

Li Ran

李然然然かわいいです

Exhibition in Beijing: 2025.2.8 – 2.23

Opening: Saturday, February 8, 4pm

Galerie Urs Meile · 弦 xián is pleased to present 李然然然かわいいです, a solo exhibition featuring the works of Li Ran (b. 1984, Tianjin, China). The gallery invites Di Xiaowei to curate the show. This exhibition highlights the artist's "Office Series" of paintings, which are integrated with his own life experiences. Li Ran's painting often starts from the visual resources of Japanese anime, intertwining the mundane routines of office life before translating them back into the realm of imagery. His work is characterized by a continuous cycle of deconstruction, demolition, mutation, and expansion—threads that weave together to create a tapestry that is both dramatic and serene.

Within the exhibition space, over a dozen paintings of varying sizes cascade freely from the ceiling to the height of ordinary office desks, cleverly carving out a narrow viewing path that accommodates only a single visitor at a time. This arrangement not only mirrors the artist's solitary daily life, but also extends an invitation to the viewer. As a modest clerk tasked with the care of teaching aids at the Tianjin Academy of Fine Arts, Li Ran leads a life marked by the monotonous routine of clocking in and out. Most of the time he sits idly in his office amidst plaster still lifes, enduring a cycle of waiting where each day mimics the one before and the next promises a tiresome echo of the present...

Over a decade of artistic exploration, Li Ran's style has evolved from his initial approach of flatness method to the current 'decayed' distortion and freakish spectacle of Japanese anime. Technically, his painting has shifted from clean flatness to a focus on the sensory and embodied experience. The interplay of loneliness and anxiety, constantly shifting between mastery and abandon, imbues his paintings with an ever-shifting array of possibilities.

About the artist

Li Ran (b. 1984, Tianjin, China) graduated from the Tianjin Academy of Fine Arts and currently works there.