

童雁汝南的绘画方法论：“神遇”的自然面相学

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我们面对肖像，就是面对自我，面对自我的肖像就是触发自身的自恋，也许，这个时代的肖像画是唯一被允许的“美好的自恋”，哪怕这是一种“执念”，也许，绘画在这个时代有着唯一存在的理由，就是让我们与自身面对面——这是通过肖像画来面对自身，而不是通过照片，因为绘画平面上的那个“自我”——一直是我们既熟悉又陌生的“我自身”。

当一个画家过去二十年来，以同样的尺寸，基本上是 41x33cm 的小幅经典肖像画尺寸，以正面的角度、平涂的背景，几乎不变的风格语言，反复写生画不同地方，不同肤色的个体肖像画，其中到底有着什么样的绘画意义？

这是童雁汝南的“执念”，也是他非常特别的方法论。可以说类似于中国古代的“程式化”，无论是山水画还是书法上的程式化，尽管这是一种新写意的表现性手法。但是，一旦你观看他的肖像人物，你看到的是什么人的什么样子呢？这是一种“别开生面”的自我，一种执念，但又如此奇怪，也许你会觉得异常奇妙。

面对自我，面对肖像，面对童雁汝南的肖像画系列作品，这是多重的面对面（faces to faces），不只是汝南面对一个人，也是我们被画过的人面对自身，还是其他熟悉的人面对我们自己，这是多重的观看！因此，需要一种现象学的复杂观看，现象学本来是悬置自然，但在汝南那里却获得了一种“自然的面相学”（Natural Physiognomy），面对面孔本身，面对面，画出了地方性的性格，画出了一个个体内在的自然性，并让人心的整体内在生命唤醒出来。

肖像画，作为一种自我认知，一种自我的“执念”，也是一种生命个体与艺术家个体的执着与执念，但如何从个体“自我”（ego）抵达某种生命本身的经验，一种生命“自身性”（selfhood）的经验。对于中国文化，对于童雁汝南的肖像画，则是一种整体的内在觉醒，一种深层的鲜活自我的觉醒。

一，四重“面对面”的观看方式

面对面，这是多重的面对面，但需要从多个维面来观看来思考。这里起码有着四个维面的观看：艺术家面对不同的对象——被画者的观感——被画的画家们的观感——评论家的目光。也许这是肖像画历史中，都可能很少被同时得到充分表现的四个维面。

尤其在武汉美术馆本次展览的一个厅中，我们可以看到童雁汝南所画的武汉本地的名流，其中很多都是从事艺术活动的朋友，其中还有与肖像画有关的艺术家，他们基本上都来到了现场展厅，这为我们这次的讨论提供了多重“面对面”讨论的机会。

一，其一是“被画者”的观看方式：就经验而言，我自己也是一个被画者，在这个手机都可以随手拍摄的时代，还有肖像画存在的价值，那将是另一种经验。与摄影的不同在于，被画者乍一看，并不像，不仅不像，而且还画得比较丑！把自己画丑了，这是第一眼视觉上的非快感，反照相的直接性。即第一眼是画得不像！“不相似”，这就与照片拍摄不同了！但是，仔细看第二眼，又发现其实画得“很像”，很多人会说画的“神”！这是因为画家省略掉不必要的要素，紧紧抓住这个对象的精神气质，这也是中国文化的“以神抓形”。比如在哲学家邓晓芒教授的这幅肖像画上，眉宇之间的那种思想的凝练，一种持久聚精会神的思考所凝结的“思想者的面孔”，就被画家准确地抓住了，这已经是“思想自身”的面孔，从个别思考者的面孔到了一般的精神层次的面容。

二，这是“被画的艺术家长们”的观看：这是比较独特的经验，是某种“画中画”的观看，这也是一种艺术史的观看。一方面，在展厅里，我们看到从埃及到中国唐代的一些古典肖像的代表作品，但并没有西方文艺复兴以来的素描作品，而是直接进入了现代，贾科梅迪与奥尔巴哈，还有黄宾虹，这是童雁汝南自己所建构起来的“艺术谱系”，或者说一种广义的写意传统。另一方面，但是，对于他而言，他去掉了所有写实或者摄影所需要的东西，去掉了不必要的要素，只是直观“面孔”，回到事物本身，回到面孔的显现。具体而言，一旦我们进入童雁汝南画某个肖像画家的场景，比如画超写实的冷军老师，这几乎是回到了委勒兹奎兹的绘画场景，进入了巴洛克时代，进入一个画中画与元绘画的场景。但童雁汝南的肖像不是肖像素描，不是照相写实，好似某种写生。但画家们被画后，尤其面对自己的肖像画时，就是“不像”！冷军先生说，这是因为汝南在面孔上“写

书法”，这个说法抓住了汝南绘画的关键，这是书写，是写书法的那种从形到神的块面结构的转换，这是一种面孔的象形文字读法！或者说，这是一种孩子气的天真？一种回到艺术最初的直觉。就是回到了某种直接性、赤裸性与纯粹性的观看。

其三，作为旁观者的“批评家”的观看：从绘画的场景出来，反思他的作品本身，经过几重对比与对照后，其中有着什么样的绘画原理？这是一种似与不似之间的“间性”？造型采取古代山水画的观看方式，如同皴法，皴法如面目，因为山水画生动，似乎还在生长，而这个被画的对象是活的，活生生的，必须画出其活生生的时间状态。局部抽象而整体鲜活，这也是黄宾虹式的现代性转化心法，黄宾虹晚期设色山水画就是局部抽象的书写，但整体还是有山水画的余象，因此汝南的这些肖像画局部看起来就如同抽象的书写性，笔触纷乱，看似一些破坏性的笔触，但整体看却还是有一个鲜活的整体浮现出来，就是一种整体的活力，一种生命整体的生动感。

其四，最后，则是“艺术家自己”的观看：他的绘画方法，看起来好似某种程式化，或者书法家的某种风格，但这不是贬义，它与中国文化传统相关了，就是写意，反复的书写，达到心手眼的合一。并形成一种自然的面相学，抓住地方性的风神或风骨，一种个体的气质，解散是风，合成是骨，笔触与色彩的重新组合，笔触书写性的不同方向——因为方向不同带来一种自然运动的活力——好似黄宾虹式的书写活力，而色彩的当下直觉——不同的气氛与氛围，一种注意力的聚集。

二，神遇的现象学

以神抓形，以神遇而不以目视，此“神遇”是什么呢？面孔上有着一一种什么样的神需要被抓住？这才是肖像画的意义！在色彩的书写中，就如同写草书，写久了，凭靠肌肉记忆，但每一次都不同，这是一种“天地之道”？这是一种建构的秩序，整体的秩序，一种新的聚精会神，一种活力，一种可能的自我认知与识别。笔断而意不断，这个“意”乃是一种生动的鲜活性。

对于童雁汝南而言，这是一种“庖丁解牛”式的哲学普遍性方法：即，从对

象的观看或者本质直观（解散形体不是照相式的写实）——到笔触与色彩的解散或先验还原——一直到整体内在生命的知觉（一种自然的面相学）。

如同庄子“庖丁解牛式”的展开过程，一，先见整体全牛，这是写实，如同身份证对象性的“面孔”（Face），这是学院派的训练与肖像画的历史继承。二，随后则是分解，打散形态，形成一种可见性的“面容”（Visage），无论是奥尔巴哈还是贾科梅迪式分解。但他们的不同异常关键！三，则是以神遇而不以目视，如何神遇？涂写出肖像对象的“精神”式不可见的容颜（epiphany）！

具体而言，这个现象学的还原过程可以这样来描述：

1，解散形体，这是放弃已有的笔法，直接书写，采取书写性的用笔。当下的气氛，就是色彩。而色彩又是每一次都是根据当时的氛围，所以不可能重复。

2，一旦明确某个局部形态，采取放大的观看方式，如同山水画的块面。这可以与贾科梅迪拉长雕塑与素描对比。贾科梅迪是不聚焦，因此面对对象，需要重新聚集，这就永远不可能画完，需要不断地画使之重新聚集。但童雁汝南的视觉建构方法则是放大，在展览的影像里我们看到，尽管画幅如此小，但在他眼里则放大了形体，如同一幅古代大尺度的山水画，有待于以很多次的笔触去重新聚集，但是不可能以固定方式聚集，必然每一次都不同。

3，因为每个人不同，局部不同，借助于每一次的颜色与笔触的独特知觉，以笔触与笔法的不同方向，富有活力的方向，建构画面。而一旦一个局部调整，其它局部必须随之改变。

4，整个笔触的节奏形成上：一方面，笔触的纷纭，甚至是混乱，就是深入到混沌，尤其是放大后，笔触很“毛”，就很有活力，有破坏性的笔触或笔痕，看似打断，但却鲜活。但另一方面，整体上笔触的方向相互之间有着呼应关系，这是山水画的整体观，一种皴法式的面相学重构。

5，重构什么呢？这是一种整体的秩序，一种生命整体的内在觉知，一种自然化的生动性。而且是一种江南的诗意。其实最初，童雁汝南的绘画是画漂亮女孩子的，这是非常重要的经验，尤其是江南的美女们，无数的美女们，这些美女，在他眼里，其实已经不是人，而是自然的花朵，是自然的生命，是生长的自然元素性。

也就是说，童雁汝南有着一种贾科梅蒂式的观看，就是“不聚焦”，就是打散对象，以一种新的方式重新组合。汝南的方式更为具有中国式的山水画原理，就是重新组合的元素来自于自然的混沌涌现，来自于生命的气息，来自于元素性的不止息的生长性，因为生命本身就是活的，必须以活的方式去面对生命本身。

这也是中国的诗意现象学与自然化的现象学，如同童雁汝南来自于江南的西湖，那个“人面桃花相映红，桃花依旧笑春风”的诗意来到了画面上，因此，从那个美丽女子的“面孔”——到相映红的记忆中的“面容”——一直到春风中的笑着的桃花（这是容颜），最后，此面容已经是桃花——人的面孔被春风中的桃花所转换，这是自然的诗意面孔，是无处不在的春风桃花建构起来的自然自身的容颜，这是自然的面相学，画家以不同的色差色层与笔触来建构面容，以笔触的色差，塑造出一个可能的鲜活的新自我，一个新生命。

Painting Methodology of Tong Yanrunan: Natural Physiognomy of “Catching Mien”

Xia Kejun

When we face portraits, we face ourselves. Facing the portrait of oneself triggers one's narcissism. Perhaps, portrait in this era is the only allowed “nice narcissism”, even if it is a kind of “obsession”. Perhaps, the only reason why painting exists in this age lies in a face-to-face opportunity for us and ourselves -- we face ourselves through portrait instead of photo -- because it is the “self” on the painting plane that always be “oneself” we are familiar with or unfamiliar with.

What is the significance of painting for a painter, who has insisted on the same classical portrait size with a scale of 41x33cm, a positive angle, flat background, almost unchanged style language, repeating sketches of different places and different skin colors of individual portraits, in the past 20 years?

This is Tong Yan Runan's “persistence” as well as his very special methodology. Similarly, it can be said to be the “stylization” of landscape painting or calligraphy in ancient China. It is a new expressive technique of freehand brushwork. But once you look at his portrait, what kind of person do you see? It's a “new and fresh” self and persistence, but it's so strange, maybe you will think it's amazing.

Faces to faces refer to face your ego, the portrait, and the portrait series of Tong yanrunan. It is not only Runan who we face, but also people who have been painted face themselves, or the other familiar face ourselves. It is a multiple view! Therefore, we need a complex view of physiognomy. Physiognomy is suspended in nature, but it is acquired as a kind of “Natural Physiognomy” by Runan. Since he faces the face itself by “face to face”, the local character and an individual's inherent naturalness are drawn, which arouses the whole inner life of one's heart.

Portrait painting, as a kind of self-recognition, is “persistence” of ego as well as of individual life and of the artist. How to turn the individual “ego” to be some experiences of life itself, or of “selfhood” of life? For Chinese culture, for the portrait of Tong Yanrunan, there is an overall internal awakening, a deep and vivid self-awakening.

I. Quadruple views of “face-to-face”

It is a multiple face-to-face view that requires multiple dimensions of thinking. There are at least four dimensions of viewing: the artist's perception of different objects -- the sitter's perception -- the painter's perception - the critic's vision. Perhaps it is the four dimensions that may seldom be fully expressed at the same time in the history of portrait painting.

Fortunately, we can see local celebrities painted by Tong Yanrunan in one of the exhibition halls of Wuhan Art Museum. Many of whom are friends engaged in artistic activities, including portrait artists related. Almost all of them present in the exhibition hall, which provides us with an opportunity for multiple “face-to-face” discussions.

Firstly, the viewing by the “sitters”: as far as experience is concerned, I am also a person sitting there for being painted. In this era when mobile phones can shoot freely, there is still the value of my portrait, which will be another kind of experience. They are different from photography. At first glance, the portrait is not like the person who is painted, even far from unlikeness, it is ugly! Ugliness is the first visual non-pleasure, but the direct nature differs from photography. At first glance, in other words, it is not picturesque! “Not picturesque”, which is the difference! However, you will find that it looks “like” the real person instead when looks at it carefully. Many people will say the portrait is “amazing”, because the painter omits the unnecessary elements and firmly catches the spiritual temperament of the object, which is also “catching shape through spirit” of Chinese culture. Taking portrait of Professor Deng Xiaomang as an example, the concise thoughts between eyebrows and the “face of the thinker” condensed by a persistent and concentrated thinking are accurately caught by the painter. The face has already been the face of “thoughts themselves”, from the face of individual thinkers to the visage of a generally spiritual level.

Secondly, the viewing by the “painted artists”: this is a relatively unique

experience and a view of “painting in painting”, as well as a view of art history. On the one hand, there are some representative works of classical portraits from Egypt to the Tang Dynasty in China in the exhibition hall, but no sketches since the Western Renaissance. Tong’s portraits directly access to the modern, such as Giacometti, Auerbach and Huang Binhong, who are built as an “artistic pedigree” by himself. In other words, it is a broad sense of freehand brushwork tradition. On the other hand, for him, he takes out the unnecessary elements that are needs for realism or photography, but only for the intuitive “face”, returning to things themselves and appearances. Specifically, once we enter the scene that Tong’ Yanrunan creates a portrait for some portraitists, such as the super-realistic painter Leng Jun, which implies returning to the painting scene of Venezuela Quez, entering the Baroque era, and a scene of painting-in-painting and meta-painting. But portraits by Tong are not portraits sketches, not photograph or realism, but seems like painting from life. However, when painters are painted, especially when facing their own portraits, they are “unlike” what they look like. Mr. Leng Jun said that Runan “writes calligraphy” on the face, which catches the key of Runan’s painting. It is writing that shows the transformation of block structure from shapes to spirits in calligraphy. It is a kind of hieroglyphic reading of face. Or is it childish naivety? In other words, it is original intuition returns to the art, and a view returns to directness, nudity and purity.

Thirdly, the viewing by “critics” as bystanders: critics study his works regardless of the scene of painting with several comparisons and contrasts. What kind of painting principle is there? Is this a kind of “intersexuality” between similarity and dissimilarity? From the perspective of ancient landscape paintings, or with the wrinkle method, the model just likes the face. It seems to be still growing because the landscape paintings are vivid. Since the object being painted is alive and vivid, it is necessary to draw its vivid time state. Partly abstract but vivid as a whole, it is also Huang Binhong’s modern transformation method. Huang Binhong’s colored landscape paintings are partly abstract writings in his late years, but still have the afterimage of landscape painting as a whole. Therefore, Runan’s portraits look like abstract writing partly, with chaotic strokes, seemingly some destructive strokes, but

still have a vivid surface overall, which is an overall vitality, a sense of vitality of the whole life.

Finally, the viewing by the “artist himself”: his painting method seems to be a certain stylization, or a style of calligrapher, which is not derogatory but related to Chinese cultural tradition. In other words, it is freehand brushwork, or repeated writing, to achieve the unity of mind, hands and eyes, and then form a natural physiognomy, seize the local wind or wind bone, and an individual temperament. Dissolve is wind, and composition is bone. Recombination of brush strokes and colors, and different directions of brush strokes writing -- because different directions bring a natural movement of vitality -- are similar to Huang Binhong’s writing vitality, and the current intuition of colors -- is a different atmosphere, and a concentration of attention.

II. Phenomenology of catching mien

Tong grasps shape through mien rather than visual way. What is “catching mien”? What kind of mien on the face needs to be caught? That’s what portraits mean! The writing of colors is similar to writing cursive script, which is a long course of relying on muscle memory, but it is different each time. Is this a “way of heaven and earth”? This is a constructive order, an overall order, a new kind of concentration, vitality, a possible self-recognition and recognition. Breaks of brush don’t cut off the meaning. This “meaning” is a vivid and fresh activity.

For Tong Yanrunan, this is a philosophical universal method of “Dismembering an Ox by A Skillful Butcher Pao Ding”: that is, sublimating from the viewing of the object or the intuitive nature (dissolving the form is not photographic realism) -- to the dissolve of brushwork and colors or transcendental reduction -- to the perception of the whole internal life (a natural physiognomy).

The process of “Dismembering an Ox by A Skillful Butcher Pao Ding” wrote by Zhuangzi (the wiser in the ancient China) shows that, firstly, there must be an intact ox, which means paint realistically, just like the “Face” of object on the identity card.

This is academism training and the historical inheritance of portrait painting. Secondly, the ox is dismembered, which implies to break up the shape to form a visible visage. Both way of Auerbach and that of Giacometti are feasible. But their differences are important! Thirdly, how to catch mien instead of only seeing it? He catches mien and paint the invisible epiphany of the portrait object with “spirits”!

Specifically, this phenomenological reduction process can be described as follows:

1. Dissolve of the body, which means to give up the existing brush style, write directly and adopt a writing style. The current atmosphere lies in colors. Since colors are always depend on the atmosphere at that time, it is impossible to repeat.

2. Once a local form is defined, a magnified view will be adopted, just like the block surface of landscape painting. By contrast, Giacomedilla’s long sculpture and sketch don’t focus on the object, so it needs to be re-assembled during the course of facing. It can never be finished since it needs to be constantly re-assembled. But Tong Yanrunan has a visual construction method to enlarge it. We can see from the image on the exhibition that he enlarges the shape within his vision though the painting is actually so small. Like an ancient large-scale landscape painting, it needs to be re-assembled with many strokes, but it cannot be assembled in a fixed way, and it must be different every time.

3. Different people have different partial faces, which requires the help of the unique perception of different colors and brush strokes each time, and the different dynamic directions of brush strokes to construct the painting. A partial adjustment must change other parts accordingly.

4. The angle of forming rhythm of entire strokes: on the one hand, the variations and even disorders of the strokes go deep into chaos. In particular, the strokes are very “rough” under the enlargement, but very dynamic. Damaging strokes seem to be interrupted, but they are lively. On the other hand, directions of brush strokes corresponds to each other as a whole, which is the overall view of landscape painting, a kind of Physiognomy reconstruction of wrinkle method.

5. What is reconstruction? This is an overall order, an internal awareness of life

as a whole, and a naturalized vividness. It is also a poetic style in the south of the Yangtze River. In fact, Tong Yanrunan paints beautiful girls at the very beginning, which is a very important experience, especially beauties in the south of the Yangtze River. In his eyes, those countless beautiful girls are actually far beyond human beings, but natural flowers, natural life and natural elements of growth.

In other words, Tong Yanrunan has a viewing style of Giacometti. “Not focusing” means breaking up the objects and reassembling them in a new way. His way tends to follow the principle of Chinese-style landscape painting. The reassembled elements come from the chaotic emergence of nature, from the breath of life, and from the non-stop growth of elements. Since life itself is living, we must face life itself in a living way.

This is also the phenomenology of Chinese poetry and a naturalized phenomenology. For example, Tong Yanrunan comes from the West Lake in the south of the Yangtze River where is full of poetic flavor. The poetry of “peach blossoms and her face add radiance and beauty to each other, peach blossoms still smiling in the spring breeze” come to life on the painting. From the “face” of that beauty -- to the “visage” of memory in beautiful scene -- to the smiling peach blossom in the spring breeze (epiphany), blossom turns to be epiphany finally. Human face is transformed by peach blossom in the spring breeze. This is a natural poetic face, a natural self-visage constructed by peach blossom and spring breeze everywhere. It is the natural physiognomy. The painter constructs the visage with different colors, layers and brush strokes, and paints a possible fresh self and a new life by color differences of brush strokes.