

## 续梦远东——方少华对《土耳其浴室》的扩建

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18世纪晚期，欧洲兴起对东方（中东）风土人情的浓厚兴趣。异域情调、美丽风景、罗曼蒂克、冒险经历等，尤其让艺术家、作家们心驰神往。新古典主义画家安格尔，也被这“东方热”感染。虽然从未去过中东，但他受英国驻奥斯曼土耳其帝国公使夫人的《东方来信》启发，于1852-1859年间创作了《土耳其浴室》。这幅充满着20来位美丽女性的绘画完成后，画家在签名旁署以“82岁”。

21世纪早期，中国在融入经济全球化后所出现的多方面繁盛，举世瞩目。生于1962年的方少华，在他49岁时，在中国的南方都市广州，耗时1年，在6米长、1.5米高的画布上接续了安格尔的东方春梦——他称之为“扩建安格尔的《土耳其浴室》”。

和安格尔身居法国去想象土耳其（中东）不同，方少华画的是他生活其中的中国（远东）本土。对这片土地的历史风俗、世道人心，方少华有身在局中者们共有的真切感。尤其，从上世纪60年代直至如今，时代风潮的巨变和不变，历历在目，冷暖自知。把往昔和今日、中国和西方进行对比，对他来说是情不自禁、时而发生的。天赋的艺术才华和多年的勤画不辍，驱动着他把心思意念非常具体、生动地转化到画面上来。

安格尔的《土耳其浴室》被“扩建”后，延展出富有中国传统特色的园林，和当代范式的海滩。在荷花、牡丹、杨柳、棕榈、椰树、飞瀑、流泉、亭台、奇石等的映衬下，30多位中西美女的胴体，曼妙多姿、横陈辗转、活色生香，伴以丹顶鹤、大熊猫、金钱豹等。方少华的空间格局、具象功底、色彩品味、笔触气质，以及流露在这些形形色色中的态度、情绪，既轻松自然衔接着一百多年前的安格尔，又有他自己的一番风度。

一目了然并反复观看，方少华对《土耳其浴室》的“扩建”，是一个男性画家正视情欲、罔顾众人的华丽春梦，也是一个中国知识分子百感交集、一言难尽的喻世奇观。它既是私密的，也是公开的——对情欲的认可、张扬乃至泛滥，是这个繁盛时代大肆公开的私密。它亦幻亦真，时幻时真——梦是虚幻的，但有时比醒时所见更接近实相。扩建的《土耳其浴室》，可能是一些人眼里不切实际的幻象，但也可能是另一些人竭力实现的蓝图，乃至早已亲历其中的实境。或者，曾经亲身经历，如今渐成昨日旧梦、海市蜃楼……

## **Continuing the Dream in the Far East: Fang Shaohua's Expansion of The Turkish Bath**

**Du Xiyun**

In the late 18th century Europe, there was a surge of keen interest in the customs of the East (the Middle East). In particular, the exotic cultures, picturesque landscapes, romanticism, and adventures fascinated artists and writers. Neoclassical painter Ingres was infected with this Oriental fashion as well. Although he had never visited the Middle East, inspired by Letters from the Orient by the wife of British Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, he painted The Turkish Bath during the years 1852-1859. Having complete this painting crowded by over 20 attractive females, he added "at age 82" beside his signature.

In the early 21st century, China flourished in all aspects after integrating into economic globalization, which attracted worldwide attention. Fang Shaohua, who was born in 1962, continued Ingres' Orientalist erotic dream on a canvas of 6m by 1.5m, a project which lasted a year at his age of 49 in Guangzhou, a cosmopolitan in southern China, and which he called "Expansion of The Turkish Bath".

Different from Ingres, who was based in France and painted an imagined Turkey (The Middle East), Fang painted China (the Far East) in which he lives, thereby sharing the feeling with other Chinese residents that the history, customs, and ethos of this land are authentic and approachable. Especially after the 1960s till now, he witnessed and personally experienced the drastically changed and the unchanged in this era; therefore, he occasionally and spontaneously makes comparisons between then and now, between China and the West. His artistic talent and years of painting practice have been motivating him to transform his thoughts into vivid, specific representations.

After Ingres' The Turkish Bath is expanded, it continues with Chinese traditional gardens and contemporary style beaches. Against the background of lotus, mudans, willows, palm trees, coconut trees, waterfalls, babbling springs, pavilions, and peculiarly shaped rocks, over 30 beautiful Chinese and Western nudes, graceful and lively, are shown all over the canvas, accompanied by red-crowned cranes, pandas, leopards, and other animals. Fang's spatial framework, strong foundation in realistic representations, taste of color, brushstrokes with personalized style, as well as the attitudes and emotions embodied by these elements, takes up the line of Ingres, who lived more than a hundred years from now, while manifesting a highly distinctive personality of his own.

Evidently, it can be concluded after appreciation that Fang Shaohua's Expansion of The Turkish Bath is a gorgeous erotic dream of a male painter that faces up to desire and disregards public gaze, and a metaphoric wonder which Chinese intellectuals have mixed feelings about and cannot describe with words. It is private and public at the same time: the recognition, publicity, and abuse of desire is the private matter that this Golden Age publicizes without constraint. It is illusionary yet real sometimes: a dream is an illusion, but sometimes closer to reality than what is seen when awake. While the expanded Turkish Bath may be imagined fantasies in some eyes, it may be the blueprint some strive to actualize, or even the real scene in which some have personally been long ago. Perhaps, it's something which some have experienced, but gradually faded into a long-lost dream and an untouchable mirage...