

林延: 空 — 气 & 镇纸 LIN YAN: DISPELLING THE CLOUDS / PAPERWEIGHT

天理文化中心 & 否画廊, 纽约
TENRI CULTURAL CENTER / FOU GALLERY, NEW YORK
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《吸》, 2014年
水墨宣纸装置, 9.1×3.96×1.82 米
Inhale, 2014
Ink and xuan paper installation, 9.1 x 3.96 x 1.82 m
Courtesy of the artist

在北京、纽约布鲁克林两地居住生活的艺术家林延的两个同期举办的纸上水墨作品展给了观众一个机会：从某个独特的视角审视目前正在大都会举办的“水墨：当代中国的古与今”大展。尽管该展因为在美国缺乏先例而具有某种重要性，但它还是在很大程度上忽略了近年来正在崛起的从事概念水墨实验的女性艺术家群体。我在此强调“概念”，是因为我深明“水墨”展策展人所声明的意图其重心与标准。根据我与林延的对话，我毫不怀疑她对于创作的概念基础无论从传统中国的角度还是现代

的角度都有一个清晰的认识。

然而，纵观今日之水墨艺术创新，在肯定传统与摆脱传统之间总是存在着某种矛盾。在这样的矛盾中诞生了一些非常先进的水墨实验，可以象征性地被解读为全球化之黎明时产生的一种全新的时/空。这种观念决定了林延在她展出的多件作品中想要寻求并表达的品质。在大型的云系列作品中，她重点探索了在宣纸上泼墨的饱和效果以及间断性地写入象征符号以唤起并否定虚空。在英文里，展览的名字是“驱散”云，正如在作品《云》(2014)中，一个脆弱褶皱

的黑色物件由否画廊的顶梁支撑着。作品《吸》(2014)在天理文化中心的前墙和天花板上安置着层层张开的黑色宣纸。不管是包裹着还是向空中展开，这些饱和的宣纸云都可以被解读为对于人类生存状态的隐喻，释放出包罗万有的意涵，包括空气、水、土污染，物质文化遗产或儒家价值观之丢失所带来的不确定性，甚至是中国内部的社会经济转型。这种多义性的，或此或彼的存在与西方的线性思维形成对照。

在《脉搏2》(2014)中，一个黑色垂直的条状物与否画廊墙上的白色褶皱宣纸针锋相对。在天理文化中心的《落叶2》(2012)中，统一的力量是能量缓慢释放的基础(艺术家对材料的感情投射)。两个例子均表示了“无知”的过程——通过放下，清空头脑而重新获得知识。这种道家哲学潜藏在林延的作品中。用墨汁蘸满纸张，把撕开的纸重新捆扎，如此整理并固定纸张使得它们的自由边缘可以随着地面升腾的空气而轻颤——所有这些看似不费吹灰之力，似乎在暗示某种简单的偶发，一种冲动，一种静悄悄的感官冲击。

林延作品所带来的这种感官的觉醒恰恰存在于创作过程当中，当艺术家的过程步骤与材料合一时。在某种意义上，这是在感觉的意识内悬置的。对于像林延这样的艺术家来说，最重要的莫过于从媒体对其反复品牌化的无聊冲击中释放出自己的思想和情感，深入创造一种能够传递可触感受的作品。换句话说，林延创造了一种可以直接跟虹膜联系，甚至可以说是跟脑神经相联的作品。这里面就包含了另一种矛盾：当作品不仅被感知为某种静态的信息，而是当自然重获平衡时，脑中的空虚通过一种触感关联真实地展开时，林延的观念是暂时性悬置的。 罗伯特·C·摩根 (由梁幸仪翻译)

Two concurrent exhibitions of large-scale ink-on-paper works by the Beijing/Brooklyn-based artist Lin Yan afforded audiences an opportunity to see another perspective relative to “Ink Art: Past and Present in Contemporary China” on view at The Met. Despite the overall significance of this unprecedented survey in the United States, “Ink Art” largely ignored the importance of emerging women artists who have been working conceptually with ink in recent years. I emphasize the term “conceptual” here, because this is how I understand the focus and criterion of the curator’s stated intention. Based on conversations with the artist, there is little doubt that Lin has a clear grasp of the conceptual basis of her work from both a traditional Chinese and Modernist perspective.

Yet, given the conceptual inventiveness in ink art today,

there lies a paradox between acknowledging its history and departing from that history. Within this paradox advanced approaches have evolved in the use of ink, which may be read symbolically as representing a new space/time at the dawn of the global era. This idea is fundamental to the kind of nature that Lin Yan seeks in the various works presented in her exhibitions. In the larger cloud works, she focused on the saturation of ink into *xuan* paper through pouring and intermittently inscribing symbols that evoke and negate the void. In English, the term is “dispelling” the clouds, as seen in *Cloud* (2014), where the delicately crumpled black form is supported by a rafter in Fou Gallery, and in *Inhale* (2014), an open spread of black *xuan* in front of the upper wall and ceiling at Tenri. Whether contained or liberated into free air, these saturated paper cloud forms read as metaphors for the human condition, bursting asterisks of meaning that range from the pollution of air, earth, and water to uncertainty over the loss of tangible culture or the Confucian mindset, or even to social and economic changes within China. This plurality of meaning exists in contrast to the Western linear proposition where *this* means *that*.

In *Pulse 2* (2014), where a black vertical bar blares against the scumbled whiteness on the wall at Fou, and *Leaves Are Gone 2* (2012) at Tenri, the force of unity is the basis for the slow release of energy (the artist’s projection of feeling in relation to material). In either case, it is the process of unknowing—to regain knowledge by letting it go, the emptying of the mind. This Taoist paradox is latent within Lin’s work. To saturate paper with ink, to bind and sheave the cut paper together, to assort and fasten the paper in such a way that the free edges flutter gently according to the current of air rising up from the floor—all of this done without effort, as if to suggest a simple happening, an impulse, a quiet sensation.

The kind of sensory awakening in Lin Yan’s works is precisely located within the process of their making, when the artist process enters into oneness with the materials. In some sense, it is held or suspended within the consciousness of feeling. The imperative for such an artist as Lin is to liberate thought and emotion from the dulling impact of repetitive branding proclaimed by media, and to engage in making work capable of transmitting a tactile sensation. Put another way, Lin makes art that connects with the retina that will, of course, connect with the neurons of the brain. Herein lies another paradox: Lin Yan’s conceptual strengths render themselves momentarily suspended as the work may be felt not merely as static information, but through a form of haptic involvement where emptiness of mind literally unfolds as nature retrieves its balance. **Robert C. Morgan**