

PearlLam Galleries

Shanghai

Players 6+1

Featuring works by Gao Ruyun, Hu Yikuan, Ni Zhiqi, Xia Yunfei, Zhang Kerui, Zhang Peiyun, and Zhong Yunshu

Exhibition dates 5 June–31 July, 2021 Monday–Saturday, 10:30am–7pm
Venue Pearl Lam Galleries, G/F, 181 Middle Jiangxi Road, Shanghai, China

The group exhibition *Players 6+1* presents paintings, video, and installations by six young artists: Gao Ruyun, Hu Yikuan, Xia Yunfei, Zhang Kerui, Zhang Peiyun, and Zhong Yunshu, together with one mid-career artist, Ni Zhiqi. By setting up spatial and conceptual frameworks such as “reversing the speed of time”, “dream and sleep”, “chessboard of colour and form”, “Midas Touch”, and “leaps in the garden of imagination”, the exhibition offers a playground where the artists act both as rule-makers and challengers, engaging viewers with diverse encounters that could be meditative, witty, and nostalgic.

Gao Ruyun focuses on the movement of lines in both his paintings and installations. By regulating the speed of the movement and dynamic of the lines, aligning them geometrically or sometimes morphing them into irregular shapes, the artist deliberately slows down the speed to the extent that the movement can hardly be noticed by a quick look. Rather than represent the speed of contemporary life, which can seem to be constantly accelerating, Gao’s installations change the perception of time itself and bring back a rhythm that is as natural as breathing.

Zhang Kerui records her dreams in *Dream/Documentary* (2015–16), echoing the rhythm of breath. She sees sleep as “a rehearsal of death”, or a period of time when one has little self-awareness, and is interested in filling up this unconscious but mysterious blankness of time by capturing fragments of blurry dreams and recreating stories based on her imagination. By placing the screens of the animation in the middle of artificial plants and playing with the light and shadows in this exhibition, Zhang continues to question the blurred line between the state of being awake and dream/sleep, as well as the real and unreal.

A pair of *Vacuum* paintings by Ni Zhiqi are also on show, including a classical version that the artist made using handmade paper and fabric cloth. He squeezes the air in between the layers by applying paint. One of his works features graffiti-like handwriting that makes the overall visuals more playful. Ni’s works are usually inspired by memories or stories behind specific materials, which he transfers into minimalist collages.

Xia Yunfei uses sensual brushstrokes to sculpt ghostlike bodies and space in his recent paintings. In the *Standing* series, the artist uses his brush to carve out of the empty space on canvas, creating a twisted and broken figure that seems to be squashed into a flat piece. Meanwhile, in *Relief* series, he extends the same method to the overall canvas, filling up the empty background and leaving the twisted figures or bodies as if they were locked in an expanding space.

A group of drawings, paintings and objects created by Zhang Peiyun draws viewers’ attention slowly into a miniature world of private gardens. The artist creates carefully delineated landscapes, reflecting her love of nature as well as engaging in an intimate and implicit dialogue with it. Other drawings include outlines of figures in classical paintings, like those of Botticelli and van Gogh, executed in a restrained and simplified manner. They seem to express the same affection for nature and call for a return to it.

Zhang Kerui's *Gold Pointer* (2021) installation is inspired by Michelangelo's *The Creation of Adam* fresco, which features God reaching a hand out to Adam; the story of Midas and his golden touch in Greek mythology; and alchemy in the Middle Ages. The artist has found the action of "pointing fingers" or "touching" to be an interesting topic, especially in today's digital age when the click of a mouse and touch of a screen have become normal. By applying gold colour onto most of her objects, Zhang points out the magic of touching, as it can create life, turn cheap metal into gold, as well as bring other huge changes into fruition.

Zhong Yunshu's work *Sculpture* tries to freeze the flow of time itself. Using a laser relief carving technique, Zhong selected images of fragile materials like soft paper and plastic, a photo of a fleeting landscape, and an outdated iPhone, and carved these images into granite, giving monumentality to the fragile. At the same time, the artist seems to be sending greetings to the reliefs by carving a line that reads "How are you/how old are you."

In the video work by Hu Yikuan "*Chang*" and the handmade film notes, he repeatedly writes down on pieces of film the adverb "chang", which translates as "usually", and its associations in meaning or forms of that character. He plays the flipping pieces of film at an eye-dazzling pace, creating an unsettling atmosphere that questions the norms of everyday life.

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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