

Stephen WONG Chun Hei
Looking at the sky and the landscape beneath

28 July - 25 August 2018

Opening: Saturday, 28 July 2018, 4-7 pm

EXIT, 3/F, 25 Hing Wo Street, Tin Wan, Aberdeen, Hong Kong

Hours: Tue - Sat, 11am - 6pm

The works in the exhibition are testimony to WONG's deep and continuing fascination with landscape. Inspired by both Western and Eastern traditions and frequently spanning two or more canvases, his paintings draw the viewer into a world of lush green hills, winding mountain paths and ever-changing skies.

WONG's scenic panoramas have evolved naturally from the dreamlike, highly imaginary landscapes shown in "Daydream Travelogues", his previous solo exhibition at Gallery EXIT. However, compared to those earlier works, his new paintings are closer to their sources of inspiration. The nine-panel "The Dragon's Back" as well as the double-panel works "Shing Mun Reservoir" and "The Sunset Peak" are based on and named after some of Hong Kong's most spectacular sceneries.

Despite being inspired by actual places, WONG's landscapes are not meant to be exact representations of nature. The artist finds the inspiration for his works during long hikes through Hong Kong's countryside. Instead of taking photographs, he documents his experiences with pencil and watercolour sketches, an approach not unlike that of a 19th-century landscape painter in the European tradition.

Back in the studio, he reinvents the terrain from his sketches and memory, often relying on his imagination. The resulting landscapes are, above all, landscapes of the mind. They invite viewers to immerse themselves into an imaginary world and picture themselves as part of the scenery. In this regard, WONG's works resemble the idealised "mountain water" paintings of the Chinese tradition.

Those ink landscapes often feature small figures that allow viewers to place themselves in the painting: a scholar in contemplation, a lone traveller, a fisherman on his boat. In WONG's "Shing Mun Reservoir", tiny hikers serve the same purpose. In "The Sunset Peak", roads and footpaths wind up the slopes, adding dramatic depth to the landscape and directing the eye towards the summit - another common device in Chinese painting.

Apart from WONG's panoramic oils, the exhibition also includes his series "The Study of the Sky Every Day", a collection of 365 small-format acrylic paintings. The project was inspired by the famous landscape painter John Constable, who produced dozens of cloud studies in 1821 and 1822. The English artist saw the sky as the "chief organ of sentiment" in a landscape painting.

Following Constable's example, WONG devoted a whole year to capturing the sky and its changing cloud formations, finishing one painting per day. His studies reveal a plethora of colours, from the spotless azure of Hong Kong's summer sky to the stormy grey of typhoon days. If painting is "but another word for feeling", as Constable once proclaimed, then WONG's series is not just a record of clouds. It is also a testament to the richness of human emotions.

黃進曦
《眈天望地》

2018 年 7 月 28 日至 8 月 25 日

開幕：7 月 28 日(星期六)下午 4 時至 7 時
地點：安全口畫廊 香港 香港仔 田灣 興和街 25 號大生工業大廈 3 樓
辦公時間：星期二至六 上午 11 時至下午 6 時

安全口畫廊呈獻黃進曦全新個展《眈天望地》，展覽於 7 月 28 日至 8 月 25 日開放，開幕酒會在 7 月 28 日（星期六）下午 4 時至 7 時舉行。

全新系列呈現黃氏對風景的深刻體會。作品受東西方繪畫傳統薰陶，壯闊的風景橫跨多幅畫板，帶領觀眾漫遊翠綠鬱蔥的山丘和蜿蜒山徑，凝視變化多端的天空。

一系列全景油畫，畫風延伸自安全口另一個展《臥遊》，但與較早期的想像風景比較，新作所呈現的景象更貼近靈感泉源。九聯畫《龍脊》、二聯畫《城門上水塘全景》與《大東山》均以引人入勝的香港風景為題材。

然而，儘管藝術家取材自真實風景，但意不在於準確描繪大自然。黃氏經常遊走於香港郊野，為作品尋找靈感，但他不以攝影捕捉印象，而是以炭筆和水彩寫生的方式記錄每個片段，恰如 19 世紀的歐洲風景畫家。

返回畫室後，他集合寫生稿和記憶印象，融入幻想，塑造腦海中之丘壑，讓觀者沈浸其中，想像自己置身風景之內。在這層面來說，黃氏的作品不乏中國山水畫之理想化意象。

水墨山水裏的人物，如靜悟沈思的文人雅士、孤獨的旅人、一葉扁舟上的漁夫，都讓觀眾代入畫中，而《城門上水塘全景》的登山者，也使人產生共鳴。《大東山》的曲折路徑連綿而上，峰巒更見雄偉，也將視線逐步引領至山峰，是中國畫的另一技法。

除了全景油畫外，展覽也集合 365 幅小型塑膠彩畫作《眈天》，靈感源自風景畫大師 John Constable 在 1821 至 1822 間的數十幅觀雲作品。這位英國藝術家，將天空視為風景畫中「情感的樞紐」。

黃氏受到 Constable 的啟發，花上一整年時間捕捉香港天空和雲朵的形態，每日完成一幅畫作。作品色調濃淡有致，有萬里無雲的蔚藍夏空，也有颱風季節的灰色暴雨天。正如 Constable 所言，如果繪畫是「情感的另一種語言」，那麼黃氏的作品並非只是一般的觀雲記錄，也是人類豐富情感的體現。