

Zhou Siwei

Beautify Home

Duration: 4.3.2017 – 4.4.2017

Opening: Saturday, March 11, 2017, 5–7 pm

Exhibition Venue: Antenna Space, Shanghai, China

Co-presented by Galerie Urs Meile and Antenna Space

The images in Zhou Siwei's works are forms of "image beings", or to be more precise, he spares no effort in eliciting the actuality of the images, while the "imaginative" aspect is circumvented as much as possible. It became gradually clear for him to choose only non-photographic, non-cinematic images, which are mostly ready-made, everyday shapes and graphics. Designed 'anonymously', these objects and their ubiquity have been stripped of their original context and transformed into some kind of formulae of images, some kind of idiom without any specific meaning, and are often merely used as fillers. But for Zhou Siwei, these images lack not only the power of visual representation, but also any semantic potential. They are nothing but "images". Therefore, they are images that are genuinely compatible which are able to cooperate with paintings in order to firmly grasp the "actuality" of painting.

The exhibition *Beautify Home* was launched collectively by Galerie Urs Meile and Antenna Space. The show will exhibit a series of paintings, sculptures and photographs. By a chance encounter, Zhou Siwei once saw his mother make a simple assemblage using a broken vase and some cobblestones she picked up somewhere, and displayed the outcome at a noticeable spot in their home. This simple gesture and the outcome of the work on display engendered a peculiar aesthetic "power", inspiring him to create a series of related works using shapes, colours and ideas in an attempt to emulate this "power". Zhou Siwei's concerns for the society's common aesthetic situations are intended for the transition from the "actuality" of painting towards the "actuality" of a common experience. Correspondingly, Zhou Siwei's works demonstrate a stance on aesthetic research: he's not really concerned with what today's "reality" is, but rather of the question that, under what emotional state is the "reality" that's long been conditioned by aesthetics produced?

Certainly, it's not to say there aren't any traces of representation in Zhou Siwei's works. Apart from the various prototype images, sometimes hints of space, light and shadows appear in the paintings. He is always vigilant against the type of representation based on sketches, tenaciously rejecting the use of black, especially white, because black and white paints often sacrifice the purity of colours. In some paper-based works, he solely utilises colour inks for printing as a guarantee on the "purity" of the colours. Colour, the artist emphasises, is the ontological nucleus to his paintings, while sketching is often regarded as sculpture's colonisation of painting. When a painter uses white paint to tune up the brightness of colours, he or she has already betrayed the principles of optics in colour science. In this sense, only colours that are entirely devoid of sketch are made for the eyes. As the price to maintain such purity, Zhou Siwei can only paint with the original brightness of primary colours, therefore the images always seem falling in tone. Colours are superimposed layer by layer, spark the energy inherent to colours themselves within vast areas of dark tones. Today, this energy still belongs solely to painting itself. (Excerpts from Bao Dong's text - *Zhou Siwei: Aesthetic Research*)

Zhou Siwei was born in 1981 in Chongqing, China, graduated from Sichuan Fine Arts Institute with a major in oil painting, currently lives and works in Shanghai, China. Recent solo exhibitions: *Beautify Home*, Co-presented by Galerie Urs Meile and Antenna Space, Exhibition Venue: Antenna Space, Shanghai, China, 2017; *Schematic*, Galerie Urs Meile, Lucerne, Switzerland, 2015; *A Round Studio*, Aike-Dellarco, Shanghai, China, 2014. Group exhibitions: *TRAVERSE · COURSE — 2016 HUAYU YOUTH AWARD*, Sanya, China, 2016; *Not Likely*, Aike-Dellarco (West Bund Space), Shanghai, China, 2015; *Ministry of Truth II: The Factitious and its Realm*, Boers-Li Gallery, Beijing, China, 2014; *7th A+A, Too Smart too be good*, PIFO Gallery, Beijing, China, 2014; *Memo I*, White Space Beijing, Beijing, China, 2013; *Painting Lesson III: Elementary And Extreme Structure*, Gallery Yang, Beijing, China, 2013; *China - Chongqing 2 Künstler in Düsseldorf*, Artist exchange program, Düsseldorf, Germany, 2012; *Sichuan Hot!*, Queensland College of Art, Griffith University, Brisbane, Australia; Ray Hughest Gallery, Sydney, Australia, 2009; *Anything is possible*, CCRN, Luxemburg, 2008.