

Tang Contemporary Art presents:

Digital Primitivism : Gao Hang Solo Exhibition

Artist: Gao Hang

Curator: Fiona Lu

Exhibition Dates: 4 February - 11 March 2023

Venue: Tang Contemporary Art Bangkok

Opening Reception: Saturday, 4 February at 4:00 PM

Digital Primitivism

Tang Contemporary Art is pleased to announce the representation of young Chinese artist Gao Hang and put forward a solo exhibition "Digital Primitivism " in the Bangkok space, starting on February 4, 2023. Born in 1991 in Baoding, Hebei, Gao Hang completed his undergraduate from the oil painting department of Capital Normal University and a Master's from the oil painting department of the University of Houston. Currently, he is working and living in Houston, USA. Curated by Lu Xiangyi, "Digital Primitivism " with 16 fabulous painting works, is the first collaboration between the artist and the gallery.

Primitivism in art is not only about a specific and ancient period but the artists' preference for primitive aesthetics, value judgment, emotional expression, and moral systems. In terms of painting, this emotional undercurrent intimates and recreates primitive painting techniques, themes, color principles, and symbolic images.

The concept of the digital world emerged at the end of the 20th century when 3D games became a worldwide phenomenon thanks to computers and the Internet. This world was so fantastic and real for Gao Hang that all his imaginary friends exist and move in a four-dimensional space-time with three-dimensional space and one-dimensional time. There are universally acknowledged rules and communication systems, and then communities and groups emerge. Gao Hang, born in the early 90s, is a part of the generations who grew up in this trend.

The key concept of this exhibition is Digital Primitivism. The artist's creation focuses on resolving digital images, especially based on the evolution of digital images in the last 2 decades. He regards the 21st-century Internet digital image as the found object of this era. Compared with the great and modern technology, those early digital images that are primitive, weird, and embarrassing attract his favor. At the end of the 20th century, Gao was introduced to 3D modeling and rendering, which was an amazing visual experience for him. In the following twenty years, he witnessed these wonderful digital images becoming coarse and absurd in contemporary times. However, their production process accidentally echoes the impulse and experience of contemporary painting. Painting behavior produces surprises, attitude changes, and even extreme emotions, which are fundamental human traits. In other words, the artist probably hopes his painting style could stimulate a contemporary productive mechanism with a high tolerance for error. He also points out, "Digital primitivism mainly emphasizes my enthusiasm for the birth of the digital world. In my paintings, it is visualized as the collision of exaggeratedly colored areas on sharp edges, rough mapping on geometric models, awkward and direct dynamics and interactions between models. Most importantly, it represents the memory of my first heartbeat feeling as a child entering this new world."

Gao Hang believes that advances in painting and technology are making their utmost efforts to explore the truth, if there is any. In the process of understanding human beings, generation after generation of technological products are saved. They are the records of the human revolution rather than the trash on the earth. For instance, when you occasionally find an old electronic device at present, you may suddenly realize that it was designed to meet past and "discontinued" behavioral and visual expectations. To get further known the truth, we abandoned generations of technology to achieve a new self in the future.

Moreover, his creative process is also related to his hobbies. Stand-up comedy at the time used to be his background sound during painting. He prefers comedy topics that challenge universal values and belief genres. It is not meant to trigger paradox or controversy, but to form an inclusive discussion. The core is even not the dialogue but the performer's coordination between the three objects i.e. observation, language, and laugh feedback. It is exactly the essence of his painting that cannot and does not have to solve actual problems, instead, the cruel, honest, absurd, and humor contain feelings of power in every form of conversation.

The digital world, social media, and metaverse shape his visual language since they share a similar birth time and growing period with Gao Hang (early 90s). The low-fidelity simulacrum created by digital fluorescent colors and large zones of polygon reflects the existence of the residents in the first generation of the digital world in the first 20th century. They had tried their best to achieve basic capabilities and interactive functions from the creators at that time. There was no extra effort for them to pursue any sense of beauty. What they had created is, in large, part like the rough mural of bulls in the cave of primitive people. Therefore, the artist's works are like facing the concept of primitivism again in the digital world. His obsession with those primary and vague modeling is like the archaeologists first seeing the primitive mural, because both of them are highly sincere, with great potential, brave, mysterious, and breathtaking.

About the Artist

Gao Hang (Born in 1991) is a Chinese artist now living and working in Houston, TX. Gao illustrates modern human online behaviors with a sense of humor and absurdity while ironically commenting on the people's need for instant gratification on digital screens. His recent solo exhibitions were shown in major galleries in America and Europe, including The Hole Gallery in New York, US; Waluso Gallery in London, UK; Pulpo Gallery in Murnau, Germany, and L21 Gallery in Palma, Spain. Gao's artworks and articles were covered in global publications such as L'Officiel, Art Forum, The Art News, Art in America, The Hypebeast, and RADII.

Tang Contemporary Art

Since its founding in Bangkok in 1997, Tang Contemporary Art has opened 7 spaces in Beijing, Hong Kong, Bangkok and Seoul to promote the development of experimental art in different regions. In the past 20 years, Tang Contemporary Art has organized groundbreaking exhibitions in its gallery spaces, and also cooperated with important art institutions in China and abroad to accomplish outstanding art projects. The gallery strives to initiate dialogue between artists, curators, collectors and institutions working both locally and internationally. A roster of groundbreaking exhibitions has earned Tang Contemporary Art internationally renowned recognition, establishing its status as a pioneer of the contemporary art scene in Asia.

As one of China's most influential contemporary art platforms, Tang Contemporary Art maintains a high standard of exhibition programming. Tang Contemporary Art represents or collaborates with leading figures in international contemporary art, including Ai Weiwei, Huang Yongping, Shen Yuan, Zhu Jinshi, Chen Danqing,

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