

# PearlLam Galleries

Shanghai

## West Bund Art & Design 2024

Stand A108

Media Preview	Thursday, 7 November, 11am–1pm
VIP Preview	Thursday, 7 November, 1–7pm Friday, 8 November, 12 noon–1pm
Public Days	Friday, 8 November, 1–6pm Saturday, 9 November, 12 noon–6pm Sunday, 10 November, 12 noon–6pm
Venue	West Bund Art Center, No. 2555 Longteng Avenue, Shanghai, China

Shanghai—Pearl Lam Galleries is delighted to announce its participation in the eleventh edition of West Bund Art & Design, where the gallery will be presenting a variety of artworks by thirteen artists from different generations and cultural backgrounds. Exhibiting artists include Alimi Adewale (b. 1974, Nigeria), Mr Doodle (b. 1994, UK), Damian Elwes (b. 1960, UK), Bella Foster (b. 1975, USA), Moses Hamborg (b. 1995, USA), Michal Korman (b. 1987, Slovakia), Sthenjwa Luthuli (b. 1991, South Africa), Ni Zhiqi (b. 1957, China), Serge Alain Nitegeka (b. 1983, Rwanda), Chidinma Nnoli (b. 1998, Nigeria), Babajide Olatunji (b. 1989, Nigeria), Zhu Jinshi (b. 1954, China), and Zhu Peihong (b. 1987, China). Works by African artists Sthenjwa Luthuli, Serge Alain Nitegeka and Chidinma Nnoli will be shown for the first time in China at the fair, alongside celebrated pieces from Nigerian artists Alimi Adewale and Babajide Olatunji who were presented at the fair last year. Additionally, while Santa Monica-based Damian Elwes reinterprets the historical contexts of artistic masters in their own studios, Paris-based artist Michal Korman captures the essence of everyday life surrounded by nature through his work. Furthermore, two American artists, Bella Foster and Moses Hamborg, will be featured at the fair, revisiting and adapting the classics and histories of art in a contemporary context.

Lagos-based Alimi Adewale's creative journey revolves around unravelling the profound beauty and cultural tapestry that defines the African experience, bringing to light the rich heritage, vibrant traditions, and diverse narratives that shape his home continent. Through his paintings, he strives to evoke emotions, challenge preconceived notions, and invite viewers into a deeper understanding of Africa's complex and multifaceted identity. Presenting his latest diptych entitled *Sisters of the Earth: A Tapestry of Cultures*, he forges a symbolic connection that surpasses boundaries and language. Standing united in solidarity, these sisters reflect the splendour of shared encounters and mutual admiration. Each figure represents a different heritage, adorned in different attire embellished with universal symbols and patterns. Yet, despite the apparent differences, there is a palpable sense of

harmony and unity that pervades the canvas. The artist encourages viewers to contemplate the magnificence of diversity and the significance of cultural exchange in fostering a more compassionate and understanding world. The work serves as a reminder of our joint obligation to nurture and safeguard our planet, acknowledging that we are all interconnected members of one global family.

Mr Doodle began consuming the Earth's surface with doodles shortly after he was born in Kent, UK in 1994. He started out covering his parents' furniture with doodles and eventually his whole bedroom until he realised his home wasn't a big enough canvas. He has said, "I want my work to consume as much of the planet as it can." Mr Doodle began to garner recognition in the art world in 2015 and has since seen a meteoric rise in interest in his work. Truly a millennial artist standing at the forefront of a new art wave, his works provoke discourse on what we consider fine art today. On view will be his latest works from his whimsical solo exhibitions *Mr Doodle in Space* at Pearl Lam Galleries Hong Kong and *Mr Doodle! Museum Mayhem* at Holburne Museum, Bath, UK. He channels his creations with love, joy, and happiness directly from his DoodleLand into ours with great stamina. His process is fluid, therapeutic, unrestrained, and without hesitation. Ultimately, he seeks to spread a sense of wonder, mayhem, and hope whilst seeking a greater understanding of his place in the universe.

Born in 1960 in the UK, British/American artist Damian Elwes lives and works in Santa Monica, California. He has had over twenty solo exhibitions, and his artworks are highly sought after by collectors and foundations worldwide. His *Studio Visit* series weaves through the spaces of numerous different artists, including Pablo Picasso, Henri Matisse, Damien Hirst, Frida Kahlo, and many more. Based on meticulous research and extensive imagination, Elwes's paintings of artists' studios, both living and departed, transport audiences into the worlds of artistic geniuses and capture the sublimity of creative experience. He chooses moments in time when an artist is at their most inventive and examines what was going on in their studios. Extensive research such as piecing together past images, hearing stories, and finding the spaces themselves leads to images that are fascinating and uplifting. Elwes will show *Matisse's Studio* and *Rose Wylie's Studio* at the fair. In these works, the significant pieces of the portrayed artist are central to the composition, and the colours of the paintings seep into the surrounding room. The newspapers on the floor of *Rose Wylie's Studio* describe a snapshot of English life, which is echoed in the view from her window. These spaces become symbols of creativity and evolve into intimate psychological portraits of artistic figures both past and present.

Bella Foster's artistic practice centres on still lifes that intimately depict the spaces of her friends and her own, blending real and imagined domestic environments. Her paintings transcend mere representation, engaging in a psychological inquiry into the intersubjective experiences that shape our connection to the objects within these spaces. Through her lens, the seemingly mundane transforms into a poignant exploration of solitude and desolation, revealing a world beyond material objects where we find meaning and spiritual sustenance. Drawing inspiration from artists like Pierre Bonnard and Georgia O'Keeffe, Foster employs a distinctive economy of colour hues that conveys a flat picture plane, foreshortening our reading of the artworks with rhythm and repetition. Far from mere depictions of ordinary scenes, Foster's works are not meant to reflect on spaces or objects we desire to own, but rather the deeper meaning embodied by them, presenting unexpected juxtapositions that challenge conventional notions of the still life genre. Ultimately, her paintings animate stillness, transforming quotidian objects into profound inquiries of human psychology and materiality.

LA-based artist Moses Hamborg sustains his intuitive dedication to both subject and craft. He draws extensively from classical figuration, notably in *Hercules splits Mount Calpe and Jabal Musa*, wherein the mythological Greek hero clears a path to Asia by tearing the mountain into two pillars, thus marking the boundaries between Africa and Europe. Captivated by the tension of the subject's physical exertion, this painting draws significant inspiration from Francisco de Zurbarán's rare commissions of *The Labours of Hercules* 1634. Through this painting, Hamborg explores identity, existing between multiple geographies, animus and anima, and the elemental forces around us. Born and raised in Southern

California, Hamborg moved to Italy to study drawing and painting. After taking on portrait commissions across North America and Europe, he attended the prestigious artist residency, Black Rock Senegal in West Africa. Currently, Hamborg is the inaugural artist in residence at 70 Square Metres in Shanghai, which was founded by Pearl Lam, where he has created a new series of works that explore mythology, transcendence, and subjective identity. Hamborg's solo exhibition will open on 6 November to coincide with this year's West Bund Art & Design fair.

Michal Korman began his art education at the age of five when the Slovak academic painter Jozef Jelenak admitted him to his courses for children at the school of art in Korman's hometown, forming his artistic foundations for three years. In 2006, the artist mastered the four-year curriculum at the school of art in only two and graduated with a diploma. Since then, he has continued to develop his style of traditional oil painting using figurative motifs and graphic design. For a few years now, Korman has dedicated his focus and found inspiration in the world of plants and has begun working with his signature themes inspired by Marcel Proust: the plants, flowers, books and objects he collects, marking the passing of time and his travels. The beauty of flowers, gardens, and the surrounding nature fills him with happiness, which he translates onto the canvas using flat solid oil paint chunks. These chunks serve as both ornaments and motifs, enhancing and disrupting their presence within the composition. What matters most to him is capturing the excitement in the viewer's eye. The artist currently lives and works in Paris.

Sthenjwa Luthuli meticulously examines the manifold dynamics of African existence, juxtaposing the traditional with the contemporary, offering a nuanced exploration of pre-modern legacies and post-modern realities. His mixed media works reflect on the hurdles of adaption and survival within ever-evolving societies fragmented by cultural diversity. *Touch in the Light* portrays Luthuli's relentless pursuit of light, acknowledging struggles endured along the way. The carved wooden relief ignites inspiration of endless opportunities the future promises. Amidst the shadows, *Moon Rising* stands as a testament to the temporary nature of darkness. Through the eternal cycle of the moon, we find hope for renewal and a profound connection to the rhythms of life and the natural world.

Shanghai-based artist Ni Zhiqi captures the non-referential manifestation of perception by combining painting and collage and using muted hues in a layered treatment. The artist's works are shaped by his deliberate and calculated use of sourced items alongside his attention to the sensuality of their materiality. Ni strips away the objects' innate nature, dismantles and reassembles them, squeezing them into a dense perceptual vacuum. Through this process, not only are different layers of perception extracted, but the gap in between the shifting layers is compressed to such an extent that the emptiness of the vacuum becomes as solid as dry land, inviting viewers "into the room"—a perceptual realm that is both an illusion and reality, a presence indicating an absence, a series of traces in place of a missing referent. Experimenting with the use of dyed leather and the plastic quality of painting, Ni's *A.M.* series captures the artist's attitude towards the practice of art—extracting what is seemingly mundane from our daily lives to reflect on the essence of time and memories. Coincidentally, *Vacuum & the World*, Ni's latest creation from his ongoing *Vacuum* series, which internalises the geometric forms and inherent characteristics of objects, will be showcased at Xiàn Chǎng, a special exhibition programme at West Bund Art & Design.

Serge Alain Nitegeka was born in Rwanda in 1983 and now lives in Johannesburg, South Africa. He works in painting, sculpture and large-scale, site-specific installations. Nitegeka produces works that address issues of identity sparked by forced migration and cultural and political borders. His installations present obstacles that promote participation in the metaphoric experience: they physically bisect three-dimensional space and use the viewer as a further disruptive variable, resulting in a tableau vivant of sorts. The ongoing dialogue between Nitegeka's site-specific installations and the sculptural forms and paintings that emerge from his studio is a key part of the artist's practice. Nitegeka's acute, investigatory

aesthetic sense places him within the rich art historical cadre of minimalism and abstraction, while the larger concepts he tackles resonate in the atmosphere of today's global politics. On view will be three thought-provoking, abstract paintings from his *Displaced Peoples in Situ: Studio Study* series, two created on wood and one on canvas.

Chidinma Nnoli, between the experience of spiritual life and all that can be considered material, explores, through a sage use of painting, the flow of the narrative of a single subject, superimposing the past on the present and vice versa while constantly referring to the self in conflict with a background often saturated with religion and gendered obligations. Nnoli's creative exploration in *Pieces of My Piece of Mind* revolves around the convergence of the physical and metaphysical with a thematic emphasis on women. Her deliberate choice of natural hues and soft pastels in this painting evoke a sense of balance, mirroring the relationship between her subjects and the spaces they occupy. Rooted in both painting and poetry, Nnoli's work exudes a captivating aura of mystery and coherence. Her poems, like whispered memories, find expression on canvas, creating a visual symphony that resonates with the soul. The effect of her work, as seen in *Pieces of My Piece of Mind*, which navigates the realms of trauma and the journey towards healing, brings comfort in shared experiences and hope that can be felt universally.

Self-taught London-based Nigerian-born artist Babajide Olatunji will exhibit his hyperrealist pastel and acrylic portraits from his *ATUNWA* series, an imagined collective of reincarnates suggesting alternative histories of the artist, each embodying different social and moral roles. These fictional subjects collectively serve as social commentary, shedding light on psychological states resulting from loss, self-identity, perseverance, kinship, womanhood, domesticity, containment, social mobility, and intellectuality. In this limited series, each biography represents a unique pathway of possibility closely related to the artist and is a conscious reflection of the role both fate and choice play in human eventualities. Through the depiction of a biography in the three paintings dedicated to each character, each story serves as a collective memento mori, reminding viewers of the transient nature of life and the universal destiny we all share. Through the use of hyperrealism, Olatunji creates an immersive experience, drawing viewers into the narratives depicted in his portraits. Influenced by old European masters including Caravaggio, Rembrandt van Rijn, Diego Velázquez, and Théodore Géricault, he employs chiaroscuro and other painting techniques to capture the essence of his subjects. The use of light and mood further enhances the emotional impact of his works in captivating the viewer's reception and engagement.

As an important practitioner of contemporary Asian art who rose to prominence in the mid to late 20th century, Zhu Jinshi tirelessly promotes Asian experiences amidst the tumultuous historical currents of post-war East-West cultural exchanges, becoming one of its most significant pioneers. His art is reflected not only in his innovative thick painting that combines traditional Chinese techniques with Western abstract expressionism, but also in his gigantic rice paper installations that engage with space, demonstrating his understanding and expansion of the interplay between painting and installation. This exhibition features Zhu Jinshi's latest diptych work, *Quantum Beauty*, which captivates us with its striking material thickness and vibrant colours, showcasing the enduring allure of thick painting. Additionally, the two-by-two-metre piece *Refraction of Romanticism: Song Dynasty Bronze Mirror*, completed just a few months ago, employs a patina-like technique using acrylic paint and a continuous immersion method, creating a three-dimensional kaleidoscopic effect. In parallel, the two small-scale works from 2024 display another facet of thick painting's micro-aesthetics through dazzling colours and layered pigments.

Zhu Peihong was born in Shanghai in 1987. Inspired by his visual memories of the city of Shanghai, Zhu's paintings, while appearing abstract in form, differ from Western abstract painting. They transform the artist's memories and conscious perceptions into a unique abstract painterly language, seeking to

restore and reveal the ways in which sensory consciousness exists in the virtual and real worlds. Most of his series are created with acrylic paint and supplemented by ink fine liners, acrylic pens, and oil paint on canvas. The exhibited work, *Growing 735*, 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 space in Hong Kong and Shanghai. 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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