

Sync in progress...

2022.11.19 – 12.8

Tang Contemporary Art, Beijing

Curator: Michela Sena

Artists: Jon Burgerman / Geoffrey Bouillot / Mona Broschár / Nina Bachmann / HIMBAD / Helena Margrét Jónsdóttir / Nirit Takele / Tang Shuo / Albert Willem

Tang Contemporary Art is honored to represent "Sync in progress..." on Nov. 19th at Beijing 1st gallery space. Curated by Michela Sena, this group show includes works by Geoffrey Bouillot, Jon Burgerman, Mona Broschár, Nina Bachmann, HIMBAD, Helena Margrét Jónsdóttir, Nirit Takele, Tang Shuo and Albert Willem.

Painting, in particular figurative one, not only survives but develops in ever more current forms; that is what we intend to convey with this exhibition.

The resilience of painting represents, not simply, that vital, uncontainable urge to continue along the chosen road, despite everything; it entails the ability to decipher "the contemporary" and translate it into meaningful and visionary codes.

It was only afterwards, when the "dry" conceptual art of the 90' and, more recently, digital media, pulled the curtain down and told the world that painting was over, that "new figurative" has become the best artistic language to understand how contemporary culture has transformed over the last few decades.

In fact, the power of painting depends on neither the artist's skill nor the viewer's experience, rather it is the real answer to the new aesthetic codes of contemporary life, ciphers that develop independently.

In other words, what we appreciate in a painting depends on neither us nor the painting, but on the tuning in of aesthetics with certain aspects of our society.

The peculiarity of contemporary painting is not to be found in its technique or material practice but rather it is a mental and psychological approach to the visualization of our reality.

The artists on show, all part of the new generation, share a common point of view. Their focus has moved away from the subject, taking it by a different foreshortening. By placing the emphasis on language, instead, it develops into a new kind of contemporary "artistic slang".

Illustration, graphic design, street art, comics are all part of the great wealth of experience with which these artists finally arrive at figurative painting.

They were born and raised in a society where digital animation is inspired by realistic painting, a visual world where the aesthetic of video-games takes its cue from post-apocalyptic scenarios of religious iconographies.

Even social media, like Instagram, focus on a sense of pictorial composition in every post to have it shared and recirculating.

That's the way how painting develops in forms more and more current, on a path parallel to our socio-cultural conditions, it manifests in different ways and media, sometimes very far from its own tradition.

About Artists

Jon Burgerman

B. 1979 in UK. Now lives in New York. 1999-2001 The Nottingham Trent University, UK, Ba Hons First Class Fine Art.

Nominated for a D&AD Silver Award for outstanding illustration series, in connection with a commission by Levis. Winner of a Bronze Lion Award at the 57th annual Cannes Lions International Advertising Festival commission by AOL. Author of It's Great To Create (Chronicle books), Splat!, Rhyme Crime, How To Eat Pizza (Penguin), Jon Burgerman's Daily doodle (Laurence King) Everybody Has A Body, Everybody Has Feelings, Everybody Worries (Oxford University Press).

Artwork in the collections of Victoria and Albert Museum London, Upper Austrian Landes-Kultur museum Linz, Science Museum London, Castle Museum Nottingham and CAC Cincinnati. Lectures at conferences worldwide, including Offset, OFFF, Typo Berlin, FITC, It's Nice That, 99U.

Press - New York Times, Juxtapose, Creative Review, Al Jazeera TV, The Guardian, BBC online, Huffington Post, Hypebeast, Cool Hunting, Dazed, GQ Magazine, Gentleman Magazine, Design Milk, Graffiti Art.

Geoffrey Bouillot

French born artist in Chalon-sur-Saône, Geoffrey Bouillot, currently lives and works in Japan.

His work is evidently informed by these two cultures, and examines a unique dynamic of pop art, cubism, and Italian futurism. Bouillot is adept at portraiture, still life and interiors. His work typifies contemporary art culture. It is clean, fresh and chic. His monochromatic designs burgeon an eclectic blend of minimalism and the ethereal.

The cultural influences include remnants of Manga, with subjects and composition meticulously separated with clean lines and play on light, achieving harmony and balance between the artists other influential styles; cubism and pop art. The mastery in conjoining such diverse genres is an accomplishment, particularly considering this is achieved using only monochrome hues. It has been said of his work, "Composed of metallic-like stacking cylindrical and spherical forms, each character morphs nostalgic cartoons into unfamiliar forms, speaking to a collision of culture – from the ancient to the deep future."

Mona Broschár

Mona Broschár (b.1985, Bad Säckingen, Germany) is a painter based in Leipzig, Germany. She studied Fine Art at the Camberwell College of Arts, London and holds an MA in Painting and Printmaking from the Academy of Visual Arts, Leipzig.

Nina Bachmann

B.1990 in Munich, Germany. Nina Bachmann works in a colorful way with ecstatic emotional states and eccentric physicality. The boundaries between banality and absurdity, honesty and vanity blur, leaving the viewer with an uncertain sense of pleasure.

The Munich-based artist works with acrylic and oil sticks on canvas and also builds sculptures with different materials such as modelling clay and bronze. The subjects in her works are euphoric, intoxicated, and jubilant. They are in a state of arousal. They are even genderless. But their anxious grimaces betray their insecurities and the lingering awareness that all this excess cannot last. And it is this duality that Nina aims to convey to her viewers, who, perhaps seeing themselves reflected on the canvas, are meant to receive a "tenuous pleasure" from her works.

HIMBAD

HIMBAD was born in 1983. He graduated from Central Saint Martins in the UK. Traces of his work can be found worldwide, including New York, Miami, London, the Ibiza islands, Berlin, the Middle East, Pakistan, Tokyo, Bangkok, Beijing, Shanghai, Changsha, and Hangzhou.. You may find his works inadvertently. He dives into our archetypal mind and reaches deep into the subconscious. His inspirations came from his study of Celtic, Greek, and eastern mythology. He adds a touch of his unique humour into his works. He has been actively involved in graffiti art creation since his artwork was presented at the Tate Modern in London in 2015 and has yearly exhibitions worldwide. In addition to graffiti art, he has participated in several crossover projects, such as snowboards, hoodies, and music.

Helena Margrét Jónsdóttir

Helena Margrét Jonsdottir is a visual artist based in Reykjavik. She studied fine art at The Reykjavik School of Visual Arts, The Royal Academy of Art in Den Haag and graduated from The Iceland University of the Arts in 2019. Her work expresses the mundane, the wireless and the digital.

"My work expresses painting in the time of wirelessness and digital imagery. The subjects are mundane and paired together based on their visual and subjective connections. They do not belong to an environment or cast shadows as they are placed on flat, dimensionless backgrounds. They are both personal and public. By pairing them together they form new connections between them, new threads."

Nirit Takele

Nirit Takele, a figurative painter, was born in Ethiopia in 1985, lives and works in Tel Aviv.

Takele, who holds a B.F.A. from the Shenkar School of Multidisciplinary Art, is the winner of the Ministry of Culture and Sports Award for Young Artist for 2019.

Nirit is making her way in the art world with her figurative visual paintings, in richness Colorful and in complex compositions. Her paintings are large and have a unique brushstroke. She draws from a place that observes and understands color. Over the years she has researched color and experimented with different ways to work with it. If at the beginning of her career she was engaged in the construction of figures using color, over the years a tension developed and created in her works between the colorful abstract forms and the figurative forms.

Nirit discusses in her work on Israeli society, and deals with issues that arise from the daily life of the Beta Israel community in contemporary Israeli reality, as well as her personal private memory. Her work combines traditional motifs with contemporary art and find inspiration in the folklore of the Ethiopian cultural. The theme of identity is expressed in her works when through authenticity she expresses her social and critical attitudes.

Her works have been exhibited in many exhibitions in Israel and around the world. Her works are in many public and private collections, including the Israel Museum in Jerusalem, the Tel Aviv Museum, the Bank of Israel and the Shenkar School Collection.

Tang Shuo

Tang Shuo, Born in Guilin, Guangxi, China in 1987, studied at the Guangxi Arts University and the CAFA. In 2020, moved to the UK and now lives and works in Liverpool.

"I created through memory. When I was a child, I lived in the rural areas of southern China, where there were tropical plants and various wild animals. The core of my work is a game I played as a child, called play house. We play different roles in the game, which may be doctors, woodcutters, snake hunters, farmers, and fathers. These are the main factors that make up my current work, The snakes and black cats that appear repeatedly in my paintings are also related to my dream of being scared by snakes and being hunted by a black cat when I was a child."

Albert Willem

In 1979, Willem was born in Belgium. He has never received any academic education in art. He is best known for his naive-styled paintings, rich with wit and humour, and with a folksy and infantile element to their composition. His subjects are generally light-hearted, deliberately avoiding profound themes and focusing on memorable and cheerful memories in everyday life.

Willem said, "I don't strive for perfection. I strive to avoid perfection because it can dissolve the sense of humour."

Willem draws inspiration from the works of the Flemish artists in the golden age of Flemish Art. He is obsessed with Pieter Bruegel the Elder's rich and harmonious characters and stories embedded in the paintings. He believes he has learned a lot from the Flemish artists since they described complicated relationships in seemingly chaotic and layered narratives and combined multiple "small scenarios" to set off a wholistic emotion in the painting. Willem's naive-styled paintings encompass a sense of his artistic lineage that can be traced back through the works of Flemish artists that he greatly admires, focusing on the inconspicuous happiness in everyday life.

Willem's canvases are gradually becoming larger. "Because large size can make everything look abstract. The characters look like colour blocks or the assembly of different brush strokes and lines."

About Curator

Michela Sena is a Rome-Bangkok-based curator and art critic. Her research relates partly to the potential of global language and the relationship and dialogue between contemporary artists coming from different territories. After she graduated in museology and art history at Roma Tre University and got a Chinese language degree at SISU Shanghai Foreign Studies University, she was Director of Primo Marella Gallery Beijing and Director of Tang Contemporary Art Bangkok. She curated a wide number of shows proposing a punctual snapshot of contemporary art research, developing in recent years a focus on Chinese and southeast Asian art.