

PearlLam Galleries

Pearl Lam Galleries opens at Singapore's Gillman Barracks, marking its third space in Asia, presenting boundary-crossing inaugural exhibition

WHERE DOES IT ALL BEGIN?

Contemporary Abstract Art in Asia and the West

Curated by Philip Dodd

Featuring works by Zhu Jinshi, Pat Steir, Christine Ay Tjoe, Su Xiaobai and Peter Peri



Zhu Jinshi, *Wooden Stick* (2013), Oil on canvas, 160 x 140 cm

Exhibition Dates

17 January–28 February, 2014

Tuesday–Saturday, 11am–7pm; Sunday, 12–6pm

Press Preview: Thursday, 16 January, 2014, 3–5pm

Grand Opening Reception: Friday, 17 January, 2014, 6–8pm

Pearl Lam Galleries, 9 Lock Road, #03–22, Gillman Barracks, Singapore

DECEMBER 2013—Pearl Lam Galleries will open its third space in Asia at Singapore's Gillman Barracks on **17 January, 2014**, to coincide with Art Stage Singapore. Complementing the critically acclaimed programmes of the existing Shanghai and Hong Kong spaces, the

Singapore gallery has been strategically chosen to strengthen the core mission of the Galleries: to engage in cultural exchange and provide a platform for rising and established talents from the West and East to meet, interact and engage.

This strategic location for Pearl Lam Galleries is also in line with and supportive of the city-state's ambitious aspiration to be the cultural hub of the region. Due to its geographical location, the Gallery will also have a special focus on Southeast Asian Art.

The space, housed within a heritage building at the Gillman Barracks Art Centre in Singapore, provides an ideal location for the Gallery: "Presenting contemporary art in a historical setting is in keeping with our locations in Shanghai and Hong Kong. We like the idea of the gallery being in a heritage space and bringing in the new and cutting edge. The location and building symbolises what we believe in—being rooted in the past and respecting local cultures while looking to the future," said the Galleries' founder Pearl Lam.

Ruoh Ling Keong, Acting Director of Pearl Lam Galleries Singapore, added: "I am thrilled to be part of a very dynamic team and look forward to building a dialogue and exchange between different cultures while respecting the Galleries' Asian roots. To have the gallery in Singapore, which is at the heart of Southeast Asia both geographically and symbolically, anchors the Galleries in the region and, without a doubt, demonstrates our commitment to the scene."

The opening exhibition **Where does it all begin? Contemporary Abstract Art in Asia and the West** provides a unique opportunity to see major artists from the USA and China, Europe and Indonesia, side by side, all exploring and revealing the power of abstract art today.

Curated by Philip Dodd, the acclaimed British arts writer and broadcaster, the exhibition explodes the myth that contemporary art from Asia is dependent on Western art, while revealing and celebrating the complex and ongoing dialogue between Western and Asian abstract art. The exhibition is mounted at a time when abstract art is becoming central again to the global art world after a period where conceptualism seemed to reign supreme.

Bridging the gap between East and West as well as across generations, **Where does it all begin? Contemporary Abstract Art in Asia and the West** will include works by a group of artists including Pat Steir, a major American abstract artist influenced by Chinese art and Taoism; two important Chinese artists Zhu Jinshi and Su Xiaobai, who both lived and studied in Germany and whose work is distinguished by their unique experiences, influences and emphasis on material; young British artist Peter Peri, whose works explore the tension between line and volume, figuration and abstraction, and art historical influences; and one of Indonesia's most prominent female artists, Christine Ay Tjoe, whose work is delicate to the point of fragility and reveals an internal world full of inner thoughts, melancholy, struggle, pain, and happiness.

About Peter Peri

Peter Peri (b. 1971, London, UK) graduated from Chelsea College of Art and Design, London in 2003. Peri's primary media are drawing, sculpture and painting. All of his works are specifically invested in the tension between line and volume, figuration and abstraction, and in the question of tradition and influence in Modernism. Peri's works on paper depict a range of forms, which coalesce into ambiguous architectural structures and volumes through an uncanny play of light and shadow redolent of Metaphysical painting. His paintings appear to trace an occult tinged geometric language—a Morse code of shifting lines and shapes—that might be used to describe the world in more elemental terms.

Peri's recent exhibitions include *Art Now* (2007), Tate Britain; *Country 10* (2006), Kunsthalle Basel, Switzerland; *Classified: Contemporary British Art from the Tate Collection* (2009), Tate Britain; and *How to Improve the World, 60 years of British Art—Arts Council Collection*, Hayward Gallery, London, UK. His work can be found in the permanent collections of Tate Modern, Saatchi Gallery, Victoria & Albert Museum, Arts Council of Great Britain Collection in UK; and UBS Funds, Kunsthalle Basel, in Switzerland.

About Pat Steir

Pat Steir (b. 1940, New Jersey, USA) attended the Pratt Institute in New York and Boston University College of Fine Arts. Her early work was loosely allied with Conceptual Art and Minimalism; however, her poured Waterfall paintings from the 1980s gained her acclaim. Profoundly influenced by Chinese painting traditions and techniques—especially the marks of the 8th and 9th century Yi-pin “ink-splashing” painters, mentorships from John Cage and Agnes Martin, and the harmony between man and nature espoused by Taoist philosophy, Steir considers elemental forces active participants in her work, intentionally removing herself from the action and allowing gravity, time, and the environment to determine the work’s result.

Her work is in the collections of Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Solomon R Guggenheim Museum, New York; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Tate Gallery, London, UK; and many other national and international museums.

About Su Xiaobai

Su Xiaobai (b. 1949, Hubei, China) studied oil painting at the Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing, and received a scholarship to study at the Dusseldorf National Art Academy in 1987. Subsequently, he moved to Germany in 1992 where he has been based ever since. Su’s solo exhibitions include *Su Xiaobai* (2013) at Pearl Lam Galleries in Hong Kong, *Su Xiaobai* (2011) at Another Gallery in Shanghai, *Su Xiaobai Solo Exhibition* (2010) at Raketenstation Hombroich in Germany, and *The Dynasty of Colours* (2009) at Langen Art Gallery in Germany. He has exhibited in museums, galleries, and art fairs in Beijing, Shanghai, Taipei, Singapore, Berlin, London, Düsseldorf and Moscow.

About Christine Ay Tjoe

Christine Ay Tjoe (b. 1973, Bandung, Indonesia) studied Printmaking and Graphic Art at the Bandung Institute of Technology and graduated in 1997. At present, she lives and works in Bandung, Indonesia. Ay Tjoe is one of Indonesia's most prominent female contemporary artists. Starting out as a graphic artist, she experimented with dry-point technique. Her work is delicate to the point of fragility and reveals an internal world full of inner thoughts, melancholy, struggle, pain and happiness that seem to reflect her personality and personal life.

Ay Tjoe’s works have been widely exhibited at galleries and museums in Taipei, Singapore, Shanghai, Beijing, Hong Kong, New York, Miami, London, Paris, Melbourne, Sydney, Jakarta, and Bandung. She was awarded the SCMP Art Futures Prize at Hong Kong International Art Fair in 2009 and Top 5 Philip Morris Indonesian Art Award in 2011.

About Zhu Jinshi

Zhu Jinshi was born in Beijing, China in 1954. After completing an artist-in-residency in Germany and teaching in the Architecture Department at the Berlin Technical University, Zhu returned to Beijing, where he currently lives and works. He began painting abstract works in the late 1970s, and participated in the Stars (Xing Xing) group exhibition, the first avant-garde art exhibition after the Cultural Revolution. Zhu has exhibited in numerous solo and group exhibitions, including *The Reality of Paint* (2013) and *Chinese Contemporary Abstract, 1980s until Present: MINDMAP* (2012) at Pearl Lam Galleries, Hong Kong; *Power and Jiangshan* (2008) at Arario Gallery, Beijing; and *On the Road* (2002) at Prague City Museum, Czech Republic. Zhu’s work is represented in many private and public collections across the globe, including Canada where his rice paper installation *The Tao of Xuan Paper* (1997) is on permanent display at the Vancouver Art Gallery. He is also represented in many private and public collections worldwide.

About Pearl Lam Galleries

Founded by Pearl Lam, the Galleries' mission is to stimulate cross-cultural dialogue and cultural exchange between the East and West by establishing distinct and rigorous programming in each of its gallery spaces in Hong Kong and Shanghai, as well as the Singapore gallery at Gillman Barracks, opening 17 January, 2014.

Pearl Lam Galleries is dedicated to championing Chinese artists who re-evaluate the philosophy and perception of Asian contemporary art, while also committed to presenting major exhibitions by international artists. Jim Lambie, Yinka Shonibare MBE, and Zhu Jinshi are among the line-up of artists who have solo exhibitions at the Galleries in 2013.

Pearl Lam Design shows works by established and emerging international designers including Maarten Baas, Mattia Bonetti, André Dubreuil, and Studio Makkink & Bey. They are invited to push the boundaries of traditional Chinese art and craft techniques and create new works that reflect their experiences in China.

About Pearl Lam

Pearl Lam has been at the forefront of re-imagining China's cultural place in the world for almost two decades through Pearl Lam Galleries and through the China Art Foundation, a trust that she co-founded in 2008.

In Asia, where the cultural infrastructure is developing fast and in innovative ways, Pearl Lam Galleries in Hong Kong, Shanghai and Singapore stand out for its intellectual and cultural ambition.

Pearl Lam is also a collector, patron, and curator. As a curator, among many other exhibitions, she conceived and organised the critically acclaimed *Awakening: La France Mandarine*, an exhibition on the French influence on Chinese art, which was a central part of the 2004 French Year in China. As a patron, she has donated works to museums as various as the V&A, London; the Asia Art Society Museum, New York; the KW Institute, Berlin; the Museum of Art and Design, New York; and the Peabody Museum, Boston.

Originally from Hong Kong, Pearl lives between Shanghai, Hong Kong, and London, and never stays still for very long.

About Philip Dodd

Philip Dodd is the former Director of London's ICA, a curator, writer and award-winning BBC broadcaster. He co-curated the seminal *Spellbound: Art and Film* at London's Hayward Gallery, and has curated exhibitions with artists and architects from Yoko Ono to Rem Koolhaas, from Moscow to New York.

His writings on art range from essays for Tate to the best-selling *Relative Values: Art and Value*.

Dodd is credited with being one of the first in Britain to understand the importance of contemporary Chinese culture. In 1998, he took an exhibition to China of Young British Artists. The following year, he hosted a major exhibition of contemporary Chinese art and culture at the ICA in London.

He is chairman of Made in China (<http://www.madeinchinauk.com/>); chairman of the Advisory Board, Art 14 London; founder of the much-acclaimed Private Museum Forum at Art HK (where he was on the advisory board) and at Art 13 London.

About Keong Ruoh Ling

Ms. Keong Ruoh Ling is the Acting Director of Pearl Lam Galleries, Singapore. She has almost 15 years of experience in the contemporary art world. She was Head of Christie's Modern and Contemporary Southeast Asian Art department from 1999 to 2011 in Singapore. A native of Singapore, she has always worked in the region and has a personal relationship with many of the top artists and private collectors in Southeast Asia.

Press Enquiries

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Directions



BY MRT TRAIN Nearest MRT Train Station: Labrador Park (Circle Line station CC27) Exit Labrador Park station via Exit A towards Telok Blangah Road. Cross the overhead bridge located on the right of Exit A, and descend from the overhead bridge by taking the staircase on the right. Upon landing, turn around and walk back up Telok Blangah Road. At the first traffic junction, make a right turn onto Alexandra Road, and walk past two bus stops before turning right onto Malan Road. Gillman Barracks is on your left and the entrance is just up the road. The walk should take you about 10 minutes.

BY BUS Nearest Bus Stop: Opposite Alexandra Point (Bus Stop Number: 15059) Take buses 51, 57, 61, 93, 97, 97e, 100, 166, 175, 408, 963 or 963e, and alight at the bus stop opposite Alexandra Point along Alexandra Road. Turn left as you alight from the bus to walk back up Alexandra Road and turn right at Malan Road. Gillman Barracks is on your left and the entrance is just up the road.

BY CAR OR TAXI Gillman Barracks is accessible by car or taxi via Malan Road that is located along Alexandra Road. Parking facilities are available at Gillman Barracks, and there is a taxi stand in front of Block 5.