

PearlLam Galleries

ART COLOGNE 2022

Stand A324

VIP Preview	Wednesday, 16 November, 12–8pm Thursday, 17 November, 11am–7pm
Public Hours	Friday, 18 November, 11am–7pm Saturday, 19 November, 11am–7pm Sunday, 20 November, 11am–6pm
Venue	Hall 11.2, Koelnmesse GmbH, Messeplatz 1, 50679, Cologne, Germany

Cologne—Pearl Lam Galleries is delighted to announce its participation in the 56th edition of Art Cologne. On view is a selection of artworks by artists from different generations and cultural backgrounds. Exhibiting artists include Jana Benitez (b. 1985, USA), Aldo Cristofaro (b. 1970, Italy), Antony Micallef (b. 1975, UK), Zanele Muholi (b. 1972, South Africa), Ni Zhiqi (b. 1957, China), Babajide Olatunji (b. 1989, Nigeria), Su Xiaobai (b. 1949, China), and Zhu Jinshi (b. 1954, China).

Brimming with vibrant colour, Jana Benitez's paintings oscillate between gestural abstraction and figuration, chaos and order, as well as brute force and tenderness. Simultaneously, they convey fullness and emptiness, presence and absence, contraction and expansion. *Budhi (2)* takes reference from archival imagery and recalls the collective wound in Filipino/Filipino-American psyche brought about by the Philippine-American War and the State Fair of 1904 in St Louis, where 1,100 Filipinos were displayed in human zoos.

Aldo Cristofaro creates abstract, graphic patterns overlapping with grid structures and colour fields, broken apart by figurative elements and the structural division in the foreground and background. *One Night in Bangkok* shows a compact agglomeration of all elements featuring a playful combination of vertical, horizontal and oblong brushstrokes. With his technique, the interlock of entangled shapes conveys an implosion.

Described as a modern expressionist, Antony Micallef roots his work in social commentary and self-examination. Known for his visually charged figure paintings, he uses oil paint in a groundbreaking way and is able to literally sculpt and form the paint to reconfigure the parameters of what an oil painting can be. Combined with his impasto and layering techniques, *Constructing Auras No. 12* is pushed to its extreme and blurs our reading of painting and sculpture.

Zanele Muholi is a visual activist and photographer. Presented as a photographic archive is a collection of self-portraits from the *Somnyama Ngonyama (Hail the Dark Lioness)* series that the artist has been working on since 2012. These autobiographic and highly personal portraits express, in Muholi's own words, "the journey, self-image, and possibilities of a black person in today's global society."

A selection of paintings and beadwork related to the photographs will also be on view to provide a broader perspective for understanding the artist's multifaceted art practice.

Ni Zhiqi's works are largely inspired by his travels and take their cue from a montage of associative imageries found in interiorized windows and floorings, such as mosaic tiles. His use of collage and muted hues is intended to probe the non-referential nature of our perception. Ni utilizes a diverse range of found materials including handmade paper he collected from Guizhou, vintage book pages he sourced from his travels, yarn from fashion design classes he teaches, anonymous old envelopes and discarded packages. *Alhambra No. 20* conveys a deep sense of longing and nostalgia.

The series *Tribal Marks* is a collection of hyperrealist portraits informed by Nigerian-born Babajide Olatunji's extensive ethnographic research into the age-old practice of facial scarification and his imagined identity of the depicted subjects of these marks. The resulting portraiture is highly photorealistic. In Olatunji's words, "The rendering process starts with the creative imaginings of the subject, considering personality, character, skin type and even factoring in medical history in some cases."

After completing his study at the Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing during the 1980s, Su Xiaobai pursued further study at the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf. Su has developed a sensuous yet rigorous art that defies classification, and yet whose own chosen medium, lacquer, is steeped in Chinese history. His works are both hedonistic and mystical, defiantly sculptural while exquisitely painted. Ranging from shell-like finishes to sensuous, curved profiles and abraded textures, the paintings exist entirely on their own terms, possessing their own history, character, and independent existence.

In the late 1980s, Zhu Jinshi was invited by the DAAD and Bethanien Art Center to live and work in Berlin, Germany, which helped him to gain a preliminary understanding of Western contemporary art. He found himself increasingly looking inward at his Chinese roots, particularly Eastern Zen Buddhism. Taking an early interest in the notion of social sculpture by Joseph Beuys, Zhu began experimenting with the potential of contemporary art, infusing Zen philosophy and Fluxus art. His work *Traveller* examines the formal language of painting from a spiritual and nihilistic perspective. The piece appears constructed, such is the formidable physical density of its highly textured surface. Vivid chromatic contrasts reveal a plethora of individual marks. Collectively, the painting comprises an unfathomable build-up of different superimposed traces, each the evidence of the hand and eye that coordinated colour, position and shape.








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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