

# PearlLam Galleries

Hong Kong

## Perfection by Chance —A Yi Pai Series Exhibition

Featuring works by Qin Yufen, Su Xiaobai, Su Xinping, Tan Ping,  
Yang Zhilin and Zhu Jinshi



From left to right: Qin Yufen b. 1954, **Diffuse 1**, 2014, Mineral pigment on Xuan paper, 250 x 194 cm  
Yang Zhilin b. 1956, **Scroll of Dreams**, 2008, Ink and colour on Xuan paper, 28 x 600 cm  
Su Xinping b. 1960, **Eight Things No. 3**, 2013, Oil on canvas, 300 x 200 cm

### Exhibition Dates

13 March–10 May, 2015

Extended hours: 13–17 March, 9am–9pm; Regular hours: Monday–Saturday, 10am–7pm  
Pearl Lam Galleries Hong Kong, 6/F, Pedder Building, 12 Pedder Street, Central, HK

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**Hong Kong**—Pearl Lam Galleries will present leading Chinese artists in *Perfection by Chance—A Yi Pai Series Exhibition* at its Pedder Building space. Works by Qin Yufen, Su Xiaobai, Su Xinping, Tan Ping, Yang Zhilin, and Zhu Jinshi, curated by the distinguished Professor Gao Minglu, will be exhibited in a fresh look at Chinese contemporary abstract art.

'Yi Pai' is Gao Minglu's holistic theory of avant-garde, modern and contemporary Chinese art from the 1970s until today. It is an aesthetic theory marked by its broad overview and inclusiveness. In 'Yi Pai: A Synthetic Theory Against Representation' published in 2009, Gao Minglu outlined, analysed, and compared Chinese aesthetics and Modern and Postmodern art and cultural theory from the West, and what emerged is the Chinese contemporary art theory 'Yi Pai'. He organised several large-scale 'Yi Pai' exhibitions, and invited over 100 artists from different periods of modern and contemporary Chinese art, such as Xu Bing, Cai Guo-Qiang, Huang Yong Ping, Liu Xiaodong, Zhu Jinshi, Wang Jianwei, Tan Ping, Zhang Huan, Xiao Lu, amongst others, to exhibit.

In a globalised and post-colonial world, Chinese contemporary art is undoubtedly not an emulation, continuation, or development of Western art. 'Yi Pai' artists have been influenced by Western art in a conscious and autonomous way, while at the same time subverting and moving against Western-centric ideas of art. The artists possess a spirit of independence and criticism, and achieve a synthesis in the relationship and multi-faceted interaction between their artistic language and their present realities in their lives.

In order to realise their artistic creations, the exhibiting 'Yi Pai' artists have all consciously integrated the Oriental tradition of meditation, essential for maintaining an equilibrium between narration and imagery, and devoted themselves to this philosophy of 'perfection by chance', much like the symbiotic relationship in ancient China between poetry, calligraphy, and painting. In clearing their minds to enter into a relaxed state, these artists achieve a flow in their process, which results in spontaneous, yet controlled freedom of expression. This freedom of expression is 'perfection by chance', breaking free from the restrictions and norms of abstraction, conceptualism, and realism, and reaching a higher state. It is this synthesis that 'Yi Pai' emphasises.

The theory of 'Yi Pai' provides a unique angle to look at Chinese abstract art. Chinese Abstract is a synthesis of traditional and contemporary art. It is not a concept that has directly transplanted and formed from traditional Chinese concepts, and it is not a completely abstract concept, but rather a form of abstraction where the abstract, conceptual, and reality overlap each other. Each abstract 'Yi Pai' artist has their own unique style and formal language, and achieves a different natural and free artistic state where the 'formless' bestows the 'form', bringing together the action of creation, the medium, and the naturally meditative state of 'perfection by chance'.

Gao Minglu explains: "In the previous five decades, contemporary art has carried with it so many conceptions and verbal narrations that it has almost been reduced to a puppet of cultural and political linguistics [...] The initial purpose of art is to present the wisdom in human nature, but now it gets eroded. Wisdom is not always utilitarian, either in a political or economic manner. Yi Pai attempts to rediscover this perception of wisdom and association of poetry in contemporary art and shorten the discrepancy between concepts and graphics, abstractness and reality, political discourse and aesthetic perception, and eliminate the 'premodern, modern, postmodern, and contemporary' historical narration on the lineal basis of time."

Pearl Lam Galleries has organised exhibitions as a foundation for 'Yi Pai', including *Mind Space—Maximalism in Contrasts* (exhibited at Pittsburgh University and Hillwood Art Museum between 2010 and 2012), as well as the inaugural exhibition at Pearl Lam Galleries Hong Kong Pedder Building in 2012, *Chinese Contemporary Abstract, 1980s Until Present: Mindmap*. Pearl Lam Galleries has been breaking new ground in its unremitting promotion of 'Yi Pai', which holds a position at the heart of contemporary Chinese art. From its roots in Asia in the twenty-first century, the gallery has been introducing Chinese contemporary art, especially Chinese abstract, which has long been marginalised, to an international audience. The Galleries, along with 'Yi Pai', is breathing new life into the field of contemporary art.

For the current exhibition, Zhu Jinshi has created a cube of Xuan paper by laying several thousand sheets into a humanised structure, with every new sheet laid making a change to the cube in temporality and spatiality. Qin Yufen will exhibit her latest coloured ink paintings on Xuan paper, for which she has repeatedly applied ink and paint in order to make unexpected marks inspired by those in the ancient Dunhuang Caves. In contrast, Su Xiaobai displays an addiction to the medium of his choice. He reinvents the centuries-old use of lacquer through repeated cycles of painting, polishing, and observing to create his sculptural paintings.

Like the literati artists of ancient China, Su Xinping, Tan Ping, and Yang Zhilin attach their emotions to the objects of their paintings. Artistically, they represent not only the object but also their feelings. The stroke of their brush is the running of their thoughts.

The 'Yi Pai' exhibition continues with the presentation of a monumental 'Yi Pai' installation by Zhu Jinshi in collaboration with Hongkong Land, which will open to the public 10–31 March at The Rotunda, One Exchange Square, 8 Connaught Place, Central, daily 9am–7pm. *Boat*, an 18-metre long, 7-metre high installation composed of bamboo, cotton, and over 12,000 sheets of Xuan (rice) paper, is a continuation of the exploration of this medium that Zhu Jinshi started in 1988 with *A Cubic Metre of Xuan Paper* in Berlin.

## About Pearl Lam Galleries

Founded by Pearl Lam, Pearl Lam Galleries is a driving force within Asia's contemporary art scene. With over 20 years of experience exhibiting Asian and Western art and design, it is one of the leading and most established contemporary art galleries to be launched out of China.

Playing a vital role in stimulating international dialogue on Chinese and Asian contemporary art, the Galleries is dedicated to championing artists who re-evaluate and challenge perceptions of cultural practice from the region. The Galleries in Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Singapore collaborate with renowned curators, each presenting distinct programming from major solo exhibitions, special projects, and installations to conceptually rigorous group shows. Based on the philosophy of Chinese Literati where art forms have no hierarchy, Pearl Lam Galleries is dedicated to breaking down boundaries between different disciplines, with a unique gallery model committed to encouraging cross-cultural exchange.

Contemporary Chinese Abstract art is heavily represented in the Galleries roster. Influential Chinese artists Zhu Jinshi and Su Xiaobai, who synthesise Chinese sensibilities with an international visual language, are presented internationally with work now included in major private and public collections worldwide. The Galleries has also introduced leading international artists such as Jenny Holzer, Jim Lambie, and Yinka Shonibare MBE (RA) to markets in the region, providing opportunities for new audiences in Asia to encounter their work. Pearl Lam Galleries encourages international artists to create new work which engages specifically with the region, collaborating to produce thought-provoking, culturally relevant work.

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## Press Enquiries

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