

Instant press release



Experiencing Simplicity —— Realistic Paintings from Long Collection

Opening: 3:00 pm, 12nd April, 2013

Exhibition Date: 13rd April, 2013— 30th August, 2013

Venue: Gallery 1, 1F, Long Museum (No.210, Lane 2255, Luoshan Road, Shanghai)

Curator: Jia Fangzhou

Participating Artists:

Ai Xuan, Chang Qing, Chao Ge, Chen Danqing, Chen Shuzhong, Chen Wenji, Chen Yanning, Chen Yifei, Duan Jianwei, Duan Zhengqu, Gao Xiaohua, Guo Runwen, He Duoling, Jin Shangyi, Leng Jun, Li Guijun, Li Tianyuan, Liu Renjie, Liu Xiaodong, Liu Yi, Long Liyou, Mao Lizi, Mao Yigang, Pang Maokun, Shi Benming, Shi Chong, Shi Liang, Wang Yidong, Wei Ershen, Wei Rong, Wei Jingshan, Xu Mangyao, Xu Weixin, Yang Feiyun, Yang Keshan, Yin Zhaoyang, Yu Hong, Zhan Jianjun, Zhang Peili, Zhang Xiaogang, Zhang Zhenggang

“Experiencing Simplicity — Realistic Paintings from Long Collection” is a brand-new exhibition after Long Museum’s opening debut based on Long Museum’s abundant collection of Chinese realistic paintings. Curated by the renowned curator and critic Mr. Jia Fangzhou, this exhibition gathers more than 50 pieces of the most representative Chinese realistic artists, such as Jin Shangyi, Chen Yifei, Chen Danqing, Yang Feiyun, Ai Xuan, Guo Runwen, Shi Chong and Yu Hong etc.

Holding this realistic-painting collection exhibition titled “Experiencing Simplicity” is to
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provide a chance for audience to appreciate realistic oil paintings as well as to put forward a meaningful topic for academic research: Are there any possibilities of development for realism nowadays? If there are, what possibilities are they?

Jia Fangzhou deems that China had its own era of realism and paintings and paintings before the Tang and the Song Dynasties were mainly targeted at realism. The phrase “experiencing simplicity” is derived from a verse by Zong Bing in the Southern Dynasty, which is “Wisemans reflect nature with their own awareness; while philosophers clear their mind by experiencing simplicity of the world”. It refers to that one should taste and sense the depicted world with a clear mind. The purposes for taking “Experiencing Simplicity” as the theme of Long Museum’s realistic-painting collection are to express the following implications: 1. The “realistic” or “reproductive” functions of painting, instead of total borrowing of the West, were actually original requirement ever by China’s early traditional painting theories; introduction of western realism only revived the original realistic linguistic system of China; 2. No matter which one it is , “pictographic painting”, “lifelike portraiture” or “experiencing simplicity with a clear mind”, they all focus on the depicted object; 3. From the Song Dynasty onward, the origin from where traditional painting turned from “figurative similarity” with “lifelike portraiture” to “imagery integration” which does not pursue formal similarity and became mainstream in literati painting, was precisely “experiencing simplicity with a clear mind”; because it is simply this theory that was involved with the “subject” that pays careful reflection to objects. It was precisely when “subject” replaced “object” and occupied the central position that literati painting which emphasizes self-expression started to rise.

According to Jia Fangzhou in the exhibition foreword, the most important achievement of Chinese realistic painting in this one-century history was its gradual approaching towards western criteria in terms of its ontological construction; yet it also underwent two “falls”——after the first “fall” of being an ideological taming tool, it turned out to be hot in the market for being aesthetically sought after by the bourgeois. It was not only disoriented in the two falls, but more tragically, in the development of western art, realistic art has been something “past” and no longer been paid attention to; It has become a “preceding text” in the chain of the art history with no position from the periods of neither modernism nor Post-modernism. Fortunately, things are different in China, where all Classicism, Modernism and Post-modernism are still under unfinished process.

A group of artists who insist on realistic creation have made constant pondering and temptation in unfolding the possibility for realistic painting to enter contemporary context and have gained dramatic breakthroughs. It’s precisely those representative artists’ masterpieces that Long Museum intends to present in this exhibition “Experiencing Simplicity — Realistic Paintings from Long Collection”. Ai Xuan’s “Portrait of Xiao Yingzi” in the background of Beijing city is brimmed with literariness and narrative style; Yang Feiyun’s “Travel Together” tempers intensely innocent images by means of realistic technique and deeply concerns the relationship between instantly realistic interests and the psychic condition of the figures within; Chang Qing’s “Girl in Blue” depicts human in

real life with a fancy sense of storytelling; Wang Yidong's "Beautiful Village 2-Tanchun" integrates the classic techniques of western oil painting with aesthetic implication of China. Through individual image "portrayal" of the object, these works showcase the realistic achievement of contemporary realistic paintings; meanwhile provide a traceable chief resource for our academic discussion on the possibility of realistic art in contemporary context.

Long Museum will organize an academic seminar on the topic of "The Possibility of Realism in Contemporary Art" on April 13rd, 2013. Hosted by the curator Jia Fangzhou, the seminar gathers art critics including Pi Daojian, Liu Xiaochun, Lu Hong, Wu Liang, Wang Duanting, Shang Hui, Li Xiaofeng, Yang Wei, Jiang Mei, Qi Lan to discuss the possibility of realistic paintings in the context of contemporary art. Another "Artists' Talk: A Chat on Realistic Art" lectured by the artists Wang Yidong and Long Liyou will be held in the afternoon of the same day, taking their own works as the resource to discourse realistic art creation.

The exhibition will last from April 13rd to August 30th, 2013 and during which, three permanent exhibitions "Chinese Traditional Art from Long Collection", "Revolutionary Art since the Yan'an Era" and "New Art History from Long Collection (modern part)" will be open to the public, too.

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