

TALES OF THE FUTURE

Kang Haoxian, Meng Yangyang, Jia Yirui

March 31st - April 28th 2022

Tube Culture Hall , Tong Art Advisory (New York) and WE SPACE (Shanghai) are pleased to present *Tales of The Future* (Chinese title: 初語未来), an exhibition that brings together three emerging Chinese artists, Jia Yirui, Kang Haoxian and Meng Yangyang.

Tales of The Future features all new paintings by Jia, Kang, and Meng, each artist with their own distinctive sensibilities that render their works unique interpretations of contemporary global visual culture and pictorial story-telling. Each artist's work envisions a version of reality inspired by their own imagination, capturing a unique dimension that lingers between the real world and the surreal.

Never having ceased their creative practice throughout the pandemic, Jia, Kang, and Meng find a zealous dark humor in destructing the ever-fluctuating overflow information of our chaotic world, at once retaining and reconciling with the protagonists that pop out of their minds. Together, the three artists' works manifest distinct creative languages that are born both out of fantasy and of the reality that—due to the pandemic—we are now ever more synced up with and reliant upon all that exists in the ether and the virtual universe.

Through Tales of the Future, we hope to offer the viewer a glimpse into the world of emerging Chinese contemporary art, and as well into dimensions begetting the future of creative language.

Meng Yangyang's language could be described as a kind of morphing minimal aesthetic. Her work overlaps and superimposes an array of color blocks, which at first glance appears to be one overall hue, and which requires the viewer to observe closely to discover the full depth of colors. Her main source of inspiration are serendipitous moments in life which she finds captivating. Through dismantling, reconstructing, and adding elements of contradiction and chance to these real-life moments, Meng's work conceals a gripping emotion underneath each image's tranquil facade. She chooses to focus on the perpetuity of things shuffled in the river of time. For her, painting is ultimately a subjective expression of the mind, and tells only truthfully her own emotions.

Meng's subject is always the human figure and the body. She uses light and fluid brushstrokes to visualize the minds and emotions of her characters.

Kang Haoxian's particular type of brushwork also retains a quality of Classical Chinese ink painting. In the same vein, her use of the negative space places her figures in an ambiguous and spiritual ambiance, inviting the viewer to find the coexistence of poetry and soul in these portraits of blurred faces and gender.

Kang's work is rich with occult elements of magical realism, as he is profoundly interested in the unknown, hence the uncanny world of seductive beings and arrested moments his

work brings to life. Kang believes that everyone is exposed to art from birth—art usually suffuses and surrounds our life, we just aren't always able to comprehend it.

Fusing traditional Chinese folk painting with Western medieval painting styles, Kang's canvases are an amalgamation of various popular cultural elements, from fashion to video game, from Instagram to pornography, the references are numerous, mysterious, and at once coherent as well as random. The enigmatic non-place his figures reside in is a realm inspired by folklores the artist recalls from his childhood and the religious mysteries he reads as an adult.

Jia Yirui's paintings come from her instinctive feelings about life, conjuring a manic world occupied by fragmentary tales and rival narratives. Her characters are often transformed and reinvented from stereotypes in popular culture and cartoon characters based on her personal interests and memories. Marvel film characters and scenes, exotic animals, news, myths, childhood memories and advertisements can all be sources of inspiration for the artist. Through recreating iconic symbols, animalizing easily identifiable daily objects by adding limbs or body parts and placing them in dramatic environment, they form complex identities. There are moments of battle and triumph, momentum and repel, devotion and failure between the characters and the animalized object rivals. Having the character as avatar, Jia tries to capture a humorous yet otherworldly inherent contradictions of modern people, to show the love, hate, loneliness, obsession, and urge.

The heroine in her work, the bride, has only one eye, upon which the artist bestows an omniscient superpower. The pirate eye mask reveals a hope that her female protagonists are not obliged by traditional standards of how a bride should behave, but rather embody a punk spirit of contemporary women.

***Meng Yangyang** (b. 1983, Chongqing, China) graduated from Sichuan Academy of Fine Arts with a BA in 2006 and an MFA in 2009. She currently lives and works in Shanghai.

Meng Yangyang has had solo exhibitions at BROWNIE Project (Shanghai, 2021), Gallery55 (Shanghai, 2018), Gallery J.CHEN (Taipei, 2010 and 2007), Olyvia Oriental Gallery (London, 2007), among others. Her recent group exhibitions include a group show at MassimoDeCarlo Gallery's VSPACE, Shanghai Duolun Museum of Modern Art (Shanghai, 2019), Shanghai Himalayas Museum (Shanghai, 2019), NAMOC (Beijing, 2017), Castello di Rivoli Contemporary Art Museum (Turin, 2016), Today Art Museum (Beijing, 2016), etc. Meng Yangyang has twice been awarded the Luo Zhongli Fellowship, and her works have been collected by several major private collections such as the Olbricht Foundation and the PCP Collection. Meng Yangyang graduated from Sichuan Academy of Fine Arts in 2006 and received a master's degree in 2009.

****Kang Haoxian** (b. 1989 in Shangdong, China) graduated from the Animation Department of the Central Academy of Fine Arts in 2013. He currently lives and works in Beijing. Many galleries, such as Star Gallery and major museums, such as The Galaxy Museum of Contemporary Art, Chongqing, China, have exhibited Kang HaoXian's works in the past.

*****Yirui Jia** (b. 1997) currently lives and works in New York. She has done an exchange program at Marchutz School of Arts in Provence, France and completed her BFA in Studio Arts from Gettysburg College in Pennsylvania, US. She is currently completing her final year of MFA at the School of Visual Arts in New York. her work has been shown in previous solo and group exhibitions at LKIF Gallery in Seoul, IRL Gallery in New York, Bill Brady Gallery in Los Angeles, Latitude Gallery in New York, We Space in Shanghai, WerkStadt in Berlin, and Hive Art Center in Beijing.