

姚聪：云上蝇舞

策展人：杨紫

展期：2021.07.17 - 08.28

地址：胶囊上海，上海徐汇区安福路 275 弄 16 号 1 层

胶囊空间荣幸呈现艺术家姚聪在画廊的首次个展“云上蝇舞”，展览囊括了艺术家近期创作的视频和摄影作品。展期为 2021 年 7 月 17 日至 8 月 28 日。

远处，一些人醉了，苍天与山脉间，从清晨到傍晚。我们只能隐约地听到他们耳机里面透出来的歌，那是他们所爱的。他们衣着淳朴简单，看上去算不得城市精英。镜头中，他们孤身一人，似乎忘记了有人在记录他们的身体与举动。他们在享受被人世遗忘的快乐，也在享受忘记自己的快乐。

这是姚聪的十屏录像作品《方形保护区》。2020 年夏天，姚聪跑到内蒙古阿拉善的小镇，走上街道，结识当地的陌生人。留在这里的人们习惯了这里，又隐约地躁动；渴望大山之外的生活，又不舍得家乡的怀抱。姚聪对他们说，自己爱在自然里撒欢，想组织一场“活动”，走到荒野，换好心情，啤酒随便喝，想奔跑，想呐喊，都敞开来闹。两个礼拜后，十个人报了名，来到贺兰山自然保护区。男女老少之中，只有一位外地游客。他们彼此约定的规则是：在干枯的河道间摆一块绿色的方形垫子以供使用，啤酒在附近摆好；每位参与者可以听自己选的歌曲；“活动”开始时，姚聪会打开摄像机，然后爬到河道另一岸，将自己隐去，将天地留给嗜酒的朋友们。

姚聪说热爱自然，不只是动人的藉口。拍摄《方形保护区》，是他第二次来到阿拉善。2020 年，他与友人两次从阿拉善左旗到额济纳旗沿路行驶，拍摄《金·言》。摄影中，白色被单遮盖不明身份的身体，只露手脚，或显出人形，上面绣了金字：“AN ARTIST WHO IS NOT BASED IN THE GOOD PLACE IS NO ARTIST”（一个没有在好地方工作生活的艺术家不算是艺术家）。

在自然中，生命活力可以释放，也可以寂灭。古代诸多中国诗人，被罢黜免职，在流放地写下最璀璨的诗，亦证明了回归天然后，生命能量起伏不定的辩证状态。在乡土观念浓重的中国，将官员放逐到荒蛮之地作为刑罚历史悠久，早在《尚书·舜典》就讲“流宥五刑。”然而，无论主观上是否情愿，那些诗人们终究从权力的漩涡中逃离出来，终究从崇高的、威严的、绝对的中心逃离出来。云上也有蝇舞，那不如贴回地面歇息片刻。“一个没有在好地方工作生活的艺术家不算是艺术家”，这话听起来有点劝人入世的道理，又肯定更着重反讽意味的一面。

在第二次探访阿拉善时，姚聪也拍摄了录像作品《数》。录像中，妆容精致的女子目不转睛地数着并不存在的钞票，炎热的天气使她发汗，皮肤的毛孔与褶皱的质地便接近于她置身的黄褐色石堆。是忙碌的银行出纳员幻想着自己沉醉在遥远美景之中，还是困在酷热石堆中的老乡想象自己是吹着空调的柜姐？我们又回到《方形保护区》中的困境：面对想象中“好地方”的诱惑，留下抑或逃离（不管是从村野逃离到城市，还是相反），都有令人难以割舍的遗憾之处。来到“自然保护区”，那些遗憾难道能就此放下？毕竟，现在，所有的“自然”——连同人心底想要开释的天性——都已被再次改造过了。

撰文：杨紫

Yao Cong: Flies beyond the Clouds

Curator: Yang Zi

Dates: 2021.07.17 - 08.28

Address: Capsule Shanghai, 1st Floor, Building 16, Anfu Lu 275 Nong, Xuhui District, Shanghai, China

Capsule Shanghai is delighted to present “Flies beyond the Clouds,” artist Yao Cong’s first solo exhibition at the gallery, showcasing Yao’s most recent videos and photographs. The show will run from July 17 to August 28, 2021.

In the distance, some inebriated people are seen between the sky and the mountains from dawn to dusk. We faintly hear songs they love coming out of their earphones. Dressed in unsophisticated attire, they do not look like urban elites. Seen through the camera lens, they are lonely and have seemingly forgotten that their bodies and actions are being recorded live. They are enjoying the pleasure of being overlooked by the world and by themselves.

The above describes Yao Cong’s ten-channel video, *The Square Reserve*. In the summer of 2020, Yao Cong visited the small town of Alxa in Inner Mongolia and met with locals on the streets. They are accustomed to this place, yet seemed somewhat restless as if longing for a life beyond the mountains but unwilling to give up the embrace of their hometown. Yao Cong told them that he loved to have fun in nature and wanted to organize an “event” to dive into the wilderness to refresh the mood, drink beer as one pleases, and run or shout without any setbacks. Two weeks later, ten people signed up, and they arrived at the Helanshan Mountain Nature Reserve. Among the men, women, and children, there was only one non-local participant. The rules they agreed upon included having a square green mat set up in the dry river channels with beer available nearby. Each participant could listen to a song of their choice; once the “event” begins, Yao Cong would turn on the camera and climb to the other side of the riverbank to hide, leaving the place to his friends, drinking.

Yao’s love of nature is more than just a cue for sentimentality. Filming *The Square Reserve* marked his second visit to Alxa. In 2020, he and his friends drove along the road from Alxa Left Banner to Ejinaqi twice to photograph *Gold Words*. In the photos, white sheets covered unidentified bodies, only exposing hands and feet or revealing the silhouette of a human figure. The phrase, “AN ARTIST WHO IS NOT BASED IN THE GOOD PLACE IS NO ARTIST,” was embroidered in gold on the sheets.

Nature, where the vitality of life releases, is also where it meets its demise. Many ancient Chinese poets, after being dismissed from their official positions, wrote their most brilliant poems in exile, which proved the dialectical state of fluctuating life energy present after returning to nature. In China, where its people share a strong tie to their homeland, the history of exiling officials to the wilderness as a form of punishment traces back to as early as “Banishments that mitigates the five ‘principal’ punishments” in the *Book of Documents – Canon of Shun*. However, whether voluntarily or not, those poets eventually escaped from the whirlpool of power, and consequently from the supreme, majestic, absolute center. If flies dance beyond the clouds, it is perhaps better to stick to the ground for a restful moment. “An artist who is not based in the good place is no artist” may sound persuasive for one to engage in the world, but it indeed reveals an ironic facet.

During his second visit to Alxa, Yao Cong also shot the video *Count*. In this piece, a woman wearing impeccable makeup counts non-existent banknotes against the heatwave, causing her to sweat down her pores and wrinkles that resemble the tawny stone mount of her immediate environment. Is she the busy bank teller who imagines herself reveling in a distant scenery, or one of the locals trapped in the scorching rock pile who imagine themselves to be tellers in an air-conditioned place? This piece takes us back to the dilemma presented in *The Square Reserve*, in which one faces the beguiling imaginary “good place,” where staying or fleeing (whether from the village to the city or vice versa) would inevitably be regretful and hard to let go. When you visit a “nature reserve,” can you let go of those regrets? After all, in this day and age, anything “natural” - including the human nature that longs for release - has been reshaped.

Text: Yang Zi