

Li Hei Di: *Tits at Dawn*

November 11th - December 18th, 2022

No. 4 - 165 Wuyuan Road, Shanghai

LINSEED is delighted to present Li Hei Di's first worldwide solo exhibition, "Tits at Dawn", featuring the artist's latest series of works. The exhibition opens on November 11, 2022, and continues until December 18, 2022. Alvin Li, author, contributing editor of *Frieze*, and the Adjunct Curator, Greater China, Supported by the Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation, at Tate, recently visited the artist's studio and had a conversation about Li Hei Di's current practice, study and research references, writes the following article regarding the exhibition:

I visited Li Hei Di's studio in west London on a Thursday in early October. The 25-year-old painter, dressed in all black with a short perm, was rocking a style as distinct as her work. She never sketches before a painting, determined to "follow her feelings." She says this leaves her in a constant state of anxiety, though sounding perfectly at ease as she says it. I can empathize with that feeling, that thrill of not knowing, of leaving the course of events to affects, drives, and want. It's painting as a crime of passion, and crimes of passion are often addictive.

If one had to summarize the character of Li's work, the first words that come to mind are: promiscuous, dream-like, in flux. That the artist doesn't sketch only attests to her highly-developed sense of space; there are always multiple layers, perspectives, and narratives going on on each canvas. Still life does not appear still, but floats, melts, is on the verge of shape-shifting. Oval figures recur throughout—oranges, peaches, bubbles, pearls—all of which, in Bataillean fashion, evoke an erotic energy. Surely there is a deeply erotic dimension to these works: one almost catches a contour of bodies in coitus playing hide and seek. But unlike the general tone of that genre, in which the erotic act is so all-consuming that it utterly suspends narrative, Li sutures her erotics into larger worlds where many other things are happening at once. If erotic painting is akin to pornography, Li's works are more a kind of romance fiction, with the love shared by its protagonists as but one of many ongoing threads woven into a fabric of bliss and play. They're sometimes hilarious, too, as in *All Day Long, I Watched the Land Break up into Ocean* (2022), where an otherwise opaque and sensual scene reveals, upon close examination, a battle between two penises urinating.

Another recurring motif in Li's work is wrapping, or veiling. Objects and bodies are often seen through a layer of membranous foil that partially obscures vision, creating an effect of looking at something in a fish tank with your nose against the glass case. This trope has allowed the artist to blend the wild mix of images she collects from popular visual culture—from wuxia film stills to portraits of Zhou Xun—into a purée, which she then applies to her canvases like a lingering impression, or a wisp of body heat. More than just a visual effect, this penchant also marks the significant influence on Li's work and worldview of certain literary metaphors, from Ursula K. Le Guin to Wang Xiaobo. In Xiaobo's book *Love in an Age of Revolution*, the author uses the image of a wet duvet cover to frame a range of personal observations, from the nature of the human condition—vital matter beneath a soft shell—to sexual desire and adulthood. In Li's works, this wrapping becomes a meta-commentary on the inevitability of seeing life through the veil of metaphor. We only encounter existence as illusions, as Nietzsche might have put it: the veil of Maya.

Tits at dawn. Are we being taken on a journey to the forest, or to the painter's bed? Apparently, when it comes to these paintings, it's not a question of either/or: in Li's paintings—or fiction—worlds (and words) can always collapse into co-existence as one.

Alvin Li, Nov 2022



李黑地：雀在破晓**Li Hei Di: Tits at Dawn**

2022年11月11日 - 12月18日

上海市五原路165弄4号

LINSEED即将呈现李黑地 (Li Hei Di) 全球首次个展“雀在破晓” (Tits at Dawn)，展出艺术家一系列全新绘画作品。展览将于2022年11月11日开幕，展至2022年12月18日。写作者、英国泰特美术馆大中华区副策展人、Frieze杂志特约编辑李佳桓 (Alvin Li) 近期造访艺术家工作室，谈及艺术家创作状态及研究参考，就本次展览撰文如下：

我在十月初的某个周四造访了李黑地在西伦敦的工作室。这位25岁艺术家一身全黑，顶着一头小卷，风格就像她的创作一样，散发着独特的魅力。黑地的作画方式遵从“自己的感受”，而从不提前打底稿。她说这样能让她处于一种“焦灼”的状态，尽管她在和我说这事的时候显得非常轻松自在。我很理解这种感觉：那种未知所带来的快感，那种将事物的发展留给情绪、渴求、欲望主导的状态。绘画的过程于是成为了激情之罪，而这种激情之罪着实叫人上瘾。

如果要把黑地的作品概括描述的话，能最先进入脑海的是这几个词：纵情恣意、如梦如幻、流溢无常。除了无稿而起所展现的敏锐空间感知力外，她的每件作品始终都能够让多个层次、视角、叙事同时迸发：静物并非是静物的姿态，或如悬浮、或如糅融，变幻莫测。椭圆形态时常贯穿于她的作品之中——橘子、桃子、气泡、珍珠——巴塔耶式 (Bataille) 般地展现出一股情欲能量。躯体轮廓似有若无，诚然暗示了身体的隐喻，但与情欲流派的基调不同的是，情色并未在她的作品中肆无忌惮，以至于终止画面的叙事。艺术家天衣无缝地将欲望交织在了更广大的世界里，使之与众多层面齐驱并行。如果将描绘躯体之欲的绘画类比为情欲文学，那么李黑地的画作更像是一种浪漫的“言情小说”，主人公们传达爱意作为多线情节的一支，被编织到庞大的极乐与嬉戏中。这些作品有时候也会带有或戏谑或幽默的元素，比如在《一整天，我看陆地分裂成海洋》(2022) 中，暧昧隐晦的感官场景或许能在仔细观察后被发现——一场“滋水之战”。

李黑地作品中另一个反复出现的意象是缠绕包裹、薄纱遮掩。物体与躯体时常会像是在透过一层薄膜被观察到的状态呈现，欲语还羞、半隐半现，营造出一种仿佛在鼻顶着玻璃鱼缸观看的体验。通过这一技法，艺术家得以将她平日里从大众影视文化中收集的繁杂的视觉灵感——从武侠片到诸如周迅等影视缪斯——打碎、过滤、调配成一种感觉或温度，稀释到画面中。而这不仅仅是一种视觉效果，这种倾向也源自从厄休拉·勒吉恩 (Ursula K. Le Guin) 到王小波等文学中的隐喻对黑地的作品和世界观的影响。在王小波的《革命时期的爱情》一书中，作者用“湿被套”的意象来设定一系列的观察视角，从人类本质——软壳中的生命体——出发，到欲望、到成年时期。而在李黑地的作品中，这种“包裹”，在我看来，变成了对通过隐喻的面纱来看待生活的必然性的元评论 (meta-commentary)。我们只是遇到了“存在”的幻象，就像尼采说的那样：摩耶的面纱 (the veil of Maya)。

雀在破晓，我们是被带入深林的旅行中，还是被带进了艺术家的私密空间？显然，当我们面向这些绘画时，这便不再是个非此即彼的问题：在李黑地的绘画，或者说，在她的小说故事中，世界 (worlds) 与文字 (words) 总能坍塌为一体而共存。

李佳桓，2022年11月
译 / 樊博