

Interview Notes - Su Xue-Pin - 9/5/09:  
Notes by Doug Blandy; Interview by Kristin Congdon

Sketched when he was young

Drew in primary school, identified as a talented student

Was in Army for two years, painted while in the army

Studies Art after army

Passion - point of view about society and culture and natural environment

Work a statement about China or Humankind? Work comments on contemporary China

Rapid development in China - people uncomfortable; reality disturbed; people are sick; materialistic

People are bloated and exploded

About China, but also about people of world

Toasting in images? People are oblivious. Life is good, but all around is sick. Self is sick.

Red in paintings represents Chinese culture

Work his highly politically charged. Does he hope people will change politically as a result of experiencing work? Art as an artistic function and a social function.

Has role of artist changed in China? Previously artists were not independent. Now artists are more independent and can choose the course of their work.

Every artist responds in own way to changing society

Political environment is currently open; permits artists to be open.

Shanghai Art Museum – openness uneven? Political art in gov. museum? Su doesn't feel there are restrictions; however his work tends to be shown in galleries with more flexibility.

Do you hope humankind will wake up? Art is to wake up; will continue to address social issues in work.

Folk traditions? Uses western painting styles. Also influenced by global traditions. Use of light in work is from west. Influenced by Chinese landscape painting. Chinese ink painting look. Collaboration and combination of east and west.

Painting about raising questions not about attacking government

Scale very important – largest 5m x 16 m

Printmaking? Litho. Allows people to place his work in homes. Painting is primarily for galleries. Prints economically important to him.

Learn about work and self – what to emphasize. Knowledge, format, skills

How is work created?

Learning the creative process?

The heart in the work?

Social responsibility of artist

University teaching?

Encourage students to pay attention to the environment and put in artwork

Students have to do written reports so that he can understand their thinking.

The time and energy required to teach challenges him.

Man on Bike (2006) - dangers in rapid development, falling of bike represents self destruction, improve consciousness

Landscapes (2007) - emptiness in people's heart, scariness and fear. Chinese landscapes deal with harmony

Absence of women? Ladies so beautiful – difficult to use as ugliness and sickness of society

Three Persons Lying on Paper (2001) - lower class people in China. Do not enjoy benefits. Newspaper refers to good of society that they are not benefitting from. Realistic. Don't forget these people.

Last Supper (200?) - Jesus of common people. Inclusion of self portrait in another version. 3 versions of this painting.