

PearlLam Galleries

Singapore

AFTER ASPHODEL

LUKE HENG solo exhibition

Exhibition Dates 2 December, 2017–25 February, 2018 Thursday–Saturday, 11am–7pm

Venue Pearl Lam Galleries, 9 Lock Road, #03-22, Gillman Barracks, Singapore 108937

Singapore—Pearl Lam Galleries is pleased to present *After Asphodel*, a solo exhibition by emerging Singaporean artist Luke Heng (b. 1987) at the Gillman Barracks. Known chiefly for his alluring visual examinations of painting as a subject and medium, the new works on show mark the evolution of Heng's practice as he ventures beyond the realms of two-dimensional and wall-based sculptural art. These ephemeral evocations include paintings, wax works, and, for the first time, a site-specific installation.

A prickling curiosity about the afterlife has expanded into the artist's latest series of works that explore the idea of liminality and transience. While the pursuit of the unknown is often betwixt and between, the literal construction of the non-place has directed this latest body of work, which is themed around impermanence and transcendental space. Alluding to the white asphodel flower and its association with death and the ethereal, this exhibition is a reflexive investigation of thresholds and the fluid psyche.

The *Non-Place* series of oil on linen paintings is a progression from Heng's earlier minimalist endeavours. By shifting lines within the visual frame, depth and perspective are introduced to build what the artist refers to as a "resting space" for the mind. Inspired by the spatial concept of a shrine, Heng invites audiences to take astral residence in his painterly suggestions of expanse. The immersion of the self in the vivid blues and diaphanous whites activates the otherwise "empty" paintings, which under close inspection reveals the artist's seamless pouring technique. Distinctive brush-like strokes, which are actually lines made via reduction, work in tandem with varying shades of colour to create a rhythmic pulse across the room.

A departure from his sculptural wax paintings, Heng's newest standalone wax works on mild steel are renderings of the slow burn of time. The artist's repeated compression of shaved wax—a transitional state usually antecedent to casting—creates a perceivably solid structure that teases its vulnerable reality. Made from materials reactive to their surrounding environment, the works present an elusive existence between the fixed and the malleable.

Referencing Jacob's ladder, Heng will produce his first site-specific installation, which negotiates the connection between his personal experiences and the work's implied morality. Informed by his painting background, he explores continuity of space and structural forms in this installation.

After Asphodel presents an immersive environment built on shifting intellectual and emotional states within Heng's paintings and sculptural works, becoming a refuge for neutrality and contemplation.

About Luke Heng

Born in 1987, Singaporean artist Luke Heng is interested in the dialectics between painting, object, and picture-making. His earlier practice revolves around the conceptualization and physical manifestation of painting, with his works often responding to the history of painting while drawing from various other art forms to influence his approach and process. His most recent practice extends into installation and sculpture, while he introduces depth and perspective into his new oil on linen paintings. Heng graduated with a BA (Hons) in Fine Arts from LASALLE College of the Arts in 2013, which he attended on a scholarship, and he has since been actively practicing art both locally and internationally.

Heng's first solo exhibition, *The Waiting Room*, was held at FOST Gallery, Singapore in 2015. His most recent solo exhibition was at Galerie Isabelle Gounod, Paris, France in 2016. Major group exhibitions include *Constituent Concreteness* at Mizuma Gallery (2016, Singapore), *Peculiar Textures* at Galerie Steph (2015, Singapore), *Primavera 3* at Galerie Frédéric Lacroix (2014, Paris, France), and *Departure* at iPreciation (2014, Singapore). He was selected to participate in the Dena Foundation Artist Residency Program in Paris, France, supported by the National Arts Council, Singapore.

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

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