

Xie Nanxing

A Roll of the Dice

Exhibition in Beijing: 7.11.2020–31.1.2021
Opening: Saturday, November 7, 4–6.30pm

Galerie Urs Meile is pleased to announce the Xie Nanxing solo exhibition *A Roll of the Dice*. The exhibition unfolds around the artist's recent thinking on "waiting" and "randomness," presenting works from three series: *What to Exhibit* (2017), *Seven Portraits* (2018), and *A Theater of Waiting* (2019).

For Xie Nanxing, waiting implies a relationship of suspension and contention. All unoccupied exhibition space is in a state of waiting. The *What to Exhibit* series, while highlighting the changes that take place before and after the artist takes over the exhibition space, also reveals art's power to bestow legitimacy: it is only when the artworks intervene in the exhibition space, only when the undefined, neutral, spectral empty space is filled with a cacophony of artistic spirits and bizarre ideas that it gains legitimacy. When asking "what to exhibit," the artist is also casting doubt on the critical standards of art and the discourse on its exhibition.

In the *Seven Portraits* series, the artist continues his longstanding focus on portraiture. The names and personalities of the seven dwarfs from Snow White provide the prototype for this series of portraits, corresponding to seven friends with widely disparate personalities in the artist's circle. Among the neutral proportions, bright background colors and minimalistic depictions, a series of portrait figures is squeezed out through the process of transformation into the language of painting.

The triptych *A Theater of Waiting* is the artist's attempt to represent the complexities of public space. When non-fictional, non-narrative dramas play out together, the public space of the airport is no longer just a setting for waiting—waiting at security, waiting at the gate, waiting on the runway—but points to a theater of waiting, where the hierarchy between everyday happenings and human figures is constantly being rearranged, leaving the audience to imagine the dramatic conflicts.

Just as a roll of the dice brings the opportunity to make a decision, waiting is preparation for the next possibility. Within the inner logic of the language of painting, Xie Nanxing attempts to restore painting's openness, and to trace back the unquantifiable conceptual pathways for which painting is a carrier. If the process of painting is beset on all sides by pitfalls and complex struggles, it is precisely because painting is a process of constantly revising and refreshing the self through waiting and randomness.

Xie Nanxing was born in 1970 in Chongqing, Sichuan Province. He currently lives and works in Beijing, China. Recent solo exhibitions include: *Xie Nanxing: A Gift Like Kung Pao Chicken*, Thomas Dane Gallery, London, UK (2019); *Xie Nanxing: Spices*, Ullens Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing, China (2018); *untitled: 3 ×*, Galerie Urs Meile, Beijing, China (2015); and *Xie Nanxing Paintings*, Kunstverein Hamburger Bahnhof, Hamburg, Germany (2005). Select group exhibitions include: *Psychic Wounds: On Art & Trauma*, The Warehouse Dallas, Dallas, USA (2020); *Chinese Whispers 中国私语—Recent Art from the Sigg Collection*, MAK Museum für Angewandte Kunst, Vienna, Austria (2019); *PARADOXA*, Museo d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea - Casa Cavazzini, Udine, Italy (2017); *Permanent Abstraction: Epiphanies of a Modern Form in Escaped Totalities*, Red Brick Art Museum, Beijing, China (2016); *Nonfigurative*, Shanghai 21st Century Minsheng Art Museum, Shanghai, China (2015); *China 8*, Museum Folkwang Essen, Lehmbrock Museum Duisburg, Kunstmuseum Gelsenkirchen, Skulpturenmuseum Glaskasten Marl, Osthaus Museum Hagen, Kunsthalle Recklinghausen, NRW Forum Düsseldorf, Germany (2015); *New Works #1*, OCT Contemporary Art Terminal (OCAT), Shenzhen, China (2014); Documenta XII, Kassel, Germany (2007); Shanghai Biennial, Shanghai Art Museum, Shanghai, China (2000); d'APERTutto, 48th Venice Biennale, Italy (1999).