

## GALERIE ORA-ORA PRESENTS XU HONGFEI'S SOLO EXHIBITION *ABSOLUTE*



Image: Xu Hongfei, Joyful on a Horse ,2014, Bronze, 62x29x52cm (image courtesy of Galerie Ora-Ora and the artist.)

**HONG KONG – AUGUST 9, 2019** Galerie Ora-Ora is pleased to present our first Ora-Ora Masters show: *Absolute* – Xu Hongfei Solo Exhibition. The opening reception will be held from 6 pm to 8 pm on August 27 (Tuesday), and the show will be on view until September 13.

*Absolute* reflects how Xu Hongfei uses the sculptural body to comment on social and aesthetic concerns. This exhibition uses art philosophy to present new ways of understanding his Chubby Women sculptures. This interdisciplinary approach emphasises how Xu's artworks are elaborately clothed in inference and meaning, making them culturally significant. By challenging the canons of beauty, Xu elicits a discussion regarding the aesthetics of the female form.

The German philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831) is regarded as the source of modern aesthetics. Hegel argued that "aesthetics is the spiritual manifestation of

ideas". This is the essence behind his "absolute idealism", which provides a basis for understanding modern art. Hegel's "absolute idealism" reflects how art is a portrait of the human mind and the embodiment of the flow of consciousness. It expresses in a sensory form an artist's fundamental beliefs about society and himself. This requires a unity of rational expression and sensibility. Only by doing so can an artist fully reflect his soul within his creation.

Born in 1963, renowned Chinese artist Xu Hongfei has also been influenced by Hegel's "absolute idealism". The *Chubby Women* sculptures mirror this principle because they reflect Xu's ideas in an aesthetic form. These sculptures do not depict a real overweight woman, but they are actually works of art produced through spiritualisation. Even though many of the works in this exhibition are nude, they do not have an uncomfortable tone. This is because they represent an ideology, concept, judgement and intellectual thought. This walks more or less deliberately in line with the Neo-Kantian view, which suggests how "the aesthetic world can be constituted only by separating form and desire".

For Xu, mediation is essential. His agency finds expression through his artworks, reflecting his beliefs about himself. Xu once expressed that an artist should stay true to himself and create art that frees the soul. *Joyful on a Horse* (2014) is an example of this, as it is an absolute internalisation in the form of conscious and free personality. Instead of leaning toward emotional restraint and coolness, the chubby woman riding the horse is energetic. Her arms are stretched outwards and her head is thrown backwards. Similarly, *Pizzicato Trio* (2017) also conveys human passion and feelings through gesture. The three chubby women are playing instruments with sincere and cheerful expressions. By creating artworks that free the soul, Xu's sculptures appeal to people of different cultures and backgrounds.

Xu's latest artwork and the highlight of the exhibition, *Absolute* (2019) depicts a chubby woman compressed into a round form. It reflects a breakthrough in Xu's thinking because it is more abstract and symbolic than his previous works. Despite this, the sculpture still retains the spirituality of the chubby figure. *Absolute* (2019) does not aim for naturalism in proportion or shape. Instead, it is a mesmerising cypher of how the artist believes beauty comes in different shapes and sizes. This fleshy representation of the female form can be found in Western art history. European masters like Titian, William Etty, Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres often portrayed the female form as plump or curvaceous. Like Boisserees, Xu finds meaning in past Western art that is relevant to the present. By doing so and creating sculptures like *Absolute* (2019), he is able to broaden the Chinese vision of beauty.



Image: Xu Hongfei, Absolute, 2019, Bronze, 45 x 45 x 90 cm (image courtesy of Galerie Ora-Ora and the artist.)

### **About Xu Hongfei**

Xu Hongfei was born in Yangjiang City, Guangdong Province, China in 1963. He graduated from the sculpture department of the Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts in 1990 and is currently the Dean of the Guangzhou Sculpture Institute. Since 1999, he has created the *Chubby Women* sculptures, depicting them in various perspectives and different mediums.

His works explore the ingenious union of clumsiness in wisdom, dexterity in heaviness, form sense and human resonance through the sharp contrast between heavy bodies and light-hearted souls. His works also relieve people's souls from stress with inspiring tension stimulated from exaggerated but precise unique shapes.

The *Chubby Women* sculptures have been well-received since the beginning. Since 2013, Xu has been promoting his *Chubby Women* series, eliminating barriers of language and social standards, to countries all around the world. The *Chubby Women* act as friendly ambassadors of the East, landing at iconic landmarks such as The Louvre (Paris, France), The Forbidden City (Beijing, China), Sydney Opera House (Sydney, Australia) and by the River Thames (London, UK), building a platform and opportunities for cultural exchange.

In 2019, Xu held solo exhibitions at the Repin Academy of Fine Arts in Russia and Kobe, Japan. His works have also been featured in many other domestic and overseas museums and private collections, including the National Art Museum of China, Guangdong Art Museum, Jiangsu Art Museum, Zhejiang Art Museum, the Guangzhou Art Museum, Hong Kong Arts Centre, Sydney City Hall, City Council of Montepulciano, City Council of Turin, City Council of Milan, Istanbul City Council, Trent Park Equestrian Center, Expo Milano 2015, Liu Haisu Art Museum, Cusco Municipality, Peru Hamburg City Hall, Hamburg International Maritime Museum, etc.

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## **About Galerie Ora-Ora**

Ora-Ora began in Hong Kong in 2006, with globally-sourced artists who are thought-driven innovators. Our artists interpret history and philosophy to bring new perspectives to our modern world and the lively dialogues between east and west. Recognized for our support of Asian contemporary art, we have grown to represent artists from Asia, Europe and the US across a variety of media. Dr. Henrietta Tsui-Leung, co-founder of Ora-Ora, is also co-founder of the Hong Kong Art Gallery Association, which builds connections and opportunities in the growing Hong Kong art industry. The gallery continues to develop alliances and partnerships with institutions globally to enable discovery of our artists in fresh environments. From our base in Hong Kong, we travel regularly to meet our clients at global art fairs and our international exhibitions.

## 方由美術八月 H Queen's 呈獻許鴻飛雕塑個展「絕對·圓」



許鴻飛，《馬上開心》，銅，62x29x52 厘米。(圖片由藝術家和方由美術提供)

### 「美是理念的感性顯現」——黑格爾《美學》

方由美術榮幸地於 2019 年 8 月舉辦方由美術大師系列——許鴻飛雕塑個展「絕對·圓」。展覽開幕酒會將於 8 月 27 日（周二）下午 6 時到晚上 8 時在畫廊空間舉行，展期至 9 月 13 號。「絕對·圓」——這一展覽主題的命名，來自於許鴻飛的經典雕塑作品《絕對圓》。許鴻飛，作為當代藝術領域的知名藝術家，其創作的一系列風格獨立、個性鮮明的雕塑作品，蘊含濃厚的藝術哲學意韻，賦以雕塑藝術哲學思考。本次展覽，著意從藝術哲學的角度，闡釋許鴻飛創作的「肥女」系列雕塑。而我們重點要做的是：從西方與亞洲藝術史描繪人體的美學潮流中，探究許鴻飛如何突破觀念桎梏，獲得成功，進而確切認知其在亞洲藝術史中的重要性。

德國哲學家黑格爾（Georg.W.F.Hegel）所提出的「絕對理論」堪稱「現代美學思源」。在其著作《美學》一書中提出：「美是理念的感性顯現」。此論是解讀他的「絕對理

論」的關鍵，同時也開啟了後人了解現代藝術理念的大門。而 1963 年生於中國的許鴻飛，亦是因循了這一條創作的思維脈絡，創作出令世人讚嘆不已的「肥女」系列雕塑。「絕對理論」相信：藝術都是由歷史的極致進化產生的。與之相應，許鴻飛透過「肥女」改變了東方審美的傳統法則，他塑造了一個又一個「肥女」——這不僅是審視過去美學潮流的結果，同時也確認了自我的審美觀並以此對社會產生影響。他曾經說過：「藝術家之責任，乃自創風格，突出個性，俾眾周知……藝術，玩物也。藝術向求偉大，易失其本質。」他以「人生要求真」為目標，用「肥女」所帶來的正能量感染他人。這是許鴻飛的雕塑著重其本質及個人風格的理論基礎。

在藝術的思考層面，許鴻飛確立了獨特的個人美學風格並廣泛地影響著世人。他塑造出來的肥女（他稱為胖太陽）顛覆了「窈窕淑女，君子好逑」的東方審美標準。「肥女」的形態乍看似是承接了西方藝術家好畫豐滿女人的習俗，但「肥女」背後的美學思考遠比其外形深遠。如他 2019 年的新作《絕對圓》便將人體扭轉成更抽象的形態，打破人體雕塑的常規。圓滾滾的可愛造型更能突顯「肥女」的柔軟與溫潤，讓人感受到創造者對快樂的期盼。

從中西文化比較的角度來審視：以往西方與東方的藝術歷史，對於人體的審美都有各自的一套哲學機制，例如人體的形態，真實度以及背後的意念等等。西方美學理念裹帶著強烈的哲學性，例如如何界定藝術品中出現的胴體到底是色情的「裸露」（Naked）還是藝術性的「裸體」（Nude），以及了解創作者的學術理念。作為對東西藝術觀念兼收並蓄的藝術家，許鴻飛對女人胴體美態有著自己獨特的理解，「肥女」的舉手投足都是他對「美」的看法而轉化成的感性形式，例如他在雕塑《三彈音樂》裏，除了雕琢出三個栩栩如生的肥女外，各人手持樂器的動作與興奮高歌的神態都表現了不同的美態，但三者合一卻表達了一種「自由之精神」。這一切均是許鴻飛心靈及意蘊合一的象征。他用其形態表達出母愛的真善美與「美不只唯一」的標準，突破東方人喜歡「瀟湘之美」的審美界限，為東方現代美學拓展了新的維度。

許鴻飛手下的「肥女」，動作及神態大多逗趣、快樂。即使他塑造的「肥女」總是婀娜多姿，但是其引人暇想的欲念卻退隱了，取而代之的則是顯現於心靈上美的共鳴。就如作品《馬上開心》一樣，肥女在馬上風姿綽約，張開雙手迎接自由的模樣，「物態」之下反映出的便是許鴻飛對自由的熱愛與追求，這無疑是他內心想法的觀照並以雕塑的形式建構內心真實的模樣。許鴻飛將自己的理性理念，以感性的手法顯現於觀眾眼前。「肥女」的豐滿體態不僅只是在描繪一個真實的肥胖女人，而是經過心靈造化而產生的藝術品。

一個現代藝術大師必須忠於自己的理念，創造出能夠解放心靈自由的作品。同時打破傳統的美學定律，並創造出新的審美觀以影響後世。而許鴻飛的「肥女」雕塑做到了，「肥女」的妙與趣解放了觀者的心靈，拓寬了東方人的審美視野，並確立了對人體美態的新標準。



許鴻飛，《絕對圓》，銅，35x30x35 厘米。(圖片由藝術家和方由美術提供)

### 關於許鴻飛

許鴻飛，1963年生於中國廣東陽江市，1990年畢業於廣州美術學院雕塑系，現任廣州雕塑院院長。自1999年起以精湛造型功底獨創「肥女」雕塑，運用多個視角和不同媒材，「導演」了詼諧幽默、狀貌多變的肥女人雕塑「喜劇」。其作品通過肥重軀體與歡快心靈之間的鮮明對比反差，探尋大智若愚之拙與舉重若輕之巧、形體感官與人性共鳴的巧妙結合，通過誇張而精準的獨特造型來激發情緒歡騰的張力，讓現代人的心靈從沈重中獲得解脫。許鴻飛的藝術生涯中屢獲殊榮，包括2013年度中國文化部優秀專家、第二屆廣東省中青年德藝雙馨藝術家等。其作品已在世界五大洲，十六個國家展出，包括法國、澳大利亞、意大利、英國、新加坡、土耳其、美國、德國、奧地利、秘魯、哥倫比亞等，2019年於俄羅斯的列賓美術學院美術館和日本神戶舉辦個展。他的作品亦被海內外多家藝術機構以及私人收藏，包括中國美術館、中國國家博物館、廣東美術館、浙江美術館、江蘇美術館、廣州藝術博物院、香港藝術中心、澳大利亞悉尼市政廳、法國盧萬河畔莫雷市、意大利蒙特普赤阿諾市政府、意大利都靈市政府、意大利米蘭市政府、英國倫敦特倫特公園馬術中心、土耳其伊斯坦布爾西西爾市政府、2015米蘭世博會意大利館、劉海粟美術館、秘魯庫斯科市政府、德國漢堡市政府、漢堡國際海事博物館等。

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### **關於方由美術**

方由美術於 2006 年由梁徐錦熹博士 (Dr. Henrietta Tsui-Leung) 在香港創立，畫廊匯聚了來自全球各地具創新思維的藝術家。我們的藝術家深入研究歷史與哲學，促進中西文化交流的對話，為現代世界帶來更多新銳藝術觀念與無窮想像力。我們對亞洲當代藝術的貢獻及支持備受各方認可，現今已開拓代理來自亞洲、歐洲和美國等地運用不同媒介的藝術家。隨後，Henrietta 更聯合創辦了香港畫廊協會。在香港藝術行業的迅速發展下，該協會為世界各地藝術社群建立了更緊密的聯繫和機遇。方由美術繼續致力與全球性的機構建立聯盟和夥伴合作關係，發掘不同具潛力的藝術家。方由美術從香港出發，邁向全世界，繼續參與更多國際性的博覽會和展覽，為世界各地的客戶提供更優質緊密的合作和服務。