

The 5th Beijing International Art Biennale: Future and Reality



In such a golden autumn of 2012, Beijing witnessed a grand gathering of arts.

In 2002, in the light of international art biennale practice, China Artists Association (CAA) started to prepare the first Beijing International Art Biennale (BIAB) to be held in 2003, which has lasted for a decade till now. In the past decade, BIAB has grown from a staggering baby to a mature person, and gradually developed its unique planning idea, exhibition style and feature brand through constant exploration, reform and innovation. In retrospect of the first session in 2003, second in 2005, third in 2008, fourth in 2010 and the latest in 2012 consecutively, both the quantity of participant countries and quality of exhibited artworks have been steadily enhanced, and BIAB has strengthened its influence in art circles both at home and abroad. This year, from September 28 till October 22, the 5th BIAB, jointly sponsored by China Federation of Literary and Art Circles (CFLAC), Beijing Municipality

Government and CAA, was presented in National Art Museum of China (NAMOC). With over 700 artworks from 84 countries, this session has aroused attention and expectation from art circles of China and the whole world.

The theme of the 5th BIAB is “Future and Reality”. A better future is an invariable dream of mankind, while the possible future starts from the current reality. As an ideal for many ancient sages, a perfect future was described in some classics about imaginary future such as Confucius’ The Great Together in the Book of Etiquette in China, The Republic by Plato in ancient Greece and Utopia by Thomas More in UK. As a key chapter in art history, vivid presentation of future can be found in painting and sculpture at every age of time and all over the world. The contemporary China is heading for a prosperous future in the world’s focus, and China needs to know the future of the world as well. However, our current reality is not as ideal as imagined. Ecological crisis, earthquake, tsunami, flood, typhoon, pestilence, nuclear pollution, warfare, religious conflict and terrorist attack constitute a menace to human survival and future. The intense relationship between man and nature as well as common anxiety caused by civilization conflict have made our exploration for future more important and urgent. Future is the outcome of reality and reality is the starting point of future. As there are so many possibilities for future, will it be a harmonious world in peaceful coexistence and prosperity or end of the world in ecological extinction and devastation? This question depends on our choice, attitude and action in the reality. It is our wise choice and sacred responsibility to eliminate disasters and potential danger, reconstruct the road to future and unite the entire world to build a harmonious and better world, which is also the lofty mission for contemporary artists. As a combination of spiritual pursuit for the future and humanitarian solicitude in the reality, the theme “Future and Reality” has been extensively acknowledged and enthusiastically responded. For future, artists from various countries bear liberal and romantic imagination at their utmost artistry and in-depth observation into the real life in their artworks. Some, in the form of tradition, emphasize their own experience and

discovery on the basis of visual arts property, while others intend to open a new horizon of art presentation by exploring art language and expanding art styles. All their works have constituted a colorful art world that transcends reality and pant for future. In this world, human painstaking efforts for shaking off reality dilemma and creating future vision and their forever dreams are taken into record.

In the course of this BIAB, an international symposium under the theme “Art Future and Reality” was correspondingly held, where art theorists and artists both at home and abroad present at this BIAB conducted profound professional exchanges and discussions related to this theme.

As the tradition of BIAB goes, besides Main Exhibition, there were several Special Exhibitions as well, namely Special Exhibition of Contemporary Art from India(jointly prepared by CFLAC and National Art Academy of India), Special Exhibition of Contemporary Art from Armenia(recommended by Ministry of Culture of Armenia), Special Exhibition of Francisco Goya’s Print Makings(recommended by Beijing Italy-China Cooperation Culture Development Company and provided by Marino Gallery of Italy) and Special Exhibition of Contemporary Art from Mexico (jointly curated by Rafael Alfonso Perez y Perez from Mexico and Hang Jian from China). Particularly, in order to prepare the latter, CAA organized a delegation to conduct research and discussion in Mexico. As an all-round showcase of the contemporary art charm in Mexico, this exhibition became a highlight in this session of BIAB.