

SETAREH

Yang Jiechang

Hundred Layers of Ink

March 4, 2023 – April 15, 2023

SETAREH Berlin is pleased to announce *Hundred Layers of Ink*, an exhibition by Yang Jiechang. For his third exhibition with the gallery, Yang will present works in video and ink which incorporate the monochromatic language he has explored since his international debut in the legendary exhibition *Magiciens de la Terre* at the Centre Pompidou in 1989. This will be the first presentation of the artist's work in Berlin for nearly a decade. The exhibition will coincide with his participation in Minimal. Art from East Asia at the Humboldt Forum.

Yang Jiechang incorporates his mastery of Classical Chinese art into a contemporary exploration of picture making. By combining ink brush imagery and techniques with contemporary subjects and media such as video, he has developed an oeuvre rich with cross-cultural observations. Yang had received from an early age, private instruction from his Grandfather in traditional Chinese culture. He furthered his study of calligraphy and Classical painting at the Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts and subsequently taught there. However, it was encountering the Western avant-garde after the opening of China in the 1970s and 80s, as well as his encounter with German Romanticism in the late 1980s that left a lasting impact on his practice.

Drawing from his deep study of Daoism, he began to approach art making as a type of formal contemplation in a series of process based black monochromes entitled *Hundred Layers of Ink*. In this ongoing series, layers of raw and diluted ink saturate the paper ground in a deconstruction of the essential elements of Chinese painting: ink, paper and water. The resulting image has a mysterious luminosity. Beyond representation, these work's central figure is actually the artist himself, an impassive channel for the meditative generation of contemplative form. While presenting work in this context he began to see his artistic project as a form of participation, a philosophical mode of art making in conversation with artist peers past and present.

In conversation with several of these notable monochromes, the exhibition will present works which capture the action of writing as their central motive, including *Oh My God/ Oh Diu*, 2002–2005 and *Oh*, 2022, that incorporate video to capture the calligraphic gestures of the artist alongside the resulting calligraphies. Somehow both ancient and yet strikingly contemporary, they utilize the language of tradition for the portrayal of presence.

Yang Jiechang participated in the Biennales in Guangju (Korea, 2002); Guangzhou Triennial (2003, 2005, 2013), Venice (2003), Liverpool (2006), Istanbul (2007), Moscow (2009), Lyon (2009), Shanghai (2012) and presented a Carte Blanche at the Musée Guimet, Paris, in 2022. His works are in the collection of LACMA, Los Angeles; Brooklyn Museum; Berkeley Art Museum; Hong Kong Museum of Art; Pinault Foundation, France; Annie Wong Foundation, Vancouver; Ullens Foundation, Switzerland and many more. He is the subject of the documentary film 'Yang Jiechang's Gu and Qi' directed and produced by Britta Erickson and of Carte Blanche à Yang Jiechang by Felicitas Yang the subject of an in-depth monographs *Yang Jiechang: 道可 道非 No Way All Ways*, edited by Britta Erickson (distributed internationally by D.A.P.), as well as of *I often Do Bad Things. Yang Jiechang: Texts and Works 1982 – 2016*, edited by Martina Köppel-Yang (Verlag Kettler, Dortmund 2017).

SETAREH

Events

Yang Jiechang
March 4 – April 15

OPEN SUNDAY
Sunday March 12
Exhibition Guided Tours in
English 1 pm, German 2 pm, Chinese 3 pm

Opening Reception
Saturday March 18
Artist Talk with Yang Jiechang and Martina Köppel–Yang in conversation with Lee
Plested
6:30 pm
Public Reception
7:00 – 9:00 pm

Public Talk
Prof. Florian C. Reiter, Humboldt University
Organizer of 'Exorcism in Dao: A Berlin Symposium'
3 pm

Also in Berlin

Yang Jiechang 'Hundred Layers of Ink' is included in
Minimal. Kunst aus Ostasien / Minimal. Art from East Asia
04.03.23 to 28.08.23
Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin
@ Humboldt Forum