

## Visual Diary — for “Hoo Mojong Paper Works Exhibition”

The artist Hoo Mojong lived abroad for half a century, within 37 years in France. After she came back and settled down in Shanghai 10 years ago, Shanghai Art Museum, National Art Museum of China and other domestic art organizations has held solo exhibition for her in succession, to introduce her and her works. Her works have been known by more and more art personage and art lovers. People look at and research her and her works with surprise, just like they re-discover an artist in art history. She is recognized as the most outstanding overseas Chinese women artists after Pan Yuliang. And also, she is an artist who affects late twentieth-century Chinese Art history on the noumenon level.

37 years in Paris is the establishing and maturing time of her artistic personality and painting style. Paris nourished her, and gave her the free creative ideas, wide artistic horizons, and the edification of modern art. As a gifted artist with introspective nature, she integrates such nourishing into her own creation naturally, to express those things or people in her life which touched her inner emotion. The strong thick colors, natural and pristine images, unique perspective, and gentle temperament which has some loneliness and sadness sometimes, all of these made her unique painting style. She showed herself in the affluence of brilliance in Paris and received wide recognition and praise. Fruit and vegetables, bread, flowers, clothes, workers, kids, women.....these most common things and people all show out the most essential but emotional aspect in her paintings. They restored the original attribute of material, and also have been given spirit and strength which only life has.

As we all know, oil painting is the most important part of Hoo Mojong. In the past exhibitions and catalogues, they occupied the main position, therefore, the oil paintings are the most well known by people. And her paper works, such as prints, sketches, gouaches, ink color, also appeared in these exhibitions and catalogues, but as a supporting role. Even so, their superb performance still deep impressed people. People highly praised that her paper works are natural delicate but sensitive, strong but relaxed intelligent, like master pieces. Some of her paper works are not inferior to her oil paintings.

I still remember the scene when I find out the batch of paper works which were brought back from Paris in Hoo Mojong's studio in Shanghai. I was surprised not only by the big quantity, but also the various styles. Due to the long time and once being affected with damp, some works have turned slightly yellow, and some even got mildews. Just like “the antique patina”, they seem to be more historic and precious. That group of works was basically created in 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. There are prints, watercolor, gouache, sketches, drawings, and even some pictures the artist draw randomly with different tools she can get. In one same work, there are oil, ink, pencil, crayon, pen and so on. It is hard to be classified. It belongs to mixed media painting. The process of watching these works is exciting. The artist's flash of genius, mood fluctuations, emotional sustenance and spiritual aspirations at that moment are truly and vividly reflected by these free images. It feels like to read the artist's loose visual diary in which has loneliness, sadness, sensation, love, perseverance, also insights and reveries..... The artist's various experience and thoughts of life and art in different times and stages are totally presented.

This time, the exhibition by Today Art Museum is Hoo Mojong's first Paper works exhibition. It means a lot. It will show almost 200 excellent paper works of the artist's different stages in her career, including the prints and ink color paintings during 60s and 70s, the sketches of figures and still-lives during 1970s, and also some sketches of figures and scenery made by various materials, such as gouache, watercolors, ink, pencil and pen, etc. Such an exhibition which covers Hoo Mojong's whole art career, not only has high artistic value itself, in fact, the "diary character" of some works is also the important visual documents of researching the artist and her creation at the same time. I believe that people can find a more plentiful and tridimensional artist Hoo Mojong through this exhibition.

Jiang Mei Curator, Art critics November, 26, 2011