

II Yuan Ming Yuan Artist Village and the new art tendency

It was started in the summer of 1989, when the members of a poem writing group placed their activity base in Fuyuanmen village situated near Beijing University. Ding Fang, a painter, and Fang Lijun who graduated from the Central Academy of Fine Art but didn't get any job proposal from the government, emigrated to the village. And soon, there appeared a small group of about 20 people. However, when new art tides, the "Cynical Realism" and the "Political Pop" began to be talked about along with the existence of the Yuan Ming Yuan Artist Village, the artists rushed to the village from all over China. As a result, the inhabitant in this artist village exceeded 1000 in several years and their attitudes were depraved and became commercialized without any standardized direction. Autumn in 1995, with the United Nations Women's Conference in Beijing close at hand, the Yuan Ming Yuan Artist Village received simultaneous exposure for 3 times and became fully extinct. Not only it developed a new art stream in the 90's, the existence of Yuan Ming Yuan Artist Village can be said that it had an extreme avant-garde social importance in the sense of making great contribution to form a free artist group detached from the cultural policy of the nation and the social demand.

◎Tips of viewing

1. Cynical Realism

One of the trends of new generation (post 89 generation) that appeared after 1989. It renounced the idealism and the heroism which the 85 Movement was declaring, and pictured itself and a scrap of daily life in a cold attitude. A political attitude was excluded abstinently and its own mental world was emphasized. Fan Lijun is the typical artist.

2. ポリティカル・ポップ

A new trend of post 89 generation proposed by Li Xianting just like the "Cynical Realism." The trend was also seen in the other East European countries. Combining Western merchandise brand unevenly distributed all over the world and Communist Party propaganda, it showed skepticism about both the disintegration of communism and the mighty world capitalism. Liu Wei is the typical artist.

III Beijing East Village and its subsequence

The "Beijing East Village" began its activity from 1993 having the base in the eastern part of Beijing. The main members were Zhang Huan, Ma Liuming and Zhu Ming, whose existence became big traction for the performance of the 90s in China. In this period, China was catching up with the capitalism world rapidly, and the artists faced powerful pressure of the market economy also seen in the Yuan Ming Yuan Artist Village after 1993. However, the Beijing East Village tried to stay underground, excluding commercialism. It aggressively used the performance as the expression form, which cannot be carried through distribution channels. However, this Beijing East Village also disappeared in 1997 just like the Yuan Ming Yuan Artist Village. In this exhibition, a lot of photographs taken by Rong Rong are mainly displayed. A few artists such as Fan Lijun and Liu Wei immigrated to Tongxian already around 1993, which is located at the suburbs of Beijing city, and the number increased rapidly after the Yuan Ming Yuan Artists Village was disclosed. Xiancheng, being the central part, live very few like Wang Jin, and the remaining majority live in three villages of the area called Song Zhuang. Daxingzhuang Village, where Luo brothers live in, is the village where comparatively not well-known artists gather. In this way, a lot of young artists still live around Beijing at present and continue the experimental work activities including video art.