

罗斯·比勒尔： 赫尔墨斯的过境

ROSS BIRRELL： THE TRANSIT OF HERMES

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1998年，罗斯·比勒尔交给友人一个包裹，并仔细交代，要对方将包裹带到圣彼得堡的冬宫桥，然后面向东北方向以确保包裹在桥的右边，再将包裹内容投入涅瓦河中。包裹里装的是《马克思恩格斯选集》。这一瞬间被封存在一张照片里。

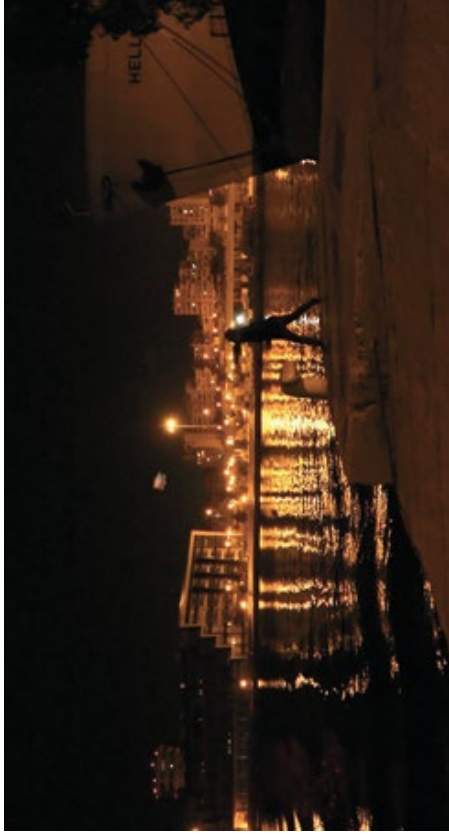
这是名为“使者”的一系列观念作品的部分，在随后几年里，不同的“使者”携带不同书籍，在不同的水域和海洋重复了这一动作：2001年，一本《易经》被丢进了黄海；马丁·海德格尔的《存在与时间》在2012年坠入科罗拉多大峡谷；而最近的一次是2016年，托马斯·莫尔的《乌托邦》沉没于雅典的比雷埃夫斯港。

初看上去，这样的姿态似乎是虚无主义的一——仿佛一种对于过去的重要文本的忽视

代式失望。然而结合比勒尔更宽泛的实践背景来看，这些行为便显现出既敏锐又开放的特质。作品探讨的是文字与地点、概念与生活之间的关系，以及那些传递书籍之手彼此之间的关系——书籍随后被归还于水、重新进入知识的生态系统。历史在其自身之上被折叠，被重述，被挑战。

“裙子”寻求出去，从自身生长出来，裙子叠裙子，形成一种运动中的复杂体，它并非静止不变，而是处在连续变化之中。”比勒尔2014年在巴塞罗那的美术馆与其同在格拉斯哥艺术学院任教的前同事大卫·哈丁的合作展“冬季防线”引用了吉尔·德勒兹的这句话作为展览的引言。“裙子”的概念是该展览的主线，同时也是比勒尔创作的核心，为其作品中繁复的事物、人、时间与地点之间的多元关联提供了比喻。

在巴塞罗那，这对双人组合展示了两件与实物等大的叙利亚棕熊伊泰克的雕塑。这些棕熊是二战期间在意大利冬季防御前线作战的波兰部队的吉祥物，后来成为了爱丁堡动物园里最著名的居民，儿时的哈丁曾拜访过它。为展览提供结构的另一元素是一个灯光概念——展厅的天花板上悬挂着不同颜色的玻璃，分别呼应着四位革新派作曲家：伊阿尼斯·希纳基斯（黑）、阿沃·帕特（白）、康伦·南卡罗（蓝）和奥利维埃·梅西安（红）。这些作曲家有着类似的移民和受迫害经历，也都曾在冲突与分裂的阵线前后穿梭。通过交叠的符号、色彩和声音，艺术家、思想家、事件与观念在多维维度下串联，并组成了崭新而复杂的星群。



左：
《雅典至卡斯泰尔之旅：赫尔墨斯
的过境》在圣彼得堡冬宫桥的展览
旅行起点，第14届卡塞尔文献展
展，雅典，2017年
Left:
Launch event of *The
Athens-Kassel Ride: The
Transit of Hermes*, starting
at the Dorsivoy Bridge, Saint
Petersburg, August 1, 1998

右：
“使者”系列中，《乌托邦：从
雅典到圣彼得堡的旅程》的展览
旅行起点，1998年9月11日
Bottom:
Collector's Works of Marx
at the Dorsivoy Bridge, Saint
Petersburg, August 1, 1998

“使者”系列中，托马斯·莫尔的《乌托邦》在比雷埃夫斯港的进港中，2016年3月11日
Thomas More's *Utopia* thrown into the Mediterranean Sea, Piraeus, March 11, 2016

在1998，Ross Birrell handed a parcel to a friend with careful instructions to bring it to the Palace Bridge in St. Petersburg and, facing northeast with the Winter Palace visible on the right, throw its contents into the Neva River. The parcel contained *The Collected Works of Marx* and Engels. The moment was captured in a photograph.

This became part of a series of conceptual works titled “Envoys”, repeated by different envoys with different books at various bodies of water and abysses in the years that followed: *I Ching* and *Time* into the Yellow Sea in 2001, Martin Heidegger's *Being and Time* into the Grand Canyon in 2012, and most recently, Thomas More's *Utopia* drowned in the harbour at Piraeus, Athens in 2016.

At first the gesture appears nihilist—like postmodern disenchantment with the seminal texts of the past—but in the context of Birrell's wider practice these acts quickly emerge as something at once more acute and open-ended. It is about the relationship between words and place, ideas and life, and the hands between which the book was exchanged before it was given back to the water, to re-enter the ecosystem of knowledge. Folding history back upon itself, rearticulating and challenging it.

“The fold winds, grows out of itself and, as fold builds upon fold, forms a moving complexity that is not static but is constantly changing.” This quote from Gilles Deleuze opened “Winter Line,” Birrell's joint exhibition with David Harding, a former colleague at the Glasgow School of Art, where Birrell teaches, at Kunsthalle Basel in 2014. This idea of the fold is central to the exhibition, as well as Birrell's overall oeuvre, in naming the multidimensional relationality between things, people, times, and places that threads itself through his work.

In Basel, the pair showed two life-sized sculptures of the Syrian brown bear Wojtek, who became the mascot of Polish troops fighting along the military front known as the Winter Line in Italy during World War II. Wojtek subsequently became the most famous inhabitant of the Edinburgh Zoo, where Harding visited him as a child. Also framing the exhibition was a lighting concept in four colored glass installed in the ceilings corresponded to four innovative composers—Iannis Xenakis (black), Arvo Part (white), Conlon Nancarrow (blue), and Olivier Messiaen (red)—who share histories of migration and persecution and have traversed lines of conflict and division. In this way, artists, thinkers, events, and ideas are connected across several dimensions through overlapping symbols, hues, and sounds to form new and complex constellations.



在比勒尔的创作中，尤其是在他与哈丁

的深度合作当中，音乐始终扮演着将这些星群衔接在一起的角色。在雅典举办的第14届卡塞尔文献展的开幕周末，两人组织了一场音乐会，雅典国家交响乐团携手叙利亚移民爱乐乐团，共同演奏了波兰作曲家亨里克·普茨曼最负盛名的曲目《能歌交响曲》。戈雷茨基曾说，这部二十世纪最受欢迎的古典乐谱之一“并非关于战争”。戈雷茨基的许多家庭成员都死在德国集中营里，但“巴赫也是德国人”，他说，“还有舒伯特，以及施特劳斯”——“这只是一百一一般意义上的《悲歌交响曲》。”

尽管这样的惊喜给作品蒙上了感伤的色彩，但在雅典音乐厅里人们长时间的起立鼓掌印证了这一宏大的弦乐作品不可小觑的力量。叙利亚战争的悲剧丝毫没有被弱化或抽象化，反而在此刻沉淀于历史，深沉且显然。

在位于卡塞尔文献展展区的一座新古典主义风格的图书馆里，浏览室的屏幕上播放着罗斯·比勒尔2015年的影片《一个美丽的生命》。这部由比勒尔与建筑师乔安娜·克罗奇共同完成的影片，见证了塞巴斯蒂安·麦金托什设计的格拉斯哥艺术学院被2014年的大火严重烧毁后的状态，以及交叉给当地社区带来的创伤。以这座著名的建筑中最具特色的图书馆为背景，一位孤独的小提琴家在此演奏比勒尔所作的乐曲，与此同时，镜头在烧焦的建筑内部游移。影片向我们问道：一座建筑可以像一支乐曲一样被解构再被重组吗？废墟是会有生命的吗？随着比勒尔的乐谱从格拉斯哥来到希腊，两座图书馆

仿佛同胞或老友一般展开了对话。

比勒尔在今年文献展的主要参展作品沿循了相似的概念：《赫尔墨斯的过境》是一个在雅典和卡塞尔之间长达百日的骑马旅行。赫尔墨斯是旅行队中的一匹担当名贵的纯种阿拉伯马。当然，赫尔墨斯也是希腊神话中的边界和旅行者之神，是在众神间传递消息的密使。借着这匹名为赫尔墨斯的马，比勒尔回归使者的主题，在旧有边界之间创造新的关联与共鸣。

雅典至卡塞尔之行的灵感来源于瑞士作家艾梅·菲利普斯·奇费利在1928至1928年间骑马从布宜诺斯艾利斯到纽约的那次旅行。奇费利与作为旅行者的马之间的特殊关系也成为这次的旅行提供了启发——超越“人”、“民族国家”这些令人不安的概念形成的社群。比勒尔的创作观念中充斥着从唐娜·哈拉维到乔治·阿本之类似的理论脚注，但与“使者”系列相似，这些理论间现实中的关系和地域有着深刻而直接的关联。

近些年来，许多难民跨越地中海，来到比雷埃夫斯港。而将塞尔的《乌托邦》投掷于此，是在提出这样一个开放性的问题：我们如何能通过学习历史以想象出更好的未来？将这些难民在希腊北部冒着生命危险走过的旅程再走一遍，并不能回答这个问题，一匹名为赫尔墨斯的种马也并不能传达任何明确的讯息。骑马旅行队将于六月抵达卡塞尔，从概念上讲，旅行那时并未结束，它将呈现一片问题丛生的风景——系在地图上绘制的线与一百个日夜叠加，在一个褶皱的内部激起波瀾。（翻译：潘丽）

Consistently in Birrell's work, and especially in his extensive collaborations with Harding, music is the glue that holds these constellations together—and often against hard odds. During the opening weekend of Documenta 14 in Athens, the two organized a concert in which the Athens State Orchestra joined the Syrian Expat Philharmonic in playing the Polish composer Henryk Górecki's famous *Symphony of Sorrowsful Songs*. Górecki said that this work, one of the most popular classical scores of the twentieth century, “is not about war”—many of his family members died in German concentration camps, yet “Bach was German too,” he said, “and Schubert, and Strauss”—“it’s a normal *Symphony of Sorrowsful Songs*.”

While this logic could tip the balance of most works unfavorably towards the sentimental, the standing ovations in the Athens concert hall showed this vast army of strings as a force to be reckoned with. The tragedy of the Syrian war did not lose any of its severity or specificity, but became simultaneously deep, historical, and transcendent.

In a neoclassical library, also at Documenta's Athens chapter, Ross Birrell's 2015 film *A Beautiful Living Thing* plays on a monitor in the reading room. The film, made together with architect Joanna Crotch, is a testimony to the state of Charles Rennie Mackintosh's Glasgow School of Art after it was heavily damaged by fire in 2014, as well as to the trauma that followed in the local community. The library of the famous building—its jewel—serves as the setting for a lonesome violinist playing a composition by Birrell as the camera pans over the sooted interior. Can a building be a composition, deconstructed and reassembled, the film asks us; can a ruin be a living thing? As Birrell's score reaches from Glasgow to Greece, the two libraries begin to correspond, like siblings or old friends, as if to suggest they may indeed.

Traveling a similar conceptual path, Birrell's main contribution to this year's Documenta is a 100-day horseback caravan between Athens and Kassel titled *The Transit of Hermes*. Hermes is a much sought-after thoroughbred Arravani horse who is accompanying the ride, but, of course, is also the Greek god of transitions and boundaries, and the emissary of messages between the gods. With Hermes the horse, Birrell returns to the themes of the envoy, and the making of new lines of kinship across old boundaries.

The Athens-Kassel Ride is inspired by the ride undertaken by the Swiss writer Aimé Félix Tschiffely between Buenos Aires and New York from 1925-28. As such, Tschiffely's special relationship to horses as companion species infects this journey, too, with ideas for new communities formed beyond freight divisions such as human and nation-state. Birrell's concept is ridden with academic references from Donna Haraway to Giorgio Agamben, but, as in the “Envy” works, these theories are deeply and immediately tied to real relations and geographies.

Throwing More's *Utopia* into the harbor at Piraeus—where so many refugees have arrived from across the Mediterranean in recent years—is asking an open question about how we might imagine better futures while learning from the past. To follow on that journey north from Greece, so dangerously traveled by the same refugees, does not answer this question, nor does Hermes the Arravani carry with him any one message. Rather, the caravan will ride into Kassel in June conceptually still underway, embodying the accumulation of a troubled landscape—a line drawn over a map—and 100 days, stirring inside a fold. ■

“罗斯·比勒尔与大卫·哈丁：冬季的过境”
展场现场，巴塞罗那本土馆，2014年
View of “Rosa Birrell and David
Harding, Winter Line,” Kunsthalle
Kassel, 2014
Photo: David Hasebiller
All images courtesy the artist.