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## 中国策展人的“国际”转向 Chinese Curators' Conversion to "International"

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*Chinese and International, they are neither contradictions nor simple mixture, but Chinese --- the realization of duple strain of being self and international at the stance of compatibility and coexistence under the interaction between the national and the exotic.*

随着“当代艺术”体系在中国的建构，“策展人”也逐渐成为中国艺术产业链中不可或缺的环节。20世纪80年代以来，中国社会政治、经济、文化诸领域都发生了外向型的转变，交流的频繁使得中国的艺术从形式、语言、风格、内容到历史、理论、思潮、实践等多个层面，不断地、迅速地、全面地进行着变革。尤其全球一体化思潮的介入，大众文化和商业社会的新兴，以及高科技的数字化虚拟空间的发展，都促使中国策展人的价值观念从一个“兼济天下”的士大夫情怀转向一个行业知识分子的角色，也使得他们的视角更趋向于“国际”的宏观范畴，进而成为本土情境和国际语境交错的文化探索者。

追溯中国策展人行业的历史，严格意义上说，可以从1985年“美术新潮”算起。从1985年至1989年，一批关注现代艺术的批评家、艺术家开始以自己的艺术理念和价值标准着手策划了多次现代意义上的艺术展览，其中最具有标志意义的事件是1989年2月在中国美术馆举办的“中国现代艺术展”。由十四位当时活跃的史论家、评论家、艺术家组成“筹备委员会”，从学术主题的确立到展览策划、组织、宣传、筹资、评选等多方面第一次完整实践了现代艺术展览中“策展人”的方式，并从民间募集约8万元的展览资金和

约25万元的收藏资金。虽然从策划理念和评选标准来说，这是一场集体意识下的盛宴，不具备真正制度意义上的“策展人”概念，但是已充分显示其雏形特征，并培养了一批中国后来重要的批评家和策展人。

90年代初，社会气氛的转变与市场经济的发展，使得类似于“中国现代艺术展”用西方现代主义来解决中国艺术困境的幻想遭到破灭，取而代之是“政治波普”、“玩世现实主义”、“泼皮”、“艳俗”以及经济利益带动下的实际主义作风。尤其西方的商业操作模式逐渐传入中国，促使新形势下批评家的作用发生转变，开始以“艺术总监”、“学术主持”的身份亮相。之后，由于分工的细化，“策展人”才真正以展览的运作者身份走向历史的前台。这时期的“策展人”，或是批评家兼任，或是艺术家玩票，或是新生代的直接介入。

归纳策展人行业形成的主要原因有以下几点：其一，市场化操作成为艺术活动的主要手段，西方的展览机制成为中国效仿的对象。艺术产业链的形成需要“策展人”环节，策展人的问题意识，又反作用于产业链的良性循环。其二，消费主义观念、大众文化趣味和后现代主义思潮，成为中国九十年代文化的主要特征。追求艺术活动背后的经济价值成为主要目的，尤其商业展览的盈利模式，都刺激了一些艺术家、批评家、史论家、收藏家、商人开始步入策展人行列。其三，中国的传统艺术展览是以“组织”方式为主，集中于博物馆、美术馆。随着国际交流活动的频繁，为适应国际需求，简化工作流程，变革原有的机构制度，需要聘请更多的策划人员。其四，批评家原来依赖的“文本批评”逐渐显出单一的劣势，展览

成为他们宣传艺术主张的又一重要途径，而且展览的叙述方式比文本表达更容易适应图像时代的需求。其五，西方策展人开始将中国的当代艺术介绍到欧美，对国内的艺术操作方式影响很大，同时，一批中国批评家、艺术家移居海外，分别参与到国际重大当代艺术展览中，并使策展人、艺术家、批评家的关系互相为依存，也刺激了国内的策展行业。其六，策展人学术的独立性，以及与外界交流机会的频繁，所赋予的“导演”权限等特点，都成为年轻一代选择的依据。

经历了80年代的学术启蒙和90年代的市场培育，90年代中后期的中国策展人行业由全球化文化的洗礼而逐渐建立起一套面向“国际”的操作方式。正因如此，21世纪初中国策展人也从一个“舶来品”，转向走进国际语境的中国身份的知识分子形象。“国际策展人”成为一个身份新名词流传于市，不仅打破了当代艺术原先的言说方式，而且在阐释过程中演绎了作品之外的学术价值。面对中国策展人重要的转型期，思考中国艺术未来发展的策略和方向，审视中国关于“国际”的想象、国际展览的定位、展览机制的构建、“国际策展人”实现方式等，都会发现其随着中国社会的日新月异而逐渐远离一味模仿的初级阶段。

在中国90年代以来的现代化进程中，“全球一体化”、“普世主义”与“后殖民”等概念先后出现在我们的视野中，它们既是冷战之后国际新形势下的产物，也可以从某种程度上被视为近代以来“中西之争”的延续。中国关于“国际”的想象从现代国家制度建立开始，就带有鲜明的西方色彩，一直延续到全球化文化的思潮，似乎西方的标准成为我们的标准，成为地理概念上世界的标准。然





而，近年来文化多元化的提倡开启了中国文化复兴的梦想，尽管非西方中心的国家仍然处于政治“一极强权”主导的大背景下，但是这个想象本身的局限性，以及强权意识的逐步削弱，使我们这个群体开始抛弃固有的观念，转向追求中西方差异与融合并存的自我实现。这个转向是深刻而且广泛的，却又始终夹杂着对于西方主导的全球化文化的认同和消解之间反复拉锯的过程。

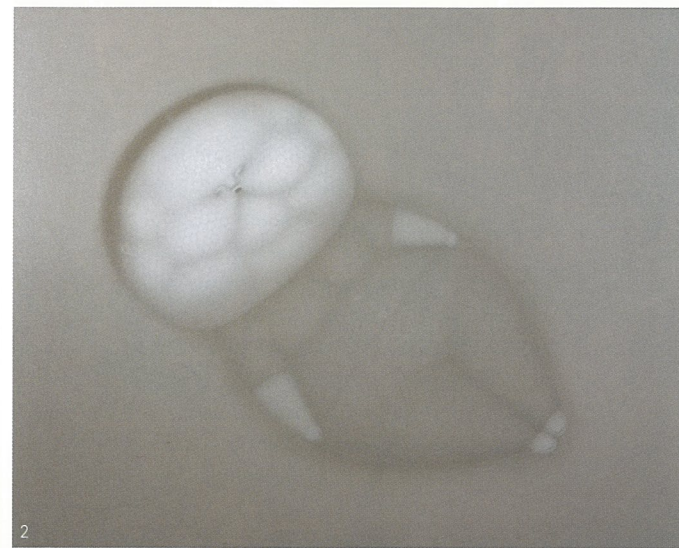
由此可见，参与国际展览是在遵循西方既定游戏规则的基础上，寻找规则以外的生存空间，并试图建立非“国际”中心的操作法则。从92年卡塞尔文献展外围展“欧洲外围现代艺术国际大展”、93、95年国际威尼斯双年展、94年圣保罗国际双年展，少数艺术家被动地参加国际大展，到21世纪中国主动申请建立诸如圣保罗双年展中国馆、威尼斯双年展中国国家馆的独立展示场所，同时组织了自己“国家”的国际大展，如上海双年展、广州三年展等，以及官方意志介入的重大交流展览，如中法文化年、中俄文化年、中意文化年美术展、巴黎蓬皮杜艺术中心“中国当代艺术展”等，都试图打破中国艺术被选择的格局，关于国际展览的概念也从趋之若鹜转向理性分析和实践，以致中国增加了参与国际对话的可能，并且使国内外进一步认识中国本身的文化价值。

中国展览本身的机制建设也逐渐在中西方互动、体制内外交流、艺术产业链诸环节的共建平台上，展开了形式多样化的尝试，尤其像“全国美展”这样传统与“学术”共同谋划的展览，也开始

为艺术在体制内的生存寻找新的方式，双年展可以说是一种替代或转化。中国的展览机制和策展人，从外部环境而言，其成长背景与文化属性决定了艺术价值必须通过国际交流得以最终实现；从内在需求而言，其无论是逐渐完善的必然性和萌发创造力的偶然性，还是日益高涨的权力意识、市场观念、学术发展的要求，都希望能够摆脱被规范的尴尬，进而获得一个现有“国际”基础上扩大的中国代言。

那么，中国策展人的“国际”转向显而易见，然而，面对日趋复杂多变的“国际”形势，关键在于中国策展人何以“国际”？

第一，中国的“国际策展人”是具备独立学术研究能力，并已经或正在建立获得多数人认可的一个学术观念或一套学术体系，其学术价值具备当下或长久的历史意义。第二，他们所参与策划的展览必须是“国际”标准普遍认同的，无论展览规模的大小，无论主题是地域性还是国际化的问题，都将经历国际评述的价值考验。第三，他们之所以能够策划一系列获得“国际影响”的展览，无一不是既通晓“国际”游戏规则，又能够以自身所持的文化身份和立场实现策展人对当下文化的判断和选择。第四，他们能够熟练地运用专业技能完善整个展览过程中的诸多环节，灵活地平衡政府、策展团、赞助商、艺术家、媒体、公众之间的复杂关系。同时，依靠团队的能动性和协作力，寻找适合自身表达和展览呈现的多样化操作模式。第五，面对综合语境、交互文化和数字化信息革命的现状，



为“国际”社会带来符合时代需求的“中国”艺术，并为中国艺术带来“国际声望”，成就当下中国式的文化策略将是中国策展人转向“国际”的重要使命。

中国与国际，既不是矛盾，也不是简单地融合，而是在内与外的相互作用下，以“兼容并蓄”的大国文化姿态，实现着自身与国际的双重张力。中国策展人必须加入“国际”，“国际”也必须重新审视中国艺术。

With the establishment of “contemporary art” system in China, “curators” have gradually become an indispensable link in Chinese art industry. Since 1980s, owing to the extroverted transition in politics, economy and culture in the Chinese society, Chinese art has been reformed continuously, rapidly and comprehensively in its form, language, style, content as well as history, theory, ideology and practice. Especially when the idea of globalization is penetrating in, when pop culture and commercial society are revitalizing, when high technology and digitalized virtual space are developing, Chinese curators are spurred to change their value from the role of an all-round helper to a specialized intellect. Their vision has been more of an “international” macro-category and thus they have become a cultural explorer in the complex of indigenosity and exoticism.

The history of Chinese curators dates back to the New Movement of Art in 1985. From 1985 to 1988, a bunch of artists and critics caring about contemporary art started to scheme quite a few modern art exhibitions, based on their own art concepts and value standard, the emblem of which is “China Modern Art Exhibition” held in China Art Museum in February, 1989. The “Preparatory Committee” consisting of 14 pragmatic historians, critics and artists for the first time practiced the role of “curators” in modern art exhibitions in theme deciding, exhibition planning, organizing, publicizing, funding as well as judging. They also raised a fund of 80,000 rmb for the exhibition and 250,000 rmb for collection. It was seen as a feast considering its planning concepts and judging standards. Technically, it did not have the true concept of “curators” in its system, but it showed the rudimental features of curators and nurtured a batch of important critics and curators afterwards.

In the early 90s, with the change of political atmosphere and development of market-oriented economy, the dream of saving Chinese art out of the hard situation with western Modernism came to its end. It was replaced by “Political Pop”, “Cynic realism”, “Hippy”, “raffishness” and practiciness propelled by economic profits. Especially the western commercial operation mode brought into China changed the role that critics played in the past. They emerged with their new identity of “art directors” or “intellectual emcees”. And then, after their job became more and more specific, curators stepped onto the front stage as true exhibition operators. The curators of this time are either part-time critics, art enthusiasts or a new generation directly involved.

To conclude the reasons why the industry of curators has come into being, firstly, the market-oriented operation has become the main method to hold art activities. The western exhibition system has become a standard for China to follow. The industry of art needs curators as a link while the ideology of curators has a corresponding effect on the benign cycle of the industry. Secondly, the idea of consumerism, the cultural taste of the public and the post-modern ideology have featured the culture of the 90s in China. To pursue the potential economic value of art activities has become the major goal, especially when the profits of commercial exhibition stimulated some artists, critics, historians, collectors and businessmen to join the world of the curators. Thirdly, the traditional

1、8848-1.86 装置录像 徐震

2、女儿 油画 潘德海

3、舞台剧 生育报告剧照2 吴文光+文慧

4、大生活，小美丽 油画 易雯





art exhibitions in China were run by organizations such as museums and galleries. Frequent exchange activities worldwide have made it necessary to have more planners to simplify the working process and reform the existing system to meet the international needs. Fourthly, "literal criticism" that critics relied on has had its disadvantage of singleness. Exhibitions have become another stage for them to make their art opinions known. And the way that an exhibition speaks them out meets the needs of the visual era better compared with literal expression. Fifthly, western curators have had a great influence on the art operation mode by introducing Chinese contemporary art to Europe and America. In the meantime, a batch of Chinese critics and artists have emigrated abroad and got involved in major art exhibitions worldwide. Curators, artists and critics start to coexist and rely on each other. The industry of exhibition in China is stimulated. Last but not least, the academic independence, the chance of frequent exchange with the outside world, the power as a "director", all these have become the conditions on which the young generations make their choices.

Having gone through the academic enlightenment in the 80s and the market nourishment in the 90s, the curators of the mid and late 90s have gradually set up an operation style looking at "the world" influenced by the culture of globalization. It is because of this that, at the start of 21<sup>st</sup> century, Chinese curators have converted themselves from an "import" to intellectuals making their way to the international context with a Chinese identity. "International curators" are gaining their popularity as a new identity word. It not only transcends the former way of interpreting contemporary art, but also shows in the course of elucidation the academic value other than the art piece itself. Thinking about the strategy and direction for the future development of Chinese art, surveying the Chinese imagination about "international", positioning of international exhibitions, establishment of exhibition mechanism and implementation of "international curators", we can find that, with the massive changes that are happening to the Chinese society, Chinese curators are going

further from the initiative stages of simply copying during this crucial transition period.

During the modernization of China since 90s, concepts such as "globalization", "internationalism" and "post-colonialism" have popped up in our vision. They are the products of new global situation after the cold war. In some sense they can also be seen as the extension of the competition between the East and the West. Since the establishment of modern state system, Chinese imagination about "international" apparently smacks of the western world. That extends to the ideology of globalised culture as if western standards have become Chinese standards and geographically the world standards. However, the advocacy of culture pluralism arouses a dream of revitalizing Chinese culture. Although those unwesternised countries still have the background of "one centralized power" in its politics, yet the constraint of this imagination and the weakening awareness of power impel a group of people like us to give up our intrinsic notion and strive for the coexistence and merger of the differences between the east and the west. This turning is of profound significance but also a process of swaying between the approval and disapproval of the globalised culture led by the West.

This shows that the Chinese participation in international exhibitions is actually the search for survival space beyond the existing games rules by following them and attempts to set up operation rules that are not international-oriented. A small group of artists took passive part in some international major exhibitions such as Venice International Biennial in 1993 and 1995, and Sao Paulo International Biennial in 1994. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, China has actively applied for the establishment of independent exhibition venues like the Chinese Hall in Sao Paulo and Venice Biennial. We have also organized major exhibitions of our own country like Shanghai Biennial and Guangzhou Triennial and exchange exhibitions involving government wills, such as Sino-French Culture Year, Sino-Russian Culture Year, Art exhibition of Sino-Italian Culture Year and Exhibition of Chinese Contemporary Art in Pompidou Art Center in Paris.

They were trying to break the situation of Chinese art being selected. The concept of international exhibition has turned to rational analysis and practice. It increases the possibility of China being involved in international dialogue, which makes the Chinese cultural value known to a greater extent in and outside China.

Chinese exhibition mechanism is taking various experiments on the platform built up by the interaction of the East and the West, exchange of the internal and external system, together with the links of art industry. Even some traditional exhibitions planned by "politics" and "academia", like "National Art Exhibition", has started its search for a new way to survive in the art system. Biennial is the replacement or conversion. For Chinese exhibition mechanism and curators, as to the external environment, their background and attributes decide that artistic value must be realized by means of international exchange; as to the internal needs, in respect of inevitability of gradual betterment and chance of creative explosion or the increasingly rising notion of rights, market and requirement for academic development, they wish to get rid of the embarrassment of being ruled and try to expand their Chinese identity on the basis of being international.

Chinese curators' conversion to "international" is quite clear; however, the key lies in how they are going to make themselves "international" facing the increasingly complicated international situation.

Firstly, the "international curators" of China are an academic concept or academic system capable of independent research, which is approved by the majority. Its academic value is of the current and everlasting historic significance. Secondly, the exhibitions in which they are involved in planning have to be widely approved by an "international" standard. Whatever scale they have, whether the theme is local or international, they are all going to experience the trial given by the international judgment. Thirdly, they are able to plan a series of exhibitions with worldwide influence thanks to the fact that they are very well aware of international game rules and they can make judgment and choice of the contemporary culture with their cultural identity and stance. Fourthly, they can use their expertise to optimize the links in the course of exhibition and balance the complicated relations between the government, the curator groups, the sponsors, the artists, the press and the public. Meanwhile, relying on initiative and cooperation of the team, they can find a versatile operation mode that is suitable for their self-expression as well as exhibition presentation. Fifthly, in the situation of comprehensive context, interactive culture and digitalized information revolution, what will be the vital mission for the Chinese curators to turn "international" is to bring to the "international" society "Chinese" art that meets the needs of our times and to bring to the Chinese art the international reputation and to fulfill the contemporary Chinese cultural strategy.

Chinese and International, they are neither contradictions nor simple mixture, but Chinese — the realization of duple strain of being self and international at the stance of compatibility and coexistence under the interaction between the national and the exotic. Chinese curators must join "the international"; "the international" should reinterpret Chinese art.

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| 1. 飞鸟不动     | 多媒体影像 | 汪建伟 |
| 2. 围观系列之拳王  | 综合材料  | 周啸虎 |
| 3. 衣服系列之一   | 油画    | 曾晓峰 |
| 4. 十七岁的单车剧照 | 电影剧照  | 王小帅 |

