

# 曾建穎

## TSENG Chien-Ying

1987–

曾建穎的作品主題以人物居多，然其並非是在製作肖像畫，而是處理一種具集體性格的眾生相，融合當下生活經驗與大眾文化，致力於探索傳統媒材或繪畫語言另闢蹊徑的當代可能性。他的繪畫聚焦在當代社會與現實生活層面，但探討的並非社會現象本身，而是透過描繪人的五官和軀體，呈現個體的內在精神，特別是生活中的違和感，或大眾避而不願面對之現實。

曾建穎的技法深受中國佛像造型的影響，透過暈染方式與明暗法來處理五官、肌肉感和身軀的輪廓線條，以一同類色分成不同色階，依照軀體關節染出陰陽面，遠看深淺錯綜，有凹入與凸出之貌，藉以呈現出立體感，猶如元初書畫鑑賞家湯垕在《畫鑒》中所言，「堆起絹素，而不隱指」，物象仿若自畫中突出。這些積累來自他長期觀察佛教及東亞繪畫的結果，而非源自西方的解剖學；若與西方繪畫傳統相比，曾建穎在線條、設色等造型的層次則更為豐富，特別是創作對於他而言，是在處理造型，而非物質合理性與否。

在〈角質身體XX〉與〈角質身體XY〉中，男女兩者身體輪廓來自於穿著時裝的外觀，指向的對象是在都會裡生活的工作者。服裝作為一種身體的延伸，或是將身上穿戴之物視為第二層皮膚，除了能夠呈現自我的身分位階、認同與主體性，曾建穎更將它形容成一種角質，即在社會中打去磨來因而產生的角質。時裝像是一副對抗外部的盔甲，也是內在心理性的保護，他擅長以日常生活的物件去象徵觀察獲得的龐然事物、探究現象下更深層之物；在創作中所呈現的情境，也反映了自身感覺系統的延伸，是一種透過身體感知投射情緒、想法以及認識世界而得出的詮釋。

作品中除了桌面上的散落物件，最遠處並無特別著墨的背景，藉以排除了襯托性與說明性；另一方面，曾建穎運用筆直的線條分隔出背景與前景桌子的不同空間，並由人物占據絕大部分的畫面，令觀者更能聚焦於作品由五官表情與身體所呈現之表現性。當被描繪的外在背景越單純，畫面主體所傳遞的感知和意涵，也才更具有放大與表達的空間。

兩件作品使用灰色調或中間色調，與過往採以直接的原色畫法有所不同，而跟近來曾建穎感受到關於外在世界的氛圍有所關聯：對於社會的不安、不公的體悟漸深，是否要順從並將自我捏塑為尷尬的模樣？又或人性於其中將採取面對、無視或何種反應？皆讓他過往關注與啟蒙和青春成長相關的主題，在這個階段產生變化轉折。（高子衿）

Subject matter in Tseng Chien-Ying's works is mostly human figures, but instead of portraiture, he deals with the collective nature of all living beings by integrating life experience and mass culture. He has devoted himself to exploring new possibilities of traditional art media and painting language and focuses on contemporary society and reality. However, rather than directly exploring societal phenomena, he presents the spirits of individuals with depictions of human faces and bodies to highlight unease in contemporary life or realities that people are unwilling to face.

Tseng has been influenced by modeling techniques seen in Chinese Buddhist art. With smudging and shading, he depicts facial features, muscles, and outlines of bodies, and with different shades of one color, he creates yin and yang surfaces representing the joints of these bodies. The rendering of concave and convex areas creates a three-dimensional effect, such that figures seem to protrude from the painting, calling to mind what early Yuan dynasty painting and calligraphy connoisseur Tang Hou wrote in his *Mirror of Painting*, "The silk fabric appears piled-up, but the folds are not felt." This technique is the result of the artist's long-term observation of Buddhist and East Asian painting and not from the study of human anatomy as it is conceived of in the West. Compared with those in Western painting, formal elements, such as line quality and use of color in Tseng's works are richer, suggesting that the subject of painting is dealing with form, rather than rationally addressing the material world.

In *Bodysuit XX* and *Bodysuit XY*, Tseng presents the body contours of two figures, one male and one female, which come from wearing fashionable clothing indicating that they are workers living in a metropolitan area. Clothing is often seen as an extension of the body, or considered a second skin that presents a position, identity, and subjectivity. Tseng takes this a step further by describing this outer layer as "keratinized tissue" formed by constant societal friction or pressure. Fashionable clothing can be seen as a suit of armor that resists external attacks and a protector of one's mentality. Tseng is skilled at using everyday objects to portray significant observations and explore deeper layers that lay beneath the surface. The situations that appear in his work are also extensions of his own sensory system, which is a way of interpreting emotions, thoughts, and understanding of the world through bodily perceptions.

In these works, there are only scattered objects on tabletops, as the artist eliminated distant backgrounds, and the contrasts and explication they bring. Furthermore, Tseng made use of perfectly straight lines to demarcate the backgrounds and foregrounds, which are occupied by tables, and most of the space in these works is taken up by their figures, so that viewers can focus on facial and bodily expressions. Overall, when a painting's background is simpler, perceptions and meanings conveyed by the subject will have more room for amplification and expression.

Tseng used gray and mid-tone colors in these two works, which is different from his past approach of using pure primary colors, and reflects his recent experience of the dominant mood in the world. In light of society's injustice and instability, should one just be submissive and mold oneself into something awkward? In what way should one face, ignore, or react to this situation? In the past, Tseng paid more attention to themes arising from enlightenment and youth, but at this stage, his focus has changed. (Jean Tzu-Chin KAO)

角質身體 XX Bodysuit XX

2020

水墨設色、紙 Ink and pigment on paper

109 x 74 cm

蒐購 Purchase 2023.0006.001



角質身體 XY Bodysuit XY

2020

水墨設色、紙 Ink and pigment on paper

109 x 69 cm

蒐購 Purchase 2023.0006.002

