

林壽宇 RICHARD LIN

大道至簡



1966年胡安·米羅拜訪林壽宇工作室後說：「在白色的世界中，無人能比的上你。」對白色爐火純青的發揮，使「白色」系列成為林壽宇享負盛名的代表作。今次我們從他創作生涯的萌芽處，1958年首次正式舉行個人展覽之罕見抽象表現鉅作，至饒富禪意的早期紙本，銜接60年代至70年代於國際美術史留下重要份量的「白色」系列，一路梳理到1984年後藝術家宣稱繪畫已死，以複合媒材為元素的拼貼作品，一系列完整作品創作年代跨越半世紀的時間，囊括林壽宇藝術生涯各個重要階段，清晰的架構此位時代巨匠，不同時期對藝術理念不斷更迭的主張。

趙無極將中國山水意念轉化為抽象繪畫，朱德群以色彩的律動傳遞傳統詩曲的視覺旋律，而林壽宇提煉中國文化的哲學思想，在作品體現老莊思想中「無為」的價值核心，運用西方冷抽象的繪畫語言將中國哲學形象化，並成為首位入選德國卡塞爾文件展的華人，其對二十世紀華人戰後美術史篇章的重要性可謂不言而喻。

林壽宇不同於其他藝術家從具象逐漸邁入抽象繪畫脈絡，他初始的風格即以抽象抒情開始。創作於1957年「日月」系列中的《紙上作品》(Lot 189) 演繹日、月宇宙運行的軌跡，一揮而就的速度筆觸源於長年來書法的學習，以厚薄的油彩交迭，說明林壽宇對東方觀點中宇宙永恆的求索。而1964年的《示意素描》(Lot 187) 饒富禪意的簡筆畫，肆意將油彩赤裸的擠壓於平面，未經抹平的油彩，膏狀的質地附著紙面造成立體的肌理效果，展現林壽宇開始對立體浮雕感的關注，他將雕塑的視覺效果體現於平面繪畫的語言，於二維平面上討論立體的空間維度，建構新的藝術體驗。

1950年代末期，時值抽象表現主義巔峰，林壽宇深受羅斯科的繪畫感召，他說：「羅斯科畫面裡大塊的色彩，彷彿來自很遠很遠，悠揚不斷的大鼓聲沉、渾厚，在心裡來回不停激盪著。」羅斯科著重精神內涵表現，力圖運用有限的色彩與形狀，無焦點的繪畫構圖，使觀者浸淫其中，與創作融為一體的大色域繪畫，帶領林壽宇從飽

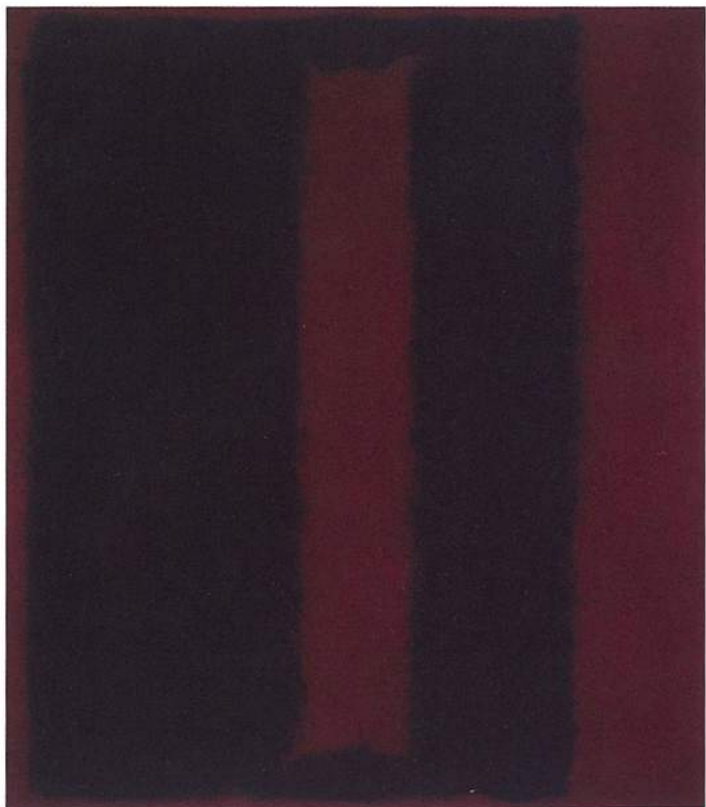
含情感的筆觸中，進入對簡單形與色構成的追求，《15-7-58》(Lot 190) 將情緒筆觸抽離，僅使用大色塊為創作的的基本單位元素，巨大的畫幅、無中心焦點的結構，將觀者的視線環繞於畫面之中，使觀看的臨場經驗成為視覺體驗的一環，如同羅斯科所言：「我畫大幅畫，因為我要創造一種親切的氣氛。一幅大畫是一種直接的交流，它把你帶進畫中。」

《15-7-58》以赭紅背景鋪墊，林壽宇縝密控制塗色力道，隱藏筆刷的運行軌跡，畫布上的色彩層次節奏來自不同次數疊加所產生的不同透光性所導致，相近色調細微差異的色面使畫面營造安寧神聖的冥想空間。

「從1958年起他就開始發展一系列黑、白色調混搭的大塊面重疊創作，在畫布有限的框架中，應用著色調接近但表面肌理與質感有著微妙差異的色面搭疊，進行畫布上層深、淺對比的排列，極工整的線條與邊框，成為畫面中引導心靈平和的地平線。」

— 羅潔尹〈一即一切：林壽宇50年創作展〉

《15-7-58》在單色背景之上，疊加瘦長黑色長方形，墨黑的塊狀彷彿是自然發光體，上下兩側透出微光，打亮赭紅的畫布中間段，由左到右橫跨完整畫面，清晰俐落的邊界線，有別於羅斯科色塊間運用油彩稀釋互相滲透的流動性，使顏色之間微妙的過渡，產生朦朧柔和的邊界。筆直明確的邊際線，將畫面穩定工整的平分為水平區塊，源於其建築系背景的學習，簡約利索的幾何圖形，與完美的比例切割原則，不僅是對大師羅斯科的致意，同時預示林壽宇朝低限主義風格發展的重要線索。

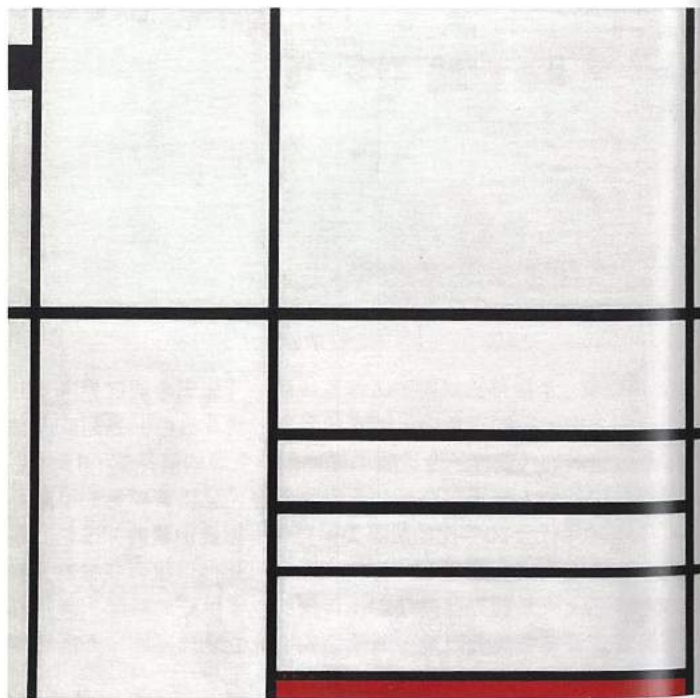


1.

「一旦色彩超出顏料的可能性，它就會展現一個人的行為世界，涉及特定的時間、特定的事件，以及他是如何審視時間和事件的。我的色彩是一種經驗性的色彩，它和某天的光線有關，和整個人的精神狀態有關。」

— 馬克·羅斯科

1960年代林壽宇開始「白色」系列，前期焦點關注正方形大塊面積組合之間的結構關係，而隨著時間的推演，大面積的區域逐漸區分為多重的幾何方形，1960年代末期「白色」系列進入成熟期，他開始以畫刀作畫，將白色層層疊疊達到「白分五色」，如同中國文人水墨畫中墨分五彩境界。在整體的白色佈局中，只見「白中白」的無限延伸，驗證他於1968年一次歐洲展覽訪談中提及，其藝術理具有濃厚的老莊思想，「天地萬物生於有，有生於無。」「白色」系列建構多重空間的無限延伸，述說宇宙太虛的本體，表現東方哲學中宇宙空間的內涵性。



2.

1. 馬克·羅斯科《棕色上的黑色》1959年作 英國倫敦泰特現代美術館藏
Mark Rothko, *Black on Maroon*, 1959, Collection of Tate Modern, London, UK

2. 皮耶·蒙德里安《巴黎：白色、黑色與紅的組成》1936年作 美國紐約現代藝術博物館藏
Piet Mondrian, *Composition in White, Black, and Red. Paris*, 1936, Collection of the Museum of Modern Art, New York, USA



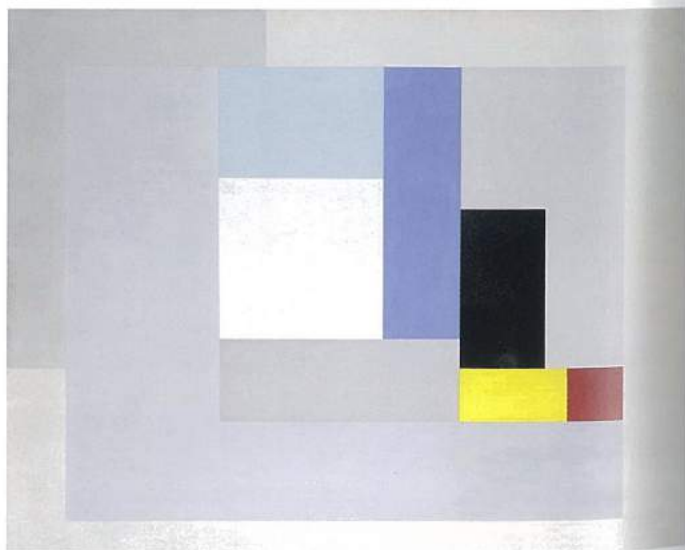


1.

1964年，林壽宇以方形塊狀疊堆的浮雕繪畫，入選德國卡塞爾第三屆文件展，成為此國際重要展覽的首位華人藝術家。而 1966年創作的《春；夏；秋；及冬》(Lot 186) 更以數量不等的方形色塊描繪季節的屬性，幾何多重並列的方塊呈現林壽宇脫離抽象抒情的開端。而《五月一日；五月二日；五月三日；及五月四日》(Lot 185) 這套版畫每件作品皆由兩部分組成，除了底層的白色絲網版畫，上層透明片上的壓克力色條是手工一件件黏貼，展現了豐富的層次變化與藝術家細膩、嚴謹的思維。同時，這兩套版畫的另一版次皆是英國泰特美術館中的典藏，見證了西方的重要美術館機構對於林壽宇在藝壇地位的認可。

藝評家王秀雄曾說：「林壽宇簡直把自己限定於長方形和白色的最簡要素內，譜出最大的律動和最豐富的白色層次。這一種豐富的白色層次和長方形的反覆，所構成的內涵是如此的緊湊和多樣。」《三三》(Lot 192) 經過精密的理性切割，層層漸進的白色越往上疊加面積越縮小，最後在帶有黑色、黃色的線段上結束，儘管畫面隱藏了空間的深度，但卻在透進的過程中創造了無限的空間。擁有厚度的淺灰色壓克力版，做為兩個乳白方形色階間的銜接，使光源的介入立體物件呈現陰影的效果，實體物質的存在加強畫面空間意識，超越平面的限制，立體浮雕感擺弄觀眾的真實視覺於幻覺、現實與超現實之間的微妙切換，林壽宇讓二維平面的繪畫與具有三維空間的現成品之間建立起有機的協調關係，在形體轉化之下建立嶄新的空間秩序。

1970年代立體現成物逐漸消失於林壽宇的畫面之中，取而代之除了較為複雜的色階，也因為前一年一家人搬遷至倫敦郊區，與大自然生活使為其作品添加不同色彩。大自然的色彩如紅、黃甚至綠，清新點綴於極簡的畫布之上。《致Katya》(Lot 191) 在白色塊下端未勾勒完全的黃色線段，刻意留白的比例是林壽宇經過精確計算的架構，呈現具有理性的結構性與空間構成，為穩定的節奏感增添韻律的變化。



2.



Lot 191

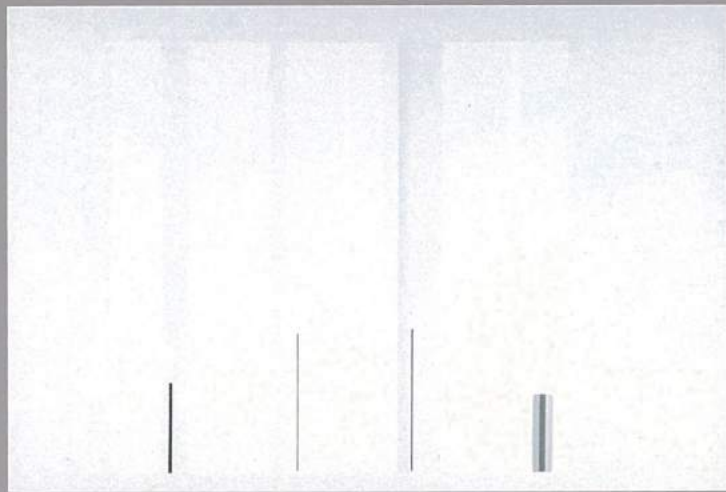
據目前可查閱的公開文獻，林壽宇曾以女兒Katya為題創作過三件作品，其中包含一件現存於英國米德爾斯堡現代美術館藏品，「我的每件作品具有紀念性的，每件作品都描繪一個故事和描寫一個人。」《致Katya》是藝術家對女兒綿密情感的釋放，紀念著他們一起擁有的生活記憶，而本件創作於1970年《致Katya》為其他同名系列作品中，年代最早且尺寸最大的一件，作為此系列的開端，更想必對於林壽宇而言包含著更加原始與純粹的情感。

1. 林壽宇與Katya Lin
Richard Lin and Katya Lin

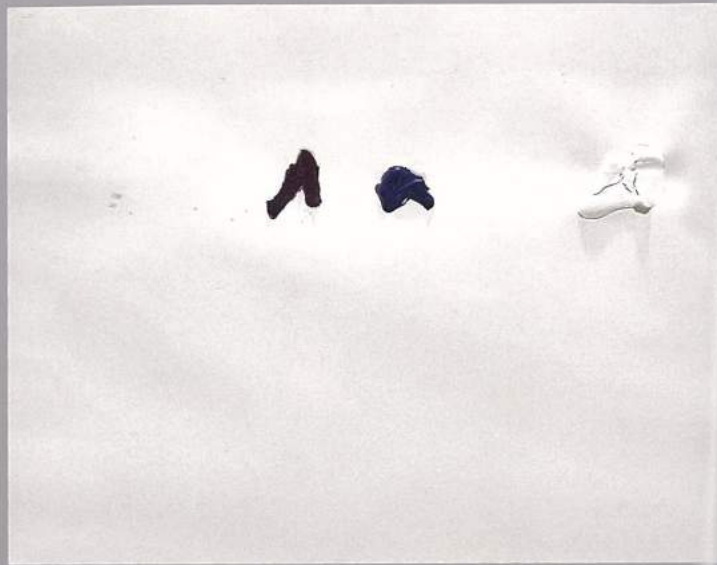
2. 本·尼科爾森《1937 六月（繪畫）》1937年作 英國 倫敦 泰特現代美術館藏
Ben Nicholson, *June 1937 (painting)*, 1937, Collection of Tate Modern, London, UK

詩人羅門說：「林壽宇不但在形式與符號中吸納了西方所偏重的『意識』與『觀念』，而且更始終堅持東方所偏持的『玄念』與『意境』。這在人類創作精神全面統合的表現上，應是更接近理想與值得重視的。」

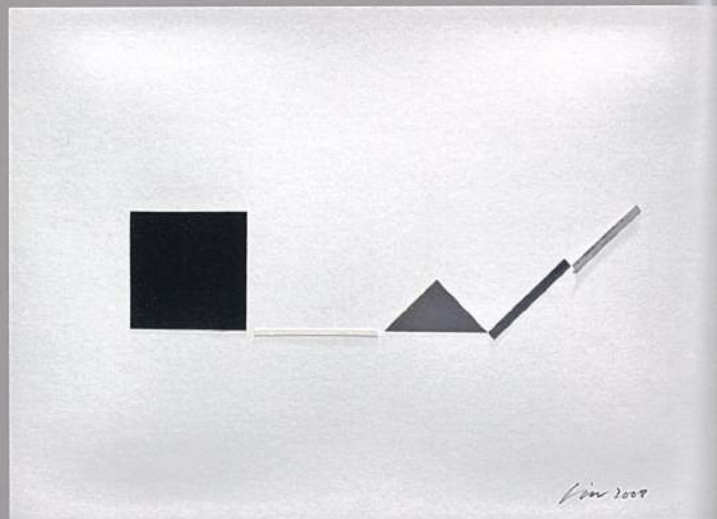
1984年林壽宇宣稱「繪畫已死」至此封筆不再作畫，轉向雕塑與裝置藝術。創作於2008年的《紙上作品》(Lot 188) 運用煙盒中的錫箔紙與紙片等現成物為材料作為立體造型的發想，再落實為大型裝置藝術的實驗。林壽宇60年代的「浮雕繪畫」於平面中延展至三度空間，晚年最終從牆面走向地面，搭建起建築立體空間。如同鄭芳和：「建築與藝術是一體兩面，《道德經》第十一章云：『有之以為利，無之以為用。』建築是實用性的，是有；藝術是非實用性，是無。林壽宇以建築的實用性，建構藝術的非實用性，在建築與藝術的有無之間轉換、架接，正顯示他的藝術由絕對轉向『可變的開始』。」林壽宇一生的創作理念契合老莊思想的「空」與「無」透過有限的色彩和極簡的形體，以西方的抽象語言，建構秩序性的幾何關係，將東方哲學的意涵具象化於空間中，代表著藝術家對宇宙萬物及自己內心的自省與詰問。繼趙無極、朱德群為首的抽象表現主義後開創另一篇章，以不同風格的抽象形式，共同於二十世紀的華人現代藝術史中，為中國傳統美學精神重新注入新的養分並發揚光大。



林壽宇《致Katya》1974年作 英國 米德爾斯堡 米德爾斯堡現代藝術學院藏
Richard Lin, *For Katya*, 1974, Collection of Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art, Middlesbrough, UK



Lot 187



Lot 188



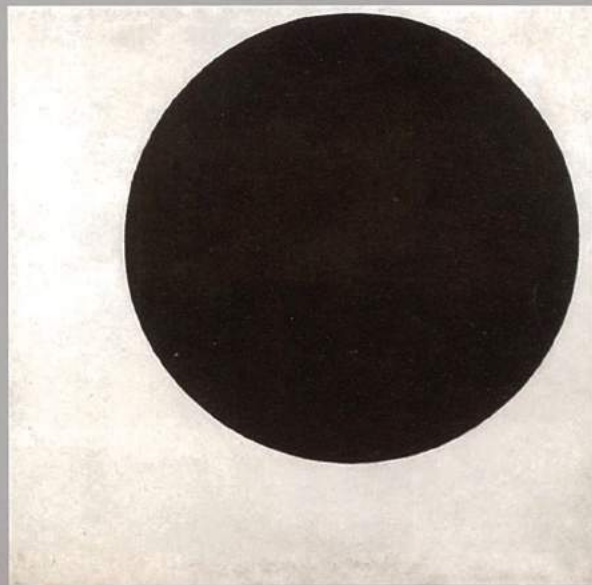
Lot 189

林壽宇 RICHARD LIN

ART THROUGH SIMPLICITY



1.



2.

In 1966, when Joan Miro visited Richard Lin at his studio, she commented, "In the world of white, you are without equal." Because of Lin's adept use of white, his *White* series became the representative work that marked his artistic achievement and world-wide fame. In this Spring Sale, Poly Auction Hong Kong have traced back to the nascence of his creative life in 1958, to include one of his early, rarely seen abstractionist work that was featured in his first solo exhibition; paper works based on the concept of Zen; the remarkable works of the *White* series produced in the 60-70s; and mixed-media collage works executed after 1984, when the artist claimed that painting was dead. This entire series spans across half a century and covers each important stage in Lin's artistic career, bringing clarity upon the structure of the artistic ideals of this great master through different periods.

Zao Wou-Ki has uncovered the concepts that lie beneath Chinese landscape paintings through his abstract works; Chu Teh-Chun utilised the rhythm of colours to convey the visual melody of traditional Chinese poetry; Lin, however, extracted philosophical thinking from the core of traditional Chinese culture, presenting the concept of "inaction" in Laozi and Zhuangzi through the language of western cold

abstractionism. He was the first Chinese included in the Kassel "Documenta" in Germany, which marks his importance in post-war Chinese art scene.

Unlike other artists whose artistic context always transform from figurative to abstraction, Lin's artistic career began with lyrical abstraction straight away. His *Works on Paper* (Lot 189) of the *Sun Moon* series in 1957 depicts the trajectories of the sun and the moon in the universe. The expressive, skillful brushstrokes was the best indication of the skills he built up after years of study on traditional Chinese calligraphy. The conversion between thick and thin oil paint reveals Lin's pursuit of the eternal universe from his oriental perspective. His 1964 *Gestural Drawing* (Lot 187) contains simple strokes with the concept of Zen. He freely pressed the oil paint onto the paper, the unflattened oil paste was sticking on the surface of the paper, creating a texture of three-dimensional. This represents a kind of prelude to his later pursuit of "relief" painting effects on flat surfaces, embodying visual effects like those of sculpture but within the vocabulary of painting on a planar surface. Lin's ability to examine spatial dimensions within a two-dimensional pictorial surface allowed him to construct a new kind of artistic experience.

1. 「一即一切：林壽宇50年創作展」展覽現場
Exhibition view of "One is Everything: 50 Years of Work by Richard Lin"

2. 卡齊米爾·馬列維奇《黑圓圈》1915年作
俄羅斯 聖彼得堡 俄羅斯國家美術館藏
Kazimir Malevich, *Black Circle*, 1915, Collection of State Russian Museum, St. Petersburg, Russia



"I use colours that have already been experienced through the light of day and through the state of mind of the total man. In other words, my colours are not colours that are laboratory tools which are isolated from all accidentals or impurities so that they have a specified identity or purity."

- Mark Rothko

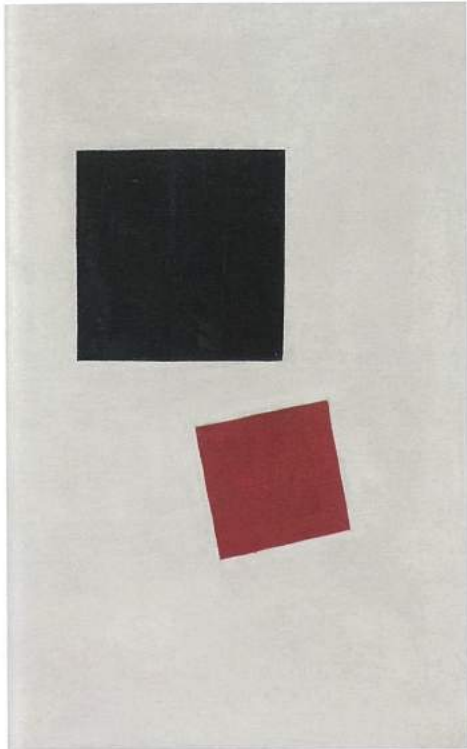
In the late 1950s, abstractionism was best rewarded and respected. Lin was profoundly influenced by Mark Rothko's paintings. He stated, "Looking at the large colour blocks in Rothko's paintings is like listening deep sound of large drums coming from far, far away, and that sound echoes in my heart." Rothko emphasised the representation of the spirit and content. He restricted himself to only use a few colours and shapes to compose gigantic paintings with no focal point, creating an immersive experience for the viewer. Walking into a painting of large blocks of colours, the viewer and the canvas finally merge into one. Lin was led from strokes full of emotion to the pursuit of simple shapes and colours. In *15-7-58* (Lot 190), he refrained himself from using emotional strokes, instead, only employed large colour blocks as the basic elements in his creations. This large-scale painting of a structure without a focal point leaves the viewer's eyes to wander around the picture, and the on-site viewing experience becomes pure visual sensation. As Rothko said, "The reason I paint large canvases is that I want to be intimate and human." *15-7-58* lays down maroon as the base colour of the background, and Lin precisely controlled the force with which he applied the colour to hide any trace of brush strokes. The layers of colours and the rhythm on the canvas originate from different and multiple overlapping layers, resulting in different degrees of translucence. The colour fields, slightly varied in tone, create a tranquil and holy space for meditation.

"In 1958, he started developing a series of works with large black and white colour blocks. Within the limited space on canvas, he arranged colour fields with similar tones but slightly different textures to show contrasts in their translucence. He uses extremely neat lines and frames to create a horizon within the picture, which leads to the peace of mind."

- Luo Jieyin "One is Everything: 50 Years of Work by Richard Lin"

1. 卡齊米爾·馬列維奇《黑與紅方塊》1915年作 美國 紐約 現代藝術博物館藏
Kasimir Malevich, *Black Square and Red Square*, 1915, Collection of the Museum of Modern Art, New York, USA

2. 馬克·羅斯科《棕色上的黑色》1959年作 英國 倫敦 泰特現代美術館藏
Mark Rothko, *Black on Maroon*, 1959, Collection of Tate Modern, London, UK



1.

On 15-7-58, a black, rectangular-shaped belt was crossing the single-coloured background from left to right, with its top and bottom emitting light, it seemed to be naturally luminous, and that lights up the middle section of the maroon canvas. The clear and neat edges make the work to differ from the fluid effect and the blurry boundaries that Rothko creates on his canvas by using diluted oil paints to penetrate each colour block. Lin used to major in architecture, and that's the reason for him to employ neat geometric lines with clear boundary to divide the canvas with optimal ratios, creating balanced horizontal zones, it could be regarded as homage to Rothko and a hint of his artistic focus gradually shifting towards minimalism.

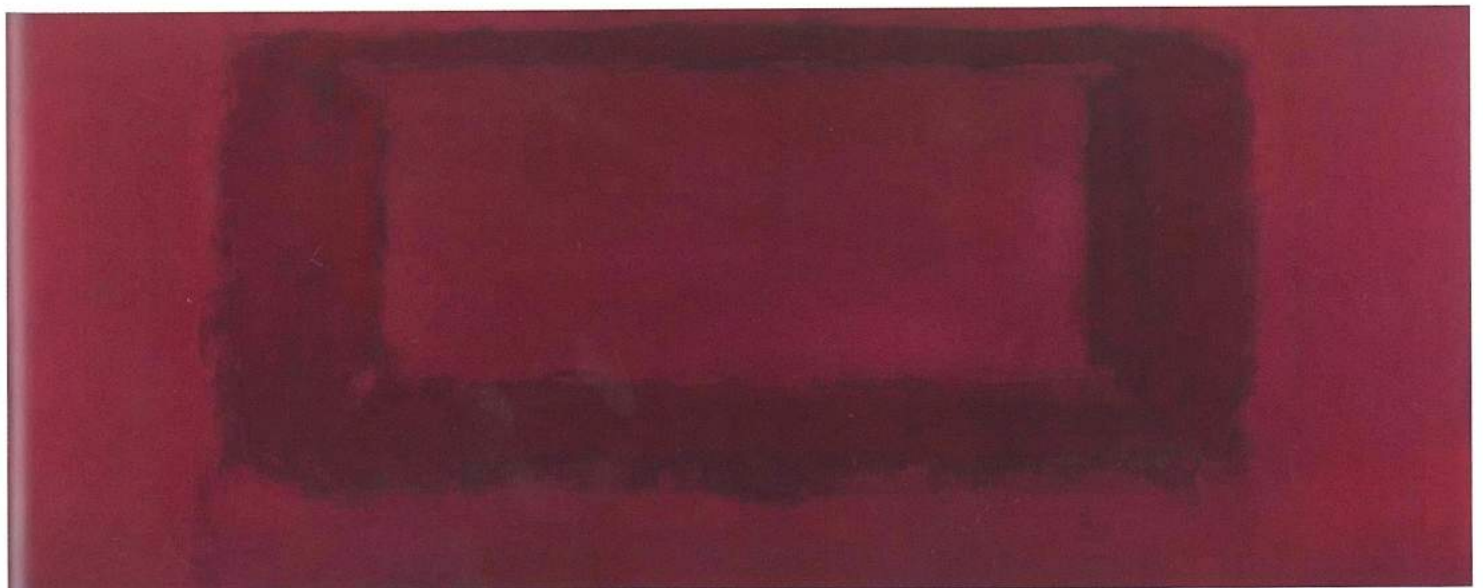
In the 1960s, Lin started his *White* series. In the early stage, his focus was on the structural relationships between the arrangement of large squares. As time went by, those large areas have been divided further into different rectangular shapes. In the late 1960s, the *White* series reached its stage of maturity. Lin started to use palette knives, stacking the white-coloured pigments onto each other, creating "five shades of white," just as the five different degrees of ink shades in traditional Chinese ink paintings. In the arrangement of those whites, the concept of "white on white" extends beyond boundaries, which reinforce his earlier statement at an interview for an exhibition in Europe in 1968, about Taoism being his main artistic focus: All things under heaven sprang from It as existing (and named); that existence sprang from It as non-existent (and not named). The *White* series constructs the endless extension of multi-dimensional space, depicting the core of the universe and showing the content of the space of the universe in Eastern philosophy.

In 1964, Richard Lin's "relief" paintings, built up by square blocks, was selected to be shown in the "Documenta III" held in Kassel, Germany, making

him the first Chinese artist to be included in this Internationally recognised show. The 1966 works-*Spring; Summer; Autumn; & Winter* (Lot 186), employ varying numbers of square coloured blocks, through which he delineates his attribution to different season. The geometric juxtaposition of multiple square shapes marks Lin's departing from lyrical abstraction, as well as the start of his *White* series. The set of prints *May 1; May 2; May 3; & May 4* (Lot 185) each consist of two parts - a base layer of white silkscreen print, and an upper layer consisting acrylic colour strips on a transparent plate. Each of these were made by hand, producing rich layering effect and demonstrates the artist's meticulous, rigorous attitude towards the making of his work. Another edition of each of these sets of prints belonged to the collection of Tate Modern, which shows the recognition and appreciation of the artist's work in Western art scenes.

Art critic Frank S.H. Wang once said, "Lin has limited himself to the absolute simplest elements of rectangles and shades of white, but with these he has composed the greatest rhythms and the richest white layers. Within these rich layers of white and repeated rectangles, he structures these implications, which are so compact and yet so diverse."

In *Three Three* (Lot 192), the canvas space has been precisely divided under the artist's rational planning and calculation, the white shades are diminishing as the layers build up, and finally ends at a straight line of black and yellow. Although the picture obscures spatial depth, but a boundless space is created during the process of building up. A light grey acrylic plate with visible thickness is bridging up the two milk-white rectangular colour scales. As the light source have created shadows for the three-dimensional objects, and the existence of concrete objects strengthens the spatial consciousness of the image. This work exceeds the restriction of a two-dimensional plane, and the



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1. 德國卡塞爾「第三屆文件展」展覽專輯封面暨封底

Cheng Fang-Ho once stated, "Architecture and art are two sides of the same coin. And Chapter 11 of *Tao Te Ching* have stressed: what has a (positive) existence serves for profitable adaptation, and what has not that for (actual) usefulness. Architecture is practical, so it 'existence'. Art is impractical, so it is 'nothingness'. Lin used the practicality of architecture to construct the impractical theory underlie in art. His transfer and connection between the 'existence' and 'non-existence' between architecture and art reflects that his art shifted from absolute to the beginning of mutability."

With his restricted colour palette and minimalist forms, Richard Lin constructs orderly geometric relationships with the Western language of abstraction. He transforms the meanings of Eastern philosophy into concrete representations in space, images that stand for the artist's introspection and questioning of the universe and his own heart. Following the Abstract Expressionism exemplified by such artists as Zao Wou-Ki and Chu Teh-Chun, Lin's work could be deemed as the start of a new era. All with different styles, these great masters of Chinese modern art in the 20th century helped to carry forward traditional Chinese aesthetics in the international art scene.



3. 艾格尼絲·馬丁《無題第5號》1975年作

sense of three-dimensional embossing manipulates the viewer's vision, alternating among illusion, reality, and the surreal. Lin built up a harmonious relationship between two-dimensional painting and ready-mades that occupies three-dimensional space. Through the transformation of form, he established a brand-new spatial order.

When it comes to 1970s, three-dimensional ready-made forms had gradually disappeared on Lin's canvas, and were replaced by more complex colour blocks. The year before, Lin's family had moved to the suburb of London, the experience of residing in the nature was probably the main reason why colours start to appear in Lin's works. Natural colours such as red, yellow, and even green refreshed his minimalist-style canvas. Within *For Katya* (Lot 191), there was a partially drawn yellow line at the bottom of the white colour block. And such blank was left intentionally through Lin's careful calculation, altogether they present a space that is both rational and spatial, with rhythm sensation.

According to the open literature sources, Lin has

named three of his creations that were related to with his daughter Katya, one of which is now in the collection of the Middleborough Institute of Modern Art, Great Britain. "My works are souvenirs. Each depicts a story or commemorates somebody." *For Katya* depicts the artist's deep love for his daughter, commemorating the life they once shared. Among his other works with the same name, *For Katya*, created in 1970, was the first ever produced and the largest. As it marks the beginning of this series, this work must contain the most primitive and purest affection of Richard Lin.

In 1984, Lin proclaimed, "Painting is dead" and stopped to execute any canvas works, instead, he turned his focus toward sculpture making. *Work on Paper* (Lot 188), executed in 2008 incorporated ready-made materials such as tin foil and the paper found in cigarette packs as an inspiration, and they serve as the blue print for his larger installations. *Painting Relief*, created in the 1960s has expanded from surface plane to three-dimensional space and finally, in the artist's late years, transferred from wall to the floor, forming an architectural form. Just as

1. 德國卡塞爾「第三屆文件展」展覽專輯封面暨封底

Cover of the exhibition catalogue of "documenta III"

2. 德國卡塞爾「第三屆文件展」展覽圖錄對林壽宇與作品的介紹

Introduction of Richard Lin and his works of the exhibition catalogue of "documenta III"

3. 艾格尼絲·馬丁《無題第5號》1975年作

美國紐約現代藝術博物館藏
Agnes Martin, *Untitled Number 5*, 1975,
Collection of The Museum of Modern Art, New York, USA