

PearlLam Galleries

Hong Kong H Queen's

DYSTOPIAN FORMS

Featuring works by Du Zhenjun, Dale Frank, Jin Meyerson, and John Young

Exhibition Dates 27 August–10 September, 2018 Monday–Saturday, 10am–7pm

Venue Pearl Lam Galleries HK H Queen's
9/F, H Queen's, 80 Queen's Road Central, Central, Hong Kong

Hong Kong—Pearl Lam Galleries H Queen's is pleased to present *Dystopian Forms*, a group exhibition featuring works by Du Zhenjun (b. 1961), Dale Frank (b. 1959), Jin Meyerson (b. 1972), and John Young (b. 1956). Concepts relating to utopian and dystopian worlds have invariably remained significant in the contemporary art field, spanning a great range of forms and mediums. This exhibition investigates artistic positions of anxiety, melancholy, and aspiration set against a backdrop of ever-changing societal and environmental degradation. As John Young said, "The moment when a caterpillar changes into a moth, deformation and reformation exist side by side... There is a sublime, metaphysical and indescribable paradox between the one state and the other—and this change heralds two different qualities of time. Within this change, there is a melancholy. This transformation, once recognized, will never see the world of forms the same again. In this transformation, form leads to a great formlessness and then back to form yet again. And so the world goes, not kept still in ideal forms, but eternally and melancholically transforming."

Du Zhenjun recognizes how digital media can be used to reveal the power intrinsic to an information society, where technology is constantly advancing and new forms of communication are being developed. The artist sources images from mass media outlets, such as television, magazines, newspapers, and the Internet, and assembles those selected images to create a collage in order to interpret the different facets of modern conflict. Du's *Tower of Babel* series is his portrayal of post-dystopian ruins, as the artist depicts the dangerous direction the world could be heading in if it does not adopt any social or environmental changes. This series of work is inspired by the Tower of Babel story in the Book of Genesis, in which a united humanity, which originally spoke one common language, tried to build a city and a tower whose top may reach heaven. God intervened by confounding them through creating multiple languages and scattering them all over the world as punishment for their betrayal.

It is acknowledged that the highest truths in today's society are no longer theological, but theoretical in the form of the principles of physics, technology, and other sciences. For Dale Frank, painting is essentially conceptual only when the material qualities in its own language are self-referential and self-critical. Embracing the medium's possibilities of physical transformation, the artist has examined the potential of a painting through continued experimentation with the materials and processes that challenge the notion of painting. As Frank said, "From the very beginning, my work has been premised on the notion that the art produced is independent of myself. Paintings tend to be more interested in pointing out how they exist, act, and 'live' beyond the realm of human perception, a paradox of sorts given the contrived nature of artworks." Believing each has a life and lifespan of its own that is created as a result, his paintings reveal the order of nature and explore the concept of "reaction".

Having come from an artistic and personal heritage that encompasses both the East and West, Jin Meyerson has always been drawn to specific moments of transition, which persevere through any established boundaries of culture, class, or nationality. What has become clear to the artist is that we are all living in the most complex and layered time in history. Essential to Meyerson's process is the belief that within the endless cycles of contemporary information and media input, there are universal forms and images that touch us all. The work on display, *The Resonance of Resurrection*, is taken from source images of the springtime growth and autumn decay, or the life cycle, of flowers from the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster site. As the artist explained, "The world has become so saturated that nothing is truly born anew and nothing truly leaves forever; the closest we get is resurrection and deconstruction. At the core, my work has always existed in this moment of simultaneous emergence and diffusion."

The exhibited pieces of John Young shed light on the abstract compositions generated by his manipulations of original paintings by the major members of the Storm Society, China's first modern art association. In Young's signature works, his combination of digital technology and oil painting techniques lies between the discourses of photography and oil painting. The innate human sentiments in his works are utilized to select presented images in order to create his art that engages with the anachronistic condition of painting in the age of photography. For Young, art is a bridge connecting the present to "a world of forgotten stories, discarded objects, and memories"; making art recollects those stories and reawakens an inherent ethical impulse at the moment.

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.

Further building on the Galleries' commitment, Pearl Lam Galleries opened its new gallery at H Queen's, Hong Kong's latest art hub, in March 2018. The five gallery spaces of Pearl Lam Galleries in Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Singapore represent an increasingly influential roster of contemporary artists. Chinese artists Su Xiaobai and Zhu Jinshi, who synthesize 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 Leonardo Drew, Jenny Holzer, 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.

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