



LIU YANGWEN

FORGING THE WILD

3812 gallery
London | Hong Kong

劉養聞 野蠻生長

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3812 Gallery Hong Kong

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劉養聞的繪畫意志：刺目之花與迴旋之眼

夏可君

眼前的花，絕非你之前看過的柔軟浪漫之花，它尖銳刺目，似乎被點燃，但又不是梵高式的烈焰，而是如同鐵火在迴旋，並沒有凝固，在驟冷與驟熱之間，它們處於自身的外翻與卷動狀態，甚至帶有刀槍劍戟的銳利，這不是在畫花，這是在鍛造鐵花，以冰冷的火焰鍛造花樣的生命體。

花已非花，但還是有着花樣，有着花意，但繪畫體現的乃是一種不屈服的意志，此永不枯萎的花意，才是繪畫著迷之處。花非花，而花之意，乃是年輕藝術家劉養聞個體生命意志力的絕對投射。

繪畫，從來都是個體意志力的隱秘表達，年輕的藝術家劉養聞，以其專注力，以其冷熱的悖論知覺，以其抽象與具象之間來迴轉換的極致張力，讓這個看起來如此古老的繪畫主題，竟然獲得了新的迷人形象。

這些具有鐵製感的油畫作品，第一眼看上去卻如同版畫，既有版畫雕刻的質感，也有一種版畫的色感，年輕的畫家為何要在油畫中追求這種版畫的視覺？這既非反油畫，也非模仿版畫，而是一種深深鐫刻的意志，一種不希望對象消失的堅定，所有的花朵最終都會枯萎，但一旦繪畫以鐫刻的感知去銘記，哀悼也成為紀念，花朵就凝定在不可摧毀的畫面上。

我想，畫家並非要讓我們看花，因為怎麼看，這些花都不是用來觀看的。哪怕是單純如同靜物畫的作品，其玻璃質感的背景，也讓其帶有一種尖銳感，似乎花葉乃是「針葉」，處於翻折狀態，伸展如同動物的爪子，或者自身卷曲，處於迴旋狀態，宛若刀劍或刀片，是的，帶有一種刀片的鋒利感，但又並不缺乏翻卷的柔軟。這就是藝術家自覺追求的感覺的悖論，正是此脫俗的悖論，讓這些花朵作品如此迷人、意外。

其次，這些花朵被置於某種複雜的背景，把花的柔軟轉變為尖銳，繪畫乃是要去觸發某種痛感？似乎這是玻璃做成的花朵，繪畫要以油性顏料做出玻璃的質感，也許這也是來自於年輕藝術家對於玻璃櫥窗的疊印感知，來自於那些裝飾的花卉在玻璃映照中的疊印視覺？以至於就是讓花朵具有玻璃的質感，但這是破碎的玻璃，那些尖銳感也就由此出現，要打斷我們習慣的凝視方式。

養聞的作品讓我想到賈科梅蒂的那些巴黎的素描作品，帶有雕刻家特有的刻刀感，以無數次不同方向的線條，來刻畫一個對象，但永遠不可能完成，永遠處於過渡狀態，反復塑造的過渡狀態，讓對象獲得了靈魂出竅的活力，繪畫並非要終結對象，而是讓對象更為充分地活躍在我們眼前，繪畫乃是讓對象重新出生，帶着它自己尖銳的嗓音與魂魄的叫喊。

我還是覺得，畫家並非要畫花，如此的花意，反而是藝術家自由心性的體現與藝術感知的豐富，確實看上去是花朵的基本構型，但在結構上，藝術家並非僅僅固定花的形態，而是從其基本的葉瓣出發，走向純粹抽象的建構，在對應迴環的結構中，形成了「音樂的軀體」。

確實如此，畫家的作品一直保持着變形，花瓣成為切片，就是無數切片在重組，成為抽象的片塊與單元，就不再是花瓣，但繪畫是意志力的個體性傳達，針葉就幻化為炫目之眼，很多的局部，看上去如同眼目，如同面孔，神秘的面具與古老的神紋，或者看上去好像字母與文字。

藝術家的想象力進入了「圖紋」的自由幻化，進入紋理的自身緣構，或者是某種隱秘的形體，甚至是星體，或者是街道與建築，或者是迷宮，在解構形體與重建形體之間，神秘圖像與自動書寫之間，生成出無數妙不可言的形態，這是繪畫的變形學，其中有着神秘的引導與誘惑，還有甚麼比激發自由的想象力，對於年輕藝術家更為重要的自我發現呢？

回到畫面上，因為背景基底的複雜性，那些抽象的格子或者斑斕的色調，都讓前景的花朵不再固定，而是在畫面上不止息地處於變形狀態。對於前景與基底關係的複雜自覺處理，讓繪畫具有了內在的深度與褶層，似乎背後有着某種神秘的力量在塑造前景的形狀，讓繪畫處於不確定與可能的變幻之中。

總之，這是一個個可能的世界，在套疊與穿插中，可以組合成不同的可能世界，但一直在轉變，在迴旋，保持迴旋、旋轉、炫目，就是所謂的「玄之又玄，眾妙之門」，進入幻覺的錯視中，繪畫的秘密不就是進入此迴旋之中，保持自由遊戲的歡愉？！

在一幅四米多的大畫上，還可以看出年輕藝術家駕馭繪畫的天賦，三聯式的三朵花，以不同方向，如同湯伯利晚期的玫瑰，處於旋轉與迴旋之間，內斂與外展之間，具象的形態與抽象的線條之間，藍色與深暗之間，雋刻與奔放之間，繪畫的張力得到了充分的表達。

如何去描述這些充滿想象力的繪畫，對於評論家其實一直有着困難，也許我們就是應該來到作品面前去體會：燦花之天眼、筆觸之雋刻、烘托之暗湧、堅定之毅志！具有如此感知深度的繪畫，讓我們對劉養聞未來的繪畫充滿了期待。

Liu Yangwen's Will to Paint: Dazzling Flowers and Spinning Gazes

By Xia Kejun

(Trans. By Dr. Dimitra)

These are not the supple romantic flowers you used to know, nor Van Gogh's flaming flowers. They are pointed and piercing, spinning in the dazzling light of burning iron. With the materiality of sharp swords and spears, they also seem immaterial. Caught between gushes of coldness and heat, they are in a state of constant unfolding and revolving. Liu Yangwen does not paint flowers, but forges iron or flower-like life forms with cold flames.

These are flowers intended to be seen as non-flowers which still have the form and the will of flowers. The whole painting reveals an unyielding will which is at the heart of the mystery of this art. Painting is always an unconcealment of individual willpower. The will of the flower is but a projection of the young artist's willpower. With his focus, his sense of the paradoxical relation between the hot and the cold, and the tension of shifting back and forth between the concrete and the abstract, Liu Yangwen gives this seemingly old subject a fascinating new form.

At first sight, the feel of iron creates the impression of the texture and colours of engraved prints. But what is the purpose of this effect? This is neither an anti-oil painting statement nor an imitation of printmaking, but a deeply engraved will and the expression of a resoluteness against loss. All flowers eventually wither, but the painting as an engraving engraves itself in memory, turning lamentation for the loss into remembrance, as the flower becomes a frozen, indestructible image.

While being a still life, the work creates the impression of sharp movement—on a glassy background, the leaves suddenly turn into needles or extended and retracted claws. But sharpness coexists with the softness of a rolling movement. The artist seems to consciously seek to depict this paradoxical relation whose strangeness gives these works a sense of the unexpected. Sharpness inevitably also brings a sense of pain. Achieving the texture of glass, Liu Yangwen recreates the sensation of decorative flowers on stained windows. But here the glass window seems broken. The shattered pieces pierce through the surface and disturb our conventional perception of what flowers look and feel like.

The complex and self-conscious treatment of the relationship between foreground and background gives the painting an inherent sense of depth and movement, as if a mysterious force behind it is shaping the foreground, leaving the painting in a state of uncertainty and the possibility of unlimited variation. There is something of Giacometti's sketches in these works. With the sculptor's characteristic sense of the carving knife, Liu Yangwen draws countless lines in different directions—the lines of an object that is never completed but always in a state of transition. This continuous remodeling gives objects the vitality of a soul that escapes materiality. Painting is not meant to perfect its object, but to allow it to be continuously reborn before our eyes. Similarly, Liu does not just fix his forms. Starting from basic leaf petals, he moves to a purely abstract construction—a 'body of music' in a revolving, spinning rhythm.

The artist's imagination enters into free reflection on the 'pictorial'. While the work remains deformed, the petals become countless shreds which are then re-organised into abstract pieces and cells. Following the artist's imagination, we see needles and leaves transform into dazzling eyes, numerous faces or mysterious masks, ancient divine patterns, letters, words, or even astral bodies, streets, buildings, and labyrinths. Between deconstruction and reconstruction of form, Liu presents his own metamorphology of painting, which guides and tempts our gaze.

This is a world of endless possibility, folding and turning to produce ever new worlds. This constantly changing, spinning and dazzling world seems to allude to 'the doubling mystery, the door to all wonders' that the Laozi speaks of. Entering the secret and playful world of painting, we enter creative imagination and the mystery of creation itself. It is of course never easy for critics to verbalize their own aesthetic experience. Perhaps one should just come to the works and see for themselves: the bright, heavenly eye in these flowers, the etched brushstrokes, the shaded background, the determination. Paintings with such depth of perception make us look forward to Liu Yangwen's work in the years to come.



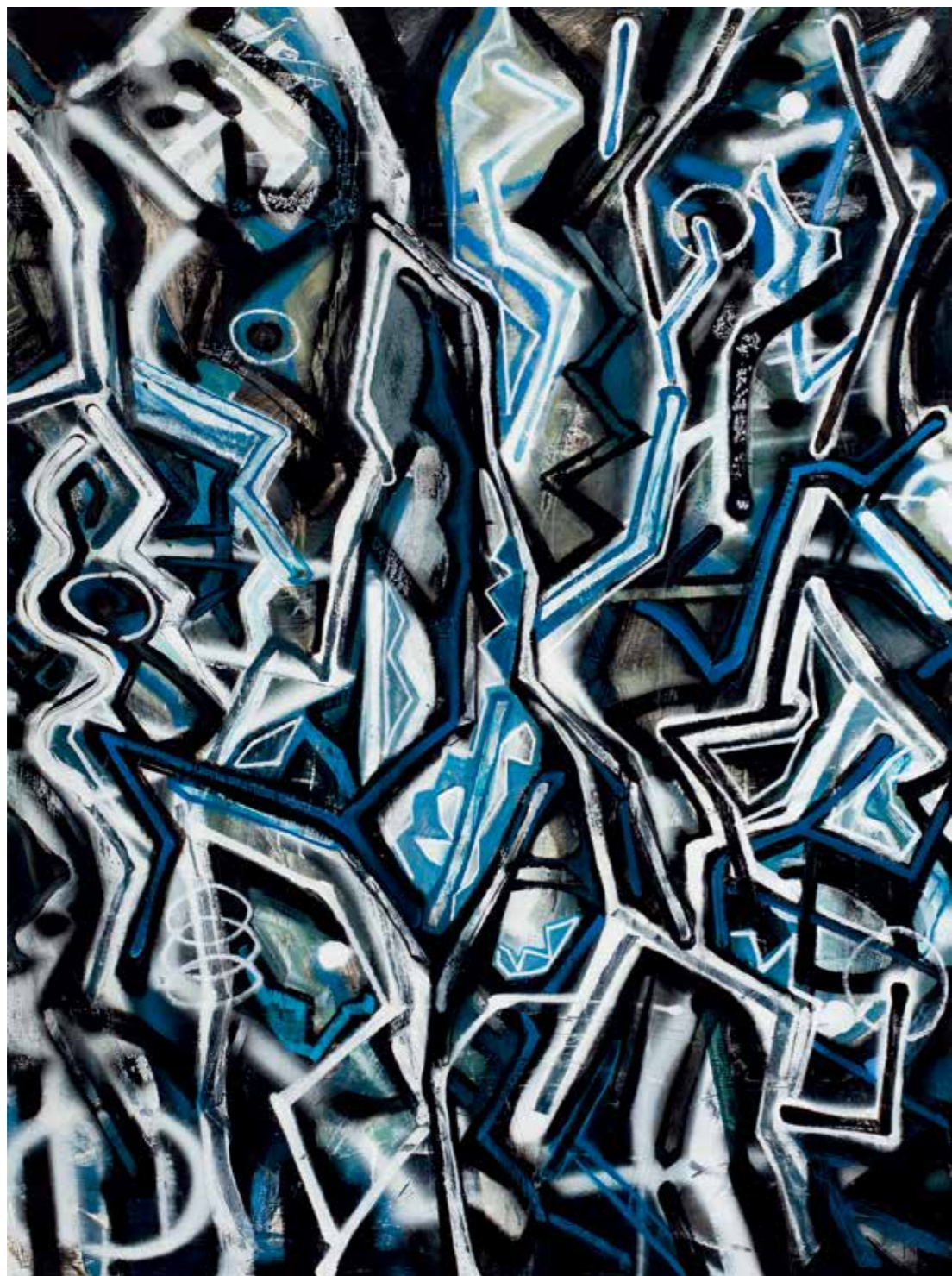
Artworks



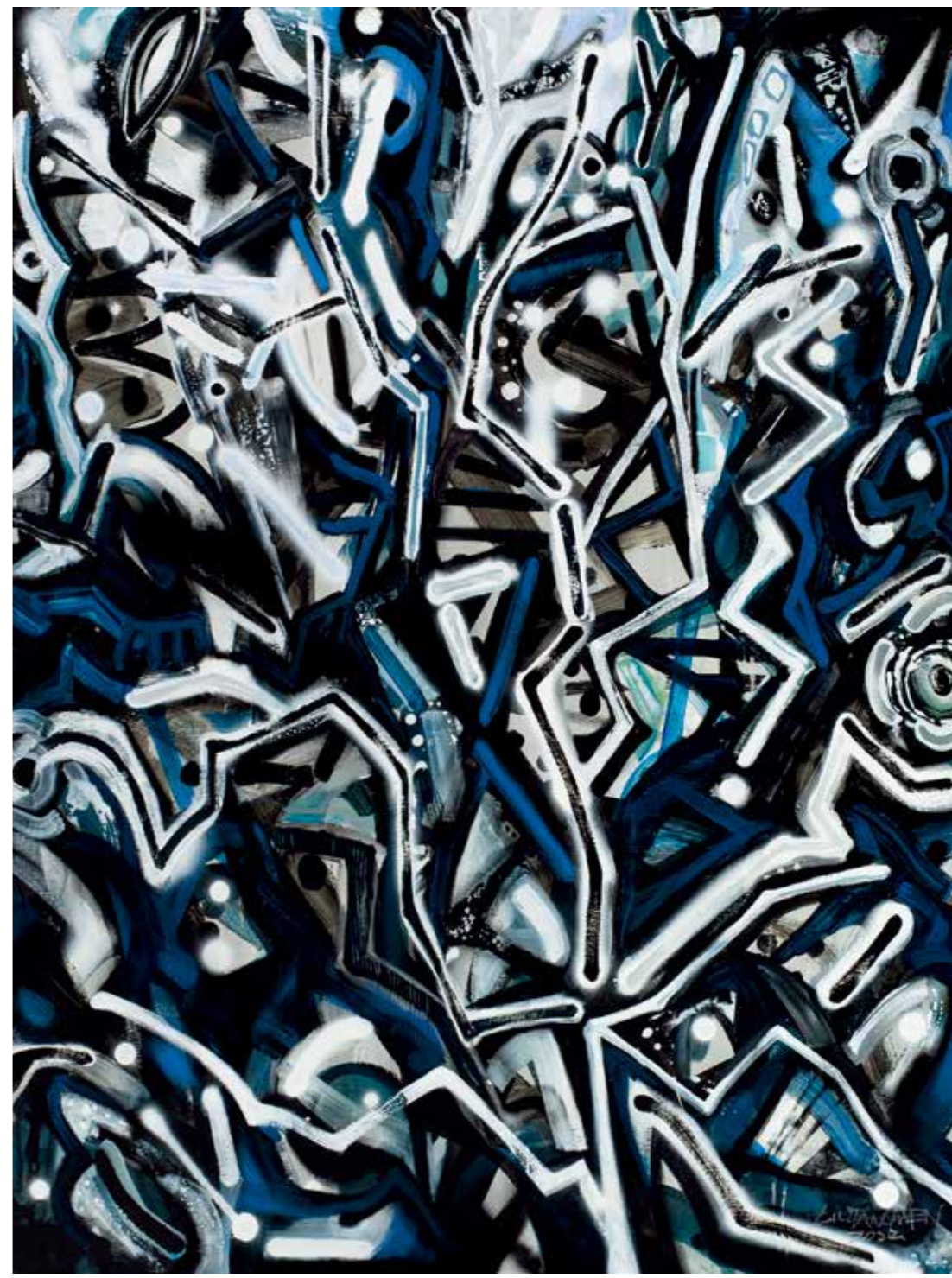
《花火》 The Blaze of Flowers
45x60cm 2022
布上油彩 Oil on canvas



7-8-21
120x90cm 2021
布上油彩、壓克力 Oil and acrylic on canvas

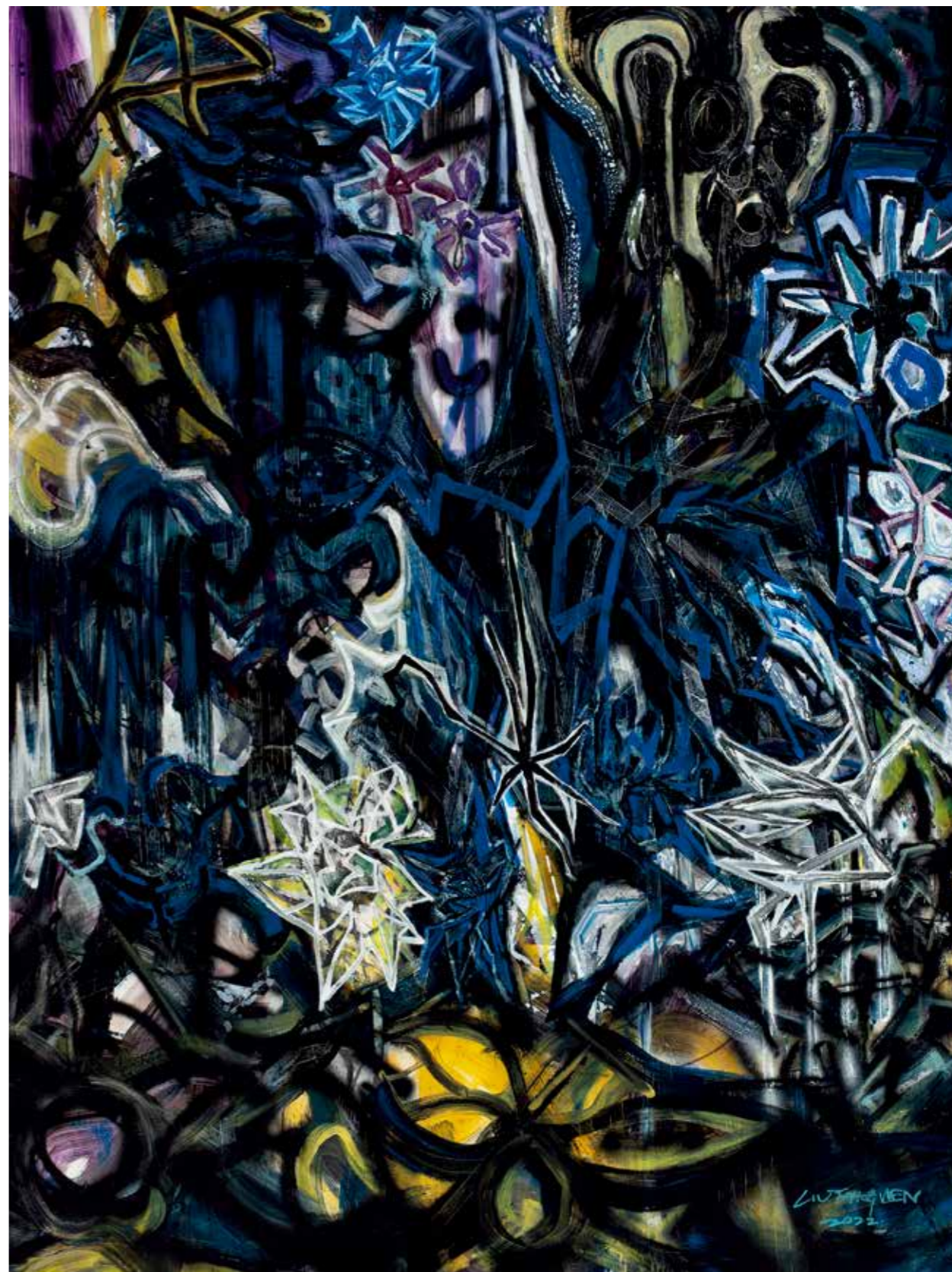


《反方向生長》 Reverse Direction Growing
120x90cm 2022
布上油彩、壓克力 Oil and acrylic on canvas



《銀花火樹》 Silver Flower, Blazing Tree
120x90cm 2022
布上油彩、壓克力 Oil and acrylic on canvas

《綠野仙蹤》 The Wizard of Oz
160x120cm 2022
布上油彩、壓克力 Oil and acrylic on canvas





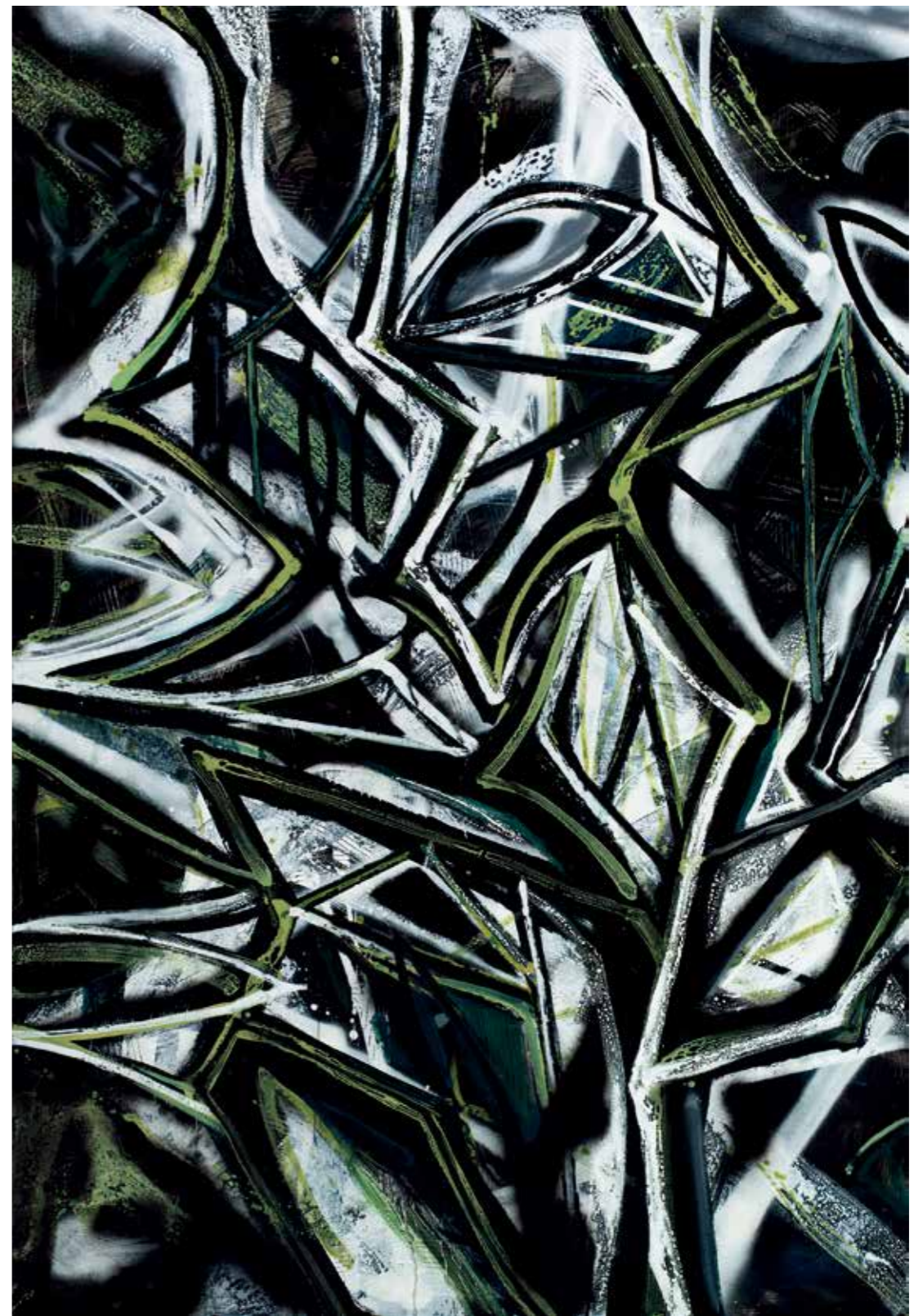
《冰島》 Iceland
120x160cm 2022
布上油彩、壓克力 Oil and acrylic on canvas



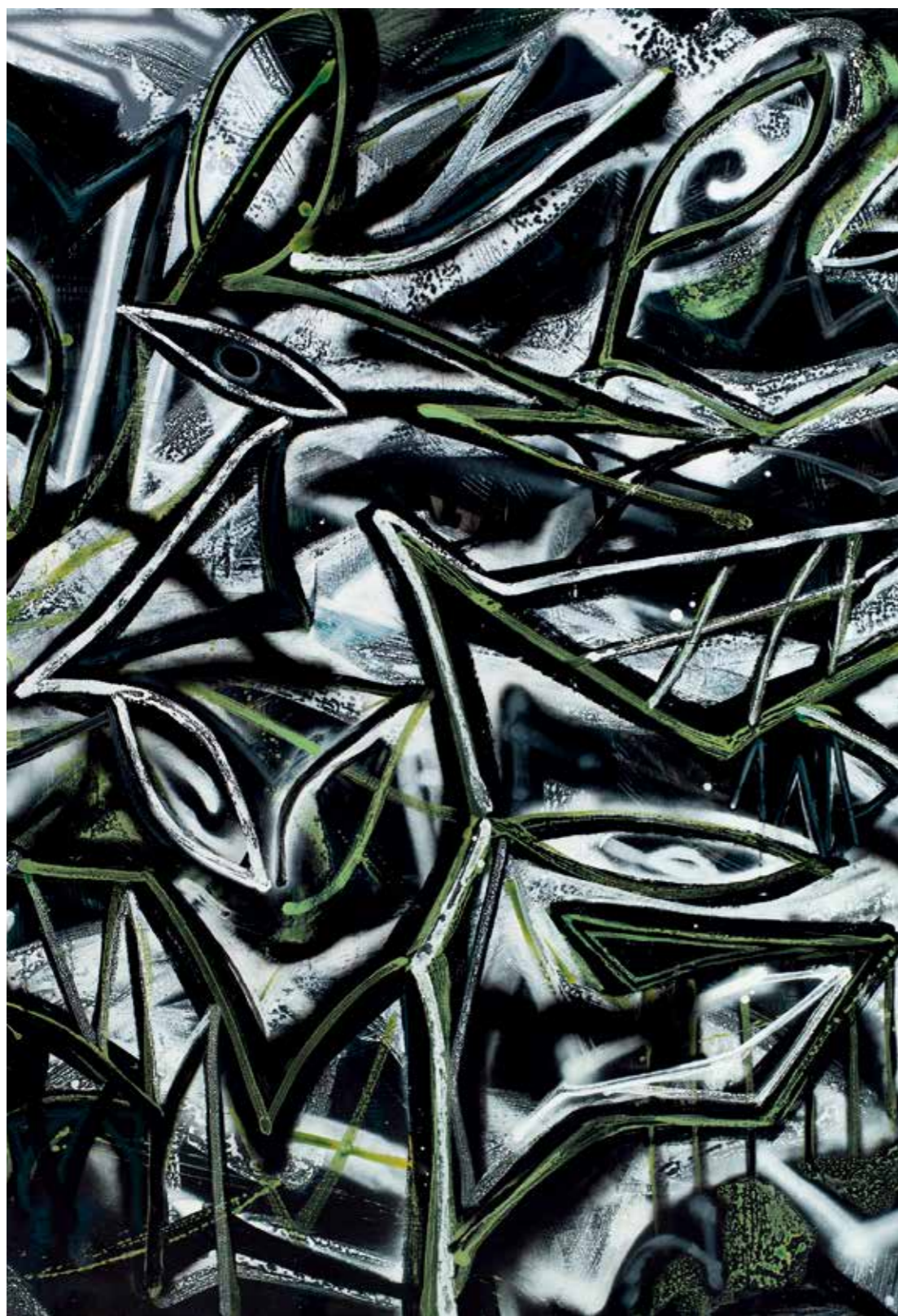
15-9-22
120x90cm 2022
布上油彩、壓克力 Oil and acrylic on canvas



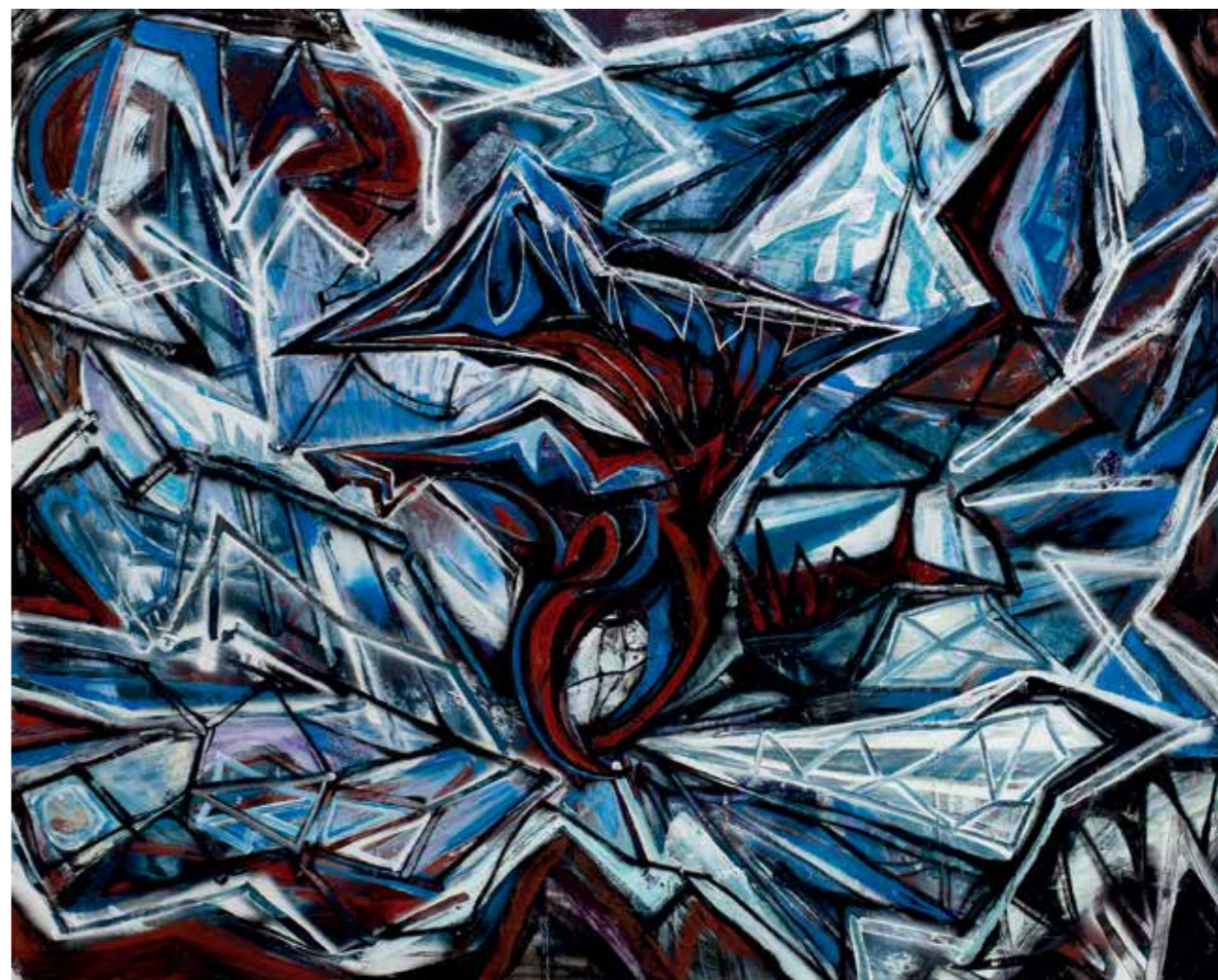
《藍玫瑰 8-22》 Blue Rose 8-22
120x150cm 2022
布上油彩 Oil on canvas



《野蠻生長》 Forging the Wild
190x390cm 2022
布上油彩、壓克力(三聯屏) Oil and acrylic on canvas (Triptych)



28-8-22
120x150cm 2022
布上油彩、壓克力 Oil and acrylic on canvas



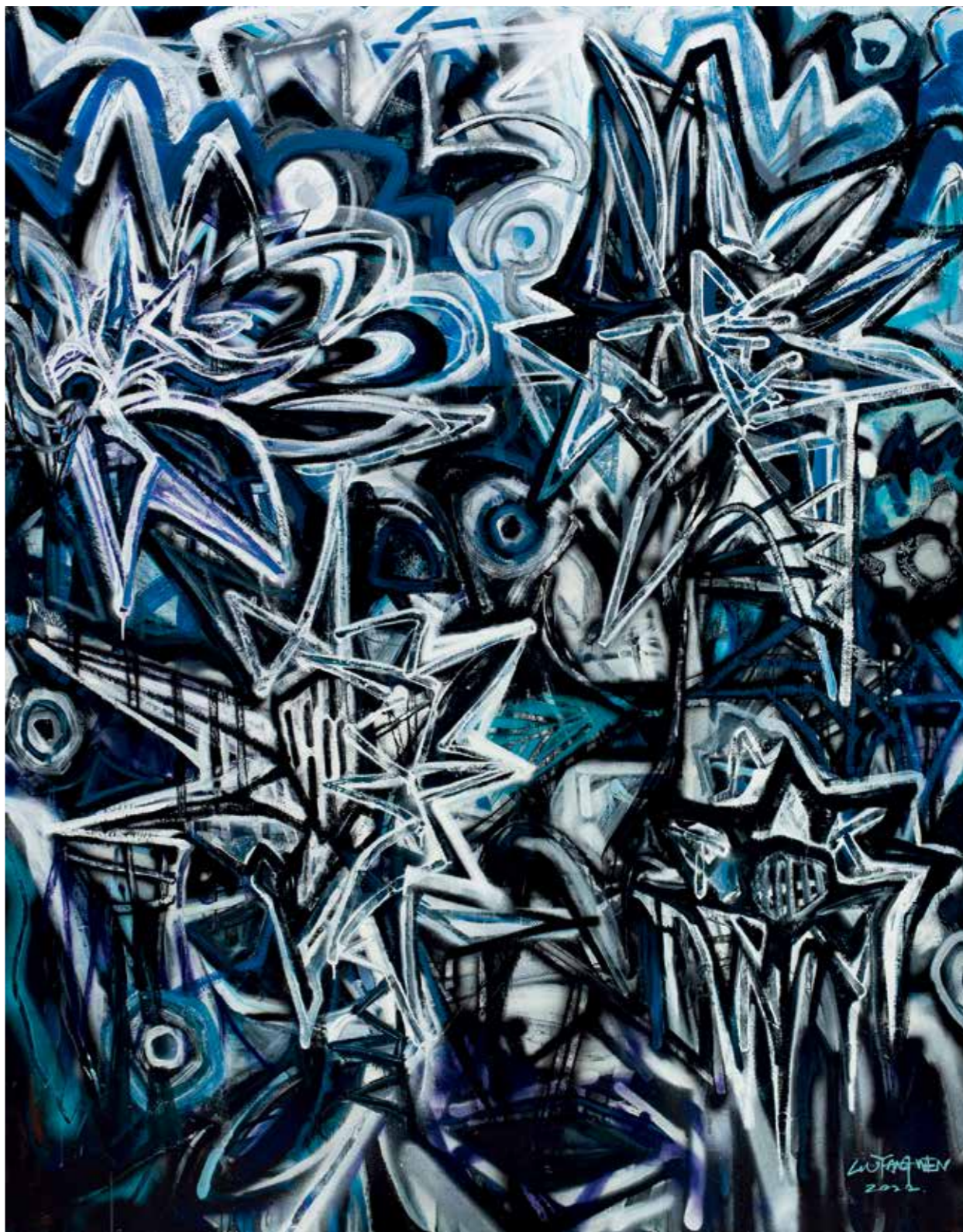


《夜幕再次降臨》 Night Falls Again
160x120cm 2022
布上油彩、壓克力 Oil and acrylic on canvas



16-3-22
160x120cm 2022
布上油彩、壓克力 Oil and acrylic on canvas

18-3-22
190x150cm 2022
布上油彩、壓克力 Oil and acrylic on canvas





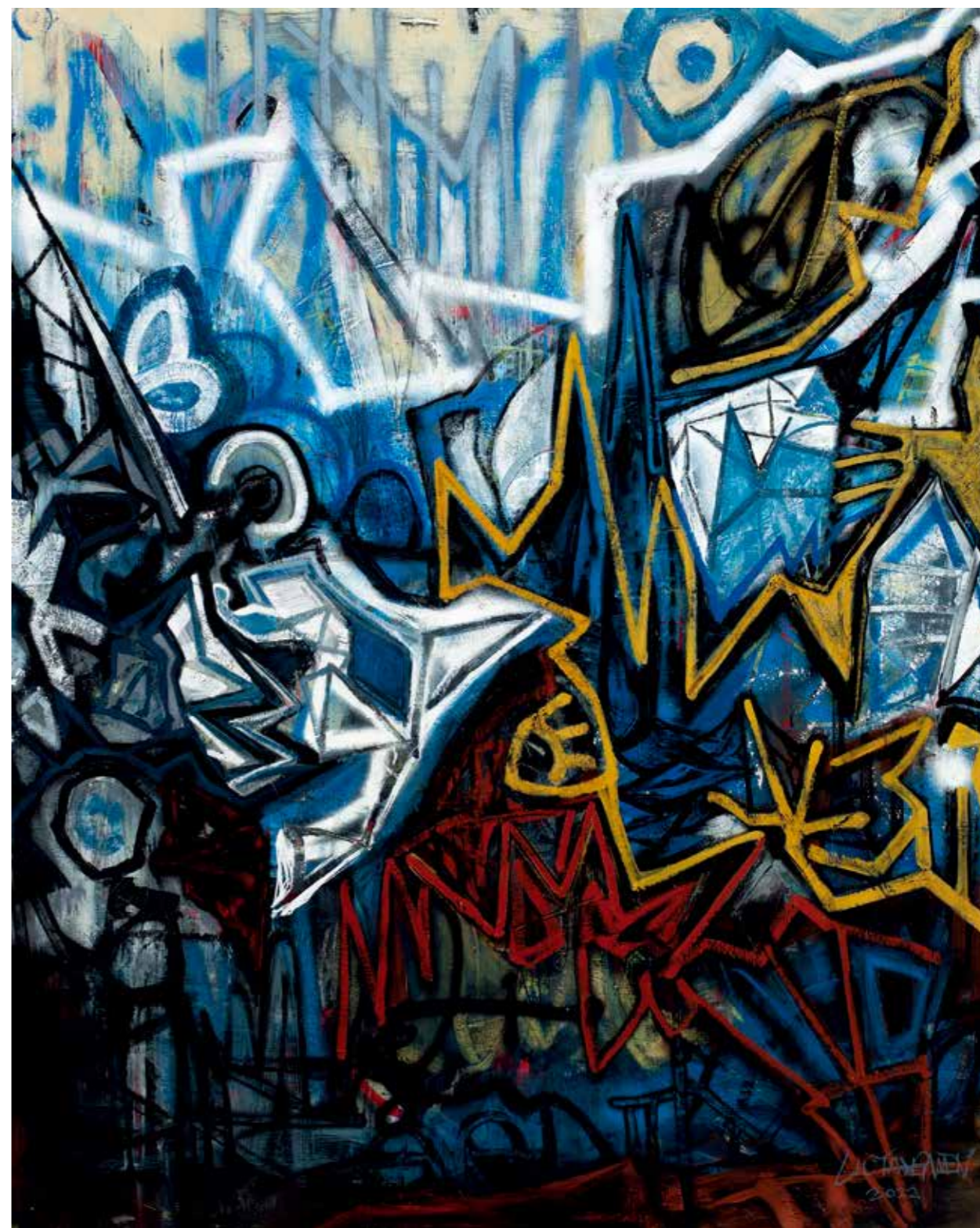
《皇冠貝母》 Crown Imperial
150x150cm 2022
布上油彩 Oil on canvas



4-6-22
150x150cm 2022
布上油彩、壓克力 Oil and acrylic on canvas



16-5-22
150x150cm 2022
布上油彩、壓克力 Oil and acrylic on canvas



11-3-22
150x120cm 2022
布上油彩、壓克力 Oil and acrylic on canvas

《藍玫瑰》 Blue Rose
150x190cm 2022
布上油彩 Oil on canvas





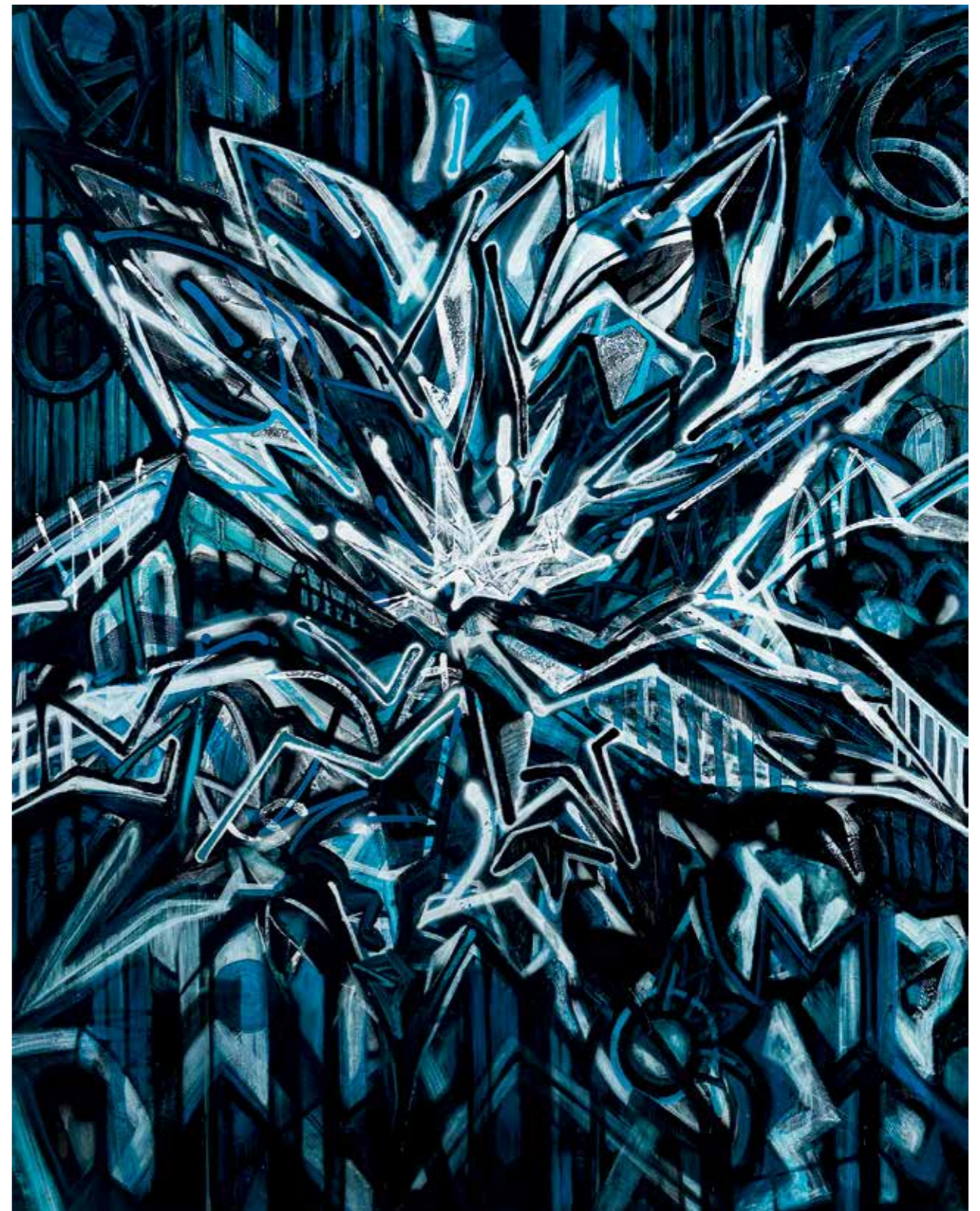
《黑色目光》 Black Gazing
60x60cm 2022
布上油彩 Oil on canvas



9-1-22
200x100cm 2022
布上油彩、壓克力 Oil and acrylic on canvas



8-9-22
190x150cm 2022
布上油彩、壓克力 Oil and acrylic on canvas



30-10-21
190x150cm 2021
布上油彩、壓克力 Oil and acrylic on canvas



15-1-22
120x90cm 2022
布上油彩、壓克力 Oil and acrylic on canvas



12-2-22
160x120cm 2022
布上油彩、壓克力 Oil and acrylic on canvas



12-3-21
183x122cm 2021
布上油彩、壓克力 Oil and acrylic on canvas



15-8-21
120x90cm 2021
布上油彩、壓克力 Oil and acrylic on canvas



19-1-18
100x80cm 2018
布上油彩 Oil on canvas



24-6-19
120x90cm 2019
布上油彩 Oil on canvas

有關藝術家

3812: 你從小在南京長大，這個地方對你來說有甚麼意義？對很多人來說，南京是「六朝古都」、「十朝古城」的文化歷史古城，各朝各代的文化在此交融，你眼中的南京也是這樣一個古都嗎？

劉：我個人很喜歡南京，畢竟從小在這長大，我們所論述的古都應該大多存在於歷史的文本中了。

3812: 你從小在父親的畫室及各種藝術展覽的熏陶下長大，你認為你父親的畫作和創作歷程對你有甚麼影響？

劉：父親對我的影響一直是潛移默化的，他會將自己的審美情感及對藝術的認知充分地施展在自己的空間和交流中，無論是平日的舉止談吐間，或是工作室呈現的獨特的充滿藝術氣息的环境，還是彌散在房間的古典音樂，無一不受其感染滋養。它就像一種強有力的能量場域，使我自然而然的感受這一切，不知不覺中一個獨特的個體便生成了。

3812: 你的父親喜歡古典音樂，並從中得到無限啟發，他甚至在工作室中闢出一處空間作音樂室。請問你也從音樂中獲得靈感嗎？你喜歡甚麼類型的音樂？

劉：一般我的創作過程中離不開音樂，其中古典音樂居多。受從小聆聽古典音樂的影響，我也非常喜歡並很快能與這種音樂形式建立起審美通道，我認為一個人當欣賞到更高級的事物（藝術形式）之後，很難再被之前感動到的事物所打動。因為在我現在的認知裏，古典音樂這種形式更能打動我，其中的形式感，非常態的意外性，以及每個音樂家獨特的表現手法，深刻且有意味，這和我對藝術的理解很接近。我也喜歡周傑倫的音樂，其實每個領域都是相通的，周傑倫的歌曲的唱法和曲風，與同時代其他歌手形成了鮮明的對比，當所有人以口齒清晰地歌唱歌詞為標準時，周傑倫用一種非常迷離模糊的吐字方式演繹作品，從而突破了當時的大眾曲風，超越了上個時代也影響着當下的歌壇，這便是差異性的價值所在。

3812: 你的父親是一位著名藝術家，這個身份對你來說是壓力，還是推動力？

劉：沒有壓力。能同父親從事同一職業的工作，可以在相同領域交流，並都很熱愛。父親的畫作可以給我帶來借鑒和思考，平日的交流也能使我進一步的反思。但我們各自的創作又是一個完全獨立的空間，作品的風格也是有着很大差異，也有着我們互相各自的觀點，這種共通與差異，我認為這是一個比較良好的狀態。父親從小就告誡我，從事藝術創作最重要的就是要保持自身的獨立人格，要有自己看待世界的方式。

3812: 你從高中開始學習素描，大學一年級開始學習油畫，請問為甚麼有這種轉變？學習素描和油畫的經歷對你現在的創作有甚麼幫助？

劉：學習素描大部分原因是為了應試考試，也是構造型能力的基本技法，這是每個藝術生都必須經歷這個過程，因為一直想畫油畫，所以完成了考試之後便可以自由發揮了。素描是普遍意義上的「基本功」，但我對那種寫實的素描並不感興趣，在高中的第一節素描課上體驗了結構素描，驚喜的是我發現在畫面中間穿梭的無數線條，使其構建出一束束尖銳的幾何形態，物體的表象在無規則的線條間被瓦解及重塑，這種變形與我當時對藝術的感知不謀而合。

3812: 除了繪畫，你在空閑時還喜歡做甚麼？

劉：聽音樂和搜尋網上的圖片，在電子時代，我們對信息的獲取唾手可得，我會經常翻閱各種

軟件網頁，從中尋找對我有用的素材。其次運動和健身也能支撐起長時間的藝術創作。

3812: 你喜歡看書或看電影？可以跟我們分享一本你喜歡的書或一部你印象最深的電影嗎？它的內容是關於甚麼的？

劉：《培根訪談錄》，因為讀訪談是最容易了解藝術家個人的想法，他們總會拋出一些之前從來沒有想過的觀點讓你深入思考，當讀到文章中與你觀點一致的句子時既興奮又驚喜，自己的見解竟然能與自己喜歡的藝術家有着相似之處，這是讀書帶給我的自信。培根在他的訪談裏提到頻率很高的一個詞就是「直覺」，培根說：「一切藝術都該是直覺的，你討論不了它，因為你連他是甚麼都不知道」，我工作時，作品的形成必須依賴着直覺，它不必在畫布上處處到位，但是支撐整個畫作的脊骨，我們的靈魂、認知、行為、生命體驗、審美，這所有的都歸結於直覺，我必須將這些絕對投射在畫布上，才能算是一幅對得起自己的作品。

3812: 你常用社交媒體嗎？它對你的創作有甚麼幫助？

劉：信息時代對我們這一代人幫助很大，上一輩人因為信息閉塞，能看到一些國外畫冊已經是很不錯了。如今我們進入了快餐文化，這是個信息爆炸的時代，所有的信息唾手可得，最新的藝術展覽，藝術家的新作，前沿的藝術評論文章，拍賣的直播等等，都能快速獲取這些信息為己所用。但每件事都有兩面性，在爆炸的資訊中，很可能會在此迷失，不知該如何行走，是隨波逐流還是逆流而上，是競相模仿還是獨立自主，這是需要警惕的。

3812: 你最欣賞的藝術家是哪位？你認為一位藝術家最重要的素質是甚麼？

劉：沒有最欣賞的，喜歡的藝術家很多，像杜馬斯，賈科梅蒂，霍普等等，他們都有着各自鮮明的藝術表現手法。我認為最重要的就是作品有個人化的識別度，也可以稱視覺陌生性，並且這種陌生感需要一種有深度的語言風格和氣質去呈現，一幅好的繪畫作品應該是自我的忠誠表達，靈魂的全然投射，從視覺中抽離對象並轉化成自己的語言符號，每一張都將是自己的自畫像，而不是視覺經驗的忠實再現，亦或是完全為了迎合市場去製作空洞低劣的作品。

3812: 請問有沒有任何中外藝術家對你的藝術創作有着重大的影響？

劉：賈科梅蒂，他作品帶來的那種直擊心靈的孤獨和陌生感，他將看到的表象所生成的複雜情感具像化的表現出來，線條不斷塑造、破壞、構建、覆蓋、雕刻、毀滅，反復的筆觸在畫面間來迴碰撞，人和物在二維平面中掙紮扭曲，這種感覺使我震撼。

有關展覽作品

3812: 「花」常見於你的作品中，你曾表示喜歡到工作室後的小山觀賞花。請問為甚麼你對花情有獨鐘？相比其他植物，「花」有着甚麼特質更吸引你？你怎樣運用「花」的生長結構和形態，構建你的創作語言和形式？

劉：我會以花為原型，主要是因為花的結構和我繪畫中需要表現的手法相匹配，花卉看似柔美元滑，但我用一種帶有無常的尖銳、暴力、銘刻、轉折感的方式散落在畫面中，解構、打散並重新塑造，這個過程充滿了意外性，以至於畫面經常會朝着相反的方向前進，這種意外性也是我期待的。在繪畫的過程中知道何時放，何時收，繪畫就是這兩者的奇妙集合。最後形成的物態似花又非花，似花是因為我依然將客觀之物的結構特點呈现在畫布上，非花是我將其用主觀的方式映射於畫布，

其中帶有我自身的生命體驗，真誠描繪在畫面上的結果。

3812: 你的作品選材通常是一些大眾熟悉的事物,但這些尋常事物在你極具個人特色的筆觸下,卻令人印象深刻、難以忘懷。在創作的時候,你認為「選材／內容」、「形式和語言」及「靈性」哪個最重要?

劉: 題材可以是任何事物,無論是風景還是人物,形式是主導,而且形式遠比內容重要許多。我認為如果藝術是一個金字塔,那麼優先級最高的便是差異性,其次是精神力,然後才是內容、理念等等,這也同樣說明內容和精神、靈魂對藝術家的重要性,但千千萬萬的藝術家都有自己的精神和內容,但是藝術家如果沒有差異性,自身的突破從何談起?縱觀美術史,這麼多大師畫的無非都是這些普遍的題材,絕大多數靠的並不是內容,而是形式上的創新,同樣一個蘋果,每個大師都有不同的畫法風格及造型。我是想將常見之物用非常規的手法表現出來,而不是將不尋常之物用司空見慣的手法去製作。重要的不是畫甚麼,而是怎麼畫。

3812: 你的作品多以深色的背景襯托鮮明的線條,為生機勃勃的動感畫面增添了一絲厚重與冷峻,請問你想通過這些顏色表達出怎樣的情緒?

劉: 首先,我用的都是我覺得舒服的顏色,至於情緒,很主觀也非常多變,每張畫都不固定,是對刻畫物體瞬時產生的情感,是直覺的表達,總體來說是有憂傷的成分在裏面,因為生命終將是悲情的。

3812: 你的線條深刻尖銳,看上去承載着強烈的情感,但仔細看,在畫這些線條的時候,速度應該是非常快卻又在控制之內的,請問你在創作時,怎樣平衡「放」與「收」、「隨性」與「控制」?

劉: 其實這個很難用文字描述,但他們的關係一定是相對平衡的。一切依賴於直覺,創作過程中是會有意外性產生,而這恰恰是繪畫的奇妙之處,我並不知道在亂塗亂畫後圖像會呈現一種甚麼樣的態勢,但總能有所收獲,有時會失敗,但失敗也很重要,不是每個人都能成為像畢加索那樣「我不必玩機遇遊戲,他一直跟我一起工作」的天才型藝術家,但要有勇氣放得開,更關鍵的是要有能力收回來,而這種收的能力完全是個人化的事情,每個人都有不一樣的收放方法,但是一張好畫整體應該是不同元素形式之間的博弈但又勢均力敵的狀態。

3812: 你的作品中常見幾何圖形及菱角,畫面質感硬朗,看上像是刀刻的板畫,實際上是油畫。你是刻意為之嗎?除了油畫,你還喜歡以哪些新媒介繪畫呢?

劉: 沒有刻意為之,作品基本是靠直覺完成的,我喜歡也需要這種硬朗尖銳的形式感在畫面形成視覺衝擊,通過我的繪畫語言來表達我對這個時代和自身的思考。我喜歡 iPad 繪畫,它不同於普通板繪,是用電子筆在平板上連接電腦屏幕作畫,我可以直接用筆接觸畫面本身,而且方便攜帶,這種電子時代的直接觸碰讓我有架上繪畫的感覺,卻又非常不同——無限量的圖層、筆觸、特效都是可以自由調節,也不會因為錯筆而不能撤回。凡事都有兩面性,也許某個錯筆是構成作品完成的重要因素,也許不撤回便有了點睛之筆,但 iPad 繪畫仍然是一種全新且與傳統繪畫連接比較緊密的方式,我挺喜歡。

3812: 你的第一幅作品《11-11-17》,乃至後來很多作品,都用數字元命名,背後代表着甚麼?

劉: 記錄時間。按照日月年,因為我發現大部分人看作品會先看題目,我想讓觀者着重關注作品的形式本身,不要被題目的提示所引導,因為那樣會極大限制想像力。題目有時也無法概述作品

的內涵,不同的觀眾可以從畫中看到各式各樣的形態與感受,這很好,而且我認為一件作品打動我們的是其中富有意義的形式,而不是直接圖像所暗示傳達的思想、信息,也就是敘述性繪畫,這類作品中大部分沒有意味,其內容佔主導,題目便引導我們描述畫面中的故事,這使得作品的藝術性受限,所以除非我在一幅畫中明確想表達甚麼觀點主題的時候,我才會命名,大部分時候以無意義的時間命名即可。

3812: 你認為你獨特的創作語言是遊走於抽象和寫實之間,或是有別於它們?

劉: 我的創作思路就是從客觀存在的事物中提取出與我感受相符合的形式圖像。因為我認為物體本身相對無意義,它們用肉眼看到的都是相似的模樣,所以我需要抽象、簡化、再造,藝術離不開抽象,但要將無意義的東西簡化,從中提取有意義的部分,也非輕而易舉,要通過簡單的筆觸刻畫出深刻的圖像,深刻簡約的圖像從何而來?來自於自己獨特的語言符號,如果不以追求深層次的語言為前提去簡化,得到的只有膚淺、表面的形式主義繪畫作品,所以抽象和簡化很重要,它們可以完全將內在審美形態展現在二維平面上,用純形式讓物體以藝術家的視角再現,將無意義轉化為有意味。

有關展覽

3812: 這是在中國大陸以外地區的首個個展,你對於今次在 3812 的個展有何寄望?

劉: 這是我的第一個香港個展,很榮幸能和 3812 合作,3812 畫廊也是很有影響力的畫廊,希望能促進更多藏家的關注與喜愛,互相交流學習。

3812: 你希望通過展覽的表現形式引導觀眾認識你,或是讓觀眾看作品時可以打開思路,感受、思考和演繹你的作品?

劉: 是的,因為這些作品畫的都是一些司空見慣的題材,我希望通過展覽表達尋常之物還可以用我個性化的手法去表現,雖然大環境中充斥着各種流行色、公式化的繪畫潮流,但是仍然要做自己,為自己作畫,並真實的去表達,即使最終沒有達到想要的結果,也要努力探尋藝術的本質,即使大家成群結隊,自己也要野蠻生長。

About the artist

3812: As someone local to Nanjing, what's the special meaning of the city to you? In the eyes of many, Nanjing is a city with a rich history, where cultures of many previous dynasties and eras are entangled. Is it such a place from your perspective as well?

Liu: I hold Nanjing very close to my heart due to the fact that I have lived here all my life. The ancient capital we are referring to exists most likely in the history books.

3812: You grew up in your father's studio and have been immersed in an environment of art and exhibitions. How have your father's artworks and his creative process influenced your own creation?

Liu: My father's influence upon me has always been imperceptible. He demonstrates his aestheticism and understanding of art fully in his space and throughout daily conversation. No matter it's the day to day interaction, the distinctive artistic atmosphere in his studio or the classical music surrounding the room, everything touches and nourishes me. All of these factors I embrace naturally, and subconsciously a unique individual is formed.

3812: Your father loves classical music and derives so much inspiration from it that he has a room solely for music. Are you also inspired by music? What kind of music do you like?

Liu: Normally I can't create without music and mostly I am accompanied by classical music. Influenced by classical music since I was a little boy, I am able to quickly resonate with it. I reckon once someone has appreciated things from a higher level, such as art, it's nearly impossible for them to be moved by previous likings. In my mind, I prefer classical music for its formality, unusual surprises and the unique way each musician composes. Jointly deep and meaningful, it's very similar to my understanding of art. In the meantime, I also like the music of Jay Chou as his singing style is very different to the others from the same era. While the majority were singing with a clearer pronunciation, the way he mutters while singing surpassed the conventional style by then and impacted the current pop music trend as well. That's the value of variability.

3812: Having a successful artist as your father, is this a burden or motivation for you?

Liu: I feel zero pressure. It's such a blessing for me to share the same profession with my dad, being able to communicate and loving the same thing. His artworks bring me reference and contemplation, while I reflect on myself further through our daily conversation. However, our individual creations are wholly independent of each other and have huge differences in terms of style and perspective. Such connectivity and variety is good. My father told me when I was very young that to maintain an independent identity

is the foremost priority of being an artist. We need to have our own way of seeing the world.

3812: You started to learn sketching in high school and oil painting in the first year of college. What's the reason behind the change and what do those experiences bring to your current exploration?

Liu: Studying sketching is mainly for exam purposes and it's a basic but fundamental technique of building structure that every art student has to undergo. I always wanted to paint with oil so after the examination I could freely explore this direction. Sketching is the foundation in general but I have no interest in realistic sketching. During the first sketching class I experienced structural sketching, where, to my surprise, those sharp geometrical shapes and figures constructed by numerous lines on the paper disintegrate and reshape the surface of the objects. Such transformations coincided with my perception of art at the time.

3812: Apart from painting, what else do you like to do in your spare time?

Liu: I like to listen to music and search for pictures online. In this digital era, we can easily access a variety of information and I often browse online for useful materials. Secondly, doing sports equips me for long painting hours.

3812: Do you prefer books or films? Can you share one of your favourite books or one film that left a deep impression on you?

Liu: It's the *Interview with Francis Bacon*. Reading interviews is the easiest way to understand what artists think and more than ever they always share some inspiring new ideas. When reading something that precisely mirrors my view, I am surprised and thrilled by the fact that me and the artist I admire share the same view. This is the confidence I gain from reading books. Throughout Bacon's interview, there is one word he frequently quotes, which is 'intuition'. Bacon elaborates on his idea, 'Art is all about intuition, you cannot discuss it because you don't even know what it is.' When I paint, I draw with intuition. It doesn't have to be everywhere on the canvas, but our soul, cognition, behaviour, life experience and aestheticism are all led by intuition, and this should be the backbone of the painting. I only consider my works as worthy when I manage to reflect these elements onto the canvas.

3812: Do you use social media a lot? How does it help with your creative process?

Liu: It is very beneficial for our generation to be in this informative era. Due to information blockage, it is very difficult for the older generation to even access some foreign catalogues. Nowadays, we are in the times of 'fast food culture' and information explosion – information is highly accessible, including the latest art exhibitions, the newest artworks, avant-garde art critics and live auctions, etc, and we can easily take them for our own use. However, as every coin has two sides, we may feel lost and start to question

whether we should follow the majority or go opposite, choosing between imitation or independence. These are traps we have to be aware of.

3812: Which artist do you appreciate the most? What is the most important quality you believe an artist should have?

Liu: I don't have a favourite but there are many artists I like, for example Dumas, Giacometti and Hopper, as they all have their own distinctive artistic expressions. To me, I think the most important quality of artists is their individual style, or I should say strangeness. Such strangeness should be presented in a profound language and manner. A good piece of artwork should be loyal to the creators' true self, reflecting their souls. It should be detached from the visual object and turned into its own language and symbols. Every piece of artwork should be a self portrait instead of a direct visual representation or a hollow product entertaining the market.

3812: Is there any particular Chinese or Western artist that has a strong influence on your creative process?

Liu: Giacometti. The loneliness and alienation he conveys in his artworks strike my heart. He visualises the complicated emotions that are evoked by representation. The lines are constantly created, deconstructed, constructed, covered, sculpted and destroyed. The repeated brushstrokes collide, together with the intertwining of humans and objects on the 2-D surface impact me so much.

About the artworks

3812: 'Flowers' are often seen in your works, and you once expressed that you enjoy observing flowers on the hill behind your studio. What is the reason for your interest in flowers? Compared to the other plants, what is the speciality of 'flowers' that appeals to you? How do you transform the structure and shape of 'flowers' to construct your own artistic language and forms?

Liu: The reason I chose flowers as the prototype is primarily that their structures are compatible with what I want to express in my paintings. They seem to be soft and smooth, but I scatter them in the picture using an unusual way with sharpness, violence, engraving and turning to deconstruct, break up and reshape. The whole process is full of uncertainty, to the point where many times paintings would progress in the opposite direction, all of which I expect. Within the progress of painting, being able to perform with great ease and spontaneity results in the final artwork. Eventually the form only remains a slim resemblance towards flowers – the similarity between the two is because I still present the structural characteristics of the objects and the difference lies in the fact that I project a subjective thinking onto the canvas, which my life experience is sincerely depicted.

3812: The subject matter of your works is normally some items that are familiar to the public. However, your characteristic brushstrokes leave a long lasting trace in the audience's memory. When creating works, amongst 'subject matter/content', 'form and language' and 'spirituality', which is most important?

Liu: Subject can be anything, whether it is scenery or portrait, whereas form dominates and is far more important than content itself. I think if art is a pyramid, then the highest priority is difference, followed by spirituality, and then content, ideas, etc. Meanwhile, it demonstrates the importance of subject matter, spirit, and soul to artists. But millions of artists have their own beliefs and content. If there's little difference between them, how can they achieve breakthroughs? Throughout the history of art, great masters share huge similarities in terms of common themes. Most of them succeed by their innovation in forms rather than contents. Even for the same apple, each of those masters have their distinct way of picturing. I want to express the common items in an unconventional way. What matters is not what one depicts but how.

3812: Most of your works use dark backgrounds to contrast with sharp lines, adding a touch of heaviness and coldness to the vibrant and dynamic images. What emotions do you want to express with these colours?

Liu: First of all, I apply colours that I am comfortable with. Regarding emotions, they are very subjective and changeable. And each painting is not fixed but elicits instant emotions through the objects it depicts. Those expressions are intuitive but in general there's a prevailing element of sadness because life eventually has a tone of sadness.

3812: Your lines seem to be deep and sharp, carrying strong emotions. But upon closer inspection, while drawing, your speed should be rapid but at the same time within control. How do you balance between release and retrieval, spontaneity, and control?

Liu: It's very difficult to describe in words but their relationship must be relatively balanced. Everything depends on intuition, and there always are surprises in the process, which is precisely the magnificence of paintings. I have no idea what the image would be like after scribbling but almost every time I gain some new achievements. Sometimes I fail but failure is equally important. Not everyone can become a genius artist like Picasso, who said 'I don't have to play the game of chance, he has always been working with me', but we shall have the courage of letting go and the ability of holding back when painting. Such ability is entirely personal, and everyone has their own ways but in a good painting, there should be a state of conflict and balance of different elements.

3812: Geometric shapes and angles are often seen in your works and the images often have a tough texture. They look like engraving but are in fact oil paintings. Do you do it on purpose? Besides oil painting, what new media do you like?

Liu: I didn't do it deliberately and primarily my works are completed by intuition. I like and need these tough and sharp shapes to form a visual impact and through my visual language to reflect my thoughts towards this era and myself. I like painting on iPad, and it differs from ordinary engraving by using an e-Pen that connects to a computer screen. Users can directly touch the screen via the pen and it's easy to carry. This direct interaction of the digital era gives me a feeling of easel painting, but simultaneously differs—unlimited layers, strokes and special effects are adjustable and wrong strokes can be easily reversed. Everything has two sides. Maybe such a stroke is the key element of that work and without withdrawing it is fully completed. However, iPad painting is a brand new painting method which is closely connected to traditional paintings that I quite enjoy.

3812: Your first art piece *11-11-17* and many works afterwards are all named by numbers. What does that stand for?

Liu: It's for documenting time. I find that most of the audience look at the title first when viewing artworks and I want them to focus on the forms rather than being misled by titles, which largely limits their imagination. Titles sometimes fail to summarise the connotation of the work. Different audiences can see a variety of forms and experiences from the paintings, which is a good thing. Moreover, I believe what impresses us about a work is its meaningful form rather than ideas and information conveyed by direct images. Narrative paintings that are dominated by contents, their title guides us to describe the story in the picture and that limits the artistry of the works. Therefore, unless I would like to convey a distinct value in the painting, I would name it properly. Otherwise in most times I would name them after meaningless time.

3812: In your opinion, is your distinctive creative language somewhere between abstract and figurative painting or totally different from them?

Liu: My idea is to extract images that match my feelings from the existing objects. Because I think objects themselves have no meaning and what is seen with bare eyes are similar. As a result, I need to abstract, simplify, and reconstruct. Art can't be spared from abstraction but at the same time it is not easy to simplify the meaningless objects and extract the meaningful parts. How do we use simple touches to depict profound images? Through our unique language symbols, and if one doesn't simplify on the premise of pursuing a deep artistic language, one would only achieve superficial formalism paintings. Therefore, abstraction and simplification are important. They can entirely present the inner aesthetic forms on the two-dimensional plane and reproduce the objects from the artists' perspective via pure forms, transforming the meaningless into meaningful.

About the exhibition

3812: This is your first solo exhibition outside mainland China. What expectation do you have for this solo show curated by 3812 Gallery this time?

Liu: This is my first solo exhibition in Hong Kong, and I am very honoured to be able to cooperate with 3812, a very influential gallery, and I hope this show can catch more attention from the collectors, facilitating interaction and exchange of ideas.

3812: Do you hope the exhibition is presented with more guidance or with more imaginative space for the visitors to feel, think and interpret your artworks?

Liu: Yes, because these are common topics in my artworks, I hope through this exhibition I can present them in my own personal style. There are plenty of formulaic painting trends in the market, but artists have to be ourselves, to present authentically, even though it may not lead to the consequence we want, we should strive to explore the nature of art. Even if other artists swarm in groups, as artist we have to grow savagely and behold the spirit of Forging the Wild.



劉養聞

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個展：

2022 「野蠻生長」，3812 畫廊，香港

2021 「刺目之花 迴旋之眼」，Tong Gallery+Projects，北京

群展：

2022 「倫敦巨匠臻藏藝博會」，3812 畫廊，倫敦

2018 「灰寂」，Tong Gallery+Projects，北京

2018 「江南敘事第五季·央曼」，可一美術館，南京

2016 「『悟空』跨媒介實驗藝術展」，多倫現代美術館，上海

Liu Yangwen

(b.1995) lives and works in Nanjing, Jiangsu Province. He graduated from the Nanjing Academy of Fine Arts with a bachelor's degree in oil painting.

Solo Exhibitions:

2022 *Forging the Wild*, 3812 Gallery, HongKong

2021 *Dazzling Flowers Spinning Gazes*, Tong Gallery+Projects, Beijing

Group Exhibition:

2022 *Masterpiece London*, 3812 Gallery, London

2018 *Grey Silence*, Tong Gallery+Projects, Beijing

2018 *Narrative of Jiangnan Season 5 · FASL*, KEYI Art Museum, Nanjing

2016 *'WuKong'* cross-media experimental art exhibition, Shanghai Doland Museum of Modern Art, Shanghai



Hong Kong 香港

Opening Hours 開放時間
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