time has been spent, and which have changed with the tests of time. He casts these scenes of the familiar, however, with sightings of the incredulous or hypnagogic. 'Black Hole of Memories I' (2011), for example, portrays a forlorn individual, who bowing his head and clutching a letter, is surrounded by the detritus of what would seem to be home. Similarly, 'Black Hole of Memories II' (2011) reveals an older lady, cocooned in bed, solely accompanied by the traces of adjoining natural debris.



“在黑暗和晦澀但植被的環境里，兩隻狗正在接近由兩尊佛像看守的祭地。一隻狗似乎對該祭地的神聖充滿著懷疑，看似嚼著水果；另外一隻站在遠處，俯瞰著同胞的獸性衝動。崔新明透過這作品創造和描繪一個為尊重眾生之間不同宗教的寓言。

滿滿的本土懷舊感貫穿這一系列以及後來的作品：他熟悉的地方既敘述青蔥歲月的軌跡，卻也隨著時間的考驗而蛻變。崔新明描繪這些熟悉的場景，然而投放懷疑的、似醒非醒的踪跡。例如‘記憶黑洞系列I’（2011），描繪了一個孤獨的個體，垂下頭，緊握著一封信，圍繞身邊的就只有似乎是代表家的零碎雜物。同樣，‘記憶黑洞系列II’（2011）呈現一位年長的女士捲縮躺在床上，伴隨相鄰的只是一些自然零碎的雜物。”







"A vision from his youth, a 'Black Hole of Memories – Hometown in Autumn' (2012) is a panoramic painting laced with nostalgia that depicts an endless sea of grass blades that jab and lead to a procumbent mountain in the far distance. Presented as an antithesis to his current abode, the painting presents a sharp contrast to his residence in the rapidly developing metropolis that is Chongqing."

“源於他少年時的記憶，‘記憶的黑洞系列 - 故鄉的秋’（2012）為一幅透著鄉愁的全景，描繪一片一望無際的青草原，一直延伸到遠處橫臥的山陵。這幅作品呈現出一個對立面，與他現在居住的迅速發展的大都市重慶形成鮮明的對比。”

*Black Hole of Memories – Hometown in Autumn*  
故鄉的秋, 2012  
Oil on canvas (油彩 畫布)  
200 x 500 cm









"An example of Cui Xinming's thematic focus on domesticity and religion, 'Black Hole of Memories I' (2011) portrays a forlorn individual, who bowing his head and clutching a letter, is surrounded by the detritus of what would seem to be home."

“崔新明以家庭生活和宗教為探究題材的一個例子，就是‘記憶黑洞系列’（2011）。作品描繪了一個孤獨的個體，垂下頭，緊握著一封信，圍繞身邊的就只有似乎是代表家的零碎雜物。”

*Black Hole of Memories I*  
記憶黑洞系列 I, 2011  
Oil on canvas (油彩 畫布)  
145 x 330 cm







"A lady lies cocooned in bed, solely accompanied by the traces of adjoining natural debris. A contrasting vivid light shines in the background; a running motif throughout his work."

“一位年長的女士捲縮躺在床上，伴隨相鄰的只是一些自然零碎的雜物。一個鮮明的對比光線照射在背景，驅使一種意念在作品中運行。”

*Black Hole of Memories II*  
記憶黑洞系列 II, 2011  
Oil on canvas (油彩 畫布)  
183 x 426 cm





*When I woke up, everything was gone II*  
當我醒，一切都已不在系列 II, 2012  
Oil on canvas (油彩畫布)  
100 x 240 cm





"A seemingly endless rock wall, adorned by mythological lion-like creatures, Cui Xinming depicts a remaining section of tradition. The landscape, devoid of buildings but covered in dark light, hints to the ominous passing of time."

“一個看似無盡的岩壁，以富神話色彩的石獅子裝飾，崔新明描繪傳統經過興衰後的殘餘。缺乏建築的景觀貫以暗光覆蓋，暗示歲月的流逝。”

*Black Hole of Memories III*  
記憶黑洞系列 III, 2012  
Oil on canvas (油彩 畫布)  
40 x 50 cm

# BIOGRAPHY

## CUI XINMING

Born in Shandong, China, 1986. Lives in Chongqing, China.

### Education

2008 MFA, Oil Painting Department, Sichuan Fine Arts Institute

### Awards

2014 Hi-Art Prize: Shortlisted  
2010 1st Zhang Xiaogang Graduate Contemporary Art Scholarship: Nomination  
2nd Chinese Institute Annual Art Exhibition Prize: Third Place, Chengdu, China  
Game Stills won the third prize at the 2nd Annual Art Works Exhibition, China  
University Fine Arts, Chengdu Museum of Contemporary Art, Chengdu, Sichuan, China

## **Solo Exhibitions**

- 2014 Journey to the East, Edouard Malingue Gallery, Hong Kong
- 2013 A Sleepwalker's World, Gallery booth of Edouard Malingue Gallery, Art Basel Hong Kong, S.A.R. China

## **Group Exhibitions**

- 2015 Luo Zhongli Scholarship Ten Years Review Exhibition, Chongqing MOMA, Sichuan, China
- 2014 Hi-Art Prize, Beijing, China  
Art Taipei 14, Edouard Malingue Gallery, Taipei, Taiwan  
ArtInternational Istanbul, Edouard Malingue Gallery, Hong Kong  
Anatomy of Anxieties, curated by Rowing project, Edouard Malingue Gallery, Hong Kong  
Bazaar Art Jakarta, Edouard Malingue Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia  
Survival Experiment, Beijing DeZi Art Center, Beijing, China
- 2013 Colour Boundary, 'CYAP' Istanbul Exchange Exhibition, Mimar Fine Art College Center, Istanbul, Turkey  
Cross Boundary – Exhibition of China Modern Young Artists, China culture Exchange Center, Berlin, Germany  
Colour Temperature: Exhibition of Top 27 Emerging Chinese Artists, Istanbul, Turkey  
China Young Artists Project (CYAP), Beijing International Exhibition Centre, Beijing, China  
HdA Kunstsalon, Berlin, Germany
- 2012 Ignite, BOOM!, China Young Artists Project (CYAP), Beijing International Exhibition Centre, Beijing, China  
Differential Public Body, Blue Roof Museum, Young Sound Art Center, Chengdu & Shenzhen, China
- 2011 Black Hole of Memories, Luo Zhongli Scholarship Exhibition, Chongqing Art Museum, Chongqing, Sichuan, China  
Black Hole of Memories II, The Opening of June, Graduation Exhibition of Masters in Fine Arts, Sichuan Fine Arts Institute, Sichuan, China  
Installation work Sinkhole, The 18th Annual Student Exhibitions, Sichuan Fine Arts Institute, Sichuan, China
- 2010 Walking as Three: The Fascination of Language, Chongqing 3 Huangjiaoping Art Space, Chongqing, Sichuan, China  
Nomination Awards – It's getting dark and sick body, The 1st Zhang Xiaogang Graduate Contemporary Art Scholarship, Chongqing Art Museum, Chongqing, Sichuan, China
- 2009 Portrait of a Lady, Chengdu International Art Biennial, Chengdu Contemporary Art Centre, Chengdu, Sichuan, China  
Big Chongqing – Lone, Chongqing, China

# 簡歷

## 崔新明

1986年生於山東,現工作生活於重慶

## 學歷

2008 考入四川美術學院油畫系攻讀碩士研究生學位

## 獎項

2014 Hi-Art Prize: 入選  
2011 油畫作品《記憶黑洞》系列獲得“2011年度羅中立獎學金”  
2010 油畫作品《游戲劇照》獲第二屆中國高校美術作品學年展三等獎

## 個人展覽

- 2014 "東遊記", 馬凌畫廊, 香港
- 2013 "一個夢遊症患者的世界", 馬凌畫廊展位 香港巴塞爾藝術展 香港

## 群展

- 2015 羅中立獎學金十年回顧展覽, 重慶美術館, 四川, 中國
- 2014 Hi-Art Prize, 北京, 中國  
台北國際藝博會, 馬凌畫廊, 台北, 台灣  
伊斯坦堡國際藝術博覽會, 馬凌畫廊, 伊斯坦堡, 土耳其  
"生存實驗", 北京德滋畫廊, 北京, 中國  
"焦慮之解剖學", Rowing Project 策展, 馬凌畫廊, 香港  
印尼雅加達藝術博覽會, 雅加達, 印尼
- 2013 "色溫:CYAP"伊斯坦布爾交流展 思南美術大學, 伊斯坦布爾, 土耳其  
"越界 - 中國當代青年藝術家作品展"中國文化交流中心, 柏林, 德國  
"色溫: 27 位中國新藝術家展覽", 伊斯坦布爾, 土耳其  
"CYAP"青年藝術家扶持推廣計劃", 中國文化交流中心, 柏林, 德國
- 2012 "CYAP"青年藝術家扶持推廣計劃 -"引爆"BOOM! 2012 cyap 彙報展北京國際會展中心 北京  
"差異公共體", 藍頂美術館, 雛聲初引藝術服務中心 成都/深圳, 中國
- 2011 《記憶黑洞》系列獲得"2011年度羅中立獎學金"重慶美術館 重慶油畫作品  
《記憶黑洞系列2》參加四川美術學院"開放的六月"研究生畢業展裝置作品  
《天坑》參加四川美術學院油畫系第18屆學生作品年展
- 2010 油畫作品《天快黑了嗎》《病體》系列獲首屆「張曉剛研究生當代藝術創作獎學金」提名獎  
油畫作品《游戲劇照》獲第二屆中國高校美術作品學年展三等獎 成都蓉城當代藝術中心 成都  
"三人行: 語言的迷戀" 當代藝術展 重慶黃桷坪正街3號藝術空間 重慶
- 2009 油畫作品《仕女圖》參加2009中國蓉城國際美術作品雙年展  
成都蓉城當代藝術中心 成都
- 2008 油畫作品《大重慶—孤獨》參加西南地區研究生展

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