

## The Representational and The Abstract

Curator: YU Yu

Opening: 11.10, 2017 5pm

Duration: 11.10, 2017 - 1.15, 2018

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Location: Westbund, 2555-10 Longteng Avenue, Xuhui District, Shanghai

YU Youhan's Solo exhibition "The Representational and The Abstract" will open at ShanghART West Bund space on November 10<sup>th</sup>. This will be the artist's first solo exhibition at ShanghART Gallery since 2004. The exhibition focuses on exhibiting YU Youhan's latest works after his retrospective exhibition at the Power Station of Art Shanghai in 2016, as well as early works seen for the first time. More than twenty sets of works from past and present will be displayed on both floors of the ShanghART gallery space. This exhibition will open until January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2018.

YU Youhan's works are known and distinguished for three main series: abstract, pop art, and landscape. The series not only alternate in different times of his career, but also interpenetrate each other in terms of painting language. For the artist, a characteristic shared between traditional Chinese art and the impressionist Paul Cézanne is a high level of generalisation. Generalisation is abstraction, a way to extract subjectivity from representational objects. In YU Youhan's early works, he demonstrated extraordinarily powers of generalisation. Abstraction has been one of the most important threads that runs through all of his paintings. His representational artworks are distinctly abstract whereas the abstract works are usually integrating figurative elements.

After passing the age of 70, Yu Youhan, who always advocates to break free from narrowness in art-making, further develops his painting style. Various painting languages are mixed together, including the heaviness of historical elements and lightness of dynamic characters blended in abstractive images. "Terracotta Army on Yimeng Mountain" is a classic case where the ancient terracotta army and contemporary landscape merge across time and space, reflecting Yu Youhan's contemplation of the developmental status of human society.

From a set of paintings inspired by packing boxes to works of "realism" depicting the surface of the moon, the techniques used in his new works continue to capture the temperament of returning to a primal "clumsiness". But an impressive variety is demonstrated in these new works, revealing the humourous psyche of the artist and the way he earnestly practices his philosophy of closely connecting art to life. As he said himself: "Duchamp said his life is his best art. I say my art is my best life."