



Chen Dongfan

陈栋帆

Selected Publications | 评论/报道选集



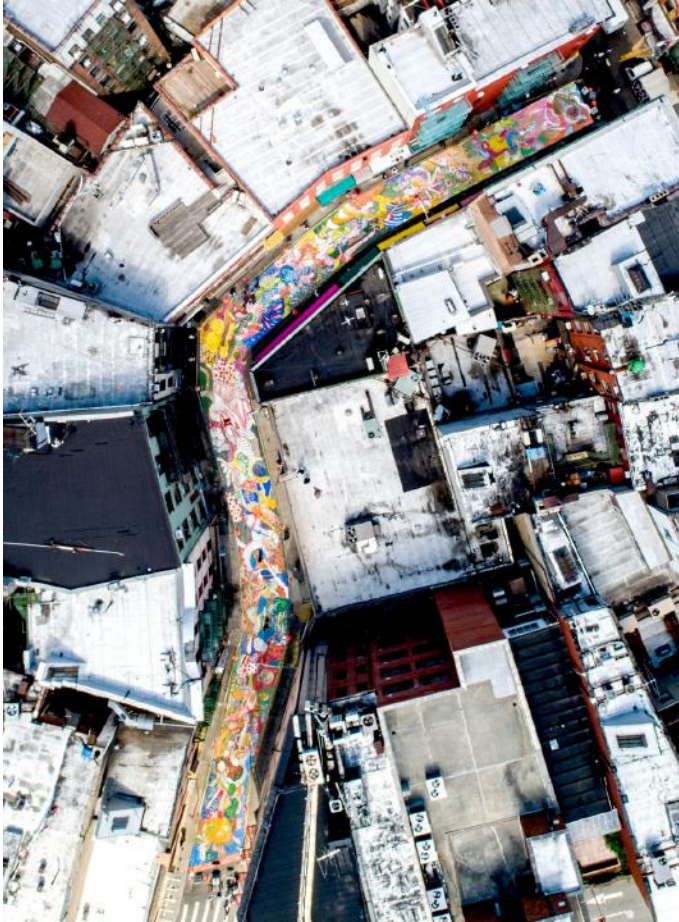
**CHEN DONGFAN** (b.1982, Shandong Province, China)

Chen Dongfan obtained his B.F.A. from the Total Art Studio of China Academy of Art, Hangzhou in 2008. Since 2014 he has lived and worked in New York and Hangzhou. His recent exhibitions include: *Chen Dongfan: Long Past Dawn, Pirates and Poets Whistle in the Dark*, Fou Gallery, New York (2020); *Chen Dongfan: Forgotten Letters 2020*, Platform China, Beijing (2020); *Chen Dongfan: Sanctuary*, The Yeh Art Gallery, New York (2020); *Chen Dongfan: Heated Bloom*, Inna Art Space, Hangzhou (2017). In 2011, the artist participated in Art Basel Liste. In the same year he also participated in a residency project in Torre Canavese, Turin, Italy.

Chen Dongfan has actively participated in various public art projects and has created large scale paintings around the globe, including “Sun Yat-sen Road in Color” (New York, 2020); “The Song of Dragon and Flowers” (New York, 2018); “Live Before You Die” (Greece, 2016); “Where Has Happiness Gone” (Hangzhou, 2011); “Uncertain” (Hangzhou, 2010). In 2018, along Doyer’s Street in New York’s Chinatown, Chen Dongfan realized a large-scale public art project supported by the New York Transportation Department in conjunction with the Chinatown Partnership. The artist took the whole surface of the 61 meter route as a canvas, creating a brightly colored abstract painting *The Song of Dragon and Flowers*. Chen Dongfan’s work was covered extensively by a number of media. *The New York Times* reported it as “painting a portrait of the entire street.” In addition to this, the artist received special acclaim from American National and New York’s House of Representatives for his exceptional contribution to the area and its community.

In his painting Chen Dongfan emphasizes the expressive tension between brushstrokes, colors and forms along with other elements. His works range from small paper based pieces, large paintings on stretched canvas, and collages produced in the studio, to enormous murals created on building facades. Aside from traditional mediums, Chen Dongfan has also experimented with spaces including libraries, stores, and movie festivals as alternatives; by extending art beyond the two-dimensional space and combining it with other creative forms such as music, dance, and performance, he achieved the unparalleled expressiveness through art that balances between being narrative and poetic, figurative and abstract, collective and individualistic.

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*Chen Dongfan: The Song of Dragon and Flowers*, public art project. Photograph by Nadia Peichao Lin and Inna Xu ©Chen Dongfan, courtesy NYCDOT, Chinatown Partnership, Fou Gallery, Inna Art Space and Art Bridge

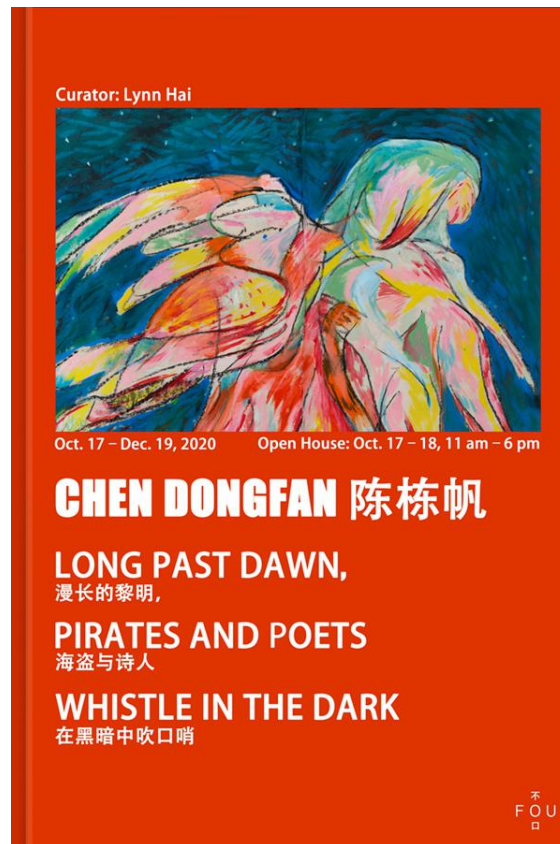
**陈栋帆** (b.1982, 中国山东)

陈栋帆2008年毕业于中国美术学院，现生活和工作于纽约。陈栋帆在绘画实践中强调笔触、色彩和形式等元素的表现张力。他的创作从工作室里小尺幅的纸本，到大幅的架上布面及拼贴，再到建筑外立面的巨型壁画……不一而足。除了传统绘画，陈栋帆也常常将图书馆、商店、电影节等替代性空间作为自己的实践场所，用突破平面的绘画装置与音乐、舞蹈、行为等艺术形式相结合，形成自己独特的平衡了叙述与写意、具态与抽象、公众与个体的绘画语言。近期主要个展包括：《漫长的黎明，海盗与诗人一起在黑暗中吹口哨》（否画廊，纽约，2020）；《被遗忘的信件2020》（站台中国当代艺术机构dRoom空间，北京，2020）；《庇护所》（圣约翰大学Yeh ArtGallery，纽约，2020）；《肖像》（清影艺术空间，杭州，2019）；《昨夜星辰昨夜风》（否画廊，纽约，2018）；《锻炼》（清影艺术空间，杭州，2017）；《罗曼史》（否画廊，纽约，2017）；《朋克书店》（Square Peg画廊，纽约，2016）；《国王的巡游》（清影艺术空间，杭州，2015）。

陈栋帆的重要公共艺术项目有：《彩色的中山路》（纽约，2020）；《龙与花之歌》（纽约，2018）；《活着在死之前》（希腊，2016）；《幸福在哪里》（杭州，2011）；《忐忑》（杭州，2010）。此外，“陈栋帆开放工作室”参与了2018年纽约亚洲当代艺术周的官方活动；2011年，艺术家参加了瑞士巴塞爾的Liste，同年在意大利都灵的Torre Canavese参加艺术家驻地项目。2018年，陈栋帆在纽约中国城的宰也街实现了一个大型公共艺术项目，由纽约市交通局连同华埠共同发展机构联合主持。艺术家将这条总长61米的街道的地面作为画布，创作了色彩明朗的抽象壁画《龙与花之歌》。陈栋帆的创作受到了各大媒体的报道，如《纽约时报》所说，是“用画笔为整条街道绘制的一幅肖像”。此外，因为对社区文化所做的杰出贡献，艺术家分别受到了美国众议院和纽约州众议院的表彰。

## Fou Gallery announces "Chen Dongfan: Long Past Dawn, Pirates and Poets Whistle in the Dark" opening on October 17

TEXT : CAFA ART INFO DATE : 2020.10.12



Fou Gallery is delighted to announce that the new exhibition Chen Dongfan: Long Past Dawn, Pirates and Poets Whistle in the Dark, will be held from October 17th to December 19th, 2020. Two of Chen's new oil painting series Poster and Story created during the COVID-19 pandemic, and a latest large oil painting Rise From The Ashes will be shown to the public. The title of the exhibition is a combination of the titles of three works in Chen's Story series. Chen incorporates mythic elements in his abstract-impacted expressionistic oil paintings and discovers their new meanings in contemporary life in response to current events and topical opinions. A two-day open house with the artist's presence will be hosted in the first weekend of the exhibition, registered by appointment only to maintain social distance.

As the pandemic swept across the world, Chen Dongfan had to reduce his contact with the outside world. Being unable to commute between his studio and apartment in New York City, Chen decided to focus on small-size paintings that he could finish on his desk at home. Since the pandemic and self-quarantine began, his access to the abundant outside information has been considerably diminished due to the reduction of communication. As a result, he has turned to online resources and allocated more time to read literature. In this process, the formation of myths, stories and fictions has attracted Chen's attention. He became interested in how stories and visuals were formulated through time, which therefore influenced his thinking process in generating these new works.

# 商金区



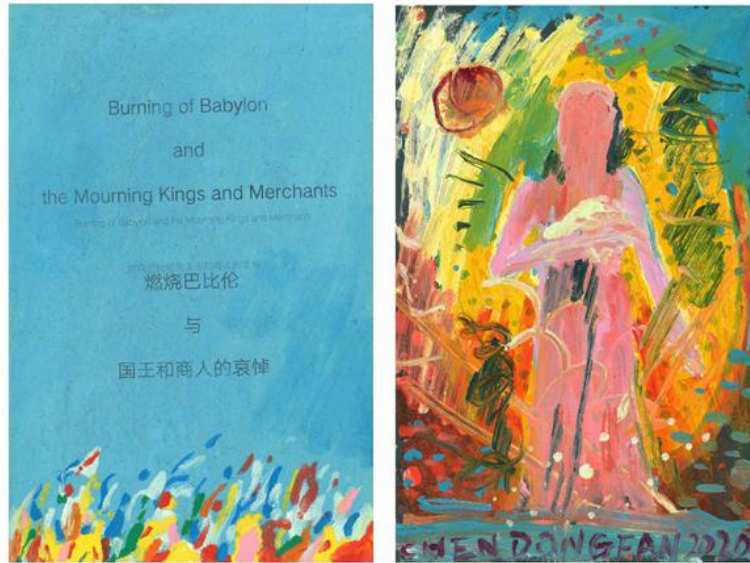
Chen Dongfan, *Stay Home 02*, 2020. Oil on paper, 27.5 x 18 inches. ©Chen Dongfan, courtesy Fou Gallery.

In the *Story* series, each work is drawn on Chinese rice paper whose size is similar to an opened book. Chen presents his drawings in a form that is closed to a diptych: on the left side, there is a line of a literary text in the middle of the paper; on the right side, Chen abstractly captures his impressions in the fantasy realm and visualizes them on the paper. Based on the text, Chen frees his imagination, searching for mythic elements, and begins to create characters and plots in his mind. Then he allows the imaginary images to flow from his brain onto the pieces of paper through his brushes. To finish, he turns back to the first piece of paper with the text and continues his painting over the text. This gives his visual fiction an ending that echoes the beginning. Thus, his *Story* series implies a timeline of narration, presenting not as a frozen moment of the climax of a tale, but rather the whole process of how a story develops and transforms.



Chen Dongfan, *Ace of Spades*, 2020. Oil on paper, 11.3 x 14.9 inches. ©Chen Dongfan, courtesy Fou Gallery.

# 医余商



Chen Dongfan, *Burning of Babylon and the Mourning Kings and Merchants*, 2020.  
Oil on paper, 11.3 x 14.9 inches. ©Chen Dongfan, courtesy Fou Gallery.

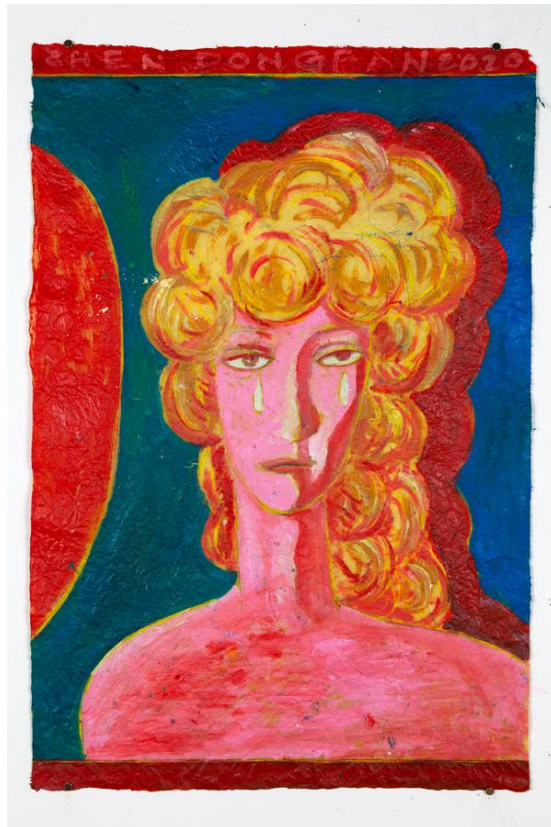
The *Poster* series are direct records of Chen Dongfan's struggles and confusions while quarantined at home. On Chinese rice paper and plastic packaging paper, Chen uses intense colors to draw distorted figures, making manifestos about suffering and adapting to this traumatic and bewildering time. Experiencing the loneliness and overwhelming uncertainty in his vivid images, the audience will feel linked with Chen's emotional experiences during the pandemic. In the exhibition, the *Poster* series will be presented alongside the *Story* series, jointly constructing the spiritual world of Chen Dongfan during the uncertain time for the audience.



Chen Dongfan, *Rise From The Ashes*, 2020.  
Charcoal, oil on paper, 74 x 50 inches. ©Chen Dongfan, courtesy Fou Gallery.

# 陈冬帆

*Rise From The Ashes* is one of the first large oil paintings after Chen attempted to move back to his studio, in order to resume working in his most familiar environment. It was when the pressure of the pandemic began to be slowly alleviated in New York. In terms of the style and the subject, *Rise From The Ashes* is consistent with the *Poster* and *Story* series. Yet the more gestural strokes and the dramatic contrast of colors somehow reveal Chen's ecstasy of seeing the dawn of returning to normal life. Although the future situation of the pandemic is still uncertain, Chen's first large-size practice after him being restricted by a small desk for long reflects his unyielding invigoration and optimism.



Chen Dongfan, *The Blazing World*, 2020. Oil on paper, 27 x 19 inches. ©Chen Dongfan, courtesy Fou Gallery.

Compared to Chen's earlier works his two most recent series both turned from abstract strokes to more figural images. Influenced by the literature he read in the past months, Chen's visual language reveals a great extent of poetry and literariness. Even though Chen has absorbed and adopted many mythological elements, he never uses any image of known mythic characters in his recent paintings. What he is truly looking for is the meaning beyond the dramatic storylines, which is the awareness of critical thinking or a state of spiritual understanding of the world.



# 既舍商

## About the artist



CHEN Dongfan (b.1982, Shandong Province, China) obtained his B.F.A. from the Total Art Studio of China Academy of Art, Hangzhou in 2008. Since 2014 he has lived and worked in New York and Hangzhou. Chen Dongfan has actively participated in various public art projects and has created large scale paintings around the globe, including “Sun Yat-sen Road in Color” (New York, 2020); “The Song of Dragon and Flowers” (New York, 2018); “Live Before You Die” (Greece, 2016); “Where Has Happiness Gone” (Hangzhou, 2011); “Uncertain” (Hangzhou, 2010). The artist received special acclaim from American National and New York’s House of Representatives for his exceptional contribution to the area and its community. His recent exhibitions include: Chen Dongfan: Long Past Dawn, Pirates and Poets Whistle in the Dark, Fou Gallery, New York (2020); Chen Dongfan: Forgotten Letters 2020, Platform China, Beijing (2020); Chen Dongfan: Sanctuary, The Yeh Art Gallery, New York (2020); Chen Dongfan: Heated Bloom, Inna Art Space, Hangzhou (2017).

## About the curator



After graduating from Architectural Association (London), Lynn (Liang) HAI gained her Master’s in Design Studies from the Graduate School of Design at Harvard University (Boston). She is active as a curator and art writer in New York, also a partner and the Art Director of Fou Gallery. Her curation and design includes: Wendy Letven: Lines Falling Together in Time (Fou Gallery, 2020); Michael Eade: Past is Present is Future (Fou Gallery, 2019); Harvard Club Dwelling At the Present Interior Design Exhibition and Forum (Harvard Club, New York, 2019); Flow Fields - Confluence in Urban Picnic (Matedero, Madrid, 2013) and Flow Fields - Dilution in 2013 Lisbon Triennale (Sinel de Cordes Palace, Lisbon, 2013) et al. Her writings are published on art periodicals including ArtChina, CAFA Artinfo, Tussle Magazine and ArtPulse et al.

# The New York Times

## *He's Painting the Streets Red. And Yellow. And Blue.*



Chen Dongfan painted a mural, “The Song of Dragon and Flowers,” along the length of Doyers Street in Manhattan’s Chinatown.

Credit

Christopher Lee for The New York Times

**By Remy Tumin**

- July 27, 2018

In the early 20th century, Doyers Street was stained red.

Chinatown gangs regularly battled along the Manhattan alley. The narrow dogleg, running from Pell Street to the Bowery, was so violent it earned a nickname: [the Bloody Angle](#).

# The New York Times

Now, a century later, a Chinese artist has turned the 200-foot stretch of asphalt into a mural.

Chen Dongfan created the work, called “The Song of Dragon and Flowers,” through the Department of Transportation’s seasonal street program, which creates temporary art-filled spaces for pedestrians.

“The portrait is of the past and the present of Doyers Street,” Mr. Chen, who speaks Mandarin, said through an interpreter last week. “When I paint a person’s portrait, I use the brush stroke to capture the internal spirit of that person. So as I was painting a portrait of the whole street, I wondered if I could capture the spirit of the street and Chinatown within my strokes.”

For eight days straight, Mr. Chen tuned out the world and worked, using acrylic paint and long calligraphy brushes. Jazz, Beethoven and electronic dance music kept him company in his ears. He finished on Friday.



Mr. Chen lives in Williamsburg and is from Hangzhou, China. “I felt like I wanted to do something for my people and for the city,” he said. Credit Christopher Lee for The New York Times

# The New York Times

Some are already making special trips to see the installation. “This street has so much character with all the small buildings, it’s very quiet and secluded,” said Edmund Lo, who came from Midtown. “It’s beautiful, I think it’s great.”

The street will be a pedestrian plaza, with no daytime vehicular traffic, through Nov. 1.

Earlier, the project had received some criticism. Doyers Street is lined with beauty salons, restaurants and gift stores, and the installation snarled foot traffic and made garbage removal difficult.

Halfway through the painting, someone spilled oil at the base of the mural.

The transportation department coordinated with the [Chinatown Partnership](#), the neighborhood’s business improvement group, to conduct outreach.

But Wilson Tang, the owner of Nom Wah Tea Parlor, a dim sum restaurant that opened in 1920, said the group could have done a better job.

“Selfishly, it is a huge inconvenience to my business, what with scheduling deliveries and trash pickup,” Mr. Tang said in an email, noting that the confusion had subsided and trucks were now allowed at night.

New York City has built more than [70 pedestrian plazas in the last 10 years](#), and is adding more through its seasonal street program with the idea of activating public spaces in a vibrant way during the warmer months.

Alana Morales, deputy press secretary for the Department of Transportation, said Doyers Street was the “ideal location for an asphalt

# The New York Times

mural given the size and scale of the street.” A second seasonal mural is in the garment district.

Doyers Street certainly provides a unique frame. Small businesses like Tasty Hand Pulled Noodle and the Ting Yu Hong Co. gift shop conjure another time. And recent arrivals like [Chinese Tuxedo](#), a fusion restaurant in a cavernous old Chinese theater, bring modern sophistication.

The side of a building on Doyers and Pell that was once used as a bulletin board for news from back home is now a coveted space for rotating graffiti artists. Photographers, both professional and the frequent selfie taker, stage shots in front of the wall.

Image



The project is part of a citywide effort to create art-filled pedestrian spaces. Credit Christopher Lee for The New York Times

# The New York Times

Doyers Street gave Mr. Chen one of his first impressions of New York when he visited the city for the first time in 2011. He and his wife Inna Xu moved to Williamsburg in 2014.

Mr. Chen said he was hesitant to apply for the project because of shows coming up in Europe, but then took a walk on Doyers to “get a feeling of Chinatown,” he said.

“I felt like I wanted to do something for my people and for the city,” he said.

That evening he went home and worked on a sketch.

“I had this vision: 100 years ago, [Doyers Street had blood on the street](#),” he said, “and every morning people needed to clean the blood from the alley. But 100 years later, this bloody alley is covered by a beautiful mural,” he said.

Mr. Chen, who has created [murals in public spaces](#) around the world, was selected from a group of 11 applicants through a public request for proposal.

This month, he started painting. After putting down four layers of white acrylic paint, Mr. Chen began applying his kaleidoscope design. He kept his paints on a cart that he pushed back and forth between the Bowery and Pell Street.

Mr. Chen put final touches and his signature on the mural over the weekend and life began to return to normal on Doyers Street. Children danced on the flowers Mr. Chen had painted; delivery carts made their drops; young people posed for photos; a large group waited for a table outside of Nom Wah.

And the neighbors approved of the result. Bai Huang has owned Baishi Beauty Salon on Doyers for 35 years. Even as the city changed and rents

# The New York Times

increased, she said, she kept her prices steady at \$8 a cut. She applauded Mr. Chen's work.

"I think it's very good for the business, it's a very colorful street, and I think New York has never had this kind of thing," she said. "It's magic."

A version of this article appears in print on July 28, 2018, on Page A16 of the New York edition with the headline: Vibrant and Full of Character, Just Like the Alley It Occupies.

- <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/27/nyregion/doyers-street-chinatown-mural-chen-dongfan.html>

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# ART & MUSEUM



Autumn Issue 2018







*Chen Dongfan, Space Painting Project (Studio 2018), 2018. Mixed media. Photograph by Li Yuhong ©Chen Dongfan, courtesy Fou Gallery*

## Compose a Song of Dragon and Flowers

by Echo He of FOU Gallery

Doyers Street, one of the oldest streets in New York Chinatown, is known as the Bloody Angle. The 61-meter street, buried deeply in Chinatown, bent at a nearly 90-degree angle. In late 19th century, Chinese immigrants had transformed Mott, Pell, and Bayard streets into the lean corridors of Chinatown. Doyers Street became a small, yet culturally significant shortcut through those streets. The street became known as "The Bloody Angle" because of numerous shootings of the gangsters. The street was literally stained red during these violent years.

In 2018, the road becomes red again. But this time, it is colored with paint, rather than blood, by an artist named Chen Dongfan. In 8 days, Chen creates *The Song of Dragon and Flowers* - a 4800 square ft asphalt mural directly on Doyers Street. The artist chooses to capture the soul and spirit of the dragon, as a visual embodiment of the area and the lasting Chinese cultural heritage. The flowers are a symbol

of peace in response to the rich history of Chinatown. Together they compose a song with exuberant and dynamic rhythm.

Graduating from China Academy of Fine Arts, Chen Dongfan has spent many years in China as a professional artist before coming to New York. He moved to New York in 2014 and since then exhibited mainly in Hangzhou and New York. In addition to painting and drawing, Chen also creates large public art projects with the language of space painting, which differentiate his practice from other artists. Chen is interested to create site-specific installation in a given space. For him, the public art project is not only a mural, but also a space painting that responds to the people and the environment. For the past years, he has hosted two solo exhibitions in Fou Gallery (New York) and one solo exhibition in Inna Art Space (Hangzhou) and every time he was able to create a unique environment.

As part of Doyers Street Seasonal Street, the New York City Department of Transportation collaborates with Chinatown Partnership to launch an open call for art project on the street. With the assistance from Fou Gallery and ArtBridge, Chen Dongfan submitted a proposal and was finally selected to implement the project. The asphalt art mural seeks to highlight the historical significance of Doyers Street and the history of Asian American immigration to the United States of America. Chen works in an intuitive way and often forms a close relationship with the space. According to Chen, his practice is painting a portrait of the street. According to Chen, he first immerses myself to the space, waiting for the very moment, and let the paint brush guide him through my improvisational action painting. Chen extracts colors and patterns from the billboards along the road, the local restaurants and hair salons and makes them part of the work. The final result is astonishing. Everyday, numerous visitors gather on the street, walk into the work and takes photos. Instagram becomes a place for further creations.

Chen Dongfan Speech: This is a Gift

“Chinatown’s history is full of hardship, but also full of love. Doyers Street is located in Chinatown, intersecting with Pell Street at its very end, as if a flying dragon is winding its way up and resting at the intersection of the two streets. I was inspired by the immigrant experience and how they perceive this neighborhood as home. I am eager to use my brush to tell the story of the past, the current, and the future of Chinatown

Improvise with color and brushstroke, to paint directly on the whole street, turning a 100-year-old street into a unique piece of art. When people all over the world walk on this road, they can appreciate the spirit and vitality of Chinatown.”

When I wrote the artist’s statement in the proposal stage, I feel that it is crazy. But the proposal is passed through a unanimous vote. I joined the first meeting remotely via Wechat video call as I was still on a holiday trip. When I saw everyone on the screen with passionate faces and serious attitudes, I realized that this is a group of people who are as crazy as me: full of passion and ideas, eager to present the work as soon as possible this summer to New York and to the whole world! Thank you again! We have achieved a crazy and beautiful work of art together.

I spent eight days to create the work under the watchful eyes of everyone: everything can be seen in one painting. I feel that I am doing a portrait for Doyers Street: history

is its past experience and you all make it the way it is now. I dare not say that my work is the future, but I hope to be able to throw out a minnow to catch a whale. The Song of Dragon and Flowers will only be the beginning of an even brighter future.

The importance of public art lies in the public participation. The Song of Dragon and Flowers is different from artworks exhibited in galleries and museums in a way that not only one can touch it, but one can also walk directly on the work and stay in the work. Together with the surrounding buildings, the artwork experiences wind, rain, and sun. The color and details of the work will change. The work will appear differently every day in the following three months. Even though the work will gradually fade, the color may lose its luster, the spirit can still be felt from every brush stroke. This is the most artistic and attractive part of my work - nothing is immortal, but we still treat the world with care, love the people around us, and do good things.

This is a gift, for the city where we live and love.



*Chen Dongfan. The Song of Dragon and Flowers, aerial view. Photograph by Nadia Peichao Lin ©Chen Dongfan, courtesy NYCDOT, Chinatown Partnership, Fou Gallery and Art Bridge*

# Painting history, emotion onto a legendary street

By Hong Xiao | China Daily USA | Updated: 2018-09-07 22:54



Chen Dongfan's artwork *The Song of Dragon and Flowers* on Doyers Street in Manhattan's Chinatown. [Photo provided to China Daily]

Artist Chen Dongfan's mission in life is to let his art speak for itself, so he spent eight days painting an asphalt mural directly onto 4,800 square feet of Doyers Street in Manhattan's Chinatown.

Early in the 20th century, Doyers Street earned the nickname of the Bloody Angle because of the street gang violence and murders that took place there.

Chen read one description of it saying that residents of Doyers Street had to wash the blood off the street with water every morning.

"That's impressive," he told China Daily. "Now, after all these years, I'm using color to create art there. It's dramatic, also romantic."

The artwork is called The Song of Dragon and Flowers to pay tribute to the history of Asian-American immigrants.

"Dragon as a visual embodiment of this area and Chinese cultural heritage, and flowers are a symbol of peace, also representing the richness of Chinatown's history," Chen explained.

"The song refers to the style and art-making process of my space painting," he added.

Chen's artwork is part of the New York City Department of Transportation's Seasonal Streets program, which temporarily transforms streets into vibrant public spaces during warm weather when people use them the most.

The Song of Dragon and Flowers was selected by the DOT from about a dozen candidates because of its outstanding visual presentation and the meaningful connection with the historical significance of Doyers Street and its Asian-American heritage.

"The plan sounded crazy, since the busy street had to be blocked from both vehicles and pedestrians while the painting was going on," Chen said.

"It was also challenging personally as I had to paint nonstop to make sure the project was completed on schedule," said Chen. "I could hardly stand up over the last few days, my back was killing me."

"But everyone couldn't have been more excited to see the completed work," Chen said, who painted the finishing stokes on July 20.

"Through the explosion of abstract lines and vivid colors, I wanted to bring an Eastern charm into my work by composing a song with exuberant and dynamic rhythms," he said.

Born in Shandong province in eastern coastal China in 1982, Chen earned a bachelor's degree in experimental art from the China Academy of Art, Hangzhou, in 2008.

Chen's work has been exhibited in the US and China and he has participated in a variety of public art projects and large-scale space paintings in New York, Hangzhou, as well as Turin, Italy and Athens, Greece.

Chen describes his work as "not about dreams, but rather a kind of reality, a kind of memory, a mental world, the intersection between sensation and illusion and it takes time to find a way in."

Chen is interested in how people react to his work. After the artwork is done, he transforms himself into an observer.

"I keep an eye on people who visit the site and post photos on Instagram with hashtags, and I like to interact with them," he said.

"Over time, the colors will fade and finally disappear. It should look different over different stages," he said. "It's just the character of my art, which is integrated into the street, reflecting the changes of time."

Currently, Chen lives and works in New York and Hangzhou. Living in New York, the ethnic melting pot, he said, gives him the opportunity to think about his ethnic identity.

"I feel honored to contribute to the community of my own ethnic group and use my brush to tell the story of the past, the present and the future of Chinatown," he said.

## Chinatown Street with Bloody Past Now a Bright Piece of Art

By Sarah Kolodny

Monday, Jul 23, 2018

You may not know it, but bendy Doyers Street in Chinatown has a dark history. In the 1930s It became known as “the Bloody Angle” due to numerous shootings. Law-enforcement officials told The New York Times that there were more violent deaths at this spot than any other street intersection in the US. But now, the street has been transformed into a stunning piece of art.



Sarah Kolodny

The work is meant to express the significance of the street and the history of Asian American immigration to the United States.



Sarah Kolodny

But the street has its own bloody history.

Doyers Street became known as “the Bloody Angle” due to numerous shootings that occurred in the 1930s. Law-enforcement officials told "The New York Times" that there were more violent deaths at this spot than any other street intersection in the country.

Artist Chen Dongfan was chosen by the New York City Department of Transportation and Chinatown Partnership to display this season's Doyers Street 'Seasonal Street' public design.



Sarah Kolodny

A Seasonal Street is a designated street chosen to be transformed into a colorful and vibrant welcoming space during the summer season. Dongfan is using his 4800 square foot asphalt canvas to present "The Song of Dragon and Flower."



Sarah Kolodny



# CHEN DONFANG

*Photo courtesy of Chen Donfang, A special thanks to Fou Gallery and Echo He  
Interview by Dominique Musorrafti*





**C**hen Dongfan is an artist born in Zibo, Shandong province, now living in New York. He obtained his B.F.A. in Experimental Art from the China Academy of Art, Hangzhou. He has been actively participated in various public art projects and created large scale space paintings in New York, Hangzhou (China), Turin (Italy) and Athens (Greece). As well he has exposed his work in art gallery shows and exhibitions. Chen Dongfan won a competition to paint a giant mural ( 4800 square foot) in Chinatown's Doyers Street: "The Song of Dragon and Flowers" where viewers could interact and be involved with the painting.

*"I wanted to recreate this room - a fictional setting from a novel (W. Somerset Maugham "The Moon and Sixpence") - in my own way in the New York studio. Through eleven days of making and engaging with the creative process, crossing space and time, I entered into dialogue with a fictional artistic master. Even with all of this done it's not over though. More like starting again on an adventure and getting back to the quiet life, all at the same time. The search for beauty is one both full of struggles and without end."*

**What motivated you to become an artist, how did you start your artistic career?**

There's a Chinese proverb that says "At three seeming grown, at seven seeming old". For me it really makes sense. If I think back, what made me become an artist probably came from when I was young and my father would hang my pictures on the wall. Those were I guess my first exhibitions. Someone only needed come visit and my father would proudly make his statement. After that, whether it was a holiday or an older relative's birthday, I would always take it upon myself to think at length of what to paint by way of a present — I realized that what I was best at wasn't only fun for me; it could also move those around me. This compelled me from an early age to hone my skills and seek a way to create art freely.

**What does art represent for you?  
What is your artistic philosophy?  
What do you want to tell with your artworks?**

Art is my way of being with the world; it represents everything and is my everyday. I like things that are positive, aspirational and happy; art that is pragmatic, pure and vivacious. There isn't really anything I want to express through the work. In the making process, I do my utmost to get close to something real and lasting. Although it's but an instant in time, still, to be able to bask in that

strange and sacred aura makes all the labor worthwhile.

**What are your sources of inspiration?**

Everything in everyday life can become a source of inspiration for me. Music, movies, reading, travel — all these enrich my life.

**Are there any of your works related to a significant moment in your life?**

Every stage in life is important. It will also never be repeated. In my 2017 solo exhibition in Hangzhou "Heated Bloom" there was one work, a large painted installation piece showing a reclining figure, a bouquet of flowers at their breast, flowers which from their blooming at the start of the exhibition had withered by its end. The title, "Heated Bloom", comes from my father's catch-phrase in Chinese "Duan-lian" (to toughen, temper; work out, hone OR: train one's skills). He died from cancer a year ago and it's still hard for me to come to terms with. Before the exhibition, I covered the gallery facade in colored eyes. I hope that in the different stages of our lives, the warmth of gazes gone by never extinguishes and dissipates. Doyers Street is the oldest and most notorious street in Chinatown and is the earliest place to have been referred to as that. More than a century ago, faced with unfair regulations on Chinese immigrants, the Chinese community fragmented and rose into various

Chen Dongfan spent 8 days to implement an asphalt mural directly on the 4800 square foot Doyers Street, with the assistance from the New York City Department of Transportation's Art Program and Public Space Unit, Chinatown Partnership, FouGallery, and ArtBridge. To highlight the historical significance of Doyers Street in the history of immigration of the Asian American community, Chen Dongfan created *The Song of Dragon and Flowers*. The artist chooses to capture the soul and spirit of the dragon, as a visual embodiment of the area and the lasting Chinese cultural heritage. The flowers are a symbol of peace in response to the rich history of Chinatown. Together they compose a song with exuberant and dynamic rhythm.





factions, conflict and bloodsheds between those whom continued unabated. Although the street itself isn't that long, there are numerous twists and turns, corners where the armed factions would lie in wait to ambush their opponents. The street once had the highest murder rate in the whole of the United States and it is said the area's business owners had to wash the streets outside their shopfronts clean of blood each morning. Doyers Street was referred to as the "Bloody Angle" and even today is infamous in its Hollywood portrayals. Making a painting on Doyers Street was something no one had ever done before. Whether one thinks of the area as a cultural backdrop or the topography of the street itself, for me a dragon seemed the image most apt for the purpose.

**Artist studio ©Chen Dongfan  
New York, United States 2018**

I wouldn't however go and paint a figurative Chinese dragon but rather sought to preserve its "Qi", the vital rhythms and spirit, combining this with floral emblems, something of love and peace, the abstract and the Pop. It was as if a dragon had ensconced itself, stretching from one end of Doyers street to the other. By realizing this public art project, I hoped to contribute something to my community and get more people to take notice of Chinese immigrant culture and its history, the injustices of the past and the peaceful shiftings of the present. Art can break the barriers between cultures, whilst at the same time touching the hearts



***A newly opened large laundry factory in Athens, Greece. While helping local people solving employment issues, the owner hopes to invite the artist to rekindle people's hope and confidence in their future through art. It's worth mentioning that the artwork's title comes from a poem chosen by the artist's Greek assistant.***

and minds of the people. This was a project supported by the New York City's Department of Transport (NYC DOT) in conjunction with the Chinatown Partnership Local Development Corporation. My proposal was received by ArtBridge with the support of Fou Gallery to be ultimately passed unanimously by a committee of judges and then realized without hitch in July.

***How long did it take to complete the whole project? What are the main difficulties you encountered?***

I was painting for a total of eight days. However, each day I had to work eight hours, hunched over in the hot sun, hence exhaustion was a problem. I improvised on-site and there was no draft to speak of, a lit-



tle like action painting. For this reason, my mental state and responses in situ were both vital, but also open to influence from ambient distractions. There was a lot it was impossible to control in the making process. This made the whole thing an adventure as anxiety-ridden as it was invigorating. There was one-time I'd been standing with my paintbrush at a corner when dazzled, I felt time and space somehow slip. From the glinting of blades, shadows, the ground awash with blood, to today and the whole street artwork in multicolored splendor. I suddenly felt very moved, this is New York!

***Live Before You Die ©Chen  
Dongfan Athens, Greece 2016***

***During the creation of your artwork in Chinatown, you were close to the Chinese-American activities. What are the main differences you've seen between them and the Chinese in the mainland?***

Everyone was so enthusiastic, many brought their kids especially to see my piece. Now I've moved to the LES they've all become my neighbors. Nothing's different, but Chinese abroad have a greater sense of cultural identity; they have a strong appreciation of how their community has progressed and prospered.

***Living in America has changed your way of seeing the world and making art?***

Living in New York may have enriched my experience of life but it hasn't impacted my worldview. My artistic practice will not change because of the city. Life in New York is both heaven and hell and my lifestyle here has been altered dramatically. The biggest thing I've gained is a settled life and inner calm—I know this is unbelievable but that's really the way it is.

***Can you share with us any story behind your art project?***

Taking the bus with my wife, two elegant blonde ladies said hi to me, a mother and daughter. They'd dressed up specially that day and come from the upper east side by bus to visit Chinatown and see my work. It turned out it was the Mother's eightieth birthday. She'd learned about my work from an article in the New York Times. Going especially to see my work had been her eightieth birthday present to herself.

***What is your experience as an artist in the era of social media? Do you think the benefits are more for the artist or for the users?***

When it comes to public art projects, social media is a really good reference tool. It's are a great means of documenting people's interactions with the work and broadcasting this to the outside. It was because of the rise of Wei Bo (the Chinese blog site) that my 2010 public art project came to be widely known. It was amusing when a friend told me excitedly that I was once of the most searched topics on the site, even though I didn't actually own an account. Last year's project was also photographed by many visitors who uploaded the images onto Instagram. Instagram is a social media platform on which users mainly share images. I've saw a great number of very creative things there. I was very excited to see the way these works functioned to instigate public participation in the piece and I plan to make a collection of all the images from social media and produce a small publication about the recreation of my work on social media.

***Can you share with us some information about your upcoming projects?***

This year I started making one small artist's book a week, each on average around 20 pages. By the end of the year, there will be a total of fifty two volumes. Right now I'm up to number twenty-nine.



**Art World**

## How — and Why — the Artist Chen Dongfan Transformed Chinatown's Doyers Street Into a Flowery, Friendly Dragon

The piece of literal street art, which fills a historic corridor in New York's Chinatown, has become a popular attraction.

**Jonathan Goodman**, August 9, 2018



Chen Dongfan at work on *The Song of Dragon and Flowers*. Photograph by Inna Xu ©Chen Dongfan, courtesy NYCDOT, Chinatown Partnership, Fou Gallery and Art Bridge

Chen Dongfan, a painter trained in mainland China but now living mostly in New York City, has painted a 200-foot-long mural on the asphalt floor of Doyers Street, a gently curving lane connecting Pell Street with the Bowery. One of the first streets to form what is today known as Chinatown, it has a post office that was just named for Mable Lee, the first Chinese woman to receive a doctorate in economics from Columbia University, and who later became a staunch proponent of the culture and rights of Chinese-Americans. The street is dotted with restaurants, hair salons, and other local shops—it's a microcosm, with historical weight, of a Chinatown increasingly threatened by gentrification, mostly in the form of condo buildings.



A proposal sketch for *The Song of Dragon and Flowers*. ©Chen Dongfan, courtesy NYCDOT, Chinatown Partnership, Fou Gallery and Art Bridge

Chen's notion with his project—creating a dragon-like form on the street that is clearly visible from the sidewalk, but more so from the buildings that rise above—was to assert Chinatown as a district of both action and power. The dragon is meant to symbolize Chinese energy, ambition, and purpose—qualities of immigrant life important still to the community—while the street itself is covered with abstract-seeming flower patterns (flowers are central to Chinese painting and culture) and suffused with the lyric, living power of nature itself (a belief central to Chinese thinking). According to Echo He, owner and director of Fou Gallery in Bed-Stuy, which represents the artist and facilitated the Doyers Street project, Chen used only 15 and a half

gallons of paint to cover the street, even though the imagery is built from five layers of paint. The result brims over with vitality.



An arial view of *The Song of Dragon and Flowers* with visitors. Photograph by Nadia Peichao Lin ©Chen Dongfan, courtesy NYCDOT, Chinatown Partnership, Fou Gallery and Art Bridge

On a warm summer weekday evening, the imagery looked remarkably vibrant as people walked up and down the street, or sat at small tables, supplied by restaurants and open to passersby. It was a scene reminiscent of the outdoor life seen in the alleys of Beijing and other Chinese cities, where street food is popular and eaten by people of all backgrounds. As for the imagery itself, the 4,851-square-foot painting—entitled *The Song of Dragon and Flowers*—is composed of convoluted flower imagery interwoven with strong abstract patterns, with the bright primary colors red, yellow, and blue shining out from the rough shapes. The abstract cast of the work allows Chen to refer to the prominent history of nonobjective painting here in New York City.



Photograph by Nadia Peichao Lin ©Chen Dongfan, courtesy NYCDOT, Chinatown Partnership, Fou Gallery and Art Bridge

Despite rumors of dissatisfaction by the shops located on the street—one night, someone poured black paint over a passage of the mural—community support has been strong. Chinatown remains pretty much a closed community, despite the heavy traffic of tourists seeking good food and a few minutes of cultural difference. As a result, it was important for Chen to come up with an idiom and overall composition that would reflect the mostly Asian inhabitants of the neighborhood. An excellent technical painter, Chen sought to create something that would both celebrate the Chinese immigrant experience and establish himself as a painter of note. His efforts are worthy of congratulation.

<https://news.artnet.com/art-world/chen-dongfans-mural-on-doyers-street-1329968>

## Cyclical Gods: Reliving Pandemic

BY [XIN WANG](#) • [FEATURES](#) • MAY 8, 2020



*Zhao Yao, "Spirit Above All," 2016*

I arrived at the opening of [Sanctuary](#), artist Chen Dongfan's first institutional exhibition in New York City, overcome with a profound sense of disorientation. It was January 30<sup>th</sup> and I was still jetlagged, having returned only two days prior from China, where the COVID-19 epidemic had steadily escalated into a national emergency. The deeper dissonance, however, sprang from the perceived normalcy – an art opening packed with friends and guests – while my memories of the nationwide pause were still vivid.

My two-week trip home spiraled swiftly from days packed with art hopping and meetings in Beijing, to self-quarantining with my family in Weihai, a coastal city in Shandong province. On Weibo, where I had been frantically following the epidemic's development, state media and independent sources perpetually clashed as they charted the bio-political and social ramifications while citizens desperately pleaded from the newly locked-down city of Wuhan. The sheer amount of raw criticism of the government's initial response (or lack thereof) had given me some hope for certain silver linings: a more open – less censored – public discourse; my account was soon suspended due to my emotionally and politically charged participation.



*Chen Dongfan, "Forgotten Letters," 2020.*

By the time I boarded for New York on January 28th, only ticketed passengers were allowed on the airport's premises, which were heavily guarded by security staff in full protective gear, bearing temperature guns. I wore both face and eye masks during the first leg to Incheon, South Korean; the physical discomfort truly expanded my empathy for those who had undertaken long-haul flights fully geared. Within a week, international air travel from China was largely suspended. Being back in New York and immediately resuming work and social routines felt like waking abruptly from a lucid, post-apocalyptic dream – that is, until the pandemic's wide-ranging ramifications caught up, and met me where I am.

# MOMUS

The exhibition, which I curated, auspiciously brought me back just in time. Neither the artist nor I could have anticipated how its theme would compound in uncanny meaning since its conception. For Chen, “sanctuary” evokes the sacred and emotional resonance of both his personal creative space and a site-specific reference to the Sun Yat-Sen Memorial Hall in which the St. John’s University’s Yeh Art Gallery is ensconced. Built as a distinctly traditional-Chinese architectural complex on the campus of a Catholic university, the venue was itself a Cold War-era residue, its construction funded by Taiwan’s Chiang Kai-Shek administration in the 1970s as a diplomatic gesture. Fraught geopolitics aside, Sun Yat-Sen was universally venerated as the “founding father” of modern China. Myriad memorial halls and streets are named after him, but perhaps none demarcates a cultural and communal space quite like this one deep in Queens, nor signals the complexity and gravitas of historical circumstances as potently for new immigrants like ourselves.



*Chen Dongfan, “Sanctuary” (outdoor installation view), 2020. Photo by Ethan Browning, courtesy of Yeh Art Gallery.*

In response to this particularly idyllic site, Chen challenged himself to create a large cycle of paintings in an unusually exuberant monochrome – a radical departure from the opulent, expressive colors that had characterized his practice to date. The resulting works – sweeping abstractions occasionally punctuated with punky icons and figures – were an attempt to reconcile controlled calligraphic energy with the destructive charge of graffiti, according to the artist. To set the tone for the installation, Chen had imagined the moment after Houyi (a heroic warrior from renowned Chinese myth) had shot down eight

# MOMUS

out of the nine suns that wreaked havoc on earth; the dead among them resumed their original form as three-legged crows, and life began to rebuild on scorched land. This moment is at once eschatological and hopeful, which makes it eerily relevant to the magnitude of change that defined the tumultuous chapters of Chinese history since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Many of these chapters are evoked in the very site of the Yeh Art Gallery: the colonial invasions beginning in the 19<sup>th</sup> century; the 1911 Revolution led by Sun Yat-sen, et al; the Sino-Japan Wars; and the alliance and struggles between the Chinese Communist Party and the Nationalist Party (KMT) that foreshadowed the current geopolitics of Taiwan. At the same time, the utter totality of mythological disasters increasingly parallels that of the current COVID-19 pandemic, which halted the exhibition itself, halfway into its three-month run.

Histories and disasters sometimes take on such mythological magnitude and fatefulness in their cyclical nature that ancient tales feel not only relevant, but commensurate. In the same manner that, for instance, Mexican muralists José Clemente Orozco and David Alfaro Siqueiros resorted to Prometheus as a revolutionary imaginary in response to the post-Mexican Revolution impulses of nation-(re)building, Chen Dongfan explored mythological figures and narratives in *Sanctuary* – though in more resonant rather than referential manner. One of the large hanging scrolls in the exhibition, *The Stone Picking God* (2019), features a figure bending over to reach for a large boulder. While working on the translation of the title, I consulted Chen to either translate the Chinese directly or as “Sisyphus,” the Greek character who embodied futility by repeating the task of pushing stones uphill. “It’s certainly there,” Chen would remind me: “but think also of the Chinese lores where ancient beings fought momental fights that shattered mountains and eventually required Nuwa (the goddess who created humans) to fix holes in the sky.”



Chen Dongfan, “Sanctuary” (installation view), 2020. Photo by Ethan Browning, courtesy of Yeh Art Gallery.



# MOMUS

A few days into the exhibition, the media had made sensations of Wuhan's temporary hospitals built over the course of a mere ten days. In most English reports they are simply "Huoshenshan Hospital" and "Leishenshan Hospital," but they translate as Thunder God Mountain Hospital and Fire God Mountain Hospital in Chinese. The discourse around these hastily-built institutions mostly focused on the spectacle of China's infrastructural prowess and the country's capacity for centralized mobilization of resources, but what really struck me was the operating cultural logic that underscored their naming. There were no mountains known by Thunder God or Fire God anywhere near the sites where the hospitals were built. The naming was largely aspirational: thunder and fire are cosmic and natural elements considered to vanquish disease and evil, while mountains topologically and geomancy-wise signal a stop. Ideologically, it might appear paradoxical that in Communist China such borderline superstitious practices should enter into practical vocabulary, yet it makes perfect cultural sense: only supernatural or spiritual forces, potent beyond our mundane technologies, could help us battle such daunting and volatile challenges. While there was never serious devotion on par with the world's major religions, the fire and thunder gods certainly boost morale. It is perhaps in the same logic that Chinese aerospace projects are often named after celestial beings of mythological and folkloric origin. Cultural pride aside, there is a certain Romantic sensibility around scaling unknown territories with older narratives – a process that also familiarizes and humanizes them, and is more than conducive to drumming up patriotic resolve.

Perhaps these mythological resonances also register the cyclical dimensions of traumatic experiences. My mind has been shrouded in constant grief and other forms of overload: prolonged media immersion and repeated heartbreak from vivid accounts of injustice and tragedy, beginning with the desperate pleas of sickened, clueless Wuhan residents on Weibo during lockdown. Before long the terror of Wuhan residents became that of Asian Americans, then New Yorkers. A crisis of this magnitude harbors cruel clarity on the human condition, as Arundhati Roy [noted](#) of the lockdown measures in India that "worked like a chemical experiment that suddenly illuminated hidden things." Living the pandemic timeline twice over has created, in me, a *déjà-vu* vertigo. The sensation feels more acute in trivial markers – memes about grocery items that remain unsold during hoarding frenzies (shiitake-mushroom chicken-soup instant noodles in China; lasagna pasta in the United States) – than it does with watershed dates of exponential infection. I often imagine how such utterly mundane registers will, years and decades in the future, trigger instantaneous recall of living through all this.



*Li Shurui, "Moon Gate," 2019.*

In a moment that somehow feels both futile and poignant for thinking about the capacity of art, I'm again reminded of spiritual inclinations and reckonings in some recent practices. Li Shurui, a Dali-based artist working primarily with mesmerizing abstraction has recently taken on the advisory role for a local monastery – the Radiant Temple at Mount Jizu – through her organic involvement with the local Buddhist communities. During the earlier days of the pandemic she participated in online streaming programs where artists produced creative content for families with children under quarantine. She also continued to develop the architectural additions to the Radiant Temple, following a particularly well-received minimalist moon gate built the previous summer. For Li, these activities have proven effective as a way to mitigate the onslaught of anxiety. Around the same time, the Beijing-based artist Zhao Yao also gravitated to sacred mountains, specifically those of the Tibetan Plateau, to continue his *Spirit Above All* project. Four years ago, Zhao transported his behemoth of an abstract painting (measuring 116 by 86 meters) into the majestic mountain ranges at 5,000 meters above sea level, unfurling the work with the help of Tibetan monks along a steep slope.

Much can be said about the absurdist collapsing of High Modernism's claim to spirituality through abstract form and the obdurate, pilgrim-like search for ritualized blessing. But for the months that Zhao Yao's work endured the elements in one of the world's most extreme environments, it functioned almost

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simultaneously as a new land art, and as a medium that broadcasts to the spiritual realm, much like the still-active religious practice of rolling out large, lavishly embroidered Thangkas for public view during the Sho Dun Festival, an act that both strengthens the faith and the fabric (through exposure to fresh air and sun). There is also a certain resonance with those 6<sup>th</sup>-century monumental scriptures carved on mountains during what Buddhist practitioners then considered "end times." While disasters – moments of existential urgency – have long been a staple in mythological and speculative genres alike, living one out as a truly global, collective, yet widely uneven experience feels like an entirely new experiment without the certainty of a familiar plot or narrative arc. Given the unprecedented amount and range of accounts that will likely be generated and preserved, our memories – and indeed historicization – of this pandemic will be a particularly messy affair. As for Chen Dongfan, who is currently quarantined in his lower Lower East Side apartment, punky devils, gentle icons, and fantastical faces of those close to him continued to proliferate into drawings of more intimate scales, visible to me as Instagram images. They simultaneously function as a quarantine diary full of psychological, fanciful portraits, sparked by registers both mundane and monumental.

<https://momus.ca/cyclical-gods-reliving-pandemic/>



**SINOVISION  
ENGLISH  
CHANNEL**

## OPEN STUDIO: SPACE PAINTING BY CHEN DONGFAN



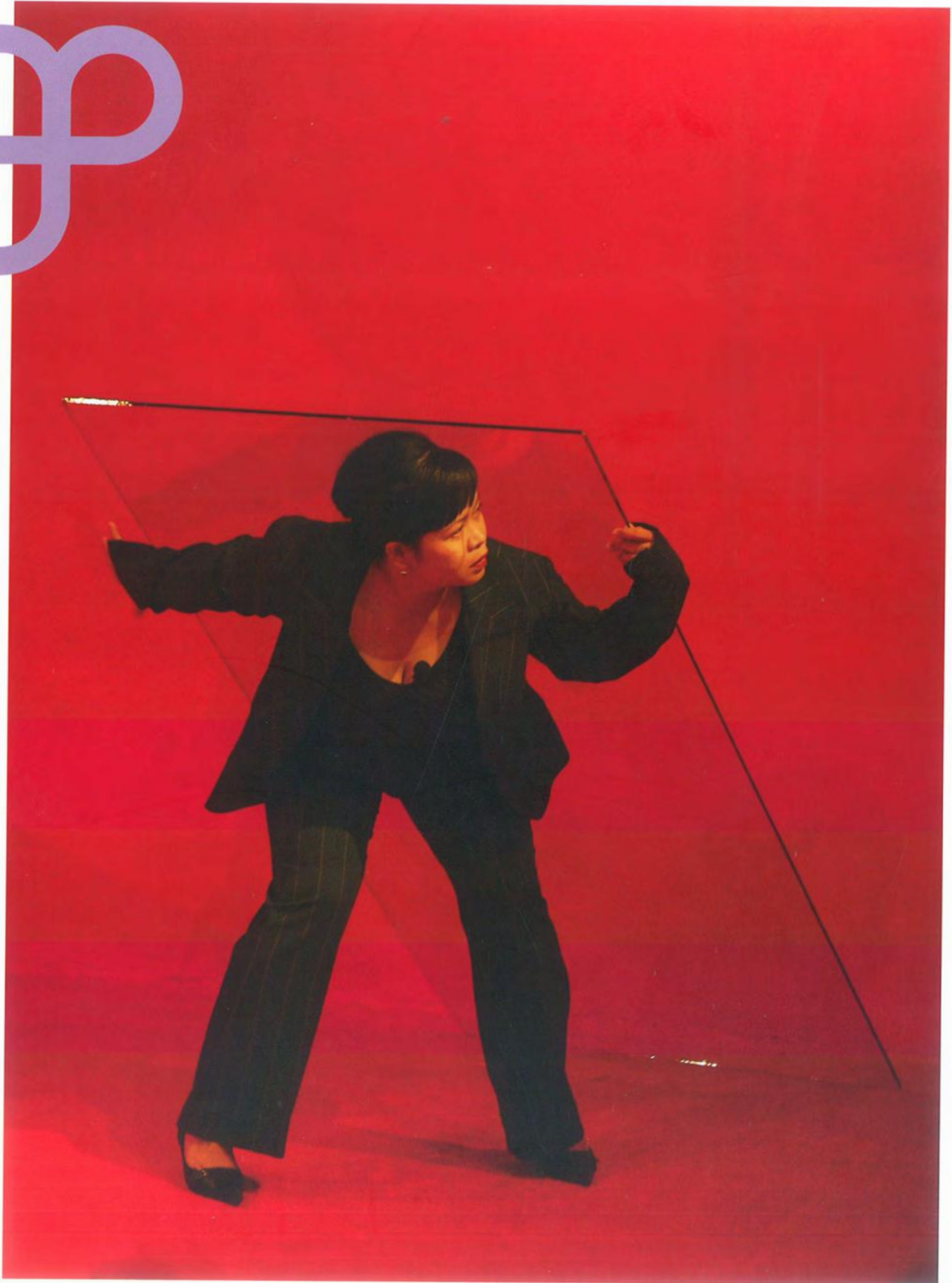
After spending 11 days painting his studio from floor to ceiling using colorful, vibrant brushstrokes, artist Chen Dongfan transformed the space into an art piece.

The 1000 square ft piece of art was unveiled on March 4th during the open studio day and attracted hundreds of visitors into the "fairytale-like" space to intimately interact with Chen's drawings.

The inspiration for the room came from William Somerset Maugham's "The Moon and Sixpence", a fictional work inspired by the life of painter Paul Gauguin.

Touched by a description from the novel of a room that's painted over by the protagonist, Chen tried to reproduce the room in his studio.

<http://en.sinovision.net/open-studio-space-painting-by-chen-dongfan/>



CA \$15  
GB £12  
JP ¥1690  
NZ \$22  
US \$15

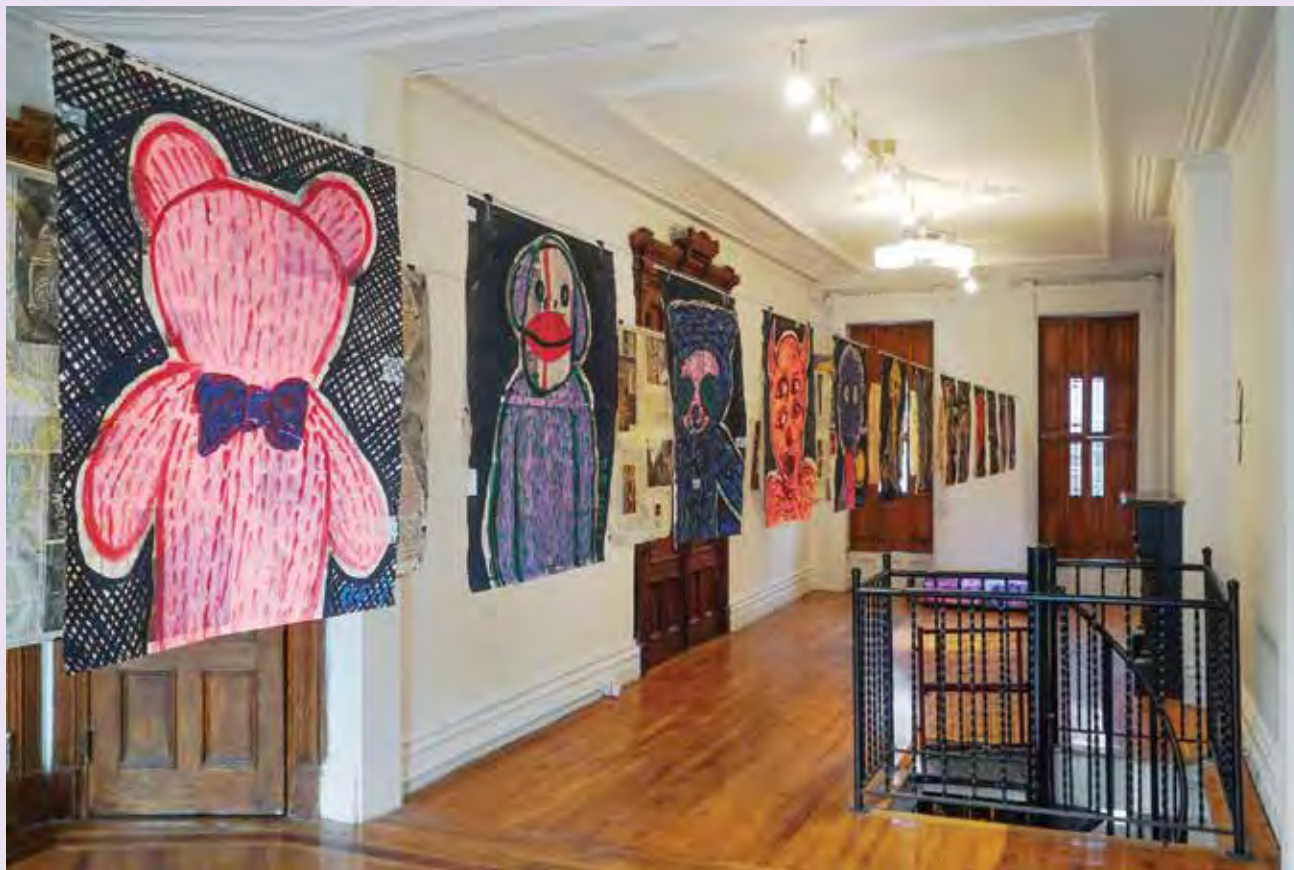
AU \$21  
EU €13  
HK \$116  
KR ₩24000  
SG \$21

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# Generation One-Point-Two-Five

BY MIMI WONG

The ecology of emerging Chinese-run art spaces in New York



Installation view of **CHEN DONGFAN**'s "You Know My Name, Not My Story" at Fou Gallery, New York, 2017. Photo by Liu Zhangbolong. Courtesy the artist and Fou Gallery.

On a Sunday afternoon in June, the artist Chen Dongfan spoke with the aid of an English translator, about his solo exhibition, "You Know My Name, Not My Story," closing that day at Fou Gallery in the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood of Brooklyn. Before an intimate audience of art bloggers, gallery professionals and artists, Chen, who splits his time between New York and Hangzhou, discussed his "Half a Man" series (2017), which consists of brightly colored, cartoon-like animal portraits painted on newspaper that hung like drying laundry across the brownstone apartment. Directly inspired by the work of Mike Kelley, the series reveals how Chen—like other artists in situations similar to his—are moving beyond certain aesthetics typically associated with Chinese art. But as with many recent transplants to New York, Chen finds himself somewhere between artists identifying as "Asian-American" and

those whose lives and practices are centered in Asia. As suggested by the show's title, while Chen's name is Chinese, his backstory is harder to pin down. This resistance to easy categorization may be one reason his work seems especially well-suited to an equally nascent space such as Fou.

Fou's founder is Echo He, whom one can always easily spot modeling one of the many whimsical fascinators and hats she designs herself. She diagnosed the dilemma that many immigrant artists increasingly grapple with: "It's a challenge because maybe they don't have deep roots compared to artists in China. So when you come to New York, at one point, you start to feel like you are not Chinese but you are still not American." Hailing from Sichuan province, He herself first arrived in New York in 2011 as a graduate student to pursue a Master's degree in visual arts administration. Her experience mirrors that of other emerging artists and art

professionals from China who are flocking to the United States to earn degrees. Once they arrive, however, they often find it challenging to break into the city's well-established art scene. She elaborated: "We somehow feel disconnected with the art world here because as Chinese we know these great artists, but [the artists] can't find a way to speak out or present their works."

Over the last three decades, the representation and reception of contemporary art from China in the US, and in particular New York, has undoubtedly flourished in large museums and international galleries. Prior to opening her own space, He witnessed the growing Chinese contemporary art market, first through her work with Pace Beijing, and later at the gallery's New York location. In spite of this increased interest, however, many artists who find themselves between the country of their birth and their new

residence have gravitated toward alternative and community-oriented art spaces, following others before them who had forged similar paths and carved out their own arenas. In the wake of the Tiananmen Square crackdown, for instance, the Asian American Arts Center (AAAC), a nonprofit community arts organization in lower Manhattan, responded with a controversial “China: June 4, 1989” exhibition. AAAC executive director and curator Robert Lee remembered that, at the time, “no funder would touch it” for fear of offending the Chinese government and thereby jeopardizing their business ties. Yet, for an immigrant artist like Zhang Hongtu—known for his Mao Zedong paintings that are pastiches of the styles of Western artists including Leonardo da Vinci, Vincent van Gogh and Andy Warhol—the show was the big break he needed to launch a career in his new home.

“He was doing artwork that had integrity with so many other Chinese artists [were] looking to the art marketplace for a direction,” Lee remembered of his early encounters with Zhang. “It was not until later when June 4, 1989, occurred that Hongtu saw how he could use his art to address the political situation in his homeland.”

Zhang credits Lee for introducing him to a community of likeminded, advocacy-focused peers, such as Ken Chu, Bing Lee and Margo Machida, among others, who later founded the Godzilla Asian American Art Network in 1990. The grassroots collective made waves when they penned a public letter to the then-director of the Whitney Museum of American Art, David Ross, decrying the lack of Asian-American artists in the museum’s 1991 Biennial. Ross eventually met with Godzilla. As one of the original participants present at that

meeting, Eugenie Tsai recalled the director’s advice: if they wanted to see more diversity reflected in the museum, their best bet was for an Asian individual to join the museum’s board. “People tend to order what’s on the menu,” he told them.

In the face of overwhelmingly white and Western-centric institutions, the constant need for open spaces and for Asian and Asian-American artists to support each other became the cornerstone of Godzilla’s mission, paving the way for successors. Their self-organized exhibitions, which provided young artists with credentials and visibility, and later, prominence for themselves as practitioners, was a method that had already been tested by Guangdong-born artist Kwok Mang Ho, also known as “Frog King.” Kwok audaciously opened his own gallery on Mott Street in Manhattan, which from 1982 to 1984 served as a studio, residence and exhibition space for his work, as well that of other Chinese artists based in New York. Artists including Ai Weiwei, Martin Wong and Tehching Hsieh would drop in from time to time, not dissimilar to how young emerging artists will now visit any one of the spaces that have recently popped up in Chinatown.

A bastion of Chinese diasporic culture, lower Manhattan’s Chinatown continues to serve as a natural entry point for many new Chinese-run art spaces. These galleries coexist alongside community-focused art collectives, retailers and cultural sites such as the Chinatown Art Brigade, Wing on Wo & Co., Pearl River Mart and the Museum of Chinese in America. The most well-known in the current circle is Practice, which is a studio and experimental residency program located in an apartment building on Eldridge Street that’s inhabited by immigrants and multi-generational families. Climbing the five flights of stairs to reach the space, you might pass elderly ladies lugging sacks of fresh produce, while inhaling the wafting scents of garlic and oil from stir-fry being prepared in homes.

Practice welcomes migrant artists from all over the world. Having made their separate ways to New York from various regions in China and Hong Kong, its founders, Wang Xu, Cici Wu and Ho King Man, prefer to self-fund the residency and exhibition space with part-time jobs, rather than through artwork sales. As artists themselves, they understand the demands of their field and therefore value Practice’s independent ability to share a place to live, work and show with their friends. “We know there are so many artists out there struggling with the rent, with the studio, with residency applications—everything—and we want to help them,” Ho said.

A few blocks south of East Broadway, Sleepcenter rents out a backroom studio to offset the costs of its not-for-profit space. When I visited in July, the basement gallery

had just opened its first show to feature artists from mainland China—“psychic” twin sisters from Guangzhou, Huang Shan and Huang He, who go by the moniker Mountain River Jump! Their exhibition, “Reality Check,” drew upon a combination of traditional myths and spiritual practices, alongside Western pop culture references and the ubiquity of digital tools, hinting at what a globalized Chinese aesthetic might look like. Like Practice, Sleepcenter doesn’t exclusively showcase Chinese artists, though gallery manager Peiyuan Li said that he and the small staff of five, including founder Rui Lin, hope to invite more artists of Asian descent in the future. They also plan to offer art classes to better connect with the Chinatown community.

So far, the DIY, multi-purpose venue is a promising model, as exemplified by places such as Fou. Just below the gallery, He and her boyfriend live on the bottom floor of the duplex. Her inspiration for the arrangement was part 1920s-Paris-salon, part Beijing-underground-of-the-1990s, when contemporary artists could only show in the residences of foreign diplomats. This adds to the spontaneous, casual atmosphere of the space, making it feel friendly and accessible, as opposed to a white-cube gallery space. Additionally, one of the many benefits of an apartment gallery, He pointed out, is that people can really see how the work fits in a “home-like environment,” which is hopefully where the art will end up if it is bought.

Despite the presence of these venues, Chinese artists who move to New York still have to take into account cultural difficulties when presenting and practicing their craft. Among those attending Chen’s closing at Fou was Dongze Huo, an interdisciplinary painter from Xi’an currently living in Elmhurst, Queens. Huo, who has resided in the US for the past six years, told me he was initially drawn to the city’s diversity and freedom, yet also cited the “inadaptability of culture and way of thinking” to be an obstacle. “I don’t feel I belong to any community here,” he said. This may explain why many visiting artists eventually choose to return to China where, without cultural barriers, they have an easier time working and rising through the institutional ranks. However, those that stay abroad and persevere in these independent spaces might eventually reap greater rewards through expanding their practice under pressure, developing a complex social network and banding with artists who have similar experiences, and building alternative routes for others in the future. As Lee duly noted, “The art market and mainstream institutions do have a major effect on culture; however, when it comes to the roots of cultural phenomena, they may not be the best place to look.”



Installation view of **MOUNTAIN RIVER JUMP!**'s *Powerful God of Journey*, 2017, digital print on fabric, 134cm x 68cm, at “Reality Check,” Sleepcenter, New York, 2017. Courtesy Sleepcenter.



Chen Dongfan's latest solo exhibition "Heated Bloom" is underway at Inna Art Space.

## New York urban graffiti inspires Chinese artist in solo 'You Are Not Alone' exhibition

Shi Jia

New York-based artist Chen Dongfan revealed he was inspired by some random graffiti for his third solo exhibition currently open to the public at the Inna Art Space, in Hangzhou.

One evening, on his way back home from the gym, Chen walked past a wall daubed in some urban art, which reads: "You Are Not Alone." He had seen it several times before, but at that specific moment he was touched. The Chinese-born artist had an epiphany.

"I felt like I was in my childhood again, walking on the same road, with the same trees," admitted Chen ahead of the exhibition, which runs until January 3 and presents 108 pieces of his work from 2014 to 2017.

Motivated by the pithy saying, he decided to use it at the entrance wall of his exhibition, accompanied by many eyes. The artist said the eyes were looking at him, both from the inside and from the outside and it gave off a heartwarming effect at being looked at by so many people in Hangzhou and New York.

Chen began his career as a public artist in Hangzhou, where he spent 11 years after studying at the China Academy of Art.

His most publicized artwork is a dazzling wall painting on the facade of a five-story apartment house facing a busy street in downtown Hangzhou, which was commissioned by the local community in the hope of attracting more visitors.

In 2013, five years after graduation, the artist began a journey to find himself and cut himself off from the world.

"As an artist I felt that I have some unfinished business," said Chen. "So I



Chen Dongfan stands in front of his work "You Are Not Alone."

had to go back to my studio and finish my own work."

A year later he set sail for New York as an independent artist. He set up home in Williamsburg, Brooklyn and spent time between there, the gym and his studio in Sunset Park. It was here where he finally found himself.

In his first two years in New York, language was no longer an asset and sometimes life lost its focus. He uses some video art in his exhibition "Viewing Platform" to describe his feelings of those early days in New York. The platform is in New Jersey where you can get a panoramic view of New York from a pair of binoculars. He turned his phone camera towards them and recorded views seen from the binoculars.

"It was hard to make alignment and you had no idea what had been recorded

exactly," Chen said describing what he was trying to do. "Sometimes it was something concrete, sometimes it was just 'empty scenes' — the sea, the birds or his self-reflection."

In one video work, showcased in the exhibition, he recorded a moment when a group of friends hugged and kissed each other in a Brooklyn house on New Year's Eve. The four-minute video is played in slow motion and the sound amplified, as if it was seen from the bottom of water.

"I was so affected then, I also hugged them. But at the same time you didn't really know why they were so cheerful," said the artist. "It was like a dream for me."

For the talented artist, the video is like a time capsule and he named it: "In Bliss Until Eternity."

A great many of his works presented this time are produced on newspapers, as Chen paints directly on to old newspapers. The series is called "Half a Man" and includes more than 60 pieces of plush toy paintings. It is also a tribute to the late American artist Mike Kelley.

"In 2012, I saw a retrospective exhibition of Kelley in a museum in Amsterdam, a week after his suicidal death in the US. In one series, he made identification photos of deserted plush toys," Chen told Shanghai Daily. "Among them, there was an ID photo of himself, looking at us."

The memory of this scene remained with Chen for a long time. Then, one day, an enlarged font of "Kelley" on a newspaper triggered his memory, and the first piece in the series was born — a koala with human eyes and a pair of glasses.

All newspaper sheets were then crumpled and ironed flat. The artist would then fix the broken part on the sheet with traditional Chinese rice paper and paste, not only on the front but also on the back.

"I think the backside is also a part of it, where you can identify a daily news item that happened on that particular day," said the artist. "It's hard to say if it has some kind of connection with my work, but I think the backside is in sync with the front."

Other figures in the series include a three-eyed pompon, a red-lip snake, and a grinning rabbit. Actually a lot of the figures are grinning with teeth. They look odd and terrified at the same time.

Date: Through January 3, 2018, closed on Mondays and Tuesdays  
Address: Bldg 12, 139 Lijue Rd  
Admission: Free

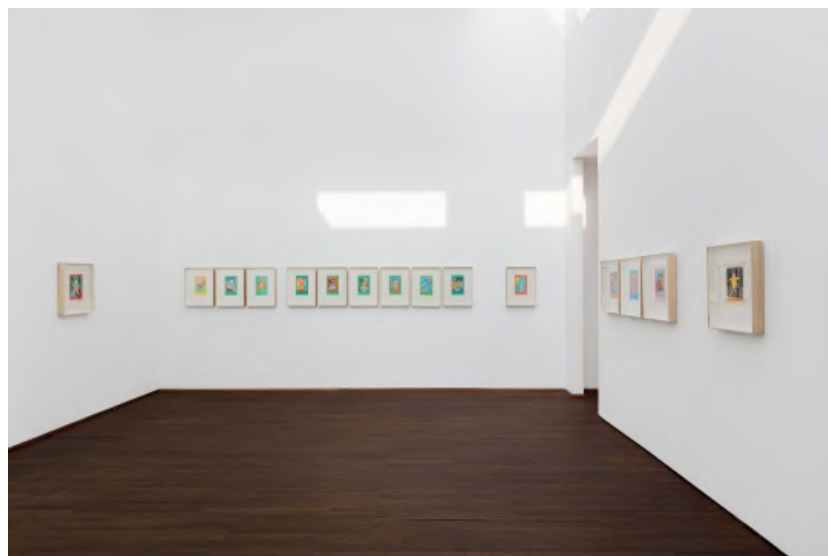


## 不再流行写信的年代，陈栋帆从纽约寄来 80 封信

作者：李天琪 图片提供：站台中国 2020 年 6 月 28 日

“这是我用绘画的语言书写的信件，不知寄向何处，亦不知何人将收到。这些被遗忘的信件，是我对自己无能为力的抵抗，是不得不要诉说却又想隐藏的情感。这些信件不可阅读，信息只在语言无力时方才显露。被遗忘的信件，有牵挂就未曾被遗忘。”——陈栋帆

作为一种传统的通讯方式，信件在时下的中国近乎“绝迹”，艺术家陈栋帆却“反其道而行之”，从大洋彼岸的纽约寄来了 80 封信——80 幅画在中式笺纸上的小尺幅油画。当信中的文字被图像替代，当本在个人间往来的通信被当众展示，一场浪漫却不私密，直接而不直白的展览就此展开：站台中国 dRoom 空间“陈栋帆：被遗忘的信件”，策展人为王将。



## “被遗忘的信件”展览现场

6月27日展览开幕当天阳光极好，白色展厅很亮，陈栋帆的小画整齐地排在墙上，被衬得愈发明艳、斑斓，这份明媚像是一条线索贯穿在艺术家的创作中，无论作品的尺幅大小。两年前那件被广泛报道、占地四百余平米的彩色壁画“龙与花之歌”也是如此。



左：《新型冠状病毒》 28.5×19cm 纸本油画 2020

右：《沉入沼泽》 28.5×19cm 纸本油画 2020



左：《受伤的天使》 28.5×19cm 纸本油画 2020

右：《愤怒的人》 28.5×19cm 纸本油画 2020



《受伤的天使》局部

# Hi艺术

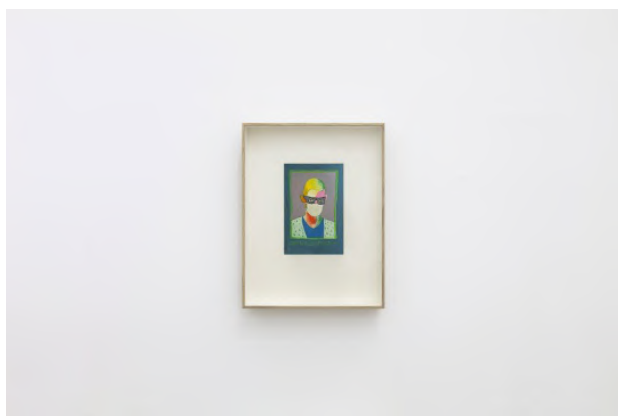


左：《帮助我们的陌生人》 28.5×19cm 纸本油画  
2020

右：《在哭泣的沟壑中》 28.5×19cm 纸本油画  
2020



《帮助我们的陌生人》局部



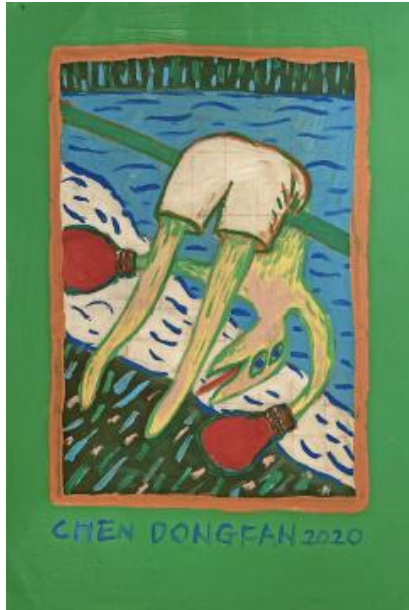
《你会没事的》 28.5×19cm 纸本油画 2020



《你会没事的》局部

这几个月以来，陈栋帆居住的城市纽约几乎一直处于动荡状态，新冠病毒的侵袭和愈演愈烈的抗议游行活动使得艺术家只能居家创作，作品“微缩”和“迷你”的原因也就不难理解。3个月，80件作品，“被遗忘的信件”在某种程度上像是艺术家的隔离日记，小尺幅作品看似轻松和随意的背后实则是日复一日的坚持，是对惰性、惯性和喧哗的抵抗。

关于作品的画面本身，王将这样解读：“颜料稀薄处，透出笺纸本身的格纹，活络而有呼吸；背景的色块中，时常加入装饰性的点画，丰富了平面的韵律。大多时候，大写的落款被安放在‘画芯’之下，犹如品牌的标识，成为了构成作品视觉印象的重要部分”。



《拳击手晾挂在海滩的单杠上》  
28.5×19cm 纸本油画 2020



《在哭泣的沟壑中》 28.5×19cm  
纸本油画 2020



《没关系》 28.5×19cm 纸本油画 2020

除了画面，每一件作品的名字也是令人惊艳、值得解读的重要部分，它们常是书名或者歌曲名，比如《在哭泣的沟壑中》即为英国小说家威廉·霍普·霍奇森的短篇，“陷入沼泽”呼应了一部同名的记者传记，《无所作为的美》来源于意大利俗语“il bel far niente”，《爱是陌生人》则是英国摇滚乐队 Eurythmics 于上世纪 80 年代发表的一首单曲……这些标题给陈栋帆的作品带来了现成的故事和往日的痕迹，但同时也被赋予了新的生命和活力。



《角落里的人》 28.5×19cm 纸本油画 2020



《愤怒的人》 28.5×19cm 纸本油画 2020



《陷入沼泽》 28.5×19cm 纸本油画 2020

## 798 艺术·对话 | 陈栋帆：尺素寄情

王薇 [798 艺术](#) 2019-07-12

陈栋帆：被遗忘的信件 2020

dRoom-站台中国 / 北京

2020年6月27日—7月25日



“陈栋帆：被遗忘的信件 2020” dRoom-站台中国展览现场

**798 艺术：**据悉，此次你在 dRoom-站台中国的个展“被遗忘的信件 2020”中呈现的作品是你在纽约疫情期间的创作，涉及了对当下现实以及艺术、自我、社会关系的反思，能否首先谈谈你在绘制这些作品时的状态及相关思考？

**陈栋帆：**我记得疫情开始的时候恰逢纽约的军械库艺术周期间，大大小小的艺术博览会有近十个。展览会上还是人山人海，大家都在讨论这场疫情，虽然都还故作镇定，但是见面已不敢相互拥抱了。然后就是意大利米兰疫情大爆发，纽约有了首例，紧张的气氛迅速弥散。3月20日，纽约州长库莫签署“暂停”防疫令，2000万人留在家中，同时关闭了非必要企业，之后的情况大家就都知道了。



左：《新型冠状病毒肺炎》 28.5×19cm 纸本油画 2020

右：《陷入沼泽》 28.5×19cm 纸本油画 2020

其实过年期间国内疫情突然爆发，从亲朋好友的微信朋友圈，到网络上各种渠道的新闻报道，每次突发事件和每个防疫阶段的心理变化都是感同身受的，整个过程中海外的华人全程陪跑，身边很多热心的朋友都在搜集口罩和防护服等物资寄回国内。因此当疫情席卷全美时，华裔的朋友们多少还是有些心理准备的。

此次在站台中国 dRoom 空间的“信件”就是在城市暂停期间的创作，近三个月画了八十封信，每日一封信，我称这是对自己无能为力的抵抗，是无用之人的情感寄托。如果说这些信件是个容器，那里面是实的，也是空的，或包罗万象，或空无一物。信（心）中谁人知，还要看读信的人。

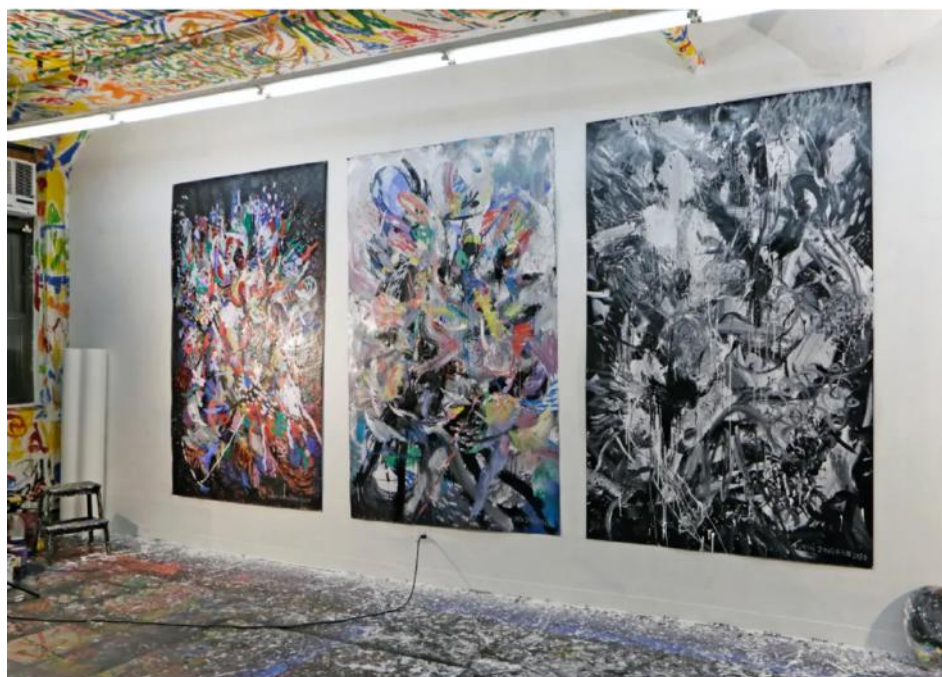


《你会没事的》纸本油画 28.5×19cm 2020

**798 艺术：**这些以油画颜料创作的作品是绘制在中式笺纸上的，除了笺纸所具有的信件的象征意义外，运用这一媒介还有怎样的考虑或不同的感受？此外，相对于大尺幅作品，你在此类小画的创作中是否也有着不同于前者的方式及体验？

**陈栋帆：**谢谢你留意到了不同。2015 年我第一次画信件，更多的还是“家书”的寄托。而今年突然被迫隔离后，在家里翻箱倒柜找出绘画的材料，当再次摸到这些中式笺纸时是被它的形制所触动，横竖交错，四边困顿。说触景生情矫情了点，更多的是不服气所激发的斗志吧，就算是画地为牢，我也要任其驰骋。方寸之间见天地，细微之处有乾坤，这些信件的创作就在隔离避疫期间这么开始了。

大尺幅的作品能将人包裹在画面里，细节处处需要精神力的高度集中和凝结，能量是直击人心的，创作常常需要凝视、等待、狙击和搏斗。小画更需要有格局，沉溺于趣味不可取，小画创作有点像安静地倾听。



陈栋帆工作室

**798 艺术：**你的画面题材十分丰富，不仅是指此次展出的作品，也包括你以往的创作。通常这些形象及内容灵感的来源是什么？或者说，一幅画通常是如何开始的？又是如何导向你心目中的一个效果？

**陈栋帆：**谢谢，这与我分阶段的创作进程有关，如果我正沉浸其中，所有的实践都会围绕它展开。这么干说有点不知所云，举个例子吧。某个阶段我非常执着于绘画之中的精神力量，我试图把绘画中的干扰因素剔除掉，将笔触和色彩从画面中抽离出来。恰逢我在长岛市租到了很理想的工作室，面对空荡荡的白盒子空间，激发了空间绘画的创作，试图用色彩和笔触去描绘一个精神的空间。我把这个沉浸式的彩色空间称之为庭院，我在花园里接待朋友们，有时会为他们绘制肖像。这些肖像是内在精神的写生，尽力去感受人与人之间的精神连接，有时会有些困难，但仍有所得。



“龙与花之歌”

在这期间我又创作了纽约中国城 Doyers St 的公共艺术作品“龙与花之歌”，关注移民文化是公共创作的思考，具体到创作部分是如何用巨幅抽象绘画将这条街的肖像描绘出来，绘画能否表现历史、现在和未来，说白了就是如何写意这条街的精、气、神。有近两年的实践都是当下创作的递进，所有的内容来源都是基于大量的实践和经验，我并不信任灵感乍现，但我相信如果一直在创作的状态里，只要把气息调整好，画面自己会走向他该有的样子。



《帮助我们的陌生人》（局部）纸本油画 28.5×19cm 2020



**798 艺术：**人物、动物、拟人化的日常物，或者说具有鲜活生命感的对象往往是你画面的主角，从中能够感受到一种对个体生命的强调，这其中是否也包含了一种自我影射？

**陈栋帆：**在家里通过网络接收外界的信息，瞬息万变的世界，触目惊心的事态，疫情彻底改变了我们的生活。截止今天全球因疫情去世已经有 554,924 人，更悲伤的是因疫情造成的连锁反应，有新闻报道因饥荒而饿死的人可能会更多。

肖像画的确会有自我的影射的部分，但在这里的“我”并不是重点，“被遗忘的信件 2020”中我特别强调了个体生命不同，每个生命各自有着独立的叙事。创作时我会陷入在很深的寂静里，我希望看画的人也能感受到这片刻的安宁。



《愤怒的人》纸本油画 28.5×19cm 2020

**798 艺术：**你画面的色彩给人留下深刻印象，不仅是丰富的色彩构成，还包括对纯色的运用以及对色彩关系的平衡，而且你画面形象的构建大多也是通过色彩来完成的。请谈谈你在创作中对色彩的思考。

**陈栋帆：**你很有洞察力，对色彩的研究是我过去这些年创作的重心，而且使用色彩来完成形象与造型是我创作中很重要的方式之一。色彩在绘画中的运用是技艺的需要，这并不是探索的重点，色彩与心理的关系是要常年来实践的。不同的颜色有着不同的意义，虽然因文化不同有个别的差异，但是人类对红、黄、蓝、绿等基本原色却有着共识，使用简单的颜色就已经足够了。还是举个例子吧，我研究音乐主题的创作时，色彩会幻化为音符，我会把自己想象为指挥家，黄色遍地生花，蓝色稳定节奏，白色顺畅气息，绿色舒缓气氛，红色又将和谐破坏激荡，黑色再将骨架搭建起来……这是既感性又科学的研究，当然在谈论色彩的实践之前，情感的感受与体验的共鸣是前提，否则色彩是没有灵魂的。



《中央公园下雪!在五月!》纸本油画 28.5×19cm 2020

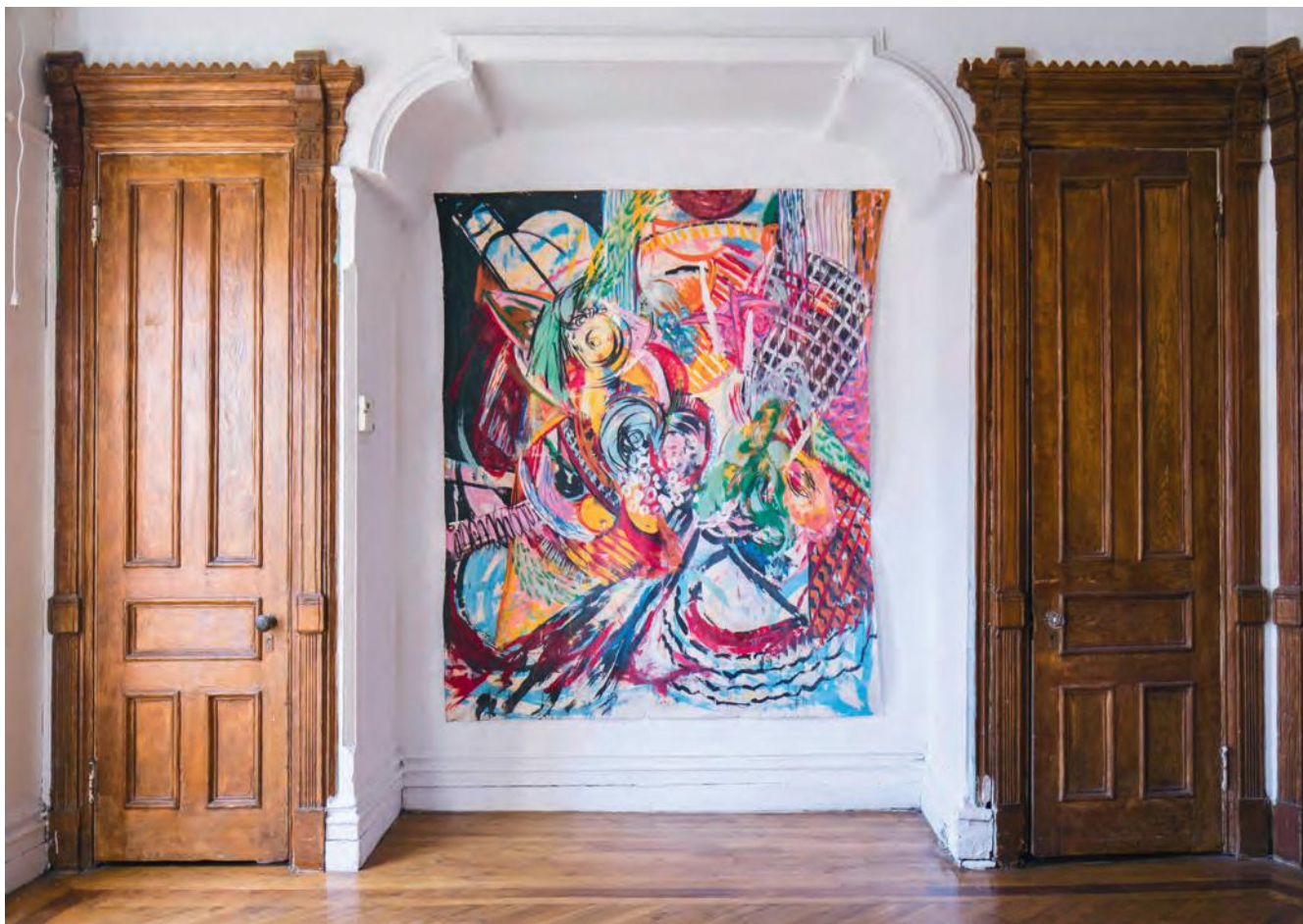
**798 艺术：**不难发现，尽管你的画面充满想象，甚至荒诞，但它们始终与现实紧密相关，你的创作与生活之间是怎样一种关系？

**陈栋帆：**创作是我生活的一部分，生活围绕着创作而展开，我想两者已经是不分离的关系了，我的生活里不能没有创作，我的创作也离不开我的生活，不好意思有点绕。你讲我的画面充满想象，甚至荒诞，细想一下，其实我们的生活也不正是如此吗？

**文：**王薇

**图：**站台中国、艺术家

[https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/QTodyybj7BXukVfQSTZt\\_Q](https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/QTodyybj7BXukVfQSTZt_Q)



陈栋帆，《广阔和隐秘的地方》，2018，布面丙烯、木炭，210.8×177.8 cm（摄影/林沛超，©陈栋帆，图片提供：否画廊）

## 陈栋帆在否画廊

陈栋帆：昨夜星辰昨夜风 否画廊，纽约 2018.4.1—6.24

文 | Jonathan Goodman 译 | 闫雨

中国画家陈栋帆在杭州与纽约两地都拥有自己的工作室。今年3月陈栋帆在否画廊举办的个展则是近期他在纽约创作成果的集中体现。在纽约长岛的画室中，陈栋帆用铺天盖地的壁画覆满了画室的每一个表面：四壁、天花板，甚至踏足所至的每一寸地面。这些流动的线条与饱和的色彩在他的画室中幻化出了千变万化的空间。而在否画廊举办的

展览意在呈现陈栋帆在工作室中创作场景的一瞥。与原本不同的是，画廊中的作品出现在传统尺寸的帆布和纸张上，并结合了诸如爱伦·坡与李商隐等跨文化的隐喻。作为一名中国画家，陈栋帆在纽约居住了很长时间，因此当我们审视其作品时，亦应当看到抽象表现主义在他作品中的深刻影响。陈栋帆绘画中的西方性和中国性占据同等比例。在这个高度

全球化的世界，绘画成为跨文化交流的媒介也似乎非常顺理成章。否画廊主人何雨长期对中国大陆艺术家的关注，也同样体现了这种国际交流所产生的无限可能性。陈栋帆的这场个展也向我们证明了其肆意游走于多种风格之间却不失控的风格。

然而这种尝试又是充满风险的。融合与挪用的折中主义作品常常在表现力度上会弱于其所借鉴的灵感来源。当这种借用变得触手可及时，艺术家就必须保持谨慎。在当前的国际艺术界，对行动绘画的借鉴仍然是一种流行——尽管行动绘画本身也是对其之前绘画模式的高度借鉴。尽管如此，这场展览仍然洋溢着热情与年轻的能量。艺术家陈栋帆正处在而立已过、不惑未至的当打之年，从展览中我们处处能体味到他旺盛的精力。在作品《带旋涡的房子》（2017）中，一个用铅笔、蜡笔和丙烯酸纸组成的上升螺旋跃然纸上，组成房子的形状。紧密相连的细细旋涡交织在一起，使得整个图像似乎也在不停上升。当我们在理解这些图像时亦很容易从中读到与大自然的相同，即使我们知道它实际上更加偏向抽象的事物。在文化上，它处于一种中立的地位，与杭州和纽约似乎都不太有关系。它更像是生长在不同文化、不同的成像手段、比喻性和抽象性的空隙之间。

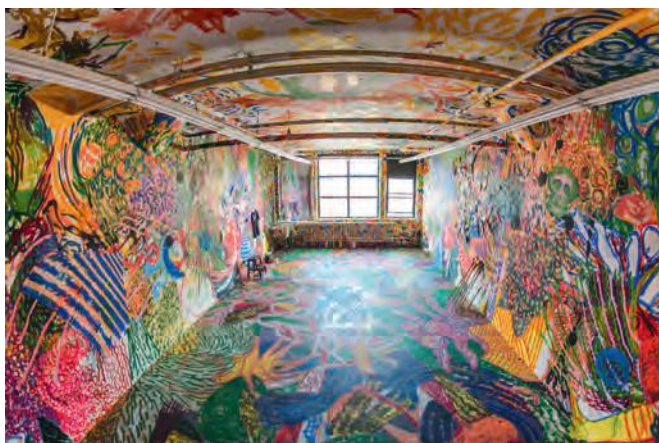
《广阔和隐秘的地方》（2018）是一件布面丙烯和炭笔作品，由网格、小点和螺旋等复杂图像组成画面。作品的标题是指一个未知的天堂，也许这件抽象作品体现了我们对这类事物的所知有限。无论这件作品的真正意味是什么，它都体现了艺术家正在发展中的抽象风格。这种能够将现有抽象艺术更进一步的作品无疑是杰出的。《广阔和隐秘的地方》中浓烈而狂热的抽象意象，让我们联想到在街头经历过

的随机影像，即使我们通常不会把都市生活与天堂联系在一起。事实上，它左上方的网格便引用了纽约现代主义和当代艺术对此结构的使用，建立了一个形式上的中立基础。《春天》（2018）更简单，但也表现出更抽象的风格。这幅丙烯颜料画运用了白、蓝、黄、红等鲜艳的色彩，以抒情抽象的方式绘制，粗糙的笔触呈锯齿状边缘拒绝彼此分隔。它是完成的，而在风格上又有原始的张力。

《大静物》（2018）也存在着一些非具象的特征。层层叠叠的黑白曲线似乎描绘了花瓶中的花朵，但这是我们想象力的结果，因为这些线条并不完全符合所描述的图像。相反，这是一个暗示，陈栋帆希望引导着他的观众去看到一些真实存在的东西。在层层叠叠的花朵背后，我们可以看到发现一个混乱的背景，其大部由白色组成，一些红色、淡红色和黄色的点缀，更增强了白色背景。

最后我想讨论的作品是《林中飞鸟》（2018），这是一幅纸上绘画，由飞鸟的形状拼贴而成。这幅巨大的作品，布置在否画廊二层的楼梯铁栏杆上方。画廊主何雨表示，这可能是一只脱离樊笼的飞鸟。如果离远一点看的话，确实能看出来这种感觉。如今绘画看起来最有趣的情况就是能在抽象和具象之间找到一种视觉平衡。陈栋帆拥有着身为中国画家的优势，而他显然是利用着这些优势来创造着融合亚洲与西方经验的作品，这一点他完成得非常好。📍

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陈栋帆，《空间绘画（工作室2018）》，2018，综合媒介（摄影/李宇宏，©陈栋帆，图片提供：否画廊和陈栋帆工作室）