YOUNG GUNN

 ${\bf Fion\ Gunn's}\ Age\ of\ Exploration$ 

Introduced by E.S. Pettit

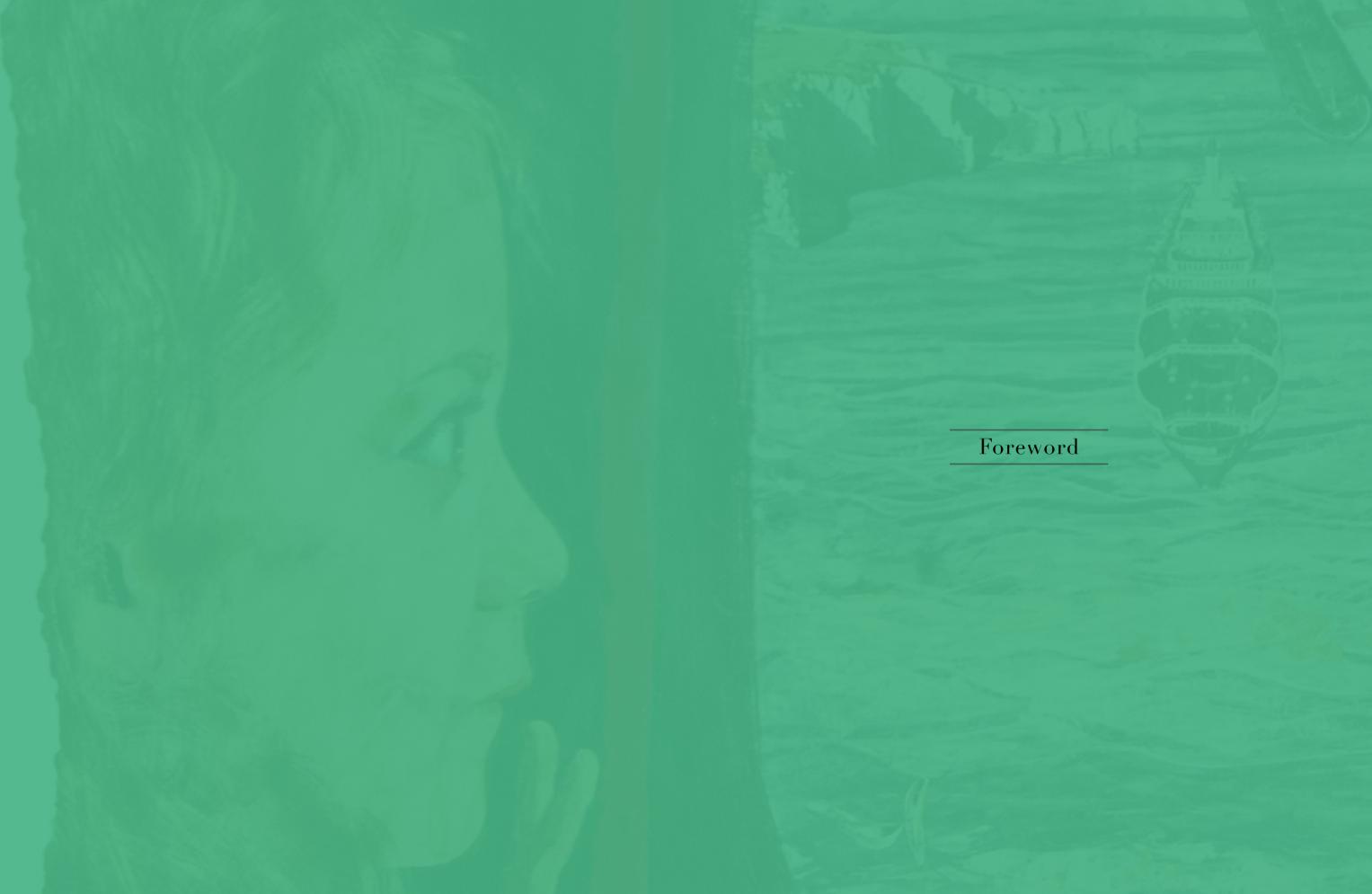


Young Gunn

Fion Gunn

Writing by

E.S. Pettit





Fion Gunn has now been coming to China longer than any other Irish artist before her. Since her first visit sixteen years ago, followed by annual visits entailing exhibitions, residencies and lectures ever since, she has also achieved a string of firsts and superlatives related to her home away from home:- the first Irish artist in 2012 to have a public sculpture commission in China for the city of Zhangjiakou; the longest series of curated exhibitions by an Irish artist of Irish artists in China titled *Irish Wave* - from 2009 to 2016; and, as of 2019, a key installation telling of journeys in the entrance to the now tallest building in Guangzhou, Rosewood Residences. Her contribution and trailblazing to cross-cultural understanding between the two countries is undeniable. Now witnessing 'opening up' of a different kind in Ireland, Gunn also documents the reverse wave of Chinese visitors, students and workers to Ireland as exemplified in the work left, depicting a figure of a young Chinese woman symbolically framed in nature's entrance to man's entrance of a Dublin Georgian red door.

Gunn's interweaving of ideas about migration and integration with her own life could not be more topical. Through water, our originator, our connector and our purifier, Gunn's *Age of Exploration* tells the story of sea trade through the ages and this as the great conduit of understanding across cultures. Gunn's practice represents a water clock for our time: balanced, honest, clean, one of man's most enduring time-measuring instruments, shared through the spread of trade. The utility and intrigue of collage and assemblage are Gunn's syntax for an artistic language full of movement and exchange and rhythm.

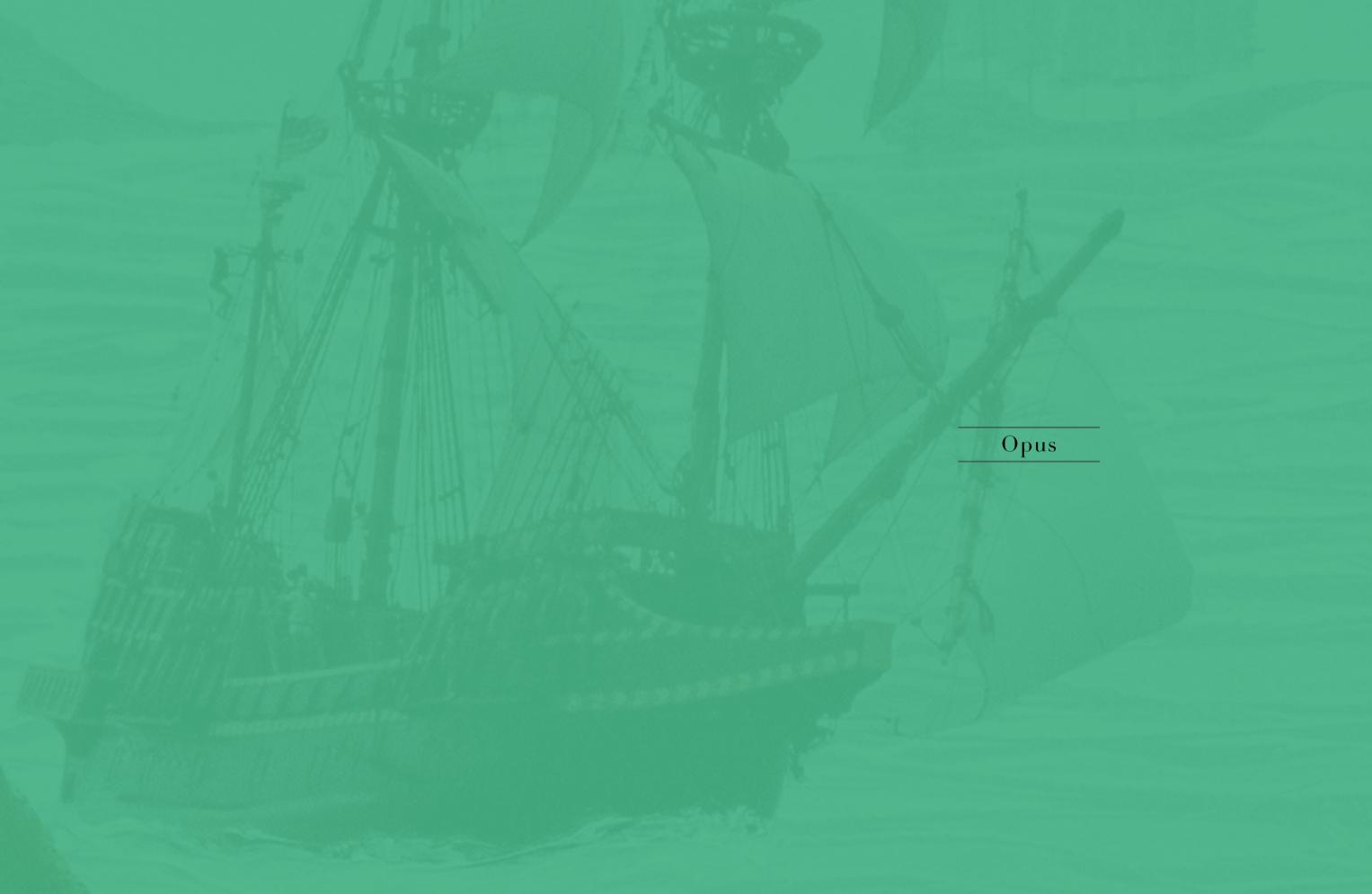
Gunn also embodies another relevant focus that is societal tolerance for increasingly individual approaches to balancing family and career. While motherhood allows, perhaps even encourages non-linear bursts of creation over erratic working hours, it is not always facilitating of the convoluted yet commercial aspects that attend the building of a public persona. Now with a considerable body of work, and fresh from her Tate Exchange Liverpool exhibition, the time is ripe for wider audience reception of the ageless mother and grandmother. I hope you enjoy *Young Gunn* at Candid Arts Trust in London and this catalogue that accompanies it.

迄今菲昂·冈恩来往于中国的时间已经远超过其他更早来到这个国家的爱尔兰艺术家。她十三年首次踏上这块土地,此后她坚持每年到中国举办展览、参加艺术驻留项目、讲座等;在这个她的精神故乡的国土上,她成就颇丰:2012年她成为第一位为张家口市定制雕塑作品的爱尔兰艺术家;自2006年到2016年,策划了在中国持续时间最长的爱尔兰艺术家联展系列"爱尔兰浪潮";2019年她的大型装置作品如今被陈列于广州市最高塔—瑰丽府邸的入口大厅。她为两国的文化交流的贡献功不可没。爱尔兰目前也在经历另一种的"对外开放",冈恩也记录了中国旅客、学生、工人们来到爱尔兰,正如左图刻画了一位年轻的华人女子,画面被一个象征性的园林入口环绕,通向一个都柏林乔治亚式房屋的红门。

冈恩结合她生命中关于迁徙和融合的思想,浓缩了她对这个时代的观察。她的"探索时代"系列通过讨论水的本身意象,回溯海洋作为我们的起源地、通联者和净化器,讲述了不同时代的贸易的故事,以及以此为载体的文化间的相互理解。如此一来冈恩仿佛打造了我们这个时代的一个滴漏,平稳、忠实、洁净,是人类最持久耐用的计时器,曾经在贸易之路上也被广泛运用。冈恩对拼贴和集合这种艺术形式的运用以及这种媒介本身的魅力构成了她富有行动力、感染力和律动的艺术语言的语法框架。

冈恩的身上也背负了另一个关于事业和家庭平衡和社会对此的容忍度的议题。作为一位母亲,也许非固定工作时间的模式更激发了她的创造力,但也压缩了进行通常意义上艺术家所需的脑力消耗和成名所需的商业策略的空间。现在她已经累积了丰富的作品,紧接着她在泰特利物浦交流中心的个展之后,如今可以更好地向公众呈现这位艺心长青的母亲、祖母辈的艺术家。我希望您能享受此次在伦敦的Candid Arts Trust的展览和本次为展览专门制作的画册。

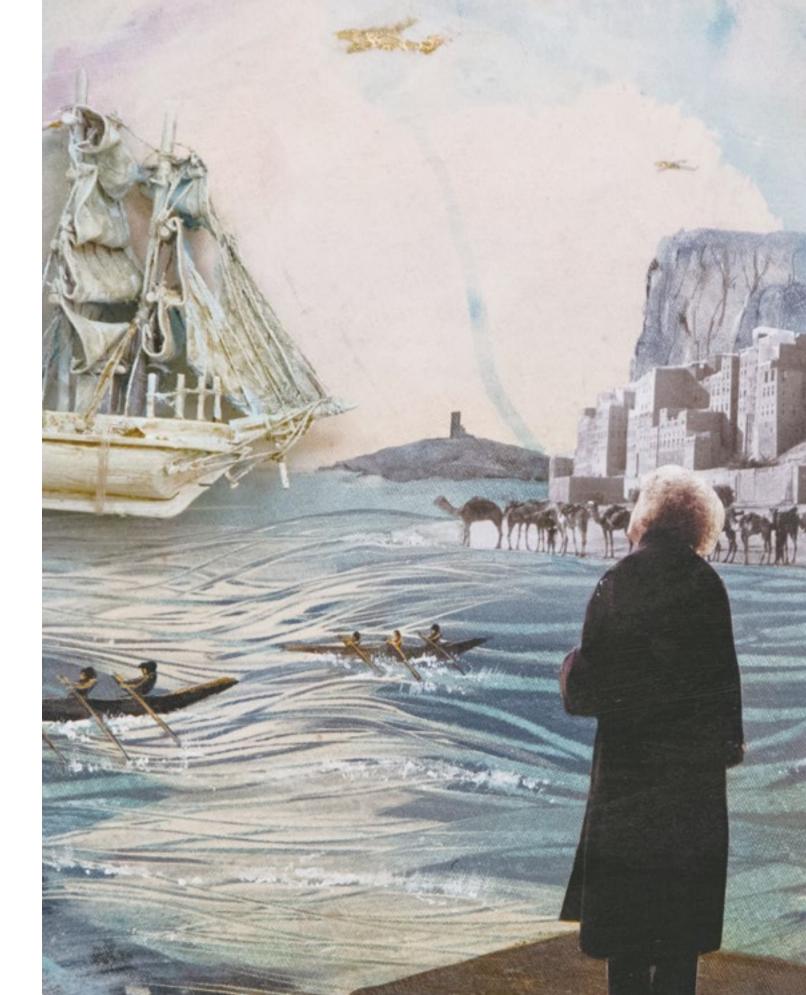
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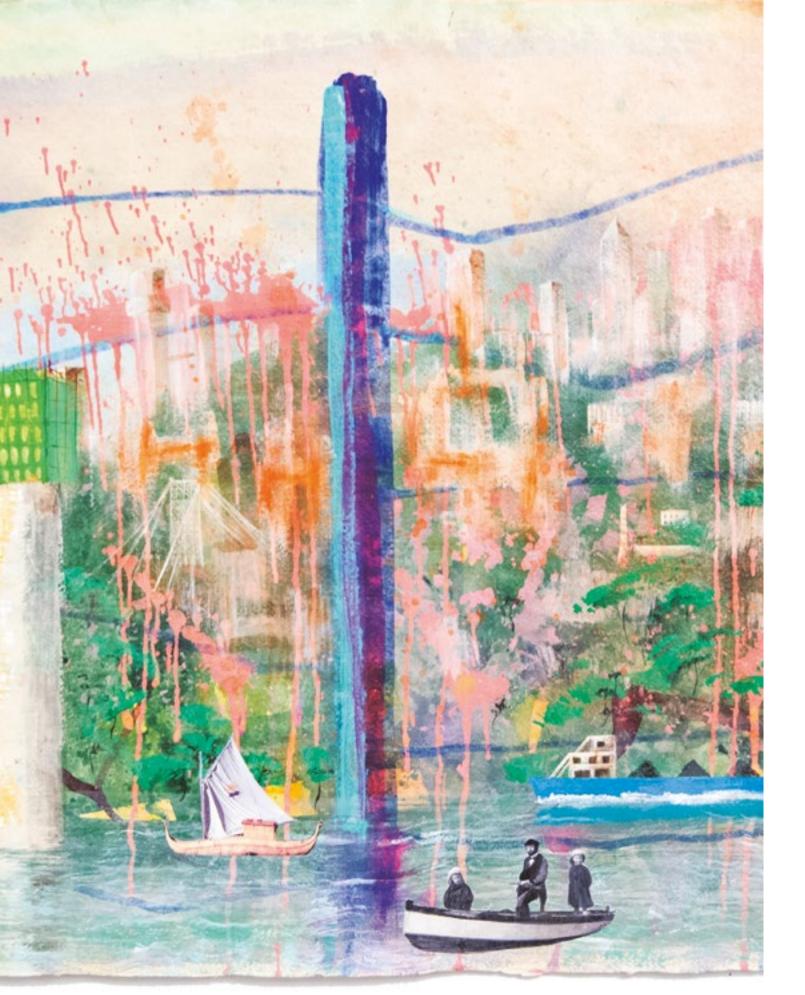


## **YOUNG GUNN**

E.S. Pettit

ON THE LAST DAY OF SUMMER, FION GUNN OPENS AN unassuming old wine case in her London studio, revealing a tropical underwater world of fictionalised Spice Islands around which plastic fish prophetically circle. The multiple ironies of Gunn's creation are rife with the heady scent of actual cloves and cinnamon embedded in its acrylic waters. Lidded by a European scene of past industrial Utopia, I reflect that when Magellan's crew landed on those islands in the East Indies a single handful of cloves could set one up for life, their value then greater than gold. I contemplate a day when fish, not filled with plastic themselves, might be the cloves of the future. The wine case housing Age of Exploration: Spice (pages 14-15) is representative of Gunn's practice. One slows down in the presence of art that has been crafted slowly by an artist who is herself an acute perceptor of time. I google "Slow Art" to see if I have coined a new phrase and have Gunn to thank for it, but discover I'm too late. There is a book, a movement and even an annual Slow Art Day (April 6th). However, the focus seems to be on the experience of looking, rather than the act of creation; Slow Art is defined as "what transpires between the beholder and whatever she is looking at... a collection of encounters...." Reading on, I see that artists classified as conjuring such encounters seem to either engage high-tech means (James Turrell, Bill Viola) or re enact scenes from history in tableaux vivant, 'living pictures' (Eve Sussman, Beach Laguna). I return to Gunn and contemplate her long-limbed frame standing over tables stacked high with clippings from books in a studio filled with miniature sailboats, rolls of silk, with sticks of cinnamon and pots of salt. Through swathes of ambitious historical and mythological narratives Gunn stitches and moulds, collages and assembles, as if history and biology are carefully grafted onto one another, thus creating a permanent bond between culture and nature. Moreover, she continuously strives not to promote the former to the detriment of the latter. Recycling contemporary detritus - plastic toys, lacquer picture frames, the leg of a harpsichord in one case - Gunn constructs imperfect yet oddly reassuring worlds of her principal interest, frontiers, both physical and psychological. Local and traditional are shared aspects of that slow movement of the culinary variety, but it concerns itself also with ethics, ecology and biodiversity. I frequently pallor at the thought of how un-ecological the art world has become, driven by evermore art fairs and biennales, dominated by ever-larger installations. Slow Art should be commended in a world where we apparently spend a mere 15 to 30 seconds on average looking at a piece of art in a gallery (contrast that to how much time people spend orchestrating poses of their virtual lives on social media). Yet Slow Art in its current guise seems to be more about indulgence than the ethics I seek to convey and moreover, the sheer reality of what creativity actually involves. I am suddenly buoyed by the thought of an artist who finds joy and purpose in old-fangled artisanship, and mitigates her negative impact on the world by unpretentiously and playfully turning its present jetsam, flotsam to good use, thereby sobering the largesse of grand historical narratives. Maybe the phrase I am searching for when considering the practice of the spry Fion is Clean Art. I jump into a time-traveling case myself seeking answers to the secrets of the young-at-heart Gunn.





Gunn was born in Cork and is every bit the tenacious, curious Corkonian with the matching energy which seems to flow from the veins of that port city in abundance. Cork has endurance in its historical DNA; more emigrants, including my ancestors, departed from her port of Cobh to faraway shores during The Potato Famine than any other Irish city. Gunn's youth spent in this idyllic part of Ireland's southwest was also strongly linked to the sea, walking alongside it, summer-time swimming, and treats of fishing with her father. The sea was primarily a place of work, indus-try and enterprise for Gunn, a place where pickled cabbages would arrive from China. Gunn's childhood, as is often the case in Irish history, was a clash of worlds: aesthetically aspirational, gal-lantly clannish, perennially entrepreneurial, against a backdrop of straitened circumstances and writhing against the weight of historical subjugation to a centralised neighbouring power, and an even more centralised celestial one. The finest students of philosophy are said to rise above their immediate circumstances, become indifferent to the turns of fate, and identify with the greater forces of history and nature. Gunn's immediate childhood circumstance meant she was largely raised by her maternal grandmother and great aunt and this upbringing took place above her fami-ly's antique shop. In this staged setting filled with curiosities from as far as the Orient, Gunn had her first encounter with world history through objects. Beyond a fixation with exotic objects as conduits to other places and times - a Qing porcelain scribe was a constant companion and China was to become an enormous influence - the key written guide of Gunn's childhood was Greek my-thology. Gunn remembers her first introduction at the age of six when she was handed an edition of Charles Lamb's Theseus and the Minotaur. Learning that Circe held the power to turn Odysseus' men into swine through her knowledge of herbs, it was one early lesson in the force of nature. Know-how with a little bit of magic in extreme situations was a source of light relief but also serious self-discovery: "Now I reflect on the Odyssey as a description of a hard journey home. What does that mean? To me it was a journey to my first perception of the self, my first wounds, but also my first experience of joy." Gunn learnt from the trials and errors of Hecabe, Agamemnon, Hector and Medea, that no matter extreme events may throw emotions into contradiction, a desire for life continues. This is reflected in the alluring palettes and nonfunctional, adorning devices Gunn elects for much of her work, no matter how challenging the subject, extending to her Displaced se-ries. Self-perception and moreover self-possession, were proven by the Stoics to be the true essence of contentment, rather than those things we desire the most - love, children and prosperity - that are governed by chance. There was possibly no greater chance and magnetism involved than the life-and-death lure of potential riches in the unmapped territories of The Age of Exploration. Sewing this to the movement of goods (and people) of our present day so that there is no tension in time is part of what enchants Gunn in her series of the same name.

Sailing on the Gorges No.4, handmade paper, collage, gold leaf, 78x57cm, 2016 (detail, opposite)

Age of Exploration: journal, mixed media, canvas, acrylic, collage, gold leaf, 40cm diameter (detail, previous page)

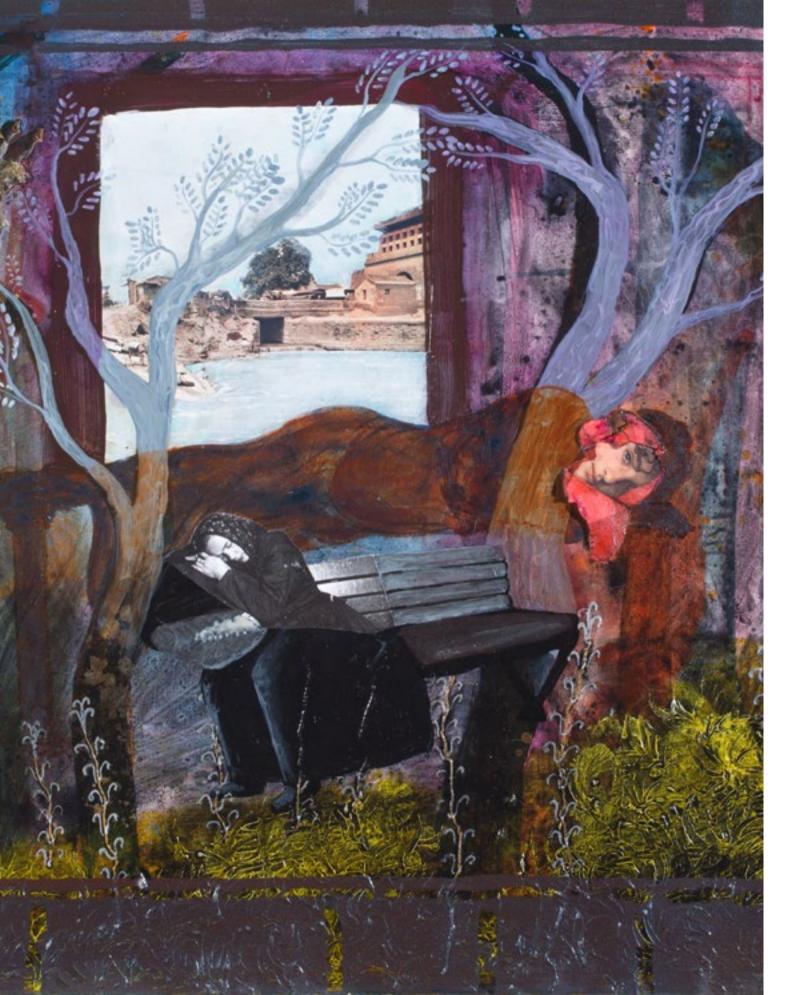


the conquerers of the Indian, Atlantic, The Cape of China as a civilisation state - the intimacy of Gunn's Goodhope and Pacific Oceans respectively, were in some ways the artists of their day:- passionate anchor and the link between subject-matter, bordering on obsessional, often seeking fortune simply to fund more projects, and equally not knowing a chartered course, epitomised in *Age of* Exploration: Viewers (page 42). The Golden Age of Exploration, from the early 15th century when the Spanish and Portuguese prevailed until the 18th century, when their French, Dutch and British counterparts assumed control, saw global empires as the rewards for perilous quests for silver and gold, silk and, most prized of all, spices. Journeys, particularly working sea journeys, were always the backdrop of Gunn's childhood; indeed she had an early understanding of migration and even a long-distance commute for work as a normal part of a life. In the early 1900's, long before longhaul business travel was the norm, Gunn's greatgrandfather, James Mintern, known affectionately as "Daddy Boats", traveled back and forth between Cork, where he was a boat builder, and New York, where he created sets for Broadway. Hearing these tales of a life characterised by parallel blueprint and blue-sky professions as told by her grandmother were catalysts to Gunn. Electing to study painting with a focus on sculpture in her final year, upon graduation from The Crawford College of Art & Design, Gunn moved to France for four years in her early 20's, including a post-graduate year at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts Supérieure de Nancy. Reflecting on Gunn's family history and upbringing, it is unsurprising to see a theatrical, mis-en-scene quality to the artist's work and her doubling as artist and curator, with now over three dozen exhibitions under her curation. Surprising is that Gunn still considers herself an immigrant in London where she has lived and worked for decades. No matter the scale of the subject Gunn

da Gama, Columbus, Dias and Magellan, takes on - exploration, immigration, global trade, work arguably lies in part in its autobiographical materiality and form; the objectivity comes with her feeling of being a perennial outsider. I will return to subject-matter, materiality and form in a moment. Perhaps more significantly for the artist, China has provided Gunn with a flipped 180 degree perspective, yet it has simultaneously been the source of great affinities and kinship.

> In her towering public work Sailing Past Life comprising twenty individual panels installed in the lobby of the tallest building in old Canton, today's Guangzhou, Gunn doesn't just tell the stories of grand ships, but fills her work with autobiography and anecdotal detail of humanity's fellow passengers (page 33). It is a tribute to the rich experience of witnessing personal alongside monumental narratives and the creation of epochal links. These are defining features too of the imposing 2019 diptych, Age of Exploration 6, pages 66-67, where Gunn paints her grandchildren, Boèce, Leóne, Phoenix and Cosimo with beguiling expressiveness and care, as they discover the genesis of life underwater, while above water the enterprise of trade through the ages bustles. When she tells stories of dissolving barriers as a result of trade, and of the Arts, Gunn is telling her own story of first-hand experience. The artist relays this through her persona of self-portraits in paint and collage and now most recently in a 3D print of the artist in the installation Fishing without My Father (pages 36-37) from her recent Fleet Series. In a large work to celebrate her annual return journeys to China for the past sixteen years in Falling on Beijing (page 25), Gunn depicts herself as an eternally youthful figure, which makes me think of Yeats' "... no country for old men" in





Sailing to Byzantium. As a Western woman who has made the same rewarding journey to China for a similar length of time, I can attest to the high levels of energy invested, not to mention the enormous positive energy the country and its people return. Gunn has been dedicated to painting China for over fifteen years in works such as Sailing on the Gorges 1 and 4, Grand View Garden and Forbidden Courtyards, all appearing in this exhibition (pages 39, 75, 70 and 100 respectively). Beneath the surface of change and a background trend of imposed global divisiveness, Gunn is more interested in the Chinese vernacular, combined with the seamless import of the exotic. The convergence of artistic influences China has embraced around the world span from Ancient Greece for the terracotta warriors to Scotland through China Trade Silver, from Italian Jesuit court painters in the Qing to Parsons-trained Beijing artists today. China has always featured heavily in the story of world trade but its pivotal role in the dissemination not only of Oriental, but of world culture, is given more balanced perspective by the artist. On a fundamental human level, Gunn also continues to be taken aback by what her small country shares with such a vast one:- the innate generosity, family values, ancient way of warriors, not to mention a shared fondness of congeniality. Gunn also does not neglect the traditional values that still fundamentally dominate contemporary Chinese life. This is underpinned by a constant, quiet striving:- from Gunn's serene depictions of the mariner, fleet admiral and diplomat, Zheng He, who sailed the Indian Ocean for the Emperor Yongle in the 14th century but never colonised for him, to today's *Dreams of City Dwellers* (page 46) portraying multi-layered stills of tradition where humble joys of home-building and community park life are framed by literal and metaphorical tradition.

Close relationships function on other levels in Gunn's work: between subjects, materiality and form. Spices, as we saw above, are not just the subject, but the fragrant tools Gunn uses to explore the lucrative spice trade and make comment on our ecological future, they also once being the mask for inedible produce and perhaps again for a world fond of plastic and tasteless GM. Elsewhere in Age of Exploration: Salt, a collage with actual salt covering and lending a sheen to the canvas, Gunn presents the multiple roles of salt as an element of the sea, a component of global trade and a trove of historical events. As the artist comments: "From ancient China, the first country to impose a tax on salt, to Gandhi and the struggle for Indian independence from British colonial rule, the substance connects global narratives. Its role in the rise and fall of empires, in the creation of liminal spaces between land and sea, as a preserver of heath and of nourishment, is undeniable, as well as a source of nutrition in our diet". These mixed material works show however not just one sanitised dimension; in Age of Exploration: Slaves to Silk (page 21), the carved-out hull of a ship spills silk cocoons stacked ominously as though eggs in a spider's nest, and an overflow of rolls of silk falling from the deck, suggest an all-consuming passion with the material. The role of form linked to subject in Gunn's work is clear in the circular motif, a compositional device to simultaneously represent the ship's porthole and a telescopic lens. The artist uses it in both the Age of Exploration and Immigrants series, in intimate works such as Remembering the Scribe (page 98) and *Memory Lens* (page 99) and in succession as seen in The Dream of Zhenq He (pages 28-29). Gunn employs it in large works alike, most notably the impressive almost three by three meter painting and collage on canvas Age of Exploration 1 (pages

58-59). On occasion Gunn's "lens of experience" is overlaid as a disc for three dimensional effect, such as in Age of Exploration: Maps (page 44); as an aperture in Age of Exploration: Silk (page 45); and created into an unusual triptych of circular 

Eye Gallery. During the exhibition, viewers were supports with sea continuously rendered between all three in Age of Exploration: Trade (page 54). In Dublin Bay (page 53), a work telling of Ireland's emigrants to England and America, the central disc is flanked by two arches, evoking a religious triptych. Gunn's next desire to create an actual journey, an immersive and interactive odyssey for her viewers has taken her on to master new digital instruments.

From geographical frontiers to technical frontiers in her work, Gunn's desire to realise a greater participatory potential for her viewer was the catalyst behind her dual exhibitions of films and installations at Tate Exchange Liverpool this summer. Gunn's multi-media Odyssey: Explorations - The Digital Journey was the culmination of 3D-painting with VR applications and from the outset the artist had a natural affinity with the digital creative tools: "...being able to incorporate movement is such a natural way for me to make art... with no prior background in gaming or its traditional aesthetics I am able to make work in my own idiom." Two films - one synchronised wall projection through a porthole, the second a simultaneous floor projection present two distinct but related reels:- the first, a passage of imagined vessels, each with its own trajectory through space and each has its own poetic narrative, Gunn taking quotations from to doing better with what we have. As creative writers, poets and thinkers significant to her. The second, floor projection, shows the same vessels viewed from an aerial perspective sailing with a very small) of improving our lives... We don't see maritime background. Gunn collaborated with Alan Stones to compose the film's soundtrack that evokes a sense of the sea, space and journey, out and adjust in order to creatively bring a little with references to seagulls, morse code and space — more pleasure and coherence into our own lives transmissions. Gunn presented *The Odyssey* and those of others."<sup>2</sup>

Explorations at Tate Exchange Liverpool with the interactive exhibition in July 2019 and the Digital Journey showcased on 23rd August of this year to mark Slavery Remembrance Day at The Open invited by the artist to engage in AR or Augmented Reality pop-ups of the individual vessels using a complimentary app - these pop ups linked to a series of markers laid out along the Albert dock connecting the two venues and to the Maritime Museum beyond. Surrounding her evocative films Gunn completed the installation with her collages and assemblages, reminding us of where it all began. It is impressive to see Gunnimmerse herself in, and reverse, preconceptions of materiality. The viewer cannot help but be left to contemplate the accessible, unthreatening nature of VR and AR, and the commercialised, ultimately destructive nature of traditional materials, such as paper and silk. While the work is futuristic, appearing ad astra, it is a gentle and slow-moving as one would expect of a journey in space, tempered by its audio-visual combination. This perceptor of time has addressed issues of tempo and again offered a more complete overview of history.

I conclude simply with a quote because it sums Gunn up perfectly:

"Creativity isn't a rare and highly dramatic activity; it's not a side-show incidental to the core concerns of our lives. It's something that – ideally - we're always involved in. It's a refusal to accept the world as it is in all its facets, it's a commitment people, we don't have to write novels, we are just persistently on the lookout for ways (sometimes the current arrangements as fixed; we're always ambitious to fine tune, to re-arrange, to adapt, cut







- 1. Professor Arden Reed in conversation with Ben Davis, published in Is 'Slow Art' the Next Big Art Movement.9 Artnet, August 25, 2017
- 2. The Book of Life, Alain de Botton, redacted from The School of Life online portal

Age of Exploration: Slaves to Silk, mixed media, 72x72x15cm, 2018 (As exhibited at Tate Exchange Liverpool) Age of Exploration: Paper, paper, wood, mixed media, 122x88cm, 2017

## 艺心长青

## 艾美丽

在夏日的尾声响起之时, 菲昂·冈恩在她位 于伦敦的工作室中打开了一个旅行箱,出乎意 料地展开了一个水下的热带世界——一个虚构 的"香料岛",一群塑料鱼环绕着它,仿佛在昭 示着什么预言。冈恩用丙烯创造的这片水域散 发出浓烈的三叶草和肉桂的香气,其蕴含的层 层的讽刺意味不言而喻。透过这个欧洲后工业 化破败的乌托邦的表象,我不禁想到当年麦格 伦的船队登陆东印度的那些岛屿时,即使是一 小撮三叶草的芬芳都会令他们终生难忘;那在 当时可是贵比黄金之物。我不由得想到,未来 有一天无塑料添加的鱼类可能也会成为跟当年 的三叶草一般珍贵的存在。盛装着《探索时代: 香料》(14-15页)的酒箱是冈恩的创作的一个 缩影。在这样一件由艺术家慢慢精雕细琢的作 品面前,观者也会不由得陷入沉思;而这位艺 术家本身正是一个敏锐的时代观察者。我尝试 在网上搜索"缓慢艺术",想知道我是否此次托 冈恩的福创造了一个新词,然而发现我已错失 先机;相关主题已经拥有了一部专著、一场艺 术运动、甚至每年四月六日已经被命名为"缓 慢艺术日"。然而其关注的焦点在于观看的体 验而非创作的手法;"缓慢艺术"被定义为"观 看者与所被观看对象之间产生的...碰撞的一个 综合体…"1继续读下去不难发现,被归类为创 造这种碰撞的艺术家们无非是利用高科技手段 (詹姆斯·特瑞尔、比尔·维奥拉)或者以"雕塑 剧"的形式再现历史场景( 伊芙·苏思曼、比琪· 拉圭那)。思绪回到冈恩这里,看着她竖立着长 幅画框的桌子上堆着高高的一叠叠杂志剪报, 工作室中随处可见的微型船模、一卷卷丝绸、 甚至还有一罐盐,我陷入了沉思。冈恩通过编 织、雕刻、拼贴和集合艺术的处理,对宏大的历 史和神话进行抽丝剥茧,仿佛历史和生命被小 心翼翼地嫁接到对方身上;从而在人文和自然 之间架起了一座永不断裂的桥梁,并且她一直 以来坚持不以牺牲后者为代价来实现对前者的 追求。她将当代社会的废弃物回收起来——塑 料玩具、漆面相框和大键琴琴腿都出现在了一





个箱子中,从而冈恩建造了一个不完美但却意 外带给人安全感的世界,同时也是她最感兴趣 的"边缘地界"——无论从地缘还是心理的角度 而言。同样,本地化和传统这两个要素也存在 于另一种缓慢的进程——饮食的多样化当中, 而这个问题本身关乎伦理道德、生态和生物多 样性。而当面对当代艺术界非良性的生态现状 时,我时常感到无力;如今艺博会、双年展层出 不穷,不设上限的巨型装置大行其道。身处这 个人们在画廊中驻足欣赏一件艺术最多不过 半分钟的世界中(这与他们花费在精心打造自 己在社交媒体上的形象的时间形成了鲜明的 对比),"缓慢艺术"理应得到推崇。然而"缓慢 艺术"目前的姿态更多是在对一种吸引力的描 述,而非我所愿的关于伦理道德的讨论,或是 更进一步的关于创造力的内涵的纯粹性思考。 但一想到有一位艺术家能在一种传统的艺术创 作方式中收获快乐和意义,将漂流物、废弃物 加以利用以尽量减少对这个世界的负面影响, 朴实含蓄且乐在其中;我也顿时受到了鼓舞。 也许我一直在寻找的能代表菲昂·冈恩充满能 量的艺术的词汇实则是"洁净艺术"。随后我仿 佛进入了一个时间旅行的箱子, 开始在其中探 寻冈恩保持童心的秘密。

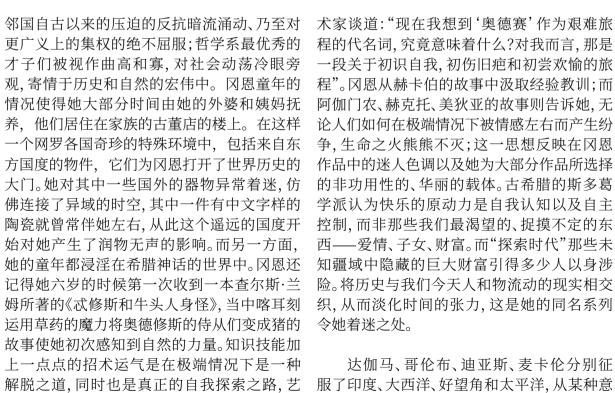
冈恩出生于科克市,拥有典型的科克人的顽强和求知欲,散发着这个港口城市喷涌不息的巨大能量。科克人的耐受力是存在于他们的历史基因中的,在爱尔兰大饥荒时期从这里的科芙港航行到远方的移民多过其它任何一个爱尔兰城市,其中也包括我的先辈们。冈恩成长于爱尔兰西南部这片田园美景中,与海洋亲密无间;她时常沿着海岸散步,享受在夏日的海中游泳,和她父亲一起出海钓鱼。海洋于她而言是工作、产业和事业的所在,也是从中国运来的泡菜上岸的地方。冈恩与同时代的爱尔兰人有着类似的经历,她的童年所见是一场世界观的崩坏:对美之向往、傲慢的排他主义、坚韧的创业精神、对这个僵化的环境的挑战、对强大











程的代名词, 究竟意味着什么?对我而言, 那是 一段关于初识自我, 初伤旧疤和初尝欢愉的旅 程"。冈恩从赫卡伯的故事中汲取经验教训;而 阿伽门农、赫克托、美狄亚的故事则告诉她,无 论人们如何在极端情况下被情感左右而产生纷 争,生命之火熊熊不灭;这一思想反映在冈恩 作品中的迷人色调以及她为大部分作品所选择 的非功用性的、华丽的载体。古希腊的斯多葛 学派认为快乐的原动力是自我认知以及自主 控制,而非那些我们最渴望的、捉摸不定的东 西——爱情、子女、财富。而"探索时代"那些未 知疆域中隐藏的巨大财富引得多少人以身涉 险。将历史与我们今天人和物流动的现实相交 织,从而淡化时间的张力,这是她的同名系列 令她着迷之处。

达伽马、哥伦布、迪亚斯、麦卡伦分别征







义上而言他们是自己所处时代的艺术家:对事 物的渴求极近痴迷,大部分时候寻求财富是为 更多的项目筹资,并且同样地师出无名;这都 浓缩在她的作品《探索时代:观者》(42页)中。 探索的黄金时代横跨十五世纪前叶直到十八 恩的家族史和成长史,她的作品中戏剧化、场 世纪,最初是西班牙和葡萄牙的天下;到了十 八世纪来自法国、荷兰和不列颠的掘金者们陆 续登上历史舞台,他们利用危险的手段掠取金 银以及最珍贵的香料;以胜利者之姿,他们在 全球扩张了自己帝国的版图。旅途,尤其是海 上差旅铺垫了冈恩童年的底色,她很早就理解 了迁徙的概念,更对远途出差习以为常。早在 1900年代初,长途差旅还远远不像现在一般稀 松平常, 冈恩的曾祖父詹姆斯·敏特恩, 被人们 亲切地称为"船爸",就曾频繁往来于科克港和 纽约;他在科克建造船坞,在纽约百老汇搭建 舞台。她的祖母口中的这些精彩的人生故事编 织出蓝图和这些天马行空的工作给予了冈恩 人生的灵感和启迪。在克劳福德艺术与设计学、托的载体。

院的最后一年,她从绘画转向了雕塑专业。在 毕业之际,她做出了她二十岁的人生的重要决 定,搬到了法国居住了四年,期间她在南希高 等美术学院度过了一个研究生的学年。回溯冈 景式的特质和她艺术家、策展人的双重身份就 显得顺理成章了(至今她已经为超过三十场展 览担任策展人)。令人意想不到的是虽然已经 在伦敦工作生活了数十年, 冈恩仍将自己视作 这个都市中的移民。无论冈恩探讨的主题多么 宏大——探索时代、移民、全球贸易、文明古国 中国,她的作品都或多或少地刻着她个人经历 的印记, 主题、材料和形式的内在联系都带给 人她独有的亲密感;而她长期作为一个"局外 人",对这一切又保持着旁观者的清醒。我将在 之后来讨论其主题、材料和形式。也许对于艺 术家个人而言更重要的是,中国让她能够从不 同的视角看待事物,同时也成为了她情感的寄

The Dream of Zheng He, paper, acrylic, collage, 190x57cm, 2017



她的尺幅巨大的公共艺术品《航海人生》 由二十联组成, 陈列在广州最高的建筑的大堂 中。在这件作品中她不单单是描绘了一艘艘巨 轮,更加入了乘客们的经历、充满人性的轶事, 使得这件作品更加丰满(33页);从而将划时代 的个人经历汇入历史的洪流,以获得丰富体 验。2019年的新作《探索时代之六》(66-67页) 亦传递了这一思想, 冈恩以她的外孙们为原 型——博耶斯、雷欧昂、菲尼克斯和卡斯摩,当 他们发现水下生命的起源时脸上流露出欣喜 和专注的神情,然而水面上现实中贸易船只一 如往昔般往来如织。当冈恩谈到贸易和艺术的 传播对于淡化边界的作用时,她其实讲的正是 她自身的经历;艺术家通过绘画、拼贴的自画 像和最新的"船队"系列中的3D打印装置《独自 垂钓》(36-37页)中的艺术形象传递了这一信 息。《纵身北京》(25页)承载了她过去十六年每 年往返于中国的旅程,面画中的冈恩如一个不 老的少女,让我联想到叶慈在《驶向拜占庭》中 的名句"……老无所归"。我本人同样作为一位 西方国家的女性在过去的十多年间在中国的 旅程中收获颇丰,我的亲身经历证明这需要投 入的高度精力,但更无须多言这个国家和人民 所反馈的巨大的正能量。逾十五年来, 冈恩一 直专注于刻画中国,例如此次展览中展出的《 驶向山峡之一》、《驶向山峡之四》、《大观园》、《 紫禁庭院》(分别于39,75,70,100页)。在现今 时局突变、全球性的国际分歧日益高涨的背景 下, 冈恩更钟情于中国本土而不失异域风情的 事物。中国的艺术影响力远播世界:沿着中国 外销银器之路从古希腊的陶俑远至苏格兰,从 清代宫廷中的意大利耶稣会士皇画师到如今 从帕森斯学院毕业归国的北京艺术家们。中国 一直以来在国际贸易的版图中有着举足轻重的 地位,其无可比拟的作用不仅在于传播东方文 化, 更在于促进世界文化的共融; 艺术家则对 此能够呈现出一个更全面平衡的角度。从人类

的基本面上来说, 冈恩的祖国爱尔兰这个小岛与这个庞大的东方国度的共通性无时无刻不令她感概: 慷慨的天性、浓厚的家庭观念、古代士兵传统, 以及同样的友善近人。冈恩并没有忽视植根于当代中国社会生活中的传统价值观, 她一直在默默地进行着这方面的创作: 她笔下的郑和平和沉静, 回溯了这位十四世纪的航海家、船队长官、外交官奉永乐大帝之命远渡印度洋, 但不以大国之姿行殖民之实的历史; 描绘当代图景的《市民梦》(46页)通过多层照片拼贴, 将住宅修建、社区公园生活这些琐碎日常中的点滴欢乐以一种忠实的、略带隐喻意味的方式装裱呈现出来。

主题、材料和形式三者的紧密联系从另一 个维度反映在冈恩的作品中。上述的香料不仅 关乎主题也是实实在在的芳香剂, 冈恩通过这 样的媒介来回顾曾经令人垂涎欲滴的香料贸 易,对我们的生态未来做出预判;香料曾经作 用包裹着不宜食用之物的糖衣,也许在这个充 斥着塑料和索然无味的转基因食品的世界中 它会再次扮演起这样的角色。另外她在《探索 时代:盐》的拼贴上撒上了真的盐,为画面上增 添了一层闪烁着的光彩。冈恩认为盐不仅是海 洋的一个基本元素,还是海洋全球贸易的源动 力和历史的见证者。正如艺术家说道:"从古代 中国作为第一个征收盐税的国家、到甘地、再 到印度对英国殖民统治的抗争, 盐串联起了各 个地区的历史。见证王朝的兴衰、连接海洋和 陆地、维持生命健康,盐的重要性不言而喻。" 冈恩创作的综合材料作品并不是单维度的:在 《探索时代: 奴与丝》(21页)中, 一个被凿空的 船体塞满了蚕蛹, 犹如蜘蛛网上的卵令人惴惴 不安, 隐喻了人们对这种材料的执念, 甲板上 垂下的丝绸卷也正强调了这一点。在冈恩的作 品中的圆形构图体现了形式对主题的表达作 用;这个形式模拟了船上的舷窗和望远镜的视

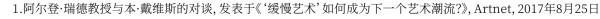
角,艺术家在"移民"和"探索时代"两个系列中 海洋、空间和旅程的气氛,加入了海鸥、摩斯电 都有采用,另外也可以在小型作品《回想文字》 (98页)、《回忆入镜》(99页)中看到,并且在《 在泰特利物浦交流中心举办了一个互动展,其 郑和梦》(28-29页)中以排列的形式出现;在大 型作品中,特别是在三米的画作《探索时代之 一》(58-59页)中将其发挥到了极致。有时冈恩 在一个圆盘之上添加层次以创造立体的视觉效 果,如《探索时代:地图》(44页);或以一个镜头 的形式出现,如《探索时代:丝》(45页);又或者 制作成少见的圆形画幅的三联幅,海洋的场景 贯穿整体画面,如《探索时代:贸易》(54页)。《 都柏林湾》(53页)这件作品讲述了爱尔兰的移 民到英格兰和美国的故事,中心呈圆形两侧呈 拱门状的构图继承了宗教三联画的传统。冈恩 接下来计划为观者打造一段浸入、互动式的奥 德赛般的旅程体验,并运用到了她近期掌握的 数码工具。

冈恩通过探索地缘的边界和技术的前沿. 她希望为她的观众创造一种参与度更高的体 验,激发了她创作了今夏在泰特利物浦交流中 心展出影像和装置作品。冈恩的多媒体作品《 奥德赛:探索—数字旅程》集立体绘画、虚拟现 实为一体,并且自始至终艺术家对数码的创作 手段都情有独钟:"......我的作品中融合动态 的形式是自然而然的......我之前在数码游戏 概括: 方面毫无经验,对该领域的审美传统也缺乏先 验,但这让我能够完全用我自己的语言来进行 表达。"其中一件影像作品让观众可以通过一 个舷窗观看到在墙上的同步投影;另一件作品 则是投影到了地板上;展现了两条各异但相关 的轨迹:前者展示了一艘艘想象中的船,每一 艘都有自己的航线、蕴涵了独特的诗意,其中 冈恩摘录了对她影响颇深的作家、诗人和思想 家的名句付诸在作品中;后者则展现了一个全 景, 所有的船只在海洋中前行。冈恩与阿兰·斯 通斯合作为这部影像作品创作了原声,烘托了谐。"2

码和空间传输的听觉意象。冈恩于2019年7月 间展出了《奥德赛·探索》;紧接着在8月23日奴 隶纪念日的当天在开眼画廊(The Open Eve Gallery)展出了《数字旅程》。在展览期间,她 邀请观众通过一个免费的手机应用来体验通过 增强现实技术呈现的船只;阿尔伯特码头上的 标记连接着这两个场馆,通向海事博物馆,循 着这些标记便可在虚拟现实中沿途找到这些 船只。这些影像作品能够引起人们的强烈的共 鸣,并且她将拼贴、集合艺术作品融合入这个 装置,展示了完整的创作脉络。看着冈恩自己 享受着这种浸入体验我深受感动, 扭转了对这 种材料性的臆断。这让观众不禁思考虚拟现实 和增强现实带给人的舒适度和安全感,相较于 传统材料诸如纸、丝绸等被商业化、最终走向 被毁灭的命运。这件作品看起来是具有未来感 的,如同在仰望星空,这种轻柔、缓慢的场景让 人们觉得置身于太空中漫游,配合着音乐的节 奏,视觉和听觉的效果互相加成。她对时代的 洞察不仅体现在对速度和节奏的把控,还有对 历史全貌的认知。

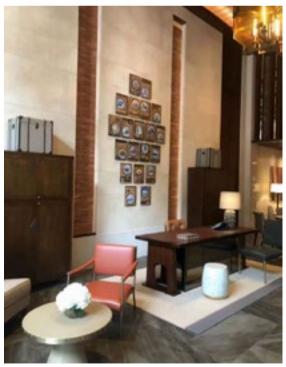
我将引用这段话作为对她的创作的最佳

"创造并不是一项稀世的、戏剧性的活 动;也不是一场围绕着我们的生命核心命题所 穿插附带的表演;世人皆创作者(在理想状态 下)。那是对世界现状的全面性的不妥协、不 放弃;也是建立在我们已有所得之上的对更高 层次的追求。有创造力之人,不必人人争当小 说家,只是我们精益求精之心不灭......我们拒 绝接受一成不变的现实;我们不懈地尝试去雕 琢、去重置、去适应、去割裂、去调整只为在我 们和他人的生命中增添些许更多的快乐与和

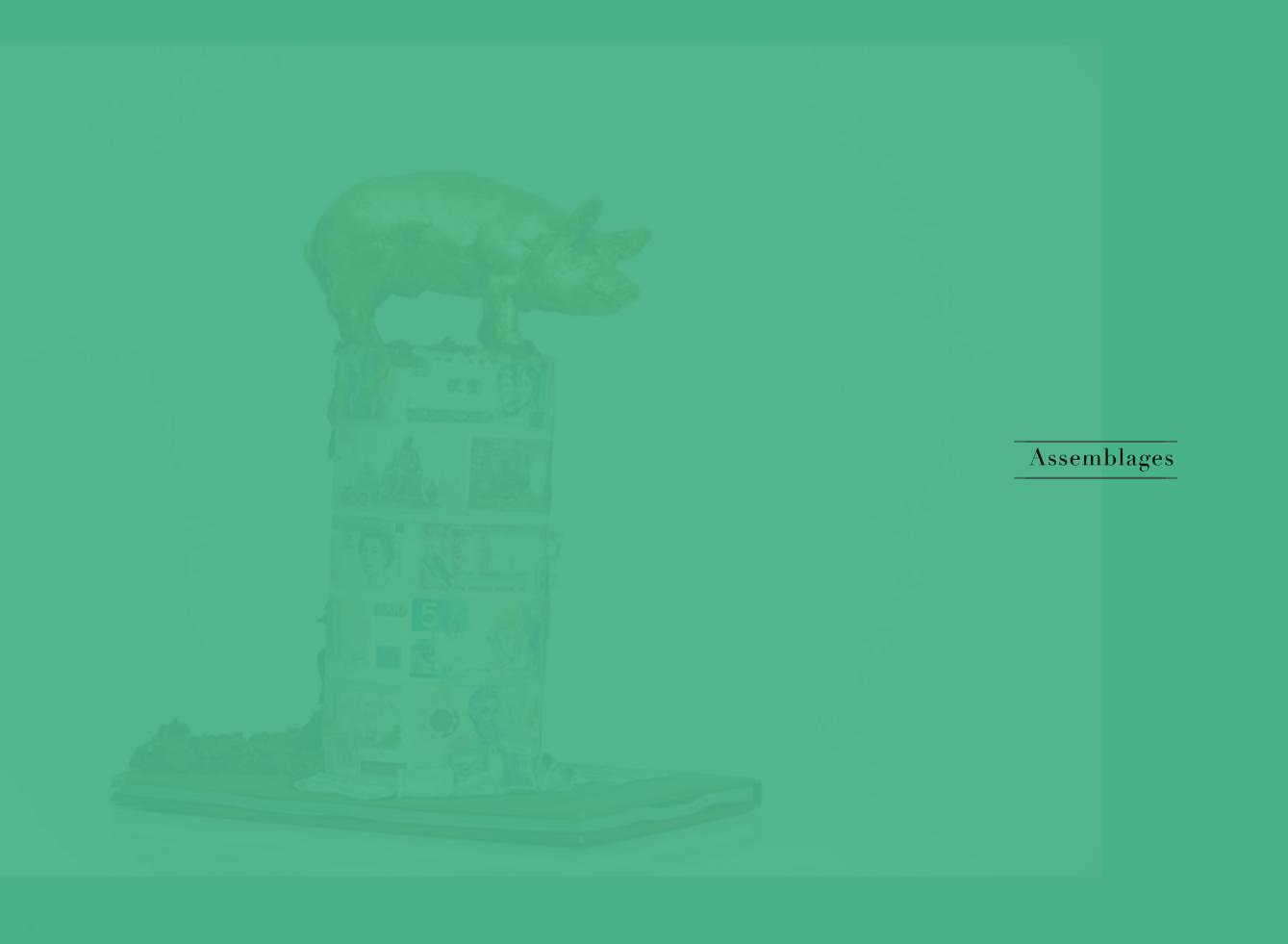


2. 《生命之书》, 阿兰·德波顿, 整理网络来源"生命课堂"





Timeline Tourist, handmade paper, collage, acrylic, 6ox 9ocm (top) Sailing Past Life, oil on handmade paper with collage, 30x50cm each, Rosewood Residences Lobby, Guangzhou





Fleet Series - Fishing without My Father, mixed media, 73x36x27cm, 2018 (As exhibited at Tate Exchange Liverpool)













Age of Exploration: Viewers, mixed media, 52x62x11cm, 2019







Making Waves, mixed media, 50x20x16cm, 2011 (top)
Age of Exploration: Silk, mixed media, 85x70cm, 2017





The Dreams of City Dwellers, mixed media, 25x30x5cm, 2012 (top)

Watching the City, mixed media, 25x35x8cm, 2009

Paris Toujours, mixed media, 10x23x5cm, 2009 (opposite)





Hidden City, mixed media, 40x90cm, 1993

Large Paintings & Collages



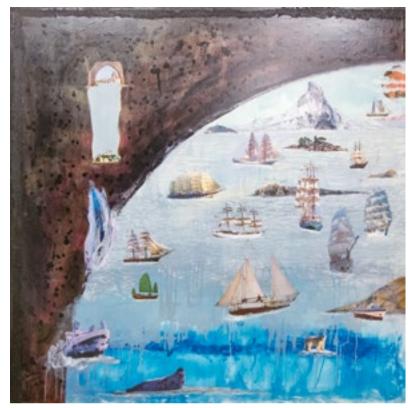
Dublin Bay, canvas, acrylic, collage, 180x100cm, 2018 (As exhibited at Tate Exchange Liverpool)





























Age of Exploration No.6, canvas, Acrylic, collage, 202x240cm, 2019

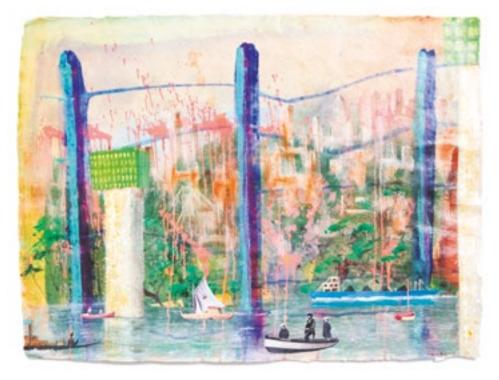




Small Paintings & Collages





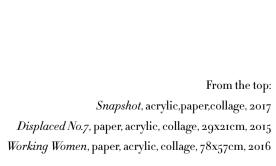


Dreamers, handmade paper, acrylic, collage, 78x57cm, 2017 (top)
Sailing on the Gorges No.4, handmade paper, collage, 78x57cm, 2016











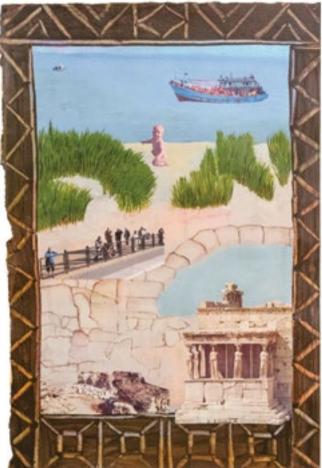


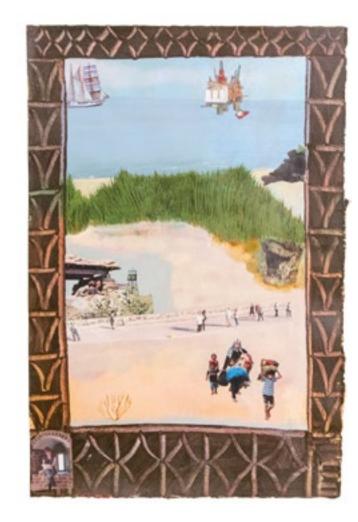






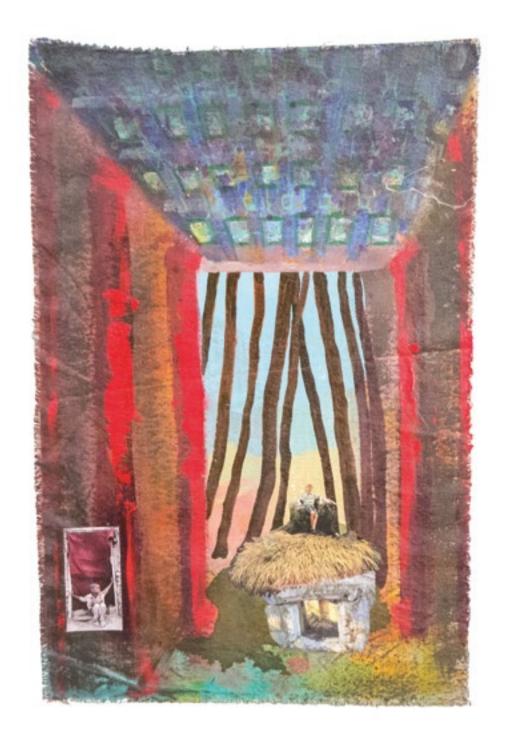








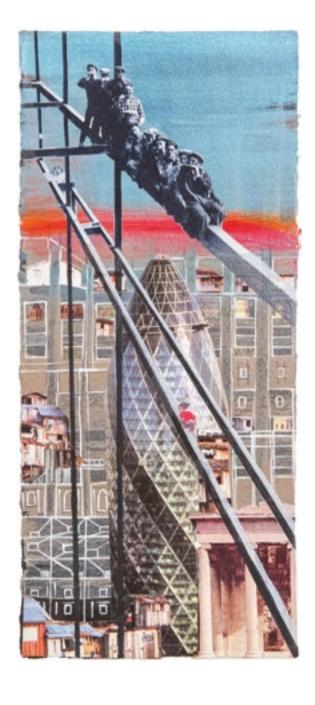






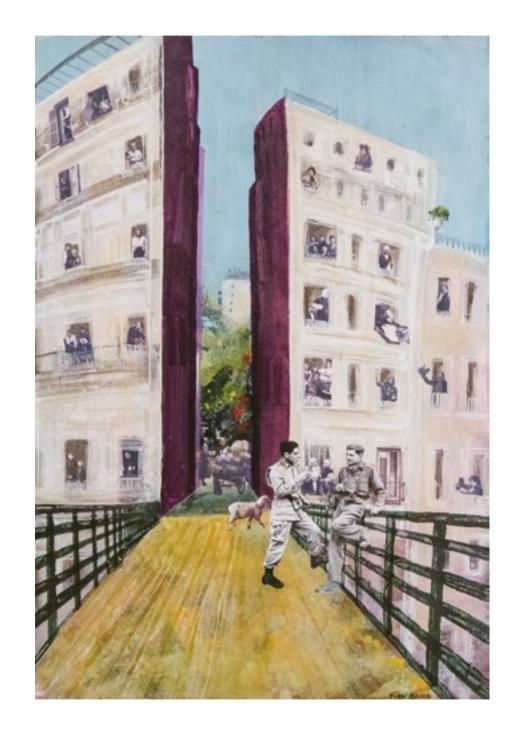


















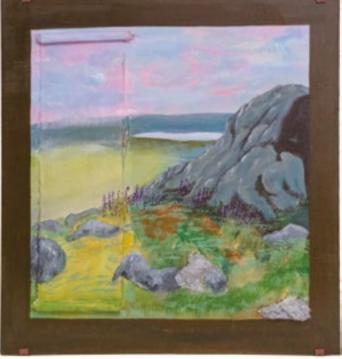








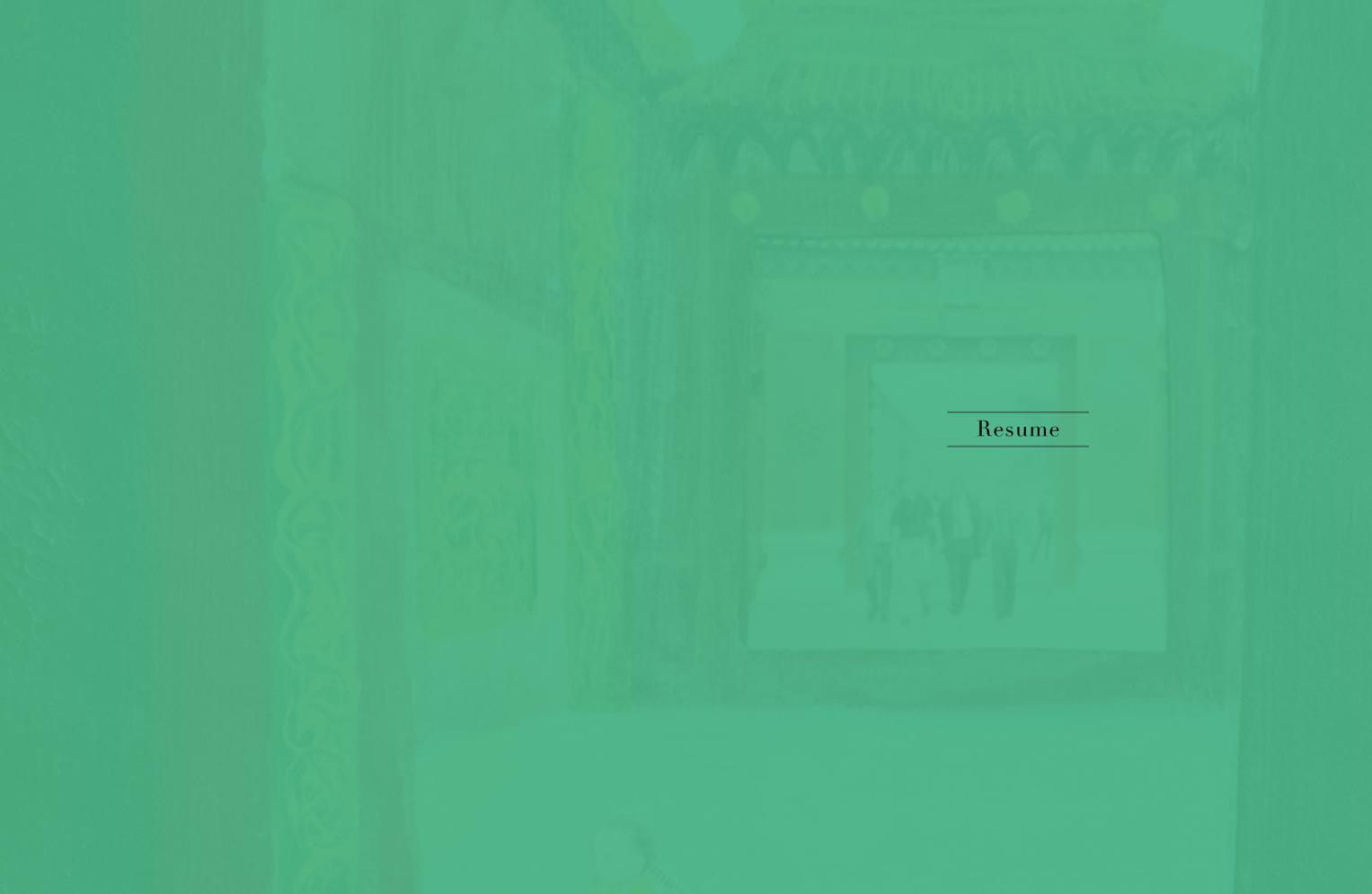












Fion Gunn graduated from Crawford College of English/Chinese) writing on the theme of the Art & Design, Ireland in and spent a post-graduate year at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts Supérieure de Nancy, France where she lived for four years, she now lives and works in London. She is the first Irish artist to have a public sculpture commission in China for the city of Zhangjiakou in 2012 and is represented by Peking Art Associates in Beijing. She is an associate at Tate Exchange Liverpool.

Gunn's diverse practice comprises 2D, 3D/ sculpture, installation, curatorial and community projects which can be viewed at http://www. fiongunn.org/ where her full CV is also available. Her work features in private & corporate and state collections in UK, France, Poland, Ireland, USA & China.

Gunn has won multiple awards for her work from Arts Council England, Arts Council Ireland, Culture Ireland, the City Councils of London, Dublin, Cork & Belfast, Irish Literature Exchange, Walcot Foundation. She founded Streatham Women's Sewing Group CIC and chaired the group 2009-15, working collaboratively with the group as lead artist. The Group comprised women from the Somali & Horn of Africa Community in Streatham as well as Asian, North African, Refugee and low income communities and its purpose was to reskill, promote inclusion and well-being through arts & crafts.

Artist's Residencies : RedGate Gallery Residency Programme Beijing 2005, Baltic Gallery of Contemporary Art Poland 2014. She was granted access to the archives of the Museum Historyczyne Miasta Gdansk for an ongoing series of work 'Displaced' informed by the post WW2 images of Gdansk.

Gunn was guest editor for the 2015 Spring Edition of ArtZip Contemporary Art Magazine (bilingual

artist as curator. She works with a wide network of international artists and has led panel discussions with high profile practitioners such as Shirin Neshat at the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center, Oct 2015.

Gunn curated major exhibitions of Irish & Chinese contemporary art in an annual project called IRISH WAVE from 2009 to 2016.

#### Recent Selected Exhibitions

#### 2019

'Odyssey: Explorations', The Digital Journey showcased at Tate Liverpool and Open Eye Gallery Liverpool, Liverpool, United Kingdom 'Odyssey: Explorations', Tate Exchange Liverpool, Liverpool, United Kingdom 'Odyssey: The Return', Dong Yue Art Museum, Beijing, China

#### 2018

'Odyssey: Expedition', ASC Studios Space, London, United Kingdom For Artnight 2018: 'Odyssey-The Journey Home', group show, The Workshop, London, United Kingdom (feature artist and curator) 'On Paper Supreme', Shenyang & Qingdao, China 'Excavations', group show, Enjoy Museum, 798, Beijing, China(featured artist and curator) 'Age of Exploration', solo show, He Gallery, Beijing,

#### 2017

'On Paper Supreme', Center for Contemporary Art, Guangzhou; Ordos Center for Art & Culture, Ordos, Inner Mongolia, China 'Views from Distant Shores' 3 person show, South London Refugee Centre, London, United Kingdom (featured artist and curator)

#### 2016

'Female Artists Nominations', group exhibition, Da Yun Tang Art Museum, Beijing, China 'The Painted Thread', Yue Pavilion, trio show, Beijing, China 'Intimate Transgressions', Hangzhou Library, Hangzhou, China; Chiang Kai Shek Museum, Taipei, Taiwan (featured artist and lead curator) 'Birth of a Nation', Ning Gallery 798, Beijing, China (featured artist and lead curator) 'Identity', EARC Space 798, Beijing, China (featured artist and lead curator) 'Struggle', Sanwei Art Center, Shanghai, China (featured artist and lead curator)

### Awards

2018 Arts Council England, Culture Ireland Asia Pacific Fund, Dublin City Council 2016 Culture Ireland, Northern Ireland Bureau 2015 Culture Ireland , Dublin City Council 2014 Arts Council England, Culture Ireland 2013 Culture Ireland, Dublin City Council, Belfast City Council, Cork City Council, Lambeth Council, Active Streatham 2012 Culture Ireland, Crafts Council of Ireland 2011 Culture Ireland, Lambeth Council, Walcott Foundation 2010 Culture Ireland, Lambeth Council 2009 Arts Council England, Culture Ireland, Arts Council of Ireland, Irish Literature Exchange 2006 Culture Ireland 2005 Culture Ireland

### Public Collections

Ministry of Justice, Ireland Atkins Chambers, London, United Kingdom CBX Building Management Ltd, London, United Kingdom Treasury Holdings China Fairmay Solicitors MBI inc, London, United Kingdom Chinese Embassy, London, United Kingdom & Dublin, Ireland Embassy of Ireland, Beijing, China Tsinghua Fine Arts Museum, Beijing, China Baltic Gallery of Contemporary Art, Ustka, Poland Dong Yue Art Museum, Beijing, China Peking Fine Arts Associates, Beijing, China Art W Foundation, New York, NY, United States Rosewood Residences Guangzhou, China

### Residencies

2019 Tate Exchange Liverpool Baltic Gallery of Contemporary Art, Ustka, Poland Artists Residency with the RedGate Programme Beijing

### 菲昂·冈恩

# 精选近期展览

## 获奖经历

# 公共收藏

菲昂·冈恩毕业于爱尔兰的克劳福德艺术与设计学院,在研究生阶段在法国南希高等艺术学院深造一年。之后她也在当地生活了四年。目前她生活、工作于伦敦。2012年她成为第一位为张家口市定制雕塑作品的爱尔兰艺术家。她由位于北京的北京艺术咨询有限公司(Peking Art Associates)代理。同时她是泰特利物浦美术馆交流中心的成员。冈恩多元化的创作包含平面、立体雕塑、装置、策展和社区项目(欲了解详情:http://www.fiongunn.org/;并获取她的完整简历)。她的作品出现在英国、法国、爱尔兰、美国和中国多地的私人、企业以及公共收藏中。

冈恩的作品多次受到英格兰艺术委员会、爱尔兰艺术委员会、文化爱尔兰、伦敦市立委员会、都柏林市立委员会、科克市立委员会、贝尔法斯特市立委员会的嘉奖。她成立了斯特里汉姆女性纺织团体,并在2009-2015年任董事并兼任团体首席艺术家。该团体由居住在斯特里汉姆的索马里和非洲之角的社区的女性、以及亚裔、北非裔、难民和其他低收入群体组成;致力于通过艺术和手工的形式帮助这些群体掌握技能,融入社会,促进他们自身的健康发展。

曾参与艺术家驻留地:北京红门画廊驻留地(2005),波兰波罗的海艺术馆(2014),获准进入格但斯克城市历史博物馆的档案库,进行一个长期的创作项目"错位"展现二战之后格但斯克的图景。

冈恩受邀成为中英双语的《ArtZip当代艺术杂志》2015年春季刊的客座编辑,撰写关于艺术家作为策展人的主题。她与来自世界各地的艺术家合作;在2015年10月在伊丽莎白·A·赛克勒女权艺术中心主持了由多位顶尖艺术工作者参与的座谈会,其中包括诗琳·娜夏特(Shirin Neshat)。

从2009年自2016年, 冈恩策划了每年一度的中国-爱尔兰当代 艺术联展计划"爱尔兰浪潮"。

### 2019年

'奥德赛:探索",一段数字旅行的体验,泰特利物浦美术馆;开 眼画廊,利物浦,英国

"奥德赛:探索",泰特利物浦美术馆交流中心,利物浦,英国"奥德赛:回归",东岳美术馆,北京,中国

### 2018年

"奧德赛:探险", ASC工作室空间, 伦敦, 英国 "2018艺术之夜"展出"奥德赛: 回乡之旅"群展, 工作室, 伦敦, 英国(参展艺术家、策展人)

"纸上·至上",沈阳、青岛,中国 "挖掘",悦·美术馆,798艺术区,北京,中国 "探索时代"个展,合画廊,北京,中国

### 2017年

"纸上·至上",广州当代艺术中心;鄂尔多斯艺术文化中国, 鄂尔多斯,内蒙古自治区,中国

"隔岸观景"三人联展,南伦敦难民中心,伦敦,中国(参展艺术家、策展人)

### 2016年

"女性艺术家提名展"群展,大韵堂美术馆,北京,中国

"绘·记忆"三人联展, 悦馆, 北京, 中国

"秘密的伤痕", 杭州图书馆, 杭州, 中国; 中正纪念堂, 台北, 台湾(参展艺术家、策展人)

"一个国家的诞生",宁画廊,798艺术区,北京,中国(参展艺术家、策展人)

"身份", EARC空间, 798艺术区, 北京, 中国(参展艺术家、策展人)

"挣扎",三维艺术中心,上海,中国(参展艺术家、策展人)

2018年 英格兰艺术委员会 文化爱尔兰 亚太基金 都柏林市立委员会

2016年 文化爱尔兰 北爱尔兰署

2015年 文化爱尔兰 都柏林市立委员会

2014年 英格兰艺术委员会 文化爱尔兰

2013年 文化爱尔兰 都柏林市立委员会 贝尔法斯特市立委员会 科克市立委员会 兰贝斯区委员会 "斯特里汉姆活力"

2012年 文化爱尔兰 兰贝斯区委员会 渥克特基金会

2011年 文化爱尔兰 兰贝斯区委员会

2009年 文化爱尔兰2009 英格兰艺术委员会 爱尔兰艺术委员会 爱尔兰文学交流

2006年 文化爱尔兰

2005年 文化爱尔兰 司法部,爱尔兰 Atkins法律办事处,伦敦,英国 CBX建造管理有限公司,伦敦,英国 财政控股,中国 Fairmay律师事务所 MBI inc,伦敦,英国 中国驻英国大使馆、中国驻爱尔兰大使馆 爱尔兰驻华大使馆 清华大学美术馆,北京,中国 波罗的海当代艺术馆,伍斯特卡,波兰 东岳美术馆,北京,中国 北京艺术咨询有限公司,北京,中国 艺术W基金会,纽约,美国 广州瑰丽府邸,中国

# 艺术驻留地

2019年 泰特利物浦美术馆交流中心

2014年 波罗的海当代艺术馆, 伍斯特卡, 波兰

2005年 红门画廊,北京

# This book is published by Peking Art Associates



For the exhibition Young Gunn

Curated by E.S. Pettit

Exhibition Venue Candid Arts Trust

*Editor* Jérémie Thircuir

> Essay E.S. Pettit

Translation
Michelle Feng



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I would like to thank the following people who have helped make this exhibition happen. I am so grateful to them:

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Creative support: my husband and artist friends

Host venue: Candid Arts Trust

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艺心长青:冈恩个展 菲昂·冈恩



探索时代

策展人:艾美丽