

Artforum: HE Xiao on Zhou Siwei

Published in Artforum

By: HE Xiao

Mar 20, 2017

The exhibition “beautified the home” is the first attempt by Zhou Thinking to present his recent work in the form of “proposition creation”. In the same way as the previous solo exhibitions, this solo exhibition is not just a painting exhibition: the artist also reproduces the seemingly abstract concept of “home” through scene construction, clay sculpture and digital photo printing. This multi-media creation method not only shows Zhou thinking's reflection on its previous creative language, but also finds the foothold of the "home", a realistic and abstract proposition from the perspective of painting.

The “beautification” in the title of the exhibition shows more about the artist as a worker who produces “beauty”, and how to become a mediator between the reality and the understanding of the art medium. Whether it's the L-shaped white platform in the center of the exhibition hall and a series of clay sculptures on the elliptical stand that are based on household items, seemingly rough, or broken glass vases on the stone – all with oil paintings on the walls. The same is the artist's "reproduction" of the real thing in daily life. Zhou thinking does not deny the function of art “reproduction”. He even believes that from the “practical” point of view, painting should retain its original function. In other words, the basic experience of painting obtained from the Academy of Fine Arts has not become the instruction manual of the leading artist, and has become the starting point for his exploration of different creative media.

From the brushstrokes in the Zhouzhi paintings, the coverage of the pigments, and the thinness of the picture, it is not difficult to see that the color and the order in which the colors are drawn are the most important factors to consider when creating. He removed the extreme colors (black and white), so it is more able to show the limitations of using basic colors to seek personal painting ideas, and it is this method that provides artists with a way to deepen the language of painting. For example, in "Sunrise and Sunset", the color extends from the upper left corner to the whole picture. Although the relationship between the light and the dark is still true, it deviates from the methodology of painting the plaster in the beauty salon. The work "Grape" and John Cage's "4:33" have the same thing: John Cage's silence in front of the piano 4 minutes and 33 seconds is not just to let the audience feel silent while watching the performance, but Guide them to notice other sounds around the scene during this seemingly quiet time, which became part of the work. Similarly, the “Grass (Background)”, which seems to be too realistic in Zhou’s thinking, replaced the image with the object being depicted in the primary and secondary relationship. The tactics of sketching objects that have been customary are applied to the depiction of the background by Zhou thinking. This approach reminds the viewer to think: When we are watching a painting, what are we looking at? Similarly, in the works of "Living Room", "Time (7:30PM)" and "Xuanguan (Malevich)" echoing the central installation of the exhibition hall, we can find the artist's image, color and narrative in the image of art history. The unfolding reflections and his research around the emotional stimulation of images.

Zhou’s paintings are not “metaphysical” abstractions, they are aimed at the powerful language power in real images. In other words, the aesthetic language contained in the image of the broken vase and stone is the driving force for the deep thinking of Zhou thinking. Whether it is the subject matter or the method of leaving traces of the obvious painting process on the canvas, it reflects the artist's constant scrutiny of the language of creation. Perhaps abstraction is an unresolved issue for any artist who lives in reality and cannot be completely rejected.

The exhibition was jointly exhibited by the Meile Gallery and the Antenna Space.

Original link(Chinese) (<http://www.artforum.com.cn/archive/search=%E5%91%A8%E6%80%9D%E7%BB%B4/10430>)

Related Exhibitions

- Beautify Home (</en/exhibitions/beautify-home>)