

Arts Link (HK): 迷失的臉龐——候絲娜 / Lost Visages—Xenia Hausner

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迷失的臉龐——候絲娜

Lost Visages—Xenia Hausner

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若我們追溯西方古典繪畫發展，會發現人物、風景、靜物均為西方藝術家中創作的三個主要畫種，而當中像畫更位居三者之首。傳統文藝復興時期巨型畫作大多以皇室貴族為委託人，故畫中靜物的人物多被畫家大量美化，典型化及理想化。至十七世紀，宗教、國王式政治權力、軍人、印像派時期更已超越本身品種，步入自由而由創作者的主觀新高度。「相似」與「相異」非人像畫之主要表達目標，西方近代新派人物畫家逐漸一應而足。奧地利女藝術家候絲娜 (Xenia Hausner) 正是當今這股承襲現實主義繪畫系統，又能轉化成當代的人物畫新品種的實踐人物。起初接觸候絲娜的巨大人像繪畫，你會被其強烈文學性、戲劇性女性人物及故事所震撼，或會在其繪畫色彩艱澀的詩意象徵引領下，漸覺迷失於一路生、抽象與具象的不停碰撞，若要進入候絲娜的既夢幻又真實來歷於現實世界，讀者可以從繪畫主題、媒介之當代性及風格傾向三個途徑去了解。

候絲娜繪畫的主題大部分涉及愛、不確定的愛、孤獨、災難、女性角色戲謔、意外、無目的盲目等待、虛空空間的懸宕——等等情懷。畫面中人們都在探討人與人之間的衝突、懷疑及不幸的關係。畫中人物既有渴望、但又最終於無奈從五光十色的世界中迷失。候絲娜作品更多呈現有東方特色的場景、道具及人物，使到過客身份更變向全球性多元化的中西交匯、融合及多重陌生地域向東歐深懷鄉的憂慮及神秘交匯。

候絲娜從媒介選擇方面除一般使用傳統顏料外，更運用到攝影、拼貼的技法，利用相片作為引及更新組合運用，人物往往驟然變得符號化及抽象化；而且畫面保留有電影感及 DV 藝術語言的引中效果。畫作尺寸巨大，人像都多採用近距離的大頭像，令觀眾一方面易於將人境

中，亦使人同時難以迴避各種放大人物之震撼感及與觀眾精彩的眼光交流。以往人像畫固有形式及傳統意識遂在候絲娜的大膽創新及變革中，一一被逐漸解構。

候絲娜繪畫風格承襲了印象派大師莫奈 (Édouard Manet) 所建立的寫實系統，之後亦受新客觀主義、表現主義、超現實主義、象徵主義及新表現主義等多種新藝術流派影響，除可以欣賞其堅實熟練的寫實技巧運用外，作品色彩亮麗奪目、畫面強有力、內容既熟悉又陌生，尤其對人物面孔細緻表情的把握、身體語言的暗示和暗示心理感受之細微暗示，十分令人入勝。她常描繪、遊歷一般人喜歡把他們與英國偉大人像畫家盧西安·弗洛伊德 (Lucian Freud) 相提並論。

香港藝術中心今次展覽會展出候絲娜不同時期畫作共廿件，對於喜歡探索當代新派人像繪畫的觀眾，實為一次難得的觀展良機。

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To trace the development of Western classical painting is to discover the three overarching genres into which its specimens always fall: the figure, the landscape and the still-life. The portrait, in particular, seemed to have gained the highest seat of popularity and prevalence. During the Renaissance, members of royal families or prestigious clans were active patrons and commissioned a great many monumental paintings. The regal as well as the wealthy posed for their portraits and it can be said that their likenesses have routinely been aestheticized, idealized and heavily stereotyped. In the 17th century, as the sovereignty weakened and enfeebled under the drive of industrialization, plebeian portraits grew common. The genre eventually came to enjoy tremendous freedom of expression starting from the time of the Impressionists, where the accepted notions of imitation or similarity were no longer requisite. New generations of portrait painters have continued to arrive and Austrian artist Xenia Hausner is one rare practitioner who has managed to situate traditional realist techniques firmly in the contemporary. Upon encountering her glist canvases for the first time, one is often shaken by their literary, dramatic and narrative forces. When trying to read into her intensely painted stories of women, one gets lost in the liminal zones between the unfamiliar, the abstract, the convoluted and the imaginative. A few strategies could be helpful in entering her realm, for example, through themes, media and styles.

Xenia's imagery traverses through unrequited love, loneliness, disaster, confusion, loss of direction and many such emotional responses to hurt, pain and suffering. Her protagonists are living through the many rites of passage in life. Conflict, doubt, and misunderstanding often arise in their relationships and each one of them longs for love, assurance and resolution, yet left directionless within the painted cosmos. Amongst the rather "Western" elements of her pictures, one will find settings, props and characters reminiscent of the East. The melding of East and

West delivers her imaginary landscape onto the international stage, so that these said relationships are carried out across borders and with additional mystery.

Apart from deploying acrylic paint, Xenia incorporates photography into what becomes a collage. Photographic prints are agents of allusion or reinvention and innovate upon the conventions – whether classical or modern – of painting. The collage work is then enriched by dimensions of abstraction as well as size of film or other digital videos. On her very large canvases, Xenia creates close-up compositions, so that her audience falls easily into her settings, yet finds it impossible to evade the gazes exchanged by her characters. Through her various strategies, Xenia deconstructs the features of the traditional portrait, revolutionises its accepted notions and propels her art into the sphere of the contemporary.

Impressionist master Édouard Manet had a great influence on the art of Xenia Hausner – it is a similar organisation of colour and line that comprises her realist style. Doses of New Objectivity, Expressionism, Surrealism, Symbolism and Neo-expressionism can also be found layered into her imagery. It is her commitment to the meticulous portrayal of her characters' facial expressions, enhanced by their body language, which captures the most private sentiments in the most powerful narratives. Her adeptness in speaking volumes through portraiture has won her many comparisons with the legendary English painter Lucian Freud.

The Hong Kong Arts Centre is proud to present Xenia Hausner's first solo exhibition in Hong Kong. A selection of her paintings will be shown, culminating in a previous opportunity to survey a new thread of contemporary portraiture.