

PearlLam Galleries

Shanghai

MIND IMAGE

Opening reception Saturday, 24 September, 3–6pm
Exhibition dates 24 September–30 October, 2022 Monday–Sunday, 10:30am–7pm
Venue Pearl Lam Galleries, 203, 2/F, 117 Xianggang Road, Shanghai, China 200002

Shanghai—Pearl Lam Galleries is pleased to present the group exhibition *Mind Image*, showcasing works by nine young artists: Li Wenguang, Li Xiaojing, Liu Yujie, Luo Yueming, Qian Jiahua, Ren Ri, Tao Yi, Xia Qingyong, and Zhu Peihong. All the participating artists have chosen a natural working method between “mind image” and “painting trace/brushstroke”. They neither consider the work as an ultimate reflection of their inner spirit nor as a pure material object. While strengthening the natural presentation of the material properties, the artists have weakened people’s subjective consciousness, forming a balance between people and things. Thus, the material transforms from an object that is part of the painting process into the primary focus of the creative process. People’s emotions and the intrinsic character of materials naturally coincide in the creation of works, restoring the anima of things.

The notion of “image” in Chinese traditional philosophy has both the meaning of “image” and “symbol”. It is a holistic cognition of specific things and their interrelationships from the perspective of intuitive experience. Word is “mind voice” and image is “mind picture”. The so-called “mind image” refers to the unity, blending and integration of “mind” and “image” and the pursuit of “selflessness” beyond the separation of subject and object. This is a kind of “selfless” artistic creation state, and “I” is everywhere in the works.

Li Wenguang was born in Shanghai, China in 1985. Since 2011, Li has switched from oil painting on canvas to paper-based creation, using rice paper and gel pen as his mediums. He has introduced a mathematical “abstract formula” into his creative process, as he slowly and repeatedly arranges lines at a uniform speed in a grid framework. His signature “Amulet” series features red, blue, and black tri-colour geometric drawings made with gel pen. It appears as if the shapes are growing out of each other, as they extend outwards in an infinite manner like a kaleidoscopic pattern. The triangles and circles in the picture are metaphors for divine power and appear mysterious. The blue series of works, which Li began in 2017, is another example of his diversity as an artist. The works “Enlightenment Star” and “Still Water Flows Deep” seem very abstract, but in fact, there is narrative content in the works. The artist projects a certain event, personal mood, or daily memory at a certain period into the picture.

Li Xiaojing was born in Shandong, China in 1981 and graduated from the Sichuan Academy of Fine Arts, where she majored in oil painting, with a master’s degree in 2009. Li’s works combine nonfigurative and recognizable forms. The artist creates an atmospheric image, which is quiet and ingenious, on the edge of cognition with the flowing lines and dripping pigments in her works. Her work transcends the content

depicted by the picture itself and gives the viewer a “beyond the canvas” association. In the work “Arthropods”, a spider, enlarged and scabrous, occupies a painted world of spots, splashes, and scratched lines. Presented in this way, it is seen anew. Its physical features are echoed in the context created by Li’s painting: dark, scratchy, and probing. There is the impression not only of the spider’s appearance, but a whole sense of the creature and its world, a glimpse perhaps of what it is like to be that living thing. These are poetic insights, in which the mysterious essence of different phenomena is, as it were, extended and given a visible form. Li’s paintings are a reminder that such perceptions are possible only in a metaphorical visual language that goes beyond the capacity of words.

Liu Yujie was born in Chongqing, China in 1984. The artist graduated from Sichuan Academy, where she majored in oil painting, with a master’s degree in 2009. Liu’s artistic creation focuses on exploring the spatial relevance between installation art and painting. Her works integrate the foundation of traditional Chinese meticulous painting with Western oil painting. Her creations have a steady grey tone, conveying a very delicate visual experience. The artist integrates subjective feelings, emotions, and thoughts into her depiction of a waterfall, one of the motifs in her work. Its cascading nature, guided by the structure of the painting device, shows the transformation of different times and space. In the work “Waterfall”, the subject is sketched by the artist with highly concise lines, depicting the spatial sense of the picture. The top-down composition also creates a time reverie for the viewer, presenting a sense of an alternation of time.

Luo Yueming was born in Shandong, China in 1987 and graduated from the third studio of the mural department of the Central Academy of Fine Arts with a master’s degree in 2021. Luo’s artistic creation includes everything in the universe. The sky, water, trees, insects and so on in his paintings are closely related to his daily life. The picture begins by capturing everything in the world, but the final “vague image” is calm and rational. This process does not rely on logical reasoning and argumentation, but starts from people’s personal experience, intuition, and way of understanding to grasp everything integrally. In the paper-based sketch works, the repetition of the traces left in the arrangement of lines placidly drawn with pencil by the artist erases the expressive artistic language. His acrylic works follow the same method of drawing and arranging lines as in his paper works. Different from the metallic feeling of hidden strokes in his paper works, acrylic shows specific and meticulous lines in the transition of shapes because of the nature of its material.

Qian Jiahua was born in Shanghai, China in 1987. She graduated from the China Academy of Fine Arts in 2011. Qian’s paintings emphasize the flat perspective of the picture. The colours, lines and blocks in her works support each other, presenting an architectural accuracy and rhythm. The artist improvises while painting, embracing unexpected contingencies. The layering in the pictures is mixed with randomness, interaction, and balance. In this process, the artist observes, understands, and records pictures growing freely. She takes the physical edge of the canvas as the boundary, and through continuous covering, cutting and traction, the colour patches and lines in the picture leap repeatedly in contingency, overlapping layer upon layer, gradually forming a fictional space full of narrative. Those real-life experiences, which also include memories and desire, constitute a dramatic moment in the work and finally freeze into the most representative visual elements such as stacking, pulling and sharp corners in the picture.

Ren Ri was born in Harbin, China in 1984. He earned a PhD in Fine Art from the Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing in 2014 and a master’s degree in science from MIT (Media Lab) in 2020. Ren’s art is easily recognizable because of a very special medium he uses: beeswax. His understanding of bee psychology and nature helps him to create. His sculptures represent the truth of how humans interact with nature, which involves harmony, destruction, molding, and interference, and can result in unpredictable, sometimes volatile, but sometimes wondrous results. In “Yuansu II”, the queen was put in the middle of the box, while the other bees started building around her. Every seven days, a reference to the seven days of creation, Ren randomly changed the position of the box by rolling some dice to create the shape of the sculpture. As for “Yuansu III”, it is a performance that shows the relationship between humans and bees. Ren Ri presented himself as a surface, pushing bees onto his face and experiencing a great number of stings.

Tao Yi was born in Shanghai in 1978 and studied in the department of liberal arts at Kunstakademie Düsseldorf (Art Academy of the city of Düsseldorf), where he graduated in 2005. Tao is inspired by music, which he expresses through the colour and composition of his paintings. His paintings possess a certain unrestrained order. Tao's artistic creations pursue the freedom of critical thinking based on certain criteria. The impromptu brushwork and traces left in the pictures create a sense of old objects. His series of Abhaya works adopt the same horizontal composition. The artist uses his arm as a compass to draw an arc in the centre of the picture and uses it to divide the work. Abhaya is a literal translation of "wuwei", which is taken from Abhayagiri, a major monastery in Sri Lanka. It is said that the eminent monks of the Eastern Jin dynasty travelled to acquire Buddhist texts there. The image of the stupa is abstracted as a semicircle. The artist consciously transforms the stability of the picture into solemnity. There is nothing else on the three-metre-long canvas except this semicircle. The painting can release its inner universe.

Xia Qingyong was born in Hunan in 1988 and graduated with a BA from the Central Academy of Fine Arts in 2011. Xia's artistic career benefits from his knowledge and conceptual understanding of art history. Starting with rice paper characteristics, he crumples xuan paper to allow it to take different shapes, then with the help of the quality of rice paper and water itself, he dissolves the brush trace. After layers of dyeing, the human mind is also integrated into the work. When the rice paper is unfolded, unexpected marks are formed at the creases, and it naturally becomes interesting. These naturally formed patterns remind us of brushworks in Chinese painting, but they are completely different as they have a certain kind of hardness that is not dull to look at. Xia Qingyong not only uses the characteristics of creased rice paper to form an aesthetic feeling, but also infuses colour into it. The interaction between the two is a kind of contrast and confrontation. The crease rejects the colour, and the colour setting needs a neat plane to load the pigment. However, folding and creasing extremely reject traditional colour rules, so the vision presented by the smoothed-out rice paper is unusual and contains a great deal of contemporary significance relating to deconstruction and reconstruction.

Zhu Peihong was born in Shanghai in 1987 and graduated from the printmaking department of the Central Academy of Fine Arts in 2014 with a master's degree. The artist's "My Space" series focuses on the dots, lines, and colour patches that flash in the picture in the process of creation as well as the traces left on the picture due to their convergence and dissolution. In this creative process, the strokes overlap and cover each other, and the paint slowly drips and spreads, solidifies and stops, repeatedly until these fragmented traces, reaching an internal order, organically connect with each other and construct the conscious cyberspace perceived by the artist's mind. The abstract dynamic air dome installation "Space O" uses virtual reality technology to replace brushes with handles and canvas with the sky, releasing the magnificent colour energy existing in the universe. The artist combines art and technology to build a channel between virtuality and reality, connecting it with our world.

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 heritage architecture in 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.

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