

## 21世紀的奇想 — 海爾蓋特的風景畫

文／柏納特·史威克博士，德國慕尼黑現代藝術陳列館策展人

這些令人不安的小生物睜大著眼睛，雙手張開地看著天空，彷彿要從海爾·蓋特的巨大畫作中衝出到觀眾面前。這些生物令人想到愛德華·蒙克的《吶喊》（創作於約 1900 年）、芭芭拉·馮·強森的《小搗蛋普姆克》（創作於約 1960 年），或安德烈·布澤爾的《Friedens-Siemens》系列（2000 年後開始創作）。無論如何，蓋特的生物並沒有獨特性，就像是複製出來的。他們就是一種她在畫中以厚塗法描繪的標準圖像，也就是表情符號。更準確得來說，他們是殭屍的表情符號，由蘋果公司在大約 2017 年時首次發表。這也許是一種給未來的藝術史學者的記事參考。蓋特的殭屍主題畫作以標記（#）和三個表情符號（女性殭屍 — 腦袋 — 男性殭屍）命題，並加上了括號與「walkingdead」文字。

畫中的殭屍表情符號並非無中生有，他們更像從周遭的異國風景中傾瀉而出：令人聯想到北非的棕櫚樹和荒蕪沙漠，也是數百年前的歐洲畫家追尋的光照條件，包括奧古斯特·馬克、法蘭茲·馬克、與保羅·克利。蓋特的「風景」畫閃耀著虛擬的光：天空從沙地上的橘色逐漸渲染到血紅，白黃色的太陽處在遠端的地平線上。與古典現代主義藝術家相反的是，這樣的強烈色彩雖然極度不自然，但卻天真迷人。也因為畫面中過高的溫度，火紅的場景似乎帶有威脅性，形狀奇特的棕櫚樹想傳達的似乎也超越了眼前的怪異景象。儘管觀眾會感到好奇，但他們其實是被刺激的：因為這樣冒犯、不悅的假象與氛圍而保持著距離。這種假象並非僅來自其中的表情符號，也同時來自畫中其他的影像。這樣的畫作已經不再關於忠實呈現風景，而是風景的陳腔濫調。無論是棕櫚樹、雲、太陽、或光線，所有畫中的物件都虛假的如同象形圖案。它們被粗糙的複製貼上，並用 Photoshop 工具編輯。的確，這樣故意且隨性的方法最能代表蓋特。

現在，歷史傳統風景畫中的人造物已經不再嶄新。直到約 1600 年，風景畫才成為了神話與歷史敘事的一部分，也就是風景與主題相互呼應。即使之後，風景畫發展成了獨立的繪畫主題，也即使人們對描繪自然與光有著強烈的慾望，藝術家仍舊和貼近真實、寫實再現保持距離。風景畫留在了畫家的想像世界中，結合了真實與虛幻的部分、理想、角色，成為類似浪漫主義時期的「心景」。

極致的人造是巴洛克時期的產物，被稱為「奇想」。我們並無從得知這個詞的起源，但詞源學的研究懷疑它是由義大利語的「頭」和「刺蝟」組成，字面意思就是「刺蝟頭」或「散開的腦袋」。這些畫作很少展示風景，而是關於人物和物件的聚集地。典型的「奇想」模糊了傳統的繪畫分類，否則這些分類會在時序和層級上分離彼此（歷史／故事、肖像、題材、風景、靜物等畫作都是以此為基準）。因此，藝術家能重新定義規則和限制，大膽而自由的遊玩在畫作之中，自由也因而被視為反學術現代主義中的第一個基礎。

所以，將蓋特的風景畫視為 21 世紀的奇想是非常吸引人的一件事。在當代藝術的範疇下，她的作品有趣地在結合了類比與數位世界的衝突 — 這裡的「衝突」並不具有該詞原有的批判意涵，而是中立的關於「衝突」，暗示著某種「影響」。這樣的做法來自於藝術家在網路上的搜尋，以及與數位工具的連結 — 手繪、手機照片、實驗性的印刷、與有時候效果不佳的圖形設計，並將這些全部丟回傳統油畫，反映出了繪畫應與所以其他媒材平等強烈當代概念

與此同時，蓋特的繪畫強調我們現今的經驗不僅是受到圖像模板的影響（來自藝術、電影、電視、廣告、社群媒體等等）。而且，這些繪畫所意指的是我們的感受能透過圖案或符號表現，使身體從即時感知退後到了一種微妙的疏離感。前提是，這種感知曾經存粹的形式存在過。不過，蓋特在畫中的人工圖案更像是觀察，而非批判。

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只有當接收者連接影像和敘事時，批判才會成立。也就是說，是否要將「#walkingdead」看作是未來的末日景觀。這並不是城市被爆炸照亮、熊熊燃燒的災難畫面，正如同路德維希·梅納德在一次世界大戰發生前就已經繪畫的景象。但這樣的末日災難景色勢必會被視為能影響人類全盤生活的恐怖景象——可以說是一種氣候變遷災難。也因為這樣，「#walkingdead」將從一個全然的藝術家想像（或是一部蓋特引用提名的美國電視劇）進入殘酷的現實之中。

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## Capricci of the 21<sup>st</sup> century – The Landscape of Hell Gette

By Dr. Bernhart Schwenk, curator at Moderne München

These little beings appear disturbing, with their eyes wide open, looking skywards and their hands widely open, as they seem to dash out of the large-sized painting by Hell Gette, directly onto the observer. These beings vaguely recall the “Scream” versions by Edvard Munch (originated around 1900), the “Pumuckl” by Barbara von Johnson (around 1960) or the “Friedens-Siemens” by André Butzer (from 2000 on). However, Hell Gette’s beings own no individuality whatsoever, they look cloned. These are indeed standardized icons, so-called emojis, which Gette transfers into her pastose paintings. More precisely, they are zombie-emojis, which were first introduced by the technology company Apple in the year 2017. A precise “terminus post quem” for dating issues of future art historians. The title of Hell Gette’s painting implicates a zombie-theme, as it chains a hashtag and three emojis (woman zombie - brain - man zombie), followed by the bracketed and hashtagged word “walkingdead”.

The zombie-emojis in the painting do not storm out of nowhere, they seem to pour out of an exotic landscape: palm trees and desert sand suscite associations to the north of Africa, where European painters were drawn to the particular light conditions about 100 years ago. Amongst them were August Macke, Franz Marc and Paul Klee. Hell Gette’s painting “The Landscape” virtually glows. The blood-red sky arches over the luminous orange of the sandy ground and a white-yellow sun sets in the far horizon. However, opposed to the paintings of the classical modernist artists, the intensity of the colors appear unnatural but naively fascinating. Because of its perceived (image)-high temperature, the fiery scenario seems threatening and the peculiar palm trees convey far more than the mere exotic strangeness. The observer is actually irritated and despite his curiosity, is held at a distance by this offensively, declaimed artificiality of the portrayed atmosphere. This artificiality is not only conducted by the emojis but also by all the other elements of the image, which now presents itself less as a landscape but more as a cliché of a landscape. Whether the palm trees, clouds, suns or lightnings, the subjects of the painting seem to be artificial like pictograms. They appear to be cut and pasted rather badly and then edited with Photoshop tools. Indeed, this deliberately casual method characterizes Hell Gette’s artistic approach.

Now, artificiality does not present something new within art historic traditions of landscape painting. Up until around the year 1600, landscapes were the setting for mythological and historical narratives, i.e. the landscape adapted to the subject accordingly. Even later, as landscapes developed into independent pictorial subjects and despite the focused interest in the portrayal of nature or light phenomena, artists would still keep their distance from true-to-life, realistic representations. Landscapes remained a painter-imagined segment of the world, put together from real and imaginary parts, idealized, equipped with staffages, or like in the age of romanticism set as a “mindscape”.

An explicitly artificial spin-off in the art of the Baroque Age, is the so-called “Capriccio”. The origin of the term is uncertain, however, etymological research suspects a composition of the Italian words “capo” (head) and “riccio” (hedgehog), literally meaning “hedgehog-head” or rather “scatterbrain”. These paintings rarely show mere landscape areas, but much rather places for a free gathering of figures and objects. Typical for the Capriccio was the deliberate blurring of conventions of pictorial genres, which were otherwise hierarchically separated from each other (history/tale, portrait, genre, landscape, still life - in exactly this order). Artists thus playfully redefined rules and boundaries and consequently made bold use of freedoms, which in retrospect can be seen as the first foundation of anti-academic Modernism.

With that being said, it is appealing to consider Hell Gette’s landscapes as Capricci of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The contemporary aspect lies in the fact, that her works integrate the conflict between the analogue and the digital world playfully into the work process - “conflict” implicating not a critical, rather the original neutral meaning of the word “conflict”, suggesting an “impact”. This happens when the artist combines her findings on the internet and the connected digital tools - with the hand-drawn, the photographs taken with the mobile phone, the experimental prints or graphically (sometimes not so well) designed, bringing it all back to the traditional oil painting, thus reflecting a highly contemporary concept of painting and treating all media equally.

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At the same time, Hell Gette's paintings emphasize how strongly our experiences today are not only influenced by pictorial templates (of the arts, the movies, television, advertisement, social media, etc). Moreover, they show that even our feelings can be expressed by patterns or icons, letting the body go through a subtle estrangement from an immediate perception, providing that such a perception, in its pure form has ever existed. However, Hell Gette articulates this in her paintings rather as an observation than criticism.

Criticism would only become legible if the receptor, connected narrative content with the image. Namely if, for example “#walkingdead” would be seen as a future apocalyptic landscape. This would not be a vision of a catastrophe with exploding luminaries and burning cities, as Ludwig Meidner had already painted prior to the First World War. Such an apocalyptic vision of catastrophe would be thought of as a horror scenario, which would effect humanity's entire living environment - a climatic catastrophe. Such would turn the subject of the painting “#walkingdead” from an overwrought artistic imagination (or a US-television series, whose title Hell Gette borrowed) into relentless reality.

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