

Imaginary roaming from home

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After computers became popular in the late 1990s, photo studios started to offer a new service, which was Photoshop-ing by combining the avatars on a portrait template with various scenes to make a photo with some kind of illusion. This wedding photo of the parents was made at that time. In the template, the height difference between men and women is large. In the photos, the father is much higher than the mother, which makes me very unaccustomed, because in reality, their height is not much different. Later, I also saw similar synthetic photos in the homes of many of my peers. In these photos, you can always see some similar scenes and details, such as the magnificent hall, the graceful interior, the glamorous costumes, the graceful posture, the bird-like stance... as if all the secular meanings The elements of good happiness are all loaded on such a thin and fragile piece of paper. If you look at it from a certain distance, such a photo reflects a "memory field" that is woven by multiple factors such as time, family, education, culture, life, and aesthetics.

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Taiwanese artist Xu Zheyu's solo exhibition "There is no news from home" begins with such a "memory field". The first part of the exhibition consists of a portrait template with no avatar and a handwritten letter. This portrait template is the artist's personal belongings. From the image, this is not a photo, but a portrait. A man with a blank face is sitting on the sofa in a dangerous position, wearing a huge ring on his left ring finger. On the table next to it is a pot of iron tree bonsai that represents wealth. Behind it are two paintings, one on the right is an eagle resting on a pine tree, and the top is a red sun. The picture on the left is chrysanthemum. Obviously, the style and characteristics of the two paintings are related to Japan. The ground is a unique colored floor tile in the south. When these elements are combined, it is probably possible to judge that this is Taiwan during the Japanese occupation period, and, to be sure, this represents the common sense and standard of the region in a certain era.

Due to the lack of facial portraits, this piece should have belonged to an individual's object, so the fundamental element of anchoring information is lost, and it is separated from a specific context and becomes a kind of common memory (dream). And this memory (dream) continues to the present, and it has built new memories in other people. Next to this portrait template is a letter written by Yu Yin's handwritten book to Su Wanqin. I don't know who Su Wanqin is. I only know from the letter that he is a 103-year-old elder who has donated his father's portrait to the Hakka Digital Collection Database, and the portrait artwork of this portrait is almost identical to the one in the exhibition hall. In the letter, Yan Yin is combing his memory from this once "common memory field". Write a letter to the actor of the TV series, a grandfather who has spent his life seriously and with excessive care, a young teacher from Hualien, a phone call from Auntie who is looking for "I", and repeatedly stressing his behavior in the letter. Fraud and so on. As a result, different eras, different identities, and different memories are superimposed with each other, and the time and reality that are filled with memories are slowly spread in the void formed by this headless portrait. To a world of image space and shape, it inhabits an unimagined imaginary roaming caused by the lack of identity.

2

From a real event, the actual images of the main characters and events are extracted, and the lack of information is caused by painting or cutting, which makes the viewers difficult to distinguish, and urges the viewer to fill with his own experience and imagination. This is Xu Zheyu. A commonly used creative technique. In the second part of the exhibition, he used this technique to create a minimal family history related to Yuan Zhijie. The surface of the work seems to be composed of images and texts. However, all the images in the image that can determine the personal image of the character are cut off from the position of the eye. The combination of words and images as factual evidence allows us to equate and compare written events with experiences and values in actual events. In a very succinct narrative, the artist buried a series of events, such as Grandpa's suicide, grandmother's conflict with his father, father's enlistment, father's new marriage and divorce, young mother's potential factors, and the same father. Mother's brother-sister relationship and so on. However, because the personal logo is "disappeared", such equivalence and comparison seem to find no real foothold, but fall into some uncertain, heterogeneous exploration and confirmation. Even such incidents have escaped specific people and things and dissipated into the viewer's own experience. When comparing text and image, we have to repeatedly explore the clues and details of the rationalization and development of events from the viewer's own memory and imagination, thus forming the intrusion and corrosion of common experience on common experience. The history of a person or a family is abstracted as a common vision of complementing each other.

It can be said that the most important part of this work is neither text nor image, but the act of "cropping" done by the artist. The death of the individual caused by this behavior establishes the existence of the common body in the display of this sharing behavior, and this work begins to exist in the comparison, questioning, negation and derivation of the other. In other words, isn't that the way each of us remembers to exist? Once memory becomes a thing of the past, it will inevitably face loss and demise. When we are retrospective of our own memories, is it necessary to rely on various looming facts and self-otherization to form an impossible existence?

3

In his book "Heavy Body", Liu Xiaofeng once said an anecdote about "Hercules at the crossroads." "Hercules, who lived a free life alone, sat in a tree in his own life in a summer, and saw two women coming towards him. Hercules faintly felt: these two A woman will be two different paths of life she has to face, one leading to good and the other leading to evil, even though the names of both roads are called happiness. Called Kagiya and Alet, respectively, Kargia is sexy and sultry, symbolizing easy enjoyment, but there is a nickname called "evil", and Alett dignified and sage, symbolizing heavy and bright, is considered beautiful. More than two thousand years ago, when Socrates told his student Xenophon about the story of Heracles at the crossroads, he gave his moral instructions absolutely. "You should be with Alet. together". And no matter how Hercules made a choice, Socrates' moral command interfered with the uncertainty of life symbolized by this story, and made a clear direction from some moral high ground or ideological authority instead of others. decision. This behavior can also be seen as a symbol of some unequal relationship between individual will and common will.

Once a person comes to this world, he will be placed in various common wills in different forms and degrees. The common will tends to issue irrefutable moral commands like Socrates, such as the "mantra" of "Calling You to Become a Big Official" in Xu Zheyu's video "There is no news from home." However, this "happiness" parasitic in the common will has filtered out the ethical judgments of "light" and "heavy" and committed to some absolute will. Since then, such a common will has been constantly involved in the life course of the individual, interrupting or disrupting the natural growth of the individual, allowing him to become another person while maintaining his own situation. The third part of this exhibition is perhaps the ethical dilemma of Xu Zheyu's video of the same name, "There is no news from home."

The cause of this work was the birth of the artist's nephew, Xu Liwen. The work records some fragments of Xu Liwen from the first half of his life. On various occasions, the artist witnessed the family's "preceding a good future before the tender meat of Xu Liwen has not yet penetrated." While recording these clips, the artist also joined his brother's life experiences, such as some of his rebellious behaviors and his life as a civil servant, and used this as a clue to describe the various relationships that hang over the family. Such as the secular standard represented by the pro-family, the existence of super-will represented by fortune tellers and so on.

In the works, the artist's thinking about ethical relations is included in the lines of the works through records, narratives, and interventions. The first is the superficial family ethics, some subjective and absolute will. (After the birth of Xu Liwen, the family pinned the family's wishes and discipline for this new life on various occasions. After the brother was recruited, he lived according to the will of the family, and the rites between the elders and the younger generation). Then there is the ethical concept determined by the individual will, the ethic determined by the rebellious behavior. In this ethic, the individual will appear as a tragic history (such as the tattoo of the brother, the head break in the fight, the locomotive in the childhood) Alleys and police chasing, etc.). Then there is the popular ethical concept determined by the secular concept (the pro-family who is a member of the parliament can pass unimpeded in the government department and become the standard of happiness). In addition, there is a sacred ethical concept above all else (the fortune teller can use his mysterious power to intervene in the ethical relationship of the whole family and form absolute authority).

Thus, the whole story forms a kind of central idea: a complicated and multi-combined ethical relationship, in which the individual will always point in one direction and form an absolute convergence under the traction of the common will. This is an absolute force under the influence of multiple ethical relationships. However, in the artist's narrative, such absolute force is full of indifference and cruelty. Undoubtedly, it is "filled in a good future" early. Xu Liwen inevitably encounters various indifferent and cruel forces in his future life, and his personal life is gradually formed and finally established in the struggle with these forces. Who is not like this?

The artist also extracts key characters from the video works from the realistic background in a comical way to form a visual cognitive gap. What the artist cares about here is not just personal family events, but the use of his family events as a starting point for thinking, trying to understand how individuals are given universality under the influence of various relationships.

The artist copied and tattooed his brother's back on a pig's skin and hung it in the exhibition hall. While watching the video, I stood next to the pig's skin. The tattoo on the pig's skin was occasionally illuminated by the light in the video, and then quickly submerged in the darkness.

Finally, talk about the name of the exhibition "There is no news from home." This is a strange expression that highlights the role of "home" by negating the "home". What is negated is the concrete, individual home, highlighting how the concept of "home" participates in the construction of personal memory, history, and ethics. It can be said that all three works in the exhibition point to the concept of "home", and the concept of "home" is the memory, history and ethics of "home" shared by all.