

# PIPELINE

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*Two Videos, three photographs, several related masterpieces, and American art (Photo no. 3) by Yan Xing, 2013. Photograph, ultra giclée, 152 x 186 cm, edition 1/3+1 A.P. Courtesy the artist and Galerie Urs Meile, Beijing-Lucerne.*

# Against Standardi- sations of Thought

## 打破思想的 條條框框

Yan Xing at Galerie Urs Meile Beijing

原文 Caroline Ha Thuc

Using everything from video to installation, Yan Xing (b.1986) confronts art history and its dominant ideologies, questioning the establishment in light of the multiplication of reproductions and reinterpretations.

Big black-and-white photographs welcome the viewer at the beginning of the show at Galerie Urs Meile in Beijing: Yan's dark universe immediately exercises its power of seduction with its precise curbs and cinematographic language.

Nearly-naked, well-muscled men are cast among nature, likely training for a race or other sporting competition: one holds a discus while another throws a javelin. These sculptural, idealised bodies refer obviously to an idea of beauty defined in antiquity. They could also embody the glory of strength and perfection promoted by both fascism and socialism during the 20th century, and to today's mainstream cult of beauty. On closer inspection, however, one man's back is covered in scars, opening cracks in these stereotypes.

In another room, and inspired by Edward Hopper's painting *Drug Store* (1927), stand the installations *Dirty Art I* and *II* (2013), two medicine cabinets built on sand, each displaying nine monitors playing black-and-white videos. Close-ups show men kissing, a foot massage or a bonsai, as well as Pier Paolo Pasolini's tombstone, including a screen showing some of

the Italian director's movies. Domination-based relations as well as a fascination for ancient Greece seem to bring Yan and Pasolini together. The artist explained that his installation is a metaphor for forms of artistic reinterpretation, particularly in China, that he calls artistic diarrhoea: the manipulation and use of images throughout history shows how much art has been exploited by prevailing ideologies. So, who needs a prescription?

In fact, Yan does not aim at provocation: his free language about nudity goes far beyond a claim for sexual freedom or individual expression. This work can be seen as a continuation of his performance *Realism* (2011), in which the artist contrasted surrealism and socialism as two aesthetic traditions and world views.

*Lenin in 1918* (2013) features a vast display of masterpieces, from Cézanne to Malevich to Mondrian. All paintings

and sculptures are black-and-white replicas, supposedly part of an imaginary apartment of Lenin's in 1918. They are inside a transparent vitrine, which could be seen as a cage: more than curiosities, they turn into dangerous species to be avoided. In a way, they actually embody the crushing weight of culture – not a free, lively culture but the idea of it and, worst of all, a fantasy of it. Undoubtedly, as soon as an art work becomes part of "art history", it becomes a potential instrument for power. How then can art be taught and conveyed?

The show offers also a good opportunity to watch two previous videos from the artist: *Art Super Arty* (2013) and *The History of Fugue* (2012), both very slow, sensual works in stark black and white that explore art-historical narratives.

Pasolini fought all his life against fascism, and young artists such Yan Xing are con-

tinuing his fight against the insidious standardisation of thoughts. In questioning art discourses systematically, they make a new and open platform for art possible.

鄢醒 (生於1986年) 使用了從視頻到裝置等一切的藝術形式，直擊藝術史及其主流意識形態，借助復制品與再詮釋的疊加思想對既有定義提出了質疑。

在北京的麥勒畫廊展覽起始之處，大幅的黑白相片映入了觀眾的眼簾：鄢醒的暗黑力量頃刻間經其一絲不苟的安排以及電影語言而得到了完美的詮釋。兩個男人幾近赤裸、肌肉發達，被塑造在自然環境之中，仿佛在為一場賽事或其他運動比賽進行訓練：一個持有鐵餅，而另一個拋出一支標槍。這些理想化的雕塑身體，顯然是用來代指古代定義中理想的美。他們也象徵著二十世紀由法西斯主義和社會主義推動的力量與完美所結合的榮耀，今天對美的主流崇拜也不例外。仔細審視，你會發現，一個男人的背部布滿疤痕，在這些刻板陳規中打開了一絲束縛。

在另一間房間里，陳列著深受愛德華·霍珀 (Edward Hopper) 的繪畫作品《藥店》(1927年) 啟發的藝術裝置《臟的藝術》(2013年)，沙子上矗立著兩個藥品櫃，每個都有九只正在播放黑白視頻的顯示器。特寫展現男人的接吻、足部按摩或一個盆景，以及帕索裏尼的墓碑，其中包括一個正播放一些意大利導演電影的屏幕。以統治為基礎的關係，加上對古希臘的迷戀，似乎將鄢醒和帕索裏尼交織到了一起。這位藝術家解釋說，他的裝置是對他所謂的藝術中的“瀉”的一種比喻。那些藝術形式的重新詮釋，尤其是在中國：整個歷史長河中，對圖像的操縱和運用揭示了藝術被意識形態所利用的程度之深。那麼，是誰需要處方呢？

事實上，鄢醒並不企圖挑釁：他關於裸體的自由言語並未止步於性自由或個人表達，甚至遠遠超越了這些。這件作品可以看作是其《現實主義》(2011年) 表演的一種延續，在其中藝術家將超現實主義和社會主義對比為兩種美學傳統和世界觀。

《列寧在1918》(2013年) 展示了一系列經典作品，從塞尚到馬列維奇，再到蒙德里安。

所有的繪畫和雕塑都是黑白的複製品，被安排歸屬於一幢虛構的1918年的列寧的公寓。它們都陳列在一個透明玻璃櫃中，這可以被看作是一個籠子：超越了好奇心，它們變成了為人所懼的危險物種。在某種程度上，它們實際上體現出了文化的沈重力量——並不是一種自由自在、充滿活力的文化，而是其理念，最糟糕的是，是對它的一種幻想。毫無疑問，一旦當一件藝術作品成為了“藝術史”的一部分，它便成為專權的潛在工具。藝術又怎能被教授與傳遞呢？

該展出還給人們帶來了一次良機——來觀看藝術家的兩段先前的視頻：《藝術、太藝術的》(2013年) 和《賦格的歷史》(2012年)，這兩段都是節奏緩慢、聲色鮮明的純黑白視頻，探索了藝術的史話。

帕索裏尼一輩子都在與法西斯抗爭，而像鄢醒這樣的年輕藝術家，正在繼續他對隱匿的標準化、框架化思想所進行的鬥爭。在對藝術言論進行系統的質問中，他們為藝術的發展打造了一個全新的開放平臺。