

## The Absurdity and after the Absurdity

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When I look at Zhang Xiao's work "Coastline", I see his talent sparks on the coast, just as the "spiritual atmosphere" we see in every picture. This is first because of his color, bright and elegant, but not stagnant dirty or showy. Then the scale and content of the photo, he uses the size of six times seven to present a witty and lively style, which occupies a new and delicate item of Chinese landscape photography. Of course, more importantly, and the most unexpected thing to me is that he molded the coast into the blade, and quickly dissects China. Indeed, these margin lands tend to better reflect the reality in the process of changing.

Coastline is one example. First of all, it is China's high heat zone. The special administrative, tourism and development region heat blows up the skirt, and shows us a wealth of "underneath". Secondly, it is also the border, a tourist line. In this relatively open place, implicative Chinese people can somehow show their true features.

Therefore, what does he see of China?

On one side, fables lie all over the places show desire of contemporary Chinese people, as well as the most indicative of the Qin Dynasty is the array of military figurines. Driven by this desire, the mutation of landscape happened, nonsense of artificial objects are often infiltrated into nature, the Buddha can be landed on beach, ox-cart wanders in front of the "White House". All of them can inevitably lead to another feature - absurdity.

Artifacts are not necessarily bad. But the contemporary Chinese artifacts are often laughable. I think because of the rapid change leads to the huge acknowledging differences of different countries and people, and the big gap between mental and material development. The result can be a mass of answers if we do multiplication of all factors.

To capture the absurdity of contemporary China is an easy job, and a lot of photographers are doing it. It can be sensational. But after all photography is neither Chinese "Bizarre Stories" nor "Stories of Immortals". Fortunately, over Zhang Xiao's absurdity, as well as the appearance of sea level, there's still the sea and sky above the sea. Like the eternal code, it surveys this human world, hanging with its sword, highlighting the secular ugliness. Then I found out how clever Zhang Xiao's choice of coastline is. The coast itself is a symbol of sides, reality and fantasy, desire and emptiness. This line is different from the ordinary, for it's easy to run out of screen, and also tends to deep connotation.

Zhang Xiao's photograph does not change reality, but in fact his inner heart is comparing with reality, giving comments. Well, landscape is objective. While observation is a subjective act, by inner externalization and internalization of foreign objects, well or not determines the level of art. Zhang Xiao is just doing right here with his fair judge and unique temperament.

He quickly captures the tragedy of Chinese people. His insight ranks top in China. However, does he consciously note the absolute significance of "the coast" before he chose it as the object? I have seen a lot of his works. The easily seen coastline reminds me: we should not only reveal the absurdity, for there are too much to reveal. There should be convergence, understanding and sympathy in criticism. To maintain a little warmth to reality or people is the rarely seen quality in nowadays, which is called compassion. Therefore, landscape can be lift up to the height of inner heart, and be given the significance of a church and the feeling of ceremony, with redemption and freedom!

This is an extreme of feeling, a reconstruction after criticizing, and even a dying out literary spirit, which I think will become his next focus. I hope on the basis of lightness, he can build a statue of solemnity. I think I have already seen one great photo, with harmonious sea, a straight bridge and a group of teenagers. It is bright, beautiful and natural. Things great as sea, is just natural, like sunshine, like ideals.

Standing on this coastline and look back, we see China in the moment, also known as "the motherland"; people orgiastic or lonely we see, are also called "the people".

## 荒诞以及荒诞之后

颜长江

我看张晓的作品《海岸线》时，我看到他的天分在海岸上闪闪发光，如同照片中无处不在的“灵氛”一样。这首先要叹服他的色调，明快淡雅，不滞不脏不艳。而在画面尺度与内容上，他以六乘七的言说方式，和诙谐、明快的风格，占据了景观摄影的新的、细微的一档。当然，更重要的一点，最让我意外的一点，是他将海边塑造成刀锋，快速地解剖中国。确实，这种边缘地带往往更能反映变革中的现实。

海岸线也是这样，首先，它是中国的高热地带，特开区旅游区掀起这款裙带，可以看到丰富的“艳照”；其次，它也是边境，是旅游线，在这条相对的自由线路上，含蓄的中国人能多少显露本相。

那么，他究竟看到了中国的什么？

这个此岸，肉体横陈，最能显示出当下国人的欲望，如同最能显示秦朝的，是阵列的军俑一样；在这欲望的驱使下，风景发生变异，人工的东西往往很无厘头地掺入自然，菩萨可以落在沙滩上，牛车可以行进在“白宫”前，于是必然导致另一本质特征——荒诞。

人工并不一定就不好。但当代中国的人工，却是往往让人啼笑皆非。我想，这是因为急剧的变革，导致各地、各界、各人地位和认识差异巨大，精神、物质也没齐头并进，这样来个乘法，答案只能是千奇百怪了……

要在当代的祖国拍下这种荒诞是很容易的，很多摄影师也是这样做的，很能哗众取宠。但摄影毕竟不是“聊斋志异”或“搜神记”。好在张晓的荒谬之上，还有时常出现的海平线，海和海上的天空，如同永恒的法典，审视着这一人间世，高悬着它的剑，凸显世俗之恶；又是纯粹的大美，凸显世俗之俗。说到这里，就明白张晓选择海岸线，实在是很聪明的，海岸本身是个象征，此岸与彼岸，现实与梦幻，欲望与虚无，这条线不同一般，既容易出画面，也容易生内涵。

张晓的这种摄影不改变现实，但内心其实在比对现实，发出评价。景观嘛，景是客观存在，但观是一个主观行为，内心外化，外物内化，化得好不好，对不对，这就决定了艺术水准。张晓在这里是做得合适的，他的评判公允，而且气质独特。

他快速摄取了我们的可悲之处，这种眼光已足称中国一流。但他选择了海边，是否有意识地注意到“海岸”的绝对意义了呢？看多了他的作品，海岸的无处不在倒是提醒了我：我们应该不止于揭示荒唐，这样的东西已太多了，我们批判时应该有收敛、理解与同情，保持一点对现实和人们的温情，这就是时下罕见的文化品质：悲悯。如是，景观才能上升到内心的高处，景观才有教堂的意义，才有仪式感受，才有拯救与逍遥！

这一种情怀的极致，是批判之后的建设。这更是当下文艺快绝种的东西了。这应当是他的下一步，我希望他在轻快的基础上，建筑庄严之象。我也看到他已经有了这样一张好照片：均整的海，笔直的栈桥上，走过来一群阳光少年。干净，美好，自然而然。伟大如海者，本就这样，比如阳光，比如理想。

这条海岸线上回望，我们看到的当下中国，又称为祖国；那些或狂欢或孤独的人们，又叫做人民。