

PearlLam Galleries

Pearl Lam Galleries Announces Its Second Participation in

THE ARMORY SHOW 2019

Stand 502, Pier 94

Public Hours 7–8 March, 12–8pm; 9 March, 12–7pm; 10 March, 12–6pm

Venue Piers 92 & 94, 711 12th Avenue at 55th Street, New York City, USA

New York (February xx, 2019)—Pearl Lam Galleries is excited to announce its second participation in The Armory Show 2019 (7–10 March), following its success at last year's edition. As one of Asia's leading galleries, with spaces in Hong Kong, Shanghai and Singapore representing an impressive and global roster of artists, Pearl Lam Galleries remains committed to fostering cross-cultural dialogue around Chinese and Asian contemporary art, and to championing artists from the region. The Galleries' stand at The Armory Show will directly reflect this tenet of its mission, as the presentation will include works by two Korean and two Chinese contemporary abstract artists: **Chun Kwang Young** (b. 1944, Hongcheon County, Korea), **Hoon Kwak** (b. 1941, Daegu, Korea), **Su Xiaobai** (b. 1949, Wuhan, China), and **Zhu Jinshi** (b. 1954, Beijing, China).

"We're delighted to return to The Armory Show this March, and look forward to the opportunity to deepen the meaningful relationships we have developed with US- and New York-based collectors over the years, and to further engage with this important art world epicenter," said Pearl Lam, founder and gallery owner.

Considered among the top contemporary abstract artists in China today, both Su Xiaobai and Zhu Jinshi both have longstanding relationships with the Galleries. This year, their work will be presented alongside that of Chun Kwang Young, as well as new artist for the gallery Hoon Kwak. Both Chun Kwang Young and Hoon Kwak received their MFA degrees in the United States, while Su Xiaobai and Zhu Jinshi left China in the 1980s to live in Germany for a number of years (Düsseldorf and Berlin respectively) before returning to China.

Chun Kwang Young was drawn to Abstract Expressionism when he first moved to the US. Painting was a way for him to express his experiences freely and a tool to explore the gaps between the ideal and reality. Since 1994, Chun has shifted his focus to his *Aggregation* series as he realized the importance of moving beyond an established artistic canon and methodology in order to progress as an artist. It was this pivotal change, where he adopted traditional Korean mulberry paper in an innovative way that has established his artistic career. The well-known sculptural *Aggregations* feature hand-cut triangles of polystyrene, individually wrapped in delicate mulberry paper pages torn from old books, which are arranged on canvases to form strikingly textured low-relief wall works in a style that is in close dialogue with the practice of assemblage. With a trompe l'oeil quality, his works create the illusion of depth and coalescence and, ultimately, represent the harmony and conflict in the unity of many. Besides his rectangular and round works, the Galleries will also exhibit an irregular shaped piece that indicates Chun's continuous exploration.

Hoon Kwak founded a group called "A.G. (Avant-Garde)" in 1969, which served as a significant presence in Korean modern art history until its dissolution in the mid-1970s. Afterwards, he moved to the US. His time studying in the West catalyzed the representations of profound cultural heritage of his homeland from afar. Influenced by the rich spiritual world of Buddhism and Eastern philosophy, Hoon applies a range of Korean materials to create works that deeply resonate with audiences. His interests in Korean Buddhist temples, shaman bowls, ancient spools, earthenware, and Chinese texts are characterized in his paintings through unique techniques such as sprinkling, applying, scratching, overlaying and peeling, which suggests Kwak's emotional response to his childhood memories of the

traumatic Korean War. The paintings at the stand feature iron oxide, otherwise known as burnt sienna. It is considered as the colour first used in ancient cave paintings with charcoal, soil, and other mineral pigments mixed into animal fat, depicting a vision of the future by returning to one's roots.

Su Xiaobai's highly contemporary artworks combine the vocabulary of the Western art canon, cultivated by his study of avant-garde art during his time in Germany, with an aesthetic and philosophic practice rooted in Chinese tradition. Since his return to China in 2003, Su has shifted from his earlier work that was mainly representational to artwork that investigates the formal quality, materiality, and relationship between an art object, the wall, and space. He chose lacquer, a traditional Chinese material with thousands of years of history, as a material to embody his artistic ideology. Meanwhile, his works represent his artistic choices, but are also the result of chance as lacquer can dry in unpredictable ways because of its unique temperament. By applying colors on linen; polishing layers of lacquer; and introducing subtle undulations, light, shadows, depth of texture, tactile sensations, and movement into the artworks, Su has elevated his materials from something with a practical use to the embodiment of a meditative state. It is exactly because of Su's meditative approach to working with his materials that his pieces are able to contain rich cultural implications, expressing a non-traditional visual force and existential power.

Zhu Jinshi has been recognized as one of the earliest precursors of avant-garde art during the 1980s in China. Zhu's expressionistic paintings articulate the relationship between abstraction and emptiness from the perspective of Zen Buddhism and Taoism. His work processes relate closely with the spirit of Chinese ink painting and calligraphy, which seek a unity with nature in pursuit of achieving a harmonic state. Using a custom-made palette knife, he pulls and pushes, flips and shovels—bodily movements that are exercised above the canvas. Where to fill, where to empty, where to collapse, and where to fall are composed of revolutionary moments of action. In this three-dimensional space, the paint grows fearlessly within different levels: it either expands; overlaps; or hides in crevices, edges, or cracks. In the end, the paint becomes a game played out by a materialized body and an escalating vision. Two of Zhu's new works created in 2018, *Beauty* and *Changzhi Temple*, will be presented at the stand.

About Pearl Lam Galleries

Founded by Pearl Lam, Pearl Lam Galleries is a driving force within Asia's contemporary art scene. With over 20 years of experience exhibiting Asian and Western art and design, it is one of the leading and most established contemporary art galleries to be launched out of China.

Playing a vital role in stimulating international dialogue on Chinese and Asian contemporary art, the Galleries is dedicated to championing artists who re-evaluate and challenge perceptions of cultural practice from the region. The Galleries in Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Singapore collaborate with renowned curators, each presenting distinct programming from major solo exhibitions, special projects and installations to conceptually rigorous group shows. Based on the philosophy of Chinese literati where art forms have no hierarchy, Pearl Lam Galleries is dedicated to breaking down boundaries between different disciplines, with a unique gallery model committed to encouraging cross-cultural exchange.

Further building on the Galleries' commitment in Asia, Pearl Lam Galleries is delighted to announce the opening of its new gallery space at Dempsey Hill in March 2019. The four gallery spaces of Pearl Lam Galleries in Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Singapore represent an increasingly influential roster of contemporary artists. Chinese artists Su Xiaobai and Zhu Jinshi, who synthesize Chinese sensibilities with an international visual language, are presented internationally with work now included in major private and public collections worldwide. The Galleries has also introduced leading international artists, such as Leonardo Drew, Jenny Holzer, Carlos Rolón/Dzine, and Yinka Shonibare MBE, to markets in the region, providing opportunities for new audiences in Asia to encounter their work. Pearl Lam Galleries encourages international artists to create new work which engages specifically with the region, collaborating to produce thought-provoking, culturally relevant work.

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