

marguo

Press Release

Han Bing. Company

11 May - 19 June 2021

Galerie Marguo, 4 rue des Minimes 75003 Paris



Galerie Marguo is pleased to present *Company*, a series of new paintings by artist HAN Bing. This show marks the artist's first exhibition in Europe.

Comprising seven large scale canvases and five smaller paintings on wood and newsprint, this series continues the artist's exploration of painting as a means of processing the urban environment and her experiences within them. These works largely reference the city of New York, where the artist has studied and lived for the majority of the past decade.

Han Bing's peripatetic upbringing has left her particularly attuned to the 'fragile, ephemeral compositions' found within the urban landscape, such as the multi-layered peeled off posters often seen plastered on

subway platforms, or the ubiquitous panels of forest green scaffolding. Roaming the city with her camera, the artist claims these precarious topographies as her own, which constitute the source material for the sweeping landscapes on view. The accidental street collages, and subsequently Han Bing's paintings, are a resonant metaphor for the nature of the city, and the instability of place, itself.

Art historian Lucy Lippard defines 'place' as a location replete with layers of time and space, histories and memories. Place is shaped by 'what surrounds it, what formed it, what happened there, what will happen there.'¹ The paradoxical sense of place — at once boundlessness and specific — is evoked by Han Bing's formal approach. Just as the street collages collapse time, marking a specific yet fleeting moment in the residual accretion of life in a given site, these paintings collapse surface and ground. Rendered in the mutable medium of oil paint through an array of applications ranging from drawing, squeegeeing, and rubbing, these vessels confront the viewer with compounded planes that dance between light and dark, flatness and depth, opacity and transparency, representation and abstraction.

In *Lorelei* and *Steed* (both 2020), loose concrete-hued swaths, punctuated by that ever-present scaffolding green, give way to dense, sinuous forms like recessed interiors teeming with tableaux of their own. The life-size dimensions of these landscapes beckon us inside their illusory depths. In *Don't Stop Now, Keep Going* (2021), city blocks cast in pitch-blackness creep up against a cubist skyline of blotchy pigment, until the moment the flattening scaffolding green peeps through, and the image is rendered back to a two-dimensional surface, decorated in the detritus of old advertisements and street art.

Han Bing's cityscapes brim with the frictional energy generated by these disjunctive elements, invoking the bustle of cities like New York, in which even a marginalized individual can find themselves woven into its ever-shifting fabric. Lippard notes that a sense of place is symbiotically related to a sense of displacement. To harness a sense of place, as Han Bing does with these paintings, is to claim a 'kind of intellectual property, a way for nonbelongers to belong, momentarily.'²

Exhibited alongside the cityscapes are a suite of three works on paper: past issues of the New York Times dabbed with the runoff from Han Bing's palette or paint brushes while at work on other canvases. These collateral paintings, which mark, and thus elevate, a surface as disposable as the daily news, echo the artist's impulse to harness the ephemerality of wheat-pasted scaffolding and stripped advertisements in her larger works. Like the titles of Han Bing's pieces — unedited fragments from podcasts and music overheard while painting or walking the streets — the newsprints act like timestamps, anchoring the artist's work to the site and time of both its sources and production.

Indeed, all of the works in the exhibition reflect real places, moments, and experiences across Los Angeles, New York, and Paris. As such, *Company* constitutes a sort of global time capsule, mediated through the personal lens of memory and longing. As we anxiously wait for our collective urban lives to resume, Han

¹ Lucy Lippard, *The Lure of the Local: Senses of Place in a Multicentered Society*, 1997. p.7

² *Ibid.* p.33

Bing's paintings ultimately invite us to reflect on how the contexts and contents we consume shape us, and how these give form to our own sense of place in the world.

About the Artist

Han Bing (b.1986, Shandong, China) holds an MFA from Parsons, The New School, New York and Central Academy of Fine Arts, Beijing. She earned her BFA from Central Academy of Fine Arts, Beijing.

Han Bing has exhibited widely across China and the United States. Recent solo exhibitions include 'A Labile Boundary at Best' at Antenna Space (Shanghai, 2020), and 'territory to be tamed-----if not later then when' at Night Gallery (Los Angeles, 2018). Selected group exhibitions include 'Fifteen Painters' at Andrew Kreps (New York, 2021), 'Meditations in an Emergency' at UCCA (Beijing, 2020), 'Abstract! Minimalism to Now' at Tilton Gallery (New York, 2020), 'They Rise When Vernal Breezes Blow' at Makerroom Gallery (Los Angeles, 2019), 'The Crossing' at Gallery Exit (Hong Kong, 2018).

Han Bing lives and works between Los Angeles and Shanghai.

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HAN Bing
Solar Eclipse in Chinatown, 2021
Oil on linen
203.2 x 172.7 cm