



Man of many 多才多藝真面目

FACES

藝術家宋培倫是中國貴州省神秘的夜郎谷掌門人，谷內的石製人臉雕像是他不斷擴張的藝術願景的一部分。在他迎來八十歲大壽前，他與**Jamie Fullerton**暢談其未來計劃

Artist Song Peilun is the gatekeeper of the mystical Yelang Valley in China's Guizhou province, known for its stone-carved figures. As he approaches his 80th birthday, he speaks to **Jamie Fullerton** about the future of the sculpture park

Additional reporting by **Paula Jin**
Photos by **Matjaž Tančič**



“T

hese are Miao people – they’re more open-minded than most in China,” says Song Peilun, tilting his phone to show me a photo of a group of nearly naked twentysomethings dancing around a flaming pyre.

With a waterfall of black hair brushing against his traditional white tunic, the impish, 79-year-old artist finger-swipes his phone. More bare bodies of Miao people are revealed on screen in snapshots of grass skirts, smoke clouds and hands ritualistically raised to the sky. Also in the pictures are stone humanoid faces glaring at the dancers – tombstone teeth, chimney noses and blue-painted goggle eyes jutting dramatically from the bizarre structures.

The scenes bring to mind the moai statues of Easter Island, but the photos were taken in Yelang Valley, Song’s 20ha sculpture park located just south of Guiyang, the capital city of China’s southwest Guizhou province.

The Miao make up one of the largest ethnic minority groups in Guizhou province and these kinds of images are emblematic of their culture, which some historians estimate dates back 5,000 years in China. According to Miao lore, supernatural forces breeze through the world, and spirits can be contacted through rituals. Throughout the culture’s history, animals, trees and stones have been worshipped, explaining one aspect of Song’s photos.

Highway signs signal the turnoff to the park, but this is not your average day trip destination. Founded in 1997, Yelang Valley features hundreds of stone sculptures of faces envisaged by Song, a former professional artist and art teacher, then constructed under his supervision by local farmers from the Miao and Buyi ethnic groups. Reaching the winter of his life and with no completion point for the park in sight, Song has been compared to Catalan architect Antoni Gaudí, whose iconic Sagrada Família in Barcelona remains unfinished almost a century after his death.

Arriving at the park, a short drive from Guiyang’s 4.3 million population buzz, I enter a mist of arty ambience. Students from the city’s colleges dab brushes at their canvases, rendering the more regal-faced sculptures lining the river that runs through the main park area. Craggy staircases lead to arched doorframes and rustic huts are reached by stoop-walking through rocky tunnels. Song’s mongrel dog Ba Dou sniffs the base of a throne made from crudely piled stones, sticks and tyres. With their bulbous, cartoonish features, some of the sculptures seem descended from Homer Simpson, while others look like African tribal masks.

Speaking over the tapping of stone workers building his latest sculptures, Guizhou-born Song says that his stone faces were inspired by props worn in the mysticism-tinged performance style of Nuo



Left to right: Artist Song Peilun is the founder of Yelang Valley; a student from a city college painting at Yelang Valley

左至右：
藝術家宋培倫乃夜郎谷雕塑公園創辦人；貴陽市內的學生於夜郎谷取景作畫

「這些是苗族人，他們比大部分中國人都開明。」宋培倫邊說邊給我展示他手機裡的照片，上面是一群圍著篝火跳舞且幾乎赤裸的人。

瀑布般的黑色長髮順著他的白色傳統長衫傾瀉而下，現年79歲的老頑童宋培倫滑動著他的手機螢幕，更多的赤裸苗族人——中國西南貴州省人數最多的少數民族之一——陸續出現在螢幕上。照片裡是疾舞的草裙，還有煙霧和儀式般伸向天空的手。

世代以來，這種影像一直展示著苗族文化對於神靈世界的信仰。一些歷史學家相信，苗

族文化在中國有五千年歷史。該文化認為超自然力量統治世界，而這樣的儀式可以通靈。

縱貫這一文化的歷史，動物、樹木和石頭都是被崇拜的對象，這也從某種角度詮釋了宋培倫的照片。在照片裡，用石頭堆砌成的疑似人臉盯著這些苗族舞者——而墓碑做成的牙齒、煙囪做成的鼻子和粉飾成藍色的大眼睛，則與其詭異的構造格格不入。這種場景彷彿是於復活節島翻拍1973年的恐怖電影《異教徒》。但這些照片卻是在宋培倫那佔地20公頃且位於貴州省會貴陽市南部的夜郎谷雕塑公園內拍攝的。

高速公路的路標指示通往公園的小路，但這絕不是普通的一日遊景點。夜郎谷成立於1997年，其一大特色是成百上千個石頭人臉雕塑。資深藝術家暨美術老師宋培倫的腦海裡早就有這些想法，他指導當地苗族和布依族農民把它們變成現實。雖已屆暮年，公園尚無完成之期，宋培倫一直被比作加泰羅尼亞建築師高迪，後者在巴塞羅那的聖家堂直到其去世近百年後還未竣工。

車程距離擁有430萬人口的喧鬧貴陽不遠，我很快就到達了這片藝術沃土。城裡的大學生對照著公園中心小河邊看起

“I wanted them to look primitive and crude – that’s why I worked with farmers”

opera, traditionally significant to Miao people. The performances are characterised by garish wooden masks depicting gods, and are believed by many performers to drive away devils.

“Nuo opera is much older than Peking opera,” says Song, who is Han Chinese and was exposed to Miao culture early in life due to its prevalence in his home province. “People didn’t understand the nature of life in the past. Through Nuo they were able to communicate with heaven and Earth. The performers were considered the bridge between them.”

After quitting teaching in 1988 and helping to set up an artist zone in Guiyang, Song was hired in the US to work on theme parks depicting traditional Chinese elements. Following his return to China he craved a more personal large-scale project. Inspired by the Nuo style he’d seen in Guizhou, in 1997 he rented the land Yelang Valley lies on.

According to Song, some locals called him crazy for renting the non-arable land, but the stones strewn around it were part of his plan. He hired local Miao and Buyi farmers – skilled in stonework from having built their own farm buildings for generations – to piece together his first faces. As rock piles gradually became ears, eyes, noses and mouths, Yelang Valley was born.

The imperfect method of making a sculpture with stone slabs, rather than chiselling from a single large stone, made many of the works look endearingly childish. “I wanted them to be primitive and crude – that’s why I worked with farmers,” says Song, gazing down from a turret-like building overlooking his rigid silent army. “Art school students wouldn’t create the same effect. You can’t call someone a master just because they went to university.”

我本來就想讓它們看上去很原始很粗糙——這就是為何我跟農民一起創作

Statements such as these help explain the loyalty Song has earned from the stone workers, up to 20 of whom work at the park at a time. He pays them a modest day rate and they work when they find time away from the fields. Some even forfeit payment, knowing that Song is not rich. He charges visitors just 20 yuan to enter the park and hangs up the phone on offers of investment, fearing the commercialisation of his vision. Rather than a garish gift shop, two years ago he opened an art gallery on site, inviting artists from around the world to stay at the park for free.

In increasingly commercialised China, where domestic tourism is booming along with the theme park industry, Yelang Valley is wonderfully unique. Song turns 80 this year, and fans of his work have wondered what will happen to his park when he is gone. The commercial calls keep coming, and the city is encroaching on Song’s peaceful enclave. Old residential buildings around the park are being demolished to make way for luxury flats. A new dormitory block housing students from Guizhou University of Finance and Economics juts into the skyline above the stone faces, as does the university’s sports stadium.

If Song is worried about this, he’s not letting on. “It’s not something I can control,” he says. And though he has a daughter, he’s certainly not concerned enough to put rigid succession plans in place. “I



don’t think about whether my work is able to last or be passed down. This is a pursuit, a dream.”

As we talk, two Miao musicians, one parping a bamboo pipe *lusheng*, the other making melodic squeals by blowing through a folded leaf, arrive to provide a jolly soundtrack to our short walk to Song’s house. Cats paw ankles for attention in the warm, wood-walled chalet as my host pours green tea.

I ask Song about comparisons the media has made between him and Gaudí. “Gaudí is the greatest,” he says. “That his work remains unfinished represents the constant and persevering pursuit of art. I can only think of him as my idol.”



GET THERE

Yelang Valley is open 8am-6pm daily and costs 20 yuan per person to enter. It's located a 40-minute drive south of central Guiyang - show the Chinese characters 贵阳花溪夜郎谷 to a taxi driver. Follow the park's official WeChat account by searching for the ID gh_a769a6b5d62a.

前往該處

夜郎谷開放時間為上午八時至下午六時，門票每位人民幣20元。距離貴陽市中心約40分鐘車程，可吩咐司機前往「貴陽花溪夜郎谷」。該公園的微信公眾號為：gh_a769a6b5d62a。

來更嚴肅的雕像，畫筆在畫布上跳躍。陡峭的樓梯通往拱形門框，鄉村風格的小屋要彎著腰穿過岩石隧道才能抵達。宋培倫的小唐狗巴豆聞著用石頭、木棍和輪軸粗糙地疊起來的一個寶座底部。有些雕塑圓圓的，其卡通風格特徵看起來像《阿森一族》的人物；有些則看起來像非洲部落面具。

一旁的工匠叮叮噹噹敲打石頭，製作新的雕塑。生於貴州的宋培倫提高聲音告訴我，其石頭人臉啟發自帶有神秘色彩的儼戲道具。儼戲對於苗族來說，具有重要的歷史意義。而儼戲的一大特色，乃模仿神仙的木製浮誇面具，許多人相信儼戲可以驅散惡魔。

「儼戲比京劇更遠古一點。」宋培倫說——他是早年於故鄉浸染過苗族文化的漢族人。「往昔的人們不懂生命本質是甚麼。透過儼戲，他們可以與天地溝通。這種儀式是人和上天溝通的一道橋樑。」

於1988年辭去教師工作後，宋培倫協助貴陽建立了一個藝術區，之後前赴美國建造帶有中國傳統元素的主題公園。回到中國後，他想創建自己的大型項目。受到曾於貴州觀賞過的儼戲風格啟發，他在1997年租下了夜郎谷所處的土地。

宋培倫說，租下這片無法耕

種的土地，有些當地人叫他瘋子，但四處散落的石頭才是其計劃的一部分。他聘用當地的苗族和布依族農民——世代以來，他們以石建房而熟練地掌握石藝技巧——來建造第一批石臉。慢慢地，一片片石頭開始變成耳朵、眼睛、鼻子和嘴巴，夜郎谷就這樣誕生了。

將許多小石片疊起來，而不是直接在一整塊大石頭上雕琢，這種不完美的方法使很多作品看起來有一種令人討喜的稚氣。「我本來就想讓它們看上去很原始很粗糙——這就是為甚麼我跟農民一起創作。」宋培倫於一個俯瞰著其靜默軍隊且猶如炮樓一樣的房子裡往下望。「藝術學校的學生做不出這個效果。不能因為某個人上過大學就可以稱為大師。」

這種想法贏得了工匠的忠誠。公園裡的石匠一度達到20位之多。他們沒有農活便前來工作，宋培倫給他們不俗的日薪——有些甚至不拿工資，因為知道宋培倫並不富裕。他只收取遊客20元的門票。聽到投資商的電話馬上掛掉，擔心其願景會被商業化。這裡沒有浮誇的商店，相反地，兩年前他開設了一家畫廊，邀請世界各地的藝術家免費在公園駐留。

在日漸商業化的中國，國內旅遊隨著主題公園產業的興起蓬勃發展，但夜郎谷則是一枝



Left to right:

Close-up shot of one of the stone sculptures; a stone worker working on a sculpture

左至右：

夜郎谷內其中一座石雕塑的特寫照；一位石匠正在園裡堆砌雕像



Like Gaudí's work, could Yelang Valley remain an ongoing project long after its creator is gone? Or will money-minded developers attack weakened defences when he's not there to repel them? When considering such obvious threats to the park's future, Song shrugs, smiles and sips more tea.

"The park will always be half-done," he says. "The other half will be left to nature or history or future generations. It's like the Great Wall or Angkor Wat. Eventually it will be interpreted by nature. There will be moss. It will be weathered and worn. There will be beauty of imperfection."

He pauses for yet more tea. Song's wife Wu Ping, wrapped up in a cosy coat, photographer Matjaž Tančič and I all lean forward, eager to

hear more from this gently thoughtful artist. Even the cats stop licking themselves, reacting to our silence.

Song continues. "This is not like assembling a car then driving it once it's finished. My work will always grow, and if future generations think there are imperfections, they can improve and add to it. This is something I long for: work that combines heaven and man in a harmonious way. It's perfection for me."

As I leave I pass a small blue truck arriving at the park entrance and tipping out another pile of rocks for the farmers to haul up the valley banks and forge into a rugged forehead or crooked mouth. Another new day, another new face.



Hong Kong Airlines flies to Guiyang daily. For more information, visit hongkongairlines.com

香港航空每日均設有航班往來香港與貴陽。查閱更多訊息，請瀏覽hongkongairlines.com

Left to right:
A view of the park;
Miao musicians in
ethnic dress playing
instruments

左至右：
夜郎谷一隅；穿上其傳統
民族服飾的苗族樂師正在
吹奏樂器

獨秀。宋培倫快將80歲了，他的粉絲也曾好奇：若他不在了，公園會怎麼樣。商業電話一直不斷，城市也在蠶食宋培倫的祥和天地。公園周圍的舊民房正被拆卸，為豪華公寓騰出空間。貴州財經大學一棟新建的學生公寓樓拔地而起，俯瞰著這些石頭臉，同樣享有該景觀的，還有學校的體育場。

即使宋培倫擔心後事，也不會說出來。「這不是我能控制的。」他說。儘管有個女兒，但她從來沒有考慮過明確的繼承打算。「我不去考慮我的作品能不能存活或者流傳下去。這是一種追求，一個理想。」

我們一路跟兩位苗族音樂家聊天，其中一位吹奏竹子做的管樂器蘆笙；另一位則用捲起來的樹葉吹出陣陣小曲。伴著歡快悅耳的音樂聲，我們很快

到達了宋培倫的家。主人家給我們倒綠茶，貓兒在溫暖的木牆小屋裡摩挲肉墊，吸引我們的注意。我問宋培倫對於媒體把他和高地比較有甚麼想法。

「高地是最了不起的。」他說。「他的思想、創作，以及他那個未完成的作品，皆說明了對藝術不斷的追求。我只能說他是我的偶像。」

夜郎谷是否也會像高地的作品一樣，在其創作者故去之後還未完成？當他故去，沒人再抵禦拜金的開發商，他們會趁虛而入嗎？被問及這些顯而易見的公園未來威脅時，宋培倫聳聳肩，笑一笑，喝了口茶。

「這個公園永遠都是建了一半。」他說。「另一半留給自然，或者歷史，或者後來的人去完成。就像長城或吳哥窟一樣，自然最終都會詮釋它們。

它們會長青苔，會風化，會變舊，但這就是不完美的美麗之處。」

他停下來，喝茶。穿著舒適大衣的宋培倫妻子吳萍、本文攝影師和我都俯下身來，想聽聽這位溫和而滿有思想的藝術家再說點甚麼。貓兒感受到我們的沉默，不再舔舐皮毛。

宋培倫繼續說：「這不像小汽車，組裝好就能開走。我的作品會一直增加，如果後來的人認為有不完美的地方，他們可以修繕，可以增加東西。這才是我一直想要的：一件天人合一的作品。這對我來說是比較完美的。」

離開時，一輛藍色小卡車剛好駛入公園，卸下一車石頭，農民把石料庫填滿，再做一個堅毅的額頭或者歪歪扭扭的嘴巴。新的一天，新的一張臉。



An at-a-glance look at Guiyang's top places to wine and dine, shop and rest your head

貴陽熱門美酒佳饌與購物住宿的精簡指南



Drink 美酒

Trip Smith

A few pints at this cosy, cool bar is a stellar reward for exploring Guiyang's nightlife beyond the main bar strips. The pub-style food is decent, but seek out this alley venue for its great craft beer, cocktails and enjoyably hipster atmosphere.

Trip Smith

在這家舒適獨特的酒吧裡喝上幾杯，作為你探索貴陽非主流酒吧的犒勞。其食物質素頗佳，但這間小巷酒館裡的精釀啤酒、雞尾酒和嬉皮氣氛才是最大亮點。

27 Yujia Alley;
+86 189 8487 2915

Local

Hip-hop heads can fill up here on loud rap from the stereo, cool music-related trinkets and clothes from the small shop section and imported beers from the fridges. There's a

decent spirit selection and a roof terrace, too.

Local

嘻哈愛好者可以在這裡欣賞大聲播放的說唱音樂，旁邊的小店還發售與音樂有關的小玩意和衣服，冰箱裡更有進口啤酒。這裡還有不俗的烈酒選擇和屋頂露台。

10/F, 4 MinQuan Rd

Eat 佳餚

Lao Kaili Suantangyu

The regular staff dancing sessions at this traditional Miao cuisine restaurant chain provide a cheesy-fun backdrop to some of the best sour fish dishes in Guiyang. Also worth trying is the hot pot-style lamb.

老凱里酸湯魚

員工舞蹈是這家苗式傳統連鎖餐廳的焦點環節，是你於貴陽品嚐最佳的酸湯魚時最有趣的體驗。其火鍋羊肉同樣不容錯過。

55 Shengfu Rd,
Yunyan District;
+86 851 8584 3665

Stay 住宿

Kempinski Hotel Guiyang

The kind of luxury you'd expect from a Kempinski is duly delivered at this huge hotel, a 15-minute drive from Guiyang Longdongbao



International Airport. The deals that include access to the business lounge, where good buffet meals are served alongside free-flow drinks, are worth considering.

貴陽凱賓斯基酒店

凱賓斯基酒店集團一貫的奢華服務，當然亦會延續至這家成員酒店。酒店距離貴陽龍洞堡機場15分鐘車程。其行政樓層提供的優質自助餐和酒水無限暢飲的配套禮遇實屬錦上添花。

+86 851 8599 9999;
kempinski.com/guiyang

Music 音樂

New Obsession

There's live jazz and blues on every night at this swish place, which opened last autumn as a larger sister venue to Guiyang's Obsession

jazz joint. Leather chairs, European food, cocktails and jazz standards abound.

New Obsession

這個時尚場地每晚均現場演奏爵士樂和藍調音樂。它於去年秋季開業，是貴陽Obsession爵士樂場地稍大一些的姊妹店。在這裡，可享受真皮座椅、歐陸美食、雞尾酒與爵士樂。

D2, Phase 3
Complex, Zhongtian Century New Town,
Shuidong Rd;
+86 185 9382 2525

Shopping 購物

Zhongshuge

Opened last autumn and arguably the most beautiful bookstore in China, this literary labyrinth has become a destination for design nuts with its retro-futuristic, cave-inspired style. Beyond reams of Chinese language books, it has great arty gifts and a café.

鐘書閣

堪稱中國最美的書店，去年秋季才開業。這家充滿復古未來主義並且啟發自洞穴的迷宮書店，已經成為設計愛好者的打卡勝地。除了中文書籍，這裡還有藝術風格的禮品和咖啡館。

Shop 1, 4/F,
Yun Shang
Fangzhou, Chang
Ling Bei Rd,
Guanshanhu
District

