

陳文祥

CHEN Wen-Hsiang

1957-

蕭麗虹 捐贈
Margaret Shiu Donation

陳文祥 1957 年生於臺灣臺北，1980 年畢業自文化大學美術系，1990 年獲得美國紐約市立大學藝術碩士。他早期曾以塗鴉的手法繪製「國畫」，作為反抗禮教傳統的象徵。紐約求學時期開始嘗試複合媒材的創作形式，納入現成物創作的概念，以反思消費商品氾濫的社會現象。

留美期間，陳文祥感受到深刻的文化差異與衝擊，特別是美國人和華人使用塑膠袋的不同習慣引起他的關注。從 1990 年開始，他將塑膠袋用於藝術創作，一開始作為作品的背景，提出關於消費習慣及環境議題的思考。1992 年回到臺灣後，他持續此一脈絡，而與在地性、自我生命的認同有了更深刻的聯結，臺灣盛行且獨特的紅白條紋塑膠袋也成為他特別常用的材料。在臺灣，塑膠袋方便且低廉到一度長時間成為隨商品附贈的免費物品；對陳文祥而言，它如此深入常民生活而帶有一種無以倫比的真實感，負有阻擋髒污的最底層功能，隨處可見卻也輕易令人覺得無足輕重，為他提供一個從真實乏味的生活中提煉出藝術靈光的切入點。

漸漸地，陳文祥開始將塑膠袋從作品的背景往前提到主角的位置，利用塑膠袋易於揉捏造型的特質，模擬各種動物與人物。創作過程中，他意外在揉皺的塑膠袋裡辨認出聖像造形，深感驚豔；從此，聖像就成為他長期發展的主題之一，其中包含了聖母、觀音、聖母抱嬰、聖殤等樣式。蕭麗虹捐贈的作品〈實物聖母抱嬰 #02〉，以深具臺灣地域文化特色的紅白塑膠袋捏出形式化的聖母抱嬰圖，乍看是一種日常現成物的裱貼，當聖母子像被辨認出來，原本廉價甚至因人們濫用而成為環境污染大患的塑膠袋，多出了一股崇高揉捏、神聖的精神性。在聖像系列的作品裡，陳文祥的折疊塑膠袋對應的並非現實世界中的人物，而是在視覺藝術史中長期使用，並已然深植於東方或西方大眾文化裡的圖像，在此陳文祥的作品不是再現現實，而是仿擬既有的圖像，並藉此獲至這些既有圖像的神聖象徵。於是，原本廉價、平凡、底層的物件，透過藝術家的雙手被賦予全然不同的意義。對陳文祥而言，這彷彿是在平淡生活裡創造奇蹟的巫術，如果將作品拆掉，它又變回一個真實無奇的塑膠袋了。

(郭怡孜)

Born in 1957 in Taipei, Taiwan, Chen Wen-Hsiang graduated from the Department of Fine Arts at Chinese Culture University in 1980 and received his Master's of Fine Arts degree from New York University in 1990. In his early period, Chen rebelled against Confucian traditions by using a graffiti-based style to create Chinese paintings. When studying in New York, he started using mixed media and ready-mades in work reflecting on the excesses of consumerism.

While in the United States, Chen was profoundly impacted by the cultural differences he encountered. He became especially interested in the different ways in which Americans and Chinese people use plastic bags, and in 1990, started using them as an art material, at first as the backgrounds of his works to advance ideas about consumerism and environmental issues. He continued in the same vein after returning to Taiwan in 1992, but adapted his ideas to the local environment and deepened their connection to his recognition of his own life. In this way, a red and white striped plastic bag that was popular in Taiwan at the time became a frequently used material in his work. In Taiwan, these plastic bags were so cheap and convenient that they were offered by stores for free when making any purchase. Chen believes this is the reason for their becoming so deeply embedded in the lives of the people, and why they carry such an unparalleled sense of realism. Serving as a first defense against stains and seen everywhere yet easily overlooked, these bags offered Chen an entry point into using a pedestrian and ubiquitous object to distill his artistic inspiration.

Gradually, he moved the plastic bags from the background to a position in his works where their malleability allowed them to play a leading role, and started molding the bags into various animals or figures. Once, in the process of folding and shaping a bag, Chen was astonished to discover a religious icon, and for a period of time afterwards, developed the theme of religious iconography in his artwork, exploring images of the Virgin Mary, Guanyin, the Virgin and Child, and the Pietà. For *Ready-Made Virgin and Child II*, donated to the collection by Margaret Shiu, he molded the form of the Virgin and Child from these red and white plastic bags carrying such deep associations with Taiwanese culture. In this series, Chen created representations of icons seen in art over the course of its history or of figures deeply rooted in Eastern and Western popular culture, rather than of real people. Works in the series do not reproduce reality, but imitate existing imagery to capture their sacred symbolism, and in this way, Chen imbues this cheap and common plastic bag with completely different meanings. Chen seems to be carrying out a kind of sorcery that transforms the commonplace into a miracle, which can also revert back to a plastic bag if the work is taken apart. (Isabelle Kuo)

典藏
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2021

COLLECTION
CATALOGUE

實物聖母抱嬰 #02 Ready-Made Virgin and Child II

2010

塑膠袋、金屬夾、紙 Plastic bag, metal clip, paper

57 x 42 cm

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