

# 空白空间 WHITE SPACE

Wang Qiang | *Acquainted with the Night*

11.27.2021 - 01.16.2022

We are pleased to announce that Wang Qiang's fifth solo exhibition will open at WHITE SPACE (Caochangdi) on November 27, 2021, and run through January 16, 2022. This exhibition will present Wang Qiang's recent new paintings.

The night is ambiguous and prolonged, and we can never say with certainty the exact time of its arrival and departure. The night is also definite and irresistible, "the sun rises as usual," and the night is never absent. Night compounds time and space. Some light, temperature, sound, and even state of mind belong only to the night. Each night is unique. A night at sea, a night in the forest and a night in the city are not the same. Perhaps only the one in the city is familiar to most contemporaries: the city as the physical space where people live, night contains a specific psychological time.

The ambiguity and exactitude of the night also characterize Wang Qiang's paintings. Wang Qiang's works on canvas, situated between abstraction and figuration, render a sense of familiarity and bewildering detachment. Such a sense comes from the not-too-distant perspective in the picture. It maintains the gesture of looking, dictated by the painter's mediated distance to his subject, preserves certain politeness. It also comes from the almost "out-of-focus" subtle vision provided by the painter's homogenous tone, where the discernible concrete images as a whole while the blurry details offer the pictures a more dream-like quality.

Wang Qiang depicts a series of scenes inside and outside office buildings after nightfall in *Acquainted with the Night*, a series of works on canvas with the eponymous title as the exhibition. In these most familiar scenes to every urban dweller, the sky is dim but not dark. The dark windowpanes seem uninviting and profound, with many shifting and flowing details lurking in the background as if hinting at the dreadful movement in the night. In contrast, the interior space of the office building, which is gently lit, seems to offer a touch of warmth and comfort to the urban residents who have yet to repose. The figures inside are in different rooms, some looking out, some working on their desks. However, their faces may be indistinct for us to know what their exact feelings are at the moment, but the hands holding the cigarettes, or the slightly leaning posture, led us in on their preoccupation. The geometric lines shaping the frame and perspective remind one of the ubiquitous rules and restrictions in the urban environment and add partial depth to the room's interior space, underscoring the unfinished stories and unexplained moods inside the building.

Furthermore, the artist condensed this state of *Acquainted with the Night* into a temporal existence beyond any specific moment in the night, which holistically pervades his paintings, drawing on individual experiences and the collective unconscious. Even the works depicting sunny midday (*Daylight*), or an indistinguishable moment where details of daily life are captured by intense flashes of light (*Small Office, Waiting*, etc.), the viewer would grasp the vibrating resonance of silence, restraint, coldness, and uneasiness one identifies with the "night."

Wang Qiang (b.1971, Beijing, China) received his BFA from the Printmaking Department of the Central Academy of Fine Arts (CAFA) in 1997. In 2004, he obtained his Master's degree (i.e. Meisterschüler) at the Düsseldorf Academy of Fine Arts. Recent solo exhibitions include *Acquainted with the Night*, WHITE SPACE, Beijing, China (2021); *The Poet's Winter*, WHITE SPACE, Beijing, China (2017); *Fremde Stadt*, WHITE SPACE, Beijing, China (2015). Recent group exhibition includes *Intervention and Redevelopment: The Imagery Means of Contemporary Art*, Guangdong Museum of Art, Guangzhou, China (2020); *A White Space Odyssey*, WHITE SPACE, Beijing, China (2019). Wang Qiang currently lives and works in Beijing.