

日常与核心——林穴的无题画  
THE EVERYDAY AND THE CORE—LIN XUE'S UNTITLED DRAWINGS  
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林穴,《无题(画卷二)》  
1995-1998年,水墨画  
457 × 152 厘米  
摄影师: 林子英@型艺工房  
Lin Xue, *Untitled (scroll no. 2)*, 1995-98, ink on paper  
457 x 152 cm  
PHOTO: eddielam@  
imageartstudio  
Courtesy of Gallery EXIT  
and the artist



生于1968年的林穴，是一个谜。今年林穴获邀参加第55届威尼斯艺术双年展，其作品于马西米利亚诺·焦尼策展的“百科殿堂”展示，仿佛一举成名。在此之前，看过他作品的人，听过他名字的人，大抵不超过一千人，主要的观众是收藏家、观看展览的人，以及在网络世界搜索到“林穴”而看过作品图像的人。自2008年始，在安全口画廊举办个展，林穴从不参加开幕，亦没有撰写所谓的“艺术家声明”，了解其人其画，除了看他的绘画，便只能从零碎的新闻，以及展览图录刊载的文章窥探端倪。

Lin Xue (b. 1968) achieved instant fame when his work was shown at the 55th Venice Biennale this year. Curator Massimiliano Gioni had invited Lin to participate in “Il Palazzo Enciclopedico.” Prior to the show, no more than a thousand people had seen Lin’s work or had heard his name. His small group of followers largely consisted of collectors, art lovers, and Internet surfers who stumbled upon his name and JPEGs of his work. When Gallery Exit organized Lin’s first solo exhibition in 2008, Lin provided no artist statement and was absent for the opening. To date, the life of Lin Xue remains shrouded in mystery. With little background information to go on, one relies on his artworks, a few media reports, and catalog texts to understand the artist and his practice.



林穴的竹枝  
One of Lin Xue’s bamboo sticks

神秘的人，画画也具有独特面貌。他的绘画像在描绘一种风景，包括山石、漂浮的国度、鸟虫花卉等，其山水结构只是形像，画家所营造的其实是一种潜藏的生命构图，自给自足的异域之所。至今，林穴创作的绘画作品不超过100件，每一幅画都以“无题”命名，画面出现钤印和题款，而林氏惯用水墨纸本，兼取直幅及横幅作为表现形式，这似乎都在提示观众，他的绘画或是溯源自国画传统；然而，分类只是提供辨识的指标，他的画仍有别于传统国画，近观远望，风景有异，我们应如何理解这些“无题”画呢？

回顾他的创作历程，并非这几年才开始创作，早在上世纪90年代，他曾获邀参加“宏利艺术新晋作品展九五”。当时香港已成立多个艺术组织及画会，香港中文大学、香港大学已设立艺术系，其他大专院校亦开办美术课程，林穴却没有报读艺术课程，也没有加入任何艺术团体，他按本能绘画，然而作品

自入选1998年“当代香港艺术双年展”后，长达十年的时间，他没有再发表任何作品——销声匿迹了。踏入21世纪，新晋艺术家大都接受大学正规的艺术训练，创作重技艺，亦重思辨，租用工作室创作，出席开幕派对，已成趋势。林穴隐遁十年后，连续四年举办个展，仍然特立独行，以登山为乐，将所见所闻、所思所感，于纸墨间呈现。沉默的蛰居生活对其创作有何影响？停画十年，他的经历和思考对其画风的形成有影响吗？本文未必能解答以上问题，但愿提供阅读谜题的一点线索。

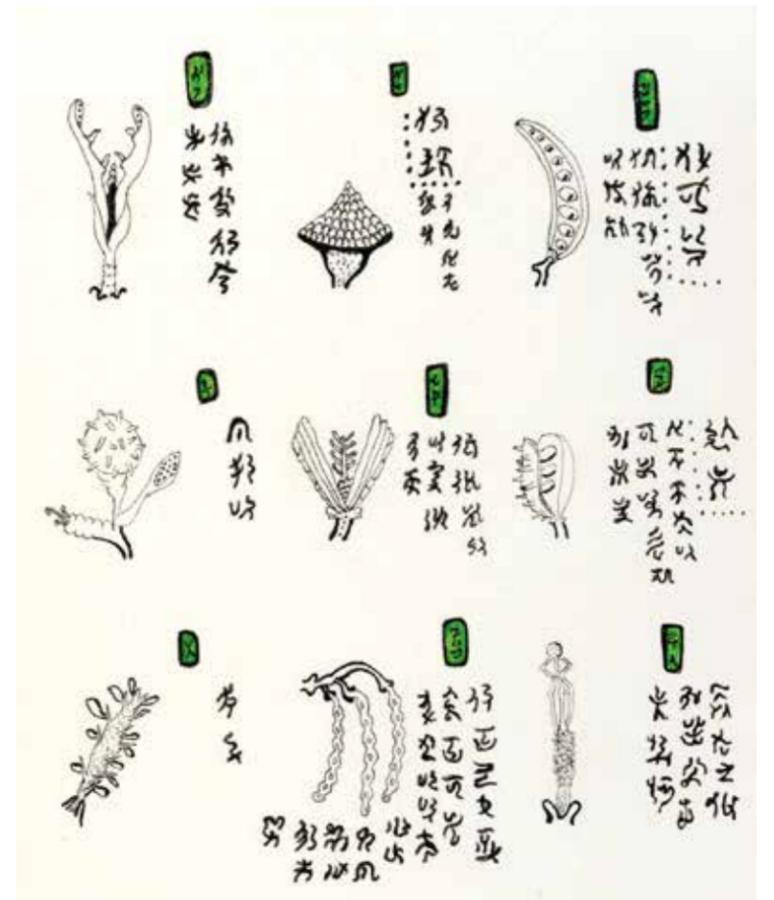
### 溯源日常

性本爱丘山。

林穴的性情与淡泊名利的古人相契。家住香港新界，离群隐居。自五岁由福建移居香港，他便常到城门郊野公园游玩，沉醉在山水草木之中。他喜欢登山远足，这是从小便养成的嗜好。受到大自然的感召，二十多岁时，他曾放弃工作到大陆的山村僻野居住过一段时间。置身山野的无人之境，令他感觉自己像在世界核心。某个夏日黄昏，当他漫步荒野，远望山脚的炊烟升起，倏忽忘言泪流。他顿感迷失，非为那消散的一缕烟，而是领悟到世界即是一缕烟，一切不在时间之内，正如“一即一切，一切即一”。其后他返回香港，作品入选“当代香港艺术双年展”，因为家庭生计与个人理想的严重冲突所产生的压力，令他没有继续创作及发表作品。十年后他重新将竹枝削尖蘸墨，在纸上画画。因崇尚自然，所以选取简单的工具，而竹枝纯粹，非人工制品。林穴表示，通常一根竹枝便能完成一幅画，用完后才再上山采摘；而画画，是为了直接记录所见。

林穴称自己是自然的模仿者，“只看，没想”。他解释说，山中所见在画纸呈现，因有了形象仿佛是自己要说些什么，其实他没有刻意想表达什么意念，绘画时尽量减少思辨。这种对自然的模仿，或许是将日常情感呈现的过程。西方风景画强调写实，再现真实；中国山水画则注重文人笔墨意趣，遣兴抒怀。观其作品，画面的整体构图及内部组织，皆非真实的再现，寄情山水的精神则与文人契合。其创作源头应来自画家平日对自然的关注及感知世界的方式：登山而知大自然的

图源自《随笔集》  
Image from Lin’s *Suibiji*  
Courtesy of Gallery EXIT and the artist



SUCH AN ENIGMATIC man as Lin Xue creates equally compelling work. His drawings appear to depict a kind of landscape composed of rocks, floating kingdoms, birds, and flowers. These pictorial elements codify a hidden map of other, self-sufficient space. Presently, Lin has created no more than 100 drawings, all of which are untitled. His drawings, made with ink on paper, are typically horizontally or vertically composed, and overlaid with seals and calligraphy on the side. While these drawings convey a likeness to Chinese ink paintings, upon closer inspection, they are distinctively different from the traditional discipline.

Lin Xue began to draw as early as the 1990s. In 1995, he participated in a group show “Manulife Young Artists Series.” In those days, The Hong Kong art scene thrived with art organizations and associations. The Chinese University and Hong Kong University both operated art departments, and professional schools offered regular art classes. Lin did not seek formal art education, nor did he join any collective. After participating in the 1998 Hong Kong Art Biennial Exhibition, Lin disappeared for the next 10 years with no public release of new work.

Lin Xue resurfaced in the twenty-first century with four consecutive years of solo exhibitions. By then, most of his contemporaries had received professional training, come to emphasize technicality and theory in their work, maintained studio practices, and regularly attended opening parties. Lin, on the other hand, maintained his independent practice of recording all that he saw, heard, thought, and felt onto ink on paper. How has the silence of solitary life impacted his work? In the years during which he abandoned painting, how did his experiences and thoughts impact his later aesthetic style? I am unable to answer here, but I can provide some clues.

### TRACING THE EVERYDAY

IT IS IN our nature to love nature.  
Like a virtuous ancient Chinese man, Lin

Xue is disinterested in fortune and fame. He lives a quiet life in New Territories, Hong Kong. Originally from Fujian, Lin migrated to Hong Kong at age five. As a child, he frequented Shing Mun Country Park and loved long walks and hikes. In his twenties, Lin gave up his job to live in a remote mountain range on the Mainland. There, he felt like he was at the center of the world. One summer, when the sun was setting, he walked through the wild fields and watched smoke rise from the foot of the mountain. He wept as he realized that the world too, is one wisp of smoke, as the saying goes, One in All and All in One.

When Lin first returned to Hong Kong, his work was selected for Hong Kong Contemporary Art Biennial. Then for next 10 years, financial concerns led him to abandon his art practice. After a decade of inactivity, he eventually picked up his bamboo stick, dipped it in ink, and began to paint again. Lin explains that the bamboo sticks are not artificial tools. He typically exhausts one stick per drawing, and replenishes his supply by collecting sticks in the woods. The act of drawing, for Lin, is a direct record of what he sees in the mountains.

Lin considers himself an imitator of nature; he aims to “to see without interpreting.” He seeks to draw from direct observations, and avoids infusing his drawings with any further meaning. He tries to think as little as possible during the process. Seeking to imitate nature, he conveys an immediate imprint of his daily sensibilities. Western landscape values real-

形貌，后内化为对自然的感悟，透过直觉主导，以意创造了“看到”的事物。

然而，林穴又打比喻说，“纸是湖，我坐湖边静待瞬间鱼跃，然后把鳞光凝定下来，此鳞光非我臆想，而是再现山中所见”。他看到的是事物的存在。在灵感闪现时，他及吋在画纸上捕捉那些于思想流动时沉淀下来、渗透真实经历的奇思异想。由于对自然的观察及喜爱所产生的移情作用，使他觉得即使一沓凌乱的书也有岩石的质感。画画是记录，亦是一种姿态。2008年至今持续进行的一系列浑然天成的习作，是“把平日山中所见抄录纸上”。

### 呈现核心

或许，画家极力追求纯粹的境界，所以画中的超现实景观既开放，又封闭，造成此悖论的原因是，画中山水物象的轮廓清晰可见，然而观众必须介入到图像的内部，主动观看，才能从众多的蝇头细节中推敲出端倪，窥探画家眼中、笔下无限的自然生态。他的绘画，似画家独白，其中亦有“旁白”：比如绘画旁边承继国画传统有一行题跋及自刻的印章，又如习作稿上自家臆造的书体文字。这些文字艰涩难懂，表面看来，文字是画家主动补充的内容，与图像相映成趣，实则无法阅读。

林穴没有接受学院艺术训练，萌生绘画的强烈愿望，是因为，1990年他在香港艺术中心看到台湾素人艺术家洪通的回顾展，深受启发，而开始创作。除了受到本能的驱使作画外，从画面结合绘画、书写文字和钤印的风格，亦可见二人的联系。画家说，读小学时，已对无法辨识的文字感兴趣。不能辨识的文字，似是画家与物沟通的窃窃私语，这套语言系统封闭，如此反复使用，倒成为画家的创作特色。这种独特性，体现在文字与超现实景观相结合之间的关系，似懂非懂，而文字生涩所造成的距离，并没有妨碍观众体会画面所呈现的质朴情感。如唐代书写“无题”诗闻名的李商隐，首首“无题”皆情诗，文字艰涩隐晦，读者仍能体会那不能言说、难以言说的款款深情。

90年代，大抵从自握竹枝绘画开始，林穴已形成个人风格。创作像无心播种而开之花，酝酿经年，渐至，数量不多，貌似重复而耐看，见其对宇宙万物的感悟及省思。画家以纸墨记录直率的情感，一挥而就，画面景观描绘精巧细致，以点线面及深浅浓淡的墨色经营压缩画面空间，层层叠叠，蕴含韵律，暗自彰显秩序，如专注细看，便能发现种种细节以及物的表情。

林穴开始只想完成一幅“看不完的山水”，画了一幅又一幅，源于对自然有难言的惦念。由单幅作品到系列作品。那十年光景的思与行，受潜移默化之功效，渐次影响他的创作：画家比以往较能冷静抽离地画画，如2010年创作的三幅《无题》，整体构图一致，画面空间的分割层次分明，以海为地，岛屿上的崇山峻岭直上云霄，微小生命孕育其中，而水中央以一圆形留白，内画海洋生物，使天地万物浓缩在同一画面中——圈内的微小生物呼应习作稿中物的诸种形态，平日的登山记录成了画家绘制宏篇巨幅的练习。林穴驾驭画面的能力及自信，进一步反映在一组



图源自《随笔集》  
Image from Lin's *Suibiji*  
Courtesy of Gallery EXIT and the artist

12幅的系列绘画中。

从小到大，林穴便对山中某棵树的果核着迷，每次走近必捡起细看。约两年前，他决定为它们做点事。因为喜欢雨天，有一次他乘雨上山，雨势太大时，他便在亭子等待雨稍缓才再上路，怎知走到树下雨又转大，刹那间狂风雷电。他说，当雨势淋漓捡果核的时候，那种难言的惦念再次油然而生，登时除了狂喜，只剩下一片空。一组12幅的无题画，便以果核为原型，记录这一次的体验。每一幅画呈现由不同角度观看桃核时的不同面貌。桃核于画心，俨如独立天地，漂浮于宇宙间。桃核的内部层峦叠嶂、万物繁殖，而雨云及涟漪，一上一下，则以淡墨及细小圆点标示，既象征天空和水面，又呼应画家的创作缘由，从而开拓了画面的内涵与想象空间，添加诗意。近在咫尺，观众仍需一种趣味以观看及细察，方能体会那言有尽、意无穷的微妙。

“没有不开花的兽，没有不开花的鸟”，这一诗情洋溢的句子蕴含哲理，为林穴的作品下了注脚。这是彝族史诗《梅葛》中的两句——关于繁衍，以及赞美春风吹来万物绽放的景象。林穴喜欢史诗式的创世神话，因其接近原点，个展“第六日”的命名亦与圣经创世故事有关。他说，“我常常觉得不知下沉，无法领会上升的喜悦”。或许人生的历练及对大自然的热爱，促使画家憧憬美好，而他一直在想的是人的问题。他的无题画，正如布莱克的诗句——“一花一天堂”，渺小而伟大，刹那而永恒，千变万化而始终如一，仿佛爱情。

ism, while Chinese landscape focuses on the play of ink and brush and the expression of emotions. Lin's drawings do not objectively replicate our present world; like the literati, Lin imbues his landscapes with a personal vision. Through daily observation of nature, he experiences the world. He sees forms of nature, internalizes them and reflects upon them. With these these forms of nature, Lin communicates his subjective view of the world.

According to the artist, “the paper is a pond by which I quietly sit. I am waiting for fish to jump, I am waiting to capture the glow of its scales. This glow is not my imagination, but a reappearance of what I have seen in the mountains.” In that spark of inspiration, he sets down on paper a depiction of flowing thoughts and wild imaginations infused with his experience of reality. Lin's vision is filtered through his obsession of nature; he sees the texture of stones in a messy pile of books. A drawing is not only a record; it is also an attitude. Since 2008, Lin has been maintaining a natural practice of recording daily sightings in the mountains.

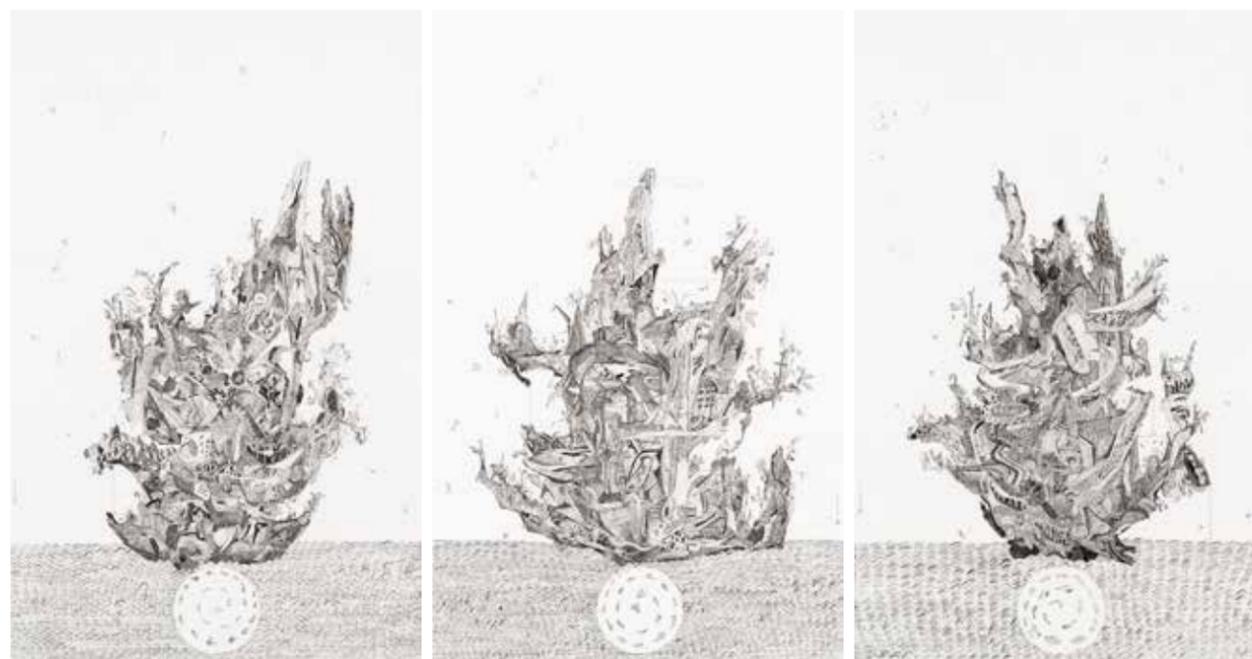
### TO DEPICT THE CORE

LIN XUE'S DRAWINGS contain multiple layers of readability. Beyond coherent pictorial forms, the viewer must also delve deeper into the image, to inspect the minute details, in order to detect unlimited natural ecology as seen through the eyes of the artist.

The drawings are like the artist's monologue, the accompanying calligraphy a secondary narrative. The latter echoes the Chinese tradition of dedicating poetry to paintings; these dedications also look like the artist's own comments on his drawing exercises. The calligraphy appears to supplement the drawing, but their literary meaning is too difficult to understand.

Lin's desire to paint was first inspired by his visit of Taiwanese amateur artist Hong Tung's 1990 retrospective at the Hong Kong Art Center. Lin's reliance on intuition, his style of drawing, calligraphy, and seal all reflect strong influences from Hong Tung. As a child, Lin was fascinated by words that he could not understand. Similarly, Lin's drawings are like visual codes of a private language through which the artist channels the objects in front of him. Lin's drawings reveal a unique relationship between surreal landscape and language. The viewer lingers between understanding and incomprehension. The calligraphy on the side of the drawings does not distract the viewer from appreciating the simple emotions of the drawing. Like the Tang poet Li Shiyin's *Untitled*, Lin's nameless drawings are like esoteric love poems, conveying deep and unspeakable feelings that

《无题(2010-10)》，2010年，水墨画，78.1 × 52.4 厘米 × 3 张  
摄影师：林子英@型艺工房  
*Untitled (2010-10)*, 2010, ink on paper, 78.1 x 52.4 cm x 3 pcs.  
PHOTO: eddielam@imageartstudio  
Courtesy of Gallery EXIT and the artist





图源自《随笔集》  
Image from Lin's *Suibiji*  
Courtesy of Gallery EXIT  
and the artist

maintain a difficult relationship with words.

In the 1990s, Lin Xue began to use bamboo sticks as a drawing tool, which critically contributed to the formation of his distinct drawing style. Every creation is like a flower that sprouts from casually spread seeds. It takes years to nurture these seeds and only few of them reach eventual flowering. The flowers resemble one another, and the viewer contemplates them, pondering the cosmology of the universe. The artist records his unmediated emotions onto paper, in delicately drawn landscape. With points and lines, thick, thin, dark and light marks, Lin creates a compressed pictorial space that embodies layers of rhythm, secret orders. Upon close inspection, one may witness various details and material expression.

When Lin first started to draw, he wanted to create a never-ending landscape. Over the years, his continuous striving towards this goal reveals his deep connection with nature. In the past 10 years, Lin has become increasingly calm and objective in his practice. The triptych *Untitled* (2000) depicts a uniform composition organized by clear spatial divisions. From the bottom of the picture plane, each drawing begins with a layer of sea, from which vertical islands then rise towards the clouds. All of earth's life forms are condensed into one image, while a white circle filled with microcosmic creatures floats in between the waters. These creatures echo various

shapes found in Lin's daily records of mountain sightings. Observations from his daily exercises culminate into larger drawings.

Lin Xue's recent series of 12 drawings shows the artist's growing confidence in creating large-scale works. Ever since he was a child, Lin has been fascinated with the peach pits he finds in the woods. Every time he comes across one, he carefully picks it up for inspection. On one rainy day, he went up to the mountains. Suddenly, the rain grew too strong to bear, and he found refuge in a pavilion. Once it had calmed, he set out again—but the weather worsened, this time with harsh wind and thunder. Under a tree, he noticed a peach pit, and he felt impassioned with nature. He became so ecstatic his mind went blank. Inspired by this experience, the series of 12 drawings adopt the shape of the fruit. Every drawing depicts a different angle; one fruit stands at the center of one painting, floating between sky and earth. The fruit embodies layers of mountains and peaks, in between which life is formed. Light ink and small points symbolize the rain and clouds that fall from the sky to ripple across the sea. The drawings depict an intimate, poetic, and imaginative space that still requires the viewer to observe with a keen interest in order to sense the infinite subtleties within.

"There are no beasts that do not bloom, there are no birds that do not bloom." This poem, imbued with philosophical connotations, beautifully resonates with Lin Xue's work. The line is quoted from the Yi people's epic poem *Meige*, which speaks of reproduction and praises the spring wind and blooming life. Lin loves origin myths as told through epic poems. His recent exhibition "The Sixth Day" refers to the Christian story of Creation. "Without knowing how to sink, one can never know the joy of rising," says Lin. Perhaps through his various life experiences and his love for nature, Lin has fostered a desire for what is beautiful from the perspective of man. As with love, and as with William Blake's words "a heaven in a wild flower," Lin Xue's untitled paintings are small but great, ephemeral but eternal, ever evolving but always the same. 🍑

After



After