ALMINE RECH

A Cloud in Trousers
Painting Today

Oct 26, 2024 — Jan 5, 2025 | West Bund Museum, Shanghai, China

The West Bund Museum and Pond Society jointly present the exhibition 'A Cloud in Trousers: Painting Today' in the gallery 0. As the first collaboration between the West Bund Museum and the Chinese art institution, this exhibition continues Gallery 0's mission to encourage contemporary art practices. Bringing together 23 artists from different generations and backgrounds, the exhibition explores the interplay between figuration and abstraction, tradition and modernity. With distinctive personal styles, these artists express their reflections on the present across various temporal coordinates, offering the public the latest experience of the diversity in contemporary Chinese painting. The exhibition will be free to the public from October 26, 2024, to January 5, 2025.

The painting was once the most revolutionary medium of the modernist movement, with avant- garde artists continually challenging the concepts of traditional painting, expanding its flatness and abstract language. At the same time, the surface of the canvas also recorded the "otherness" in history and culture. Under current post-medium conditions, painting practices reveal more structural possibilities. As art historian David Joselit pointed out, painting in the post-medium condition exists within networks of structure and symbols, which involve not only the relationship between artists and communities, or art and the public but also the complex connection between the form and content of painting. The context of contemporary painting is crucial, as artists disrupt, redistribute, divide, and assemble their subjects, embedding meaning in a flowing network of time, thus redefining painting and its rich traditions. A Cloud in Trousers: Painting Today is a dialogue between the present and traditions from different eras. The exhibition features artworks by 23 artists, including Chen Fei, Chen Ke, Chen Zuo, Ding Hongdan, Fan Jing, Fu Site, Hao Liang, Hu Xiaoyuan, Ji Xin, Jia Aili, Leng Guangmin, Liang Hao, Liang Yuanwei, Sun Yitian, Tan Yongqing, Wang He, Wang Qiang, Wang Xiaoqu, Wu Silin, Xia Yu, Xie Nanxing, Ye Linghan, and Zhang Zipiao. Through their works, these artists construct complex micro-relationships between the individual and the collective, revealing the psychological landscapes of the artists while reflecting the diverse realities and emotions of contemporary society.

'A Cloud in Trousers: Painting Today', jointly presented by the West Bund Museum and Pond Society, marks the beginning of Pond Society's long-term research into contemporary Chinese painting practices. In the years to come, Pond Society will host annual research exhibitions, engaging in in-depth conversations with contemporary artists. Simultaneously, this exhibition represents an attempt of the West Bund Museum to broaden the perspective of Gallery 0, evolving from individual to collective narratives. By providing an open, experimental space for artists, the museum seeks to foster collisions of diverse creative ideas, offering the public an opportunity to engage with the varied and newest expressions of contemporary Chinese painting. This aims to cultivate a site where visual art scene can resonate, reverberate, and evolve sustainably.