

艺术界 LEAP

THE INTERNATIONAL ART MAGAZINE OF CONTEMPORARY CHINA

下
186

程然：最后一代 CHENG RAN: THE LAST GENERATION

北京麦勒画廊 GALERIE URS MEILE, BEIJING 2013.05.11-2013.07.07



《昼夜之渐》，2013年
3版，混合媒体装置
(木质隔板墙、小说文字稿
框装裱、油画、素描、灯、
吧凳、小桌及灯光装置)
木质结构: 318 × 696 ×
600厘米; 灯光装置: 32 ×
600 × 400厘米
Circadian Rhythm,
2013
Mixed media installation
(wooden partition walls,
framed novel excerpts, oil
painting, drawing, lamp,
bar stool and table, lighting
construction)
Reading room: 318 x
696 x 600 cm; lighting
construction: 32 x 600 x
400 cm
Courtesy of Galerie Urs
Meile, Beijing-Lucerne

程然的个展“最后一代”将麦勒画廊的所有面积都动员了起来，空间被卷入到某种艺术家强有力的“私有化”进程中。“进程”让我们置身于艺术家通过诸多细节与线索所营造出的观展经验中，且异常舒适，因为那些改造的意象都带着明确的优雅与浪漫质地，拒绝与“观念”的过分呼应，以及与其他“不在场者”间的神秘关联。由此“私有化”与展览的公共性达成了共识，我们似乎可以不再探究艺术家创造的个体宇宙中，即使这个宇宙的存在方式带有强烈的“艺术家——神教”色彩。

共识，或者说“和解”，似乎都源于程然在展览中不再预设任何知识中介，而是对自己的生活与想象力世界加以精致的“坦白”。“最后一代”有着明确的私人性质，甚至说私密性，所有作品都力图展开艺术家的某一条记忆轨迹，或者释放出从某个具体时刻出发获取的真实经验。“收集”的行为在此变得十

分鲜明，即使在物质与非物质之间周旋，比如一边是一根鹰的羽毛，来自世界各地的石头，五星酒店的钥匙牌，另一边则是黑胶唱盘上的声音，录像中在冰岛拍摄的风景，它们都被艺术家纳入了展示的程序，赋予了在展示意义上的第二次生命。然而这些私有之物的转化过程略显蹊跷：对于程然来说，它们自身没有言说的能力，无法开展真正的展示——既不能彻底占领画廊空间，亦不能造成对观者感知的拨弄——而是必须再次被润色与打磨，附着上艺术家提出的丰富的情绪性修辞：《潮汐交谈》中的石头只是艺术家诗性谈吐的附庸，仿佛在说“这不是一块石头”；《最后一句话》中的风景需要配以画外音，在各种互文的叙事中才能得以延伸为某种“电影”。进而，我们发现这些记忆之物与其所属者对它们的操作（或可以称为“创作”）之间无疑存在着清晰的边界，经由对这些边界的触及以至穿越——比方说从偶然获得的日记抵达一部录像作品——艺术才能

得到生发, 边界继而成为了策略与技术的盘踞之地, 亦是坦露艺术家趣味的最佳尺度, 或可说这些边界构成了程然作品的基本轮廓: 匀称分裂的物与对物的想象。

而对于文学文本的使用构成了这种修辞学边界的极端案例。无论是对《双城记》开头的引用, 还是程然自己创作的小说《昼夜之渐》, 抑或他留给南·戈尔德丁的小纸条, 都使得修辞问题在艺术家的作品中形同“刺点”一般, 作为最可观亦最具生产性的特色内容。蜿蜒在木质回廊中的小说, 一方面通过物理性的修辞将“阅读”与“观看”的体验打乱, 一方面又试图拨乱反正, 建立一种新的逻辑: 叙事本身的逻辑嫁接在空间的连续性之上, 文本上的断裂、错失并由此引发的焦虑都成为了可预期与合理的效果。文学在此几乎为艺术家提供了一条无边界的边界, 其介于物质与非物质之间的模糊性, 使物与对物的想象二者之间可以自由过渡, 使分裂的状态趋于无法分辨——例如, 如何判断《昼夜之渐》到底是写作还是装置? 也许答案只能是, 在这件作品中它们互为对方的修辞, 这也是它们唯一重大的使命。 杨扶

Cheng Ran's solo exhibition "The Last Generation" mobilizes all of the available space at Galerie Urs Meile in a forceful process of artistic privatization that absorbs the gallery in its entirety. This process, as such, gives the audience a rather comfortable viewing experience, created through various details and clues. The elegant and romantic imagery, having been altered, refuse undue resonance with the concept and reject any mysterious association with those who are absent. Thus the artist's privatization arrives at a consensus with the public nature of the exhibition, allowing us to cease exploring the divide between the artworks and ourselves. Alternatively, we find complete immersion in the singular universe created by the artist, even though the methods that brought this universe into existence carry strong suggestions of the artist as cultist.

Consensus—or better yet, reconciliation—originates from the fact that Cheng Ran does not assume common knowledge. Instead, he engages in a detailed and complete confession of his life and imaginative world. "The Last Generation" is clearly private, even secretive; all of the works strive to open a memory trail of the artist, or to break open the real insight that was gleaned from a specific moment. The artist's habit of collecting is obviously displayed, alternating between objects both material and not. There is an eagle feather, rocks from around the world, key chains from an old five-star hotel, as well as voices playing on vinyl, and landscapes of Iceland on video; these have all been incorporated by Cheng into the program on show, which gives the

meaning of "exhibition" a second life.

Yet the process that transforms these private objects for public display is rather strange: As Cheng sees it, the objects cannot speak for themselves, and thus cannot by themselves be an exhibition—they are limited by their inability to thoroughly occupy the gallery space, or to interfere with the audience's sensory perception. Instead, they must be embellished and polished, accompanied by the emotional rhetoric of the artist: The rocks in *Tide Conversations* are but vessels for the artist's poetic musings, as if to say, "this is not a rock." The images of landscapes in *The Last Sentence* need the accompaniment of sounds; it is only through this extension of the intertextual that narrative emerges in the film. As a result, we discover that doubtlessly there remain clear boundaries between these objects of memory and their possessor's operating hand, which may also be called creativity. By touching or crossing these boundaries—such as going from a serendipitously obtained diary to a video work—art is germinated. The boundaries subsequently become the stronghold of strategy and technology, and the best measure for baring the artist's interests. Or, it can be said that these boundaries constitute the basic outlines of Cheng's works: symmetrically fractured objects and imaginations thereof.

The use of texts from literature makes for an extreme case of liminal rhetoric. From quoting the opening sentence of *A Tale of Two Cities* and Cheng's own novel *Circadian Rhythm*, to a note that Cheng left for Nan Goldin, rhetorical acts are scattered throughout Cheng's artworks like punctum, forming the most spectacular and productive content. The text of *Circadian Rhythm* is displayed on a spiral of wooden corridors. Confusing the experiences of reading and seeing is a physical manifestation of rhetoric. But Cheng is also attempting to make order out of chaos and to establish a new logic: When the narrative's internal logic has been grafted onto the continuity of space, any anxiety inspired by textual breakage or misplacement becomes an expected and reasonable effect.

Literature provides Cheng Ran with a boundary that has no bounds. Its inherent ambiguity between materiality and non-materiality allows the object—and thoughts about the object—to freely cross the inter-liminal space, where the states of fracture are increasingly undistinguishable. How then to decipher *Circadian Rhythm*? Is it writing or installation? Perhaps the only answer that can be is: Both are rhetorical devices in service of the other; this is their only and greatest mission. Yang Di (Translated by Jiajing Liu)