

Form and Meaning

Fu Tsohsin's recent paintings do not seem to have much in common with his previous works, in which we generally see the depiction of social realities, especially the dark ones. But these new works are completely unloaded with the tragic social drama and its melancholic mood. Instead, a surrealistic euphoric atmosphere dominates. We wonder what has brought about such a change.

Some artists, such as Chagall and Dali, express the abstract by means of concrete realistic images. In these works Fu Tsohsin has chosen the human forms as chief imagery to express spirituality in various states. Going beyond social realities and their burdens, the artist constructs in the indefinite spiritual nowhere a magnificent body aesthetics. However, are these new works really so thoroughly uprooted from his previous creations?

First of all, these human forms, though out of their familiar social context and costumes, and with their faces unmasked, still exhibit the recognizable earthiness, which characterizes Fu Tsohsin's earlier human shapes and which the critics often account for a debt to Buffet or Gauguin. Here the bodies, suspended between mobility and immobility, illustrate various spiritual states. The awe inspiring Black Kingkong and Red Kingkong, going through water and fire respectively, stretch out their muscular limbs as dancers, bursting with controlled energy. They remind us of their trio brother in Greek mythology, the powerful Hercules, who accomplishes impossible tasks. In Three Goddesses the fertile female shapes present themselves with all their bountiful beauty as if they were the ripe fruit borne by the leafy trees.

With a few exceptions, most paintings in this series exhibit partial or total nakedness. Nakedness may refer to the shedding off of social emotional burdens and returning to the state of pure nativity. Nevertheless, nude painting also provides the artist with the opportunity to study the texture and structure of the human form. Nakedness in Fu Tsohsin's earlier works, for example, in 1997's *Gold Loving Old Man*, *The Lost Child*, and *Desire*, possesses emotional or symbolic meanings. It is the same with *Child of the Eagle* (1999-2000), in which the nude boy, probably the painter's first complete nude, is a mixed figure of hero and victim, drawn from an aboriginal Tayal (泰雅) legend, which again reflects a social tragedy.

But here with religious meditative practice as the pervasive subject matter, the painter enjoys the similar privilege as western artists who depict religious scenes. During the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, Christian art exhibited again and again the scantily draped or completely naked Christ on or off the Cross, as well as the naked Holy Child. As to the female nudes, the artists went to the Old Testament and caught Bathsheba in her bath. Different from the highly dramatic elements the Christian religious paintings manifest, Fu Tsohsin's recent creations are wrapped more in the liberal marginality of Taoism or Buddhism. In the space devoid of the passionate human or divine drama, the artist is able to transgress social manners and set his artistic gaze innocently upon the human forms under no disguise. In *Man and Woman* he depicts the male and female bodies loosely suspending like spiders; their studied correctness suggests something parallel to De Vinci's scientific depictions of the human structure. The couple in *Cultivation*, with halos around their heads, are making apocalyptic signs; their bodies, relaxed in a blessed nativity, are immersed in glorious golden yellow. Under the green leaves, there are no Adam and Eve, nor the forbidden fruit. As a little yellow flower frugally reflects in *Encounter* the joy of winged love, so does

a minute red flower in *Origin of Life* illustrate the sweet precariousness of the couple's raft journey. The mystery of life's energy is suggested by the combination of human and beast in *Birth and Divine Beast*, as well as by the androgynous human form in *Human World*.

Dramatic contrast in size is one of Fu Tsohsin's favorite expressions also. In *White Elephant* a little leaf floats beneath a fully grown white elephant, a symbol of fulfilled virtue and blessedness. Utterly out of proportion, this leaf nevertheless creates a wonderful sense of visual and emotional balance. Without it, the painting will be too much saturated in its otherworldly redness. But with this single familiar green spot, the picture comes to life with a warm promise that the spiritual fulfillment depicted in this work is not unreachably remote. The two twigs of flowers in *Seeker of Tao* achieve the same aim. The picture is already complete without them--- the seeker has already acquired an oval ring of eyes, the symbol of wisdom, and is sheltered by green leaves, symbol of proliferation. What more has he to do with little flowers? However the painter once referred them as a sort of unnecessary necessity---they bring the colors to life. Furthermore, there is the emotional reason, too. These little flowers actually mark the track along which the painter has taken his creative journey so far. Flowers, especially little ones, have actually formed a significant part of the artist's vocabulary. For instance, tiny daisies can be found in *Where's My Home* (2000-2001), *Mountain Wind* (2000), ??? and *Three Brave Men* (2000), and a yellow flower in *Holding Hands* (2000). These little flowers are significant emotional metaphors in Fu Tsohsin's paintings. They are somewhat like Chagall's bouquets. Sometimes they reflect life's tragedy; sometimes they transcend life to the noble, the joyful, and the ecstatic. They are hope as well as despair.

The bodies are seldom expressed eloquently enough in our world of art. In these pictures we see a rare comfortableness in their various poses or concentrated meditation. Their explicitness is often mixed with a touch of humor. As to the perfect harmony between movement and tranquility, between body and mind, we go to works depicting rhythmic euphoria ---*Listen, Musicians Under the Trees*, and *Musicians in the Mountain*.

After the series of works inspired by the aboriginal Tayal culture, Fu Tsohsin is further removed from the grasp of the earth's gravity. This exhibition takes us to a seemingly ethereal sphere, where body and mind meet in their full integrity enriched by decorative vegetation. Who can say this is not reality; this is not the human world?

Nina Chang

形體與喻意 【張妮娜】

乍看之下，傳作新這次展出的作品，竟完全由之前我們所熟悉的社會寫實題材跳脫出來，似乎毫無關聯。我們訝異畫家是在何種情況下發生這種改變。

作品中慣見的陰霾憂鬱氛圍一掃而空，評論家經常指出的《愁情》、《悲愴》、《悲劇》等情緒也被超塵脫俗凝鍊華美的宗教氛圍所取代。沒有了戲劇、故事為喻意所取代。

藝術家有的選擇透過具象來表達抽象的精神境界，如夏卡爾與達利。傳作新這一系列作品，以身體為意象主體表達靈性昇華。畫家自社會現實出走，卸下情感負荷，在飄浮游移的精神領域建構起一度量恢宏的身體美學，算得上一番脫胎換骨。然而這些畫作果真與先前的作品沒有關聯？

首先，畫面上的身體儘管剝去了社會寫實的外衣，摘去角色面具，我們依舊認得出畫家一慣所表現的畢費式的粗獷力感。它們飽涵能量，在不同的環質中示現多樣態的靈界境界。《水金剛》與《火金剛》分別經歷水火，健韌的身軀伸出舞蹈般大無畏的體勢，氣魄懾人。想起他們希臘神話的鸞生兄弟，那位赴湯蹈火，飽經憂患的大力士赫克力士(Hercules)，不禁莞爾。《三聖女》則展現豐腴厚實的女體，有如畫中由土地生出，花葉繁茂阿娜多姿的樹木所結生的美果。

這系列人體作品除了少數幾張之外，大都呈現半身或全身的袒裸。袒裸固然寓意脫下社會包袱，歸真返原，亦表現畫家對身體肌理結構單純的直觀及臨摩。畫家早先的畫作中，少數幾張裸裡的人體均影射鮮明的情緒意涵，如九七年《愛金老人》、《失蹤小孩》、及《慾望》。九九—00年《鷹之子》赤裸的小男孩雖然包裹在泰雅的神話傳說裡，卻仍明喻愁鬱的社會悲劇情節。

這一系列以宗教修行為主題的裸裡人體畫，有如西方宗教藝術，得以擺脫世俗禮教界線，直窺人體。基督教畫作打從嚴謹的中世紀至文藝復興便一再出現以聖嬰孩與受難基督為核心的裸裡聖像；女體則履以舊約裡巴示巴沐浴為題示現。不同於基督教宗教畫濃稠的戲劇性，傳作新裹以東方道釋氛圍的人體，已超脫人生哀樂激情的戲碼，浮游於生命原鄉之虛空，還原為生命初緣所來自的陰陽二體。《男者》、《女者》二作，描繪伸展開來的人體，準確性令人想起達文西對人體所作的科學研究圖。《修行圖》中的男女，戴著光環，打著神秘的手勢，鬆放豐潤的裸身開展在華麗金質的黃彩中，成蔭綠葉，點點飄落。不見亞當、夏娃的激情禁果，只見《相遇圖》裡小小拈花的歡悅，以及《生之源》裡水中小紅花相伴的同筏共渡。生命的能量奧秘更藉《誕生》中的人獸同體、異體共身的《神獸圖》、與人間之作裡的陰陽共體表現。

形體大小極致的對比也是傳作新一向喜用的手法。象徵福德圓滿的白象，壯碩的身軀虛凌於山尖之上。耐人尋味的一片小葉懸浮於象腿之間。這片看似不成比例，無

足輕重的迷你葉片在視覺上卻產生一種奇妙的平衡作用。少了它，整張畫面則浸漬在過度虛擬幻化的紅暈中。就那一點我們所熟悉的綠意，頓時使畫面的色彩豐富生動起來，並且將畫面拉近現實，予人溫暖的希望，喻示那個圓融豐碩的精神境界並非遙不可及。《求道者》畫面下方的兩枝花葉也有異曲同工之妙。省去這兩枝花葉，畫面的寓意已然俱足，求道者已證得諸眼，頭頂上枝葉也已成蔭，復與小花小葉何干？其實不然，誠如畫家所言，它們在畫面上的存在，好似一種沒有必要的必要。因著它們，畫面的色彩生動起來。而畫家的創作之旅一路行來的蹤跡也暗藏其間。卻顧所來，小花小葉早已是畫家喜用的語彙。百合就曾出現在九三年的《歲月》、九五年的《晒》、及九七年的《愛金老人》裏。九八年《何處是我家》裏的小白雛菊、九八年《夜劫》裏的紅花、二〇〇〇年《三勇士》中的小花、〇〇—〇一年《山風》裏的小飄花等也都各具喻意。傅作新的小花小葉如同夏卡爾畫中幾乎遍在的花束……能使人暫時忘卻人生的悲劇，亦可能反映悲劇……是希望，亦是絕望，但經常更是內容結構上沒有必要之必要。

身體在我們的藝術領域，總有些欲語還休，難得如此舒坦表達。相較於畫家寫實作品中陰鬱憂感的人物，這些畫作裏的身體，凝鍊與舒放之間有若弓弦，張力著著，卻又不失幽默。至於身體在動靜之間的曼妙生動則淋漓表現在樂聲靈動下的幾幅作品……《聆聽》、《紅樹下的樂者》、《又見靈山》、和《山中漫步》。其間所展現的身心和諧妙境，令觀者感同身受，雖不能至，心嚮往之。

傅作新這次的展出，可說是一場身體與心靈交融的宴饗，表現畫家登高創作泰雅系列作品之後，更超然擺脫地心引力，探索純粹身體美學之作。誰又能說身體不是現實，描繪身心融和的種種情貌不是寫實，不是人間？