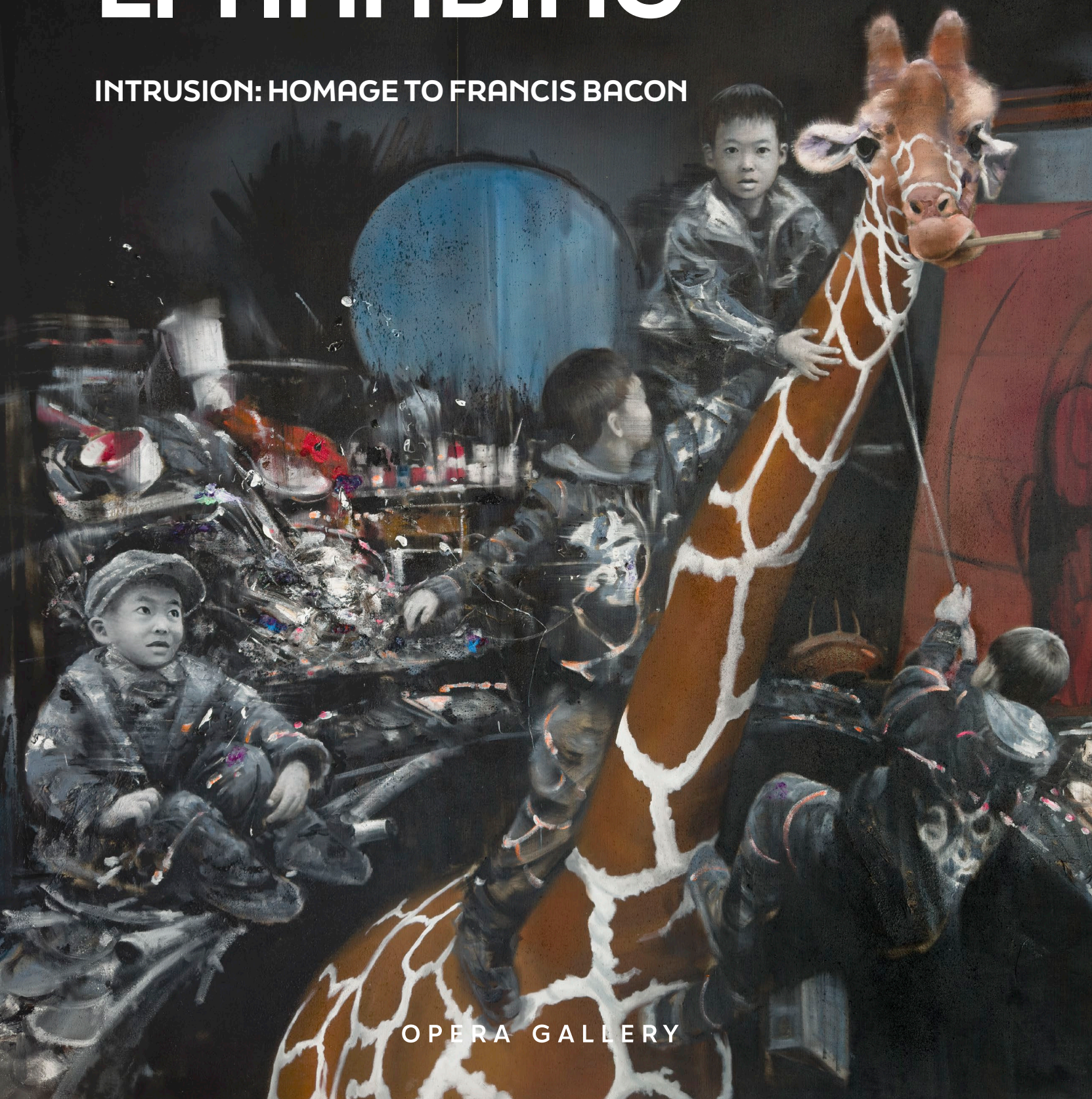


LI TIANBING

INTRUSION: HOMAGE TO FRANCIS BACON



OPERA GALLERY

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16 March - 6 April 2023

OPERA GALLERY

FOREWORD

Opera Gallery is delighted to present the second solo exhibition of the contemporary Chinese painter Li Tianbing in Opera Gallery Hong Kong.

The exhibition «Intrusion: Homage to Francis Bacon» pays tribute to the Irish-British painter Francis Bacon (1909 – 1992), whose human forms confront the viewer with unsettling uneasiness. The profound admiration Li Tianbing has for Bacon’s art is founded on his painting’s different, almost unconventional aesthetic. «Man’s solitude is so profound in his paintings (...), and his use of materials are so simple yet so powerful at the same time», he confided, «I’d spent over ten years studying and practising Chinese painting, but all of it collapsed when I saw Bacon’s paintings». Akin to Bacon’s subjects, Li Tianbing’s figures are often framed within geometric forms and enveloped by a mosaic of shapes.

Li Tianbing was born in 1974 in the Southern province of Guilin during the Cultural Revolution. Like millions of children, the artist was denied the companionship of siblings due to the one-child policy led by Deng Xiaoping. Li Tianbing’s name, meaning «soldier of the sky,» captures the duality of his life as an artist whose work transcends boundaries while still being shaped by earthly constraints.

Like in Kaléidoscope, the artist transcribes his idealised childhood filled with siblings and friends in order to reach a catharsis and break away from the pain of his solitary childhood. In this series, the child figures are transported to Bacon’s studio, which used to be a forbidden place when the artist was still alive. The artist and his imaginary brothers can be seen playing with the wanderings of their imagination, splashing themselves with paint, climbing on giraffes and playing with monkeys.

In the continuity of this idealised childhood, something that the artist dreamt of experiencing as a child was snow. Snow will become an essential visual element in Li Tianbing’s new body of works, as it carries a reflective message and brings an aesthetic dimension to the paintings by purifying the surroundings with a homogenous cloak and highlighting the fur of animals. Therefore, both of those missing elements have been filled in Tianbing’s paintings, putting in a dialogue the chaos of Bacon’s studio and the cleanliness after a heavy snowfall.

Opera Gallery is proud to showcase Li Tianbing’s multifaceted and visually cohesive oeuvres in Hong Kong, a city whose incomparable landscape is reminiscent of the artist’s native province. Opera Gallery would like to thank Li Tianbing for his work, which perfectly embodies the universality of visual language.

Gilles Dyan	Stéphane Le Pelletier	Wen Wen Liu
Founder and Chairman	Director	Deputy Director
Opera Gallery Group	Opera Gallery Asia-Pacific	Opera Gallery Hong Kong

李天兵前言

香港奥佩拉画廊很荣幸推出当代华裔艺术家李天兵个展，这是艺术家第二度与奥佩拉画廊合作。

此次展览《掠：向弗朗西斯·培根致敬》，旨在向爱尔兰裔英国画家弗朗西斯·培根（1909-1992）致意，其作品人物呈现的状态每每使观者深受触动且惴惴不安。

李天兵对弗朗西斯·培根的作品深深折服，特别是培根与众不同、打破条条框框的美学。「在其画作中，人类的孤独是如此深入肌理，同时他使用的素材既简单又力道十足。」李天兵透露，「我花了超过十年的时间钻研中国绘画，然而当我看到培根的作品时，所有的积累顿时分崩离析。」和培根风格相似，李天兵的人物也多是几何形状，且为多重影像层层交叠。

李天兵于1974年出生于中国南方的桂林，当时正值文化大革命。因邓小平推行一胎化政策，李天兵如同其他数以百万计的孩子，童年中没有兄弟姐妹的相伴。李天兵的名字可直译为「天空中的战士」，无疑也反映他作为艺术家的双重性——其作品超越了界限，也因世俗限制不断转变。

一如李天兵在巴黎的首次个展《万花筒》，艺术家将其理想中的童年改写为身边围绕着兄弟姐妹和小伙伴，以宣泄其情感，摆脱孤独童年的苦闷。在本次展出全新系列作品中，孩子们肆无忌惮出现在培根的工作室中，这是艺术家在世时任何人无法出入的禁地。作品中可看到，艺术家和他想象中的伙伴们在幻想中驰骋嬉戏：恣意在身上泼洒颜料、或爬上长颈鹿、或和猴子玩耍。

在理想化童年的衔接中，艺术家孩提时代最梦寐以求的体验就是雪。在李天兵新系列作品中，雪成了一个重要视觉元素，它不止传递一种反思，同时以同质的斗篷净化环境，突出动物的皮毛带来不同的美学维度。于此，两个缺失的元素在李天兵作品中获得填补：混乱失序的培根工作室和大雪后的通透澄净，两者间展开对话。

奥佩拉画廊十分荣幸呈现李天兵结合视觉与多面向的作品，特别是在城市景观无与伦比的香港，不免联想起艺术家的故乡。奥佩拉画廊特别向李天兵及其完美体现视觉语汇共通性的作品表达诚挚谢意。

Gilles Dyan
创始人兼董事长
Opera Gallery Group

Stéphane Le Pelletier
亚太区总监
Opera Gallery Asia-Pacific

Wen Wen Liu
副总监
Opera Gallery Hong Kong



INTERVIEW WITH LI TIANBING

Can you tell us about your childhood?

My childhood was grey and solitary. My father was serving in the army far from us and my mother worked as a middle-school teacher. Most often, I was cooped up at home all alone. Art is what saved me. Every day, I'd scribble on the walls, the floor and the doors. The moment I felt the chalk in my hand, time would no longer drag on. I also remember my tenth birthday, when my mother gave me a book as a present: *The Life of Xu Beihong*, the founder of modern art and modern art education in China. When I turned twenty, I was irresistibly drawn to the fine arts school in Paris and the learning experience there. That was when I started to dream of leaving to study art in France and become an artist.

Can you tell us about your life as a child under Deng Xiaoping's leadership? About the one-child policy and the way it impacted your life?

The one-child policy lasted over 40 years. The slogan was: "Having only one child is good; the government will take care of your old age." At the time, everyone believed in that. Today, there are numerous suicides among the elderly in the countryside as they cannot afford their medical care. An entire generation was the victim, as I was, of the psychological void due to the lack of siblings, a void that still is mine today. This has shaped my art, my way of constantly depicting imaginary brothers, creating our playtime in the scenes in my paintings. Perhaps this is a sort of healing from the solitude and the suffering this policy caused me. Every time I paint this theme, my childhood memories are both amended and further ingrained at the same time.

When did you decide to become an artist, to the detriment of the bright diplomatic career ahead of you?

When I was 18, I went to Beijing to study at the Institute of International Relations, in the Department of International Politics – from which many diplomats have graduated. This was the era of China's reform and opening-up policies. The Chinese aspired to communicate with the outside world. Over the course of the four years I stayed there to study, I realised that my true passion was art, diplomacy being little more than a political outreach tool in which there is no independence. As far as I'm concerned, art is the true and best language to communicate with the world. I therefore decided to leave for France and study art. My professors saw this as a practically suicidal decision that would lead me to a life of destitution, but my childhood dream was calling me irremediably. One day, my mother said to me: "Even if you become a street performer, I will support your decision as long as this is what you love." In 1996, I therefore decided to leave China for the very first time, to come to Paris.

Your work is intrinsically intertwined with your personal story, can you explain to us how?

Each of my paintings is like a time-traveling tunnel connecting the present with the past. For me, time is not a straight line, it is a spiral, and the so-called story of my childhood isn't a time that is forever past as you can conjure it up through *yinian* (one thought). Through this notion, which is at the core of the *Kaléidoscope* series, I sought to represent the coiling of time and its circular nature, using the shapes I painted.

How have Western cultures influenced your work?

The concepts of East and West are utterly artificial. When I arrived in France over 20 years ago, I was lost amongst the diversity of Contemporary Art. Yet for me this was a positive sort of confusion, meaning that the old concepts had been broken to pave the way for new ideas.

Do you wish to establish a dialogue between East and West?

I spent the first 20 years of my life in China, the next 20 in France and I am currently spending the next 20 in the United States. These three cultures run through my veins and have in a natural manner blended into one. All these true, everyday life experiences are naturally reflected in my work. There is no boundary between life and art; I am a practitioner and a citizen of the world.

What struck you most when you arrived in France?

When I arrived in France, I saw the Francis Bacon exhibition at the Centre Pompidou and it left its mark on me. In his work, I discovered an entirely different aesthetic in which the notions of "disgusting" and "touching" coexisted. Man's solitude is so very profound in his paintings and when you look closely, his touch and his use of materials are so simple yet so powerful at the same time. In China, I'd spent over ten years studying and practicing Chinese painting, but all of it collapsed when I saw Bacon's paintings. I hence started to paint like him and at the Beaux-Arts, people would call me "The Chinese Bacon".

How would you define your style, your way of seeing things through your art?

Most things in life, like countries, nations, regions, etc. have borders. Art, however, has no bounds. Its merit is to constantly shatter boundaries and limitations, and in particular in relation to the idea of "self". Artists enjoy their own style as it constitutes a comfort zone, while in Zen thinking, we need first of all to achieve *powozhi*, which means breaking through one's ego. When artists establish a style, it's as though they were drawing a line, a boundary in a sphere of infinite creation. Painting enables me to push boundaries and go beyond such limitations from time to time by experimenting with other styles.

Can you describe what defines your work aesthetically, in your own terms? Your personal touch, your signature?

The notion of aesthetic is an artificial, man-made concept, which until Duchamp was little more than a retinal pleasure. Over time, different artists have developed various versions and definitions of beauty. The notion of aesthetic is like a living mountain, which everyone sees from a different angle. In fact, beauty and ugliness are the same thing, *wufeng biexing* meaning indifference in Zen Buddhism, thus concurring with Duchamp's perspective. As far as I'm concerned, I see beauty as a sort of conflict, a moment when a new state of mind is achieved after breaking free of established conventions and boundaries.

Why did you choose to work with large format canvasses?

Large format canvasses can give the viewer a sensation of immersion and inclusion. With my paintings, I hope to embark people on a journey through my work, taking them away from their lives and habits and inviting them to experience something new.

Is it important for you to give your painting titles?

Painting is a language on its own, and as such cannot be translated through any other form of expression. The meaning of a work of art essentially depends on the viewer, as each person sees things differently. I want my paintings' titles to convey as little information and as few clues as possible in order to avoid circumscribing the viewer's imagination and interpretation.

Which artists have influenced you?

Francis Bacon and Marcel Duchamp are two major influences in my creative endeavour. Bacon showed me how to create contemporaneity through the traditional medium that oil painting is, while Duchamp allowed me to develop a deeper reflection on "style", the notion of "self", "taste", on the way to go against one's "own self" and how to avoid the pitfalls of "tastefulness" by not taking a stance and instead constantly stepping out of our comfort zone. In the course of my 5 years studying at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris, I was also influenced by two of my teachers: Vladimir Veli kovi and Christian Boltanski. The former greatly inspired me with regard to developing a language through painting, the latter with regard to the notion of concept and how to develop a different vision of things.

The settings in which you depict your subjects are very significant (ex: Francis Bacon’s studio). How have these locations influenced you during your life?

I have been fascinated by photos and documents that depicted Francis Bacon’s studio. Last year, I finally had the chance to visit his relocated studio in Hugh Lane Gallery, Dublin. Interestingly, Bacon’s chaotic works had an unexpected effect on me, evoking a sense of reduction in entropy even if the studio was itself in utter disorder. His studio reminded me of the lotus flower that grows in muddy waters but remains unstained, demonstrating how chaos can give birth to a «very ordered image,» as Bacon himself said. As a painter, I spend most of my time in my studio and in my opinion, art arises from three crucial elements: time, the artist’s effort, and the location. Each location possesses its magnetic force, and all the materials within it contribute to the context. Sadly, in contemporary art we seem to focus more on the exhibition’s location then to the artist’s studio itself. Indeed, we focus too much on the presentation of the final product, neglecting its place of origin - the very concept of «artist’s studio» is fading away with time. With my new serie, my objective is to shift the focus back to the studio and the artwork’s genesis.

Why did you incorporate animals in your latest series “Intrusion: Homage to Francis Bacon”? Which symbolic and visual elements do these animals add to your paintings?

I grew up in China during the 70s, where having pets was considered a symbol of capitalism. Yet, I was fortunate enough to have one beloved childhood pet, a cute and obedient owl which lived in a barbed wire cage on our balcony. I became deeply attached to it, and I loved watched sunsets together during my free time. However, pets were not a common sight in my family or social circle. Our parents’ generation, still reeling from the Great Famine of the 60s, saw animals as a source of food rather than as domestic companions. I recall how my uncle, a photographer, suffered from shaking hands, and the doctor suggested that eating owl meat might alleviate his symptoms. Two months later, my owl was killed and eaten.

Not having a bond with an animal left a deep void in my childhood, as well as in my generation’s childhood. Yet, I believe that the past is not set in stone and can be reimagined and repaired by attempting to recapture the sense of closeness I could have felt with my pet through my paintings.

Throughout your different exhibitions, your subjects remain young children. Do you ever imagine them as teenagers or young adults?

Life can be divided into cycles, and the first one spans from birth until around the age of 12. This period is characterized by a natural, pure, and creative spirit, driven by joy and curiosity. As humans grow older, they become more «social» and begin to prioritize survival over exploration, limiting their creativity as boundaries emerge. It’s no wonder childhood is such a cherished and nostalgic time for artists. Personally, I often feel like one of the children from The Simpsons; I never truly grow up, only my surroundings and time continue to change.

李天兵对答

可以和我们分享一下您的童年生活？

我的童年可以说是晦涩且孤独的。因为长期在军队中服役，我的父亲一直和我们距离远远，我的母亲是中学教师，所以绝大多数时间我都是一个人在家。艺术拯救了我，每天我都在墙上、地板、门上随意涂鸦。当手中拿着粉笔时，时间就不再那么漫长。

我还记得，在我十岁生日时，我妈妈送了我一本书作为生日礼物，那本书是《徐悲鸿的生活》，徐悲鸿正是中国现代艺术和现代艺术教育的启蒙者。当我二十岁时，我为巴黎的艺术学校和学习体验深深吸引，也正是此时我开始幻想有朝一日可以在巴黎攻读艺术，并成为一位艺术家。

您可以谈一下在邓小平领导下的童年？一胎化政策对您的人生产生何种影响？

一胎化政策持续了40年。当时的口号是“只有一孩好，老了政府照顾你”。彼时，每个人都对此深信不疑。而如今在农村有许多老者自杀，只因为他们无法负担医疗费用。

正如我一样，整个时代都是“一胎化”政策的牺牲者，因为没有兄弟姐妹而心灵空虚，直至今日，我依然感到空虚。这也对我的艺术创作产生至关重要的影响——在我的画作中持续描绘想象中的兄弟，我们一起嬉戏玩耍。也许这正是针对一胎化政策造成的孤独与伤害的一种疗愈。每一次我创作这样的主题，我的童年回忆既被修复，同时也愈发根深蒂固。

您是何时决定放弃前程似锦的外交生涯而成为一个艺术家？

我18岁时就读北京国际关系学院，主修国际关系政治——许多外交官都毕业于此。当时正值中国改革开放时代，中国渴望与外在世界沟通互动。在我待在那里学习的四年里，我意识到外交只不过是一种政治手段，不具独立性，而艺术才是我真正的热爱。

在我眼中，艺术才是与世界交流最真实、最好的语言，因此我决定去法国学习艺术。我的教授们认为这是一个近乎自杀式决定，会把我带入困窘的生活，但儿时梦想无可救药地召唤我。一天，我母亲对我说：“即使你成为街头艺人，只要这是你喜欢的，我也会支持你的决定。”1996年，我决定离开中国，来到巴黎。

您的作品本质上总与个人的亲身经历相互交缠，您能说明何以如此？

我的每一幅画作都像是穿越时空的隧道，连接着现在和过往。对我来说，时间并非一条直线，而是螺旋形的，所谓的童年故事也不是“一念”就能召唤出一段永远逝去的时光。这也是《万花筒（Kal é idoscope）》系列的核心，我试图通过此概念以我画的形状来表现时间的盘绕及其循环的本质。

西方文化对你的作品有何影响？

所谓东方和西方的概念完全是人为的。

当我二十多年前来到法国时，我迷失在当代艺术的多元面貌。但对我来说，这是一种“正面”的困惑，意味着旧的概念已被打破，为新思维铺平了道路。‘

你期待在东方和西方间建立对话吗？

我人生的前二十年是在中国度过的，接下来的二十年在法国度过，将来的二十年会在美国度过。这三种文化在我的血液里流淌，自然地合而为一。所有这些真实的日常生活经历也反映在我作品中。生活和艺术之间没有界限；我是一个践行者，也是世界公民。

当您初抵法国，什么让您印象深刻？

当我到法国没多久，就在庞毕度艺术中心观看了弗朗西斯·培根的展览，给我留下了深刻的印象。在他的作品中，我发现了一种截然不同的美学，其中“令人反感”和“令人触动”的概念并存。当你近看其画作，人类的孤独是如此深入肌理，他的笔触和使用的素材既简单又力道十足。在中国，我花了超过十年的时间钻研中国绘画，然而当我看到培根的作品时，所有的积累顿时分崩离析。因此，我开始像他一样画画，在艺术圈，同侪称我为“中国的培根”。

您如何定义您的风格，以及您如何通过您的艺术来看待事物？

生活中大多数事物，如国家、民族、地区等都有其界限。然而，艺术无疆界。其优点在于不断地打破界限和限制，特别是与“自我”的概念有关的界限和限制。艺术家乐于沉浸于自己的风格，因为它建构了一个舒适区，而在禅宗思想中，我们首先需要实现“破我执”，即突破自我。当艺术家建立某种风格时，就好像他们与无垠创造力自划界线了。透过尝试不同风格，绘画使我能够不断突破界限，进而超越其限制。

您能用自己的话语来描述、如何以美学的观点来阐述您的作品、您的个人风格和您的签名？

审美的概念是人造、人为的概念。在杜尚之前，它不过是种视觉上的愉悦。随着时间推移，不同艺术家对美有不同的版本和定义。审美的概念就像一座活生生的山，每个人从不同的角度来审视。其实，美与丑是同一件事，在佛教禅宗中“无分别心”是内心清明，这与杜尚的观点吻合。就我而言，我认为美是一种冲突，是打破既定习俗和界限后获得初心的瞬间。

您为何偏爱使用大尺寸画布？

大幅画布可以给观众一种沉浸感和身置其间的感受。通过我的绘画，我希望让人们经由我的作品踏上一段旅程，让观者远离他们的生活和习惯，邀请他们体验某种新事物。

对你来说，给画作命名重要吗？

绘画本身就是一种语言，因此不能通过任何其他表达形式来翻译。一件艺术作品的意义本质上取决于观众，因为每个人看到的东西都不一样。我希望我作品的命名传达尽可能少的信息，尽可能多的线索，以避免限制观众的想象力和诠释。

哪些艺术家对您有深刻影响？

弗朗西斯·培根和马塞尔·杜尚对我的创作影响深远。培根向我展示了如何以油画这种传统媒介来创造当代性，而杜尚则让我对“风格”、“自我”和“品味”进行深层思考，在与“自我”背道而驰的路上，如何以不采取立场避开“品位脱俗”的陷阱，取而代之的是，不断地跨出自己的舒适圈。

我在巴黎国立高等美术学院学习的五年中，我也受到了两位老师的影响：弗拉基米尔·维利科维奇和克里斯蒂安·博尔坦斯基。经由绘画发展一种语汇，是前者给我的启发，后者则是关于概念的见地，还有如何发展对事物的不同看法。

在你作品的叙事中，场景的设定具有重大意义（例如弗朗西斯·培根的工作室）。这些地点如何对你的生活造成影响？

关于培根的工作室，之前我看过很多照片和文件，去年我去都柏林在其工作室边上待了一整天，如今工作室已迁至都柏林的休·莱恩画廊。身处其中的紊乱状态，我们可感知“熵”的激增，然而培根的作品实则在对立面，作品显示熵在减少。如同莲花般出淤泥而不染，一如培根所言，正是这些紊乱孕育了“井然有序的形象”。

作为一个画家，绝大多数时间都是待在自己的工作室。对我来说，艺术作品源于三个要素：时间、地点和艺术家的努力，每一个所在都有其特殊磁力，所有的素材散发其力量并与环境相融合。就当代艺术来说，我们对展出的地点着墨更多，而较少讨论创作作品的地方；我们更重视如何呈现艺术，而较少讨论作品如何产生、作品的来龙去脉和它从何而来。“艺术家的工作室”这个概念已逐渐淡去，这是我之所以创作这个系列，试图将我们的焦点转向工作室本身。

在你的最新系列《掠：向弗朗西斯·培根致敬》，为什么会想到把动物放入作品中？这些加入你画作的动物有何象征和视觉上的意涵？

我的童年正值70年代的中国，宠物被视为资本主义的象征，我的父母对60年代的大饥荒记忆犹新，在他们眼中，宠物并非宠物，而是食物。我的玩伴或同学中没有一个人拥有自己的宠物。我的叔叔当时是个摄影师，但他无法握手，乡下医生便建议他可以食用猫头鹰缓解症状，于是在我童年唯一出现的宠物就是一只可爱温顺的猫头鹰。她被关在阳台一个铁丝网笼子里，我和她度过所有闲暇时光，在她被杀死、食用的前两个月间，我们一起看遍每个日落。孩子总是很自然地亲近动物，但是我童年或我所处的世代与宠物、或和动物间的互动其实付之阙如，所以我企图在画作中以各式各样想象中的宠物来重塑我的童年，对我来说，过往从未被完整地修补，而是一个持续修补的过程。

在你不同的展览中，主题依旧是儿童。你可曾把他们想象成青少年或年轻人？

从出生到12岁，这是人生的第一个循环，也是最自然、纯真、充满创造力的阶段，那种喜悦和专注几近纯粹；在此之后，人们就变得社会化，必须遵循令人受苦、悲伤的生存守则。对艺术家来说，孩提时代是个梦幻阶段，没有因循陋习，没有条条框框，想象力可以无尽驰骋，因而我们总试着停留或贴近这个阶段。我对于童年总保有怀念，我就像是《辛普森家庭》里的孩子，永远不会长大，真正变化的只有时间和环境。



Artist's portrait

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

I left China for Paris in 1996. During the first days I spent there, I happened to pass by the Francis Bacon retrospective exhibition at the Centre Pompidou. This was the first time that I laid my eyes on his works. The visual impact and the originality of these paintings, the cruel reveal of the human living condition, and his unique perspective of loneliness and violence... I felt that all my aesthetic structure was broken into pieces, and the shock I felt at that time is still fresh in my memory. After that, I entered the École des Beaux-Arts de Paris and studied under Vladimir Veli kovi , who was one of the leading figures of French figurative painting at that time. His style was similar to Bacon's, and he was also one of his best friends. Thus, since the beginning, Bacon's influence on my art was huge. Bacon's studio was like a forbidden place - when the artist was alive, no one could enter, not even the house keepers. After his death, his studio was sealed in glass by the National Museum of Ireland in Dublin.

In this series, I portrayed myself as a mischievous child who breaks into Bacon's studio in an attempt to have fun, but ends up losing himself in his thoughts. Having lived in Europe and America for more than 20 years, I still feel like a cultural intruder, diving headlong into Western art and shattering the ties with my cultural and aesthetic comfort zone, breaking all cultural barrier.

As proven by the contemporary physics, the past is not really fixed and the future is not really open. As a matter of fact, my works are constantly trying to reshape my childhood and keeps questioning my past memories. When the One Child Policy was in effect in the 70s, I was living in Guilin, a city in southern China. At that time, it was impossible to visit Bacon's studio in England, and as a child I had never seen big snow. Therefore, these missing elements have been filled in my paintings, which allow me to reconstruct my childhood.

The chaos of Bacon's studio and the cleanliness after a heavy snowfall, the Western art and the Eastern harmony between men and nature, the colorful oil paint and the binary black white... This exhibition will put all the above in a dialogue in Hong Kong, city which is the perfect paradigm for the intersection of the East and West, adding layers to the conversation through its prominent clash of cultures.

艺术家创作自述

1996年，我第一次离开中国，开始了在法国巴黎漫长的艺术学习，记得当时正好路过蓬皮杜艺术中心举办的培根回顾展，第一次见到培根的作品，视觉上的冲击和手法上的独特，对于残酷的人类生存状况之展现，对于孤独和暴力的独特视角…让我之前所有的美学惯性被瞬间击溃，当时的那种震撼至今乃记忆犹新。之后我进入了巴黎国立高等美术学院，师从Vladimir Velickovic教授，他作为当时法国具象派的领军人物之一，风格与培根相近，也是培根在巴黎居住时最好的朋友之一。所以在我的西方美术之路，培根的影响是巨大，尤其在开篇。培根的工作室如同一禁地，艺术家在世时，连家里的清洁人员都不能进来，死后被北爱尔兰国家博物馆用玻璃封存于都柏林。在这一系列作品里，我化身为一个私闯境地的顽童，原想进去大玩一把，却又不免陷入沉思，这何尝又不是我今日的写照：二十多年一直旅居欧美，在文化上，我是一个不速之客，一头钻进西方，既需要跳出原有的文化审美舒适圈,又要打破所有的文化隔阂。

如同当代物理所证实的，过去不是既定的，未来也不是开放的。我的作品一直都在篡改着自己的童年，同时也是一种对记忆的持续思考。上世纪七十年代的中国，作为独身子女一代的我，生活在中国的南方城市桂林，那时的我，既不可能来到英国培根的工作室，也从没见过大雪。这些缺失的元素都在这批重构童年的画作中得以逐一补齐。培根工作室的混乱和大雪后的洁净，西方的艺术和东方的天人合一，油画的色彩和二元的黑白也在这次展览中得以相互对话，尤其是放在香港 - 作为中西交汇的重要据点，也是各种文化相互闯入的乐园,赋予了这些对话更多的层次。

Bacon studio bleu
2022

Oil on canvas
198 x 244 cm | 78 x 96 in





Chez Bacon avec la girafe #1
2022

Oil on canvas
213 x 189 cm | 84 x 72 in



Chez Bacon avec la girafe #2
2023

Oil on canvas
198 x 198 cm | 78 x 78 in

Espaces perdus chez Bacon
2022

Oil on canvas
198 x 198 cm | 78 x 78 in



Red studio Bacon
2022

Oil on canvas
198 x 244 cm | 78 x 96 in



La nuit chez Bacon

2022
Oil on canvas
198 x 162.5 cm | 78 x 64 in



Chez Bacon avec les singes
2022

Oil on canvas
198 x 198 cm | 78 x 78 in





Atelier sous la neige
2023

Oil on canvas
198 x 162.5 | 78 x 64 in



Chez Bacon avec la chouette
2023

Oil on canvas
198 x 162.5 | 78 x 64



Avec un lapin
2023

Oil on canvas
198 x 162.5 cm | 78 x 64 in



Avec le coq sur la neige
2023

Oil on canvas
127 x 101 cm | 50 x 40 in

Grimper aux arbres avec la neige
2023

Oil on canvas
208 x 198 cm | 82 x 78 in





Canot sous la neige rouge
2023

Oil on canvas
198 x 183 cm | 78 x 72 in



Avec la panier a dos
2023

Oil on canvas
162 x 127 cm | 64 x 50 in

Petite moine devant le pont sous la neige
2022

Oil on canvas
183 x 213 | 72 x 84 in





Petit hero

2023

Oil on canvas

101.5 x 101.5 cm | 40 x 40 in



Avec la petite chevre sur la neige

2013

Oil on canvas

101.5 x 101.5 cm | 40 x 40 in

Petit hero
2022

Oil on canvas
162.5 x 198 cm | 64 x 78 in



BIOGRAPHY

生平



Born in 1974 in the southern Province of Guilin, in China, Li Tianbing studied at the Institute of International Relations in Beijing before relinquishing a diplomatic career that was already fully mapped out, as he wished to fully devote himself to his passion for art. At the age of 22, he therefore attended the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris, from which he graduated six years later with distinction. Today, he lives and works between Paris and Los Angeles.

Li Tianbing's body of work is characterised by the dual influence of the Far East and the West: the first being a legacy of Chinese painting imbued with Taoism, the second coming from the teachings of art professors such as Vladimir Veličković, Christian Boltanski and Giuseppe Penone while he studied at the Fine Arts School in Paris. His work was marked by a pivotal moment in 2006, when he compiled a family album comprising portraits of him as a child, for the purpose of denouncing the one-child policy, thus depicting an imaginary family through replications of himself. He henceforth developed a new visual language in which portraits abound, creating through his art a dialogue between reality, imagination and fantasy.

When working on his compositions, Li Tianbing essentially uses oil paint; however, another of his main means of expression remains drawing with Indian ink. He also enjoys working with watercolours, alternating between Chinese and European paintbrushes. Today, Li Tianbing's works of art are found both in public and private collections: The Hong Kong Arts Centre, the M+ Museum and the Uli Sigg Collection in Hong Kong; the China National Museum of Fine Arts and the Ullens Collection in Beijing; the Fondation Carmignac in Porquerolles, France; the Minneapolis Institute of Art, the Denver Art Museum, and the Asia Society in New York, USA; the Red Mansion Foundation in London, UK.

1974年出生于中国广西省桂林，李天兵曾就读北京国际关系学院。尽管外交工作坦途在望，但基于对艺术的满腔热情，他毅然放弃外交专业，22岁前往法国就读巴黎国立高等美术学院，六年后以优异成绩毕业。目前，李天兵在法国巴黎和美国洛杉矶两地生活创作。

李天兵创作主体深受东方和西方的双重影响。首先，是植基于道教色彩的中国绘画，其次是在巴黎深造期间受到弗拉基米尔·维利亚科维奇、克里斯蒂安·博尔坦斯基和朱塞佩·佩内等艺术教授的指导。2006年是李天兵创作的分水岭。当时他整理家庭相簿时发现许多他身为独生子的照片，为谴责当时“一胎化”政策，他借由重复自身影像创作出一个想象中的家庭模样。至此，在他大量肖像画中发展出一套全新的视觉语彙：透过其艺术作品在现实、想象与虚幻间建构了对话。

创作过程中，李天兵基本上以油画为主；而印度水墨也是他另一种主要表达手法。他还喜欢使用水彩，在中国和欧洲笔触间交互运用。时至今日，李天兵的作品已为许多国际艺术展馆和私人收藏，包括香港艺术中心、香港M+博物馆、香港乌里·希克收藏；北京的中国美术馆、尤伦斯重要当代艺术收藏；法国波克罗勒的卡米尼亚克基金会；美国明尼阿波利斯艺术学院、丹佛艺术博物馆和纽约的亚洲协会，与英国伦敦的红楼基金会等。

1974 Born in Guilin, China
Works and lives in Los Angeles and Paris

EDUCATION | 学历

2002 École supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Paris, with merits from the jury

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS | 精选个展

2020 Cuturi Gallery, Singapore
2019 Art Central Hong Kong, Mazel Gallery, Singapore
2019 Urban Scene, JD Malat Gallery, London, United Kingdom
2015 Pearl Lam Galleries, Singapore
2012 Stephen Friedman Gallery, London, United Kingdom
2011 Hong Kong Art Center, Hong Kong
2009 ADAA Show, L&M Arts Gallery, New York, United States
2008 L&M Arts Gallery, New York, United States
2007 Galerie Albert Benamou, Paris, France
2007 Galerie Loft, Paris, France
2007 Espace 1789, Saint-Ouen, France
2006 Beizitou, Kashya Hildebrand Gallery, Zurich, Switzerland
2006 Galerie Deborah Zafman, Paris, France
2006 Brand New Works, Kashya Hildebrand Gallery, New York, United States
2005 Musée de Gajac, Villeneuve, France
2005 Galerie Loft, Barcelona, Spain
2005 Galerie Loft, Paris, France
2004 Galerie Albert Benamou, Paris, France
2004 Kashya Hildebrand Gallery, New York, United States
2002 Galerie Donzévanaanen, Lausanne, Switzerland
2000 Musée Marzelles, Marmande, France

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS | 精选群展

2018 Sea of Desire, Fondation Carmignac, Ile de Porquerolles, France
2016 Us is Them, The Pizzuti Collection, Columbus, United States
2016 Chinese Whispers, Recent art from the Sigg Collection, Museum of Fine Arts, Bern, Switzerland
2015 Who's Afraid of Picture, L'École Supérieure d'Art et Design de Grenoble, Grenoble, France
2015 Dusk to Dusk: Unsettled, Unraveled, Unread, Ben Maltz Gallery, Otis College of Art and Design, Los Angeles, United States
2014 Mind-Beating, China Millennium Monument - Contemporary Art Museum, Beijing, China

2013 Mind-Beating, The 55th Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy
2013 Biennale d'Issy, Musée Français de la Carte à Jouer, Issy-les-Moulineaux, France
2011 Instituto Valenciano de Arte Moderno (IVAM), Valence, Spain
2008 Art Basel Miami, L&M Arts, Miami, United States
2008 Du vent dans les branches, Sénat, Paris, France
2008 Sport in Art, Today Art Museum, Beijing, China
2007 Sport in Art, Museum of Contemporary Art, Shanghai, China
2007 National Museum of Fine Arts, Beijing, China
2006 Mickey dans tous ses états, Artcurial, Hôtel Dassault, Paris, France
2005 Nature Détournée, Institute of France, Munich, Germany
2004 Galerie Guislain - Etats d'Art, Paris, France
2004 Premier Prix Antoine Marin - Galerie Julio Gonzalez, Paris, France
2004 Arts et Justice, Galerie d'Art du Conseil Général des Bouches-du-Rhone, Aix-en-Provence, France
2003 Biennale d'Issy (award of the Biennale), Issy-les-Moulineaux, France
2003 Pas n'importe où, juste à coté (painting award), Couvent des Cordeliers, Paris, France
2002 Kashya Hildebrand Gallery, Geneva, Switzerland
2002 Biennale de la jeune création de Houilles, Houilles, France
2002 Salon de la jeune creation, Houilles, France
1999 Académie des Beaux-arts, Institut de France, Paris, France
1999 Museum of Modern Art, Dubrovnik, Croatia
1999 Pavillon Mestrovic, Zagreb, Croatia
1998 Galerija Progres, Belgrade, Serbia

COLLECTIONS | 公共收藏

Uli Sigg Collection
M+ Museum, Hong Kong
Foundation Carmignac, Paris, France
Guy Ullens Collection, Beijing, China
Asian Society Museum, New York, United States
The Ekard Collection
Tiroche DeLeon Collection
Pizzuti Collection, Columbus Museum OH, United States
Red Mansion Collection, Mitcham, United Kingdom
Saeb Eigner Collection, London, United Kingdom
Minneapolis Institute of Art, Minnesota, United States

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