
侯逸杰：指向秘宝的罗盘

Hou Yijie: Compass Pointing to the Secret Treasure

文 / 唐煜婷
Text by Roxy Y. Tang

「集体迷思 (Groupthinking) 是一种智力上的群体懒惰现象，其结果导向的是公共层面的恍惚、盲目、自欺与暴力。古斯塔夫·勒庞曾在《乌合之众》中总结“集体”有以下几种性格：冲动、易怒、缺乏理性、表情过度夸张等。倘若历史进入整体性的催眠磁力场，撤销思辨的人将戏剧性地集体滑向无限混沌的休整状态。」——《指向秘宝的罗盘》导读绪言

在一场探险中，将自然和工具作为坐标参照无疑是行之有效的导航方式：星辰火光是宿命论者的助眠剂，罗盘指针也是行路旅人的定心丸。出生于 1996 年川渝地带的艺术家侯逸杰，成长底色系由千禧年代的次文化 (Y2K)、贸易流通和互联网高歌猛进下的全球化初期产物组成，动漫、名著、神话故事和流行歌曲在其间仿若毫无规律地闪现和消亡，这些变幻莫测的情动触因淌过的遗痕却恰好能够拼凑出这代人无畏又脆弱、多元又迷惘的矛盾画像。

侯逸杰在此次展览的三处关键位置分别呈现了三件双联巨幅画作《地裂天崩当闲事 1》《指向秘宝的罗盘》和《带我去新世界》，率先从作品标题上展露了艺术家的既定观念：躺平式抵抗、逆向求索和对脱胎换骨（尤其是向好的方向）的极度渴求。当巨型荧幕般的画面笼罩在观众眼前，近乎等大的人物形象便自觉地多了一分代入感，他们进击的姿态、身处的环境、周遭散落的零碎物件，以及最为抢眼的图像“关键线索”——红色的熔岩从远处沉寂的火山口喷涌如雨，但近处地面上形形色色的人似乎未受其扰；长尾流星如同闪电般划破天际，寻宝队伍里的人俨然各有各的“求生法宝”；杂乱反复的线条既昭显着此趟苦旅的行动感和未知感，又将此刻的叙事场景掷入摇摆恍惚的抽象境地——全然指向了浪漫且悬疑的虚构性思考 (hypothetical thinking)。

如果试图寻找到某种魔幻仪式的历史源头，以看似迂回的方式“抄”现实的“近路”，那么体现在侯逸杰对流行文化和复古文本的引用中，他则是用英雄主义的遥远口吻讲述直面当下的戏谑与批判。《二桃杀三士》和《陷害忠良》将中国古典武侠演义和即视感的真实场景相互关联，从画面构图到人物表情均暗喻着艺术家对贪痴嗔以及黑白道义的深入理解；而相较于倾向明确的寓言式表达，《逮捕暴露狂》和《逃脱大师》则在画面中增添了反复游移的多重意味——尤其是对符号的运用使得原本颇显轻松的画者将其藏匿的自欺感成功转移到了观者位。是非对错不再绝对化，智者和愚人的指针久久悬于半空。

信息过剩和具身缺失导致如今的媒介渠道扭曲变形，所谓的事实真相已然无从考证。「人要往哪里去、人生的意义究竟应该落于何处」，这些本就复杂的问题加之参考系统的崩坏失效，一并推搡到 Z 世代人身上时便显出了不同程度的虚无主义 (nihilism)——由怀疑、感性、失范和反叛组成的后现代取向。《不老药》和《成仙路》将佛道中的唯心环节：炼丹、鬼火、修仙、生死（乃至永生），置于神秘而又充满

数理秩序的图像熔炉中，邀请观众一同回归欲望本源，继承先人的无穷想象来抵抗现实的浩然缥缈。侯逸杰在此前的画作中着力刻画了诸多的神怪异志，如关帝符帖和占星术，也映射着迷思时代的狂放与错乱。

由不破不立的少年雄心所构成的主体视角，体现在大众文学和影视介质中则譬如《第一滴血》《One Piece》和三国水浒；越战史、航海梦、智勇双全的侠客义士、剧本赢家亦是集体社会对男性气概的凝炼描画，并据此建立了一系列澎湃激昂的解法路径。电影角色约翰·兰博（John Rambo）以持械伏击的姿态出现在侯逸杰的同名画作《兰博》中，同样具有类似末日英雄气质的还有源自典故中率领百万雄师的《投鞭断流 1》和身着西装革履的现代男子特写《无题》；然而画者并非意在颂扬，尤其是当儿时的二元对立观在现实情境中屡遭倾覆后，对人类中心主义的批驳便再度潜于《无题》之“白鹭仙人”背后的反转叙事中。或许是意识到，校准重构仍是某种意义上的最优解，侯逸杰将其对重蹈覆辙的理解寄于诗人北岛《回答》中的一句“好望角发现了”，既是对历史切片的移轴审判，也提供给观者一种中间地带新视角：以一半觉醒、一半摸索的勇者姿态重新伏于诡吊多变的当下时空。

星星是剧烈燃烧的火，火光乍现，时常点亮画面的视觉中心，将所有在场者吸引入其中。这是侯逸杰对创作方法的有意设定，同样，擦除和修改的痕迹也在侯逸杰的作品里形成了合理的动作叠影，这一反复确认的过程被一视同仁地记录下来，进而演化为一种更加接近真实状况的偏差性视觉。对复杂情形的破冰与写实、同破坏与错误并存；这种具有书写感的绘画语言颠覆了传统审美的单极性，精美不再是唯一标准如今甚或已成为一种平滑的掩盖。在艺术家侯逸杰看来，瑕不掩瑜，名为“自省”的秘宝自会如磁力场般校准我们手中的罗盘、脚下的路线。

Group thinking describes a phenomenon of collective intellectual inertia, resulting in public confusion, blind conformity, self-deception, and violence. Gustave Le Bon, in *The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind*, identified the following characteristics of collectives: impulsiveness, irritability, lack of reason, and exaggerated expressions. If history falls into a comprehensive hypnotic magnetic field, individuals who abandon critical thinking will plunge dramatically into an indefinite state of chaotic suspension.

— Introduction to 'Compass Pointing to the Secret Treasure'

**All works mentioned below were created by Hou Yijie during 2022–2024.*

During an adventure, referring to nature and toolkits would undoubtedly be effective ways of navigation: celestial light serves as a soporific for fatalists, and the compass needle acts as reassurance for travellers. Born in 1996 in Sichuan, the artist Hou Yijie grew up influenced by the subcultures of Y2K, the early products of global trade and the rapid expansion of the internet.

Anime, classic literature, myths, and pop songs seemingly appeared and vanished without a pattern. Yet, the traces left by these fleeting emotional stimuli help piece together a contradictory image of this generation—fearless yet fragile, diverse yet confused.

In this exhibition, Hou shows three diptychs at vital positions: "When the Sky Falls, it's a Trivial Matter 1" "Compass Pointing to the Secret Treasure" and "Take Me to the New World". The titles alone reveal the artist's core concepts: passive resistance, reverse exploration, and a profound longing for transformation (especially for the better). As these large, screen-like canvases envelop the audience, the life-sized figures naturally enhance the sense of immersion. Their assertive postures, the environments they inhabit, the scattered objects around them, and the most striking visual "key clues"—red lava spewing like rain from a distant dormant volcano, yet the diverse people on the ground seem undisturbed; long-tailed meteors streak across the sky like lightning, while each member of the treasure-seeking team appears to have their own "survival tool"; the chaotic, repetitive lines not only highlight the sense of movement and uncertainty of this arduous journey, but also cast the current narrative scene into a swinging, hazy abstraction—all point towards romantic and hypothetical thinking.

If one finds the historical origins of some magical ritual, employing a seemingly roundabout way to "shortcut" reality, Hou does so through his references to popular culture and retro-texts. He narrates present-day satire and critique with the distant tone of heroism. In works like "Two Peaches Kill Three Gentlemen" and "Framing the Loyal", he intertwines Chinese classical martial arts tales with realistic, immersive scenes. From the composition to the characters' expressions, these pieces subtly convey the artist's profound understanding of greed, anger, and the dichotomy of morality. In contrast to the clear allegorical messages, "Arresting the Exhibitionist" and "Master of Escape" introduce multiple meanings through the repeated and ambiguous use of symbols, shifting the concealed sense of self-deception from the artist to the viewer. Here, notions of right and wrong are no longer seen as absolute, with the indicators of the wise and the foolish lingering in uncertainty.

The oversaturation of information and the loss of embodied experiences have distorted mass media, making the truth increasingly unverifiable. Ultimate questions like "Where is humanity heading?" and "What is the meaning of life?" are compounded by the collapse of reference systems, pushing Gen-Z toward varying degrees of nihilism – a postmodern orientation characterised by scepticisms, emotionality, normlessness, and rebellion. In "Elixir of Immortality" and "Path to Immortality", the Buddhist and Taoist elements of alchemy, ghost fire, cultivation, and life and death are placed within a mysterious yet mathematically ordered visual framework. These works invite the audience to return to the origins of desire, inheriting the boundless imagination of their ancestors to resist the nebulous vastness of reality.

In his earlier works, Hou Yijie has focused on depicting numerous gods and mythical creatures, such as Guan Yu talismans and astrology, reflecting the wildness and confusion of an era steeped in mysticism.

The main perspective, shaped by the youthful ambition of 'no destruction, no creation,' is reflected in popular literature and film media, such as "First Blood" "One Piece" "The Romance of the Three Kingdoms" and "Water Margin". The history of the Vietnam War, seafaring dreams, resourceful and brave heroes, and script winners collectively crystallise society's depiction of masculinity and establish a series of passionate and stirring pathways. The movie character John Rambo, portrayed with a stance of armed ambush, appears in Hou's painting "Rambo". Similarly, end-of-day heroism is embodied in works like "Throw a Whip to Break the Flow 1", depicting a historical figure leading a million troops, and "Untitled", featuring a modern man in a suit. However, the artist's intent is not to glorify these figures. Especially after the binary oppositions of childhood ideals are repeatedly subverted in real-life contexts, the critique of anthropocentrism resurfaces in the reversed narrative behind the "Egret Immortal" in "Untitled".

Perhaps realizing that recalibration and reconstruction remain the optimal solution in a certain sense, Hou Yijie embeds his understanding of repeating in the poet Bei Dao's line, "The Cape of Good Hope has been discovered" from "The Answer". This not only serves as a shifted judgment of historical slices but also offers viewers a new perspective of the in-between area: to re-engage with the ever-changing present with a posture of half-awakening and half-exploration.

Stars are intensely burning fires, their sudden flare often illuminating the visual center of the paintings, drawing all present into their light. This intentional setup by Hou Yijie in his creative process is mirrored by the traces of erasure and modification in his works, forming a reasonable overlay of actions. This process of repeated confirmation is uniformly recorded and evolves into a visually deviant reality closer to the true situation. The simultaneous depiction of breaking through complex situations and realism, alongside destruction and error, disrupts the monopolarity of traditional aesthetics. Perfection is no longer the sole standard and has perhaps even become a smooth facade. To artist Hou Yijie, imperfections do not overshadow the essence. Like this magnetic field, the treasure named "self-reflection" will recalibrate our compass and guide our path.