

# Muse with a Short Fuse

## 短火缪斯

Allison Katz 艾丽森·卡茨

2018.11.06 – 2019.01.09

“短火缪斯”是Allison Katz的绘画在中国的首次个展。此次展览为一个三部曲系列的第三章，该系列开始于2018年1月Katz在北美的首次机构个展：“没写日期的日记 (Diary w/o Dates)”（首站加拿大安大略省阿克维尔画廊，并于2018年5月巡至波士顿麻省理工大学的List中心），而随后在2018年9月开始持续至11月11日在米兰的 Gió Marconi 画廊展出的“句号 (Period)”则是三部曲中的第二部。时间的表达是三场展览共同关注的核心内容，同时作为其绘画作品中的主题和潜台词。

“短火缪斯”通过探索源远流长的关于绘画的传说，也就是那位能够催发灵感的女神缪斯，以求在绘画过程和图像内在的持续性元素上延展。从古典时期开始，缪斯（总是女性）的形象据说总是一时兴起地将上帝的点子赠予她青睐的（总是男性）艺术家。从波德莱尔作于1857年的那座卑贱而圣洁的“腐败缪斯 (Venal Muse)”，再到雷内·丹尼尔斯 (René Daniëls) 在1980年代创作的具讽刺性的“被逗乐的缪斯 (Amused Muse)”，缪斯这一经久不衰的外化的存在，始终如一。

按下快进，古老的公式已然消失。这位缪斯是一位形变者；流动，含糊，能够以任何形态出现（超越人类，动物和空间）。固定的角色不再有，有的只是某种伸缩自如的动力：现在的缪斯和艺术家常常换着手，一起卷入一场关于起源，意图和期待的持续对话中去。两者都威胁着，在任何时候都有可能疯狂中转身离去：火爆的脾气是荷尔蒙 (Period) 和超级加速 (Diary w/o Dates) 的产物。绘画行动与时间的极限搏斗，争取着能让他们停留足够久的时间，并与材料的说服力达成协定。

汇集于此的十幅绘画是根据第一位缪斯来组织的：天线空间最开始便有的水磨石地板，上面的几何图案由五块镶嵌瓷砖组成，呼应了由Katz制作并在“句号”中以不同组合进行展示的圆形陶瓷碟。每幅绘画占据了不同的位置并且探索了一个新想法，但它们都是通过一种笔迹创作的，也就是艺术家自己的标志性风格，这种风格保持着自身辨识度的同时又反复无常。

一场古典的倒转布好了舞台，如Katz的伴侣菲利普为其绘画摆的姿势，尽管从不是直白的 - 他可能是一颗卷心菜旁边出现的阴影（“卷心菜 [与菲利普] No.15”），或以公鸡作为替身在一系列自2011年开始持续创作的画作中出现。此次展览特别展出了这些系列的第一次重合（“卷心菜公鸡”）。但P这个字母本身也同样具有生产力：一个代表了某个名字的形状，一场行动，另一位艺术家；或是一个映像，泼洒在另外一个首字母上 (pb)。

Katz将她多元的创作中产生的素材融入绘画的宇宙中去。比如，她回收利用了意大利男装品牌Paolo Pecora的一次时装拍摄的照片，2016年时她曾为这个品牌设计过一件毛衣；他们将他们的模特替换为她在“短火缪斯 (PC for PP)”中自己的模特，扭曲了服装公司广告的话语方式。她为伦敦文学杂志《The White Review》2018年秋季刊设计的封面被放大，然后被画上了与其最初平面印刷的效果相反的疯长般的质感。它在一个新的语境中被重新定向，以她的姓的双关语为名首次登台，而这一次是在一片新大陆上 (Katz Outta The Bag)。

从很早开始，“命名”便成为Katz的缪斯之一了。一个名字是被赋予而非索得的，它是个体化的标志，同时又被他人使用；这是一个通往质疑和与主体性、作者身份及个人传记自传体小说的游戏场所。Phil Lips既是一个崩坏的名字，又是其主人公嘴巴的描述——同时还是曼·雷的“爱人，气象台时间 (The Lovers, Observatory Time) 1932–34”，一件曼·雷在与Lee Miller分手之后宣泄而作，以致敬前任的超现实主义杰作的新版。“咖啡馆曼·雷在Copley画廊，LA (Café Man Ray at the Copley Galleries, LA) 1949”设想了这幅画最初展览的场景，里面摆设着一个与那闭合的酒吧相反的张开的嘴（一个Katz过去在其他画作中使用过的主题）。

绘画经久不衰的影响力抵御了那短火的威胁，它在数码时代是一个物质客体，也是标记着存在的一种超自然行为。对Katz来说，这位缪斯的隐喻无疑是反算法的 (anti-algorithmic)，它并非是为了鼓吹艺术家的个人品味，而是让违逆且无法预料的力量汇集于展览当中。由此，绘画的过程成倍增长，被重新发明并再一次将意义神话化。

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Antenna Space is pleased to present *Muse with a Short Fuse*, the first solo presentation in China by Allison Katz. The exhibition forms the third part of a trilogy that began in January 2018 with Katz's museum exhibition *Diary w/o Dates* (Oakville Galleries, Ontario, Canada, traveling to the List Centre at MIT, Boston, US in May 2018), followed by *Period*, on view from September to November 11, 2018 at Gió Marconi Gallery, Milan. All three exhibitions have as their central preoccupation the expression of time, as both a motif and subtext in painting.

*Muse with a Short Fuse* expands on the durational element inherent to painting's imagery and context by exploring one of its longest-standing myths, that of inspiration as wrought by a Muse. Since antiquity, the figure of the (always female) muse was said to gift divine ideas to the (always male) artists whom she favoured. The persistence of the Muse as an external presence has been consistent right up the abject but saintly Venal Muse by Baudelaire in 1857 to the sarcastic Amused Muse of René Daniëls in the 1980s.

Fast forward, the old equation has evaporated. The muse is a shape-shifter; fluid, ambiguous and able to take on any form (beyond human, animal, and space). There are no longer fixed roles, only an elastic dynamic: muse and artist now constantly change hands, embroiled in an ongoing conversation about origins, intentions and expectations. Both are threatening at any moment to turn away in distraction: the short fuse is the result of hormones (*Period*) and hyper-acceleration (*Diary w/o Dates*). The act of painting wrestles with the limits of time, forcing a glimpse to stay for as long as necessary, making a pact of material persuasion.

The ten paintings collected here are structured around the original mosaic floor of Antenna Space itself, with its five inlaid tiles of geometric patterns, the circle pattern in echo of the round ceramic plates displayed in various formations in *Period*. Each painting takes a different position, and explores a new idea, but they are all created by one handwriting, that is, the artist's particular style, which remains both recognizable and mercurial.

A classic inversion sets the stage, as Katz's partner Philip poses, but never directly – he might appear as a shadow beside cabbage (*Cabbage [with Philip] No. 15*) or via the surrogate of a cock in a series ongoing since 2011. This exhibition features the first time when these series overlap (*Cabbage Cock*). But the letter P itself is equally generative: a shape that stands in for a name, an action or another artist; and when reflected becomes another initial altogether (pb).

Katz takes the materials generated by her diverse practice and fuses them back into the cosmos of painting. For example, she reclaimed the photographs from a fashion shoot by the Italian menswear company Paolo Pecora, for whom she designed a sweater in 2016; swapping out their model for one of her own in *Fusion (PC for PP)*. The cover she created for the 2018 fall edition of the London-based literary magazine, *The White Review*, was scaled up and painted with rampant texture in opposition to its original graphic printing, repurposed for a new context, punning on her last name's capacity for making a *début*, this time on a new continent (*Katz Outta The Bag*).

Naming has long served Katz as a muse, a name being something one is given without asking, both an individuating marker and shared by others; it is a site to question and play games with subjectivity, authorship and autofiction. *Phil Lips* is both a breakdown of a name and a description of its protagonist's mouth – and a versioning of *The Lovers*, *Observatory Time*, 1932–34, Man Ray's surrealist icon, cathartically dedicated to Lee Miller after they broke up. *Café Man Ray* at the Copley Galleries, LA, 1949 pictures the original exhibition of this painting, posed inside an open mouth (a motif Katz has previously used in other paintings, such as *Heaty*) contra to the one that is closed.

The threat of the short fuse is counteracted by painting's lasting impact, both as a material object in the digital age, and as a psychic act for marking existence. For Katz the metaphor of the muse is distinctly anti-algorithmic – rather than upholding the artist's tastes, defiant and unpredictable forces converge. In this way, the painting process itself multiplies, reinvents and mythologizes meaning anew.

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