

8 July, 2017

Pékin Fine Arts

Preoccupations: Summer Group Exhibition

8 July – 5 September, 2017

Pékin Fine Arts is pleased to host Preoccupations, a group exhibition of five (5) artists:

Aniwar Mamat 安尼沃尔 (b. 1962, Xinjiang Province, China)

Huang Zhiyang 黄致阳 (b. 1965, Taipei, Taiwan)

Mao Lizi 毛栗子 (b. 1950, Beijing, China)

Ryan La Bar (b.1975 Great Falls, Montana, USA)

Xu Zhenbang 徐振邦 (b. 1990, Shenzhen, China)



Huang Zhiyang, *ZOON - Dreamscape No.1610*, 2016, Ink, mineral pigment and acrylic on silk, 150 x 134 cm.

Preoccupations brings together recent concerns of five artists, reflecting disparate yet over-lapping practices of prolonged interest in specific subjects.

In the 1st exhibition space, of new works by Huang Zhiyang and Mao Lizi, the artists share a deep preoccupation with ink and traditional painting medium. Specifically, how to innovate with traditional ink and brush tools, while developing each's idiosyncratic form of painterly expression. "Expression" not in the gestural or emotional sense. Rather, in the mastery of technique and expertise reserved for those well practiced in the act of painting. Both are fascinated with the way paint moves into and across paper and canvas, how it absorbs and flows, guided by both the artist's hand and the intrinsic materiality of the medium. Both are adept at producing seemingly expressive and "free" paint strokes, which are in fact tightly controlled by years of practiced technique. Thick and thin lines are applied, in exploring the creative possibilities of the medium. Both artists aim at taming the medium, and in so doing, their best works are created.

The challenge of overcoming the confines of materiality and medium is also Ryan LaBar's concern. Working solely in ceramic sculpture, Ryan is based in Jingdezhen, in a studio with a kiln he constructed. Controlling the clay, fire, and potters wheel are a constant concern. Much control is needed in ceramic sculpture, as in ink and brush strokes, in order to produce elaborate labyrinth like work that appears to flow randomly, seemingly "free" and "uncontrolled".

In the 2nd exhibition space, Aniwar Mamat and Xu Zhenbang adapt graphic art, geometric abstraction, and vernacular materials to painting. Both aim to show viewers "new painting" dispelling prior notions of what constitutes a "good painting". Aniwar uses fabric as both canvas and compositional element, sometimes applying gold leaf and wind and rain in place of paint. Xu appropriates cheap roadside landscape posters, reinventing them by incorporating graffiti and gaming

compositions into vaguely map-like epic abstractions. Both use bright colored, clean and rigid horizontal lines as tools of conceptual construction.

All four painters have no fear of strong seemingly unorthodox colors. Rather than avoid bright, even garish, non-traditional color combinations, these artists embrace them. No soft quiet monochromes, no traditional ink blacks and whites for these artists. The surprising bursts of color are part of the works' appeal. The eyes' attraction to color, is an intrinsic and vital component in their artwork composition, and is a preoccupation they share.

Producing seemingly random and "free" forms of individual expression, the five would argue, comes only after periods of prolonged and intense preoccupation.

- Beijing, July 2017