ALMINE RECH

Ted Pim
Loinnir

Mar 21 — May 24, 2025 | Shanghai

Almine Rech Shanghai is pleased to announce 'Loinnir,' Ted Pim's third solo exhibition with the gallery, on view from March 21 to May 24, 2025.

Ted Pim's latest exhibition, *Loinnir,* is the incarnation of his relentless experiments with light and cultural symbols. *Loinnir* is an Irish word meaning radiance, gleam, or shimmer. It symbolizes enlightenment not only in optical or physical sense but also in the metaphysical and intangible senses. Drawing on this Irish heritage, Pim's current practice appropriates classical motifs and Old Masters' imagery through repetition, cropping, and radical recontextualization, transforming the familiar into the uncanny. By doing so, Pim's works are stripped of original narratives and resist narrative closure. *Loinnir* becomes a reimagined and reanimated hallucinatory space.

Looking back, Pim has long been aware of art history's entanglement with power and myth. He avoids nostalgia and instead explores its plasticity. His recontextualized portraits challenge notions of timelessness, reframing history through contemporary lenses. ***Loinnir*** continues to stretch the tension between reverence and subversion, between the historical weight of the past and the present's fluidity, inviting viewers to engage with the spectral remnants of history as a living dialogue. Through this dialogue, viewers come closer to Pim's sensitive reinvention of not only Irish cultural heritage but also the fragility of beauty in a broader spectrum.

Central to the exhibition is *Dream of thought,* a painting that reimagines enlightenment as a metamorphosis of perception. Interlaced faces blend into each other, and their blurred contours symbolize the dissolution of individuality into collective consciousness. A radiant third eye dominates the composition, emblematic of intuitive wisdom transcending mere visual observation. The chromatic palette also conjures a liminal atmosphere that frames enlightenment not as an intellectual conquest but as a somatic revelation. It is through this layered symbolism that Pim is able to map out an odyssey of self-discovery in which perceived reality, born of a singular nocturnal phenomenon that he once experienced, is nothing more than recurring visions of a spectral and ephemeral blue glow.

Inspired by Henri Matisse's *The Dance*, Pim continually transforms vitality into a meditation on spiritual ascension. Movement keeps evolving beyond the physical boundary and, as a result, we see a celestial geometry of bodies and symbols that converge towards liberation and transcendence. At the heart of Pim's *The dance*, an omniscient eye anchors the composition as both beacon and metaphor, haunting the viewer and further catalyzing an exploratory journey towards enlightenment. Through the outstretched limbs, earthly gestures merge with sacred geometry, embodying unity as both aspiration and ritual. Warm, auric light cascades from the eye, evoking harmony between cosmic wisdom and human yearning. In this collision of classical dynamism and symbolic abstraction, enlightenment is reimagined as a force of harmony.

Pim's *Star from the Dream* encapsulates humanity's eternal quest for enlightenment in a strikingly similar vein. Yet the distinction lies in how the solitary figure embodying our incessant hunger to pierce the veil of the mundane is rendered not as a beacon of triumph, but as a fading ember dissolving into the void. In other words, torn between earthly doubt and numinous revelation, the outstretched limb sends itself into the very vulnerability born of the paradox of active surrender. While aspiration becomes liturgy, Pim lays out another silent dialogue, which tells the narrative not so much as a linear ascent, but rather as a dance that celebrates nothingness. We can say that the eyes and mirrored reflections in Pim's paintings disrupt the traditional means of perception in spectatorship. They question the malleability and plasticity of our tangible time-space, functioning as portals that disorient or even alter familiar interpretations into multiple dimensions. In terms of composition, symmetry in Pim's work is not so much a vessel for divine harmony but rather teeters between control and chaos, history and invention, reality and illusion. In this manner, seeing becomes falling: a plunge into delirium where memory blurs, history shatters, and recognition dissolves into revelation.

Magnified fingers are a tactile provocation throughout Pim's latest series. Rendered on the grotesque scale, they appear as both an intimate caress and an invasive interrogation, where desire transforms into discomfort. Once again, the familiar morphs into the alien: a finger becomes a landscape, and a gesture fossilizes into myth. Pim's hands echo art's ancestral mark-making yet twist into Freudian specters. On one level, the gesture of the hands suggests that to gaze is to trespass: the viewer falls through layers of consciousness, where memory bleeds into sensation, and touch becomes a phantom limb. It is precisely through such tactile sensations that the artist invites a psychological engagement, drawing the viewer into an ambiguous dimension where perception, memory, and physical sensation collide. On another level, by distorting tangible objects into grotesque excess, Pim aims to expose the fractures beneath "timeless" aesthetics, transforming passive ornament into political provocation. Here, every object of contemplation leads us to delve deep into the unstable legacy of beauty itself. While epiphany continues to dwell in the fragile space between attainment and release, what begins to emerge at the core of Pim's artistic practice is an ode to the sacred liminality of becoming. In Pim's hallucinatory space, the known world slowly dissolves, and for one suspended breath, the soul touches the unspeakable.

— Jialing Sun, researcher and curator