

ARTIST'S STATEMENT (2002)

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我對於中國工筆人物畫的沉迷，始於十年前在大學藝術系的人物畫課，因為對明末畫家陳洪綬(1598－1652)作品所產生的濃厚興趣，而開展了對古代人物畫風格和技巧的探究。大學畢業後數年間的作品，主要用功於掌握古代畫風，用以描寫現世的人物情景，希望把新和舊的元素混和，在時空交錯中產生一種張力，製造出一份奇趣感。然而，我真正關懷的，還是傳統的舊東西。我期望把那些瀕於絕滅的文化遺產，加以復修和翻新，暫緩其被遺忘的宿命。

而在創作過程中，因着不斷地發掘題材，領略到敘事性繪畫與描述對象之間的微妙關係，也引發我對於如何選擇題材，以及如何呈現題材等問題有更多的思考。因此我的創作進程，便從繪畫語言或表現方式等的關注，轉而至研究不同的題材，發掘題材的可塑性，及其附帶的文化意義。

這次展覽的主題，由追尋古代文人雅玩開始。近年來，我對於好些傳統工藝美術品，漸漸產生了愛慕，找尋着欣賞的門徑時，也發現工藝美術與繪畫共通互換的美學原理。古代的文人畫家或是畫師們，除了面對其畫作外，生活的範圍中充滿各式各樣的實用美術品及工藝品，由建築物、家具、日用器物、家居裝飾，以至衣服佩飾等，構成一套和諧而互相參照的美學系統。我有感於過去習畫的參考樣本，都不脫繪畫的範疇，忽略了眾多在旁邊可作對照的器物及工藝美術。因而為自己擬定了這樣的工作計劃，透過一些古代的器物藝術，找尋對話的渠道，開拓自己的視覺語言。陶瓷器物系列，就是這個構想的起步，是自我研習的第一章。

另一邊廂，是我對於古代文人的詩意及文詞世界的雜想。文人的生活離不開對文字的掌握、創作和賞玩。文字的妙用，常在寓情於物，而又超乎物外。圖象類比於詩詞，也可有另一番妙用。為文詞配上新圖，能把文意拉闊；為圖象配上古文，亦有提神果效。兩種遊戲，參差互玩，意外無窮。

尋芳逐月，追捕古色，正是總覽我作品的題旨。

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It was at the university's figure painting class some ten years ago that I became fascinated by the Chinese *gongbi* (fine-brush) painting. I was attracted to the works of late Ming dynasty master Chen Hongshou (1598-1652) and began to explore the styles and techniques of classical figure painting. After graduation, I produced works that mainly involved using

traditional styles to describe contemporary subject matters. Through the combination of old and new elements and their interaction, I hoped to create a new and unexpected interpretation. My primary concern, however, remained to be that of the Chinese tradition as I tried to modify or revitalize this forgotten ancient painting style.

During the creative process, I constantly developed new concepts and which had made me understand the intricate relationship between the narrative and descriptive functions of painting as well as the selection of ideas and method of expression. The development of my painting, therefore, had changed from the concerns for artistic vocabulary or expression to the exploration of different ideas and inclusion of cultural significance.

The concept of this exhibition stemmed from my homage to antiquity. In recent years, I became interested in traditional works of art and artifacts. As I learnt their connoisseurship, I began to realize the many interchangeable elements shared by both Chinese craft and painting. Besides their own works, ancient painters lived in an artistic environment surrounded by fine or functional works of art. Their studio, furniture, utilities or ornaments were all part of a harmonious and compatible aesthetic system. I used to study painting through reference books and early works, and somehow neglected the importance of ordinary and everyday crafts. Through the concept of using ancient works of art, this exhibition attempted to bridge the past to the present, thus finding a dialogue and new visual language between them. The *Ceramic Series* is the first step in that direction.

The other part of the exhibition comprised of works that concern the ancient literati and literary expression. The life of the literati was preoccupied by the usage, creation and appreciation of words. The beauty of words lied in their ability to not only describe matters but also derive meanings beyond. There could also be further possibilities when words were put against paintings. For example, when a poem was inserted with new illustration, its meaning could be expanded; or when a painting was suited with an old inscription, it could generate fresh meanings. Both were feasible options that could create interesting and alternative results.

The title *An Alternative Antiquity* thus perfectly represented my new works.

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*A version of this essay was published in the Exhibition Catalogue,
Wilson Shieh: An Alternative Antiquity, Hong Kong: Grotto Fine Art, 2001, 49.*