

Navid Nuur

Apart from the secret that it holds

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Galerie Max Hetzler, London is pleased to present *Apart from the secret that it holds*, Navid Nuur's (b. 1976, Tehran) first solo exhibition at Galerie Max Hetzler's London gallery. It follows Nuur's recent acclaimed solo exhibition at the Kunstmuseum Den Haag.

The exhibition will feature a new, monumental painting from the artist's ongoing *The Tuners* series, examples of which were exhibited in the Parasol Unit's presentation in Venice in 2019. In this body of work, Nuur appropriates, enlarges, and recolours anonymous doodles collected from scrap paper used to try out pens in stationery stores world-wide. These abstract marks, used to tune the writing instrument, embody an unconscious, universal language that transcends time—dating back to prehistory and reaching into the future.

The transformative potential of materials across time and place lie at the core of Nuur's practice. Edmund de Waal states, "Navid is an alchemist. He believes that you can take one material and that it can become utterly other and still be itself." The artist's work assumes its final form in relation to the space where it is presented, changing the way we perceive and interact with our environment. Referring to his works as 'interimodules', the artist points to their temporary nature (interim) and interconnectedness (module). Using ceramics, granite, neon, mirrors and ephemeral concepts such as light, energy or luck, Nuur creates experiences that question the world we live in.

Employing time, heat or gravity, the artist activates the metamorphosis of materials to induce form-altering processes which defy his control. A series of drawings explores the physical body of colour, its weight and volume. Via the conduit of water, the pigments separate and travel through paper pulled by gravity over time. The trace of the process itself becomes the final work.

Nuur's ongoing *Vitamin D* series explores the concept of light, without which painting could not exist. Paring painting back to its essence, the artist uses crushed vitamin D, matter created by the body from light, as pigment. Light is also a fundamental component of *Mind Map*, 2013, which creates associations between concrete and abstract concepts in material form.

Inviting participation from visitors, *In Your Face*, 2007-2008, uses a non-reversed mirror to reflect the viewer's true image. While a seemingly simple reflection, this will be the first time the viewer sees themselves as others see them, rather than through the customary reversed image, provoking a deeper understanding of one's bodily presence. A penny press encourages visitors to insert a coin and receive it back transformed into an object they can take home. By defacing the minted coin and turning it into an artwork, Nuur brings to the fore questions of value — here determined by the state, enacted by the collective and taken out of circulation by the artist. Oscillating between playful and profound, Nuur's practice, across a wide variety of media, calls upon our powers of perception and engages us to see the world around us with renewed vision.

About the Artist



Navid Nuur, *Untitled*, 2016-2020
laminated glass collage, charred wood
85 x 85 x 1 cm.; 33 ½ x 33 ½ x 3/8 in.

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Navid Nuur (1976, Teheran) lives and works in The Hague, Netherlands. Nuur studied at the Piet Zwart Institute, Rotterdam and Plymouth University. In 2020, the artist's work was the subject of solo exhibitions at Kunstmuseum Den Haag, The Hague and Marta Herford Museum, Herford. Works from the artist's *The Tuners* series were recently exhibited at "THE SPARK IS YOU: Parasol unit in Venice" at Conservatorio di Musica Benedetto Marcello di Venezia, Venice (2019). Other solo exhibitions of Nuur's work include NDSM Werf, Amsterdam (2019); Be-Part, Platform for Contemporary Art, Waregem (2017); DCA Dundee Contemporary Arts, Dundee; Trafó House of Contemporary Arts, Budapest (both 2014); Bonnefantenmuseum, Maastricht; Parasol Unit, London (both 2013); Matadero, Madrid (2012); Kunsthalle Sankt Gallen, St. Gallen (2011); Stedelijk Museum voor Actuele Kunst, Ghent; Kunsthalle Fridericianum, Kassel and De Hallen Museum, Haarlem (all 2009). Group exhibitions include Stedelijk Museum, Schiedam (2020); Centre Pompidou-Metz, Metz; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (both 2018); Art Stations Foundation, Poznan (2016); Kunsthalle Kiel, Kiel; Bienal de la Habana, Havana (both 2015) and La Biennale di Venezia, Venice (2011).

Works by Navid Nuur are held in major public collections including Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; Kunsthaus Zürich, Zurich; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; Bonnefantenmuseum, Maastricht; Neuer Berliner Kunstverein, Berlin; Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem and Stedelijk Museum voor Actuele Kunst, Ghent.

The artist's work is currently included in the group exhibitions *Collector's Item*, Centraal Museum Utrecht and *Reading* at Quinta do Quetzal, Portugal.