

許炯的內在山水

出處 | 劉安蓁 Annette An-Jen Liu, Ocula, 21 September 2022

連結 | <https://ocula.com/magazine/insights/xu-jiong-internal-landscapes/>

北京藝術家許炯的繪畫來自於他所受過的專業中國畫與書法訓練，並演進成具有實驗性、表現性與非正規的作品實踐。



左至右：許炯，臨嘉慶寫東坡詩，2022，紙本綜合媒材拼貼，125 x 50 cm；我不是李白，2019–2021，紙本綜合媒材拼貼，155 x 90 cm。「山水 2022 SS」展覽場景，亞紀畫廊，台北

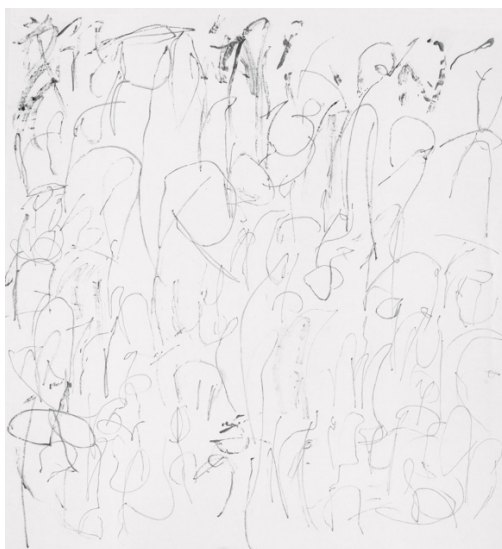
2019年，許炯在台北亞紀畫廊的個展「自畫像」突破了紙與墨，由塔型形狀所組成的非具象繪畫呈現了藝術家對壓克力、彩色顏料及拼貼的實驗。

在這些作品中，許炯利用三個堆疊的「方塊」架構來解構自我認同的複雜性，並同時加入文字—不僅在作品中，也出現在了標題裡—以提供一種作品意義的解讀方式。

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這種搖擺在易讀性和難讀性之間的遊戲延伸到了許炯的開創性的風格，抽象的書法線條定義了非正規，且其中的字符經常被渲染成難以辨認的樣貌。



許炯, 獨酌, 2015, 紙本水墨, 131 x 123 cm

早期作品如《獨酌》有著墨水漣漪，暗示了以酒作為創作啟發的唐代詩人李白。



「山水 2022 SS」展覽場景, 亞紀畫廊, 台北

同樣的，許炯對傳統中國的風景畫—山水—的探索遠離了對景色的描述，更像是一種對形體、材料、敘事與痕跡創作的當代研究。

許炯在台北亞紀畫廊的第三個個展「山水 2022 SS」(2022年8月30日至9月30日)放大了這個特性，展出了不拘一格的22件複合媒材繪畫—紙、畫布、木板甚至現成物件—彰顯了藝術家的持續成長的實踐。

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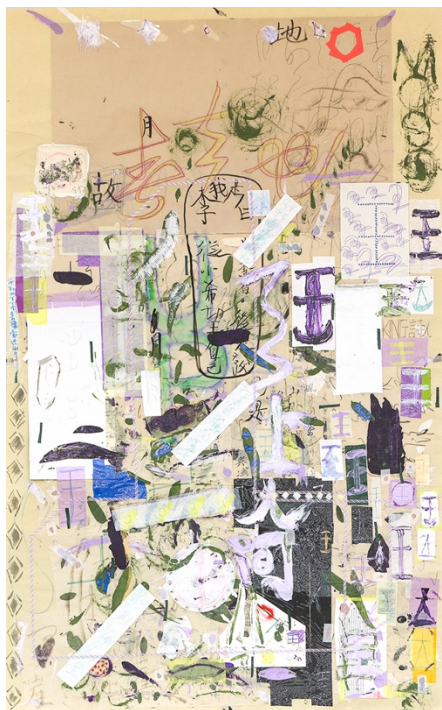
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展場中會看到的第一件 2022 年作品展示了一幅對宋代詩人蘇軾的完整、清楚書法臨摹，描述了在山上的一個寧靜、沉思而孤獨的時刻。

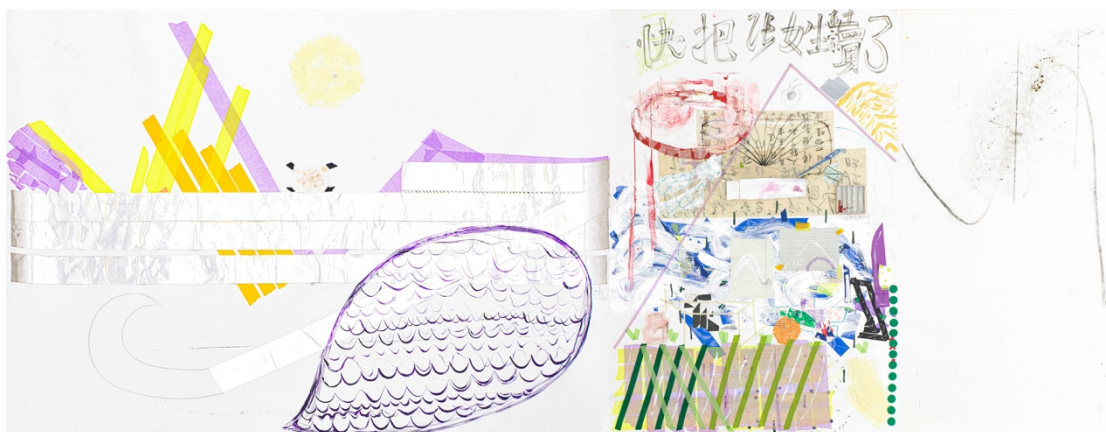
作為展覽中唯一一件以文字為主、非拼貼的紙上水墨作品，它指出了許炯的一種中國古典影響。他將這件作品與旁邊的《我不是李白》(2019-2021) 搭配展出，嘗試將其脫離出傳統的框架。



這件有著古怪姿態與顏色的作品呼應了它極具聲明性的標題，紫色與黃色的草稿與書寫拼貼在了一起。「從小希望我是李白...後來發現是...」、「KING 詩人」與重複的「王」字都是其中可以被辨認的字詞。

每一個「王」都由不同的風格寫成，就像一個學習，一種類似於臨摹前輩著作以磨練自己，然後再培養自己的做法。

在畫廊的兩個空間裡，許炯的畫作以沙龍式的方法展示，突破了他新作品的限制。在第一個空間裡，較大的畫作巧妙地利用了畫廊的挑高天花板。



許炯,快把張姓畫家賣了吧, 2021, 紙本綜合媒材拼貼, 150 x 400 cm

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四公尺寬的無框紙上作品《快把張姓畫家賣了吧》（2021）是展覽中最大的作品。這件三連幅被展示在了其他兩幅畫的上方，以墨水、顏料和彩色膠帶描繪了一片抽象山水，並將風景簡化成了形狀和圖案的組合。

許炯所下的標題《快把張姓畫家賣了吧》刻意且極具野心的指向了張大千，他是一位二十世紀最具影響力、地位最高的中國水墨畫家，也知名於現代印象的山水表現。

許炯大膽地在作品中上寫下了這個的要求，這或許暗示了對中國傳統水墨的當代必要反思。作品中的其他漢字—儘管因為草書樣貌與上下顛倒而導致難以閱讀—依舊暗示了許炯的書法背景，並持續奠定了他的實踐基礎。

抽象的書法線條定義了非正規，且其中的字符經常被渲染成難以辨認的樣貌。

沙龍風格的展場中，還展示了許炯的田野攝影作品。他以手機拍攝記錄了周圍環境，輸出成 8 x 10 寸的照片後，如註腳般與他的畫作一起展示在了第一個空間中。



「山水 2022 SS」展覽場景, 亞紀畫廊, 台北

在這些抓拍的照片中，有廟宇樓房、建築工地、樹木以及機艙窗外所望出去的風景—顏色、形狀、線條都找到了它們自己的方式來進入藝術家的抽象之中。第二個空間

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中，許炯在牆上展陳了更多的照片。這些照片有著更多對細節的觀察，包括斑駁的油漆、草地、日落以及陰影。

另一疊照片被放在了一個展檯之上，觀眾也得以拿起觀看。它們的功能更像是為兩個有著視覺內容堆積的拼貼系列《從北朝回來神魂顛倒》（2014—2021）、《在每一個宇宙遇見你》（2015—2022）作為支持性材料。

許炯不墨守成規的方法，最終回歸到對山水傳統的渴望。

在這兩個系列中，「盒」、「塔」和「紀念碑」的主題反復出現—藝術家用獨立的矩形來象徵政府、宗教等權威，並巧妙地評論權力和文化。

《從北朝回來神魂顛倒》（2021）中的形狀伴隨著中文字「發」，意指了對財富與繁榮；而「匈奴」，也就是「匈人」，指的是在公元前三世紀統治中亞大部分地區的游牧戰士。



許炯，從北朝歸來神魂顛倒，2021，紙本綜合媒材拼貼，170 x 150 cm

貼在畫上的是拍賣目錄中的頁面，其中的「當代藝術」和「紐約」字樣則最為明顯。與形式抽象並列，這些內容指向了歷史和文化遺產，同時也可能是批評藝術界的商業主義。

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作為展覽中較大的系列，《從北朝回來神魂顛倒》代表了許炯不墨守成規的方法，最終回歸到了對山水傳統的渴望－通過抽象的風景來描繪自身和私密。

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Xu Jiong's Internal Landscapes

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Beijing-based artist Xu Jiong's painting practice is informed by his formal training in Chinese painting and calligraphy, which the artist has evolved into experimental, expressive, and non-conformist works.



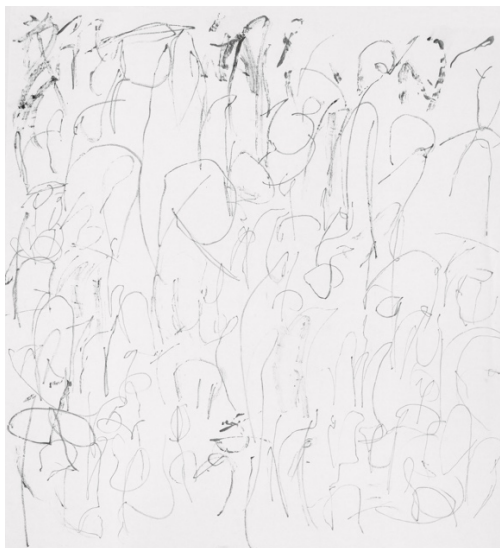
Left to right: Xu Jiong, *臨嘉慶寫東坡詩* (2022). Mixed media on paper. 125 x 50 cm; *I am Not Li Bai* (2019 – 2021). Mixed media on paper. 155 x 90 cm. Exhibition view: 山水 2022 SS, Each Modern, Taipei (30 August – 30 September 2022).

Xu's 2019 Self-portrait exhibition at Each Modern, Taipei, marked his departure from working with ink on paper alone. Non-figurative paintings composed of tower-like forms introduced experiments with acrylic paint, colourful pigments, and collage.

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In these works, Xu used the formal composition of three stacked 'blocks' to deconstruct the complexities of queer identity, while engaging with text—both in the works themselves and through their titles to offer ways to decipher each painting's meaning.



Xu Jiong, *Drinking Alone*, 2015, Ink on paper, 131 x 123 cm

This play between legibility and illegibility extends to Xu's paradoxical style, in which non-conformity is defined by an abstraction of the calligraphic line, where characters are often rendered indecipherable.

Early works like *Drinking Alone* (2015) feature ink scribbles on paper that potentially reference Tang poet, Li Bai, for whom wine ignited creative inspiration.



Exhibition view: Xu Jiong, 山水 2022 SS, Each Modern, Taipei (30 August – 30 September 2022).

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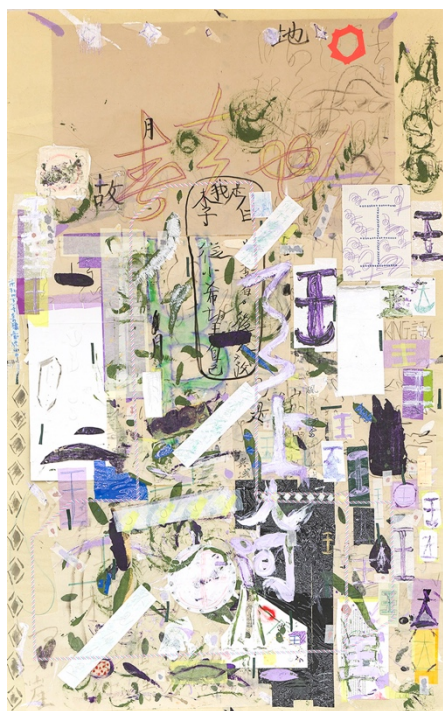
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Similarly, Xu's exploration of shanshui 山水, traditional Chinese landscape painting (shan meaning mountain, shui water), detours from literal renditions of scenery to become contemporary studies of form, material, narrative, and mark-making.

This is exemplified in 山水 2022 SS, Xu's third solo exhibition at Each Modern, Taipei (30 August – 30 September 2022), where an eclectic collection of 22 mixed-media paintings on different materials—paper, canvas, plywood, and even a readymade object—attests to the artist's evolving practice.

Hung as the first painting in the gallery, a 2022 work untitled in English presents a complete, fully legible calligraphic transcription of a Song dynasty poem by Su Shi, describing a peaceful and contemplative moment of solitude in the mountains.



Xu Jiong, *I am Not Li Bai* (2019–2021).

Collage and painting on paper. 155 x 90 cm.

As the only text-based, non-collaged, and ink-on-paper work in the exhibition, the piece points to Xu's classical Chinese influences, while its pairing with the painting *I am Not Li Bai* (2019–2021) suggests an attempt to distinguish itself from those traditions.

The painting's eccentric gestures and colours reflect its declarative title, with collaged sketches in purples and yellows obscuring some of the writing in Chinese. 'Li Bai was someone whom I wished I ... then I realised...' and 'KING poet' are among the decipherable phrases, along with multiple 王 (king) characters.

Each 王 is written in varying styles like a study, an act resembling the practice of copying the writings of old masters to refine and hone one's skills before cultivating one's own.

Across the gallery's two rooms, Xu's paintings hang together in a salon style that highlights the scope of his new works. Larger paintings are showcased in the first space, making use of the gallery's vaulted ceiling.

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At four metres wide, the unframed work on paper *He Destroyed 10000 Artists* (2021) is the biggest piece in the exhibition. Installed at the highest point above two paintings, the triptych illustrates an abstract mountainscape composed of ink, paint, coloured tape, and readymade objects that simplifies the scene into an assemblage of shapes and patterns.



Xu Jiong, *快把張姓畫家賣了吧* *He Destroyed 10000 Artists* (2021). Mixed media on paper. 150 x 400 cm.

Disparate elements like irregular zigzags, undulating lines, asymmetrical ovals, and geometric cut-outs overlap and co-exist with one another. They have been collaged and connected to form peaks across all three panels, alongside vibrant purple and yellow shapes occupying two-thirds of the work.

The painting's Chinese title, *快把張姓畫家賣了吧*, translates to 'Let's sell (the paintings of) a Zhang-named painter'. Xu is intentionally ambiguous and likely referring to Zhang Daqian, an influential and highly prolific 20th-century Chinese ink painter renowned for his modern, impressionist approach to shanshui.

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Exhibition view: Xu Jiong, 山水 2022 SS, Each Modern, Taipei

Xu has boldly written this cheeky request on the work itself, perhaps suggesting a necessary reflection on the contemporary relevance of the Chinese ink painting tradition. Other Chinese characters in the work—albeit harder to read as they are in cursive script and upside down—allude to Xu's background in calligraphy, which continues to ground his practice.

Xu's style is defined by an abstraction of the calligraphic line, where characters are often rendered indecipherable.

The salon-style hang also displays Xu's vernacular photography. Taken on his phone, the selection of eight-by-ten-inch prints of images documenting the artist's surroundings is shown alongside his paintings in the first gallery like footnotes.

Among them are snapshots of a temple roof, a construction site, a tree, and a view taken from the window of a plane—colours, shapes, and lines that find their way into the artist's formal abstractions.

In the second gallery, the installation presents more of Xu's photos on the wall, this time detailing closer observations like textures of peeling paint, grasslands, a sunset, and shadows.

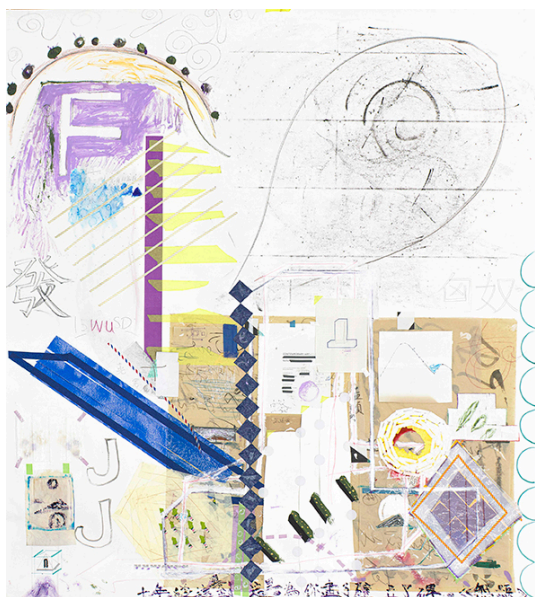
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(Left) Xu Jiong, 從北朝歸來神魂顛倒 *From the Desert and the Sea* (2021). Mixed media on paper. 170 x 150 cm.

(Right) Xu Jiong, 在每一個宇宙遇見你 *Meet You Again* (2015–2022). Mixed media on canvas. 60 x 80 x 2.5 cm.

More photographs are stacked on a plinth and made available to look through. They act as supporting material for two collaged series to which the accumulation of visual references is attached: 'From the Desert and the Sea' (2014–2021) and 'Meet You Again' (2015–2022).

Xu's non-conformist approach returns to a shanshui tradition that is ultimately about longing.

In both series, there are recurring motifs of the 'box', 'tower,' and 'monument'—standalone rectangular shapes that Xu employs to symbolise defining authorities like government and religion, subtly commenting on power and culture.

In *From the Desert and the Sea* (2021), these shapes appear with the characters 發, which has a prosperous connotation, and 匈奴, referring to the Xiongnu, also known as the Huns, a nomadic warrior population that ruled over much of Central Asia in the third-century B.C.

Taped onto the painting is a redacted page from an auction catalogue with the words 'CONTEMPORARY ART' and 'NEW YORK' rendered most visible. Juxtaposing the painting's formal abstractions, these references point to historical and cultural legacies, while perhaps critiquing the art world's commercialism.

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As the larger series in the exhibition, 'From the Desert and the Sea' represents Xu's non-conformist approach by returning to a shanshui tradition that is ultimately about longing—by depicting the personal and private through an abstraction of scenery. —[O]

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