

Ju Ting

Winter is Coming

Exhibition in Beijing: 4.12.2021–27.2.2022

Opening: Saturday, December 4, 4–6.30pm

Galerie Urs Meile is pleased to announce the Ju Ting (b. 1983) solo exhibition *Winter is Coming*, the artist's second solo exhibition at Galerie Urs Meile Beijing. This exhibition will present Ju Ting's large scale site-specific installation *Winter is Coming*, created especially for the gallery space.

Ju Ting is adept at the use of exacting technical methods to present the many layers of texture in painting and beneath its surface, prying open complex emotions in reality. In such early representative works as *Pearl*, *+-*, and *Untitled*, the artist explored ways of breaking through the frame and traditions of abstract painting, drawing on genuine emotions and the human condition to engage in carving and tearing of different painted surfaces. In the latest work, *Winter is Coming*, Ju Ting has discarded the meticulous, nearly sculptural carving of the *Pearl* series, while continuing with the repeated stripping and erecting of the *Untitled* series, while adding a new, more forceful and destructive act—striking—to complete the final creation. Ju Ting utilizes the way the pliability of acrylic changes under different temperatures, laying out dozens of layers of acrylic paint and stacking them over a wooden panel in a warm room, before placing the work in a cold room to cool and harden. She then strikes it to create fissures that reveal the layers and structures of colors within. After the picture has been split open, the emotions laden in the colors begin to flow through the fragmented, relief-like surface. The smashed golden surface gives the wall a stark, resplendent beauty.

To apply action to multiple layers of painting is a risk for the artist. She must accept the serendipity that the unknown brings to the process. Drawing on her understanding and experience of the properties of the material, and utilizing the effects of temperature, she breaks layers of paint in a giant painting, striking until there are cracks even in the wooden base panel. This act is rooted in the artist's sustained rebellion against painting traditions. For example, in the *Untitled* series, the artist devised a new creative approach of stacking layers of acrylic and tearing them under different temperature conditions, but this was not enough for the artist. In *Winter is Coming*, she further destroyed these familiar techniques and complete pictures, and infused the work with a new energy of action and living experience.

Ju Ting's past works are often discussed within the scope of abstract art, but abstract art in the West is a rebellion against figurative artistic traditions, in the Chinese context, the question remains as to whether the resources and social environment are sufficient for the discussion of abstract art, and Ju Ting's creative starting point often deviates from the goals of abstraction, which are formal and aesthetic. Ju Ting seeks out a balance between the painterly and the material between medium, action and reality. The paints, colors and the supporting wood paneling in the new work *Winter is Coming* are inextricably linked to each other. The striking that is the final act of creation provides a clear footnote on the artist's attitude toward the greater living environment and its predicament within the pandemic. The gold of the surface, a symbol of power and wealth, is struck multiple times to reveal the lower layers of material and paint. The action reminds the viewer to pay attention to the state of art and artists, rather than being mired in rigid aesthetic appreciation of abstract art. Ju Ting's art is not made for today's digital screens, but must be experienced in person, the viewer entering into the action itself.

Ju Ting was born in Shandong province in 1983, and currently lives and works in Beijing. She studied at the Central Academy of Fine Arts Printmaking Department, earning a BFA in 2007, and MFA in 2013.