

PearlLam Galleries

Hong Kong

Hong Kong Spotlight by Art Basel

Antony Micallef: Constructing Auras

Stand S16

VIP Preview	26 November, 2020. 2:00pm – 8:00pm HKT
Opening Date	27 November, 2020 – 29 November, 2020. 11:00am – 7:00pm HKT 30 November, 2020. 11am – 6pm HKT
Venue	Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre 1 Harbour Road, Wanchai, Hong Kong

Pearl Lam Galleries is pleased to participate in Hong Kong Spotlight by Art Basel, premiering a new series of works by leading International artist Antony Micallef. *Constructing Auras* constitutes a continuation of the artist's last exhibition, entitled *Raw Intent*, 2016. The new series highlights the close relationship between creator and object, and the co-dependence between these two entities. The forthcoming exhibition features a seminal body of works that focus on the fusion of a variety of forms that manifested itself through the artist's meticulous studies of form from nature, drawing inferences from a wide range of disciplines from palaeontology to couture textile. All of which are interwoven into the new series magnificently, resulting in compelling sculptural paintings that resonate with us all.

Micallef continues to challenge conventions surrounding the portrait painting genre, using disfiguration and impasto techniques to test the physical limitations of the two-dimensional plane. The artist combines the traditional mediums of beeswax and oil to develop an approach that is uniquely his. This constructed technique allows the artist to mould and create mass on the canvas that is not attainable through application with a brush. In the same way that beehives are constructed, the paintings have pockets of air and internal shapes signifying strength. The main structure or carcass of the painting is constructed in a similar way, exhibiting a honeycomb effect that is lighter in weight, which contrasts the heavy use of oil paint that would eventually melt downward at the mercy of gravity. The oil and beeswax structures are then coated and skinned with very thin layers of oil paint, akin to adding a layer of enamelling to a steel structure on a skyscraper.

Other works from the new series incorporate a distinctive technique that attributes the qualities of textile to the medium of oil paint, converting it into a material that can be folded and woven like a piece of leather. Micallef reasons "I want my forms to encompass a sense of life. This body of work is all about the materials used and the palpable essence of the material depicting a sense of being. All the things I was interested and influenced by that I never thought I could incorporate into my art have amalgamated into this body of work like one big mixing pot."

About the Artist

Antony Micallef was born in Swindon, England in 1975 and graduated in Fine Arts from the University of Plymouth. Notably, he learned from the austere landscape painter John Virtue, a student of the postwar painter Frank Auerbach.

Described as a modern Expressionist and widely recognized as one of the finest painters in contemporary art today, Micallef roots his work in social commentary and self-examination. Known for his visually charged figure paintings, Micallef's series featured in his exhibition *Raw Intent* were a complete departure from his earlier artworks. In more recent works, he builds up a relief-like surface with heavy paint to depict a figurative mass in front of a muted background. By using an impasto technique, the material is pushed to its extreme and blurs our reading of painting and sculpture. Through the use of tools such as scrapers and palette knives, Micallef twists the paint to further distort the depicted figure in the hope of realizing an embodiment that will "breathe" on its own.

About Pearl Lam Galleries

Pearl Lam Galleries is a driving force within Asia's contemporary art scene. Founded in 2005, the gallery plays a vital role in stimulating international dialogue and cross-cultural exchange between the East and West.

Following a rigorous programme, Pearl Lam Galleries presents museum-quality exhibitions that re-evaluate and challenge perceptions of cultural practice in Asia. With a thoughtfully balanced roster of Chinese and international artists, the gallery is strategic in its curation, positioning itself as an educator.

The gallery maintains a flagship space in the historic Pedder Building in Hong Kong, whilst the Shanghai gallery is situated in the heart of the Bund district. With a team of international staff, Pearl Lam Galleries' reach is global, having presentations at major international art fairs including The Armory Show, Art Cologne, Art Basel Hong Kong, Frieze Masters, and West Bund Art and Design.

Press Enquiries

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