

李珊个展：菲菲红素

LI Shan: A Red, Red Blossom

2023年9月8日至10月22日

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美好的事物是永恒的喜悦，
其美好与日俱增，永不泯灭，
永远为我们保留一处幽亭，一丝安宁。

——济慈《恩底弥翁》

东画廊欣然宣布将于2023年9月8日举办李珊个展“菲菲红素 A Red, Red Blossom”，展期至2023年10月22日。展览以一系列生机勃勃的鲜花和风景写生作品为中心，年代跨越半个多世纪，连缀起李珊自1970年代起作为前卫艺术团体“无名画会”的主要成员时期的创作，以及重返画坛后近年来于边疆和海外游走与冒险的旅程记录。李珊天真美好的笔触在过去与当下的时代里总是显得“格格不入”，然而无论周遭风景如何变迁，李珊画笔下的芳菲中所蕴含的忱挚生命力与古典美学诉求总是一次次打动你我。

无名画会：“70年代，绘画为我的心打开了一扇窥视世界的窗”

少女时期的李珊在14岁时加入无名画会，成为年纪最小的成员。无名画会作为中国当代艺术的第一个在野画会（高名潞语）[1]，主要活跃于1950年代末至80年代初——彼时社会经济状况暗淡、物质矛盾突出、文化生活单调沉闷。自发结伴的画会成员们常常相约在北京近郊写生创作，坚持“为艺术而艺术”的纯艺术主张，自觉脱离了时代的宏大叙事，对当代性呈现的可能提出了全新的诉求。

对无名画会而言，风景和静物是他们最重要的两种题材。风景既是大自然的物质现实，也是其精神表征。他们渴望远离城市，到大自然中寻找对善的心灵和美的艺术的拯救。静物也是类似的，“静物不是自己去摆的，而是要（主动）去发现的”（张伟语）。李珊在日渐熏陶下领会和承继了无名画会的意趣和艺术主张，其中她最钟爱画花，因为鲜花代表着美和纯洁，是一种理想美的象征。

七十年代，李珊创作了一系列描绘鲜花与风景的写生作品——北京植物园里的《丁香花》、香山公园秋日的落叶与枝桠，都是她内心深处对美的渴望的自觉流露。相比于画会中的其他成员，身为女性的李

珊也更加细腻，当无名画家们写生都在画果皮箱时，李珊则在果皮箱的另一面加上了花。受制于当时有限的物质条件，描绘秋日香山的《无题》是画在了粘贴了用于制作口罩的纱布的硬纸板上，成为逆境下的乐观与坚韧品质的缩影。

艺术家在风景中寻获自由，想尽办法从体制的齿缝中创造自己的存在，在绘画中投射自我的理想、创造不同于现状的新的现实。一张张小尺幅的绘画将碎片化的日常经验凝聚成一个连续的整体，这种连续性就是“存在的力量”[2]。这使得李珊的鲜花与风景，与其说是现实的镜像或直接描绘，不如说是想象力和创造力的过程。

重拾画笔：“绘画是美好生活的一部分”

从七十年代起，李珊大概就是画会中对没有经过系统性学院训练最不在意也最没有负担的成员。她的画面总是出自本真和自然，天然得没有任何矫饰，略去了细致的纹理，以平涂的方式描绘景与物的构造。对色彩的敏锐和极高的天赋得到了画会成员们和大师吴冠中的一致赞誉。七十年代末，中国迎来了全面改革开放的现代化浪潮，社会氛围的天翻地覆促使画会的多数成员转去投身商业等其他领域，李珊也不例外。2005年，48岁的李珊找回初心并再次拿起画笔，她意识到曾经的技巧和感觉又快速地回来了，“忘不掉的，已经融入身体，形成了永久记忆。”此时的她作为独立创作者更加自如、更加解放。

绘画之外的李珊，爱好海外旅行、徒步和单板滑雪等户外活动，足迹遍及新疆、英格兰、北欧、瑞士、尼泊尔等多地，绘画也因而成为她记录旅途的日记本。李珊坦言，绘画时的专注和宁静与她日常生活中表现出来的外向、爱冒险的性格形成巨大反差。她的作品中，不论是花卉静物、天山风貌或是异国景致，都引人进入一个仿佛激愤与忧愁皆被净化了的世界。李珊把对美好事物的关注和对生活的热爱倾注于画布上，作品中总有一种明媚、温暖而可靠的气质。

如德国哲学家黑格尔所说：“艺术的使命在于用感性的艺术形象的形式去显现真实”。李珊保持着这个时代少有的、沉思般的宁静和盎然的生命力。她始终忠实于自己的观察，用纯真的眼睛去洞察世界和感受生活的真谛，在色彩的微妙变动中表现不同的心境与情绪感受，也令她得以在每一次成功的观察和表现中始终保持鲜活与魅力。

参考文献：

[1] 高名潞 主编，《“无名”：一个悲剧前卫的历史》，广西师范大学出版社，2007。

[2] 王爱和平 主编，《李珊：无名画集（卷二）》，香港大学出版社，2009。

LI Shan: A Red, Red Blossom

September 8 – October 22, 2023

2555-9 Longteng Avenue, West Bund, Shanghai

A thing of beauty is a joy forever:
Its loveliness increases; it will never
Pass into nothingness; but still will keep
A bower quiet for us, and a sleep

——John Keats, <Endymion>

Don Gallery is pleased to announce the opening of LI Shan's solo exhibition "A Red, Red Blossom", which will run from September 8 through October 22, 2023. Focusing on a series of vibrant floral and landscape paintings spanning more than 50 years, the exhibition connects LI Shan's work as a prominent member of the avant-garde art collective No Name Art Group in the 1970s and she has been chronicling her travels and adventures on the China frontiers and abroad since she returned to painting. LI Shan's pure and refined brushstrokes have always appeared unconventional in the past and the present. Nevertheless, regardless of the changing surroundings, LI Shan's paintings consistently convey a genuine vitality and classical aesthetics, leaving a profound impact on viewers.

No Name Art Group:

"In the 70s, painting opened a window into the world for my heart"

At the age of 14, LI Shan joined the Wu Ming (No Name) Art Group and became its youngest member. From the late 1950s to the early 1980s, when China was facing severe socio-economic challenges and the cultural scene was monotonous and dreary, the No Name Art Group emerged as the first at-large art collective (in GAO Minglu's words) for Chinese contemporary art [1]. The members of the art group frequently gathered in the outskirts of Beijing to sketch and create artworks, emphasizing the concept of "art for art's sake", consciously distancing themselves from the dominant narratives of the time, and putting forward a brand-new demand for the possibility of presenting contemporaneity.

For the No Name Art Group, landscapes and still lifes hold great importance as their depiction subjects. Landscapes represent the physical reality of nature as well as its spiritual essence. The artists yearned to escape the city and immerse themselves in nature, seeking salvation for both their pure hearts and their artistic pursuits. Still life similarly, "Still life was not seen as something to be artificially arranged, but rather as something to be [actively] discovered" (in ZHANG Wei's words). LI Shan, who was influenced by the No Name Art Group under day-to-day cultivation, fully embraced their artistic interests and ideas. Among these, she has a particular love for painting flowers. Because flowers symbolize and serve as a representation of ideal beauty and purity.

In the 1970s, LI Shan created a collection of paintings that portrayed flowers and landscapes - the *Lilacs* in the Beijing Botanical Gardens, and the fallen leaves and branches at Fragrant Hill Park - all of which were conscious expressions of her deepest desire for beauty. LI Shan, being a woman, was more delicate than other members of art group. When they were solely drawing garbage bin, LI Shan unconventionally added flowers on the reverse side of the bin. Constrained by the limited material conditions of the time, *Untitled*, depicting Fragrant Hill Park in autumn, was painted on cardboard pasted with gauze used to make masks, epitomising the qualities of optimism and resilience in the face of adversity.

Landscapes provide artists with a sense of autonomy as they strive to forge their own existence in spite of the established system, incorporating their personal ideals into their creations and crafting extraordinary, distinct realities that deviate from the norm. The "power of existence" is the coherence that emerges from LI Shan's small-scale paintings, which transform fragmented daily experiences into a continuous narrative.[2] Consequently, LI Shan's floral and landscape artworks are not mere reflections or accurate representations of reality, but rather the result of her imaginative and innovative spirit.

Getting Back to Painting: "Painting is part of the good life."

Since the 1970s, LI Shan has likely been the member who is least bothered by and concerned about the absence of formal academic background. Her paintings are always natural and unadorned, omitting detailed textures and depicting the structure of scenes and objects in a flat manner. Her sensitivity to colour and her great talent have been praised by both the members of the art group and the master WU Guanzhong. In the late 1970s, China ushered in a wave of modernisation with comprehensive reform and opening up, leading to significant changes in society

and prompting most of the members of the art group to pursue other careers, such as business, and LI Shan was no exception. In 2005, at the age of 48, LI Shan picked up her paintbrushes again, and realised that her former skills and senses swiftly returned, and that "what I couldn't forget had been incorporated into my body, forming a permanent memory." She feels more at ease and liberated now as an independent creator.

Outside of painting, LI Shan's interests extend beyond to overseas travelling, hiking, snowboarding, and other outdoor activities. These pursuits have allowed her to visit various locations such as Xinjiang, England, Scandinavia, Switzerland, Nepal, etc., and her paintings have served as journals for her travels. LI Shan confesses that the concentration and peace she experiences while drawing contrasts sharply with the extroverted, adventurous nature she exhibits in her daily life. Her works, whether still lifes of flowers, vistas of the Tianshan Mountains, or exotic settings, transport the viewer to a realm free of both anger and despair. LI Shan pours her appreciation for beautiful things and love of life onto the canvas, and her works are always bright, warm, and dependable.

According to the German philosopher Hegel, "The mission of art is to reveal the truth in the form of sensual artistic images." LI Shan possesses a remarkable combination of enthusiastic dynamism and introspective tranquility that is rare in our time. She has always been faithful to her own observations, observing the world and feeling the true meaning of life with innocent eyes, expressing different states of mind and emotional feelings in the subtle changes of colours, which has enabled her to maintain her vitality and charm in every successful observation and expression.

[1] GAO Minglu (Ed.), <The No Name: A History of A Self-Exiled Avant-Garde>, Guangxi Normal University Press, 2007.

[2] WANG Aihe (Ed.), <LI Shan: WU Ming (No Name) Painting Catalogue Vol.2>, Hong Kong University Press, 2009.