

# Pearl Lam Galleries

## ART BASEL HONG KONG 2023

Stand 1D07

Private view (invitation only)	Tuesday, 21 March, 12noon–8pm Wednesday, 22 March, 12noon–5pm Thursday, 23 March, 12noon–2pm Friday, 24 March, 12noon–2pm Saturday, 25 March, 11am–12noon
Vernissage	Wednesday, 22 March, 5–9pm
Public Hours	Thursday, 23 March, 2–8pm Friday, 24 March, 2–8pm Saturday, 25 March, 12noon–6pm
Venue	Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, 1 Harbour Road, Wanchai

Hong Kong—Pearl Lam Galleries is pleased to participate in the Galleries sector of Art Basel Hong Kong 2023. On view is a selection of artworks by artists from the gallery stable to showcase the breadth of the gallery's aesthetics. Exhibiting artists include Jana Benitez (b. 1985, USA), John Copeland (b. 1976, USA), Mr Doodle (b. 1994, UK), Leonardo Drew (b. 1961, USA), Dale Frank (b. 1959, Australia), Isshaq Ismail (b. 1989, Ghana), Antony Micallef (b. 1975, UK), Zanele Muholi (b. 1972, South Africa), Babajide Olatunji (b. 1989, Nigeria), Cynthia Polsky (b. 1939, USA), Gatot Pujiarto (b. 1970, Indonesia), Qiu Deshu (1948–2020, China), Su Xiaobai (b. 1949, China), Zhu Jinshi (b. 1954, China), and Zhu Peihong (b. 1987, China).

Jana Benitez's latest paintings emerge from deep reflections made during her visits back to her birth country, the Philippines. She is interested in the ethics of representation, and with this began a series of portraits of Filipino artists in their studios, examining how these sacred spaces are amplified and translated into art that goes out of these sage dwellings and enters the collective consciousness.

John Copeland's highly gestural, complex paintings masterfully possess elements of both figuration and abstraction. Created with thick, impasto oil paint, the mark-making is bold, fragmented, precise, and loose. His recent works contain amorphous figures as well as paintings within paintings that mirror the subject and make viewers question what they are looking at.

*Mr and Mrs Doodle Fly to DoodleLand* is a celebration of Mr Doodle's love story with his wife. He channels his creations with love, joy, and happiness directly from his DoodleWorld into ours with great stamina. His process is fluid, therapeutic, unrestrained, and without hesitation, where the dense clusters of black and white doodles are gradually tinted with an array of bright colours.

Leonardo Drew is known for creating reflective abstract sculptural works that play upon the dystopic tension between order and chaos. His pieces recall post-minimalist sculpture that alludes to America's

industrial past as well as the plight of African Americans throughout U.S. history. One could find many meanings in his work *Number 18C*, but ultimately the cyclical nature of life and decay can be seen in his grids of transformed raw material to resemble and articulate entropy and a visual erosion of time.

Dale Frank considers painting as an open form for expressing a tactile state that is not bound by worldly events or the authorship of individuals. Running contrary to the belief that art should be made for human viewing, Frank argues that artworks should point out how they can act and exist in their own right to achieve an ideal physical state that can go beyond the realms of human perception. For time may be the only element that governs the making and reception of art.

Describing his portraits as “infantile semi-abstraction”, Isshaq Ismail's artistic practice aims to reduce the human figure to its most basic characteristics. Thick patches of bold colours dominate the surface of the canvas. *Guardian 1* questions the audience's expectation of figurative depiction and instead creates the impression of a parallel world peopled with grotesque creatures both similar to human beings but different in appearance.

The painting *Ava (Flower Painting)* is an expansion of Antony Micallef's growing interest in looking at the natural world. An evolution of mark making and trying to constantly use oil paint in non-traditional dynamic ways has led him to a creative opening. Influences for these flower paintings come from an amalgamation of sources including Emil Nolde, Vincent Van Gogh, and Chaim Soutine among other impressionists.

Zanele Muholi is a visual activist. 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”.

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 are highly photorealistic.

Cynthia Polsky was an active painter in the 1960s and 70s in New York. Working independently from the art scene prevalent at the time, Polsky's practice instead relied on her memories and lived experiences as sources of inspiration, most prominently the artist's study of ballet and transformative travels to East and South Asia. This has resulted in a body of work that captures the nuances of an artist's subconscious and imagination.

Gatot Pujarto's artistic practice is mostly his reflections on the happenings around him. He adds texture by pasting, patching, layering, tearing, binding, and creating patterns with fabric. The idea of *Hurt Communities/Komunitas Yang Tersakit* arose from street children. The artist believes that the young generation should be treated with love and care as assets of the nation's future.

Deeply influenced by Chinese traditional philosophy, Qiu Deshu's work visualises natural transformation on both macroscopic and microscopic levels. An initial interest in the cracks in the rock slates subsequently led him to become aware of its silent but natural power. The *Fissures* series expresses his innermost desire for spiritual balance and self-healing, but it also proposes a dystopic vision of the rapidly changing landscapes of modern China.

Su Xiaobai has developed a sensuous yet rigorous art that defies classification, and yet its own chosen medium, lacquer, is steeped in Chinese history. Focusing on the colour, shape, and texture of his works, Su's arresting and compelling art engages both with the language of Western abstract art and with the traditions of Chinese philosophy. On view is *Yielding as if Ice About to Melt No. 1*, where subtle changes in the layers and textures aid in emanating a calm and mysterious atmosphere.

Zhu Jinshi is a pioneer of Chinese abstract art and installation art. Though abstract, Zhu's work is rooted in metaphor. Experience—fleeting and internal—is embodied in the inert substance to which it is committed and in which it finds an imaginative and deeply expressive equivalent. On view will be several of Zhu's signature abstract thick paintings, including *Who Is Guan Yunchang*. This work is the key piece among all 2 x 2 metre works. The series takes the classical novel *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* as a hidden background to construct an abstract multi-dimensional space.

Zhu Peihong was born in Shanghai in 1987. His work is inspired by his visual memory of the city of Shanghai. *Growing* focuses on dots, lines, and colour patches with the strokes overlapping and covering each other. 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 like a mental landscape of a utopia in between reality and virtuality.





## 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 Art Cologne, Art Basel, Frieze Masters, and West Bund Art and Design.

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