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LEAP

贰零零零年以来的中国当代艺术

ART OF THE EIGHTS: A CHINESE
CONTEMPORARY DECADE

投掷美术史

ART HISTORY ACCORDING TO MADEIN

工作室里的最后晚餐

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储云作品集:《东莞雕塑》

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19篇最新展览评论

REVIEWS OF 19 RECENT SHOWS

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艾未未：非常遗憾

AI WEIWEI: SO SORRY

慕尼黑艺术之家

Haus der Kunst, Munich 2009.10.12-2010.1.17



展览现场

2009

慕尼黑艺术之家

从上至下：地毯（2009）、
根（2009）、童话（1001个
中国访客）（2009）

View of "So Sorry"

2009

Haus der Kunst, Munich

From bottom: *Rooted*

Upon, 2009;

Soft Ground, 2009;

*Fairytale (1001 Chinese
Visitors)*, 2009.

1937年竣工的慕尼黑艺术之家，是希特勒钦定的“大德意志艺术展”展场，相对于同年开幕的“堕落艺术展”，这里象征着美德与高尚。因为有了这段历史，后来在此举办的每一场展览，在正式进入主题之前，都必须想好如何对这个特殊的场馆做出回应。就此而言，在这里举办艾未未到目前为止规模最大的回顾展简直再合适不过，因为这样一个横加的外来语境使我们不能再将艺术家丰富的创作实践简单评价为包罗当代中国众生万象便了事。艾未未也似乎直觉到这个历史感沉重的展场所蕴含的挑战和机遇，因此选出了一件作品作为整场展览的中心，这件以极为彻底和激烈的方式浓缩了他过去十年全部言行的作品实际就是一块由北京第一地毯厂生产的长35米、宽10米的地毯。这块地毯精确地复制了艺术之家大理石地板的每一处磨痕，每一种颜色。整个制作流程从大量流动的（中国）劳力将美术馆地板的每块砖拍成数码照片，到把一堆国有企业的技术工人逼到极限，完美地概括了艾未未的工作方式（里面一圈制作骨干，外面一圈承包商人）。从形式上看，地毯摆放的位置毫厘不差，没有一点铺出来的地方。实际上，很多观众开始都没发现地毯的存在，这也正是该作品想要取得的效果。

与乌尔斯·菲舍尔(Urs Fischer)在新美术馆让人产生错觉的作品不同,这张地毯的目的性似乎大过了玩乐之心,暗示着权力能在多大程度上扭曲或遮蔽现实,而观众(或公民主体)只能默默承受。乍一看,你也许会觉得这件作品最大的冲击力来源于它与地板惊人的相似度,来源于地毯厂的同志们怎么能把所有东西事无巨细搞得那么清楚透彻。但更具颠覆性的解读是,正因为他们搞得太清楚、太透彻,或者说成功地给我们留下了这样的印象,我们才只能把他们提供的现实当成惟一的正确版本接受,而真正的现实如今就藏在一层毛茸茸、软绵绵的表皮之下。当然,从这里我们很容易联想到艾未未一贯喜欢讨论的那些更大的历史和政治问题,再加上时间特殊——他刚在慕尼黑接受完脑部外科手术,许多人通过各种各样的媒介跟踪手术进展——作品隐含的意味就更加清楚。地毯上放着许多奇形怪状的浮木(《根》,2009),引诱观众走近的同时又禁止他们踏入这片由树根和枝干组成的森林;周围墙上则密密麻麻贴满了两年前卡塞尔文献展期间被他拉到德国去的一千名中国人的照片(《童话》,2007/09)。这样的安排就更让人觉得《地毯》真正想说的其实是当代大众社会里个人被分配到的可能性问题。

透过这一中心看去,艾未未其他作品背后的根本驱动力也得到了新的释放。涂上工业油漆的陶罐、被拦腰截断的桌子突然间变成讲述强制性困惑的作品。(引用艾未未自己评论彩色陶罐时说过的话:“你涂上一层东西,底下的内容我们看不到,但它仍然存在,而表面这一层本不应存在,但它却在那儿。”)形态完美的紫檀立方体、被压成方块的普洱茶说的则是把关于一个物质传统的知识变成新的、也许毫无用处的形式。大吊灯怪诞的富丽(此处化身为《立方体灯》,2008)似乎更加鲜明。而分类记录地板砖的建档冲动也在关于国家体育场建设过

The Haus der Kunst, commissioned by Hitler and completed in 1937 to house the “Grosse Deutsche Kunstausstellung” (Great German Art Exhibition)—a virtuous counterpoint to the “Degenerate Art” exhibition which opened one day after the former—is a venue that demands the ante of a site-specific response before the business of showing other work can proceed. As such, it was an ideal venue for Ai Weiwei’s largest retrospective to date, adding an element of an alien context to an oeuvre that is too easily explained away as containing the multitudes of contemporary China. Ai seems to have understood rather intuitively the challenge and opportunity presented by such a weighty site, and in response chose to center his show around a single work that served to encapsulate, drastically and radically, everything he has been doing and saying for the last decade. That work was a carpet, 35 by 10 meters, woven at the Beijing No. 1 Carpet Factory, rendering every imperfection, every tone of the Haus’s travertine floor with stunning verisimilitude. Based on an entomologically precise grid of digital photographs of each tile made possible by copious amounts of mobile (Chinese) labor, it was then realized by pushing a group of state-system craftspeople just beyond the fringes of their comfort zone. *Soft Ground*’s production recapitulates Ai’s working method (an inner circle of lieutenants surrounded by an outer circle of contractors) par excellence. Formally speaking, it sat exactly upon the squares it intended to cover, not a millimeter out of place. In fact, to many viewers the carpet was at first invisible, which was exactly the point.

In contrast to Urs Fischer’s recent trompe l’oeil intervention at the New Museum, this carpet seemed more purposeful than playful, suggesting how reality can be twisted and obscured by power in ways the viewer (or the citizen-subject) must simply live with. At first glance, one might be tempted to think its thrust lies in the mimesis, in how the comrades at the carpet factory got every detail down pat. But perhaps the more subversive reading is that having gotten it, or rather, after we are led to believe the carpet factory comrades have gotten it, we are left with only their version of reality, now hidden just below a soft fuzzy surface. It’s a short leap from here to the bigger historical and political questions for which Ai is better known, particularly in the wake of his highly mediated Munich head surgery. That the carpet became the surface for a forest of scholar’s stone driftwood (*Rooted Upon*, 2009) onto which viewers were enticed but forbidden to walk, and that the surrounding walls were papered in a mosaic of the faces of the thousand individuals Ai brought to Kassel during his last major German stunt two years earlier (*Fairytale (1001 Chinese Visitors)*, 2007/2009), only adds to the suggestion that *Soft Ground* is really about the possibilities allotted to the individual in contemporary mass society.

Seen through the prism of this central nave, the fundamental push behind most of Ai’s other works comes into fresh relief. Paint-dipped pots and cut tables are suddenly also pieces about forced obfuscation. (To quote his own words on the dipped urns: “You cover something so that it is no longer visible but is still there underneath, and what appears on the surface is not supposed to be there but is there.”) The perfectly finished ebony cube, the pressed mass of tea: these are about marshalling the knowledge of a material tradition into new and perhaps useless forms.

童话(宿舍)

2007/2009

木头、钢架、布料、塑料、
竹子、灯

200 × 781 × 545 cm

展览现场

艺术之家慕尼黑

Fairytale (Accommodation)

2007/2009

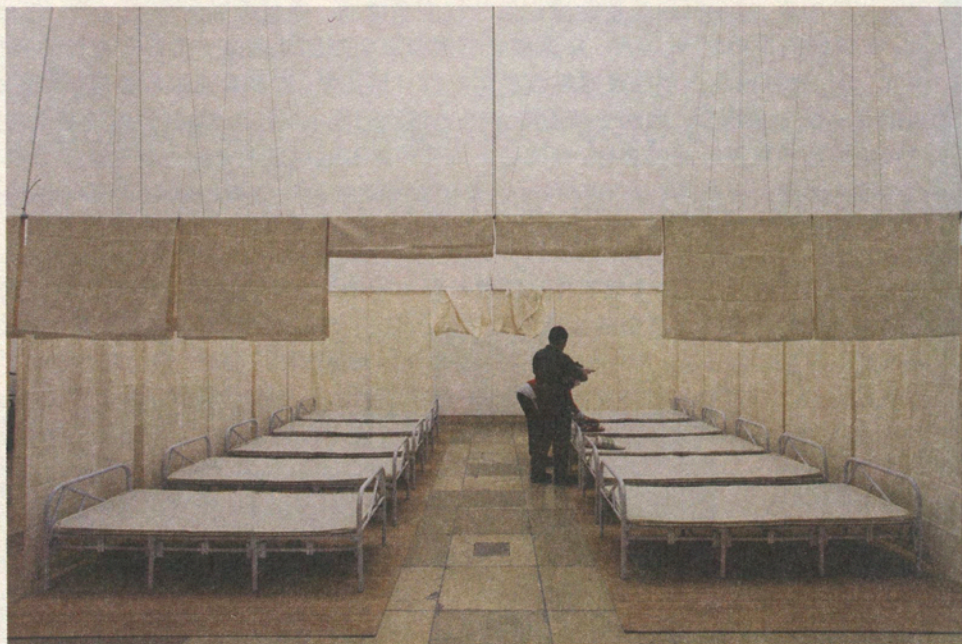
Wood, steel, fabric, plastic,
bamboo, lights,

200 × 781 × 545 cm.

Installation view,

Haus der Kunst,

Munich, 2009.



立方体灯

2008

水晶玻璃、灯和金属

400 × 400 × 400 cm

展览现场

慕尼黑艺术之家

Cube Light

2008

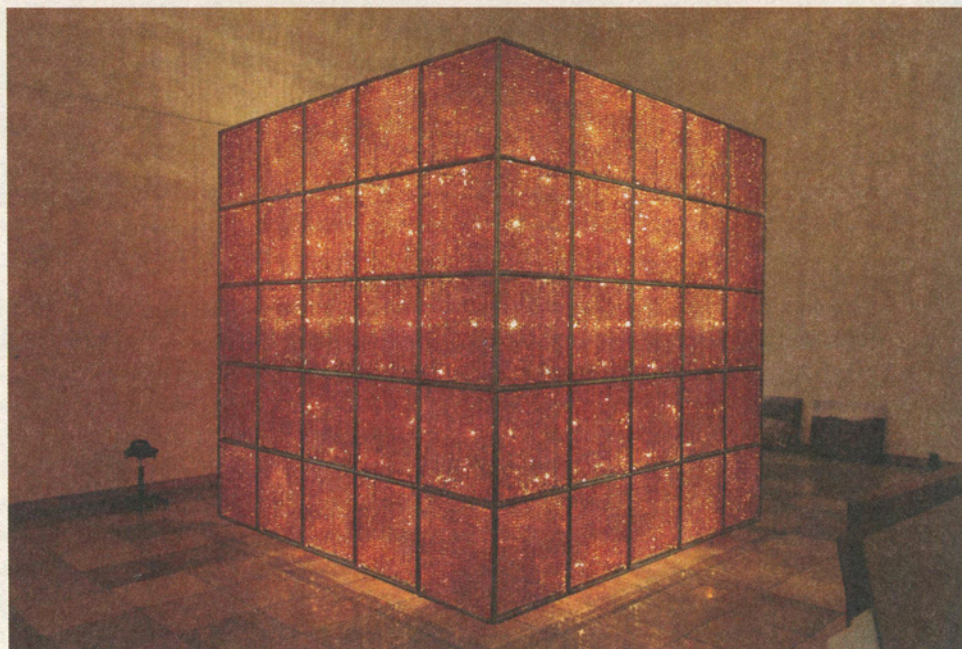
Glass crystal, light,
and metal,

400 × 400 × 400 cm

Installation view,

Haus der Kunst,

Munich, 2009.



程、汶川地震破坏程度的摄影系列里有所体现,更不用说前几年记录长安街全段和三环路交通流量的影片。这种对艾未未来说一直至关重要的文献记录意识这一次终于得到了应有的展现。室内展厅里,策划人克里斯·德尔肯(Chris Dercon)和艺术之家的策展团队成功地呈现了艾未未复杂多变的艺术实践,既保留了原作中多重价值的冲击力,又不让人觉得零乱。

但外墙呢?艾未未用八千多个儿童书包在展馆外墙上拼出“她在这个世界上开心地生活了七年”十五个字,这是在四川地震中痛失爱女的一位母亲说过的话。整个书包幕墙高十米,长一百米。巨大的陈述句旁边挂着一张同样巨大的展览广告牌,广告牌红色的背景上是剪着奇怪发型的艺术家,仿佛要为这句话及其代表的行动主义立场提出一种对等关系,或者单纯是为了强调作者身份。这是近年来“政治的艾未未”,据他本人说,“政治的艾未未”一直都在,只不过因为陶土和木质装配品太风雅,政治藏在背后显不出来。但是,用廉价(新)书包在公共场合以如此巨大的规模拼成句子真的是艾未未想让人们记住的姿态吗?对一场社会对话如此直接的介入是否能够带来新的可能性,还是只是证实了一个一直就存在于背后的立场?我不想和一些批评家一样质疑艾未未此处的态度是否真诚,而是更多地想讨论让所有东西都悬挂在外的策略是否有效。与展厅内部的作品相比,这面外墙给人的感觉似乎是艺术与政治被生硬地混在了一起,结果对双方都没有好处。

如果想看艾未未更好的一面,可以看看展厅入口处的《模板》(2007/2009):在建筑师和工程师的帮助下,艺术家原封不动地复原了在第十二届卡塞尔文献展上被暴风雨刮倒的这件纪念碑式作品,也在某种程度上驳斥了那些怀疑艾未未这次想提出任何大胆新方向的想法;或者可以看看艺术之家后门柱廊的那二十二根竹杆和每根竹杆两端的仿元青花瓷瓶(《竹杆和瓷罐》,2009):插在瓷罐里的竹杆紧紧抵在石柱上,仿佛要努力撑开柱与柱间的空间,整件作品覆盖的长度跟书包墙差不多,但比单纯的姿态更加哀婉。通过这些重点更突出,甚至可以说美学意味更浓重的作品,艾未未表达了一种只能称之为道德的冲动,同时坚定地拒绝了过度的表达。田霏宇

The grotesque grandeur of his chandeliers, here represented by *Cube Light* (2008), seems even more pronounced. And the archival impulse to catalogue the floor tiles, which also lies behind extended photographic projects like those to document the construction of the National Stadium and the destruction wrought by the Wenchuan Earthquake, not to mention earlier attempts to catalog every section of Chang'an Boulevard or the Third Ring Road—is finally allowed the prominence it has always had for Ai. In the inner galleries, Chris Dercon and the Haus der Kunst curatorial team did an impressive job of imparting a complex practice with a sense of unity that did not cheapen from its multivalence.

But what about that façade, where Ai used seven thousand children's backpacks to spell out the sentence “She lived happily on this earth for seven years,” spoken by one of the earthquake victims' bereaved mothers? Ten meters high and one hundred meters long, the oversized utterance was paired unwittingly with a giant exhibition billboard featuring the artist's strangely shorn visage on a red background as if to posit an equivalence or perhaps simply to assert authorship over the sentence and the activist stance it embodied. This is the “political Ai” of recent years, one whom he claims has always existed but remained hidden behind eminently tasteful assemblages of clay and wood. Yet is spelling a sentence out of cheap, new backpacks, even on such a massive and public scale, really the sort of gesture Ai wants to be known for? Does such direct intervention into a social conversation allow for new possibilities, or simply verify a position that has been operative all along? Unlike some critics, I am less inclined to question the sincerity of Ai's positions than the efficacy of this particular strategy of letting it all hang out. In contrast with the works on view inside, the façade seemed an instance of art and politics mixing uncomfortably to the benefit of neither.

A better Ai may be found in his recreation of his fallen Documenta XII sculpture *Template* (2007/2009), a painstaking rendition of collapsed monumentality implanted at the entrance to the exhibition as a sort of rebuke to those who might suspect Ai of offering any bold way forward. (With the help of architects and engineers, he reconstructed the structure made of temple doors exactly as it was blown over by a windstorm shortly after Documenta opened.) Or, for that matter, on the Haus's rear façade, where twenty-two bamboo poles bookended by Yuan-style guan jars (*Bamboo and Porcelain*, 2009) struggle to press open the space between each pair of columns, covering a distance identical to the backpack-wall in a manner more poignant than posturing. In these more focused, and dare it be said, more aesthetic interventions, Ai combines an urge that can only be called moral with a staunch refusal to give so much away. Philip Tinari