

STEVE TURNER



Jingze Du: *American Gothic*
February 18–March 18, 2023

Steve Turner is pleased to present *American Gothic*, a solo exhibition featuring new works by Dublin-based Jingze Du that relate to American popular culture and celebrity as perceived by Du, someone who spent the first thirteen years of his life in Yantai, China and most of the next fourteen in Dublin, Ireland. Du's vantage point is an interesting one, for though he has yet to visit the United States, he has intensely admired its culture from afar and has made it a subject in his work for the last five years.

At the exhibition's core are three pairs of delicately rendered paintings in thinned down oil in shades of black, gray and white. There are two larger than life-size portraits of visual artists, one of Jeff Koons and the other of Sterling Ruby; one of basketball legend LeBron James in action and another of two courtside NBA fans; and finally there is Du's pared down version of Grant Wood's *American Gothic* and one of a great white shark, tellingly titled *Jaws*. The pairs have their own interesting frisson and all of the individual works have some interesting dialogue with the others. Koons and Ruby are the yin and yang of American contemporary artists, one shiny and bright, the other dark and foreboding; LeBron is the embodiment of the American Dream; The shark is the face of American capitalism; Grant Wood's painting is the ultimate American painting; and the courtside fans are the audience to it all. There also are five acrylic spray-painted paintings, two of the Empire State Building, two of Andy Warhol and one of a U.S. one hundred dollar bill. They add another layer of historical context and exemplify the other half of Du's painting practice, one that is gestural, loose and occasionally includes color.

Jingze Du (born 1995, Yantai, China) moved to Dublin when he was thirteen years old. He later earned his BA at the National College of Art & Design, Dublin (2017) and his MA from the Royal College of Art, London (2019). He has had solo exhibitions at Sifang Museum, Shanghai (2022); Steve Turner, Los Angeles (May & October, 2020 & 2021) and Hive Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing (2021). This is his fourth solo exhibition at Steve Turner.