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Tao Siqu: The Naked Eye**Dates: 2025.08.30 – 11.01****Address: Capsule, 1st Floor, Building 16, Anfu Lu 275 Nong, Xuhui District, Shanghai, China**

Capsule is pleased to present *The Naked Eye*, an exhibition of over twenty new oil paintings by Tao Siqu. Marking the artist's second solo presentation with the gallery, these jewel-like canvases glitter with private pleasures and dark fantasies. The exhibition runs from August 30th through November 1st, 2025 with an opening reception on August 30th, 2025.

Tao Siqu is not a morning person. She paints at night, and her work reflects that—the feeling of time stretching out in the quiet dark while the waking world rests. She crafts strange scenes of love, touch and abjection with quiet brushstrokes and delicate glazes. This exhibition's title, *The Naked Eye*, evokes seeing without obstruction. This disrobing of sight itself provides a counter point to the painted nudity we expect. Contrary to the conventional gaze, a 'naked eye' suggests seeing more truthfully, acutely and with precision. Yet Tao Siqu never paints a full picture. Instead she crops, providing only fleeting glimpses into a lustful world.

While not always apparent at first, Tao Siqu's impulse to paint springs from tenderness. Each piece is a small act of devotion, as the artist brings dignity to various types of love: caring, compulsive, taboo, ecstatic. She is also a painter of light. At times, the intimate glow of skin; at others, a spotlight's stark interrogation. The artist uses light as a passage between reality and fantasy, often verging on the mystical. These illuminations are invocations of spells, solace, or rituals of exposure. Tao Siqu's light wells up from deep within the canvas, igniting body parts like the flash of a match. Through layered glazes and gentle scumbling, her light gains an almost tactile presence.

In these pieces Tao Siqu deploys a more naturalistic palette than her earlier works, while retaining her signature surreal auras. On her canvases, color carries both humidity and toxicity: fluorescent-tinged pinks and purples, liquid-like crimson, skin tones that are soft yet tinged with melancholy. Muted greys and murky greens rumble at the edges with a repressed echo—they conjure distorted memories of touch, scent, and sound, giving her paintings a moist, dreamlike texture. These colors drift between beauty and pathology, seducing us with sweetness before abruptly jolting us awake. Drawing upon imagery from cinema, literature or endless online scrolling, Tao Siqu imbues contemporary tropes of desire with corporeal and sensory memories.

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In particular, for this exhibition, Tao Siqi looked to Virginia Woolf's gender-bending 1928 novel *Orlando*. The book spans several centuries, as Orlando transforms from a young nobleman into a woman across historical periods. Obsessed by Orlando's slippery nature and ability to travel through time and gender with ease, Tao Siqi's paintings manifest a similar fluidity. *Mirror* nods directly to a scene where Orlando catches her own reflection after shape-shifting from male to female. Taking in her new form, Orlando observes that "the change of sex, though it altered their future, altered nothing in their identity"¹. In Tao Siqi's version, we behold a shard of mirror from a first-person perspective. As the hand in *Mirror* becomes our own, the painting suggests that we may not recognize our own reflection. Although some pieces in this exhibition can be read as fairytale or parable, Tao Siqi's insistent first-person POV unnerves again in the gem titled *Fading*. Our hand again; the burning of a dragonfly. How close can we get to this netherworld and still leave it unscathed?

Tao Siqi depicts gendered power relations bluntly, without presenting solutions to the complexities of dominance or submission. She does not judge the people, animals and spaces she paints. Instead Tao Siqi lets her subjects act as abjectly as they please. Her subjects often revel in some kind of *jouissance*—pleasure to the nth degree, pleasure that one loses one's identity in, pleasure that morphs into something else. Take *Mad Love*, a stabbing: a young woman's face is splattered with blood as she drives a knife into flesh with fixed fascination. Nearby, in *Melting*, a woman acts as a candlestick, head tilted back, candle jutting from mouth, hot wax dripping down her chin. Pleasure and pain merge in a smoky, Rembrandt-esque palette with equal parts neon light. As luminous as the candle it depicts, *Melting* is built sculpturally, touch by touch.

Sensations and perceptions are two separate things—there's the sensation itself (hand on torso) and the perception of that touch (comfort or shock, etc.). So the effects of each lick, gulp or press are hard to predict. On top of that, pleasure isn't always easy to access. As Tao Siqi indulges into taboo territory, she brings us all closer to desire. Do not look away. In fact: look closer. These works call upon us to deviate, to experiment and to embrace the truths perceived by our naked eyes, if we dare to look.

Text by Sarah Faux

¹ Woolf, Virginia. *Orlando*. Camberwell, Vic., Penguin, 2011.

陶斯祺：裸眼

展期：2025.08.30 – 11.01

地址：胶囊，中国上海徐汇区安福路 275 弄 16 号 1 楼

胶囊荣幸呈现艺术家陶斯祺在画廊的第二次个展“裸眼”，二十余件全新油画作品如珠玉般精巧璀璨，闪耀着私密的欢愉和幽暗的幻想。展览将于 2025 年 8 月 30 日开幕，持续至 11 月 1 日。

陶斯祺不常在晨间活动。她习惯晚上画画，作品亦传达出夜的气息——在静谧的黑暗中，世界已然沉睡，时间被无限拉长。她以克制的笔触和细腻的光泽，构建关于爱恋、触碰与厌斥的奇异景象。展览标题“裸眼”示意着毫无遮掩的观看。这种赤裸的视线违背了我们对绘画裸体的预期。相比将身体作为奇观的凝视，“裸眼”暗示着更深层的真相正等待被看见。她不呈现完整的全景，而是通过裁切透露出情欲世界的一瞥。

陶斯祺创作的底色是慈悲，起初或难以察觉。每一幅作品都是一次虔诚的献礼，为各种形式的爱都赋予尊严——关怀、执迷、禁忌、极乐。同时，她也是光的塑造者，有时是私密的肌肤之光，有时则如聚光灯般逼视。她对光的运用近乎神秘，这些光并非现实主义的再现，而是一种临界状态——一种将肉身推向超感知界限的视觉召唤，是魔法，是抚慰，或是暴露的仪式。它们似乎从画布深处涌现，如火柴般点燃身体。通过多层次的釉色叠涂与薄擦，光线在画面中具有几乎实体性的质地，我们仿佛可以用眼睛去触碰、撩拨。

尽管此次艺术家运用了较以往更为自然的色调，但依旧呈现出她标志性的超现实氛围。颜色在她的画布上带着湿度与毒性：略带荧光的粉紫、近似液体的猩红、柔软却又伤感的皮肤色，暗灰与沉绿在边缘处轰鸣出压抑的回声——它们如同记忆里变了形的触觉、气味与声音，让画面呈现出一种湿润、近似梦境的质地。这些色彩不安地游移在美丽与病态之间，让人既被甜蜜俘获，又在瞬间警醒。她从电影、文学、网络等媒介中提取形象并重新演绎，同时将身体与感官记忆带入当代欲望的语境。

在本次展览中，陶斯祺借用弗吉尼亚·伍尔夫 1928 年经典小说《奥兰多》中的“性别漂流”与“时间裂缝”作为精神线索。书中的奥兰多跨越数世纪，由贵族男青年变为女性，经历了不同历史时期下的社会角色转变，其游移的力量令艺术家着迷，她的绘画也显露出不断变换的感官漂移和流动性。《镜子》直接回应了小说中奥兰多从男性变为女性后第一次在镜中照见自己的章节。奥兰多端详着自己全新的容貌形体，意识到“性别的改变，虽然会改变人的未来，但却丝毫不会改变其性格”¹。在陶斯祺的画中，观者从第一人称视角低头凝视一块镜子的碎片，画中的手即为观者的手，暗示我们未必能够认出镜中的自己。尽管展览中的部分作品可以作为寓言或童话来解读，但在《消逝》中，艺术家再度以第一人称视角制造不安。又是我们的手，蜻蜓在燃烧。我们究竟可以多么接近这幽冥之境而尚可全身而退？

这些作品不仅探索吸引与厌恶，也关乎主体性与权力格局。陶斯祺并不为支配、屈从或羞耻提供解答，而是直截了当地呈现性别权力关系的纠葛。她不对画中的人物、动物和情景进行评判，而是让它们自在

¹ 弗吉尼亚·伍尔夫（Virginia Woolf）：《奥兰多（伍尔夫文集）》，任一鸣译，上海：上海译文出版社，2022 年。

地展现或卑微抑或放纵的姿态。她笔下的主体往往在自我亢奋中沉溺于某种欣狂——极致的愉悦，令自我消溶的愉悦，变形为异物的愉悦。此时，身体与身份一同被撕裂、改写。正如《狂爱》中的刺杀，年轻女子鲜血溅面，她挥刀刺入肉体，刀刃与身体合二为一，专注而入迷。《融化》中，一位女性化身烛台，仰面朝天，蜡烛立在口中，烛泪沿下颌流淌。霓虹光辉点亮了伦勃朗式的烟熏暗调，快乐与痛苦难以分割。画面如烛火般闪耀，亦如雕塑般一触一触地被塑造。

感觉与知觉是不同的，前者是最原始的身体回响（手与躯体的触碰），而触碰带来的慰藉或惊悸则是知觉。因此，每一次舔舐、吞咽或按压的结果都难以预料。更何况，在一个对仪容举止乃至情感尺度都设有隐秘规范的文化中，感官体验难以被坦率谈论，愉悦亦非轻易可得。而在陶斯祺的画中，身体是模糊的、湿润的、不稳定的，它在被观看时不断变形，也在凝视中获得某种新的存在。她潜入禁忌深处，将我们推向欲望的边界。不要移开目光。相反，请靠近看。这些作品召唤我们偏离常轨，尝试冒险，拥抱裸眼所见的真相——如果我们敢于凝视。

撰文：莎拉·福克斯（Sarah Faux）