

Tan Mu

*DAWN*

September 9 – October 7, 2022

Opening reception Friday, September 9, 6–9PM

Peres Projects is pleased to present *DAWN*, Tan Mu's (b. 1991 in Yantai, CN) second solo exhibition at Peres Projects and first at the Berlin gallery.

In *DAWN*, the subjects of Tan Mu's compositions cover an enormous breadth of topics – from the embryo, privacy stamp, and logic circuit to the solar farm, atomic bomb and the earth itself – guiding our attention to major cultural markers of our times. The artist's primary sources are both archival and cutting edge, examining life through the lens of the history of humankind's evolution and endeavors. She explores the cycles and pursuit of incremental developments in the lives of humans.

Starting from the origin of human life, *Embryo* (2022) attests to the eye's capacities augmented by technologies. The framing and scale of the compositions are enabled by microscopes or satellites. In mapping human activity and the changing world, the works in this exhibition depict the extended body and what we reach for. In October 1946, the first images were taken from space, allowing us to see the earth for the first time from a distance. *Peek* (2021) recreates the hazy black and white photograph, pulling from the same sense of wonder.

Behind the marvel of that image is the larger context of the cold war, another expression of which resulted in the atomic bomb, also depicted by Tan Mu in the series *TRINITY TESTING* (2020). These images have become so circulated and iconic that their meaning is dulled, becoming banal. However, her paintings re-mystify these images, lending the familiar compositions a spiritual potency. Tan Mu insists that she doesn't change or edit any images, she pursues and attempts to document the truth, but the work is emotional, the brushstrokes creating a layer of human touch. There is a sense of curiosity and awe that emanates from her paintings, which take advantage of the effects that art has on a viewer to re-mystify the beauty captured digitally.

The late 20th to early 21st century has been described as the Silicon Age, which is characterized by the dense network of information relentlessly generated and disseminated. The work we do, the entertainment we enjoy, and the ways we communicate are increasingly defined by the internet, the computers, tablets, and cell phones that connect us. In *Silicon* (2021) and *Logic Circuit* (2022), Tan Mu presents the design and mechanics of core parts of these devices and how they are constructed, alluding to the significant impact elemental silicon has had in the contemporary world. These works deal with the complexity of information systems and the challenges of security and privacy.

Ideas of progress often belie the impact on the planet that enables those shifts. While documenting actual events and sites, Tan Mu's subjects constantly gesture to the horizon as we seek to become more efficient and to expand. *Solar Farm* (2022) and *Gulf of Mexico* (2021) depict rapidly changing landforms, sometimes at the expense of the ecological system we inhabit, whereas *3D-Printing House* (2022) portrays experiments in creating new shelters and building materials.

*The splash of a drop 1* (2022) reflects on the history of painting and its shifting role with the emergence of the first cameras. The advent of photography and the progression of technology changed how reality was being documented. Ultimately Tan Mu's works are as much a celebration of the handmade qualities of painting techniques as they are an examination of life through the lens of the history of technology.

In two paintings in the exhibition, the artist works from photographs she has taken herself. The gray curtains in *Stage* (2021) suggest suspense, symbolizing the curiosity and anticipation of discovering something unknown. *Sunset* (2021) is even more personal; the view from her studio in New York City offers us a glimpse into her daily routine, a busy day turning into night, stillness as the world turns over again into dawn.

Like the cellular biologist rendering the most complex parts of the body visible, *DAWN* contends with the pace of the humanities – ever striving, pushing and reaching into the unknown.

This is Tan Mu's second solo exhibition with Peres Projects. In addition, Tan Mu has exhibited in a number of international exhibitions including *Loop*, Between Art Lab, Beijing, *The Model of the World*, Zhangzhou Museum, *2nd Changjiang International Photography and Video Biennial*, Chongqing Museum of Contemporary Art, *CHRONODRIFT*, Lumber Room Gallery, Portland, *Exhibitions of Expanded Media*, Tsinghua University Art Gallery, Beijing, *50/50 New Print*, International Print Center New York and *International Exhibition of Contemporary Printmaking*, Ecole nationale supérieure des Arts Décoratifs in Paris. She graduated from the High School of Central Academy of Fine Arts, Beijing in 2011 and earned her BFA in Expanded Media Studio Art from Alfred University in 2015.

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Please note that attendance will be subject to all local COVID-19 related requirements at that time. We will publish updated info prior to the event.