

Ding Li: Curb Your Enthusiasm

Artist	Ding Li
Curator	Kaimei Wang
Opening	January 8, 2022 15:00 – 19:00
Exhibition Period	January 8 – March 4, 2022
Venue	MadeIn Gallery, No.1, -1F Sunken Garden, Lane 9 Qufu Road, Jing'an District, Shanghai

MadeIn Gallery will present Ding Li's solo exhibition "Curb Your Enthusiasm" on January 8, 2022. This is the third solo exhibition of Ding Li at MadeIn Gallery after "Robert Song" in 2019 and "April 12th, No. 106, 2879 Longteng Avenue" in 2020. The exhibition will present a series of new paintings. Ding Li continues to practice the tubular brushstrokes and gradations of color, and applies them to new subjects, achieving more painterly images that emphasize the emotionality of line and color. This solo exhibition presents Ding's latest breakthrough and innovation in the long-standing rigid dichotomies in the field of painting – figurative/abstract, pictorial/narrative, etc., and his longing to create a visual link of connecting contemporary desires and thirsts among the Internet, the screen and the scenes of everyday life in the post-epidemic era. Ding Li's paintings make us realize that in the information age, painting has gone far beyond its technical definition as "paint on canvas" and has been providing a venue to negotiate the challenges of a mediated life-world.

Curator Kaimei Wang takes the appearance of Ding Li's paintings shaped by tubular brushstrokes and gradient colors as his personal "runway of creativity". In her view, the information "squeezed and transmitted digitally" is torn, distorted, and synthesized, and when it reappears, it has been shifted, replaced, and dislocated; from a banal digital picture to an unfamiliar image created by an artist, painting in the post-internet era is full of the temptation of phantom solidification and specter resurrection.

Since the second half of the nineteenth century, different categories of the arts have separated from each other, and each has shown a tendency to pursue its own specificity or purity. And this notion is eventually theorized by art critic Clement Greenberg as the "medium specificity" of a form of art, i.e., the unique and proper area of competence for a form of art corresponds with the ability of an artist to manipulate those features that are unique to the nature of a particular medium. However, contrary to thinking in terms of medium specificity, since the 1960s, from the rise of television and electronic computer to the Internet revolution, painting has assimilated the very cultural and technological developments that were thought to have led to its "death" and has shown great vitality. Digital images, with their diverse sources and media, have become the new ground for the development of painting in the 21st century, as an inexhaustible creative material and technological solution brought about by the Internet revolution. In the "post-medium condition", painting continues to challenge both creators and viewers in a broadened system and frontier.

About Ding Li

Ding Li was born in 1979 in Shanghai, and graduated with a MA from the Oil Painting Department of the Academy of Fine Arts in Paris, France (École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-arts de Paris). The works of Ding Li are based on repeated experiments with the aim of defining a pure expression of his own in this media. His practice focuses on the exploration of painting developed from materials characteristics and presents a new visual language through the reconstruction of oil paints, spray paints, brushes and frames.

His recent exhibitions include: "18th Sea Horizon Painting and Sculpture Exhibition", China Art Museum, Shanghai, China, 2020; "April 12th, No. 106, 2879 Longteng Avenue", MadeIn Gallery, Shanghai China, 2020; "Robert Song", MadeIn Gallery, Shanghai, China, 2019; "Wild Metropolis", Powerlong Museum, Shanghai, China, 2019; "Advent: Inventing Landscape, Producing the Earth", Qianshao Contemporary Art Center, Shanghai, China, 2019; "Extreme Mix-Guangzhou Airport Biennale", Guangzhou, China, 2019; "The Kind Stranger", UNArt Center, Shanghai, 2019; "The Variable and The Generating", MadeIn Gallery, Shanghai, 2019; "In the Name of December 12.", Imagokinetics Lab, Hangzhou, China, 2018; "The First Porsche "Young Chinese Artist of the Year" Nominees' Exhibition, Modern Art Museum, Shanghai, China, 2017; "Yellspace Programme Exhibition—Partial Archive", Yell Space, Shanghai, China, 2019; "Serendipitous Mission", MadeIn Gallery, Shanghai, China, 2017; "Form Consumption Over Substance Reflection", MadeIn Gallery, Shanghai, China, 2017; "Information Sculpture Superhighway", MadeIn Gallery, Shanghai, China, 2016; "Inventing Ritual", Bentu, Chinese artists at a time of turbulence and transformation, Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris, France, 2016; "Not Impulsive Enough Is the Devil", MadeIn Gallery, Shanghai, China, 2015.

About Kaimei Wang

Kaimei Wang is an independent curator, art writer and translator based in Shanghai. She graduated from Beijing Normal University, Stockholm University and holds a master degree on study of contemporary art at the Sotheby's Institute of Art. She is one of the 4 winners of the prestigious international art critic awards 2021 and is the co-writer of the book on contemporary painter Ding Yi published by Lund Humphries in London 2020. Her research of interest covers film, photography and painters in relation to art history . Her translation work "Ingmar Bergman Essay Collection" from Swedish to Chinese will be published in 2022.