





Sophia Vari
Madame De Pompadour 蓬帕杜夫人 1999
White Polychrome Bronze
白色上色铜雕
Edition 2/3 + 2 AP 限量 3 件 + 2 AP
113 x 14 x 17 cm

INK AND INNUENDO



SOPHIA VARI • LI YONGFEI

PEKING ART ASSOCIATES
&
ANDREA HERRERA GOULANDRIS

- PRODUCED WITH -
GALERIE DUMONTEIL

Edited and Designed by E. S. PETTIT
With Introduction & Interviews by E. S. PETTIT & M. L. HO
Translation by M. FENG



Li Yongfei 李永飞
A Flash of Fireworks 刹那烟火 2013
Ink on Rice Paper
纸本水墨
144 x 75 cm

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INK AND INNUENDO

E. S. Pettit

BORN ON THE HISTORIC GREEK PENINSULA OF ATTICA jutting into the Aegean Sea, Sophia Vari's extraordinary and peripatetic life story reads like an art history of the twentieth century. Hailing from a Classical Greek tradition she firmly believes is 'in the blood', Vari has spent a lifetime traveling and absorbing the many cultures that have fed her artistic imagination. From Mayan to Egyptian, Olmec to Cycladic, and periods spanning the Ancient to Baroque and movements Cubism to Surrealism, Sophia Vari has known the great artistic figureheads of her time, including Henry Moore, and Maria Callas, who sat for Vari in the creation of a bust one week before the singer's untimely death. For nearly the past four decades Sophia Vari has been married to Columbian artist Fernando Botero and their life of adventure and artistic critique has clearly been one of beauty and mutual benefit to their distinctive practices. Once claiming "painting is an illusion", Vari skips between oils, watercolours, mixed media and collage with ease, as well as jewellery in silver, gold, wood, ivory and coral, or 'portable sculptures', as she prefers to call them. Yet it is with large



Sophia Vari
The Little One 娇小 2011
White Polychrome Bronze
白色上色铜雕
Edition 1/6 + 2 AP 限量 6 件 + 2 AP
35 x 30 x 52 cm

and monumental sculpture that Vari is clearly in her element, stating in 1976: "I want to touch, I want the volume, I want to be able to walk around my work, I want to create into a space... to feel my own existence." Vari's sculptures have evolved through several stages over the course of decades dedicated to perfection and she is seemingly just as active today as she was fifty years ago, working every day for up to eight hours. Indeed Sophia Vari is a study in contrasts. Slight and statuesque, Vari's feminine frame is at variance to her chosen materials of bronze, marble and silver; the weight and physicality of her work constantly exploring a delicacy of balance. She is fascinated by the tension between gravity and levity and her work remarkably exudes both in equal measure.

Beginning to sculpt in the 1960s, the young Vari was preoccupied by the human form and Classical techniques. Moving into rounded abstraction by the 1980s, in more recent years her work has evolved into constructed and planar forms, often painted in polychrome to contribute a sense of movement to the work, with occasional Mondrian reds, blues and yellows adding a certain playfulness. While today Vari pays homage to her Greek heritage through the marble and bronze media of her work, she has freed herself from the human form over the years to explore a more complex presentation of the interaction of form. And her play with contradictions never really ceases for the viewer. The contrast between seeing reproduced images and being exposed to Vari's work in person is stark- when experienced, there is a surprising subtlety and moreover, sensuality that is unexpected for such heavy material

and formations. Vari has said to have been entranced by the sensuous women in Rubens' paintings from a young age and there is an undeniable sexuality to her own work which is sophisticated. Just as with Rubens, in Sophia's sculpture the robust and light coincide as forms engage with space and at times appear almost suspended. Italian schools have also clearly been a great influence, and the simplicity and vitality of Giotto and Piero della Francesca may be the defining objectives for Vari. The Italian art critic Vittorio Sgarbi once said Vari "humanises geometry", but she rather sees geometry as a tool of discipline which she uses to make the work "clean and clear" and "permits indulgence with other things", such as the beauty of the materiality and the patina.

In our interview by phone from a little Greek island to Beijing I am struck by Sophia's energy, her ease at switching languages, and the memory of a mind that too is clean and clear. She speaks of conquering adversity early on in the aftermath of World War II, learning salient lessons of overcoming cultural isolation, and a cool-headed pragmatism she inherited from her grandmother.



Li Yongfei 李永飞
Red Billows 红色波涛 2016
Ink and 'Zhusha' Mineral Pigment on Paper
纸本水墨, 朱砂
144 x 210 cm (side view 侧面图)

Besides the formative relationships of her life which all centre upon art and creation, Sophia speaks frankly that art is not catharsis for her as the artist, but her great aspiration is rather to 'do something good' with her art for others. She speaks unpretentiously of the peace that ink art offers the viewer, confiding that while she has a feeling for it she could not do it, and generously praises the works of ink artist Li Yongfei. Unlike Li Yongfei, who believes the otherwise ethereal practice of meditation has a practical and direct influence on his artistic practice, Sophia ingeniously admits to a corporeal, almost workmanlike approach to her art. She does not claim to enter a creative *Gestalt*, a 'creative whole' between her life and work, her greater concern being "bringing clarity and ethics to creation". The septuagenarian continues:- "if I can give a little bit of harmony and peace to the viewers of my work then I am satisfied. Peace provides clarity for thought, which in turn provides the way to a practical solution". In achieving a masterclass in aesthetic balance the ends may be the same for the two artists, but their approaches could not be more dramatically different, both philosophically and practically. While Sophia is concerned with morality, Li Yongfei is preoccupied with a Confucian ideal of harmony above morality. I imagine Sophia in her studio determining proportions in clay and toiling with casts for bronze in foundries, while half a world away a young ink artist sits as if in complete stillness.

If Sophia Vari's sculptures are an education in form and balance, the tradition of Chinese ink painting is a continual pursuit of gesture over form, with the physical link of the artist's body to paper through brush being paramount. In Li Yongfei's steadily growing body of work over recent years subjects centre upon the tradition of mountains, mythical creatures and cloud seals (*yun zhuàn*), reinvented in the mind. Monochromes have evolved to combine with increasingly rich colouration in works that literally collect the imprint of the literatus' study. From tea to charcoal from burned incense to life-affirming orange *zhusha* mineral pigment, all of these agents act to disperse and manipulate the ink for the viewer's pleasure. Li Yongfei's thorough devotion to literati customs becomes clear on a visit to his studio. Here heady scents of ink mix with incense as the artist relays stories learnt by heart of myths and heroes, demons and dragons, all previously brought to life by the artist through careful consideration of the brush. Just as ancient Chinese artist-scholars spawned the phrase *wen ren yu cha*, 'scholars and tea', to embody a sense of art, a studio visit would not be complete without sampling one of this northern-born artist's selection of southern-harvested tea. Indeed, the considerate and charismatic Hebei-native may be the personification of a modern literatus, self-cultivating through regular practice of *The Three Perfections* of calligraphy, painting and poetry, of which he now counts volumes of his own compositions. But it is the process behind this young artist's new abstract works that is perhaps most intriguing. In recent years Li, Central Academy-trained in the most fastidious and demanding of all ink brush painting, the hairline-fine *gong bi*, has sought to find unmitigated ways to transmit his physical - and spiritual - life to paper. For an artist devoted to extending the limits of the brush, his solution has been extreme, not to mention brave, in deciding to abandon the brush altogether. It has also been a keen lesson in self-abandonment.

Relinquishing himself to his materials rather than exerting control over them through his tools, Li has led a search of indirect means to direct ink and water. And the practice to which the artist has turned to is meditation. Rather like a practitioner of *taichi*, Li Yongfei has engaged with material control alongside release through meditation, or as he calls it "the direct and indirect flow of energy on the paper". Commencing his study of meditation with a Taoist philosopher a number of years ago, Li cites amongst his earliest experiences water placed in vials before each practitioner during meditation, and then submerged in ice at the end of the session. The resultant ice crystals of those more experienced in meditation being far more complex than those less experienced left a profound impression on the artist. It brought to his mind the phenomenon of 'Water Memory', the purported ability of water to retain a memory of substances previously dissolved in it even after a number of dilutions, and the claimed mechanism by which homeopathic remedies work, although diluted to the point that no single molecule of the original substance remains. Li Yongfei too attests to a related effect in his artistic work that heavily relies on water as he has practiced meditation in parallel. While his immersion in meditation has deepened, Li firmly believes that his state of mind and moreover the power of his meditative practice at any one time affects the property of water in his works and therefore the formation of ink and mineral in them. He explains the basic practical and more esoteric aspects to his practice:-

"When water and colour and ink are mixed on a piece of paper, several effects and forms can emerge. One is *an yong* (a kind of stippling effect), one is flowing and the other is merging. For these effects and textures to appear on the same piece of paper, I manipulate the water. But it also depends on factors such as temperature. If I work in the winter, the results are quite different from the summer. Water also gives the effect of depth - raised and sunken areas. It's a bit like making wine. After I put all the ingredients together, I let it ferment... Yet the most profound effect on my work is meditation... In many ways I've abstracted the method. In my works, there are no outlines, no lines at all. It's more like *yi tuan qi* (a cluster of energy). So I think it's more pure. It's just *qi* flowing on the paper... In this series I want to express particular elements of Chinese Taoist culture."

Li Yongfei's statements call to mind the words of the ink artist Liu Dan with whom I recently had the privilege of spending time in his studio. The soft but decisively spoken master gave me pause for thought when he declared: "the majority of Western artists need to conquer materials, whereas an ink artist must surrender to his materials, *they conquer him*". It is undeniable that there is an honesty that ink and water on paper demands, they are relatively unforgiving, and do not allow for temporal lapses as other materials might. Liu Dan's words have held resonance as I've visualised Sophia Vari in Pietrasanta, the ultimate in feminine grace wielding a masculine impetus of bright, *yang* energy in the context of a bustling Tuscan foundry, all expanding and contracting vigour like the very bronze alloy in its cast, indeed conquerer of her materials. Trip an auspicious eight thousand kilometres east from Pietrasanta to Beijing to find Li Yongfei - all tamed, *yin* energy enveloped in a dark studio only suffused by the gentlest of aromas of tea mixed with incense, his environment creating *xian tian* ('what comes from heaven'), a primeval quality and the kind of innocence (*hun dun*) he uses to describe his works.

Ink and Innuendo is an exploration of contradictions within dualities: of finding form in gesture and the inverse; the physical mind, the quietened body; masculine *yang* in a sculpsess of bronze, marble and silver and feminine *yin* in the delicacy of water and ink from the resolute hand of a literatus. I hope readers of this catalogue and visitors to the exhibition will enjoy it as much as I have in bringing together these two dynamic, divergent artists My sincere thanks to Sophia Vari and Li Yongfei for their uncompromising commitment to their crafts and their generosity of time in giving insightful interviews contained in this catalogue. Thanks always to my team, Michelle Ho in Hong Kong and Michelle Feng in London. My thanks also to Jeremie Thircuir, Liu Yaping, and to Zheng Yuxin of Galerie Dumonteil, Shanghai. And last but not least, sincerest thanks to Andrea Herrera Goulondris and her husband Leonidas for so generously opening up their unique home in Beijing's Liuyin Park that is such a magical setting for the contemplation of art.



Li Yongfei 李永飞
Taihu Stone 太湖石 2015
Ink and Tea on Rice Paper
水墨和茶在宣纸上
180 x 98 cm



Li Yongfei 李永飞
Cloud Seal I 云篆一 2013
Ink on Rice Paper
纸本水墨
138 x 69 cm



Li Yongfei 李永飞
Cloud Seal II 云篆二 2013
Ink on Rice Paper
纸本水墨
138 x 69 cm



Sophia Vari
Vibrant Fire 跳动的火焰 2012
Silver 银
Edition 1/6 + 2 AP 限量 6 件 + 2 AP
37.3 x 10.5 x 10.7 cm



Li Yongfei 李永飞

The Dragon's Earth (a diptych)

大地被龙侵占 (双连画) 2015

Ink and 'Zhusha' Mineral Pigment on Rice Paper

水墨, 朱砂在宣纸上

144 x 374 cm overall





Sophia Vari
Twilight 暮色 2004
Silver 银
Edition 2/2 + 2 AP 限量 2 件 + 2 AP
91 x 20 x 28 cm



Twilight 暮色 2004
Side view
侧面图



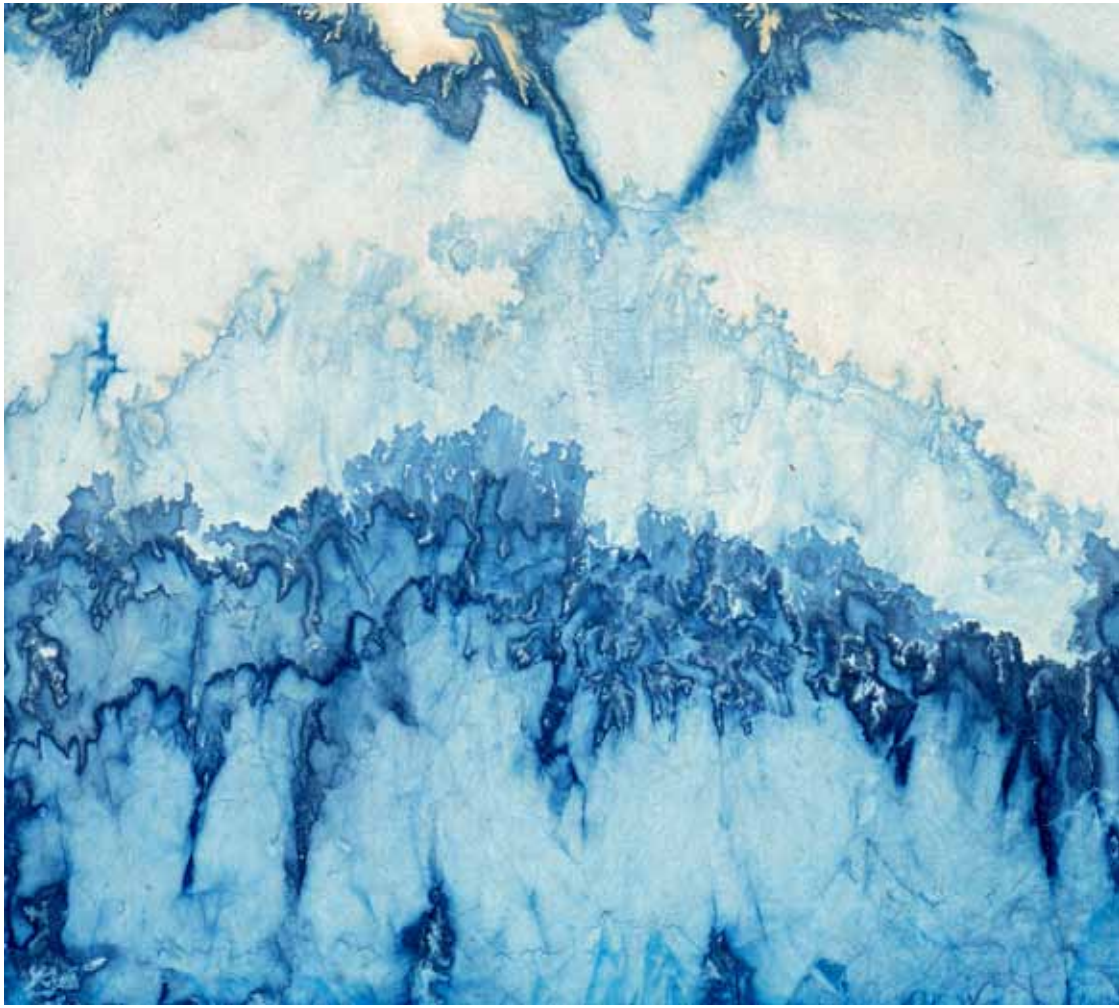
Sophia Vari
Madame de Pompadour 蓬帕杜夫人 1999
White Polychrome Bronze 白色上色铜雕
Edition 2/3 + 2 AP 限量 3 件 + 2 AP
113 x 14 x 17 cm



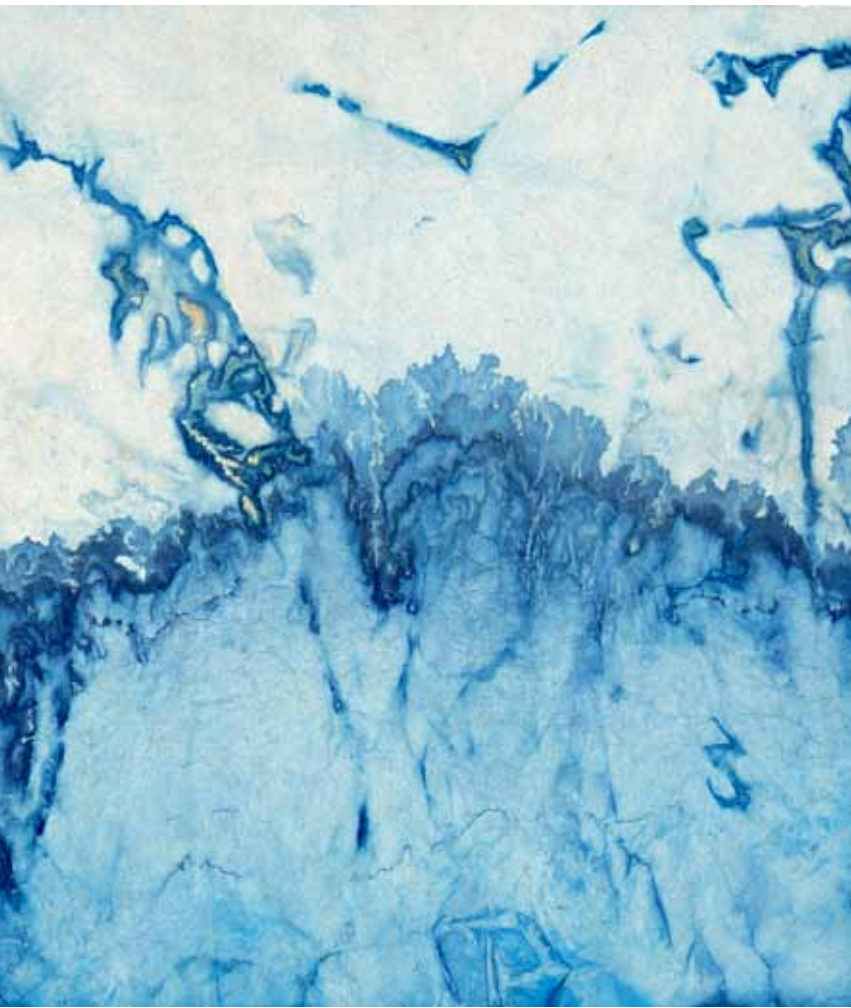
Li Yongfei 李永飞
Changeable Clouds I 云无常之一 2013
Ink and Tea on Rice Paper
水墨和茶在宣纸上
230 x 95 cm



Li Yongfei 李永飞
Mountain with Fog 山雾 2015
Ink, Tea and Watercolour on Rice Paper
水墨, 茶和水彩在宣纸上
49.5 x 99 cm each x 3 works



Li Yongfei 李永飞
Blue Mountain 蓝山 2016
Ink and Watercolour on Rice Paper
水墨，水彩在宣纸上
65 x 137 cm





Li Yongfei 李永飞

Mountain's Awareness 山之思维 2016

Ink, Tea and Watercolour on Pi 'Skin' Paper

水墨, 茶, 水彩在皮纸上

98 x 293 cm





Sophia Vari
Origin 起源 2015
Marble 大理石
27.5 x 27 x 25 cm
Unique Piece 孤品



Origin 起源 2015
Verso Detail 细节图



Li Yongfei 李永飞

Left to Right 从左向右：

Shadowless 无影；*Communicate with a Puzzle* 谜之交流；*Ripple of A Cloud* 云之波纹 2015

Ink and Tea on Rice Paper

水墨和茶在宣纸上

180 x 98 cm each





Li Yongfei 李永飞
Red Coral Sea 红珊瑚之海 2016
Ink and 'Zhusha' Mineral Pigment on Rice Paper
水墨，朱砂在宣纸上
210 x 144 cm



Sophia Vari
Flower of Night 夜之花 2011
Bronze, Patina 锈色铜雕
Edition 1/6 + 2 AP 限量 6 件 + 2 AP
93 x 46 x 45 cm



Sophia Vari
Fleeting Fire 瞬间的火焰 2012
Silver 银
Edition 5/9 + 2 AP 限量 9 件 + 2 AP
34.6 x 10.5 x 6.5 cm



Li Yongfei 李永飞
Red Tide 红浪潮 2015
Ink and 'Zhusha' Mineral Pigment on Rice Paper
水墨，朱砂在宣纸上
152 x 145 cm



Sophia Vari
Madame De Pompadour 蓬帕杜夫人 1999
White Polychrome Bronze 白色上色铜雕
Edition 2/3 + 2 AP 限量 3 件 + 2 AP
113 x 14 x 17 cm



Li Yongfei 李永飞
Quantum Upheaval 量子剧变 2014
Ink on Paper
纸本水墨
177 x 90 cm



Li Yongfei 李永飞

Mountains are not Mountains 山不是山 2014

Ink, Tea and Watercolour on Paper

水墨，茶和水彩在皮纸上

98 x 380 cm





Li Yongfei 李永飞
Aroma of Opium 鸦片香气 2015
Ink on Paper
纸本水墨
210 x 97.7 cm



Sophia Vari
Encounter 相遇 2010
Bronze 铜雕
Edition 1/6 + 2 AP 限量 6 件 + 2 AP
63 x 31 x 46 cm
Side view 侧面图



Li Yongfei 李永飞

Mystery - Extreme 谜 - 极 2013

Ink, Tea and Watercolour on Pi 'Skin' Paper

水墨，茶和水彩在皮纸上

97.7 x 180.3 cm





Sophia Vari
Harlequin 小丑 2002
White Polychrome Bronze 白色上色铜雕
Edition 1/6 + 2 AP 限量 6 件 + 2 AP
61 x 26 x 24 cm



Li Yongfei 李永飞
Sun Spots 太阳之斑点 2013
Ink on Rice Paper
纸本水墨
140 x 97.5 cm



Sophia Vari
The Prefect 长官 2000
White Polychrome Bronze
白色上色铜雕
Edition 1/3 + 2 AP 限量 3 件 + 2 AP
80 x 36 x 23 cm



The Prefect 长官 2000
Side view
侧面图



Li Yongfei 李永飞

Interstellar (diptych) 星际 (双连画) 2015

Ink and 'Zhusha' Mineral Pigment on Rice Paper

水墨, 朱砂在宣纸上

144 x 370 cm overall

Private Collection, Luxembourg

私人收藏, 卢森堡



IN CONVERSATION WITH SOPHIA VARI

Emily Pettit

Emily Pettit (EP): Dear Sophia, could we start with your family and cultural roots. You were born in Athens to a Hungarian mother and Greek father. Ancient Greek sculpture consisted almost entirely of marble or bronze in its monumental form; it was often painted, and geometry plays a significant role in its earliest tradition, all of which are features of your sculptural work. How would you say Ancient Greek sculpture influenced you, especially your post-figurative, abstracted works?

Sophia Vari (SV): When I began practicing sculpture forty years ago my work was entirely figurative and because I was once figurative there is a certain movement, the suggestion of gesture in my abstract work. I came out of Classical forms to be free, but since my youth, visiting museums in Athens, Ancient Greek sculpture has been in me. Most influential on myself were the techniques and the material of marble and bronze. With the years there have been other influences, but Ancient Greek sculpture is still very much in my blood.



EP: Vittorio Sgarbi said you “humanise geometry”. Of course your sculptural surfaces are smooth and there are straight lines, semi-circles and parabolas amongst other geometric forms. Do you think there is a consistent inner life to your sculptures or a range of inner lives? What are these lives?

SV: Vittorio Sgarbi is one of the great art critics. To take his phrase “humanise geometry”, I don’t create a human being through geometry. Geometry is rather a taming influence for a sculptor; it brings clarity and it makes the work healthy. I can then permit indulgence with other things, the material, patina and so on. What I do when I am sculpting is to create something I will respect. When we speak of an inner life to my sculptures, perhaps transferring my emotional inner life to my work, well my problems, my doubts are not in my work. A work of art has to have its own life to sustain itself over time.

EP: To go back to the idea of art being ‘healthy’, it raises the question of an almost ethical duty of the artist. Could you say more about this?

SV: Yes, my Greek origins have instilled a sense of doing good through art - bringing clarity and ethics to creation.

EP: Could we talk about China. Andrea Herrera Goulandris and I are staging your third exhibition in China, this time of your exquisite marble, bronze and silver sculptures from Galerie Dumonteil with the abstract ink works of the considered young artist Li Yongfei. Yongfei has talked about the effect that meditation has had on his practice of ink work. Does your inspiration also come through a creative 'Gestalt', a creative whole, perhaps while meditating, exercising or day dreaming?

SV: I must be honest with you Emily, not at all. When I go to my studio it is just as if I were to go to an office. I close my door, I sit, and I work. I am disciplined. I don't wait for inspiration, nor do I let my mood affect my work. I work in a very practical, very physical way. I don't mean physical in my body - I mean physical strength in my head that I've had since I was a little girl.

EP: Please go on.

SV: My parents took me out of Greece to Switzerland because of the Second World War. When we returned I was nine years old and I spoke French and Hungarian... but I didn't speak a word of Greek. I was disliked at school because I had been away in Switzerland - who could blame the other children. Most horrifyingly people were dying the streets - there was not enough to eat or drink - the context was the biggest shock a child could have. I got a depression at that time and I learned a lesson early on in mental strength to overcome it.

EP: Who helped you?

SV: My grandmother, who was also called Sophia. There were no kisses, she was tough. But from my grandmother I learned that even when you are devastated in your life, you have to create. And for me that was to make a work of art. At that time I learned to accept the defects of my country and to admire its culture.

EP: An exhibition of your works was held in 2008 at the Temple of Confucius in Beijing. You have said that the context of your exhibitions is very important to you - complexity, elegance and harmony. Could you tell us how the context of The Temple influenced your selection and staging of works? Have your earlier impressions of China changed when you re visited last year I think?

SV: As you know, Greece held the Olympic Games prior to China. The Greek government wanted to "send flowers", in other words to make a present to the Chinese government and it came in the form of my monumental sculpture. I was very emotional placing my work in front of the Temple of Confucius. I so admired the artistry of the temple, and I felt very small. I felt the connection that China and Greece, although so different, share a deep respect of their cultural traditions.

EP: You have said that your sculptures represent the interaction of seven planes of paintings. When I look at the lines of your sculptures I imagine I can see Chinese calligraphy as I circumnavigate them. Has Chinese art seeped into your work? If so, which Chinese art has impressed you and how does it show itself in your work?

SV: I have my own cultural heritage, which is long, just as China's and that longevity I find fascinating. You can't add to a culture that is not yours. You can admire it and respect it, but as far as it really influencing you? I admire the gestural element of Chinese art, the incredible calligraphy. I spent hours looking at ink art when I visited China in 2008 - maybe it was too much, I could not replicate it; I would feel I was stealing. You have to just be yourself.

EP: Patently your sculptures are very physical - there is nothing ethereal about them. They have been described as a mixture of form and balance. The tradition of Chinese ink drawings is concerned with gesture above form, the physical link of the artist's body to paper through brush being paramount. What are your musings on the ink tradition in China?

SV: Ink gives the viewer peace. It is not executed by the hand that trembles. I could not do it, but I can feel it.

EP: Looking at world culture, you have been exposed to so many cultures in your life and many schools have fed into your imagination: Mayan, Egyptian, Olmec, Cycladic, Ancient and Baroque. Do any of these schools now predominate in your work? How is your relationship to art movements, notably Cubism, evolved over the years?



Sophia Vari
Miss 小姐 2000
White Polychrome Bronze 白色上色铜雕
Edition 3/3 + 2 AP 限量 3 件 + 2 AP
80 x 47 x 31 cm



Miss 小姐 2000
Side view
侧面图

SV: When you start out as a young artist you look at everything, you absorb a great deal and you mix it like a cocktail. The Egyptian is connected to the Archaic Greek, the Ancient to the Baroque. Over the years your style is what you choose and your memory is what appeals to you best. Art comes out of art.

EP: And tragedy? It reminds me of the closing passage of *The Birth of Music out of the Spirit of Music* where Nietzsche writes that the Ancient Greeks were able to create such beauty because they had experienced so much tragedy. It gave me cause for thought as a very young woman. And yourself?

SV: Yes, I believe hard experiences make the work more pure. If you look at Hellenistic sculptures, there is no gaze, the eyes are turned upward to the skies. Unlike Roman sculpture, the figures are not exactly human, they are superhuman [mythical heroes, war heroes]. Art is there to make the difficult easier, to see beauty, harmony, even for the material to give a sense of reassurance. If I can give a little bit of harmony and peace to the viewers of my work then I am satisfied. Peace provides clarity for thought, which in turn provides the way to a practical solution.

EP: Some of your sculptures are black and white, making one think of a piano and music scores. Speaking of ebony and ivory, you met one of my heroines, Maria Callas, in 1957 when you were 17 and Maria was at the height of her powers. Callas is fascinating to me because she treated the score fluidly, almost flagrantly at times, inserting words into cadenzas to communicate the story in her terms instead of flourishes to show off her vocal prowess. She worked instinctively and completely became the character; the score was secondary to the spirit of the character. I read once that in *La Traviata* that everything about her posture indicated sickness, fatigue, softness. Her arms would move as if they had no bones. In *Medea*, everything was angular. Could you describe how you work and how you see the physicality of your sculptures?

SV: Callas was part of Greece. When I met her I then and there decided I wanted to be an artist. My first encounter was when I was 17 through friends of my parents. Then we met many years later when we both lived in Paris. I asked to make a portrait bust of her. She came to my studio and asked what will you do Sophia? Will you create Maria or Callas? I said I will create Maria Callas, you are and always will be Maria Callas. A week later she died. You know the circumstances... I finished the portrait and gave it to the Foundation.

It is a lesson an artist must learn that one's personal life is second to being an artist. Maria Callas was looking for Maria later in her life and in a way that may have been her undoing. An artist has to accept it, there is no great creation without great sacrifice.

EP: Does music influence your work? Do you listen to music in the studio?

I cannot listen to music when I work because I respect music too much, having it just as background.

EP: Another great figure of the 20th century, Henry Moore, devoted his artistic life to exploring abstractions of the human figure, and to a monumental scale. Did he influence you in any way after your encounter, both the works and the person?

SV: I met Henry Moore when I was very young, 24 years of age. I remember it was afternoon tea time and his wife had made a pear tart. I was kept in the kitchen eating it and I was anxious I would be kept in the kitchen and not spend sufficient time with the master! Actually I went into the studio and stayed with Henry Moore for three or four hours listening and observing. The memory that stays in my mind is that he was so convinced of what he was doing.

EP: Last but not least, you have had an illustrious career and exhibited all over the world. Over the course of such a career, which place do you most treasure creating works and why - how does the place specifically influence your work?

SV: In each place I work in different materials. I work in marble in Italy for three to four months during the summer and my husband also has a studio there as the foundries are nearby. In the winter we are in Monaco. In New York I mostly work on my jewellery, my portable sculptures as I call them. Each year we spend one month in Columbia where I work on my paintings as it is easier to transport them and in any case, there are no foundries nearby! Light is a great influence on my work. The Greek light is fantastic. In Columbia it gets dark very quickly and I don't like working by electricity. Actually I am living inside myself you know Emily. So I can work anywhere; I can make maquettes on a plane. What I cannot do is to not work.

EP: Thank you very much for your time and your insights Sophia.

SV: Thank you Emily. I am very happy and honoured to participate with such a great artist like Li Yongfei. Thank you!



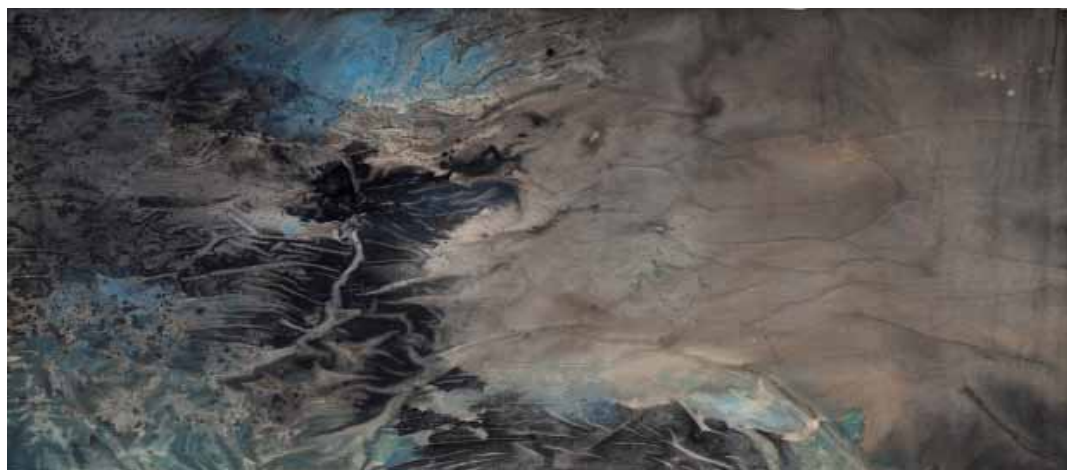
Sophia Vari

IN CONVERSATION WITH LI YONGFEI

Michelle Ho

Michelle Ho (MH): Meditation underlies this series of works. What are you trying to capture?

Li Yongfei (LYF): These works are kind of like energy (*qi*) flowing in the universe which I capture on paper. Some are like curls of smoke, some like surging waves and others like the still waters of a lake. They are all different. It's like taking a perception in meditation that becomes contained in the universe, and contained as energy in the human body. So this series is all about *qi* and its many different forms, forms beyond language, beyond senses and beyond images. Something which lies at the back of our consciousness but in certain moments, for instance during meditation, is suddenly experienced in its totality but cannot be interpreted. I'm interested in the possibilities of awareness. If cognitive boundaries are not broken, human beings cannot move forward.



I shifted into the abstract with this series to explore all of this. I don't know the starting point or end point when I begin each work. Different people will look at the same work and tell me they see different forms and phenomenon. That's the whole point actually because *qi* itself is formless and each viewer or person also has a different *qi*.

MH: What is different about your method with this series?

LYF: When you mix water and colour and ink on a piece of paper, several effects and forms can emerge. One is *an yong* (a kind of stippling effect), one is flowing and the other is merging. For these effects and textures to appear on the paper, I manipulate the amount of water used. But it also depends on the temperature. If I work in the winter the results are quite different from the summer.

Water also gives the effect of depth - raised and sunken areas. It's a bit like making wine. After you put all the ingredients together, it ferments. The more it ferments, the richer the effect. If it's humid, it can take up to a month to dry. Sometimes in a couple of weeks it's complete. As it dries gradually, the water ebbs like the tide. You can see the ebbing and retreat of water everywhere. I then select from the papers. Often, only one or two can be used as art. The rest cannot be used. I don't have a fixed



Exhibition Installation
L. J. & A. Goulandris' Residence, Beijing
展览现场
古安家, 北京

Opposite 对面 : Li Yongfei 李永飞
Rupture of the Ocean 破海 2013
Ink and Mineral Pigment on Rice Paper
纸本水墨, 绷于木板
207 x 96 cm
Private Collection, Beijing
私人收藏, 北京



Li Yongfei 李永飞
Silent Water Listening
to the Dragon's Cry 静水听龙吟 2013
Ink on Rice Paper
纸本水墨
141 x 74 cm

"This series is all about 'qi' (energy) and its many different forms, forms beyond language, beyond senses and beyond images. Something which lies at the back of our consciousness but in certain moments, for instance during meditation, is suddenly experienced in its totality but cannot be interpreted. I'm interested in the possibilities of awareness. If cognitive boundaries are not broken, human beings cannot move forward".

- Li Yongfei



Li Yongfei 李永飞
Depth of Darkness 暗的深度 2013
Ink on Rice Paper
纸本水墨
141 x 71 cm



Sophia Vari
Miss 小姐 2000
White Polychrome Bronze 白色上色铜雕
Edition 3/3 + 2 AP 限量 3 件 + 2 AP
80 x 47 x 31 cm

method. I experiment with many methods. If I see that the paper needs more work I will pour water and ink – just using vials with this series, never a brush - layer upon layer until I am satisfied. I work on a very flat smooth surface so that the ink runs freely.

I also have a very special method. But that's a secret! I discovered it through trial and error. Yet the most profound effect on my work is meditation.

MH: Any challenges in creating this series?

LYF: When you use other mediums such as paint it's like building a house out of bricks. You are a bricklayer. When you use inks you are the water engineer for that house! With oil painting, you can do it in blocks and parts. The same with *gong bi*. But with *shui mo*, you cannot.



Once I had piece of paper I fermented like wine for about two months. But when I took it out there was nothing except mould! No one could tell what it was. But if you used it as a piece of art it could have been very surprising. It was like a really old moulding wall. Not a particularly interesting subject. And yet its detail was quite amazing. Who can draw time? And yet time drew this.

MH: Do you still see your works as part of the tradition of Chinese painting?

LYF: Chinese painting for me cannot be defined as a type of painting but the manifestation of an idea. It is formed by the richness and diversity of Chinese culture since ancient times. It's like an air mass composed of everything from music and theatre to tea and incense, from jade and China's lakes to *Tai Chi*. It's hard to describe the outer form but it reveals the inner energy of the Chinese people and what is deep in our bones.

The lines, and the heavy and light shades of ink in traditional *xieyi* painting (literally a free-flow sketching of one's thoughts) have a certain *qi*. In many ways I've abstracted the method. In my works there are no outlines, no lines at all. It's more like *yi tuan qi* (a cluster of energy). So I think it's more pure. It's just *qi* flowing on the paper. Also, in this series I want to express a particular aspect of Chinese Taoist culture. When incense is burned, the smoke creates (Chinese) characters. This is the language with which we can communicate with the spirits. In ancient times, the initiated could read these smoke characters as they appear. In each temple, there was a book for deciphering these smoke symbols. But only the high priest or leader could open it. Nobody else. With this book, he

Li Yongfei 李永飞
Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon 卧虎藏龙 2013
Ink on Rice Paper
纸本水墨
97 x 151 cm

can decode the smoke characters. This ritual is called *yun zhuan*, literally meaning "cloud seal". It's a language unto itself. Because gods don't speak our language, because they are *qi*, they communicate through this smoke.

In most of my works, you can see this smoke effect. I guess you could call it *mo zhuan* or "ink seal". It's the innate language and character of ink. While smoke disappears almost instantly, the ink remains like a record.

MH: What do the smoke symbols tell us?

LYF: It can tell us many things. They have many meanings. There is another culture called *quanxi* (inseparable connectivity to and of the universe). If you drink this cup of water now, I can, through your action and the time of your action, tell you about your entire life. If you believe in numerology, your destiny revolves around the number you have been assigned as part of fate. It's hard to explain. But through one little thing you can read everything.

I think Einstein also raised similar theories. What's important to me about all these theories is the *qi*. And the question becomes how to capture it.

MH: You mentioned Western oil painting and Chinese ink painting have their own *qi* which reflects a distinct temperament of the times and their society. Would you say the same about your own works?

LYF: A professor of mine spent ten years in Japan. He said it's still paper in the end. But why do Chinese people use it so differently? We sort of spiritualise the canvas paper.

If you look at ancient Chinese paintings, there is a world of *qi* captured there. It's an artistic landscape *yishu fengshui* ("the fengshui of art"). So for instance, some people paint spring or winter but Chinese people are more concerned with the elements of wood, fire, earth, water and gold (or metal). If someone is missing the element of gold in his *qi* and you add a painting of snowy landscape, it will compensate for his lack. We are after harmony.

I think my works are more personal. I see many art works that depict vulgar or cruel images which reflect the artist's dissatisfaction with society. Many critics like it when an artist is transmitting his own angst onto the canvas. But I think that the *qi* transmitted through such works is too negative, to the extent that after you have observed such a work for a while, it will also harm you. I don't really like this feeling. It's angry and vulgar. My works cannot be described specifically for instance whether it is pure or obscure, extravagant or simple. It's a kind of *hun dun* (innocence). It's like when a child is born it doesn't know what is right or wrong, what is ugly or beautiful, what is a compliment or an insult. It's primeval or in Chinese we say *xian tian*, what comes from heaven.

MH: Chinese audiences may be familiar with the ink tradition. A lot of artists experimenting with different modes – e.g., using human hair, video and so on. If we don't understand this tradition, what can we do to understand these works?

LYF: I think the more radical ink artists are engaged in a kind of performance and perhaps their goal and relationship to their audience is different. They like the hustle and bustle and controversy around their works. It's like opening a new bar and drawing in the crowds. If you understand music, you would not go to a bar to find your music. People usually go because the crowds are there. If you really want to understand, it will take you a lifetime and you will find it in unexpected as well as traditional places.

Art is a life-long engagement. There's the market, there's the brand name of the artist, then there's the artist and his heart. If you really want to paint what's in your heart, you are more free of course.

MH: Chinese contemporary art was thriving globally while you were a student. As a student what were your greatest influences? And where do you draw your inspiration now?

LYF: As a student we all drew models, drew more models, and then more models, everyday. Only in the last year could we freely create. But by that time you no longer know how to create! After three years of repetition your mind is locked. I rarely did my

homework because I was reading other stuff, writing and learning. So very often other people would give me their homework and I'd just put my name on it! I felt so oppressed. They'd tell you to draw a flower and you had to draw a flower. A model and you had to draw a model. Or we'd just be asked to imitate as perfectly as possible a landscape.

Outside of school, artists like Fang Lijun were famous at the time. But I didn't pay much attention. There are other artists whom I admire and whom I believe will go on to be timeless. But they won't shoot to stardom overnight. They are steady in their development and the prices of their artworks are stable. There are one or two Japanese and Chinese artists. One Chinese installation artist.

These days, it's meditation. Meditation is a part of my life. It's how you have a dialogue with the universe beyond the tangible and probe our consciousness. Our ultimate purpose is enlightenment while life itself is like a dream, a fleeting illusion. I'm fascinated by the unknown, by man's pursuit of mystery, by ancient Eastern alchemy, by things beneath the veneer of reality.

MH: How do you think you have changed as an artist over the years?

LYF: I think I have come to understand art as more spiritual. It doesn't have a set language but it speaks to your heart. I still do what I want to do. I don't think about whether this piece will sell or not or who will or will not like it. I don't really rely on words or what can be explicitly expressed or seen. I prefer experience, intuition and feeling and I guess that elusive connection between these dimensions.

I would like to develop even greater freedom and abstraction in my ink works. I want to create something so pure, so genuine and playful. There's a lot I want to do. Some of my plans may not be suitable for gallery exhibitions. Something may be aesthetically perfect but I want to keep pushing boundaries too. It's just what you do as an artist.

MH: You are paired in this exhibition with Sophia Vari. What are your thoughts on Sophia's works?

LYF: Sophia's abstract sculpture has a grandiose sense of power. The connections between some forms reflect the dialogue between ink and water on the paper; her artistic language is simple and pure. Although her art is underlain by Western art vocabulary, I can still see a wonderful similarity with the treating of black and white in Oriental compositions, where the void is just as important as the content - the "empty space" is beyond the sculpture itself.



Li Yongfei 李永飞
Mottled Memories 斑驳回忆 2013
Ink on Rice Paper
纸本水墨
151 x 97 cm

ARTISTS' BIOGRAPHIES



Top 上: Li Yongfei 李永飞
Fireworks in the Void 真空中的焰火 2013
Ink and Tea on Rice Paper
水墨和茶在宣纸上
96 x 96 cm

Sophia Vari
Encounter 相遇 2010
Bronze 铜雕
Edition 1/6 + 2 AP 限量 6 件 + 2 AP
63 x 31 x 46 cm



SOPHIA VARI

Born 1940, Greece

Lives and works in Italy, Monaco, New York and Columbia

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

1969

Woodstock Gallery, London

Schmacher, Munich

1974

Espace Cardin, Paris - France

Mayor's Parlor of Gallier Hall, New Orleans, Louisiana

Jasper Gallery, Houston, Texas

1975

Museu de Arte Moderna, Sao Paulo

1976

Coe Kerr Gallery, New York City

1978 - 1979

Galerie Desmos, Alexandre Iolas, Athens

Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Lisbon

1981

Fondation Veranneman, Kruishoutem

Aberbach Fine Art Gallery, New York City

1983

Galeria Juana Mordo, Madrid

1984

Fondation Veranneman, Kruishoutem, Belgium

1985

Nohra Haime Gallery, New York

1986

Galerie d'Eendt, Amsterdam
Galerie d'Athènes, Athens

1987

Galeria Alfred Wild, Bogota
Galerie Eolia, Paris
Galeria Thaeco, Cali

1988

Fondation Veranneman, Kruishoutem, Belgium
Nohra Haime Gallery, New York City
Galleria d'Arte Il Gabbiano, Rome

1989

Galerie d'Athènes, Athens

1990

Galerie Eolia, Paris

1991

Museo de Arte Contemporaneo, Caracas
Nohra Haime Gallery, New York City

1992

Galleria d'Arte Il Gabbiano, Rome
Sala Gaspar Galeria d'Art, Barcelona

1994

Galleria d'Arte Il Gabbiano, Rome
Nohra Haime Gallery, New York City

1995

Fondation Veranneman, Kruishoutem
Nohra Haime Gallery, New York City

1996

"Salon de Mars", Nohra Haime Gallery, "Sculptures et Assemblages sur Toile", Paris

1997

Butler Art Institute, retrospective show, Youngstown, Ohio
Nohra Haime Gallery, "Assemblages on Canvas", New York City
Galerie Frank Pages, "Sculptures and Assemblages on Canvas", Baden-Baden
Studio d'Arte La Subbia, "Sculptures and Assemblages on Canvas", Pietrasanta
Galerie Naïla de Monbrison, "Jewels", Paris

1998

"The Art Show", Nohra Haime Gallery, "Sophia Vari : Monumental Sculptures", Seventh Regiment
Armory, New York City
Nohra Haime Gallery, "Polychrome Sculptures", New York City - USA Ulrich Art Museum,
Wichita, Kansas
Galleria Terzo Millennio, "Jewels", Milan

1999

Arij Gasiumasen Gallery, "Polychrome Sculptures", Palm Beach
Galerie Pièce Unique, Paris
École des Beaux-Arts, Galerie Pièce Unique, Paris

2000

Nohra Haime Gallery, New York City
City Hall of Athens, "Monumental Sculptures", Kotzia Square, Athens
Palazzo Bricherasio, Torino
"FIAC", Galerie Pièce Unique, Paris

2001

"Salon de Mars", Liliane Sicard, "Jewels", Geneva
Boca Raton Museum of Art, retrospective show, Boca Raton, Florida
Ludwig Museum, "Sophia Vari : Monumental Sculptures and Assemblages on Canvas", Komblentz
Liechtentaler Allee at Augustplatz, "Sophia Vari : Monumental Sculptures Outside", Baden-Baden
Galerie Frank Pages, "Recent Works", Baden-Baden
City of Geneva, "Sophia Vari : Monumental Sculptures", Street of the Constitution, Geneva
Artrium, "Sculptures and Assemblages on Canvas", Geneva
Nohra Haime Gallery, New York City

2002

Galerie Pièce Unique, Paris
Galerie Pièce Unique, "Baccarat meets Sophia Vari", Paris
Comune di Firenze, Assessorato alla Cultura, Salle d'Armes du Palazzo Vecchio and Piazza della Signoria, "Monumental Sculptures", Florence

2003

Nohra Haime Gallery, "Nevelson/Vari : a Dialogue", New York City
French Embassy in Greece, "Baccarat meets Sophia Vari", Athens
Liliane Sicard, "Baccarat meets Sophia Vari", Geneva
"Pavillon des Antiquaires et des Beaux-Arts", Liliane Sicard, "Jewels", Paris
Comune di Pietrasanta, Assessorato alla Cultura, "Sophia Vari at Pietrasanta", Chiesa San Agostino and Piazza del Duomo, Pietrasanta, Italy

2004

Benaki Museum, Athens - Greece
Musée Baccarat and Ileana Bouboulis Fine Arts, "Sophia Vari", Paris
City of Rome, "Monumental Sculptures", Piazza Esedra, Rome
National Art Gallery, "Balai Seni Lukis Negara Exhibition", Kuala Lumpur

2005

Casa de Risparmio, "La General", Granada
Santa Inès de Sevilla, "La General", Sevilla
Caixa de Gerona, "La General", Gerona
Nohra Haime Gallery, New York City
City Hall of the 6th Arrondissement, Comité Saint-Germain Didier Imbert Art Productions, "Sophia Vari at Saint-Germaindes-Prés", Paris

2006

Citta di Moncalieri, "Sophia Vari. Monumental Sculptures at Moncalieri", Moncalieri/Torino - Italy
Galeria Ramise Barquet, Monterrey, Mexico
Galerie Pièce Unique, Paris

2007

Galleria d'Arte Contini, Venice
Caja Canarias, Cultural Center, Tenerife
Caja Canarias, Cultural Center, La Laguna

2008

Confucius Temple, Beijing
Gardens of Boulingrins, "15 Monumental Sculptures" , Monte-Carlo

2009

J & P Fine Art, "Sculptures and Watercolours", Zürich

2010

Artcurial, Exhibition of jewelry and Presentation of the book "Sophia Vari Bijoux Sculptés", Paris
J & P Fine Arts, exhibition of her jewelry and presentation of the book "Sophia Vari Bijoux Sculptés", Zürich

2011

Paseo de la Castellana, "Forma y Color", Monumental Sculptures", Madrid
Galerie Piece Unique & Piece Unique Variations, "I Love Greece", Paris
"Sophia Vari the Plazas of Cartagena", Monumental Sculptures, Cartagena de Indias - Colombia
Nohra Haime Gallery, "Recent Sculptures and Watercolours", New York
Louisa Guinness Gallery & Ben Brown Fine Arts, exhibition of her jewelry, paintings, sculptures and presentation of the book
"Sophia Vari Bijoux Sculptés", London

2012

Bourse Palace, "Sophia Vari Le Armoniche Evoluzioni della Forma" , monumental sculptures, sculptures and paintings, Genoa
Contini Galleria d'Arte" Sophia Vari Gioielli - Sculture - Dipinti", Venice and Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy
N H Galeria, " Sophia Vari: Watercolours and Collages", Cartagena de Indias, Colombia
Nohra Haime Gallery, " Sophia Vari Wearable Sculpture", New York
Galerie MiniMasterpiece, " Sophia Vari Bijoux Sculptés", Paris

2013

N H Galeria, " Sophia Vari: escultura y obra en tela", Cartagena de Indias, Colombia
"Sophia Vari" Sculptures and Paintings Pera Museum, Istanbul

2014

"Sophia Vari" Sculptures, Paintings and Jewels at the Museum of Contemporary Art of Basil & Elise Goulandris Foundation, Andros, Greece
Piretti Art Gallery, " Sophia Vari", Knokke - Le Zoute, Belgium
Louisa Guinness Gallery, " Scale of Beauty", Jewels, London
Galerie MiniMasterpiece, Jewels, Paris

2015

"Sophia Vari, Pueblos de Colombia", Galeria El Museo, Bogota
Contini Art UK, " Le Désir de la Forme", London
"Shadow and Light", Galerie DUMONTEIL, Shanghai

PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

Fondation Verannemann, Kruishoutem, Belgium
Museum of Antiochia, near Medellin, Colombia
Fondation Botero, Luis Angel Arango Library, Bogota
City of Cartagena de Indias, Bogota
Wichita State University, Plaza of the Heroines, Wichita, Kansas, USA
Hilton Hotel, New York City
Ulrich Museum of Art, Wichita, Kansas
Butler Institute of American Art, Youngstown, Ohio
City of Paris, France
National Gallery of Art / Alexandros Soutzos Museum, Athens Benaki Museum, Athens
Vorres Contemporary Art Museum, Paiania, Greece
National Pinacoteca, Athens
Foundation Basil and Elise Goulandris, Modern Art Museum, Andros, Greece
Pieridis Museum, Athens
City of Athens, Square Mayor
Beeldenaanzen Museum, Den Haag, The Netherlands
City of Pietrasanta, Italy
Museo degli Argenti, dept. Gioiello contemporaneo, Palazzo Pitti, Florence
Costa Croisière, Genoa
Open Air Museum of Utsukushi-ga-hara, Japan
Museo de Ponce, Ponce, Puerto Rico
Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Lisbon, Portugal
Musée de la Main, Lausanne, Switzerland
Museo de Arte Contemporaneo de Caracas Sofia Imber, Caracas, Venezuela



LI YONGFEI

Born 1985 in Hebei Province, China

**Graduated from the Chinese Painting Department of Central Academy of Fine Arts in 2007,
B.F. A. degree**

Lives and works in Beijing

SELECTED SOLO AND GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2016

"The Chinese Ink Community", Group Exhibition, The Times Museum, Beijing
"The Beginning", Zijie Studio, Beijing

2015

"Secret Love", Group Exhibition, Tropen Museum, Amsterdam

2014

"The Spirit of Taichi", Li Yongfei and Ju Ming Joint Exhibition, Peking Art Associates, Beijing

2013

"Ink Painting Trio", Loftooo Art Center, Shanghai
"Secret Love", Group Exhibition, The National Museum of World Culture, Gothenburg

2012

CYAP Youth-Support Project, 5 Guanghua Road, International Expo Center, Beijing
"Secret Love", Group Exhibition, Östasiatiska Museum, Stockholm

2011

Greenhouse Project, ZAN8 Online Art Space
Youth Art 100, Temple of Earth, Beijing
"Fantasia in Ink Major", Li Yongfei and Qu Weiwei Joint Exhibition, Atkins & Ai Gallery, Beijing

2010

DEUX DIALOGUES Special Exhibition of Chinese Contemporary Artists, Paris
Painting Art, An Exhibition between France and China, Strasbourg
"Surprised Burst", Li Yongfei and Jiao Yang Exhibition, 3818 Cool Gallery, Beijing
Art Rally, La Celeste Gallery, Beijing

2009

"Scattered", T. Art Center, Beijing
The Four Doors of Heritage in Contemporary Chinese Ink Painting, Today Art Museum, Beijing
Blue Dot Asia 2009, Seoul
An Exhibition of Sculpture, 3818 Cool Gallery, Beijing
PARCOURS D'ARTISTES, Pontault Combault, Paris

2008

"Dream and Reality", Moon River Art Museum, Beijing
Exhibition of Sculpture, Moon River Art Museum, Beijing

2007

BFA Graduation Exhibition, Central Academy of Fine Arts (CAFA), Beijing
"Reboot", The Third Chengdu Biennale, Chengdu International Exhibition Centre, Chengdu
"Reasonable", iNew York Art Space, Beijing

PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

Britannia, P&O Cruises
Chevron Corporate Collection, Beijing
Art Museum of Chengdu
Dashanzi 798 Art District, Beijing
Rosewood Beijing

2008

《梦想与现实》——月亮河当代艺术展 月亮河当代艺术馆, 北京

《源》——月亮河雕塑艺术节 月亮河当代艺术馆, 北京

《时代名门》——中国当代艺术展 时代名门, 北京

《LOFT 户外雕塑展》—— 北京 798

2007

《重新启动》——第三届成都双年展, 成都

《情理之中》——李永飞、杨心广作品展 纽约艺术空间, 北京

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成都当代美术馆, 四川, 中国

798 艺术工厂, 大山子, 北京

北京瑰丽酒店



李永飞 Li Yongfei
造世界 *Creation of the World* 2013
纸本水墨
Ink on Rice Paper
96 x 48 cm



李永飞

1985 生于河北石家庄

2007 毕业于中央美术学院国画系获学士学位

现工作生活于北京

画展：

2016

《水墨共同体》——时代美术馆，北京

《当春乃发生》——梓杰工作室，北京

2015

《宓爱》——Tropen Museum, 阿姆斯特丹，荷兰

2014

《神游大虚》李永飞和朱铭作品展，北京艺术联盟

2013

《水墨三人展》——劳拉麦艺术中心，上海

2012

《CYAP 青年扶持计划》——国际会展中心，北京

《秘爱》——瑞典东方美术馆，斯德哥尔摩，瑞典

2011

《暖房计划》——ZAN8 艺术空间，北京

《青年艺术 100》——地坛，北京

《水墨大调幻想曲》——李永飞，曲魏魏作品展，艾特艾画廊，北京

2010

《DEUX DIALOGUES 中国当代艺术家特别邀请展》——法国

《画》——中法艺术交流展，斯特拉斯堡市，法国

《惊绽》——李永飞焦阳作品展，3818 库画廊，北京

《艺术集会》——La Celeste 画廊，北京

2009

《四门阵》——今日美术馆，北京

《错落》——梯级艺术空间，北京

《边界》——苏州本色美术馆，苏州

《PARCOURS D' ARTISTES》——Pontault Combault 巴黎

《反一映》——苏州本色美术馆，苏州

欧洲当代艺术展——Holzgerlingen, 德国

3818 库画廊群展——3818 库画廊，北京

2011

卡斯蒂利亚大道, “形式与色彩”, 大型雕塑, 马德里

Pi è ce Unique 与 Pi è ce Unique Variations 画廊, “我爱希腊”, 巴黎

“索菲亚·瓦丽 卡塔赫纳广场”, 大型雕塑, 卡塔赫纳 - 哥伦比亚

努赫拉·黑姆画廊, “近期雕塑和水彩画”, 纽约

路易莎·吉尼斯画廊与本·布朗美术馆, 珠宝、油画及雕塑展, 《索菲亚·瓦丽 雕塑珠宝》著作介绍会, 伦敦

2012

布赫斯宫, “索菲亚·瓦丽 Le Armoniche Evoluzioni della Forma”, 大型雕塑、雕塑和油画, 捷尼

孔蒂尼艺术画廊, “索菲亚·瓦丽: 珠宝 - 雕塑 - 绘画”, 威尼斯和科尔蒂纳丹佩佐, 意大利

NH 画廊, “索菲亚·瓦丽: 水彩画和布面拼贴”, 卡塔赫纳, 哥伦比亚

努赫拉·黑姆画廊, “索菲亚·瓦丽: 可佩戴的雕塑”, 纽约

Mini Masterpiece 画廊, “索菲亚·瓦丽 雕塑珠宝”, 巴黎

2013

NH 画廊, “索菲亚·瓦丽: 雕塑与布面拼贴”, 卡塔赫纳, 哥伦比亚

佩拉博物馆, “索菲亚·瓦丽”, 雕塑油画展, 伊斯坦布尔

2014

“索菲亚·瓦丽”, 雕塑、油画和珠宝展, 当代艺术博物馆 - 巴斯尔与爱丽丝·古兰得利斯基金会, 安德罗斯岛, 希腊

皮赫提画廊, “索菲亚·瓦丽”, 诺克-勒·祖特, 比利时

路易莎·吉尼斯画廊, “美的尺度”, 珠宝展, 伦敦

Mini Masterpiece 画廊, 珠宝展, 巴黎

2015

艾尔木西奥画廊, “索菲亚·瓦丽, 哥伦比亚的村镇”, 波哥达

孔蒂尼英国美术馆, “形态的渴望”, 伦敦

“光与影”, 杜梦堂 Galerie DUMONTEIL, 上海

公共收藏:

维拉能曼基金会, 克雷斯豪特姆, 比利时

Antioche 博物馆, 麦德林, 哥伦比亚

Botero 基金会, Luis Angel Arango 图书馆, 波哥达

卡塔赫纳市, 波哥达

维奇塔州立大学, 英雄广场, 维奇塔, 堪萨斯州, 美国

纽约希尔顿酒店, 纽约

乌尔里奇艺术博物馆, 维奇塔, 堪萨斯州

布特勒美国艺术学院, 扬斯敦, 俄亥俄州

巴黎市政厅, 法国

国家艺术画廊和 Alexandros Soutzos 博物馆, 雅典, 希腊

贝纳基博物馆, 雅典

托雷斯当代艺术博物馆, 皮亚尼亚

国家美术馆, 雅典

巴兹尔和爱丽丝·古兰得利斯基金会, 现代艺术博物馆, 安德罗斯, 希腊

Pieridis 博物馆, 雅典

雅典市, 市长广场

Beeldenaanzen 博物馆, 海牙, 荷兰

彼德拉桑塔市, 意大利

美第奇家族珍宝馆, dept. Gioiello

现代艺术博物馆, 碧提宫, 佛罗伦萨

歌诗达豪华游轮, 捷尼

美原高原露天博物馆, 日本

庞塞艺术博物馆, 庞塞, 波多黎各

卡洛斯特·古尔本金基金会, 里斯本, 葡萄牙

手工博物馆, 洛桑, 瑞士

加拉加斯索菲亚·安贝现代艺术博物馆, 加拉加斯, 委内瑞拉

2001

“三月沙龙”，莉莉安娜·斯卡德，“珠宝”，日内瓦
伯克莱屯艺术博物馆，回顾展，伯克莱屯，佛罗里达州
路德维希博物馆，“索菲亚·瓦丽：大型雕塑和布面拼贴”，孔布莱兹
Liechtentaler Allee at Augustplatz，“索菲亚·瓦丽：露天大型雕塑”，巴登-巴登
弗兰克·佩琪画廊，“近期作品”，巴登-巴登
日内瓦市，“索菲亚·瓦丽：大型雕塑”，宪法大道，日内瓦
Artrium，“大型雕塑和布面拼贴”，日内瓦
努赫拉·黑姆画廊，纽约

2002

Pi è ce Unique 画廊，巴黎
Pi è ce Unique 画廊，“巴卡拉遇上索菲亚·瓦丽”，巴黎
佛罗伦萨市政府，文化部，维奇奥宫的拉萨尔艺术厅和西纽利亚广场，“大型雕塑”，佛罗伦萨

2003

努赫拉·黑姆画廊，“内韦尔森/瓦丽对话”，纽约
法国驻希腊大使馆，“巴卡拉遇上索菲亚·瓦丽”，雅典
莉莉安娜·斯卡德，“巴卡拉遇上索菲亚·瓦丽”，日内瓦
“古董与美术艺博会”，莉莉安娜·斯卡德，“珠宝”，巴黎
彼德拉桑塔市政府，文化部，“索菲亚·瓦丽在彼德拉桑塔”，圣奥古斯丁教堂和大教堂广场，彼德拉桑塔，意大利

2004

贝纳基博物馆，雅典-希腊
巴卡拉博物馆和伊莱亚娜·布布里斯画廊，“索菲亚·瓦丽”，巴黎
罗马市，“大型雕塑”，共和国广场，罗马
国家艺术馆，“Balai Seni Lukis Negara Exhibition”，吉隆坡

2005

丽斯帕米奥之家，“La General”，格拉纳达
塞维利亚之圣伊内斯，“La General”，塞维利亚
赫罗纳银行，“La General”，赫罗纳
努赫拉·黑姆画廊，纽约
六区市政厅，圣日耳曼区委员会 Didier Imbert 艺术作品展，“圣日耳曼区的索菲亚·瓦丽”，大型雕塑，巴黎

2006

蒙卡列里市，“索菲亚·瓦丽：大型雕塑在蒙卡列里”，蒙卡列里/都灵-意大利
拉米斯·巴尔克画廊，蒙特雷
Pi è ce Unique 画廊，巴黎

2007

孔蒂尼艺术馆，威尼斯
Caja Canarias，文化中心，特内里费岛
Caja Canarias，文化中心，拉拉古纳

2008

孔庙，北京
布兰格兰公园，“15件大型雕塑”，蒙特卡罗

2009

J & P 美术馆，“雕塑和水彩画”，苏黎世

2010

艾德拍卖公司，珠宝展和《索菲亚·瓦丽 雕塑珠宝》著作介绍会，巴黎
J & P 美术馆，珠宝展和《索菲亚·瓦丽 雕塑珠宝》著作介绍会，苏黎世

1987

Alfred Wild 画廊, 波哥大

画廊 伊奥利亚, 巴黎

Thaeco 画廊, 卡利

1988

维拉能曼基金会, 克雷斯豪特姆, 比利时

努赫拉·黑姆画廊, 纽约

伊·加比亚诺艺术画廊, 罗马

1989

雅典画廊, 雅典

1990

伊奥利亚画廊, 巴黎

1991

当代艺术博物馆, 加拉加斯

努赫拉·黑姆画廊, 纽约城

1992

伊·加比亚诺艺术画廊, 罗马

萨拉·加斯帕德艺术画廊, 巴塞罗那

1994

伊·加比亚诺艺术画廊, 罗马

努赫拉·黑姆画廊, 纽约

1995

维拉能曼基金会, 克雷斯豪特姆

努赫拉·黑姆画廊, 纽约

1996

“三月沙龙”, 努赫拉·黑姆画廊, “雕塑和布面拼贴”, 巴黎

1997

布特勒美术学院, 回顾展, 扬斯敦, 俄亥俄州

努赫拉·黑姆画廊, “布面拼贴”, 纽约

弗兰克·佩琪画廊, “雕塑和布面拼贴”, 巴登-巴登

拉·苏比亚艺术画廊, “雕塑和布面拼贴”, 彼德拉桑塔

那伊拉·德·莫布里森画廊, “珠宝”, 巴黎

1998

“The Art Show 艺博会”, 努赫拉·黑姆画廊, “索菲亚·瓦丽: 大型雕塑”, 第七团军械库, 纽约

努赫拉·黑姆画廊, “上色雕塑”, 纽约

乌尔里奇艺术博物馆, 维奇塔市, 堪萨斯州 - 美国 特尔佐·米莱尼奥画廊, “珠宝”, 米兰

1999

阿尔吉·加斯马森画廊, “上色雕塑”, 棕榈滩

Pi è ce Unique 画廊, 巴黎

高等美术学院, Pi è ce Unique 画廊, 巴黎

2000

努赫拉·黑姆画廊, 纽约

雅典市政厅, “大型雕塑”, 考兹亚广场, 雅典

贝利凯拉齐奥广场, 都灵

“FIAC”, Pi è ce Unique 画廊, 巴黎



SOPHIA VARI

1940年，出生于希腊
生活工作于意大利，摩纳哥，纽约和哥伦比亚

精选个展

1969

伍德斯托克画廊，伦敦
舒马赫，慕尼黑

1974

皮尔·卡丹空间，巴黎 - 法国
加利埃市政厅市长会客室，新奥尔良，路易斯安那州
贾思帕画廊，休斯顿，德克萨斯州

1975

现代艺术博物馆，圣保罗

1976

寇·科尔画廊，纽约

1978 - 1979

德莫斯画廊，亚历山大·艾欧拉斯，雅典
卡洛斯特·古尔本金安基金会，里斯本

1981

维拉能曼基金会，克雷斯豪特姆
阿博贝奇画廊，纽约

1983

胡安娜·莫多画廊，马德里

1984

维拉能曼基金会，克雷斯豪特姆，比利时

1985

努赫拉·黑姆画廊，纽约

1986

Eendt 画廊，阿姆斯特丹
雅典画廊，雅典

LYF: 我觉得以用人发的为例的作品是一种表演形式吸引别人来看。他们喜欢围绕他们作品的热闹和争议。就像新开一个酒吧，希望能够招揽人群。但是如果你懂得音乐，你不会去酒吧来寻找你的音乐。人们去那里只是一种跟随效应。如果你真心想要了解，你一辈子都在学习。这是需要投入一生的。我曾经很喜欢方力钧，也会模仿他的一些风格。但是我后来一步步改变了。你喜欢艺术家去改变——我们一个阶段一个阶段地成长。

“艺术市场”关注品牌。如果你因为某种类型的作品出名，当你创作出完全不同的作品时他们不会认得也不会欣赏。

但是这就是市场。如果你真心要画出你心中所想，你会更自由一些。不过这样画可能会堆积成山。

HXL: 在你读书的时候，中国当代艺术在全球范围内蓬勃发展。什么对学生时期的你产生过重要的影响？

LYF: 读书的时候，我们画模特，画更多的模特，继续画模特，日复一日。只有在大四的时候能够自由创作。但是到那时候你已经不知道怎样去创作了！经过三年的重复训练，你的思想已经被禁锢。我很少做我的作业，因为我都在读其它东西、写作和学习。所以经常别人会把他们的课外作业给我，我就署上名字。他们告诉你画朵花儿，你就只能画朵花儿；画个模特，你就只能画个模特。或者我们被要求尽量逼真地还原风景。

在学校之外，像方力钧一样的艺术在当时很有名，但我没有太关注。其它有一些艺术家我很欣赏，我认为他们会经得住时间的考验。但是他们不会一夜成名。他们在稳定地发展，他们作品的价格也很稳定。有一两个日本艺术家和中国艺术家，一个中国装置艺术家，一个台湾雕塑家。

HXL: 你觉得自己作为艺术家这些年有什么改变？

LYF: 我认为我渐渐懂得艺术的更精神的层面。它不是一个既定的语言，但它能直通我的内心。我依然在做自己想做的事情。我不去想这件作品能不能卖出去或者谁会喜欢。我不依赖文字，或者任何可以被直观地表述的或看见的。我倾向于相信经验、直觉和感觉，我冥冥之中感觉这些维度之间有说不清道不明的关系。你不必明说，我知道你想说什么。这样是自由而纯粹的。

在未来，我希望在我的景泰蓝作品里创造更多错综复杂的东西。对于墨的作品，我可能会希望更自由、更写意。我希望创造非常纯粹、非常真实、非常好玩的东西。还有很多我想做的事情。我的一些计划可能不太适合画廊展出。这仅仅是你想要做的。

HXL: 你如何看索菲亚·瓦利的作品呢？

LYF: Sophia 的抽象雕塑作品首先给我的感觉是非常的浑厚的力量感，部分形体之间的结合，也犹如水与墨在纸面的对话；她的艺术语言是简洁和纯粹的，Sophia 在作品中喜欢黑与白的色彩，尽管她的艺术背景是西方艺术的语言，但是在我看来也和东方构图中对于黑白的掌控有着异曲同工的奇妙，只是她的“留白”是在雕塑形体之外的空间

HXL: 你认为你的作品还属于传统中国画吗?

LYF: 中国画对我来讲不是一种绘画的类型而是一种观念的放大。是自古以来中国文化的丰富性和多元性构成的。这就像一个方方面面的总和的气团,从音乐、戏剧到茶、熏香,从玉器、湖泊到太极。很难去形容其外在结构,但是它表现了中国人的内在精神,深入我们骨髓的东西。

“写意”绘画的线条和深浅相宜的墨的阴影确有一种“气”。我用了很多种方式来抽象化这个手法,在我的作品中没有轮廓,甚至完全没有线条。更像是“一团气”,所以我觉得是更纯粹的。只有“气”在纸上流动。在这个系列中我想展示中国道家文化中独特的元素。当焚香的时候,烟创造出了(汉)字。这是一种我们在精神上沟通的语言。在古代,先人可以立刻解读出烟的文字。在每一座庙宇都有一本书可以解读烟的符号。但只有道行高深的僧人才能打开阅读,别人都不可以。这种仪式叫做“云篆”。这是一种自我对话的语言,因为神并不使用我们的语言,因为他们是‘气’所以他们通过烟来交流。

在我的绝大多数的作品中,你可以看到烟的效果。我想你可以叫它“墨篆”。这是墨的原生语言和文字。烟立即消失于无形,而墨会像一个印记一直保留。

HXL: 烟的符号能告诉我们什么呢?

LYF: 它可以告诉我们很多,有很多层含义。这是另外一种文化,“全系”(和整个宇宙不可割舍的联系)。如果你现在喝掉这杯水,我可以通过你的动作和时间看出你整个一生,可能甚至看到整个宇宙。如果你相信数字占卜,数字可以卜算的你的命运也会注定成为你命数的一部分。这很难讲清楚。但是通过一件很小的事情你会看到全貌。

我想爱因斯坦提出过类似的理论。所有这些理论对我来说最关键的是“气”。所以问题变成如何去捕捉它。

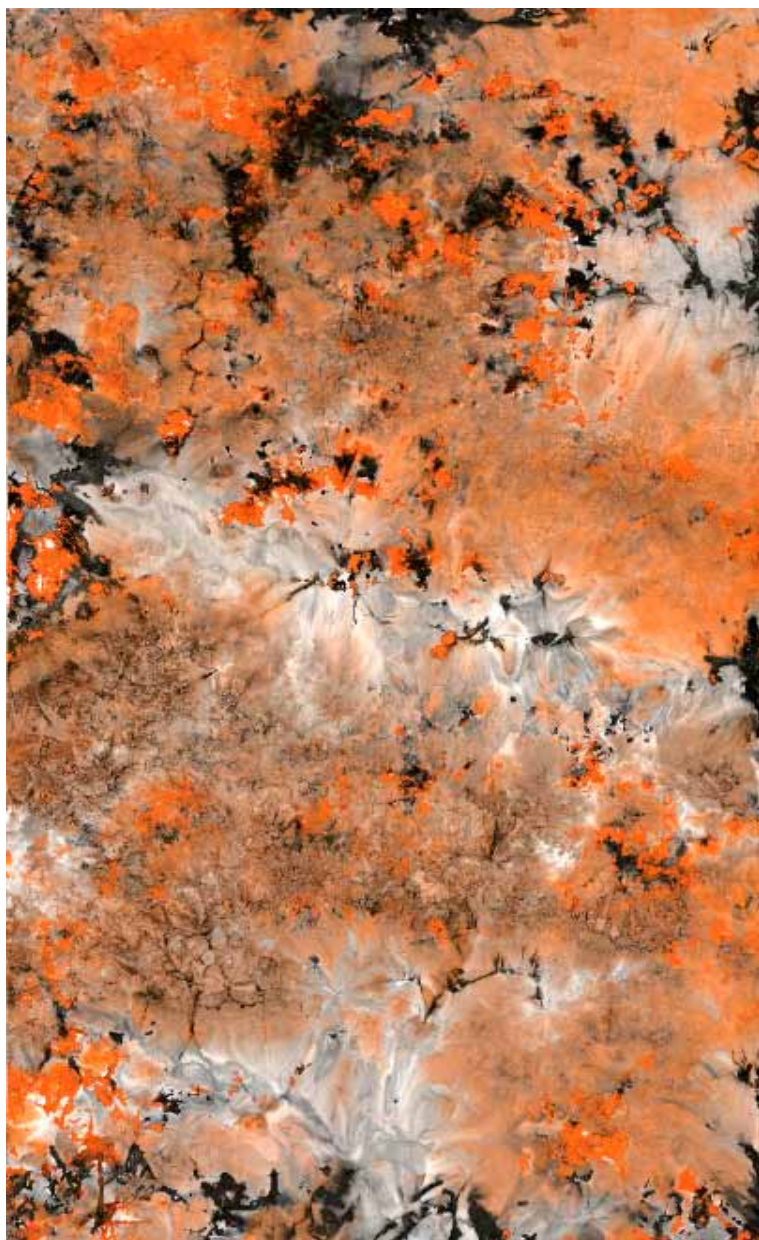
HXL: 你提到了西方的油画和中国的水墨画都有自己的“气”,反映了各自的时代和社会的环境。你的作品呢?

LYF: 我的一位教授在日本待了10年。他说归根结底这还是纸啊。但是为什么中国人使用它的方式如此不同?我们有点精神化了纸。

如果你看中国古代的画,这是一个凝聚了“气”的世界。这是艺术化的山水,“艺术风水”。所以例如有些人画春季或者冬季,而中国人却关注五行元素,金(或者金属)、木、水、火、土。如果有人在他的“气”当中缺金,那你可以在画中添加雪景,这会弥补他的缺失。我们追求的是和谐。

我认为我的作品更个人化。我看到很多艺术品通过描绘一些粗鄙或残忍的画面表达艺术家对社会的不满。许多批评家也很喜欢艺术家把自己的愤怒宣泄到作品中。但是我认为从这些作品中传递出来的“气”是有害的,你吸收了到一定程度之后,对你也是有害的。我不是很喜欢这种感觉——愤怒和粗鄙。很难形容我自己的作品——不管是纯粹或者模糊,夸张或者简单。这是一种无邪,就像初生儿不会知道对错、美丑、是赞美还是诋毁。这是原始的或者用中国人的话讲“先天”,来源于上天。

HXL: 中国观众可能熟悉水墨传统。很多艺术家都在用不同的形式进行实验,比如用人的发丝、影像等等。如果我们不了解这个传统,我们能够如何去解读这些作品?



Li Yongfei 李永飞
Red Star 红色恒星 2015
Ink and 'Zhusha' Mineral Pigment on Rice Paper
水墨、朱砂在宣纸上
258 x 144 cm
Private Collection, Beijing
私人收藏, 北京

与李永飞的对话

何晓霖，在艺术家位于北京的工作室

何晓霖 (HXL): 冥想奠定了这个系列作品的基调，你想要捕捉什么？

李永飞 (LYF): 这些作品有点像漂浮在宇宙里面的能量，被我一不小心捕捉到纸上。有的像盘旋的烟，有的像汹涌的浪，有的像波澜不惊的湖面。他们全都不相同。这正是在冥想中捕捉到一个感受被宇宙所容纳，也作为一种能量被人体吸纳。所以这个系列都是关于“气”及其多种不同的类型和形式的，超越语言、感觉和图像的形式。这是一直存在于我们意识深处的东西，但在一些特定的时刻，比如冥想的时候，我们会体会到其彻底性但无法解释。我对意识的潜力和可能性很感兴趣。如果认知的边界不能被打破，那人类就无法向前。

我在这个系列中转向抽象的手法来探索这一切。每当我开始一件作品的时候，我不知道起点和终点会在哪儿。不同的人在看过同样的作品后告诉我们所看到的形式和现象是不同的。这正是因为“气”是无形的，而每一个观者或个人拥有不同的“气”。

HXL: 你可以解释一下这个系列中所用的技法吗？

LYF: 当水、颜料和墨融合在一张纸上的时候，不同的效果和形式会浮现出来。一种是“暗涌”（一种点画的效果），一种是流动，另一种是浮现。为了让这些效果和质感会出现在同一张画面上，我会来控制水。但这也取决于其他一些因素，比如温度。在冬天的效果和夏天完全不同。水也会造成深浅的效果——凸起和凹陷的区域。这有点像酿葡萄酒，我将所有的原材料放在一起，让他们发酵。但是最深层次的影响 [对我的作品来说] 来自于冥想……我尝试不同的方式来抽象化我的手法。在我的作品中，没有轮廓，也没有线条，更像是‘一团气’。所以我认为这是更纯粹的，只有‘气’在纸上流动。在这个系列中我想展示中国道家文化中特殊的元素。

发酵时间越长，效果越丰富。如果潮湿的话，可能需要一个月来风干。有时两周便可完成。渐渐风干的时候，里面的水就像退落的潮汐。水从各处消退。接下来我会选择，一般只有一两件能够成为艺术品，其他的都会被舍弃。我没有一个固定的模式，我试验过很多种方法。如果我发现这张纸需要更多的处理，我会倒上水和墨——只有小瓶装的，绝不动笔——在纸上，直到我满意为止。我在非常平滑的平面上来进行，保证墨可以自由地流动。

我也有十分特殊的方式。但是这是一个秘密！我从试错里面发现的。

HXL: 在创作这个系列的时候遇到了什么挑战？

LYF: 当你用其他的材料比如颜料，这就像是砌砖立屋，你就像是一个铺砖匠。而当你用墨的时候，你就像是一个房子的供水工程师。在油画上，你可以一砖一瓦地创作，工笔也一样。但水墨就不行。

有一张纸我像酿酒一样酿了两个月。但是我将它拿出来时候，上面除了霉什么都没有！谁都说不清那是什么。但是如果你把它当作艺术品，会很令人惊喜。它就像一面很古老的、霉迹斑斑的墙。什么都不是，但是细节却很棒。谁能够画出时间？但时间可以画出这个。

EP: 您有些作品是黑白的，让人联想到钢琴和音符。说起乌木和象牙，您在1957年您17岁的时候见过一位我的女神玛丽亚·卡拉丝（Maria Callas），那时正是她的辉煌年代。卡拉丝让我惊艳的是她让音符活起来，在当时甚至是对既定规则的公然冒犯，在华彩乐段中插入词句，以她自己的方法来讲述故事，而非一味炫技。她凭着本能、全身心地创作，成就了您；音符在面对人物灵魂的时候退居次位。我曾经读到在《茶花女（La Traviata）》中，她的举手投足都充满了病态、脆弱和绵软。她的手臂舞动着，好像没有了骨头的支撑。在《美狄亚（Medea）》中，一切却都是充满棱角的。您如何来描述您的作品，您又是如何看待您的雕塑的物质性的呢？

SV: 卡拉丝是希腊裔的。从我见到她的那一刻开始我就想成为一位艺术家。我第一次见到她是我17岁的时候透过父母的朋友。很多年之后再次相遇，那时我们都住在巴黎。我提出给她塑半身像的请求。她来到我的工作室，问我：索菲亚您要做什么呢？您要创作一个玛丽亚还是卡拉丝？我说我要创作玛丽亚·卡拉丝，您是而且永远都是玛丽亚·卡拉丝。一周后她离世，您知道当时的情况。我完成了雕像并送给了基金会。

艺术家必须明白一件事，私人生活是次于艺术创作的。玛丽亚·卡拉丝在她晚年的时候在寻找玛丽亚这个身份，但是她可能只做了无用功。一位艺术家必须接受，没有巨大的牺牲是不会有杰出的创作的。

EP: 音乐对您的作品产生了影响吗？您在工作时听音乐吗？

SV: 我工作的时候没法听音乐，因为我太尊重音乐了，不能只把它当作背景。

EP: 另外一个20世纪的传奇人物，亨利·摩尔（Henry Moore），他一生都致力于巨幅人像抽象化的艺术创作。您和他相遇之后，他的作品和本人对您产生了什么影响吗？

SV: 我遇到亨利·摩尔的时候很年轻，只有24岁。我记得是一次下午茶时间，他和他的太太一起做了一个梨子挞。我被迫待在厨房里吃东西，我十分担心万一在厨房时间太久我就没有足够的时间跟这位大师相处了！事实上我到他的工作室，跟亨利·摩尔待了3、4个小时聆听观察。我牢记他特别坚信他所做的事情。

EP: 最后但同样重要的是，您已经有了辉煌的事业，在全世界各地展出。在您的生涯中，您最珍惜在哪个地方工作，为什么——这个地方如何特别地影响到您的创作？

SV: 在不同的地方我用不同的材料来创作。夏天的时候我会在意大利花3、4个月雕大理石，我的先生在那里也有工作室，因为铸造厂就在附近。冬天的时候我们会在摩纳哥。在纽约的时候我基本只做珠宝设计，“随行雕塑”我更喜欢这个叫法。每年我们都会哥伦比亚待一个月，我会从事我的绘画，因为运输比较容易，而且那里也没有近便的铸造厂。光线对我的作品来说很重要。希腊的光线条件特别棒。在哥伦比亚，天很快会变暗，我不喜欢开着电灯工作。其实我住在自己的体内，你知道吗艾美丽。所以我可以在任何地方工作，我可以在飞机上完成一个小模型。但我无法不工作。

EP: 非常感谢您，索菲亚。

SV: 多谢您，艾美丽。我很高兴也很荣幸与李永飞这样出色的艺术家一起展出。谢谢！

EP: 有谁曾经帮助过您呢？

SV: 我的祖母，她也叫索菲亚。她十分严厉，从来不给我亲切的温暖。从我祖母那里学来，即使你的生活支离破碎，你还是必须要创造。对于我来说就是创作艺术作品。在那个时候我学会了接受我的国家的落败，并欣赏她的文化。

EP: 您在 2008 年北京国子监的展览中，您提到展览的环境因素对您十分重要——复杂性、优雅、和谐。您能告诉我们，国子监的环境如何影响您展览作品的选择和陈列吗？您去年再访中文时候您对中国之前的印象有所改变吗？

SV: 您肯定知道，希腊承办了中国之前的那届奥运会。希腊政府希望“赠花”，换句话说就是给中国政府一个礼物，当时选择了我的巨型雕塑。将我的作品放在国子监前展出的时候我十分激动，我很欣赏这座庙宇的艺术感，并且感觉我自己的渺小。我感受到中国和希腊的联系，虽然截然不同，但都对他们自己的文化怀着深沉的崇敬。

EP: 您曾经说您的雕塑代表了七个平面的绘画之间的互动。我凝视着您的雕塑的线条，想象当我绕着作品观赏的时候能看见中国书法的影子。是否中国艺术已经渗透入您的作品中？如果是，哪一种中国艺术影响了您，又是如何反映在您的作品中的呢？

SV: 我有自己的文化传统，同中国一样历史悠久，我觉得这种文化的长寿十分令人惊喜。你不能添加不属于你的文化，你只能欣赏它、尊重它，但它是不是足够影响你？我欣赏中国艺术的示意的元素，无与伦比的书法。2008 年我去中国的时候，我在水墨艺术作品前驻足几个小时——也许太精深，我无法模仿，否则我会觉得我是窃取了别人的东西。你必须只做你自己。

EP: 显然您的雕塑很实在——全然不是飘渺无形的。他们被描述为一种形式和平衡的组合。中国水墨画的传统注重示意高于形式，最重要的是艺术家的肢体与纸张透过挥笔物理性地联系起来。中国水墨传统给您带来的灵感是什么？

SV: 水墨给观者带来平和。这不是颤抖的手可以完成的，我做不到但是我能感受到。

EP: 来看看世界文化，您在生活中体验了很多不同的文化、不同的流派，都为您的想象提供了养料：玛雅、古埃及、奥尔梅克、基克拉迪、古典和巴洛克。其中哪一种风格在您的作品中起主导作用呢？您和这些年来不断发展的各种艺术运动的关系是什么，尤其是立体主义？

SV: 当你还年轻的时候艺术创作刚起步，你会去看各种事物，你吸收了很多然后你像调鸡尾酒一样调和它们。古埃及与古希腊、古典直到巴洛克都密不可分。很多年后，你的风格是你的选择结果，你的回忆是最牵动你的东西。艺术来源于艺术。

EP: 那悲剧呢？这让我想起《音乐精神》的《音乐的诞生》的末段，尼采论述古希腊人之所以能创造如此惊世之美是因为他们曾承受无比伤痛。在我很年轻的时候引发了我的思考。那您呢？

SV: 对，我相信苦难的经历能够让作品更纯粹。如果你看古希腊式的雕像，是没有眼神的，眼睛都朝向天空。不像古罗马雕像，所雕刻的都不是人，而是超人 [神话英雄、战争英雄]。艺术让困难变得简单，去发现美好与和谐，甚至让材料来传递慰藉。如果我的作品能给观者带来一点点和谐以及平和，我就很满足了。平和使得思维清晰，反过来清晰能提供切实的解决办法。

索菲亚·瓦利 (Sophia Vari)

电话访谈与连线北京艾美丽 (Emily Pettit)

Emily Pettit (EP): 亲爱的索菲亚, 我们可以从您家庭和文化的根源说起吗? 您出生于雅典, 母亲是匈牙利人, 父亲是希腊人。古希腊雕塑几乎都以大理石或者铜为材料, 塑造其宏伟之式; 一般经过彩绘, 而且几何形状在最初扮演了重要的角色, 这些特征都反映在您的作品中。您如何看待古希腊雕塑对您的影响, 特别是对您的后具像化、抽象的作品?

Sophia Vari (SV): 当我四十年前开始创作雕塑的时候, 我的作品全部都是具象的, 因为曾经是具象的所以当中有一种运动感, 这种动作的细微迹象也反映在我的抽象作品中。我从古典的形式中走出来更自由化, 但是从我少年开始, 参观雅典的博物馆, 古希腊雕塑就深深地烙印在我的体内。对我最重要的影响是其技法和运用大理石以及铜作为材料。之后也有很多来自其他方面的影响, 但是古希腊雕塑是流淌在我的血液中的。

EP: 托里奥·斯加尔比 (Vittorio Sgarbi) 曾用“人性化的几何”来评论您的作品。当然您的雕塑的表面非常地细腻, 其中有直线、半圆、抛物线还有其他的几何形状。您认为您的雕塑中栖居着一个始终如一的内在生命或者一系列内在生命吗? 它们是什么?

SV: 托里奥·斯加尔比是最杰出的艺术评论家之一。借用他的语汇“人性化的几何”, 我并没有通过几何来创造一个人。倒不如说几何对任何一位雕塑家都有主导型影响, 它使得作品清晰、健康。接下来我就可以允许自己也对其他东西着迷: 材料、光泽等等。我在从事雕塑的时候我所做的是创作一种我所敬畏的存在。当我们在说我的雕塑的内在生命之时, 也许是我内在的情感生活投射到了我的作品中, 而我的问题、我的疑虑都不在其中。一件艺术品必须拥有其个体生命来延续自我、抵抗时间。

EP: 回到艺术品保持健康这个概念, 它引出了一个近乎是艺术家的道德责任的问题。您可以再多谈一下吗?

SV: 好的, 我的希腊血统灌输了一种通过艺术成就美好的观念——给创作带来清醒和准则。

EP: 我们可以谈论一下中国吗? 古安女士 (Andrea Herrera Goulandris) 和我来主持您在中国的第三个展览, 本次杜梦堂艺廊 (Galerie Dumonteil) 提供的您的大理石和银质的精美雕塑将和一位青年艺术家李永飞的抽象水墨作品共同展出。永飞提到了冥想对于他的水墨创作的影响。您的灵感是否来源于“完全整体”, 即一种创作整体, 也许从您冥想、锻炼或者幻想中产生?

SV: 我必须要诚实地告诉您艾美丽, 完全没有。当我进入我的工作室, 就像我去办公室工作一样。我关上门, 坐下, 然后开始工作。我非常自律。我从不等待灵感降临, 我也不会让我的心情影响我的工作。我用一种非常实际的、非常身体性的方式工作。我不是说体力——而是我从小便拥有的我大脑的一种力量。

EP: 请继续。

SV: 我的父母在二战的时候带着我从希腊逃到瑞士。当我们回去的时候, 我已经九岁了只会说法语和匈牙利语, 希腊语我一个字都不会讲。因为我逃去了瑞士, 我在学校受到排挤——谁能去责怪其他的小孩呢? 最可怕的是, 会有人死在大街上——当时没有足够的食物——这样的历史背景对一个小孩来讲是最大的震撼。我当时十分地沮丧, 我从很早开始就学会了用精神的力量去战胜它。



展览现场
孔庙，北京
Exhibition Installation 2008
The Temple of Confucius, Beijing

《墨喻》是一次对二元性内在矛盾的探索：从中示意寻找形式，从形式中寻找示意；有力的大脑和冷静的身体；女雕塑家雕刻的铜、大理石和银——雄性的“阳”，一个文人坚定的手微妙处理的水墨——雌性的“阴”。我希望这本画册的读者和展览的观众跟我一样享受两位充满活力、各具千秋的艺术家的联合呈现。我衷心地感谢索菲亚·瓦利和李永飞，感谢他们对艺术创作的孜孜不倦和他们慷慨贡献自己的时间接受包含在画册里的采访。一如既往地感谢我的团队，香港的何晓霖小姐 (Michelle Ho) 和伦敦的冯潇小姐 (Michelle Feng)。十分感谢上海杜梦堂艺廊 (Galerie Dumonteil) 的 Jeremie Thircuir 先生、刘雅萍小姐、郑瑜欣小姐。最后且重要的是，真心地感谢古安女士 (Andrea Herrera Goulandris) 和她的丈夫古兰士先生 (Leonidas Goulandris) 为此次展览慷慨地开放他们在北京柳荫公园独一无二的私宅，一个观赏艺术品的绝佳之所。



Li Yongfei 李永飞
Tornado 龙卷风 2013
Ink on Rice Paper
纸本水墨
138.5 x 70.5 cm
Private Collection, Hong Kong
香港私人收藏

如果索菲亚·瓦利的雕塑是形式和平衡的典范，中国水墨画的传统则是对示意高于形式的不懈的追求，最重要的是艺术家的肢体与画面透过挥笔被物理性地联系起来。在他近年来稳定成长的作品群中重点刻画了传统的山、神兽、云篆，在他的脑中重新创造。单色的色调不断丰富，带着强烈的文人研究的印迹——茶、木炭、香灰、充满生气的朱砂、为了达到视觉效果所用的控制和扩散墨的调剂。在一次拜访李永飞工作室之后，发现他忠实贯彻了中国文人传统。令人沉醉的墨香混合着熏香，艺术家讲述着他熟记的关于神话、英雄、魔鬼和龙的传说，这些意象之前都在他的考究的笔下熠熠生辉。正如古代中国文人画家创造了“文人与茶”饱含艺术气息，一次工作室拜访在没有喝到这位北方画家精挑细选的南方茗茶之前是不会结束的。当然，这位充满魅力、讲究的河北籍画家是一位现代文人的代表，通过经常练习“诗书画三绝”来陶冶情操，如今他的练习成果已经累积成山。而这位青年艺术家新抽象画的创作过程可能更加引人入胜。中央美术学院毕业的李受过最严苛挑剔的水墨画特别是工笔的训练，近年来他找到了一套完整的方法将他的身体和精神生活付诸于纸上。对于一位致力于打破毛笔限制的艺术师而言，他的路径是极端的、充满勇气的，决定完全摒弃毛笔。这也是一趟关于自我舍弃的残酷考验。

将自己交付给材料而非通过工具来控制材料，李寻找到非直接的途径将墨与水直接联系起来。艺术家选择了冥想的方式来实现。李永飞像一个太极师傅透过冥想在一收一放之间与材料沟通。多年前他开始同一位道家的哲人学习冥想，李提到在他最初的经历中，每一个练习者在开始冥想前都会把水装入一个小瓶中，待冥想结束后水会结成冰。有经验的冥想者的结晶比初学者复杂得多，这给艺术家带来了强烈的震撼。这让他想起“水记忆”现象，传说中无论经历过多少次稀释水能够保留之前溶解在其中的物质的记忆，这种机制正是顺势疗法的原理，稀释到原有物质的分子都不复存在。李永飞证实他在进行冥想的同时会对他依水而生的艺术作品产生相应的影响。随着他的冥想体验越来越深化，李坚信他的思想状态，还有他冥想的力量在某个时刻会作用于他作品中水的构成，因此而改变的它们的墨和矿物质的结构。他阐释了他创作的基本操作和更深奥的一面：

“当水、颜料和墨融合在一张纸上的时候，不同的效果和形式会浮现出来。一种是‘暗涌’（一种点画的效果），一种是流动，另一种是浮现。为了让这些效果和质感会出现在同一张画面上，我会来控制水。但这也取决于其他一些因素，比如温度。在冬天的效果和夏天完全不同。水也会造成深浅的效果——凸起和凹陷的区域。这有点像酿葡萄酒，我将所有的原材料放在一起，让他们发酵。但是最深刻的影响 [对我的作品来说] 来自于冥想……我尝试不同的方式来抽象化我的手法。在我的作品中，没有轮廓，也没有线条，更像是‘一团气’。所以我认为这是更纯粹的，只有‘气’在纸上流动。在这个系列中我想展示中国道家文化中特殊的元素。”

李永飞的陈述让我想起了与水墨画家刘丹的谈话，最近我很荣幸拜访了他的工作室。这位温和坚定的大师让我陷入了沉思，当他说到：“大部分的西方艺术家需要征服材料，但水墨画家必须臣服于材料，‘让材料来征服他’。”不可否认的是，水墨在纸上非常的直白，他们甚至是无情的，不像其他材料那样允许小失误。刘丹的话萦绕在我的脑中，我可以想见在皮耶特拉桑塔，索菲亚·瓦利——有着女性的极致优雅，在她托斯卡纳的忙碌的铸造厂中挥舞着极致明亮的“阳”气，收放她的活力正如铜在模具里面浇筑成形，这正是她在征服她的材料。从皮耶特拉桑塔跨过8118千米（真是一个吉利的数字）向东的北京我会看到李永飞——所有的柔和的“阴”的能量在他幽暗的工作室中，混合着轻柔的茶香和焚香一同扩散，他的环境创造了“先天”（“来自先前的，来自上天的”），一种原始的质素，一种单纯（“混沌”），正如他形容的他自己的作品。



展览现场
古安家，北京
Exhibition Installation
L. J. & A. Goulandris' Residence, Beijing

《墨喻》

艾美丽 (E. S. Pettit)

希腊历史悠久的阿提卡半岛直伸入爱琴海，生于斯的索菲亚·瓦利 (Sophia Vari) 非凡的、漂泊四方的人生正如一部二十世纪艺术史书。她坚信古希腊的传统流淌在她血液里，瓦利的一生都在游历，从不同的文化中汲取养分，获得她创作的灵感。从玛雅到埃及，从奥尔梅克到基克拉迪，时间跨度从古代到巴洛克，从立体主义运动到超现实主义运动。索菲亚·瓦利与她同时代的风云人物结交，从亨利·摩尔 (Henry Moore) 到玛丽亚·卡拉丝 (Maria Callas)，在这位传奇歌唱家离世前的一周她还为瓦利作了半身像的模特。在过去的近四十年中，索菲亚·瓦利与哥伦比亚艺术家费德南多·博特洛 (Fernando Botero) 结合，他们充满奇遇和饱含艺术争议的婚姻显然成就了两人各自卓然的创作。瓦利曾道“绘画就是一种幻想”，她在油彩、水彩、综合材料、拼贴之间游刃有余；也以银、金、木材、象牙和碳等不同材料进行珠宝设计或者“随行雕塑”，她更偏爱这种说法。但大型的纪念性的雕塑作品也是瓦利创作的一个重要组成部分，在1976年她承认：“我想要触感，我想要规模，我希望能够围着我的作品边走边观赏，我希望可以创造一个空间……来感知我自身的存在。”瓦利的雕塑在几十年间经历了几个阶段的发展力求完美，而且她看上去跟五十年以前一样充满能量。索菲亚·瓦利是一个矛盾体。轻盈、雕塑感、瓦利作品的女性化的轮廓与她所选择的铜、大理石和银的材质并不相称，其重量和结构也一直在探寻平衡的微妙。她着迷于严肃和轻佻之间的张力，两者都流露在她的作品中。

她从1960年代开始雕塑创作，早年的瓦利执着于人体塑造和古典技法。在1980年代之前绕道抽象，近年来她的作品呈现出扎实的、面状结构，很多时候用彩绘来创造一种流动感，有时用蒙德里安式的红、蓝、黄来增添一点趣味。而现在她以大理石和铜作为材料来表达她对希腊传统的归属感，经过数十年从人体塑造到演化到更复杂的“互动形式”的表达。亲眼观赏瓦利的作品对比于参照图片会带来惊人的不同效果：亲身感受是，这种惊人的细腻和感性很难与沉重的材料和廓形联系起来的。瓦利曾经提到，在她早年鲁本斯 (Rubens) 的绘画中魅惑的女性形象为她开启了艺术的大门，而她自己作品中对性微妙的处理也是难以忽视的。正如鲁本斯的作品，瓦利的雕塑中强壮和轻盈的形式同时存在，与空间交融，有时产生凝固感。意大利画派的影响也很显著，乔托 (Giotto) 和皮耶罗·德拉·弗朗切斯卡 (Piero della Francesca) 作品中的简洁性和强大可能也是她的指导性原则。个人主义的意大利艺术评论家维托里奥·斯加尔比 (Vittorio Sgarbi) 曾用“人性化的几何”来形容瓦利的艺术，但她更愿意把几何仅仅作为一种规则性的工具来使她的作品“干净而清晰”以及“允许自己享受其他东西”，如材料和光泽之美。

在我们希腊小岛连线北京的电话访谈中，我被索菲亚的活力、她语言切换的能力、异常清晰的记忆所冲击。她谈到在二战之后她如何克服困境，学习解决文化隔阂的重要问题，以及从她祖母那里继承的清醒的实用主义。围绕艺术和创作的关系塑造了她的人生，除此之外，索菲亚也坦承作为艺术家，艺术并非一种精神净化，而是一种愿望她希望用她的艺术为其他人带来美好。她也毫不矫情地谈论水墨艺术给观者带来的平和，即使如此但她觉得自己无法尝试，并欣然赞许了水墨家李永飞的作品。不同于李永飞承认冥想的飘渺感觉直接地、实际地作用于他的艺术创作，索菲亚巧妙地描述了她物质性的、甚至如工匠般的创作过程。她否认她进入了一种“完全整体”，即一种她工作和生活融为一体的“创作整体”，她更关心“将清晰和准则带入创作中”。老人继续说到：“如果我的作品能给观者带来一点点和谐以及平和，我就很满足了。平和使得思维清晰，反过来清晰能提供切实的解决办法。”为了达到一种大师级的平衡，两位艺术家的目的是一致的，但是他们的手法却截然不同。索菲亚注重道德，而李永飞着迷于一种孔子式超越德行的和谐。可以想象索菲亚在她的工作室中决定黏土的比例，在铸造厂中辛苦地铸铜；而在地球的另一端一位年轻的水墨艺术家正盘坐着，如同沉浸于绝对静谧中。



李永飞 Li Yongfei
成吨燃烧的蝴蝶 *Burning Butterflies* 2014
水墨，朱砂在宣纸上
Ink and 'Zhusha' Mineral Pigment on Rice Paper
366.5 x 144 cm

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起源 *Origin* 2015 (上 top)

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27.5 x 27 x 25 cm

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雷霆 *Thunder* 2013

纸本水墨 Ink on Rice Paper

69 x 138 cm

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《墨喻》



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