

蘇笑柏的藍：蘇笑柏 個展

展期 | 2022.12.17 – 2023.02.18

地點 | 耿畫廊 台北市內湖區瑞光路 548 巷 15 號 3F

蘇笑柏的藍 SU XIAOBAI: BLUE

2022.12.17

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2022 年末，耿畫廊在這微微動盪不安的世界裡，開始眷念起蘇笑柏筆下畫出的藍。在幾次與藝術家的對談中，辦一檔藍色單色畫的想法慢慢成形，並將展名取作「蘇笑柏的藍」。並非偏好這些濃淡深淺、尺幅各異的藍，而是想著，一次只看一種顏色，亦不失為一種有趣的觀看方式。

現代主義作家詹姆斯·喬伊斯於 1922 年出版的《尤利西斯》，封面是一抹淡淡的藍。蘇笑柏和老友在巴黎見此書的原版後，一見傾心。如何再現這一抹淡藍的慾望，推動著他的創作，而如何畫出有體溫的藍，至今似乎仍難以捉摸。

這些大漆經典之作，一面一色耐人尋味，單色間有著層疊詩意與時間痕跡。

展覽無正式開幕活動，展覽跟隨一篇「身邊人的話」文字，經由藝術家身邊人的側寫，貼近藝術家的內心世界：
展期為 2022 年 12 月 17 日至 2023 年 2 月 18 日於耿畫廊 3F 展出。

身邊人的話

蘇笑柏畫的藍，其實不是畫。

從 Boesner 美術用品店出來時，袋子裡裝的全是色粉，沉甸甸的，貨架上的瓶瓶罐罐空了一大半，我們付款時他歉疚地笑了笑，說，這次選的英國牌子有點貴。我不太相信用比 Sennelier 更昂貴的牌子能畫出更好的畫。不過，他卻讀出了我的心思，按住我的手，認真起來：「這次不畫畫，畫色譜」。

本子裡有一行字「尤利西斯藍」，中文，不知從哪裡找來，寫在百靈用剩下的小本子裡。色譜裡沒有叫這種名字的藍。

這種藍不在色譜裡，在一本書裡，一本 1922 年出版的小說，《尤利西斯》封面上的顏色。2022 年我們和老孔在巴黎莎士比亞書店見到這本書的原版，他便從此固執地把這種無法描述的藍稱為尤利西斯藍，也固執地再現這個色系。有好幾次從畫室回來，短短一句：「今天只畫藍」。

《尤利西斯》封面上的顏色其實只是一種淡淡的希臘藍。莎士比亞書店老闆 S·畢奇站在巴黎奧賽火車站一號月台，等從第戎進站的蒸氣機，兩本剛從印刷廠出爐的書，帶著油墨味，準備趕在 1922 年 2 月 22 日這天作為生日禮物送給窮困潦倒的作家 J·喬依斯。書從送書人衣袋裡掏出，塞進 S·畢奇手裡，帶著一路捂在胸口的體溫。

沒有人能畫出有體溫的藍。

關於藍，我有幾次看到蘇笑柏見到濕壁畫後的藍，失魂落魄的樣子。

一次在義大利佛羅倫薩的聖馬可修道院，安吉裡里珂畫的「受胎告知」。

一次在山西太原，北齊徐顯秀的墓室壁畫「宴飲出行圖」。

一次在義大利菲拉拉的齊法諾亞宮的「月鑾房」。

看完濕壁畫的那天，他從石階上走上去走下來，大汗淋漓，像從水裡撈出來似的。從這天開始，他認為他畫過的所有的藍都不夠藍，也不夠好。

那麼，你還要聽蘇笑柏畫《佛羅倫薩·印象》的原因嗎？

臺台北，內湖，耿畫廊，五層樓。四層畫廊，地下一樓、一樓、二樓、四樓。

還有三樓呢，三樓不算是，三樓不是，蘇笑柏才有膽子只放他的單色畫。

這次作品見面會有個展名叫作「蘇笑柏的藍」。

如果有下一次，下一次叫「他的白」，「他的灰」，「他的紅黃黑」.....不是，都不是。下一次，如果有，叫「蘇笑柏的水墨」。

撰寫 / 身邊的家人

蘇笑柏

1949 年出生於武漢

現工作、生活於上海與杜塞道夫

蘇笑柏以大漆與繪畫間的轉化，使繪畫成為一種跨越文化經驗的自然表露。作品與作品間呈現不同的厚薄對比，創造出時間累積的層次與肌理，畫面細膩而富有雕塑感。類似殼狀的表面，感性的圓弧狀邊緣，磨損的紋理，他們完全依存於自身的條件，擁有自己的歷史與性格而獨立存在。蘇笑柏的作品用視覺語言和藝術的概念，體現了哲學與人類日常的普世議題。他的藝術體現了其存在的本身，而非描繪其他物件。就如同蘇笑柏所言：「把故事留給要故事的人，我只要一點光，一點平面上的起伏，一點色彩和流動，就好了。」

蘇笑柏 1949 年生於中國湖北省武漢市，畢業於德國國立杜塞道夫藝術學院，為杜塞道夫藝術家協會會員。重要展覽包括：台灣台北耿畫廊「一池光井：蘇笑柏畫展」（2019）、日本兵庫縣立美術館「無時無刻—蘇笑柏展」（2018）、台灣台中國立台灣美術館「大境—蘇笑柏藝術展」（2013）、德國蘭根美術館及德國國家電視二台聯合舉辦的德國巡迴展「色彩的王朝—蘇笑柏繪畫作品」（2010）、中國北京今日美術館「考工記—蘇笑柏藝術展」（2008）、中國上海美術館「大象無形—蘇笑柏藝術展」（2007）。

媒體垂詢

info@tinakenggallery.com

+886.2.2659.0789

追蹤耿畫廊

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Su Xiaobai: Blue — Su Xiaobai Solo Exhibition

Dates | 12.17.2022 – .02.18.2023

Venue | Tina Keng Gallery 3F, No. 15, Ln. 548, Ruiguang Rd., Neihu Dist., Taipei, Taiwan 11492

蘇笑柏的藍

SU XIAOBAI:
BLUE

2022.12.17

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As 2022 draws to a close, Su Xiaobai's blue palette comes to mind amidst the turmoil of the world. Out of several conversations with the artist emerged an idea of organizing a blue monochrome exhibition at Tina Keng Gallery, titled Su Xiaobai: Blue. It is not because Su prefers these blue representations of varying shades and sizes, but because he thought it would be interesting to observe a single color at a time.

The cover of *Ulysses*, a novel by modernist author James Joyce published in 1922, is a light shade of blue. This first edition of *Ulysses* enthralled Su and his old friend when they chanced upon it in Paris. How to re-create this shade of blue has since haunted Su's practice. But how to paint a blue that carries the warmth of a body remains elusive.

These works of lacquer — each a nuanced tint of blue — coalesce into a palimpsest of layered poetry and chiseled time.

This exhibition has no official opening, but is accompanied by “What the Loved Ones See,” a text penned by Su’s family members, allowing the viewer a glimpse of the albeit reclusive artist. The exhibition opens on December 17, 2022, and closes on February 18, 2023.

What the Loved Ones See

The blue Su Xiaobai paints does not really count as painting.

We came out of the Boesner art supplies store, heavy bags loaded with bottles of pigments. More than half of the store shelves were cleared out. “The British brand I picked this time is a bit pricey,” he said with an apologetic smile as we paid. I actually don’t believe that a brand more expensive than Sennelier will help make better paintings. Somehow he read my mind, pressed my hand and said in earnest, “This time I won’t make paintings. I’ll paint the color spectrum.”

There is a term in his notebook: Ulysses blue. I don’t know where he came across this term, quietly written in a tiny notebook left by Bailing. There is no such a thing as Ulysses blue in the color spectrum.

Such blue exists not in the color spectrum, but in a book published in 1922, titled *Ulysses*: the blue of its cover. Ever since we and our friend Lao Kong chanced upon the first edition of the book at Shakespeare and Company in Paris in 2022, Xiaobai has nicknamed this indescribable blue as Ulysses blue. And he has not stopped trying to re-create this shade of blue. Several times when he got back from the studio, the only words he uttered were: “Today I just painted blue.”

The cover of *Ulysses* is actually a pastel shade of Greek blue. Standing on Platform 1 at the Gare d’Orsay in Paris, Sylvia Beach — the owner of Shakespeare and Company — awaited the arrival of a steam train from Dijon. Two copies of the book fresh from the printing factory, permeated with the smell of ink, were on their way as a birthday gift to the destitute author James Joyce on his birthday, February 2, 1922. Revealed from inside the delivery person’s coat, the copies were stuffed into Beach’s hands, still warmed by the body that had carried them all along.

No one could paint a shade of blue that carries the warmth of a body.

When it comes to blue, I'm always reminded of how Xiaobai was lost in thought after he'd seen the blue in frescoes:

The Annunciation by Fra Angelico at the San Marco Museum in Florence, Italy.

The mural of *Feast Outing* in the tomb of Xu Xianxiu, Northern Qi dynasty in Taiyuan, Shanxi, China.

The Hall of the Months at the Palazzo Schifanoia in Ferrara, Italy.

The day he'd seen the frescoes, he paced up and down the stone steps, drenched in sweat, as if he'd just been fished out of the water. The blue he'd painted, ever since that day, had fallen short of his expectations of what blue is or should be.

Do you still need to hear the reason why he painted *Impression of Florence*? The Tina Keng Gallery in Neihu, Taipei, Taiwan has five floors: B1, 1F, 2F, and 4F. There's 3F, too. But the third floor doesn't count as part of the gallery's exhibition space. Not really. That's why Xiaobai has made the bold move of showing his monochrome paintings on the third floor. This unveiling of his new work is titled *Su Xiaobai: Blue*.

If there's a next time of an exhibition like this, it should be titled: Su Xiaobai: White, Su Xiaobai: Gray, or Su Xiaobai: Red, Yellow, and Black... No, none of these sounds right. If there's a next time, it should be titled "Su Xiaobai: Shuimo."

— Xiaobai's family

Su Xiaobai

Born in 1949 in Wuhan, China

Lives and works in Shanghai and Düsseldorf

A graduate from the Düsseldorf Academy of Fine Arts in Germany, and a member of the Association of Düsseldorf Artists 1844 (Verein der Düsseldorfer Künstler 1844), Su Xiaobai has developed a visual language rich in personal experience and abstraction under the guidance of Konrad Klapheck, Gerhard Richter, and Markus Lupertz, by breaking away from the skills mastered in Beijing.

Immersion in Western culture and separation from his homeland led Su Xiaobai to rediscover the duality between art and object, and renewed his perspective towards the traditional culture of his ancestry. Su became inspired by lacquer — a thousand-year-old plant material and a symbol of Oriental culture — upon his return to China in 2002. He began experimenting lacquer on linen, bricks, sackcloth, clay, vine, and wood as a substitute for oil on canvas. The artist paints layers of vibrantly colored lacquer in a structural and balanced



Tina Keng Gallery Taipei

composition, rendering a three-dimensional momentum. The seemingly arbitrary, yet meticulously deliberate handling of visual forms reveals the artist's pursuit of aesthetics and his personal sense of reinvention.

Su Xiaobai has exhibited internationally, including *Beneath a descending moon, breathing: The Paintings of Su Xiaobai*, Tina Keng Gallery, Taipei, Taiwan (2019); *And There's Nothing I Can Do*, Hyogo Prefectural Museum of Art, Kobe City, Japan (2018); *Grand Immensity - The Art of Xiaobai Su*, National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts, Taichung, Taiwan (2013); *The Dynasty of Colours*, Langen Foundation, Neuss, Germany (2009); *Kao Gong Ji — Xiaobai Su Solo Exhibition*, Today Art Museum, Beijing, China (2008); and *Intangible Greats*, Shanghai Art Museum, Shanghai, China (2007).

Press Inquiries

info@tinakenggallery.com

+886.2.2659.0789

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