

**Standart: The Collected Drawings
of Antonio Mak Hin-yeung**

企硬的藝術：麥顯揚畫集

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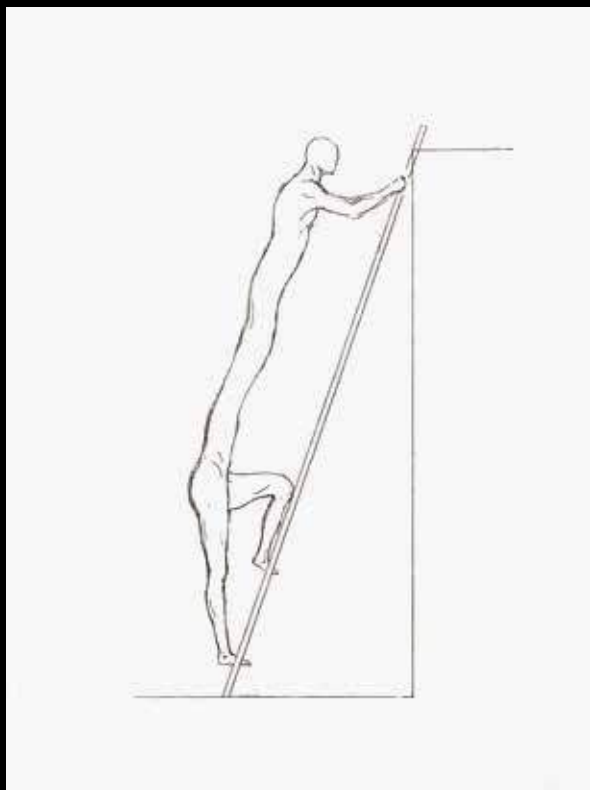
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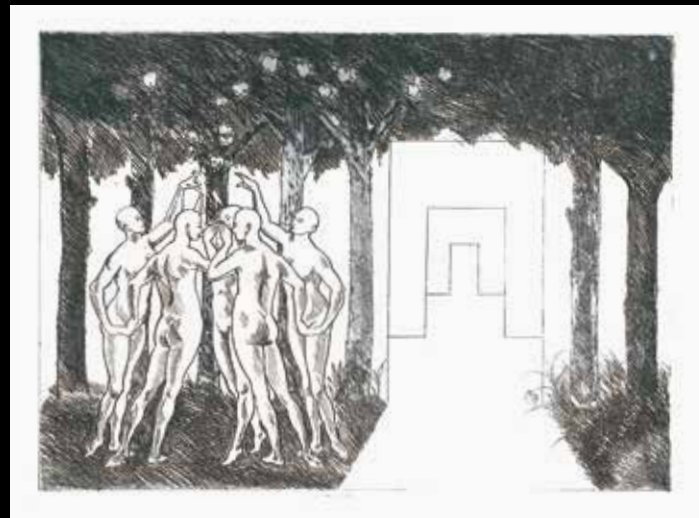
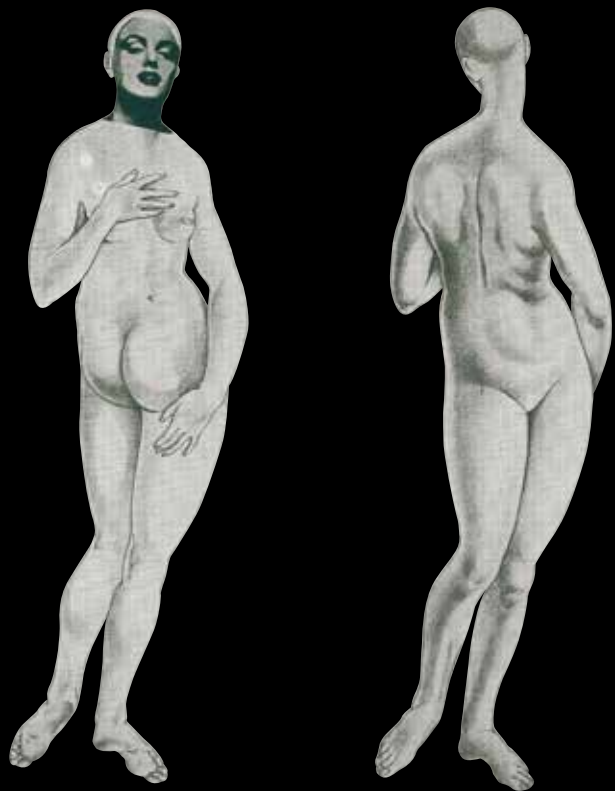
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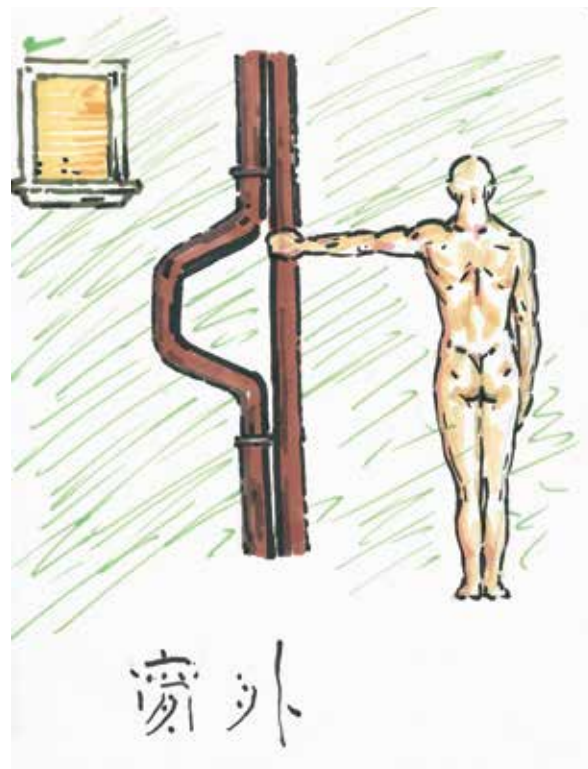
Drawings, collages, and notes
1960s–1990s

繪圖、拼貼及筆記

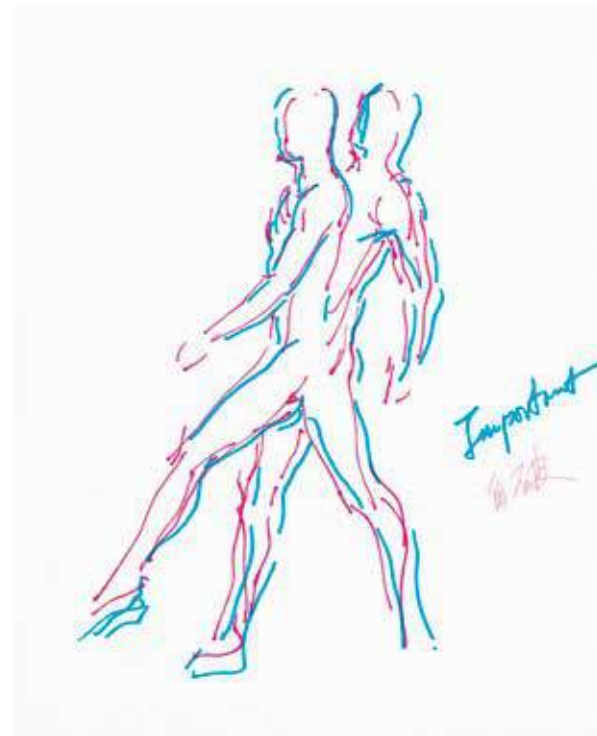
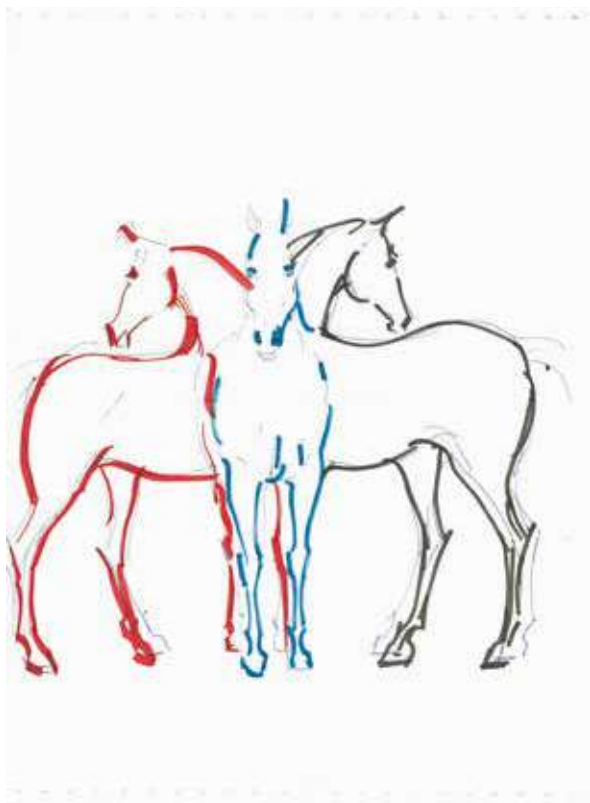




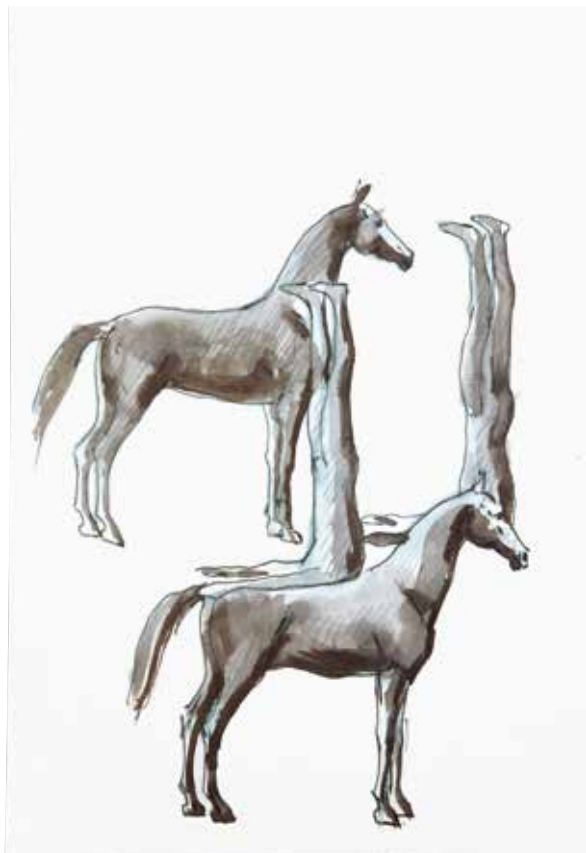




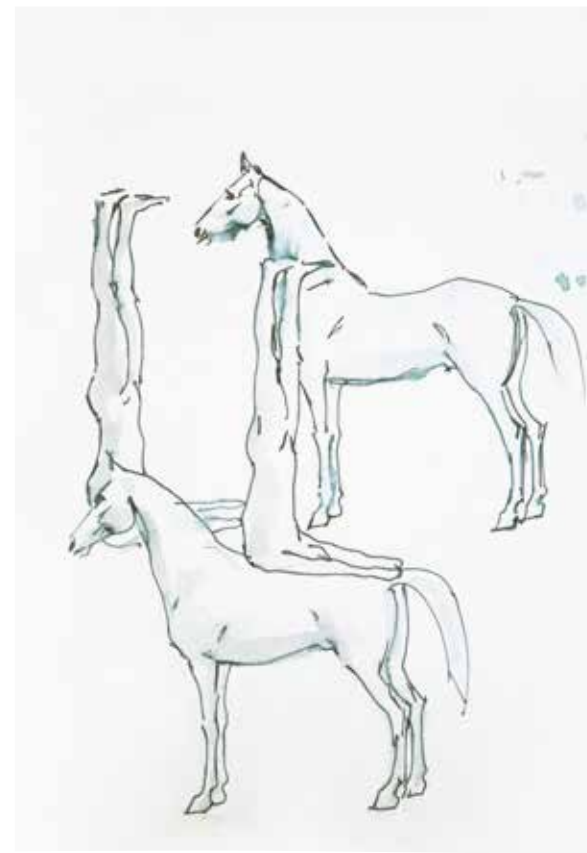








倒立馬背：黑 | *Upside down on horseback: black*
1980s 21cm x 30cm



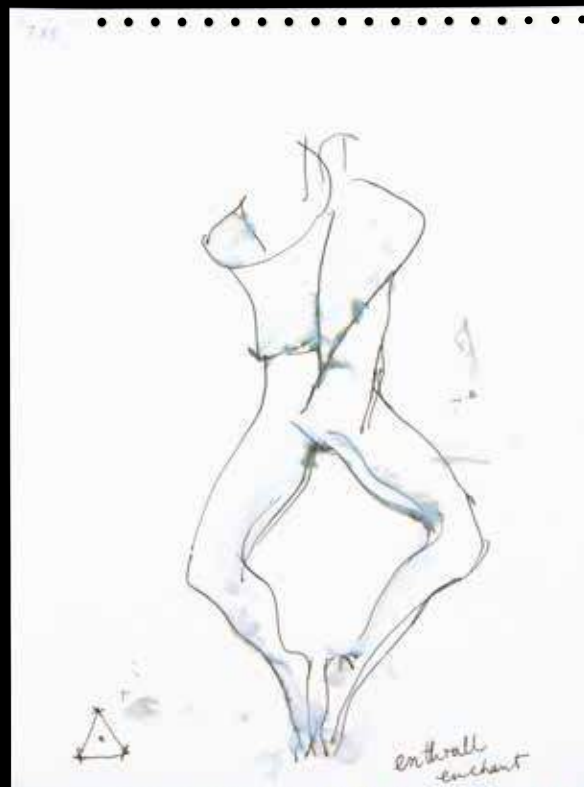
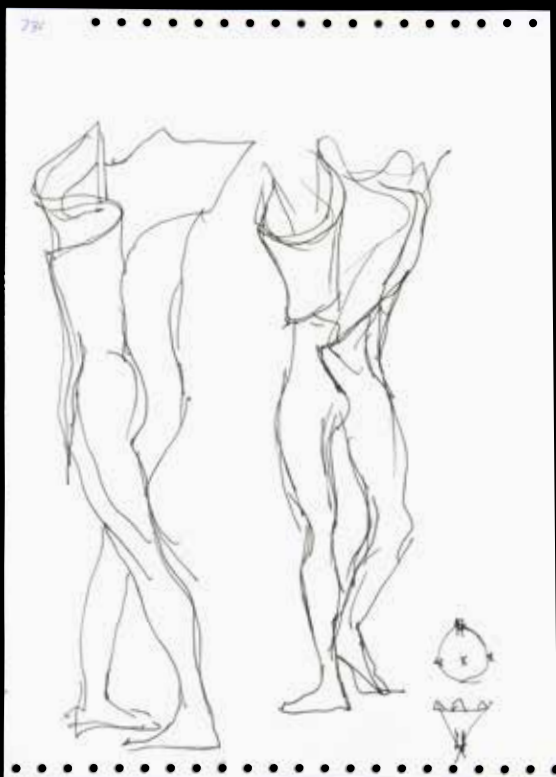
倒立馬背：白 | *Upside down on horseback: white*
1980s 21cm x 30cm



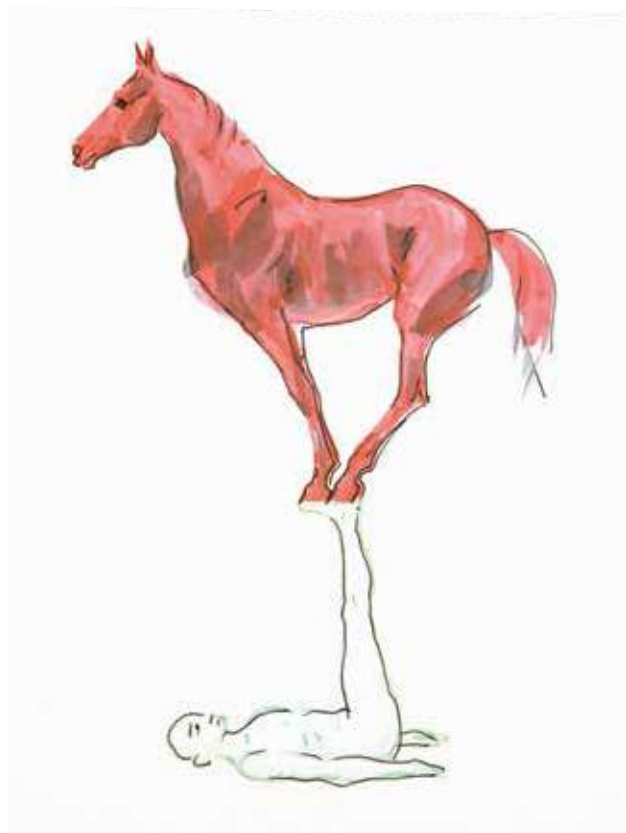
在急流中堅定不移（一） | *Unwavering in the fast currents I*
1980s 36cm x 28cm



在急流中堅定不移（二） | *Unwavering in the fast currents II*
1980s 36cm x 28cm







人馬：頂級表演（一） | *Man and horse: a top act I*
1990s 28cm x 38cm



人馬：頂級表演（二） | *Man and horse: a top act II*
1990s 28cm x 38cm

數個月後，當我在新加坡嘗試開展我的計劃時，我收到一通電話，說如果想見阿麥最後一面，最好趕緊回港。於是，我立即坐上一班航機，直奔醫院。看到他的身體狀況，我很震驚。

蘇珊要把他從醫院帶回家，渡過他生命中最後幾個小時。這是個明智的決定。阿麥回到家裏，抖擻精神起來，並堅持要我扶着他，在家中走一圈。他精神奕奕地談到了生命中的成就和遺憾。

第二天早上，阿麥離世了，一位朋友在他身旁誦讀藏傳佛教禱文。那一刻，我和他的一些朋友，包括黃仁達在內，看着他的呼吸愈來愈安靜。然後，一切歸於寂靜。

我對阿麥的回憶變得零碎。隨着時間和年齡記憶愈發模糊，出於某種原因，我只能記起我們之間一些看來瑣碎的經歷。然而，當我看到他的作品時，我仍然可以看到他的激情、機智、拒絕妥協、蔑視平庸，以及他對生活與藝術的熱愛。這些一切，將與他長存。

梁家泰，攝影師

The Mak-ian Theory of Evolution: (A Personal Reconstruction)

Valerie C. Doran

A Way In

To look through the more than 500 drawings, paintings and texts by Antonio Mak presented in this book, spanning a period of over 30 years, is to experience the full weight of Antonio's personal iconography—an iconography that is not only visual, but also philosophical and conceptual. Those who know Antonio's art are aware of the many layers of interplay and playfulness that shape his world, and that are so compellingly articulated in his sculptures. Many of the works presented in this book explore motifs that have been materialised by Antonio into three-dimensionality: here are his animated male figures, his chairs and ladders, his tigers and horses, his trees and books, his doubles and split figures. But the advantage of this rich collection of Antonio's studies is that they allow us to wander through the trajectories of Antonio's thoughts, to trace his conceptual explorations, to encounter his scribbled self-questionings and commentaries, and to better understand his stylistic explorations, appropriations, and transitions.

Such a rich body of work predicates many possible ways of engagement and

interpretation; but I would like to focus on one particular thread that lies at its core. For Antonio, everything begins with the body. His body—the male body. The proud body, the vulnerable body, the body that is drawn upwards towards heaven and downwards towards hell, held together by the centrifugal force of the human heart. In these works Antonio presents the male body in a whole spectrum of manifestations: as beautiful, vulnerable and arrogant; as cartoonish, anxious, and clueless; as desperate and divided; as heroic in its seeking and tragic in its failures.

Here we can see how, stylistically, Antonio draws from many different sources to express his visions: he appropriates, he responds, he reconstructs, he uses what makes sense to him, all in perfect freedom. (In this sense, as David Clarke has pointed out, he is a true conceptualist).¹ Here are drawings of the male body as elegant and detailed as a study by Michelangelo, and as flat and featureless as a line drawing by Michael Craig-Martin, an important mentor for Antonio during the years he studied at Goldsmiths in London. We see surrealistic juxtapositions (a man in a suit transforming into a suited chair), existential conundrums (a man emerging out of his own body) and haunting *mis-en-scenes* (a nude man standing on the trunk of a fallen tree, its roots wildly exposed, and his posture a study in despair).

But through it all, it is possible to trace a kind of Mak-ian sense of human evolution.²



Figure • roots I, 1980s

A Mak-ian Theory of Evolution

But be forewarned: this is not a chronological evolution, based on a timeline of Antonio's 'artistic development'. Rather, it is a visual and existential evolution distilled from this entire body of work, and it is both additive and reductive.

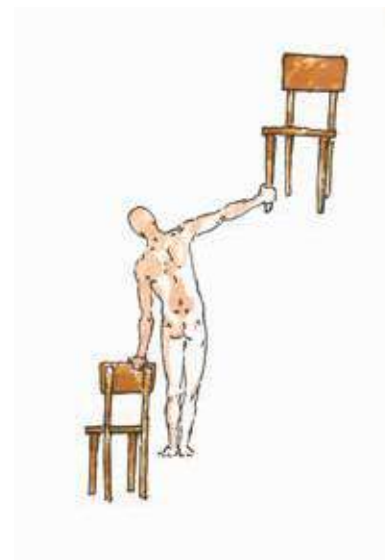
It begins at the most fundamental level, with a detailed pencil drawing of an oddly expressive human skeleton. The progression moves on to studies showing the addition of a powerful male musculature, drawn with a Michelangelo-esque precision. Then there is the covering of the musculature with the skin, and the male nude emerging in his beautiful

1 See David Clarke, *Chinese Art and Its Encounter with the World* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2011), p.153.

2 Perhaps the identification of such an evolutionary intent on Mak's part could be open to criticism of this being a case of subjective construction; yet in my encounters with Mak's work I have always felt a strong sense of this evolutionary presence and its innate logic.



Anatomy • chair, 1970s



Man and two chairs, 1980s



Suited man: skeleton, 1970s



Self-analysis, 1970s

completeness. He is an organic whole, possessed of his thinking nature (his head), his emotional nature (his heart) and his animal nature (his sex). We see his confident and even arrogant engagement with the man-made objects of his world, represented by the chairs, the combs and the mirrors that are part of Antonio's peculiar iconography of things. He uses them, manipulates them, admires his own image within them.

Gradually, however, a sense of anxiety creeps in, a realisation that this man-made world is not so easily manipulated after all, that it is closing in on him. The Dadaists and the Surrealists showed us that we are as much possessed by things as they

are possessed by us, and Antonio here pays homage to their mentorship. The objects that seemed there to serve him take on a life of their own. In his vulnerable nakedness, the man wrings his hands, he hides under a table. But he becomes trapped inside a chair, even poisoned by it, like a spider.



Anticipation, 1990s

He needs something else, some kind of civilised armour to hide and protect the vulnerability of his naked body and to help him navigate this modern, manufactured world. Enter the suit, and his concomitant transformation from a classical figure to a line drawing, a flattened creature, a cartoon, easily able to blend in. But there is a sacrifice implicit in this adaptation, in



Manchair I, 1980s



Man thinking about life under a roof, 1990s



Chair and the body, 1980s



Suited man: please, 1970s



Suited man: back, 1970s

this flatness. He loses the energy, passion and vulnerability of the body. He is sucked dry. He is reduced to the observer, to the thinking mind alone, and becomes a figure with a man's head and a skeleton's body.



Suited skeleton, 1970s

This is the turning point, the crux, the crisis. This is where things fall apart.

The man in the suit now seeks to escape this constructed world, to return to nature, to seek his core. We see him clinging to the trunk of a tree, as though desperately trying to merge with it, or claw his way inside it. From this point on this man has become aware of his own disjuncture, of the disconnects emerging within himself between the rational and the emotional, the spiritual and the animal. And we realise that this tree, this trunk (*gan* in Chinese), is a metaphor for the trunk of his own body,



Man and tree tango, 1990s



Man's nature, 1970s

the place where his heart resides. (Antonio's close friend, the artist Yank Wong Yan-kwai, once wrote about the way Antonio always kept his shirt partly unbuttoned, to expose the skin nearest his heart.)³

The leaves of the tree (*shuye*), which appear often in Antonio's work, are rebuses for the leaves of a book (also *shuye*—one is a homonym for the other) through which the narrative of his own evolution will be told.

³ See Wong Yan-kwai, *Looking for Antonio Mak*, exhibition catalogue (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Museum of Art, 2008), p.8.

The suit that is supposed to protect him becomes a mere absurd covering, a surface attempt to domesticate him; it is as ridiculous as putting a suit on a horse. And so the suit is discarded, and the man becomes naked once more.



Suited horse I, 1980s

But he has lost the wholeness he was born into. He is all mixed up. He loses his head, he is cut in two, his legs go in different directions, his mind ends up in his crotch, he cannot identify his roots. He dallies with tigers without awareness of their dangerous nature, and he dreams about history while lying on the back of a horse, oblivious to the fact that it is standing still.



Man and tiger: top act and tango, 1980s



Man thinking about history on horse back, 1990s



Make handlegs, 1980s



Identity and difference • ladder II, 1980s

He tries different attempts to regain his balance. He recreates the classical form of the centaur, where the rational strength of the man is wedded to the unbridled power of the horse, but succeeds only in attaching the bottom half of a man to the bottom half of a horse, a grotesquerie that only doubles the figure's bestial nature.



Manhorse I, 1980s

He seeks a path back into himself and a hole opens up in his body to reveal an ascending staircase, leading both in and out. He searches for transcendence and his body unravels to create a pair of wings.



Staircase on man II, 1980s

He attempts to take flight, but the wings turn into a cape and the cape turns into a veil that covers his face, that hinders and smothers him: superman loses his head and runs off in a nightmare panic.



Wingcaped man, 1980s



Superman lost his head, 1980s

Yet he doesn't give up. His trunk sprouts new leaves, his book opens to another page.

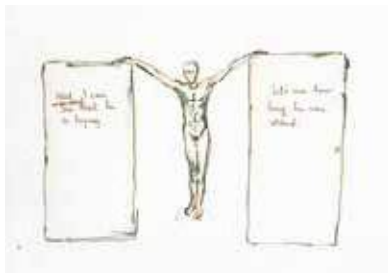


Either it's a trap or it's simply fate, 1980s



A new page, 1990s

And thus for all the disjunctures and failed attempts to regain balance and wholeness, the evolutionary narrative revealed in Antonio's work is a heroic one, because it is a story of a man who never gives up, who will try every which way to bring the body and the spirit back together, to open a path into the heart of the matter.



Let's see how long he can stand, 1980s

A Way Out

In Antonio's later sculptures, the body takes on a further evolutionary step that is not explicitly present in the drawings, because it is integrally linked to the materiality of his sculptural language. This final stage of the

body's evolution is found in the textured nudes and human trunks which are so clearly modeled with the imprint of the movement of Antonio's hands, and whose surfaces are marked with jagged openings and ragged holes, allowing the viewer to glimpse the hollow interior.



Yellow wind, 1989, bronze, h. 25.2cm

Yet these seeming windows into nothingness are really the visible markers of where the artist has finally broken through the outer shell of the body, to find what lies at its core—they are entries not into emptiness, but to the living energy within, the centre of balance.

While Antonio's drawings and paintings do not explicitly depict this evolutionary step, its core energy is nascent within them. Through the gift of this book, we can not only seek its presence, but absorb it.

任卓華

入內

翻閱本書所載麥顯揚在三十多年間創作、數量逾五百幅的繪圖和筆記，就是在感受他整個個人圖像系統的份量——一個不僅是視覺、也是哲學與概念上的圖像系統。熟悉麥顯揚藝術的人會意識到當中層層互為影響、玩味十足的元素，它們塑造了麥顯揚的世界，亦於其雕塑中表露無遺。書中許多畫作探索了一些後來會被麥顯揚物化成立體的主題：包括男性肢體、椅、梯、虎、馬、樹、書、雙身，以及分離的肖像。然而，這個豐富的麥顯揚練習紀錄的重要之處，在於它讓我們能夠漫遊藝術家的思想軌跡，追溯他的概念探詢，邂逅他紊亂的自省和評註，以至更深入了解他創作風格上的探索、挪用與轉變。

本書豐碩的材料包容許多詮釋的空間和方式，但我只想聚焦於一道關鍵的思路。對麥顯揚來說，一切始於身體。他的身體——男性的身體。那個引以為傲、脆弱、上朝天堂下朝地獄、憑着心來連繫的肢體。在這些紙本作品之中，麥顯揚展現男性身體的方方面面：它既是美麗、脆弱與孤傲的，亦是卡通化、焦慮與一無所知的，更是奮不顧身與分割的；他在追尋中充滿英雄氣概，遭遇挫敗時又流露悲痛。

就風格而言，我們可見麥顯揚如何參考不同的原料來表達他的洞見：他絕對自由地挪用、回應、重構及使用他認為合乎情理的事物。（故祈大衛稱他為真正的概念論者。）¹ 這裏展示的男性身體繪圖時而優雅細緻，時而扁平無奇，前者就如米開朗基

羅的身體研究，後者則如麥顯揚於倫敦大學金匠學院求學時期的重要導師——麥克爾·克萊格·馬田所畫的線條畫。我們亦看到當中有超現實並置圖像（一位身穿西裝的男人變形為一把穿上西裝的椅子）、存在主義的謎語（一個男人從自我越出），以及詭異的場面調度（一個裸體的男人站在一棵已倒塌的樹幹上，樹根粗野外露，男人以絕望的姿態沉思）。

通過這一切去追溯一種麥顯揚式的人類進化卻是可行的。²

麥顯揚式進化論

請注意：此進化論並非按照麥顯揚的「藝術發展」順時序地展開，而是從所有作品中精煉而成的一種視覺與存在主義式進化，它可增，亦可刪。

一切從最基本開始——一幅細緻而怪誕生動的骷髏鉛筆畫，繼而發展至風格如米開朗基羅的繪圖般精密的強健男性骨骼系統學習。這個骨骼系統添上一層皮膚後，一個美麗無缺的男性裸體乍現。他是一個有機的整體，擁有與生俱來的思維能力（其頭部）、情感（其心）及動物的天性（其性）。男人自信地、甚至是傲慢地接觸世間的人造物，如椅子、梳子和鏡子等等麥顯揚特有的物件圖像。男人使用和操縱這些人造物，在眾物之間膜拜自我形象。

不過，一種焦慮的感覺逐漸浮現。男人察覺到自己並不能輕易操縱這個人造世界，反而被它步步進逼包圍着。達達主義者與超現實主義者讓我們明

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《人和兩椅》
《西裝友：骨架》
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《自我剖析》
→ p.20

1 參見祈大衛：《Chinese Art and Its Encounter with the World》（香港：香港大學出版社，2011），頁153。

2 本文對麥顯揚作品中進化意圖的辨識，或許會被批判為主觀的建構；但當我接觸他的作品時，往往會強烈地感受到這種進化是存在且具備內在邏輯的。

《NTCP 純》
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《人椅（一）》
《人在遮蓋下思考生命》
《椅子和身軀》
→ p.22

白到，人類與物件互相支配着彼此，麥顯揚在此對兩者唇齒相依的關係致敬。那些看似侍候男人的物件失控了。男人拖着脆弱而裸露的身體，扭擰雙手，躲藏在桌下。後來他更被困於椅子內，椅子甚至如蜘蛛般毒害他。

男人需要其他東西，像一些文明的盔甲來隱藏與保護其脆弱的赤身，並引導他遊走於這個現代生產世界中。男人穿上西裝後，整個人從古典的形像變成一個如線條畫般扁平和卡通的人物，輕易地融入週遭的環境。這個適應、變得平庸的過程卻暗藏代價：男人極其枯槁，他的身體失去了力量、熱情，也不再脆弱，但他卻退化成一個只具思考力的觀察者，隨後更變成一個擁有男性頭顱和骷髏身體的人。

這正是轉捩點，是關鍵，也是危機，一切自此分崩離析。如今，身穿西裝的男人嘗試逃離這個建構的世界，重返自然並尋回自我核心。他緊抓住樹幹，就如極其渴望能與之結合或開闢一條通道以入內。此時，男人意識到自我的斷裂，和那從自身溢出、在理性與感性、靈性與獸性之間的分離。這棵樹、這樹幹（以「幹」暗喻男人的軀幹），就是其心靈所在。（麥顯揚的摯友兼藝術家黃仁達曾經寫過，麥顯揚經常不扣襯衫的部分鈕扣，就是要顯露最接近心臟的肌膚。）³

在麥顯揚作品中經常出現的樹「葉」，實為書「頁」的畫謎，以訴說他的進化論述。

那一套原用來保護男人身體的西裝，現已成為一件愚蠢可笑的外衣，一層企圖馴化男人的表層。它看起來就像為馬匹披掛西裝一樣荒謬。故此男人摒棄西裝，再次裸露身體。

但他已失去了與生俱來的完整性，感到迷惑不已。現在男人是拼湊而來的，他失去了自己的頭顱，身體被一分为二，雙腳朝不同方向伸展，他的

思想最終落在胯下，再也辨別不到自己的根。男人未有意識到老虎生性兇殘，與之戲耍。他又躺在馬背上夢見歷史，忘卻馬已停蹄。

男人嘗試以不同的方法來重拾平衡。他欲透過連結人的理性力量與馬匹的野性力量來重塑經典的半人馬像，卻只能夠將人的下半身和馬的下半身結合，創造了一個獸性更強的怪誕生物。

當男人尋找返回自我的路徑時，他的身體穿了一個洞，露出一道上行的梯子，同時暗示入內和出走的可能。他追求超越，身體便裂開，長出一對翅膀。

男人嘗試飛翔之際，他的翅膀卻變成一件斗篷，斗篷其後又幻化成一塊遮蓋着他臉龐的面紗，窒礙着他：超人失去了自己的頭顱，承受着夢魘般的恐慌而迅速逃離。

但他沒有放棄。他的肢幹長出新葉，其書本又翻開新的一頁。

縱觀所有肢體的分離和企圖恢復平衡與完整卻失敗的嘗試而言，麥顯揚作品中的進化論述甚具英雄氣概。因為故事是說一個永不言敗的男人用盡一切方法嘗試將身體和心靈合一，開闢一道通往事物核心的道路。

越出

身體在麥顯揚晚期的雕塑作品中繼續進化，但這部分未有明顯表現在其畫作之中，因為它與雕塑語言的物質性密不可分。富有質感、清楚印有麥顯揚手工造像痕跡的裸體和人體軀幹，正是身體進化的最後階段。雕塑上參差不齊的缺口和粗糙的小孔，更讓觀者瞥見中空的身體內部。

這些看似導入虛無的窗戶，確是藝術家最終突破身體的外殼、尋求核心之物的明證。核心所藏的並非虛無，而是生存的活力，是一股平衡。

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3 參見黃仁達：《尋找麥顯揚》展覽場刊（香港：香港藝術館，2008），頁8。

麥顯揚畫作縱然沒有明顯描述這個終極進化步驟，其核心能量卻在其中萌芽生長。我們透過這本書，不但能夠找到人類進化的存在，更能夠理解、內化。

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