

1  **'China and the Art of War:  
Perceptions of the  
Russo-Ukrainian War in  
Chinese Online Poetry and  
Visual Art Narratives, 2022-Present'**

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2  **INTRODUCTION:**

**Visual Art & Poetic Narratives**

3  **Cao Fei 曹斐: Falling Matryoshka**

On February 25, 2022, 1 day after Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Cao Fei posted on Instagram:  
"Falling Matryoshka © Cao Fei 2022. Photo from the border of China and Russia. Project commissioned by @garagemca."  
Collaboration Garage Museum of Contemporary Art, Moscow, Jan 2022.

4  **Matryoshka in Russia & China**

- Russia: tradition since 1890
- Japan: Honshu doll, daruma doll (but not nested)
- China: traditional roly-poly toy: 'tumbler' (*budaoweng* 不倒翁)
  - Drinking game since Tang dynasty
- Cao Fei: The doll that cannot fall has fallen

5  **China's Geopolitics**

6  **Opening Beijing Winter Olympics**

4 Feb 2022: Beijing Winter Olympics Opening Ceremony,  
Xi Jinping & Putin pledge 'no limits' friendship

7  **Joint Statement: No limits Friendship & Media Mirroring**

## 8 National Radio & TV Administration 国家广播电视总局 (2018)

- 2021 NRTA under Central Propaganda Dept of CCP
  - secret agreement with Russia's Ministry of Digital Development, Communications and Mass Media. Leaked: Chinese media to repeat & amplify Russian propaganda
- Since Feb 2022: converging media narratives Russia / China
  - China amplifies Russia's fake news: Ukraine prepares biological warfare (cf. Hvistendahl & Kovalev, 2022)

## 9 Official Discourse on China's Mediasphere

- 'Glorious Russia! Glorious Putin! They have politicians in the West, but Putin, he is a great political player who will go down in history!'
- 'I support the disintegration of NATO! I support Russia, because when Russia falls, China is next!' (Weibo, 2 March 2022).
- 'Russia has done a beautiful job!'
  - (Cf. Bandurski, 2022)

## 10 Parrhesia in East & West

### 11 Parrhesia in Western Culture

- Greek παρρησία — first in Euripides (c.484-407 BC)
  - Literally: 'saying everything one has in mind'
  - Speaking truth to power, freedom of expression, transparency, duty, idle talk, gossip.

### 12 Parrhesia in Western Culture

- Foucault, 1983:
  - Condition: truth-tellers face risk or danger for them in telling truth
  - But they feel bound by duty to muster the courage and do so.
    - Foucault, Michel, 'Discourse and Truth: The Problematisation of Parrhesia', Six Lectures given at Berkeley, 1983.

### 13 Parrhesia Tradition in China

- Duke Huan of Qi 齊桓公 (r.685-643 BC) established office of 'admonition officers' (*jian guan* 諫官) to speak truth to power—until Liao dynasty (916-1125).

- Praised by Xi Jinping's e-government: He Jing 何静, website of Audit Bureau of Guilin City, Guangxi 广西壮族自治区桂林市审计局.

#### 14 **Parrhesia Tradition as the Intellectuals' Mission**

- Roaming scholars *shi* 士 in pre-Qin China
  - Confucius 孔子
  - Mencius 孟子
- Roam from kingdom to kingdom
- offer advice on good government to the ruler

#### 15 **Parrhesia Risks**

- Sima Qian 司馬遷 (c. 145-c. 86 BC) & Grand Historian to Emperor Han Wudi 漢武帝 (r. 141- 87 BC)
  - Sima Qian defended defeated general Li Ling 李陵 (d. 74 BC)
  - Death sentence
  - Commuted to castration and 3 years in prison
- Tradition of *xiaoshuo* 小说 — idle talk, gossip — history rather than fiction
- Political critique — often indirect

#### 16 **3 THEMES:**

### **Parrhesia in China's Mediasphere**

#### 17 I.

### **COLOURS OF UKRAINE**

#### 18 **COLOURS OF UKRAINE:**

### **1. Cao Fei 曹斐**

#### 19 **Multi-media artist CAO Fei 曹斐 (b. 1978)**

#### 20 **Cao Fei**

- 1 • Februar/März 2022
  - "Found daily colours to support Ukraine"

- Echoes of Ukraine found in China...

21  **Cao Fei on Instagram**

22  **COLOURS OF UKRAINE:**

## 2. Badiucao 巴丢草

23  **Badiucao**

- Born c. 1986 in China
- Known by pseudonym only
- Lives in Australia
- Active on Sina Weibo, other Chinese social media,
- Twitter, Instagram
- Website: <https://www.badiucao.com/latest-adventure>

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- #StopWar
- #StandWithUkraine
- <https://www.badiucao.com/latest-adventure>

25  **COLOURS OF UKRAINE:**

## 3. Huang Rui 黄锐

26  **Huang Rui 黄锐: 'Absence of Black Moon'**

- \*1952, Beijing
- 1978 co-published Jintian 今天 Today literary magazine
- 1980s Co-founder & member of Stars Group 星星画会
- Exhibitions in China, Europe, USA

27  **Huang Rui 黄锐: 'Absence of Black Moon'**

- Art Basel
- 2022
- Oil on canvas, 88 x 99 cm

28  **Huang Rui 黄锐: 'Absence of Black Moon'**

- ‘Together for Peace’: Exhibition by Ukrainian & Polish Embassies, Beijing, 12 March 2022
- *Dao de jing* 道德經 inspiration
- *Yi jing* 易經 *Book of Changes*

29  II.

## SUNFLOWERS

30  SUNFLOWERS:

### 1. Ai Weiwei 艾未未

31

Sunflower Seeds (*Kuihuazi* 葵花籽), Tate Modern, 2010

- ‘Readymade’—Marcel Duchamp (1887-1968)
- Sun & sunflowers: Mao & the people
- Symbol of communication— Cultural Revolution
- 100,000 seeds—Twitter users in world

32  SUNFLOWERS:

### 2. Badiucao 巴丢草

34  Ukrainian woman confronts Russian soldiers

Henichesk, sea of Asov

25 February 2022

“Take these seeds and put them in your pockets, so at least sunflowers will grow when you all lie down here.”

Viral on social media

35

1/6 series: Six-piece NFT (non-fungible tokens/cryptocurrency) collection

dedicated to the brave Ukrainians fighting against the Russian invasion, inspiring the world

All proceeds to go to Ukrainian government

37  **SUNFLOWERS:**

**3. Xi Yongjun 席永君**

38  **Xi Yongjun 席永君 (b. 1963)**

- b. 1963 Qionglai 邛崃, Sichuan
- Lives in Chengdu
- Poet, with international recognition
- Editor-in-chief of
  - literary magazines
  - Chengdu Evening News, etc.

39  **Microblog Poem: 'Ukraine: Homeland of Sunflowers (Poetry Series): Sunflowers', Xi Yongjun 席永君, 2022**

向日葵

更无柳絮因风起，

惟有葵花向日倾。

——【宋】司马光《客中初夏》

在乌克兰港口城市亨尼切斯克  
一位大妈当街怒怼俄罗斯士兵  
她大声质问：你们为什么要来  
我们这里？你们是侵略者  
你们是乌克兰人的敌人  
从这一刻起，你们被诅咒了  
你们应该把这些葵花籽  
放进你们的口袋里，这样  
等你们死后，它们就会  
在乌克兰的土地上自由生长  
那光明，那沉默的爱……

大妈深爱向日葵

向日葵是乌克兰的国花

40  III.

## RED & BLACK

41  RED & BLACK:

### 1. Badiucao 巴丢草

42  STOP 3/6

43  STOP 3/6

'In my view, if you open the dazzling neon jacket, China's complexion is nothing more than black and red.

Red is blood, fear and violence.

Black is iron, freezing nights, depression, despair, and the silent corners. It's the cloth gag covering the screams.

The country is like a giant meat grinder, a layer of fresh blood covering a layer of despair, new despair covering the layer of fresh blood, over and over again.'

<https://chinadigitaltimes.net/2013/12/ten-question-badiucao-%E5%B7%B4%E4%B8%A2%E8%8D%89/>, accessed 20 Jan 2024.

44  Badiucao 巴丢草

- Composite Portrait:
- Xi Jinping & Putin, 2022
- Badiucao's first solo show
- DOX, Prague, Czechia, May-August 2022

45  Red/Black: Colour of Anarchists

- Anarchy: 'doctrine of no government' 無政府主義 *wúzhèngfǔ zhǔyì*
- Against oppressive government
- Popular variant of socialism
- Russian Revolution 1917

- May Fourth Movement 1919

46  **RED & BLACK:**

2. Liao Weitang 廖伟棠

47  **Liao Weitang 廖伟棠**

- b. 1975 Xinxing county 新兴县, Guangdong
- Moves to Hong Kong (Cantonese name: Liu Waitong, pun on *liuwang aitong* 流亡哀痛, 'Grief in Exile')
- Poet, photographer, writer, magazine editor, bookshop manager
- Literary prizes in HK, Taiwan, abroad
- Assoc. Prof. National Taipei University of the Arts 國立臺北藝術大學 (Literature)

48  **'Winter on Fire', Liao Weitang 廖伟棠**

Winter on Fire

二二八連假前夕

我坐在路邊

用手機看紀錄片

Winter on Fire:

Ukraine's Fight for Freedom

49  **'Winter on Fire', Liao Weitang 廖伟棠**

Winter on Fire

二二八連假前夕

我坐在路邊

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Winter on Fire:

Ukraine's Fight for Freedom

50  **'Winter on Fire', Liao Weitang 廖伟棠**

51  **'Winter on Fire'**

我想截圖給我防火牆內的朋友看  
但只截下來字幕  
圖像變成一片漆黑只剩下：

52  **'Winter on Fire'**

「我的朋友和我  
開始搖響所有的鐘」  
「聖米迦勒修道院的人  
正在阻止這件事發生」  
「上一次這些鐘敲響  
是在1240年蒙古韃靼人  
入侵基輔之時」  
我不確定他們能否猜到什麼回事

53  **'Winter on Fire'**

而我住在基輔、第聶伯的朋友  
鐘聲盈耳，無暇寫詩  
她們忙於撬開  
十字架之上  
針孔一般狹窄的天空  
就像我住在九龍、港島、大嶼山  
每天都經歷著二二八前夕  
的朋友一樣

54  **Concluding Remarks**

55  **Concluding Remarks**

- 4.3.2022
- <https://www.badiuca.com/latest-adventure>

56  **Concluding Remarks**

- 4.3.2022; <https://www.badiuca.com/latest-adventure>

57  **Thank you!**