

隐秘之火——康海涛
A Burning Within — Kang Haitao

“绘画”的释放 ——康海涛的视觉结构

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当康海涛画出一批抽象性作品时，熟悉了他“夜景”的人，都会诧异：何以从那般“具象”变成这样？产生类似疑问，并不奇怪。因为太多人对绘画的阅读，只是从图像入手，习惯“形象”所带来的想象。一旦画面形象发生巨大变化，阅读便会因为惯性而不适应，正如面对康海涛的两个“系列”。显然，康海涛意识到了这种状况的出现。于是，他给出一个浅显易懂的答案：这类看似抽象的作品，是他创作“夜景”之余，信手涂抹，表达个人对绘画某种轻松状态的理解。

情况果真如此？这类抽象性作品与“夜景”毫无关联，仅是画家的闲余信笔？答案，并非如此简单。当然，有人也会质疑这一结论——画家自己都这么表述了，为什么还要把问题复杂化？毫无疑问，“质疑”合理。但问题在于，画家的表述也并非完全“真实”。一方面，因为画家直观思考的东西，有时很难用语言说清楚；另一方面，画家完成画面的过程，常常不是依靠显性逻辑，而是在隐性化的潜意识中进行。故而，面对画家的作品，画家的自我解释固然重要，却绝非标准答案。当然，如此判断并非为了否定什么，而是一种揭示——让我们摆脱某种固定的“描述”，以细腻的方式重新面对画面，从而发现别样的视觉经验。其实，这一过程中，答案并不重要。重要的在于，我们是否能够获得更为丰富的体验过程。或许，这也是艺术最大的价值所在。

那么，面对康海涛看似无关的两个系列，我们该如何展开全新的视觉旅行？起点，当然还是画面。首先，让我们注意这批抽象性作品。就视觉表现的结果而言，它符合我们惯常认知的抽象画概念。但稍微仔细些，我们就会发现：它似乎并非简单的形式主义抽象。因为，作品没有设定某种抽象目标，而是一种绘画行为“前后叠压”的“修正”过程。诸如，这批作品多会保留“炭笔构思”的痕迹，但这种构思往往又与“视觉结果”毫无关联。也即，康海涛在创作这批作品时，最初的构图，通常会因为绘画行为的继续而发生转变。当然，“绘画过程”对“原初设想”的修改，并不新鲜。但一般而言，我们通常不会保留那些“过程性”痕迹——将与“最终结果”不符的视觉痕迹消除，抑或遮蔽，从而确保我们的“完整性”阅读。然而，康海涛显然不是这样。他有意破坏了我们的阅读预期，将整个修改痕迹保留——哪怕与最终显现的结果完全无关。于是，在不断调整、不断改变的绘画行为的记录中，康海涛为我们提供了一个“开放式”的视觉结构，并在一次次的视觉修正中，显现出绘画行为自身的价值，而非服务于某个预设目标的工具性。

对于“绘画行为”的自足体验，而非表达的工具，或许正是康海涛试图向我们传达的基本信息。沿着这一方向，所谓抽象作品，更像是画家迷恋“绘画行为”的自我记录。它不一定要有什么特定的图像目标，仅是为了释放“被工具化”了的“绘画”本身。并因为“释放”，重新享受绘画最为原初的体验，抑或说快乐。就此而言，这批抽象性作品，是一贯迷恋绘画自身体验的康海涛，为我们带来的开放性视觉尝试。那么，这种开放性尝试与他的“夜景”有着怎样的关联呢？回答这个问题，还要回到康海涛画“夜色”，与通常的“夜景”到底有着怎样的差异。就视觉表现结果而言，他的“夜色”，将普通人习以为常的视觉经验，转化为陌生的视觉范式，在不确定感的体验中营造出一种冷静、厚重而舒远的精神影像。但从“夜景”到具有精神影像的“夜色”，他又是如何完成的呢？回到画面，我们会发现康海涛描绘的“夜色”，之所以有别于普通“夜景”，在于他提供了带有散漫层光影的夜。这是一种特具特征的观看方式。依靠日常逻辑，夜的“图像生成”往往依靠某一聚焦光源，并因为对比而出现光的集中区。但这种图像逻辑，与我们肉眼观看的夜是不同的。在真实的观看中，光并非那么聚焦，而是相对柔和的散光。应该说，康海涛抓住并放大了这一点，从而为我们提供出别样的“夜色”。然而，问题在于，画家是如何放大这种观看视角的呢？

当这个问题被提出后，康海涛两类作品的关联性就开始清晰起来。原因很简单，表达

“夜色”中弥漫的散漫光层，依靠的也恰是抽象性作品中“绘画行为”的相互修正、叠压。其实，夜色在康海涛手下，之所以显现出独特的视觉气质，正是源于他独特的丙烯积色的绘画语言。就表面看，这种语言是服务于画面形象，如树木、墙体之类的景观。但其细节的叠压过程，却并非“再现”性的，而是绘画语言的自身节奏。正如他描绘的树木局部，我们很难看到具体的形象表征，更多的只是一种层层积染的用色过程。这种感觉，与他抽象性作品中绘画语言的相互修订，如出一辙，都是康海涛对“绘画行为”自身体验的过程，并试图将这一过程以可感的方式显现。就此而言，康海涛的作品虽然呈现出两种看似相悖的倾向，但却恰恰显现了他对于“绘画行为”迷恋式体验过程，并因此而与同辈画家有所差异。从某种角度上看，也正是这种“绘画行为”在作品细节中的释放，才使得康海涛在同辈画家中显现出一种特殊感觉——他将绘画性发挥到极致，使绘画语言自身具备了某种精神体验，乃至形而上的观念诉求。也即，与很多依靠图像说话的作品不同，康海涛是靠绘画语言自身来说话，是一种对“绘画行为”自身表意能力的释放。而这，在今天流行化的图像浪潮中，显得尤为难得，值得我们持续关注、研究。

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The Release of “Painting”

--Kang Haitao’s Visual Composition

Hang Chun Xiao

When Kang Haitao painted a group of abstract works, people familiar with his “night scenes” were astonished: how could he go from his “representational” works to this? It became an oft-asked question, but is not all that strange. Because most people’s comprehension of painting enters directly through the images, they are used to the imagination given by “forms”. As soon as the forms on the canvas transform, comprehension suffers from inertia and lags behind, which is what happened with Kang Haitao’s two series. Kang Haitao has realized this situation and put forth a clear answer: these seemingly abstract works are really what is left over from his “night scenes”; it’s a casual painting, expressing an individual understanding of painting at rest.

Is this really what happened? Are these abstract pieces really not at all connected with his “night scenes”, just the product of an idle hand? The answer is that it’s not necessarily that simple. Of course, some people will doubt this conclusion—the artist himself put forward this explanation, so why should we complicate the issue? There’s no question, the doubt is fair. But the artist’s explanation is not the whole story. For one thing, the artist’s intuitive way of thinking makes it difficult sometimes to express things clearly. For another, in the process of completing a canvas, he often doesn’t use visible logic, but proceeds in the hidden subconscious mind. Therefore, face to face with his works, it’s true that the artist’s own explanation is important, but it’s not a standard answer. This interpretation is not in order to negate, but to explain—let us break away from a fixed “description”, and look again carefully at the paintings to uncover a different kind of visual experience. Actually, the answer is not important. What is important is whether we can discover an even

richer experience. This is, perhaps, the highest value of art.

So, facing Kang Haitao's two seemingly unconnected series, how should we launch a completely new expedition of vision? The starting point, of course, is the canvases. First, let us turn our attention to these abstract works. In terms of the visual result, they are in line with our customary concept of abstract art. But looking more closely, we discover: they are not simply formalist abstraction because the pieces don't have a specific abstract goal, but a kind of process of "revision" through constant overlaying. These particular works have kept traces of the "original sketch", but this blueprint often has no relation to the finished work. In other words, when Kang Haitao was creating these works, the ongoing painting process altered the original plan over and over again. Of course, the revising effect of "the process of painting" on the "original plan" is not new. But generally, we don't pay attention to those "process" traces—they are forgotten as inconsistencies, or it might be that they are blocked, thus guaranteeing that all we reflect on is the finished product. However, Kang Haitao is clearly different. He intentionally destroys our expectations, and maintains all the marks of revision—even if they have nothing to do with the finished work. Thus, in the constant adjusting and changing of his painting process, Kang Haitao gives us a "transparent" visual composition; in revising again and again, the value of the act of painting emerges, not just painting as a means to an end.

In terms of "painting" as a personal experience, not just a tool of expression, perhaps Kang Haitao is trying to convey some essential information. The so-called abstract pieces indicate that the artist is infatuated with "painting" for himself. They don't necessarily have a specific visual goal, only to release him from the use of painting as a tool. And through this "release", we can delight in painting's original experience in a new way. These abstract works are, in Kang Haitao's infatuation with the experience of painting itself, an attempt to show us a transparent vision.

So, how is this kind of attempt at transparency connected his "night scenes"? To answer this question, we have to return to the differences between Kang Haitao's particular "night scenes" and normal night visions. In regards to the visual result, his "night scenes" transform normal visual experiences into unfamiliar visual paradigms, and in this uncertainty, create a kind of calm and distant mental projection. But

how does he get from the things we see at night to these projected "night scenes"? Returning to the canvas, we can see that Kang Haitao's "night scenes" are different from night scenes in reality because he gives us night with disorganized layers of shadow and light. This is an extremely distinctive way of viewing things. Logically, the appearance of images at night depends on some kind of focused light source, and the concentrated area of contrasting shades. But this logic is not what we see with our own eyes. To our eyes, light is not necessarily that focused, but soft and diffused. Kang Haitao grasps and emphasizes this point, giving us a different kind of "night scenes". So, the question is, how does the artist utilize this angle of observation?

Once this question is put forth, the relationship between Kang Haitao's two series of works begins to clarify. The reason is simple: the pervasive layers of light in the "night scenes" depend precisely on the multiple-level revision and layering style in the abstract works. Actually, the unique visual characteristics of colors of night under Kang Haitao's brush originate in his unique language of acrylic application. Looking at the surface, this kind of language serves painted forms, like landscapes of trees and walls. But this process of layering the details is not necessarily "re-creation", but the rhythm of painting language itself. We have a hard time seeing concrete representations of objects; it's more a process of layering accumulated colors. This feeling is exactly the same as the multiple-layer revision of painting language in his abstract works: it is process of experiencing "painting", and this process emerges perceptibly in his works. Even though Kang Haitao's works take us in two seemingly opposite directions, they clearly show us the process of the "act" of painting that he experiences, thus differentiating him from other artists of his generation. Looking from a certain angle, this "act", in the release achieved through the works' detail, gives Kang Haitao a special place amongst his contemporaries—he displays painting at its pinnacle, imbues the language of painting with his own experience, and even demands a metaphysical understanding. Unlike art that relies on "pictures" to speak, Kang Haitao speaks through the language of painting, using the release of painting to express himself. In the tide of today's popularized images, this is especially rare, and deserves our continued attention and interest.

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