

(開幕)

2024年07月18日, 週四
下午 六時至八時

(日期)

2024年07月18日 – 08月31日

(開放時間)

週二至六, 上午十二時 – 下午六時,
公眾假期除外

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為我所愛而設的莊嚴肅穆、 四季合宜的葬禮

(藝術家) 多米尼克·諾爾斯

1. 遠遠看去, 多米尼克·諾爾斯的繪畫看起來就像是能夠把臉埋進去的柔軟動物毛皮。當我問起, 他的作品該從何入手時, 他說: 「追隨你的體驗和感受即可。」其中一件作品上滿是大片午後陽光的橙色, 沾染著像是細小虛空開口的黑色斑跡。另一件作品看起來像是某個無特徵的存在一頭扎進了冰冷的水池。還有像是細密編織成的高牆, 衝著天豎立, 而藍天像是被火勢環繞時暫供舒緩的香膏。另一幅作品令人目盲的光耀中有一道血紅印記。這些作品的標題全都是「我摯愛的」, 而這加強了畫面的不安感。他在因何而哀悼? 我在因何而哀悼?

2. 多米尼克不知道哪裡是家。他曾在芝加哥、巴黎及佛羅里達生活, 於近年在多個藝術之都迴轉, 在每處逗留數月, 這種流浪生活讓人豔羨, 但長此以往則難免心感飄零 (這是他的想法嗎, 還是我只不過在投射自己的感受?) 很長一段時間以來, 多米尼克的家就是他的馬匹塔茲所在之處——巴哈馬, 也就是多米尼克生長的國度。自他四歲起, 塔茲就是他的忠實伴侶; 多米尼克甚至覺得, 在遇到塔茲之前, 他自行製作的迷你馬匹雕塑就預示了塔茲的到來。而那也就是多米尼克首次通過創作藝術滿足內心慾望的經驗。在2021年疫情期間, 在多米尼克外出旅行之時, 塔茲的體魄開始變得衰弱。多米尼克隨即從佛羅里達的馬匹展會飛回巴哈馬, 並做出了讓塔茲安樂死的艱難抉擇。「如果我當時陪在塔茲的身邊,」多米尼克說, 「他可能就會能活下來。」

3. 「心碎而絕。真的, 你沒有什麼別的可說的了。」我把灰從你的臉頰上擲去, 抹在我自己的舌頭上。某一年, 我曾在一處墓園和一條自殺橋之間的宅邸中居住。在我入住前, 一位女人剛剛在那公寓房間中去世, 而我還要繼承那些不斷寄來的郵件。我時而向朋友們說起這經歷, 就像是講述奇聞軼事一樣, 但我曾真切地希望, 在逝者之中生活能夠讓我顯得更鮮活的生命力。然而, 我消失在風景之中, 變得透明、濕漉漉。

4. 在我與多米尼克·諾爾斯首次相遇之前, 他剛打盹醒來, 當其時我們都生活在南丫島的一處宅子裡。多米尼克與一位遙遠的、數個時區之外的摯友在前一天晚上徹夜通話; 他前來香港, 因為一家畫廊委託他在展覽空間中創作一幅壁畫。他迅速因川流不息的人群和高聳入雲的摩天大樓而感到疲憊, 想念巴哈馬的水木自然, 因此搬到南丫島上來生活。他問起我放在餐桌上的兩本書: 戴力·渣文的《藍》和伊黛爾·阿德楠的《海與霧》。這兩本書是我的護身符, 我解釋道。南丫島就是我的藍島。在初次見面的第一個小時裡, 我們談到了依賴理論、查蒂·史密斯、親密關係的本質, 以及在政治及公共衛生危機中的曖昧時間感。隨後, 我問起這位藝術家在最近感興趣於何物, 他就發來了一篇有關日本長野縣御射鹿池的文章——那的水是如此地清澈, 環繞水面的樹木在水中形成完美的倒影。直到看見東山魁夷的畫作《綠色回響》(1972)之前, 我都不太能理解多米尼克對這風景的迷戀。在東山魁夷的畫裡, 在一排排高大的樹木及倒影之間, 有一匹駿美的白馬在遊走。

5. 「在面對馬匹的時候, 你必須要足夠有禪心,」多米尼克·諾爾斯說。「馬匹能夠辨認你的情感, 但是他們不能理解為什麼你帶有這些情感。一匹馬能夠在1.2米之外聽見你的心跳。」這動物模仿彼此的運動姿態以抵禦獵食者。在這個意義上, 他們就是完美的鏡子, 反映了外部世界的一舉一動。「去想像一下, 在草原上, 一群馬裡最中心那一匹的心跳——他的心跳向外輻射, 一直能夠傳導到森林樹木外延的那匹馬身上。」

6. 多米尼克·諾爾斯穿著肅穆的黑色衣服, 站在他創造的一片火海前。我在那天 (香港最受矚目藝術博覽會的第二天開放日) 為他拍了十九張照片, 他僅在四張中露出了笑容。他意識到自己要持續扮演某種藝術家身份, 卻在如此行事之時帶著一絲桀驁不馴。在輕鬆對話中, 他也帶有一種寫作者的娓娓道來姿態。他說, 他常希望藝術界能夠少舉辦一些展覽, 多舉辦一些討論會。他不在

乎別人用什麼人稱代詞來指代他，儘管他曾稱其作品為「酷兒慾望的隱喻」。扮演藝術家身分，這對多米尼克來說意味著滿足並背叛觀眾對他的期待。一位老師曾如此教導他：「你在世界中行事的方式不必是你的本真。」他的繪畫作品既溫柔又暴力，就像是Franny Choi的詩句。他總是想要接觸一種柔軟的死亡。後來，他發給我一張原口典之《油池》作品的屏幕截圖；我只能從中看到閃著光芒的、無底洞式的黑色悲愴。

7. 南丫島是一種自我干預——悲愴挖空著我。淡紫色的牽牛花愚蠢地朝著太陽綻開。我脫得只剩下內衣，衝向水的搖籃。光亮無法觸及的海洋深處就是午夜地帶。我在家中向你展示了我膝蓋上的瘀青，你則將雙唇印上我藍黑色的皮膚。

8. 我摯愛的，我摯愛的，我摯愛的，我摯愛的，我摯愛的。說一遍，這句話就是傾慕的表達；說五遍，這句話就是嘗試召喚逝去之物的咒語。「在進入創作過程之時，我往往在思考葬禮，而作品最終呈現的面貌往往是重生，」多米尼克·諾爾斯在一次與Elephant Magazine的訪談中如此說。兩個靈魂佔據了兩件作品的畫面——一個是以細膩紅棕色筆觸繪製的馬匹，另一個是狀似多米尼克祖父的白色人物。他的祖父是一名詩人，常稱呼周遭事物為「我摯愛的」，包括野狗。在祖父的葬禮上，從大教堂一直排到墓園的哀悼者隊伍高呼：「我摯愛的！」他親暱地稱呼人們的方式，多米尼克說，最終成為了他永恆的名字。畫作上的人物是從火焰中誕生的，還是正在走入火焰？還剩下誰，能夠去蒐集我們在清晨的無情烈火中失去的事物？

9. 我在街道中穿行，尋回了僅存的證據，並將其埋葬於我的肋骨之間。悲愴沒有名字。它可能有名字，曾經有名字，但隨後被抹除了。這物體凝固了，我不斷揉搓，直到其中出現了頭顱的形狀。我摯愛的，我說，我摯愛的。我不願以此稱呼那缺席之物，但也暫且這樣做了。

文：Karen Cheung

(關於多米尼克·諾爾斯)

多米尼克·諾爾斯（1996年生於巴哈馬），生活工作於芝加哥及巴黎。諾爾斯在2020年於芝加哥藝術學院作為新藝術家協會獎獲獎者取得繪畫碩士學位，在2017年於芝加哥藝術學院獲得學士學位。近期個展包括：Hannah Hoffman Gallery, 洛杉磯（2023）；「為我所愛而設的莊嚴肅穆、四季合宜的葬禮」，聖安德肋堂，由Layr畫廊策劃，薩爾茨堡（2023）；Chapter NY, 紐約（2022）；「為我所愛而設的莊嚴肅穆、四季合宜的葬禮」，Galerie Emanuel Layr, 維也納（2021）；「太陽沈沒」，Soccer Club Chicago, 芝加哥（2020）；「泰茲頌歌」，The Green Gallery, 米華基（2019）。他的作品將於第十五屆光州雙年展「盤索里—21世紀的聲景」展出，他也於近期參加多個大型群展，包括：「變換季節之歌」，維也納氣候雙年展，維也納（2024）；「回望：第十二屆白柱空間年度展覽」，白柱空間，紐約（2023）；「內心的猛獸：內（外）生物」，mumok美術館，維也納（2022）；「通路」，Misako and Rosen, 東京（2022）；「十五位畫家」，Andrew Kreps Gallery, 紐約（2021）等。諾爾斯曾參加The Suburban（米華基，威斯康星州）等藝術家駐地項目，並曾於The Condo Association（芝加哥，伊利諾州）策劃群展。他的作品已被維也納mumok美術館及華沙現代藝術博物館等機構收藏。

(Opening)

Thur, 18 July, 6 – 8 PM

(Date)

18 July – 31 August 2024

(Opening Hours)

Tue to Sat, 12 – 6 PM

Closed on public holidays

(Location)

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The Solemn and Dignified

(Artist) Dominique Knowles

1. From afar, Dominique Knowles' paintings look like soft animal hide I could sink my face into. "Just go by what you experience and feel," he says, when I ask how I should approach his art. Swathes of afternoon orange, marred by flecks of black like small slits of the void. A featureless being plunging face-first into an icy pool. Knitted walls that open up to a sky, blue as a balm against the encroaching fire. A stain of blood against a blinding canvas of light. That these works are titled *My beloved* only adds to the unease. What was it that he was mourning? What was I mourning?

2. Dominique didn't know where home was. He had lived in Chicago, Paris and Florida, and these days he was in various art capitals around the world for months at a time, the kind of vagabond life that looked enviable from a distance but became unmooring after a while. (Had he said this, or was I projecting?) For a long time, home was where his horse Tazz was, in his native Bahamas. Tazz had been a constant companion to the artist since he was four – he felt he had manifested him by making miniature horse sculptures before he even had his own horse. It was his first experience in creating art to fulfil his heart's desires. Then, in 2021, in the midst of the pandemic, while Dominique was away, Tazz's body started failing. Dominique flew from a horse show in Florida back to the The Bahamas and made the difficult decision to euthanise him. "If I had been there," he said, "I wondered if Tazz would have stayed alive."

3. "Died of a broken heart. There's nothing else you can say, really." I brush the ash from your cheek, smear it across my tongue. For a year, I lived in a house between a cemetery and a suicide bridge. My apartment was haunted by the woman who had died just a month before I moved in, and I kept getting all her mail. I offered these facts to friends as though it was a joke, but really, I had hoped living among the dead would render me more alive. Instead, I faded against the landscape, translucent and sopping.

4. The first time I met Dominique Knowles, he had just woken up from a nap in the Lamma village house in which we had both found ourselves. He had stayed up all night on a call with a beloved friend several time zones away, and was in the city because he had been commissioned by a gallery to paint a wall. Soon he was worn out by the heavy crowds and the spiny skyscrapers; he craved the water and trees of The Bahamas, and moved out to the island. He asked me about the two books I had left on the dining table – Derek Jarman's *Blue* and Etel Adnan's *Sea and Fog*. They were my talismans, I explained. Lamma was my blue island. Within the first hour we had covered attachment theory, Zadie Smith, the nature of intimacy, and the mushiness of time during moments of political and public health crises. Later, when I asked the artist about his latest obsessions, he sent me an article about the Mishaka Pond in Japan's Nagano Prefecture, where the waters were so clear the surrounding trees were mirrored onto the surface. I didn't understand until I looked up Kaii Higashiyama's painting *Midori Hibiku* (1972). There it was, between rows of towering trees and their reflection – a majestic white horse, trotting across the woods.

5. "With horses, you have to be very zen," Dominique Knowles says. "Horses can recognise your feelings but they don't understand why you have them. A horse can hear your heartbeat from 1.2 meters away." The animals mimic each other's movements to guard themselves from predators. In that sense,

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they are perfect mirrors, a reflection of the outside world. "Picture a horse's heartbeat in the center of the herd in a field – radiating outwards to the horse at the edge of the forest of trees."

6. Dominique Knowles was dressed in mourning tones of black, standing in front of an inferno he had created. Among the nineteen photographs I took of him that day, on the second day of Hong Kong's art fair of the year, he is smiling in just four of them. He is aware of the artist persona he has to maintain, though he performs it with a note of irony. Even in casual conversations, he speaks with the measured pace of a writer. Sometimes he wishes the art world would put on fewer exhibitions and organise symposiums instead. He doesn't particularly care what pronouns you use for him, though elsewhere he has described his work as "metaphors for queer desire". The performance is Dominique's way of both meeting and betraying the audience's expectations. A teacher once told him: "The way you move through the world doesn't have to be your truth." His paintings are tender but violent, like the poems of Franny Choi. He is always reaching towards a soft death. Later, when he sent me a screenshot of Noriyuki Haraguchi's *Oil Pool*, all I saw was a gleaming, bottomless well of black grief.

7. The island is a self-intervention – the grief was boring me. Lilac morning glories turn stupidly towards the sun. I strip down to my underwear and run into the cradle of the water. The place where light could no longer reach the ocean is the midnight zone. Back at home I show you my bruised knee, and you press your lips against my blue-black skin.

8. *My beloved, my beloved, my beloved, my beloved, my beloved.* Say it once and it remains an expression of adoration; say it five times and it becomes an incantation to summon what has been lost. "I would go into the work thinking of a burial, but it would come out a resurrection," Dominique Knowles once said in an interview with Elephant Magazine. Ghosts dominate in two of the canvases – a horse depicted in sensual brushstrokes of chestnut, and a figure in white that could be his grandfather, a poet who often invoked the phrase for all that was around him, even stray dogs. At his funeral, a line of mourners formed from the cathedral to the cemetery, all crying out, *my beloved!* What he called people endearingly, Dominique said, became his name eternally. Are the figures emerging from, or walking into the flames? Who is left here to gather the things we lost in the fire in the ruthless morning?

9. I drift from street to street, retrieve the remaining evidence and bury it between my ribs. The grief has no name. Or rather it did, once upon a time, but it's since been redacted. The mass has congealed and I knead it until a head takes shape. *My beloved*, I say. *My beloved*. That is not what I wanted to call the absence, but it will do for now.

By Karen Cheung

(About Dominique Knowles)

Dominique Knowles (b. 1996 in The Bahamas) lives and works in Chicago and Paris. Knowles received both his MFA in Painting as a New Artist Society Award scholar in 2020 as well as his BFA in 2017 from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Recent solo exhibitions include Hannah Hoffman Gallery, Los Angeles (2023); "The Solemn and Dignified Burial Befitting My Beloved for All Seasons", Andräkirche Salzburg, organised by Layr, Salzburg (2023); Chapter NY, New York (2022); "The Solemn and Dignified Burial Befitting My Beloved for All Seasons", Galerie Emanuel Layr, Vienna (2021); "The Sun Sinks", Soccer Club Chicago, Chicago (2020); "Ode to Tazz", The Green Gallery, Milwaukee (2019). His work will be on view at the 15th Gwangju Biennale "Pansori - a soundscape of the 21st century", and has been included in numerous recent group exhibitions, such as: "Songs for

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the Changing Seasons", Klima Biennale Wien, Vienna (2024); "Looking Back / The 12th White Columns Annual", White Columns, New York (2023); "The Animal Within – Creatures in (and outside)", mumok, Vienna (2022); "Portals", Misako and Rosen, Tokyo (2022); "Fifteen Painters", Andrew Kreps Gallery, New York (2021) amongst others. Knowles has participated in a residency at The Suburban (Milwaukee, WI) and has curated a group exhibition at The Condo Association (Chicago, IL). His work is in the permanent collections of mumok, Vienna and the Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw.