

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Zhu Jinshi

Blum & Poe, New York

January 7 – February 20, 2016

Opening reception: Thursday, January 7, 2016, 6 – 8pm



New York—Blum & Poe is pleased to present a survey of paintings by Beijing-based painter Zhu Jinshi. This is Zhu's first solo exhibition in New York and his second solo presentation with the gallery.

Zhu's painting practice is divided into two parts: all-over paintings which literally cover the canvases end to end with paint often the depth of the human hand, and what are known as Liu Bai paintings (direct Chinese translation: "leaving blank"). Liu Bai, a traditional aesthetic approach to compositional balance in Chinese painting, was conceived as a form of "blankness," rather than "emptiness," embodying great philosophical nuance. In parallel with works such as these, Zhu has recently explored the flat application of the black monochrome, with all of its minimalist and philosophical implications. One all-black painting, *Kant* (2015), will be on display, its one-inch deep surface scored by a delicate web of shallow grooves and ripples. This exhibition will also feature three sculptural works; *Bank* (2013) and *Head Sculpture* (2015), consisting of enormous slabs of paint laid upon plinths; and *Nine Levels* (2015), a minimal, modular installation conceived especially for the gallery terrace.

All the works in the exhibition are accumulations of Chinese aesthetic and socio-political histories and hard labor, drawn from the artist's experience growing up during the Cultural Revolution. Born in 1954 in Beijing, and later assigned by the government to work in factories, it was in this oppressive context that he developed his early identity as an artist. Zhu joined a group of artists of similar age called the Stars (Xing Xing) in 1979. That year, after being denied a show at the National Gallery in Beijing, they staged an unauthorized exhibition outside the museum, which has since been widely recognized as a breakthrough in Chinese cultural expression. Thereafter, Zhu and others began to explore abstraction. By the mid-1980s, many Chinese artists had relocated to Western countries, including Zhu Jinshi and Qin

Yufen who moved to Berlin in 1986. After living in the West for twenty years, Zhu Jinshi moved back to Beijing, where he currently lives and works.

This exhibition is one in a series that Blum & Poe is hosting with the intention of illuminating the narrative of postwar art in China, Japan, and Korea — serving as a point of contrast and correspondence between east and west — in both of which Zhu Jinshi is steeped, in knowledge and reference.

Zhu Jinshi has been the subject of numerous solo exhibitions. *Performance in Paint*, curated by Melissa Chiu, director of the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in Washington DC, is on view at the Inside-Out Museum in Beijing until January 31, 2016. Other important solo shows include *On the Road*, City of Prague Museum, Czech Republic (2002); *Tao of Rice Paper*, Museum of Vancouver, Canada (1997); and *Fangzhen*, DAAD Galerie, Berlin (1990). Recent group exhibitions include *Alone Together*, Rubell Family Collection, Miami (2012); *Mind Space: Maximalism in Contrasts*, University of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (2011); and *China Now – Art in Times of Change*, ESSL Museum, Vienna, Austria (2006).

Image: Zhu Jinshi, *Dancing with the Devil 1 (detail)*, 2013. Oil on canvas, 63 x 55 1/8 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Blum & Poe, Los Angeles/New York/Tokyo

Locations:

Blum & Poe, Los Angeles, 2727 S La Cienega Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90034

Blum & Poe, New York, 19 East 66th Street, New York, NY 10065

Blum & Poe, Tokyo, 1-14-34 Jingumaeshibuya, Tokyo, 150-0001

Hours:

Los Angeles, Tuesday – Saturday, 10am – 6pm

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