

The word "boundlessness" derives from the poem *Song of Leyou Park* by Tang Dynasty poet Du Fu (712-770). The poem describes what Du observed as a guest at a banquet, connecting trivialities of drinking and sightseeing in the park to important state affairs for which noble relatives were favoured. The poet lamented on his own life and extended his sorrows to the times. The poem paints a sophisticated scene with depressing emotions whilst presenting a majestic atmosphere and profound meaning. The last two lines of the poem - "Finished drinking, this body of mine has nowhere to go. I stand alone in a boundless expanse chanting a poem to myself." - embodies multiple layers of meaning. The implications of "nowhere to go" are twofold: end of his political career and lack of opportunity to fulfill his political ambition on the one hand, and the absence of like-minded people around him on the other. The feeling of "boundlessness" refers to not only the dusk, but also the bleak prospect of oneself, the deep concern over the country's political future and the profound sense of ever-lasting history. The idea of "being solitary in the room of boundlessness", therefore, is an expression for one's feelings and concern about the reality. In the face of the clamorous world and massive, complex social changes, one has to "retreat" to the corner not because of being apathetic to what is happening outside, but to remain alert to one's own position. By connecting destiny of individuals to fates of the society, one would consciously stay committed to the reality by exploring potential opportunities. In this sense, being solitary in the room of boundlessness is a symbol of feeling helpless yet hopeful as well as the trait of daring to influence the powerful reality with individual strength and agency in the belief of independence and the power of culture.

By looking at the human mind, emotions, temperament, nature, potential and aspirations, one may develop a more subtle and flexible perspective to go beyond the horizons and mind shackles of modernity, so as to fully understand and appreciate people and events in their respective historical contexts. I have selected a modest group of works and archival materials to create a "Room of Boundlessness." On my invitation, historian of modern Chinese literary, Professor Chen Pingyuan

wrote a calligraphy of "Being Solitary in the Room of Boundlessness." In the early 1990s, impact of the market economy and changes in social reality, along with people's concern about the loss of humanism, have resulted in the intellectuals' "self-reflection" and sparked a "great debate on humanism" in the cultural sector. Since then, Professor Chen has chosen to "retreat" to "scholarship" through advocating study of literary and academic history with an emphasis on "academic norms". He has also pioneered and innovated academic "production" to fulfill the intellectuals' social responsibilities.

The "Room of Boundlessness" serves as a space constructed with a mishmash of experiential fragments and living emotions. I have previously organized two exhibitions under the title of "Room of Boundlessness." This time, the "Room of Boundlessness" is a gathering of the hearts and minds of people facing different circumstances and challenges in the contemporary society. These works are both symbols of angst, as well as portraits of "people with nowhere to go."

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