ALMINE RECH

Huang Yuxing: Under the Vault of Heaven

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In the summer of 1996, Huang Yuxing was gratified to receive an acceptance letter from the Central Academy of Fine Arts, yet this did not alleviate the self-doubt and anxiety about the growth that he had been experiencing. To escape from this predicament, he travelled to Xizang repeatedly with the intention of a temporary change of life. During his life in Lasa, besides painting, he had even become a lama for some time, studying and practising Buddhism in daily life and attending spiritual ceremonies... This not only relieved his physical and mental agitation, but most importantly, from then on, he had developed a new understanding of the world, the universe, and particularly of the self.

Upon his return to Beijing, Huang Yuxing created a body of works that was tinged with Expressionism and Fauvism. Most of these works take the human body as the subject matter, pervaded with an obscure, depressing, eerie and restless mood, as a part of his initial exploration of painting (visual and conceptual) itself (e.g., Mondrian, Modigliani, Chagall). But for him, the real impetus comes from confronting the deviation of the self and revealing his true feelings.

About ten years later, a new 'fluorescence' series emerged 'suddenly'. Metamorphosed landscapes, mountains and rivers replaced exaggerated bodies and portraits, shifting to a vibrant, variegated and mesmerising motif and style, away from the gloom and dreariness of the past. Seemingly a disconnection, it is, in fact, still his scrutiny and expression of self: "Under the vault of heaven, you and I are just beings." Needless to say, religiousness and spirituality comprise a hidden clue of expression in Huang's painting practice. In light of this, we have included nearly 30 masterpieces from each period of his painting career over the past 30 years, as well as dozens of works on paper and some documentation from the archives, discounting the chronological order and reorganising them according to the five themes of 'Lights', 'Rivers and Mountains', 'Islands', 'Revelries', and 'Worlds' to unfold his perception, imagination and introspection in a more comprehensive and dynamic manner.

Huang Yuxing (b. 1975, Beijing) is widely recognized among his generation for his dexterous ability to create paintings that reflect and preserve the process of their creation. Colors, brushstrokes, and traces of the artist's hand endure on his canvases after being continuously overlaid and blended. The meticulous brushstrokes and intense colors that pervade his works are grounded in the traditional Chinese realist technique, 'Gongbi Zhongcai', while building upon these principles through a signature contemporary style that continues to evolve.

Huang's artistic practice is marked by exceptional depth: while his works may at first recall an Expressionist style, they are deeply rooted in a detailed construction of landscape and human form that effuses vibrant color and reflects the experience of creation. Huang's works are marked by a sharp and clear contrast between the vitality of color and the harsh realities of life. Rivers, bubbles, treasures, sunrises, and sunsets are recurring motifs in his works that are presented with dazzling visual effect, yet embody the artist's extensive study of individuals, nature, life, politics, and beyond.