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The background of the page is a large, abstract artwork by Rui Rasquinho. It features a complex, layered composition of textures and colors. On the left, there are vertical, brush-like strokes in shades of grey and white. The right side is dominated by a large, dark, almost black, curved shape that appears to be a shadow or a deep crevice, set against a lighter, more textured background. The overall effect is one of depth and organic, almost geological, forms.

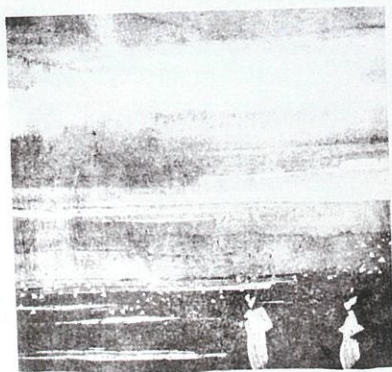
# 抽象探索

# EXPLORATIONS OF ABSTRACTION

華堅玉新作展覽展示了他從插畫家到抽象藝術家的早期轉變

The new exhibition of works by Rui Rasquinho shows the early stages of his evolution from illustrator to abstract artist

文 BY MARK PHILLIPS / 譯 TRANSLATION STACEY QIAO / 圖 PHOTOS EDUARDO MARTINS



## 冰

仔城區文化協會正獨家呈獻首個以中國藝術為主題的作品展《誰念幽寒坐鳴呃？—華堅玉插畫展》，展覽由長居澳門的葡萄牙藝術家華堅玉構思及製作。

是次展覽是華堅玉從2012年至2019年七年間在《今日澳門》（澳門葡語報紙）上發表的一系列插圖編輯而成的。該報長期發表由卡斯凱斯（Rui Cascais）譯為葡文的知名中文作品，包括詩歌、哲學及評論文章等。華堅玉每星期為這些文章繪製一幅插畫。

「為《今日澳門》創作的插圖是微噴印畫，使用了混合媒材，包括中國水墨、炭和一些其他種類的黑墨。其中，中國水墨占主導地位，一開始是因為其與主題直接相關，並且我也很樂意用中國水墨來嘗試非西方古典畫派的新鮮表達方式。中國水墨極富流動性，有灰到黑的多種色調。」華堅玉解釋說。「這項工作每星期都要做，因此我必須快速進行創作，之後進行掃描，並用數碼工具進行合成。」

**T**aipa Village Cultural Association is currently hosting the first Chinese ink exhibition by Macau-based Portuguese artist Rui Rasquinho, entitled *Who heeds a man who sits and wails out in the cold?*

The selected works for this exhibition are based on a series of illustrations published in local Portuguese newspaper *Hoje Macau* over a seven-year period, from 2012 to 2019. The newspaper was publishing Chinese texts including poems, philosophies and critical essays by a number of renowned Chinese literati, translated into Portuguese by Rui Cascais. Rasquinho undertook the task of illustrating the texts on a weekly basis.

“The illustrations for *Hoje Macau* are Giclée prints using mixed media, including Chinese ink, charcoal, and some other kinds of black ink. There is a predominance of Chinese ink, which, in the beginning was to make a direct connection to the theme, and for the pleasure of trying new non-classical



文字作品的作者包括李賀（公元790-816年）、王充（公元27-100年）、淮南子（公元前139年）及文子（公元742年）等。是次展覽的標題來自李賀的詩作《致酒行》。

「我不是文人，也並非學者，所以起初我並不熟悉這些文學體裁。如果不是這個項目，我應該不會對其進行如此深入的研究，」華堅玉說道。

但當開始閱讀這些文學作品，對其進行視覺闡釋後，華堅玉發現，這些文字以及中國傳統繪畫風格和技巧對自己很有啟發。

「我在中國已經有20年了，但是我從來沒有想過，作為『鬼佬』的我會嘗試挪用中國風格——文化挪用其實讓我很不快——但一切自然而然地發生了。開始是因為我接受了這項委約工作，然後我真正被吸引了。從某種意義上說，這是一種更誠實的方法。我愛上了這種風格，但我要重申，這不是中國畫，但當然是受到了中國畫啟發的。」藝術家解釋道。

expressions with it. It offers a lot of fluidity and various shades, from gray to black," Rui explains. "It was a weekly project, so I had to work quickly, so I would do the work, scan it and join it all together with digital tools."

The texts are by such authors as Li He (790-816 AD), Wang Chong (27-100 AD), Huainanzi (139 BC) and Wen Tzu (742 AD). The title of the exhibition comes from the stanza of a poem entitled *Let Wine Be Brought In!* written by Li He.

"I'm not a literati or a scholar, so I was not familiar with this genre of literature at first, and probably, by myself, I wouldn't have dug into it as deeply," admits Rui.

But once he started to read the works and interpret them visually, he naturally found himself inspired by the texts, and also by classical Chinese painting styles and techniques.

"I've been in China for 20 years, but I never thought as a gweilo that I would try to appropriate a Chinese style - actually that type of approach irritates me a lot - but it just happened naturally, first because of the work I was commissioned to do, and then I was just caught by it. In a way it's a more honest approach. I was in love with the style, but again, this is not Chinese painting, but of course it's inspired," the artist explains.

"The starting point was traditional Chinese painting, but I wasn't trying to emulate it because I'm not a master, I couldn't do that. In order to paint like that you have to study and practice for years. So instead, I used some aesthetic references and tried to do my own style. There's also some western classical references as well, and comic references. They're not obvious but there's a lot."

Rui's work on this artistic project for seven years ultimately led him to experiment more freely with Chinese ink, resulting in the second part of the works on display, a series of fold-out books in which the artist explores a more abstract style.

"The folding books emanated from this series. I had done so many of these works in this style that I started exploring it more by myself in a more free way. So that's why I'm displaying them together in the same space, so people can see the link, between illustrations based on texts, and something that



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「創作起點是中國傳統繪畫，但我沒有試圖模仿，因為我不是中國畫大師，我做不到。要想精通中國畫，必須經過多年的學習和實踐。因此，我只是把中國畫作為美學參考，畫出我自己的風格。我也參考了西方古典繪畫和漫畫。可能並不明顯，但其實有很多。」

這項長達七年的藝術計劃使華堅玉能夠更自由地探索中國水墨——在展覽的第二部分，是一系列中國折本風格的水彩畫，藝術家在其中探索了更加抽象的風格。

「這些折本源自插畫系列。用這種風格完成了許多作品後，我開始以一種更加自由的方式進行探索。因此我把這兩種作品展示在同一空間中，以使觀者看到基於文本的插圖以及完全自由的抽象作品之間的聯繫，」他指出。「這是探索和過程的產物，在象徵和抽象之間的猶疑。不是最終成品，更像是學習和研究抽象的過程。」

「折本像可折疊的書，可以有兩種形式，這意味著圖畫並不總是存在。你可以把它折疊起來，圖畫就變得不明顯起來。我喜歡這種暴露藝術的方式。」他補充道。

is totally free and towards abstraction," he notes. "This is a product of exploration and process, there's a hesitation between figurative and abstract. Not a final product, more like a process of learning and investigations of abstract."

"The fact that it's in a foldable book, it can assume both forms, and this means that the drawing is not always present. If you want you can take it to obscurity and fold it away. I like the exposure of art in those terms," he adds.

João Ó, President of Taipa Village Cultural Association's executive board and the curator of the exhibition, has known Rasquinho for many years and has watched his progression and growth as an artist.

"When you are given a task to illustrate Chinese poems, you can't just illustrate with a Western style, you have to give it some Chinese elements. I want to show people how Rui has come to

this point in his art work. We want to show the process. This is exactly the point where he jumps from an illustrator to an artist," notes João. "Instead of just showing the abstract works, Rui also wanted to show the other pieces from the newspaper project, and when I saw them together I completely saw the link, the evolutionary line between them. So what you see here is this process of transition," he adds.

In July, Rui will hold another exhibition at the Orient Foundation, with some new works, demonstrating a further evolution of his abstract pieces.

"Literature makes you think, so of course, this project gave me insights and revelations, and a greater appreciation of Chinese culture. This is the beginning of a particular artistic direction for me and it will continue to transform into something else," Rui predicts.

氹仔城區文化協會理事長 João Ó 與華堅玉相識多年，一直關注著他在藝術道路上的變化和成長。

「要為中國詩歌配圖，不能簡單地用西方風格，必須加入一些中國元素。我想向人們展示華堅玉是如何在藝術作品中做到這一點的，我們想展示這個過程。這是他從插畫家變成藝術家的關鍵。」João指出。「他不僅展示了抽象作品，還想展示報紙插畫項目中的作品。我把它們放在一起時，真切看到了兩者之間的演化脈絡。大家在這裡看到的就是這個演變過程。」他補充道。

今年7月，華堅玉還將在東方基金會舉辦另一場展覽，展出一些新作品。這是他在抽象作品創作上的進一步發展。

「文學使人思考，因此，這個項目賦予了我一些洞見和啟示，讓我更加欣賞中國文化。對我來說，這是一個特殊的藝術方向的開端，讓我繼續發展蛻變。」



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