

PearlLam Galleries

TEFAF MAASTRICHT 2016

Stand 535

Two solo shows by Su Xiaobai and Zhu Jinshi

Su Xiaobai



L: SU XIAOBAI b. 1949, *Kuanhou-Peaceful*, 2015, Oil, lacquer, linen and wood, 190 x 182 x 14 cm (74 3/4 x 71 5/8 x 5 1/2 in.)
R: SU XIAOBAI b. 1949, *Turquoise-Blue*, 2015, Oil, lacquer, linen and wood, 190 x 183 x 15 cm (74 3/4 x 72 x 5 7/8 in.)

Zhu Jinshi



L: ZHU JINSHI b. 1954, *Dajue Temple No. 1*, 2013, Oil on canvas, 180 x 160 cm (70 7/8 x 63 in.)
R: ZHU JINSHI b. 1954, *Yellow Mountain Temple No. 2*, 2015, Oil on canvas, 180 x 160 cm (70 7/8 x 63 in.)

Public Hours

11–19 March, 11am–7pm 20 March, 11am–6pm

Public Opening

11–20 March

Venue

MECC Maastricht, Forum 100, 6229 GV Maastricht, the Netherlands

Maastricht—Pearl Lam Galleries is delighted to announce its first participation in TEFAF Maastricht 2016 (11–20 March), one of the world's most prestigious art fairs, which will showcase 275 leading international galleries that specialise in art, antiques, and design. The Galleries will be the first Hong Kong-based gallery, and one of only three galleries from Asia, to participate in the Modern sector of the fair. Participation in TEFAF demonstrates the Galleries' increasing presence in Europe, building on its foundation in Asia with two gallery spaces in Hong Kong, one in Shanghai, and one in Singapore.

The stand will focus on two solo shows by Chinese abstract contemporary artists Su Xiaobai and Zhu Jinshi, who will each exhibit six painting works. Both artists are representative of *Yi Pai*, a holistic theory of art developed by Professor Gao Minglu to better understand Chinese avant-garde, modern, and contemporary art, which Gao posits are all rooted in traditional Chinese philosophies and culture, but are also influenced by the artists' present realities.* This will be the first time that each artist is exhibiting at the fair. As part of a legendary generation of artists who left China in the 1980s, both Su Xiaobai and Zhu Jinshi lived in Germany for a number of years, Dusseldorf and Berlin respectively, before returning to China. This has granted them unique perspectives on contemporary art, as they incorporate both traditional Chinese and Western influences into their practices.

The work of Su Xiaobai (b. 1949, Wuhan, China) is recognisable by his use of traditional Chinese materials such as lacquer, but his work is contemporary and unique. The artist focuses on essential qualities such as colour, shape, and texture, which in various combinations produce distinctive surfaces, ranging from smooth and jewel-like to carved and abraded, with their own history and character. With titles like *Kuanhou-Peaceful* and *Kuanhou-Joyful Red*, Su's works have a poetic quality and are full of emotion. The artist is influenced by the Buddhist sutra "Everything is nothing, nothing is everything." His works *are* with their own intrinsic qualities.

Su began his studies at Kunstakademie Düsseldorf in 1987. With greater exposure to avant-garde art, in the 1990s Su began to shift away from figurative painting. He happened upon lacquer as a medium in 2003. Over the course of four to five years, Su developed his own technique of working with lacquer. His works represent his artistic choices, but are also the result of chance, as lacquer can dry in unpredictable ways. The three-dimensional quality of the artist's works come from complex fabrication methods, including adding extruded board for support and applying layer upon layer of lacquer, often combined with water, oil, powder, and pigments, which create a surface ready to be sanded, drilled, or chiselled. Su's dedication to the material of lacquer and his work process is akin to Zen meditation or what Gao associates with *wuwoxiangsheng*, "enlivening both the object and me".

Zhu Jinshi (b. 1954, Beijing, China) is one of the pioneers of Chinese abstract and installation art. Pearl Lam Galleries will be presenting a selection of the artist's often large-scale, vibrant oil on canvas paintings, which are characterised by Zhu's thick layering of paint that gives his works a three-dimensional, sculpture-like effect. The paint is applied with shovels and other heavy-duty implements and the works themselves take several years to dry. Zhu's approach to abstraction comes from the ink approach where the mind must be empty, and the artist's hands connected to heaven, earth, and heart to manifest the work. The artist must be meditative to connect and make the strokes in a state of *tian di ren*, "the ultimate peace in the unity of the three (heaven, earth and man) in one".

While the influence of traditional Chinese culture is present in the marked influence of Chinese traditional landscape painting, these contemporary abstract paintings and Zhu's continuous exploration of the art form over the past 35+ years are a unique and enriching contribution to the history of abstract art in both Asia and the west.

Yi Pai, Gao Minglu's theory of Chinese abstract art, as discussed in his recent book, argues that as opposed to Western art, Chinese abstract art does not evolve from Modernism but from ancient Chinese beliefs, traditions, and philosophies—particularly the ink brush philosophy and principles from the Tang Dynasty where the Three Perfections (calligraphy, painting, and poetry) are combined in one.

Although they were exposed to new forms of art upon their moves to Germany, where they were surrounded by a whole new culture, both Su Xiaobai and Zhu Jinshi found themselves looking inwardly at their Chinese roots—at the rich Chinese traditions of calligraphy, cursive script, poetry, Taoism, Buddhism, and other ancient artistic and spiritual practices still at the heart of Chinese culture—to frame their artistic practices. It is through a Chinese perspective that these artists filter modern influences on their art.

* Gao Minglu is one of the world's leading scholars of Chinese contemporary art. He served as editor of China's leading art magazine *Meishu* in the 1980s. Gao received his Ph.D. from Harvard University and is currently a research professor in the Department of the History of Art and Architecture at the University of Pittsburgh.

"I'm thrilled that, for the first time, Pearl Lam Galleries will be participating in TEFAF Maastricht. It's a pleasure to know that we are the first Hong Kong-based gallery to exhibit in the Modern sector of this prestigious art fair. Both Su Xiaobai's and Zhu Jinshi's works incorporate traditional Chinese and modern influences in unique styles. I am especially excited to expose them to a wider international audience and continue the discourse on different forms of Chinese contemporary art."

—Pearl Lam, Founder, Pearl Lam Galleries

About the Artists

SU XIAOBAI

Su Xiaobai, one of China's most distinctive painters, was born in 1949 in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China. In 1965, he joined the School of Arts and Crafts in Wuhan, and from 1985 to 1987, he studied oil painting at the Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing. In 1987, he moved to Germany to pursue further study at the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf (Düsseldorf State Arts Academy). Su Xiaobai has been living and working between Shanghai and Düsseldorf since 2005.

Recent solo exhibitions include *Su Xiaobai: Painting and Being* (2014), Pearl Lam Galleries, Hong Kong, China; *Grand Immensity: The Art of Su Xiaobai* (2013), National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts, Taichung, Taiwan; *Su Xiaobai* (2013), Pearl Lam Galleries, Hong Kong, China; *The Dynasty of Colours* (2009), Langen Art Gallery, Neuss, Germany; *Kao Gong Ji—Su Xiaobai Solo Exhibition* (2008), Today Art Museum, Beijing, China; and *Great Form is Shapeless, Su Xiaobai Solo Exhibition* (2007), Shanghai Art Museum, Shanghai, China. Recent group exhibitions include *Jing Shen: The Act of Painting in Contemporary China* (2015), PAC Milan Museum of Contemporary Art, Italy; *Perfection by Chance—A Yi Pai Series Exhibition* (2015), Pearl Lam Galleries, Hong Kong, China; *Where Does It All Begin? Contemporary Abstract Art in Asia and the West* (2014), Pearl Lam Galleries, Singapore; *Chinese Contemporary Abstract: 1980s until Present: MINDMAP* (2012), Pearl Lam Galleries, Hong Kong, China; and *Yi Pai: Thirty Years of Chinese Abstract Art* (2008), Beijing, China and Madrid, Spain.

ZHU JINSHI

Zhu Jinshi, born in 1954 in Beijing, is one of the pioneers of Chinese abstract and installation art. He began to create abstract paintings in the early 1980s and moved to Berlin in 1986, where he began to experiment with performance, installation, and conceptual art. In 1994, Zhu returned to China, dividing his time between Berlin and Beijing until 2010. Currently, he lives and works in Beijing.

Zhu's recent solo exhibitions include *Performance in Paint: Zhu Jinshi* (2015–16), Inside-Out Art Museum, Beijing, China; *Zhu Jinshi: Boat, a Yi Pai installation* (2015), organised by Pearl Lam Galleries and Hongkong Land at Exchange Square, Hong Kong, China; *Zhu Jinshi: Simplicity* (2014), Pearl Lam Galleries, Singapore; *Zhu Jinshi: The Reality of Paint* (2013), Pearl Lam Galleries, Hong Kong; *Zhu Jinshi* (2012), Blum & Poe, Los Angeles, USA; *Power and Territory* (2008), Arario Gallery, Beijing, China; and *Fang* (1990), DAAD gallery, Berlin, Germany. Group shows include *Perfection by Chance—A Yi Pai Series Exhibition* (2015), Pearl Lam Galleries, Hong Kong, China; *Thick Paint: Jean Fautrier, Franz West, Zhu Jinshi* (2014), Luxembourg & Dayan Gallery, New York, USA; *28 Chinese* (2013–14), The Rubell Family Collection, Miami, USA; *Orient/Ation*, 4th International Istanbul Biennial in Turkey (1995), Istanbul, Turkey; and the 1st Xing Xing (Stars Group) Exhibition (1979), Gallery in Beihai Park, Beijing, China. His works have been collected internationally by notable public and private collections, including the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, USA; Brooklyn Museum, USA; Busan Museum of Art, Korea; Delphine Arnault, France; Deutsche Bank, Germany; Mario Testino, UK; The Rubell Family Collection, USA; Guangdong Museum of Art, China; Vancouver Art Gallery, Canada; and White Rabbit Collection, Australia.

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.

The four branches of Pearl Lam Galleries in Hong Kong, Shanghai and Singapore represent an increasingly influential roster of contemporary artists. 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, Leonardo Drew, Carlos Rolón/Dzine and Yinka Shonibare MBE, 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.

Press Enquiries

Eleanor Porter / SUTTON

eleanor@suttonpr.com / +852 2528 0792

Chloe Ho / Pearl Lam Galleries

galleriesg@pearllamgalleries.com / +65 6570 2284