



Exhibitionary

“5 Shows”

1. Cristof Yvoré at M Woods, Beijing



It doesn't get cooler than M Woods, the independent non-profit experimental museum that was founded by collectors Lin Han, Wanwan Lei and co-founded by Michael Xufu Huang. It points to a global shift in the museum landscape where brilliant young (often very young) collectors are creating major public institutions. Besides having an absolutely enviable collection, M Woods hosts solo shows that couldn't happen

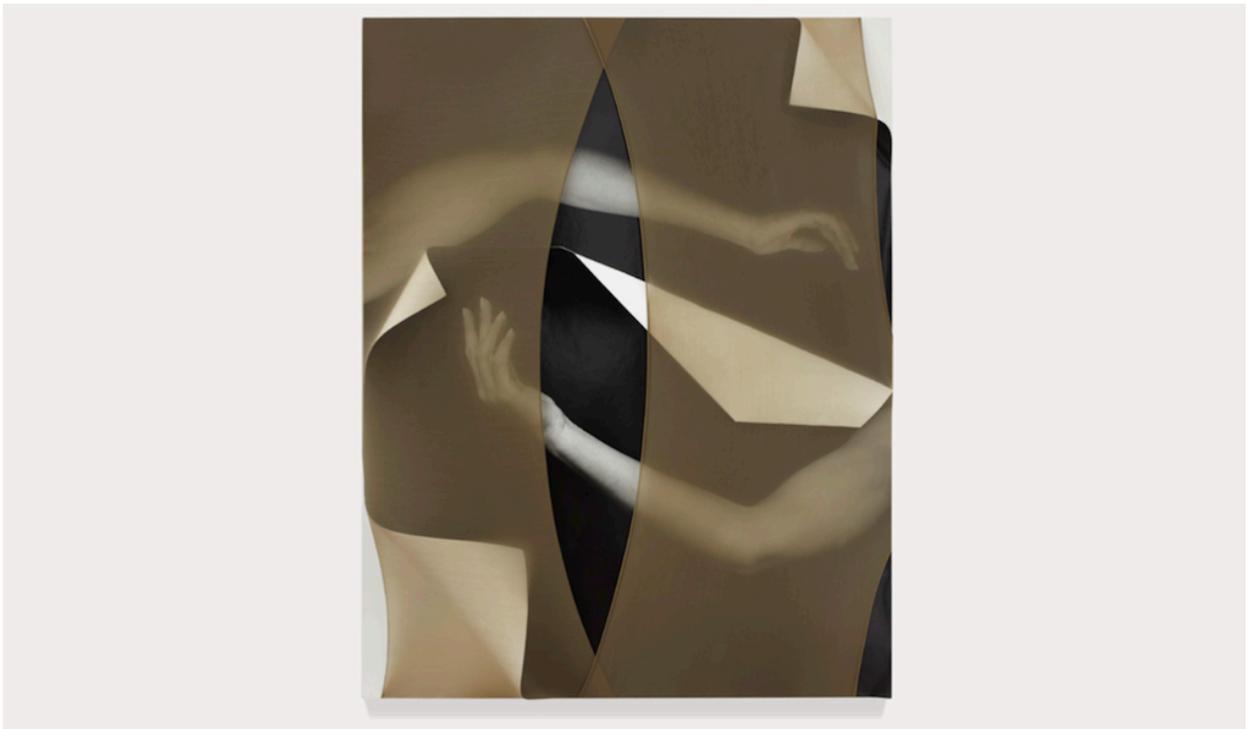
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anywhere else in China. Founder Lei is curating the first ever museum retrospective of French-born painter Cristof Yvoré in the country. It is fitting to give visibility to this too often overlooked artist here because of the long cross-cultural dialog between French (from Impressionism onward) painters and Chinese artists. These small scale paintings obsessively explore a very limited range of intimate subjects, rooms, bare walls, flowers in vases, still lifes on tables and such things. Yvoré proves that it matters less what you paint and more how you paint it. He explores the most important elements of painting, weight, balance, hue, and saturation whose meditations in oil on canvas are recalling the master Giorgio Morandi. Painted from memory that have the sentiment of "remembrance of things past" but are never sentimental.

M Woods, No. 2 Jiuxianqiao Road, Chaoyang District, Beijing

2. Sheree Hovsepien at Higher Pictures, New York



Courtesy Higher Pictures, New York

In her new body of work Iranian-born Sheree Hovsepien expands her career long investigation into photography as a physical medium presenting a series of small scale (many around 21 inches) collages. This is her first show at Higher Pictures and we applaud the gallery for giving much deserved recognition to Hovsepien after decades of her quietly working. Using silver gelatin prints, as well as photograms (mostly of nude figures) from her expansive personal archive, she creates layered images that are covered or obscured by stretched black or tan nylon that immediately evokes hosiery. This is truly photography in the expanded field where the very materiality of the medium

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is engaged beyond just optics. The prints are curled, rolled, covered, overlaid, such that the haptic is given precedence. Like her earlier work in her oeuvre the central theme is the the essence of portraiture itself.

Higher Pictures, 980 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10075

3. Hal Fischer at Project Native Informant, London



Courtesy Project Native Informant, London

Hal Fischer is among the pioneer artists of the late 70s that came before the so called Pictures Generation. He brought the language of structuralism and linguistics into his photographic practice and after making only three seminal bodies of work in the 70s disappeared and stopped making art. This is the rare (or only) chance to see all three bodies of work at once in one of the most respected emerging galleries whose ultra-smart hot young program is in lineage with Fischer. The three projects take up where “objective” (August Sander *Face of Our Time*) and “typologies” (Bernd and Hilla Becher) left off. The first series *Gay Semiotics* (1977) is a single series of 24 photographs all about 20 x 16 inches, while *Boy-Friends* (1979) is ten portraits of actual/imagined romances, finally *A Salesman* (1979) is an ambiguous billboard (non)advertisement that influenced many of the young artists working with corporate aesthetics today. These works on one hand act like scientific evidence discovering new species. Or a field guide for newcomers to gay culture. On the other hand these works are knowingly referring to

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contemporary theories of signs, quasi-anthropology that are used to complicate the so called documentary “truth-value” of photography through ironic, sartorial, and camp insider jokes.

Project Native Informant, 26 Holborn Viaduct, London EC1A 2AQ

4. Hannah Black at mumok, Vienna



Courtesy: mumok / Klaus Pichler, Vienna

Hannah Black is one of the future greats of artists working today and she is equally a public intellectual, writer, and theorist who is central to the current discourse around race and gender in art. In her first museum exhibition in Austria she presents a three channel video installation which collages together multiples sources of filmic material. Black who is brilliant with words plays on the term “cell” which refers both to the basic unit of biology and to prison with the title *Small Room*. The work itself is a meditation on biological processes and from this view, the humble virus (which is neither living nor dead), is a prisoner in other animals cells and through the act of infection gives rise the the symbiosis that is life itself. Black questions lineage and ancestry which are often both based on DNA and tightly intertwined to the more urgent issues of diaspora. Interspersed with her filmic work are popular icons or pop music through which she explores the deepest question of identity and geological/political history. At one moment

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across three screens it reads “It’s the end of the world” on the first “There has never been a world” on the middle “It’s the beginning of the world” on the last.

mumok, Museumsplatz 1, 1070 Vienna

5. Ned Vena at Société, Berlin



Courtesy Société, Berlin

Ned Vena is among the most exciting young(er) painters working today and with his newest show he puts another nail in the coffin of Zombie Formalism. These paintings are anything but boring carbon copy process-based derivative abstractions. Instead they are ferociously original blending digital image manipulation with appropriation to question what makes a painting. The subject is equally provocative as he takes a critical look at a ubiquitous street art icon: the New York Skyline reflected in the eye of Spider-Man. Taking from his vast personal collection of graffiti spray painted tourist souvenirs all of (nearly) the same image. Unlike a Warholian silkscreen each painting is distinctly different showing the “hand marks” of the graffiti artist. Vena removes his own hand from the final paintings by scanning the graffiti works (enlarging them) and printing them with all the slippages of digital image directly onto canvas. In these paintings we can see the three skylines that tourist can choose: those who long to put the Twin Towers back in, the (post-) traumatic moment when they are gone or finally those who look to hopefully to the current skyline with the Freedom Tower. The image which Vena nearly obsessively uses speaks not only to the deep connections between the corporal body

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and the isomorphism with the city (the buildings themselves), it also speaks to the artificiality of both the comic super-hero and the imagination of the New York skyline whose iconography speaks directly to an American Dream broken by the realities of 9/11.

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