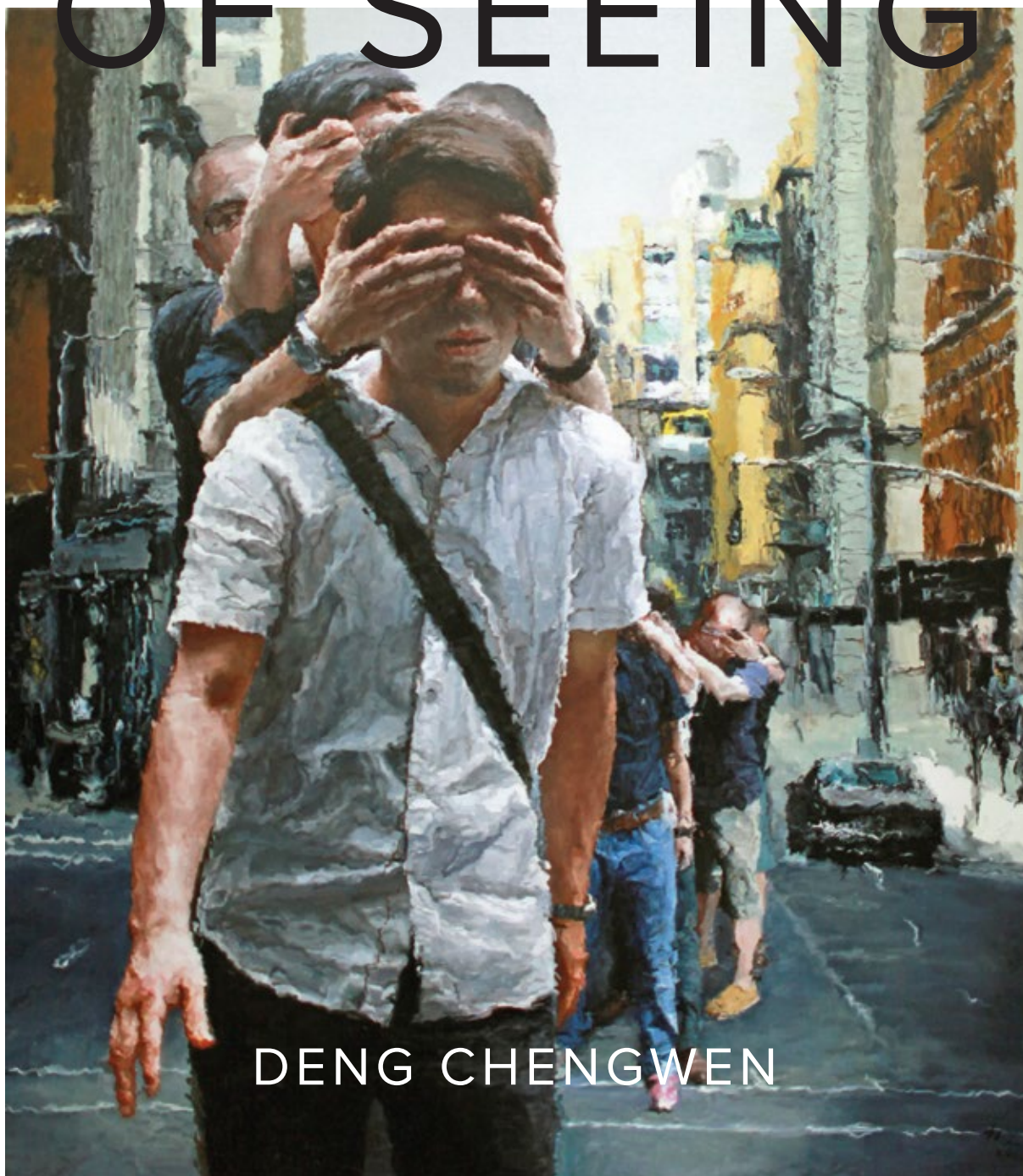


THE  
LIGHTNESS  
OF SEEING



DENG CHENGWEN

**ODETOART**





From trains of lost direction, to key holed glimpses of blindness; from bewildered expressionless youths, to serene smiles of ignorance: having worked with Deng Cheng Wen for over 5 years now, it hardly takes me by surprise that the prodigious artist has chosen to develop his striking theme into an artistic blossoming of thought and technique.

From representing a cultural generation to striking philosophical chords with a worldwide disillusionment, The 'Blind Walking' series is not only an astounding collaboration of realism and abstract representation, but an entire discourse by itself; seeping into the questions and boundless self-doubt that internally cripple the youth of China and beyond.

A look through Ode to Art's first exhibition with Deng Cheng Wen reflects on the artist's mastery over the medium of oil, and the innovations of his conceptual backgrounds. However, a reflection of his present and upcoming art is even further enthralling than the last. With a progression into water colour as a propagator of not only his artistic capabilities, but as an enhancer of the dissent and transience of the concept phenomenon itself, the artist has crossed limitations of a multifold nature, bringing them together as ambient, thought provoking works that retain the awe inspiring aesthetics contained in his last. With increasing ambiguity and perspective to his representations, the ideas behind them deepen as well, showing a maturity of thought and hand that transcend natural progression into an encapsulation- as if the artist held such macro understanding from the very beginning. The blend of aesthetic and theoretic in such a manner is an exhilarating avenue for the art world- more so that of Chinese

culture, showing a break in a tradition of avoidance into insight of the burdened and misguided Chinese youth of today.

Following suit, the artist's imagery too, has progressed immensely in its detailing and significance. Vestiges of urban development such as modern clothing and dyed hair has now evolved into clearly sloganed t shirts and leather jackets, further emphasizing the generation his works adhere to. His depictions of light and backgrounds remain as astonishing in realism as his oil works, and are even enhanced in certain artworks depicting a keyhole view of his characters. Sombre faces now turn into serene smiles that add layerings of perspective and interpretations- showing his signature characters in a manner that create a mental foraging for empathy and understanding.

This connect between viewer and viewed allows for a veritable treasury of mental exploration to artist's works; and it is to this exploration that I now invite you to partake in. Through worlds of paradise and desolation, join us as we follow the artist and his misplaced youth into avenues of thought and mental awakenings- discovering the enlightenment of light with the blind walkers that seek it.

Jazz Chong  
Director, Ode to Art





*About Lopez*  
Oil on canvas, 100 x 120cm

mi  
2013









## The Meaning Behind Blind Walking

Deng Chengwen's blind walking series is an allegorical theme for the survival of the next generation. He uses stimulating visual situations to describe the lost mental state of Chinese youth after globalisation.

In 2007 a few of Deng Chengwen's "Blind Walking" pieces were on show at the first 798 art festival which I organised. The scene was several stern looking young people who looked like they were playing a game of feeling their way around in the dark, standing in a line, with the last person in the line covering the eyes of the first. As if an embryo for this whole series, at the beginning, the works started off with just two or three people with a freehand empty background of grey nothingness. Later, the number of people was increased to seven or eight with a specific city, wasteland, river or country road background. "Blind walking" depicts the new generation and their landscape after China's rise. The temperaments of the new generation in Deng Chengwen's works already possess the same post globalization characteristics as young people all over the world: not having the special political naivety of those born in the 50's and 60's, nor the adolescent cruelty accumulated during the preliminary stages of capitalism of those from the 70's. Due to their excellent material standards and robust bodies they have good skin and fashionable clothing, with some young people even dying their hair a western blonde colour.

However, compared to those in other international cities, the new generation of Chinese possesses its own special characteristics, namely "sombreness" and worry. We can't say that the youth of other countries do not possess these characteristics, but that they seem to be expressed very strongly in the new generation of Chinese. This is of course, caused by China's unique culture of political, economic and social revolution, which having economically liberated this generation still leaves it with other mental burdens.

Yet this kind of "burden" theme is absent from most art of the new generation. The theme of popular art is the superficial visualisation of cartoon, loveliness, and fashionable-beautiful women. Compared to his compatriots'

fondness for the new culture depicting cartoon loveliness, which reveals a lack of politics in contemporary art, Deng Chengwen chose to show sombreness. His depiction raises the mental problems of the new generation with his subjects mainly being people of the same age. They seem like they are the generation with no cares and worries after China's rise, however they do not appear happy and are racked with anxiety.

Loss of direction causes this generation's anxiety and even fear which has become the phenomenon directly expressed by Deng Chengwen. He depicts various kinds of people's psychological actions; those with mouths wide open; those with mouths tightly shut; those with two arms outstretched; those with hands together in prayer; those with bodies bent forwards and those with heads turned looking back. It is easy to see; Deng Chengwen is not only expressing the mental state of himself, but that of a group. Their state of being burdened and lost also possess some special characteristics; they are not in the midst of politicized activities but in an adolescent state of grasping their way. In this state of grasping they feel lost, along with unspecified fear and anxiety.

Deng Chengwen's "blind walking" was originally a void with no background, with the foreground being a burdened and anxious face covered by the hands of another. Their style of survival method causes this generation to fall into a vain loss of direction, anxiety, fear and to become burdened. This is the phenomenology of the work "blind walking". In the early stages of the "blind walking" series, Deng Chengwen only showed the mental phenomena of the present generation and didn't directly show the reason which led to it. In the later works in the series, he added background situations for the blind walking line of people such as cities, rivers, wasteland etc, showing the different spheres causing the burden and fear.

These different spheres all belong to a series of difficult situations, for example, a line of blind walkers on top of a building in the city walking straight ahead, the leaders feet being right on the edge of the roof. In front of them is a landscape of towering buildings and a sea of neon lights but they have already walked to the edge of the building. Certain difficult situations are located by rivers in the city suburbs, the blind walkers are pressing forward through a river up to their waists in water or some young men and women are just standing around aimlessly in the water. Another scene is blind walkers in a patch of wasteland. Despite their being no immediate danger the blind walkers faces are full of emptiness and anxiety.

Ever since the paintings of the 70's, it has become a pattern to express the characteristics of the new generation and their mental state through realism, super realistic pictures and allegorical behavioural scenarios. Yet most themes of paintings are still focussed on painting the phenomenon of the experience of adolescent cruelty. Deng Chengwen, however, has not stopped at this expression of this generation's adolescent art, instead depicting their existence in the midst of this issue. He not only expresses the new generation's pain and burdened feelings, but also tries to search for the philosophical link between their mental state and their habitat.

His personal original idea shows these two aspects: the first, is trying to find the link between this generation's psychological problems and the changing Chinese environment; the second is to summarize this new generation's circumstances as a kind of mental phenomenon with a philosophical meaning. In these two respects, Deng Chengwen has discovered the mental phenomenon of himself and his generation. The rise of China is the background in which they have grown up, it has also formed this generation's unique mentality: He and his generation have enjoyed the globalised life style

brought about by the rise of China over the past 15 years, but his generation have no experience and memory of the process and problems of this rise. Therefore they feel the actual mental issues brought about by China's rise, yet cannot be clear about the reasons for these mental difficulties' existence.

For his generation, this inexplicable anxiety seems to have no origin, the only interpretative reason seems to be materialism, urbanisation and the turning of life into a kind of game which has caused a loss of direction. As Deng Chengwen's generation's paintings cannot give themselves a historical explanation of the phenomenon of their mental state, therefore their paintings emphasise mental phenomena, self-descriptive allegorical representation as well as a kind of philosophical link between the characteristics of their environment and their mental state.

The game like state of superficiality as well as feelings of anxiety have been represented in some of Deng Chengwen's early works, for example, using post-modernist techniques to reflect a series of modern juxtaposed portraits, imitating the "astonishment" in Da Vinci's Last Supper, and also imitating Vermeer's A Marriage in his work "A Contemporary Wedding", with modern day people shaving Mona Lisa. In these works, although Deng Chengwen is trying to show the theme of burden through post-modernist techniques, for example the feeling of being betrayed, the oppression of common wedding customs as well as challenging masterpieces. However the playfulness of his technique not only did not pass on the feeling of being set free from sombreness, yet actually hid the sombre meaning of the theme. As for self-thought about the game culture, some of Deng Chengwen's early works also reflect on this issue, for example, "A contemporary anatomy lesson" shows a group of college students in sombre mood annotating a pile of old thread bound books. On top of the piles of



books are several Hollywood action figures; the incredible hulk, spiderman. "Stone Picking" shows the young man who is holding a stone and does not know where to go. These two paintings are actually the pre-cursors to the blind walking series. The picture does not use a game like post-modern technique to reflect a sombre theme but uses games as a state of existence to show the self-characteristic of the mental phenomenon of emptiness and being racked with anxiety.

Deng Chengwen touches on raising this generation's mental issues and reflecting on them and their loss of direction and emptiness. He shows a moral picture of the empty pit of a globalised age, with the high rise buildings representing a new kind of pit as well as a post-modern game-like state representing a shallow and empty pattern. Deng Chengwen's blind walking series's starting point is not just to express the current generation's innate mental characteristics and cultural form, but also

to reflect and dissect the problems facing this generation starting from a mentality perspective. Some of these problems could be problems already encountered by mankind during industrialisation in the last century or in the post-industrial period. Some are special phenomena occurring after the rise of China.

This is the starting point of the blind walker series from the perspective of the mental reflection of this generation, the reflection has been shown a little already in "The lesson of contemporary anatomy". What we should really think more about is Chinese contemporary culture that is still playfully consuming globalization without foundation and traditions with deep roots; therefore the contemporary itself becomes meaningless. Deng Chengwen's work is beginning to return to this serious theme; this is the new trend of upcoming Chinese new art.

## The Meaning Behind Blind Walking

Text by Zhu Qi  
Beijing Wangjing



## 邓称文：被蒙住眼睛走路及其虚无处境

邓称文的“盲行”系列是关于新一代的生存状况的寓言主题，他以直刺人心的视觉画面，表述了全球化之后的中国年青人的精神迷失。

在2007年，邓称文的几件“盲行”作品就参加过我策划的首届798艺术节。他的画面是几个神色严峻的年轻人像在玩“摸黑”游戏，排成一行队伍，后一个人的双手蒙住前一个人眼睛。作为这个系列的雏形，他的作品开始时只有二、三个人，背景是虚无的暗灰色调的写意空景。后来人数增加到七、八个人，背景也增加了具体的都市、荒原、河塘以及乡间小道。

“盲行”描绘的是中国崛起后的新一代及其背景。邓称文画面上的新一代的气质，已经具有跟世界各地的年青人一样的国际都市一代的全球化特征，既没有五、六十年代生人的政治化的纯真年代的特质，也没有70后的资本主义早期原始积累阶段的青春残酷。他们因为良好的物质条件而身体壮实、皮肤娇好、穿着时尚，有些年青人的头发还染成了西方化的金黄色。

但比起其它地区的国际都市一代，中国的新一代具有自己的特征，即“凝重”和焦虑不安。这种特征不能说别国的青年人没有，但中国的新一代身上似乎表现得特别强烈。这当然在于中国独特的政治、经济和社会变革造成的文化模式，使得这一代在经济上解放之后，仍然有精神上的重负。

但这种“重负”主题在大多数的新一代艺术中是缺席的，流行的艺术主题是卡通可爱以及美女时尚的肤浅化形象。与大多数同龄人热衷描写卡通可爱的新生代文化，表现为一种当代艺术中的“政治”缺席，邓称文则选择表现这一代的“凝重”。他的绘画提出了这一代的精神问题，他的人物大都是同龄人，他们看起来属于中国崛起后衣食无忧的一代，但看上去并不快乐，而且精神状况显得焦虑不安。

方向迷失造成了这一代人的焦虑甚至惶恐不安，成为邓称文的一个直接表达的精神现象。他描绘了各种人的心理动作，有张着嘴的，有紧闭着嘴的，有双手向前抓摸的，有双手合十祷告的，有身体前倾试探的，有头向后回顾的。显而易见，邓称文不只是表现自己一个人的精神状况，而是表现一群人，并且这似乎是在一种集体状况下发生的集体现象。他们的负重和迷失状态具有一种

时代特征，即他们不是处在一种政治化的运动中，而是处在一种青春的“摸黑”游戏中，在摸黑游戏中他们感到方向迷失的莫名恐惧和焦虑。

邓称文的“盲行”起初是没有背景的一片“虚无”，前景则是一个张张被他人蒙住了视线的“凝重”而焦虑的脸。游戏化的生存模式使这一代陷于一种迷失的虚无、焦虑、负重以及恐惧，这是“盲行”作品的画面现象学。在早期“盲行”系列中，邓称文只是表现这一代的精神现象，却没有直接表现导致这种精神状况的原因。在随后的“盲行”系列中，他为“盲行”的迷途队伍增加了“处境”，如都市、河塘、荒原等，作为造成人的凝重和恐惧所处的各种空间。

这些空间“处境”实际上都是属于一系列的“险境”或者“困境”，比如一队“盲行”者在都市的楼顶上向前走，领头者的双脚已经走到了屋顶边沿，前方是一片高楼林立或霓虹灯海的都市景观，但他们已经走在楼下深渊的边缘。有一些“困境”在都市的郊区边缘的河塘，“盲行”的队伍在齐腰深的水中艰难行进，或者一些青年男女在水中迷茫的伫立。还有一些“盲行者”是在一片荒原上，尽管没有空间上坠落的危险，但“盲行”者充满着虚无感和不安状态。

从70后绘画始，通过写实主义的方法、超现实的图像以及寓言性的行为情节，来表达新一代的自我特征和精神处境，成为一种新的绘画倾向。但大部分绘画的主题只是停留在对青春残酷体验的现象学描绘上，但邓称文并没有停留在对这一代的青春艺术的表达，而是描绘了他们处于这一问题中的存在状况。他不仅是在表达这一代的自我痛苦和负重感，而且还试图寻求精神和环境之间的哲学关系。

他的个人创见体现在两个方面：一是试图找到这一代的精神问题与中国社会变革的环境关系，二是将这一代的处境归纳为一种存在哲学意义上的精神现象。在这两个方面，邓称文找到了他及他这一代人都有精神现象。中国的崛起是他这一代人特有的成长背景，也形成了他这一代人特有的精神模式，即他和他那一代人享受了中



国近十五年崛起的全球化都市生活，但他这一代对这种中国式崛起的过程及问题并没有切身体验和历史记忆，因而他能感受到这种崛起的事实带来的精神问题，但不能清楚这种精神“困境”的原因是什么。

对他这一代而言，这似乎是一种没有来由的莫名的“焦虑”，唯一可以解读的直接原因，是物质主义、都市化以及人的游戏化状态造成的方向迷失。邓称文的新一代绘画由于不能为自己的精神现象作出历史解释，所以，他的绘画更多地侧重精神现象自身在形象语言上的寓言性表现，以及精神现象与环境特征的一种哲学的关系。游戏化状态的肤浅化及焦虑感，在邓称文的早期作品中就有主题性表现，比如使用后现代手法表现的一系列人物现代置换的作品，戏仿达芬奇《最后的晚餐》的“惊诧”，戏仿维米尔的《婚礼》的“当代之婚礼”，现代人给“蒙娜丽莎”剃须。在这些作品中，尽管邓称文试图通过后现代手法表现一些凝重的主题，如对被背叛的感受、世俗婚姻的压抑以及对名作的挑战，但是手法的游戏化似乎不仅没有传递一些凝重感的释放，反而遮蔽了主题的凝重意义。

对于游戏文化自身的思考，在邓称文的一些早期作品中亦有表现，如“当代之解剖课”表现了一群学院青年人在心情凝重的注释一堆古籍线装书及书堆上放着的几个好莱坞玩具“绿巨人”、“蜘蛛侠”，“投石问路”则表现一个

年轻人手里拿着石子去无所适从。这两幅画实际上孕育着后面“盲行”系列的基本方法，即画面本身不使用游戏化的后现代方式去表现凝重的主题，而是将“游戏化”本身作为一种生存状态，去呈现这一精神现象的虚无性和焦虑不安的自我特征。

邓称文触及到了对这一代人精神问题的提出和反省，即他们的方向迷失以及虚无处境。他表现了一种全球化时代的虚无深渊的寓意图像，即都市高楼作为一种新的“深渊”，以及后现代游戏化作为一种浅层化的虚无模式。邓称文“盲行”系列的精神出发点，在于不仅是表达这一代先天的精神特征和文化形式，而是从一种精神问题入手反思和解剖这一代所面对的问题，有些可能属于人类在上一世纪工业化、后工业社会时期已经有过的存在主义问题，有些则是中国在崛起之后特有的精神现象。

对这一代的精神反思是“盲行”系列的出发点，这在“当代之解剖课”中已经有了迹象，即在无根基的全球化和有深厚根基的传统之间，中国的当代文化还只是在对这两者进行游戏化的消费，因而当代艺术自身也倾向一种虚无主义。邓称文的绘画又开始回归厚重主题，这是中国崛起之后新艺术的一个必然趋势。

被蒙住眼睛走路及其虚无处境

文/朱其



## 如坠窒息，如沐清辉：我读邓称文的绘画

### 1.

可以说，所有的绘画都是一面镜子。但它不是时代的简单反射，它只是在物质世界之外，给出了一种深可触探又无法与前者合一的维度，尤其那些借形象表达深重主题的作品。在这种实践中，艺术家不是小丑，绘画也不是甜点和安乐椅。邓称文的作品与所有新一代艺术家的一样，既与所处的时代境况有关，又不完全受此制约，笔者认为还是建立在个体秉赋之上的艺术家的自我期待和自我要求。再者，文学和哲学再深厚终极，都只是绘画的“外物”，就如同围绕着西红柿和芸豆植株的支架，要想结出果实，还得靠自身属性和内部的东西。就比如，我们说到任何一个绘画工作者，在学习过程中，他自然会接触到某种语言成熟的表达，重要的是这种表达与自己的气质追求相契合，它对学习者的影响具有排他性、唯一性。它可能如醍醐灌顶一般，瞬间就会触动接受者的某根神经，后者神往之，揣摩并研习之，慢慢地，经典范式的某些经验就会内化在艺术家自身的表达语言中，成为自身创造力的一部分。这可能是所有艺术家的必由之路。

### 2.

进一步说，邓称文作品表达的是“绘画之重”。因为成长环境中物质条件的改善和收藏群体缺乏艺术（史）常识等原因，“重负”主题在被市场所“接管”后的新一代艺术实践中是稀有或缺席的，在更为年轻的一代画家中，我们常常看到，那些卡通的、讲究图式设计感的、可爱的甚至时尚肤浅化形象是流行的主题。然而，邓称文却选择通过绘画去表现这一代的“凝重”。他的作品，以一种“艺术史拼贴”的方式和来自于当代传统的绘画技巧，传达了这一代的精神倾向。艺术家喜欢描绘同龄人，这可能因为他对此感到熟悉，在气质上也更容易把握一些，他们在荒芜的城市街道上，在荒草离离的田野间，做着仪式般的游戏或游戏般的仪式。他们仿佛空降自某处，又仿佛从泥土或灰色楼宇中分化出来的生命，他们看起来并不快乐，非但如此，有时显得焦虑不安——但艺术为什么必须表达快乐呢，何况，人似乎在追寻意义的道路上就把它丢掉了。

### 3.

我认为，“好”的绘画，或者说，引人入胜的绘画都具有一定的“迷宫”性质。你很难也没有必要一眼看穿诸相的玄机，简单的材料堆积壁垒间的曲径，景幻入胜的纷纷线路虽然看似都指向出口，却不得立时切近。邓称文的绘画或许就是这样一种“迷宫”性质的绘画，它们不着意平涂、不炫目、不在材料的“殊胜”上做视觉文章，也就是说，它们不直接提供浅表的视觉快感。在2011年完成的作品《盲行者》和《梦碎的黎明》中，艺术家以平静的笔触，凝滞的人物形象加之对莫名光线的描绘，提升了所绘形象的迷宫气质和魅力。随后作品的风格上做了些微调，笔触交织层叠，有些表现意味，我猜想这首先与艺术家不满足于安逸生活，力求在此中求变的状态有关，另一方面，艺术家也渐渐在自身的秉赋中发现了恣肆描绘之乐，在某些纸上水彩画作品中，色块层叠，轮廓清晰，被反复塑造的形象本身就传达了一种具有个人追求的绘画过程，这使得这些充满现场感和绘画性的作品，显得与众不同。

### 4.

邓称文喜欢在具象里面寻求记忆承载，具象，也是叙事的方便和需要。同时，他的艺术也是一种事关“错置”和“拿来”的艺术，照片提供的即时性细节与艺术家的个人体验相结合，让阅读者在如坠窒息的同时又如沐清辉。邓称文的作品传达了一种富有个人线索和独特气质的对传统——包括当代西方和中国当代经典性绘画——的态度，在邓称文笔下，传统不是假想敌、而是观念表达的引子和依托。他以拿来主义的勇气和判断，向心仪的标志塔致敬。我们或许会问，在怎样的角度和层面上，其他艺术家的经典形象，包括照片提供的客观性语言，才能内化为自己的创造？邓称文通过一系列作品，对当代西方美术史的经典形象——比如加西亚·洛佩兹的作品——的挪用，呈现了一种对艺术原创性的新解。在艺术实践中，为了表达需要，创作者都可能通过个人语法转换将被挪用的形象，将其融汇进自我语汇。艺术“是什么”不重要，也无需赘言，也许揭示“不是什么”会更有趣一些。



5.

在我看来，邓称文的绘画实践甚至还提示我们去重新关注一种复杂的、面对历史和当下的心理现实：他者与自我、重负和潜行、希望和无望，经典和致敬。经典可以作为一种“他者”元素被植入一切标榜原创的艺术么？艺术是语言的艺术还是社会学或文学的艺术？具象的心理空间是具象绘画的终极诉求吗？被视觉消费了的艺术，将以怎样的曲径引导阅读者重回艺术家堆满颜料和杂乱物事的工作室，去体验原初悸动？等等。不管怎样，在邓称文营造的具有舞台感的现实蒙太奇里，具有时空矛盾性的元素被导演共谋，艺术家举重若轻，直接借景生意，它们重现异己的画布后又渐渐退远，他以破碎的镜片，折射了时代乡愁。

于艾君  
2014年6月





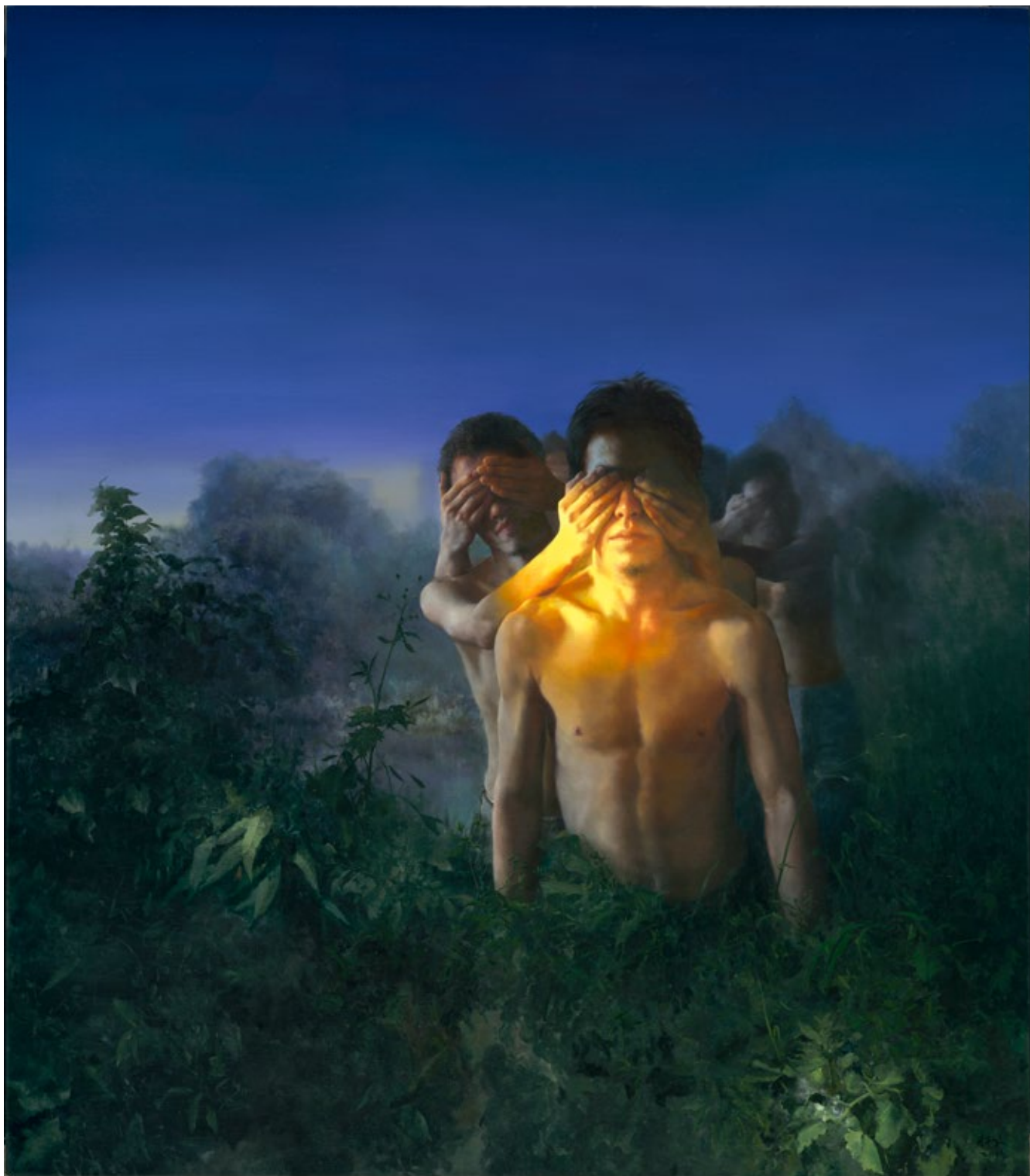
- 望京 -

*Wangjing, SOHO, 2014*  
Oil on canvas, 160 x 120cm



- 一米夕阳 -

*A Metre Sunset*, 2013  
Oil on canvas, 160 x 140cm





- 乱 -

*Chaos*, 2012  
Oil on canvas, 160 x 140cm







DENG CHENG WEN



*Into Lopez No. 1*  
Oil on canvas, 100 x 120cm



- 一座山 -

*A Mountain*, 2013  
Oil on canvas, 130 x 90cm





- 走进洛佩斯 3 -

*Into Lopez 3, 2013*  
Oil on canvas, 120 x 150cm









- 殤 -

*Shame*, 2014  
Watercolour on paper, 66 x 42cm







- 幻象 -

*Mirage*, 2013  
Watercolour on paper, 52 x 51cm



- 看上去很美 -

*A Beauty to Behold*, 2011  
Oil on canvas, 140 x 160cm







- 洛佩斯是一座山 -

*Lopez is a Mountain*, 2013  
Watercolour on paper, 80 x 60cm





- 流光 -

*Brilliance*, 2014  
Watercolour on paper, 51 x 67cm





BLIND WALKING



- 欣慰中的盲行者 -

*A Comforted Blind Walker*, 2012  
Oil on canvas, 60 x 80cm



- 远方 -

*Afar*, 2014

Watercolour on paper, 60 x 40cm







2012

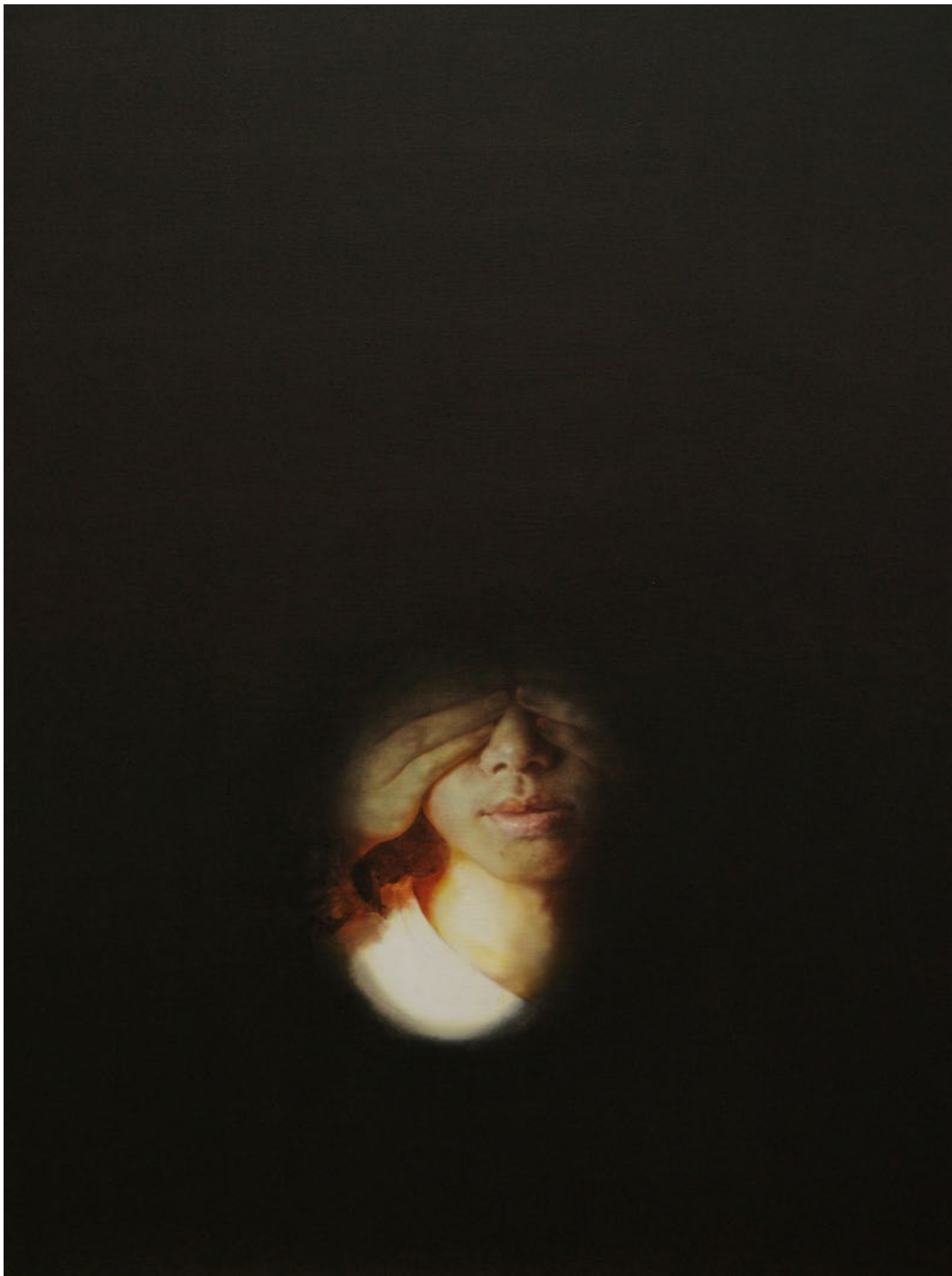
- 习作 -

*Exercises, 2012*  
Watercolour on paper, 63 x 50cm



- 光 -

*Light*, 2011  
Oil on canvas, 60 x 80cm





- 习作 -

*Exercises*, 2013  
Watercolour on paper, 70 x 48cm







- 偶然 -

*Coincidence*, 2013  
Watercolour on paper, 38 x 56cm



2014





- 雨 -

*Rain*, 2014  
Watercolour on paper, 30 x 40cm



- 耳听为虚 -

*Heresay is True*, 2013  
Oil on canvas, 100 x 80cm









- 勿言 -

*Silenced*, 2014  
Watercolour on paper, 50 x 64cm

- 窗 -

*Windows*, 2012  
Watercolour on paper, 50 x 50cm





- 夕阳无限好 -

*Magnificent Sunset*, 2012  
Oil on canvas, 120 x 160cm



- 盲行 -

*Blind Line*, 2011  
Oil on canvas, 120 x 160cm









- 梦碎的黎明 -

*Set Out At Dawn with Broken Dreams*, 2011  
Oil on canvas, 120 x 150cm



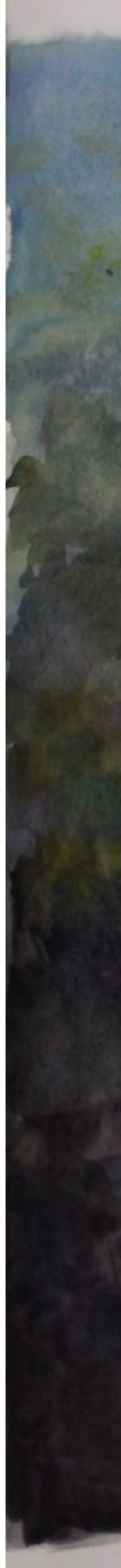
- 迷失青春 -

*Lost Youth*, 2013  
Oil on canvas, 160 x 120cm



- 疑似真实2 -

*Illusive No. 2*, 2014  
Watercolour on paper, 62 x 55cm











Deng Cheng Wen's Blind Walking series captures the collective ambition, ignorance and emotional flurry within the young Chinese of his generation. His works adopt a concept-based approach in order to seek a depth and complexity - at a level that causes some of its viewers to recognize personal truths when standing before the art.

Born in Guangdong Province in 1981, Deng Chen Wen graduated from Tianjin Fine Arts College in 2006. In 2003, he was featured in the "Rising of the New Generations" contemporary art exhibition. Being named as one of the rising stars among the art industries, he continued to shine his way through in his career.

Deng Chen Wen believes that the young Chinese are crowding around and pushing forward, seeming to only be drawn to the unknown and dangerous path - walking on the top of buildings, at the edge of cliff, on the speeding drive way and in the trackless desert. Blind-folded by each other they never attempt to pry away the hand that covers their eyes. Deng Chengwen, using this imagery, places these blind walkers in various places, repeatedly pointing to their ignorance, whether in the city or in the wild. The artist has no intention of removing their hands of their eyes, nor does he intend to bring them away from these dangerous settings, because he is aware that this cannot be changed unless the blind walker himself is willing to change.

For an emerging artist, Deng's insight into the issues unique to his generation is encouraging. Despite his youth, his message is compelling and pertinent while his arresting compositions attest to his immaculate

attention to detail. The strong compulsion to express himself on the condition of his generation suggests that some have already started to see and will lead their compatriots towards a more meaningful future. And rightly so, this collective ambition is directed towards their infatuation with still-life techniques. Because modern life is multi-faceted, they cannot hope to achieve the public consensus that Yang Fei Yun's garners. However they have to veer away from simplistic representations of single-faceted beauty. Through his own sensitivities, Deng has re-constructed a new visual experience that evokes the spirit whilst creating an art that integrates both symbolism and metaphors. His works counter the clash between perceptions of image and language. This separation between language and image, in order to find his own method of creation, is consciously derived from his personal history; this method of painting is heavily imbued with symbolism and significantly fashions the artists painting style. Deng's works are a stunning display of the contradicting visual imagery that many in his generation encounter daily in their lives. His analysis often presents itself as a medley of perceptions, with a bias towards the unstable flux of our times.





## SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

### 2014

Solo Exhibition , “The Lightness Of Seeing” - Ode To Art Singapore

“The Stars of the Schools” – Oil painting selected exhibition (POLY Art , Beijing

### 2013

“Carrying the Tiger Down The Mountain” Central Art Academy Beijing

### 2012

“Made in China” London Contemporary Art Exhibition

“WEIBO” - SongZhuang Museum, Beijing

### 2009

Solo Exhibition at Ode to Art Gallery, Singapore

Invitation Exhibition of “One Cubic” Cultural & Arts Festival of Song Zhuang for Exhibition Mastermind, Beijing

Adjacent Exhibition of “State” Art in Beijing

### 2008

Art Basel Miami Beach, Miami, America 2008 “Multi-prism” Contemporary Art Group Exhibition at  
New Millennium Galley, Beijing

“Inheritance & Thinking” Invitation Exhibition of Three Generations of Tianjin Oil Painters, Tianjin

### 2007

Joint Exhibition “Linger: Between Language and Image” at 9 Art Space, Beijing

“Gathering Sandcastles” - Chinese New Generation Artists Award Exhibition

Participated in 798 Art Festival, Beijing

Group Exhibition of works by young artists “MirrorStage, Fable and Lie” at 9 Art Space, Beijing

DENG CHENG WEN  
BLIND WALKING

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