

YAN PEI-MING

It Takes a Lifetime to Become Young

Massimo De Carlo is pleased to inaugurate its new Hong Kong gallery with a solo show by the Chinese artist, based in France, Yan Pei-Ming, with whom Massimo De Carlo has collaborated for almost 20 years, since 1998.

Yan Pei-Ming grew up during the Cultural Revolution in China and left Shanghai for France in 1980, where he studied at the École National Supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Dijon. During the last 30 years Yan Pei-Ming has established himself as one of the most prominent artists, renowned for his epic size portraits of key power figures from both the East and the West, from Mao Zedong and Barack Obama to Marilyn Monroe and Alexander McQueen.

In *It Takes A Lifetime To Become Young* Yan Pei-Ming presents a new body of work where his signature painted portraits depict an array of artists that have inspired him throughout his career, helping him shape his relationship to painting, and that still have a particular intimate significance for the artist. Masters such as Pablo Picasso, Egon Schiele and Frida Kahlo are all portrayed in the early years of their life, from childhood to adolescence: capturing the mix of candour, melancholy, determination and ambition of these iconic artists in their younger days, yet already on the path to greatness.

The exhibition is structured as a tangible retrospective of a coming of age tale about watching, nourishing, respect and inspiration: here, the title *It Takes A Lifetime to Become Young*, a revealing quote by Pablo Picasso, embodies Yan Pei-Ming's reflection on the relationship between time and practice, youth and adulthood, rites of passage and commitment.

Observation is key in this exhibition: amongst this display of great masters of painting as their younger selves, the artist chooses to add one self-portrait depicting him as he is today: reflecting on how the children's gestures and expression, gaze and attitude have influenced the gestures of these great painters-to-be and his own approach to the gesture itself. By doing so, Yan Pei-Ming allows his admiration for the artist that nourished his formation to maintain the naïveté and honesty of the first time he approached the painterly gesture.

For the first time a new element is introduced in Yan Pei-Ming's practice: the typical monochrome pallet is replaced by an array of different, vibrant, colours and shades; making tangible the artists desire to not confine the tracing of emotions and expressivity to black and white but to challenge new tints through this body of work.

It Takes A Lifetime to Become Young is a statement: the history of painting is a continuous journey through time and temperaments, evidence and fiction, gesture and thought; with this exhibition Yan Pei-Ming enters, expands and helps to define the narrative around this medium.

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Yan Pei-Ming was born in Shanghai in 1960. He lives and works in Dijon (France). Yan Pei-Ming has had solo exhibitions at the CAC Màlaga, Malaga; Ullens Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing; Fondation Vincent Van Gogh, Arles; the San Francisco Art Institute; and the Musée du Louvre - The Funeral of Mona Lisa by Ming was shown in the room next to the original Mona Lisa. Group exhibitions include the Venice Biennale in 1995 and 2003; the Sevilla Biennale in 2006; the Istanbul Biennial in 2007, among others. Yan Pei Ming is collected by a number of prestigious institutions including the Centre Georges Pompidou; the Honolulu Museum of Art; the National Gallery of Australia; the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo; the Museum Ludwig in Koln; and the Shanghai Art Museum in Shanghai.

Hard Facts:

Massimo De Carlo, Hong Kong
3d Floor Pedder Building, 12 Pedder Street, Central, Hong Kong
From March 22nd, 2016 until May 22nd
Open Tuesday to Saturday, 10:30am – 7.00pm
Opening: Monday 21st of March 2016

For further information and materials:

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