

## Notes Witten Before *Nameless*, the Solo Exhibition by Cao Shu

Text / Jiang Jun

Living in the present era of “Big Data,” “Internet Plus” and “Industry 4.0,” we are enmeshed in an explosive fusion of the real and the virtual, a gray area between online and offline. The world has been not so much comprised of physical objects as incessant organization and distribution of unending flow of information. As early as the 1970s, Jean Baudrillard introduced the concept of “consumer society,” unmasking our subjection to the general symbolic coding behind our consumer behavior. We’ve lost our “authenticity” and lived as simulacra for a long time. This is exactly our quotidian ideology nowadays. As our industry and consumption are networked, the problems have become ever more critical. In such an existential orientation, a human being is genuinely an individual without subjectivity, making the postmodernist suggestion of “the death of the subject” a reality. This solo exhibition voiced Cao’s misgivings about “the loss of subjectivity.” On a more specific basis, the artist’s concern over the uniformity and anonymity of identity flooded his works, be it the collection of anonymous netizens’ profile pictures or the “invisible” poetic reflection of images on a cigarette pack with undue decoration. The monochromic form of his works *WE* and *A Long Poem in Chicken Broth* was strongly reminiscent of Yves Klein’s monochrome and modernists’ indulgence in unity and standardization. Shown in monochrome images, the daily necessities and the treatise on linguistics gave prominence to the compulsive identification behind their ideological veils. Every voice and rallying cry we give is grudgingly based on the compulsive identification, and the subjectivity tries desperately to restore itself through their own reconstruction. Eventually, the work *Meet-ing* seemed to be his artistic proposal for resisting “the loss of subjectivity.” Yes! We become ourselves only when we gaze at each other. No sooner do we gaze at each other, than we restore our authenticity. These images are quite touching by reason of the mutual discovery and recognition sparked at the very moment when we make eye contact with each other. The inter-subjective identification was supposed to be the starting point for the reconstruction of the “subjective self,” yet the fact of the matter is that photographic equipment lies therebetween as an unwanted intruder. The poetic quality thus comes to an end spontaneously, turning into a faintly discernible reverberation amid countless spectacles. Cao’s oeuvre has become the rebellious poetry against the deep-rooted uniformity in our times, the poetry denies itself in a dialectical fashion.

### 写在曹澍个展“无名”之前

文/姜俊

今天是“大数据”的时代、“互联网+”的时代，“工业 4.0”的时代，我们存在于现实和虚拟消融之中，我们处于线上和线下间的模糊地带。世界不再是由实体的物构成，而是由无时无刻川流不息的虚拟信息组织和分配。早在上世纪 70 年代鲍德里亚就提出了“消费社会”的概念，宣誓了一种消费背后整体符号编码对我们日常生活的宰制，我们早已丧失“本真性”，进入到拟像的生活，这就是当下日常的意识形态。随着工业和消费的互联网化，这样时代的病症愈演愈烈，人在这样的生存处境（*Befindlichkeit*）中正真地成为了一个没有主体的个体，后现代的口号“主体的死亡”终成现实。在曹澍的作品中，我们可以看到他对于“主体性丢失”（the loss of subjectivity）的焦虑。无论是 对网络匿名者头像的收集，还是对香烟盒包装上由于过度装饰而造成的“不可见”的图像的诗意化显影，都充斥着他对身份同一化、匿名化的担忧（*Sorge*）。在《我们》和《鸡汤长诗》的单色形式上，我们可以清晰地回忆起克莱因的单色绘画和现代主义者们对统一和标准化的迷恋。各种日常用品和关于语言学的论著都在单色中凸显出其背后意识形态的同一性强迫（*Identitätzwang*, 阿多诺）。我们今天每一句的发声和呐喊正无奈地建构其上，而主体性正妄想通过对它们的重构失而复得。最后《相遇》似乎成为了他抗争“主体性丢失”一个提案。对！在对望中，我们才成为了自己，本真性就此刹那回归。这一个个影像得以触动我们的正是：在那四目相撞的一刻，爆发出来相互的发现和识别。主体和主体间的指认本应该成为“主体自我”再次建立的起点，但在事实情况下中间却横陈着拍摄的光学机器。诗意就此嘎然而止，它构成了无数个奇景中小小的回响。曹澍的作品成为了我们时代中反抗那最深层单一化的诗歌，但这一诗歌又在自我辩证式的否定着。