

Miao Miao

Snowmasses

Exhibition in Beijing: 2024.3.21 – 5.5

Opening: Thursday, March 21, 4–6pm

Galerie Urs Meile Beijing is pleased to announce *Snowmasses*, Miao Miao's (b. 1986) first large-scale solo exhibition at Galerie Urs Meile. This exhibition sifts through Miao Miao's creations over recent years, revealing her adept extraction and accumulation of materials and experiences from the everyday, which she transforms or "edits" into a unique painting language. Miao Miao describes this fluid creative action as "snowballs," which is, in a sense, her way of paying homage to the everyday.

Most of Miao Miao's paintings emerge from sketches or mobile phone snapshots. Her capturing and observation of the landscape along her travel routes, and the imagination she attaches to it, are the wellspring behind the snowball world she builds. In other words, Miao Miao is engrossed by the act of graphically rendering the ephemeral world. Through the medium of painting, Miao Miao takes her captured fragments of the everyday and subjects them to montage-style compilation, reconstructing her perceptions of time and space.

Though the pictures Miao Miao constructs always contain thought-provoking and tantalizing narrative and literary elements, the real keystone of Miao Miao's painting has always been the exploration of shape and color. For Miao Miao, what matters isn't just what she paints, but the process of painting itself. Miao Miao has picked up the various iconified, often swelling forms that permeate everyday life—heads, posteriors, fruits, footballs, snowballs, and other forms and notions pulled from the everyday and further fostered into being in her mind. The term "snowball" is a conceptual model of Miao Miao's self-refinement. It also refers to this form, and a simple catch-all term for the process of falling, condensation and melting. Like the constantly-shifting appearance of the outer world, it may not last forever, but this very process of organic transformation between solid and liquid reveals its vitality.

The people who appear in Miao Miao's pictures are often common people, masses, lacking specific identity and with unclear faces. She has intentionally simplified and generalized these images encountered on her travels, focusing on grasping their postures and movements, drawing the viewer into a living dynamic, while the trappings of flat graphic style lend them a touch of fantasy.

Her artistic practice is not limited to non-traditional painting styles and medium research, but has expanded into broader territory. Her tireless exploration of form and color has naturally drawn Miao Miao to experiment in transformations between two and three dimensions. She uses handmade paper clay as a sculptural material, which she then colors in an attempt to establish a precise, unified channel linking abstract concepts and concrete, tangible material forms.

The brightly colored fruits of disparate shapes in her latest work *In the Fruit Store* (2023) are a discussion of issues in world geographics; *Funeral* (2023) is a reflection on life and time; while *In K's Bus* (2023) presents an ode to life and a love song to the beautiful moments of the everyday. An apple extracted from *Near the Castle* (2023) has been turned into sculpture *Boat* (2023), in a deep dive into themes of temptation and choice, with the symbolic element of the apple engaging thinking on the complex relationships between desire, strategy, and momentous decisions.

Every work in the exhibition is like a snowball that has coalesced from everyday observations and experiences, vivid and dynamic. It is as if the viewer has been invited to step into a visual kaleidoscope made from a riotous profusion of colorful fragments of the everyday. Behind the pleasing visuals are the artist's rigorous painting practice and fierce ambition as she attempts, within the rapid fluctuations of the everyday, to find diverse images of common people and life, to use fantastical thinking to activate them, and find the vitality within, that core that should be at the heart of the snowball world.

(This text includes excerpts from Yao Siqing's essay for this exhibition.)

Miao Miao (b. 1986 in Henan, China) graduated from the Fine Arts Department at Henan University, China in 2009. She has been focusing on her painting practices and conducting research on art materials. Her works unfold around the interior and exterior of everyday life as they obsess over color and shape, mingling with the

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literary in attempts to articulate chaos. She currently lives and works in two-dimensional planes in multiple cities. Recent solo exhibitions and projects include: “Magic Carpet”, Galerie Urs Meile, Ardez, Switzerland (solo exhibition, 2022); “Grass”, Box Museum, Foshan, China (Residence Project, 2022), “The Crescent and the Full or a Dichotomy of the Sunrise”, Inside-Out art museum, Beijing, China (Residence/Curation Project, 2022). Recent group shows include: “Kong-Fu: Form and Meaning”, Yuan Art Museum, Beijing (2023); “Amusement Park”, Cloud Art Museum, Shenzhen (2023); “Tongue in Cheek”, Dangxia Art Space, Blanc Art Group, Beijing, China (2022); “Spring Fever”, Platform China, Beijing, China (2021); “Tangle of Revolution and Political Soul”, Shanghai Gallery of Art (SGA), Shanghai, China (2021).