

PearlLam Galleries

Singapore

Cang Xin & Pan Jian duo exhibition **'Space and Nothingness'**



Cang Xin b. 1967, **Exotic Flower and Rare Herbs—No. 77**, 2010, Wood and charcoal,
205 x 60 x 68 cm (80 3/4 x 23 5/8 x 26 3/4 in.)

Pan Jian b. 1975, **Cloud Valley 2**, 2014, Oil on canvas, 250 x 200 cm (98 3/8 x 78 3/4 in.)

Exhibition Dates

15 August–27 September, 2015

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

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

Art Talk: Cang Xin in Conversation with Assistant Professor Yin Ker

Saturday, 15 August, 2:30pm–3:30pm

"Only the way accumulates space. Space is the fasting of the heart." —Zhuangzi

"What is form that is emptiness, what is emptiness that is form." —Heart Sutra

Singapore—Pearl Lam Galleries is proud to present *Space and Nothingness*, a group exhibition by Beijing-based performance and conceptual artist Cang Xin (b. 1967), and landscape painter Pan Jian (b. 1975). The show examines the impact of Eastern philosophy and ink painting tradition on their recent practices, focusing on the meditative qualities of space and emptiness.

Chinese ink painting privileges space like no other artistic tradition. White space is regarded as a void or nothingness, it is composed by the painter's marks for the viewer's meditative contemplation. In fact space in itself, the form of nothing, is considered the hallmark of aesthetic elevation. Space is the negative of gesture or human action; it is what has been left behind after the work of restless agitation. Cang and Pan's contemporary interpretation of traditional painting translates this into the third dimension. Their work takes on the status of "space-nothing", the negative form of their physical and gestural marks upon the world. While ink painting restricts the articulation of space on paper, the work of these two artists explores the meditative properties of space in the real world.

Pan Jian describes the choice of colour in his paintings as a product of his emotional experience. In the series of works presented in this exhibition his use of somber colours strain the eye and demand close scrutiny, replaying Pan's physical and mental struggles in visual terms, and claiming the canvases as an instrument of his reality. Only fragments of the sky are visible, a visual relief to the subtle tones of black. The fragments begin to undulate, realising themselves as a form that is pure nothing, a meaningless shadow that is articulated through negation. Blackness starts to expand and engulf the mind, enfolding the viewer in the vertigo of the vacuous that is simultaneously empty and full.

In Cang Xin's *Exotic Flowers and Rare Herbs* series, the artist creates strange and fantastic wooden sculptures of defamiliarised trees, flowers, and other natural organisms. Bits of organic material, frequently blackened into the colour of charcoal, accumulate into a strange mass. Like Pan's dark strokes, Cang's works evoke a sense of restlessness, seemingly without a goal, merely settling upon the revelation of form that comes out of the accumulation of nothing. The dirty, material world of reality is relieved by Cang's sculptures: little fragments of sky.

In conjunction with the exhibition opening, Pearl Lam Galleries is organising 'Cang Xin in conversation with Yin Ker'. The artist will discuss his practice, as well as his place in the international art scene. Themes of discussion will include shamanism, *shunyata* (void), experimental procedures, and internationalism.

About Cang Xin

Cang Xin was born in 1967 in Baotou, Inner Mongolia. Cang is a Beijing-based performance and conceptual artist. He entered the Tianjin Academy of Music in 1986 and began to paint in 1991. In 1993, he moved to Beijing's "East Village", where he began a series of performances such as the *Trampling Faces*, the *Lick* series, and the *Virus* series.

At "East Village," Cang joined a group of artists who were famous for their challenging performance art. One of their group performances *To Add One Meter to an Unknown Mountain* (1995) has since become one of the defining images of Chinese contemporary art. In his artistic practice, Cang plays the part of a "Shaman," experiencing the world and its multifarious offerings through his bodily senses. To him, art is a way of life that sits easily with his self-conception as a modern-day shaman, heir to the nature-magic tradition of his native Mongolia.

Cang's selected exhibitions include *Spiritual Crystals* (2015) at Whitebox Art Center, Beijing, China; *The Extra-Dimensional Becoming* (2014) at Tian Ren He Yi Art Center, Hangzhou, China; *Metamorphosis* (2014) at Leo Gallery, Shanghai, China; *Like Thunder out of China* (2013) at Arsenal Montreal; *Cang Xin: The Spirit of Translation* (2011) at The Gallery of Chinese Cultural Arts, San Diego, USA; *Rites of Nature* (2009) at C-SPACE, Beijing, China; *Cang Xin's Shamanic Vision* (2009) at Space Can, Seoul, Korea; *Cang Xin's Mythology* (2008) at Today Art Museum, Beijing, China and 10 Chancery Lane Gallery, Hong Kong; and *Identity Exchange* performance (2006) at The Red Mansion Foundation, London, UK.

About Pan Jian

Pan Jian was born in 1975 in Shandong Province. He received his BA from the Oil Painting Department at Xi'an Academy of Fine Arts in 2001. Pan currently lives and works in Beijing and Xi'an, China.

Having grown up amongst natural landscapes before moving to the bustling metropolis of Beijing, Pan has a different perspective on urbanisation and psychological detachment. With “defamiliarised images,” Pan challenges the viewer with the sea of loneliness.

Pan creates a sensational, poetic world on canvas with his uninhabited deep forests painted with loose brushstrokes. Pan explores themes relating to anxiety, depression, and sadness, which, to him, is the way to true beauty. The artist uses black, grey and blue to infuse canvas with ineffable melancholy, while meticulously painting the natural sceneries. The prominent aloofness that Pan has towards the depicted scene shows his exploration of rationality and emotions.

His recent solo exhibitions include *Shadow of Light* (2015) at 10 Chancery Lane Gallery, Hong Kong; *The Edge of the Shadow* (2013) at 10 Chancery Lane Gallery, Hong Kong; *Strange Image—Pan Jian* (2010) at Today Art Museum, Beijing, China; and *The End of the World* (2008) at Beijing Space, Beijing, China. Selected group exhibitions include *Macht Sichtbar: To Unveil the Invisible—Pan Jian & Fu Xiaotong Dual Exhibition* (2014) at Jing Gallery, Beijing; and *Outside the Lines* (2014) at RH Contemporary Art, New York.

About Yin Ker

Yin Ker works on narratives of art beyond the Euro-American canon, in particular, images classified as "Buddhist art" and artistic productions from South and Southeast Asia. She owes her training in art history to the University of Paris-Sorbonne (Paris IV), France, where she completed her doctoral dissertation in 2013. Yin is currently examining the historiography of art in modern times, as well as ancient notions of material culture labelled as "art" today. Prior to her current appointment as Assistant Professor at Nanyang Technological University, she was Assistant Professor for Art History at Nalanda University (Rajgir, India, 2014).

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 and culturally relevant work.

Press Enquiries

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