

YAN PEI-MING THE MOURNERS

Massimo De Carlo presents *The Mourners*, a new solo exhibition by Yan Pei-Ming for our London gallery.

The duality of eastern and western cultural experiences (Chinese born Yan Pei-Ming has been working and living in Dijon for the last forty years) has led to the artist's expressive style and mostly monochromatic palette that has acquired international success and recognition. Working from memory or from photographic images, Yan Pei-Ming's paintings intertwine both personal and cultural imagery: fame and anonymity, public figures and intimate subjects, life and death, all these issues are resolved inside his work that is, above anything, a deep and sometimes harsh reflection on human condition.

The solo exhibition *The Mourners* combines two new self-portraits with six watercolours that were first presented in 2019 at Musée des Beaux-Arts in Dijon as part of the solo exhibition *The Man Who Weeps*. Yan Pei-Ming's watercolor practice is unfairly less popular than his painting practice, and it is characterized by a softer, lighter, and maybe more fluid technique that the artist loves deeply. The images of *The Mourners* are based upon the 82 mourners from the Tombs of the Dukes of Burgundy, in Dijon. Yan Pei-Ming's images are magnified to be about six times larger than the original small-scale alabaster statues: the standing stiff figures presents sculptural volumes that emerge from the black background enveloped by rounded and virtuoso draperies, with their mysterious faces sheltered by heavy hoods.

The watercolors by Yan Pei-Ming perfectly recall the original statues, ascribed to 14th century's sculptor Claus Sluter, whose practice revolutionized funerary statuary and the art of mourning. Yan Pei-Ming's *The Mourners* refer to the history of Burgundy and to the Musée des Beaux-Arts' collection, but also to the intimate history of the artist, as they were painted together with a series of watercolors of his late mother. By painting these two bodies of work at the same time, the artist mixed his own grief over the loss of his mother with the age-old feeling of death raising his mother to the status of a universal icon.

In this exhibition, *The Mourners* are installed in association with two self-portraits (*Autoportrait, noir*, 2020 and *Autoportrait, blanc*, 2020). Yan Pei-Ming no longer narrates an intimate, personal story in relationship to his mother, but in fact he is observing history as it unrolls in front of the eyes of his self-portraits. These two works are not only mirroring the artist's mental state, but also witnesses to history in the making. Created while the artist constrained himself to remain in the strictest confinement, the self-portraits dissects the current global feeling of solitude and hopelessness facing the unprecedented events and conflicts of the present time. The drama takes place outside and is yet without images to hold on to.

YAN PEI-MING

Yan Pei-Ming was born in Shanghai in 1960. He lives and works in Dijon, France. Recent solo exhibitions have been held in prominent institutions such as: Petit Palais - Musée des Beaux-Arts de la Ville de Paris, Paris (2019); Musée d'Orsay, Paris (2019); Musée des Beaux-Arts de Dijon, Dijon (2019); Villa Medici, Rome (2016); Belvedere Museum, Vienna (2016); CAC Malaga, Malaga (2015); QMA Gallery, Doha (2012); Fondation Vincent Van Gogh, Arles (2014); Ullens Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing (2009); San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco (2009); Musée du Louvre, Paris (2009); Des Moines Art Center, Des Moines (2008). Group exhibitions include: Leopold Museum, Salzburg (2018); National Portrait Gallery, London (2018); Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris (2016); MKM Museum Küppersmühle für Moderne Kunst, Duisburg (2015); Grand Palais, Paris (2015); Centre Pompidou-Metz, Metz (2014); The Lyon Biennale (1997, 2000); Venice Biennale, Venice (1995, 2003); the Sevilla Biennale, Sevilla (2006); the Istanbul Biennial, Istanbul (2007); The Bangkok Biennale (2018), among others. Yan Pei-Ming is collected by a number of prestigious institutions including the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris; the Pinault Collection in Paris; the Louis Vuitton Foundation in Paris; the Würth Museum in Erstein; the Ludwig Museum in Koln; the Voorlinden Museum in Wassenaar ; the Honolulu Museum of Art in Honolulu; the National Gallery of Australia in Canberra; the Shanghai Art Museum in Shanghai; and the National Museum of Modern Art in Tokyo.

In 2021, important exhibitions will be held at the Musée Unterlinden in Colmar, in April, and at Palais des Papes and Collection Lambert in Avignon, in June.

Hard Facts:

Massimo De Carlo, London
55 South Audley Street, London W1K 2QH
From November 25, 2020 until January 16, 2021

Open by appointment only

For further information and materials:

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THE MOURNERS

November 25, 2020 – January 16, 2021

LOWER GROUND FLOOR

1 *Autoportrait, blanc*, 2020

Oil on canvas

130 × 97 cm / 51 1/8 × 38 1/8 inches

2 *Pleurant XIII*, 2018

Watercolour on paper

152.4 × 101.6 cm / 60 × 40 inches

3 *Pleurant XIX*, 2018

Watercolour on paper

152.4 × 101.6 cm / 60 × 40 inches

4 *Pleurant XIV*, 2018

Watercolour on paper

152.4 × 101.6 cm / 60 × 40 inches

5 *Autoportrait, noir*, 2020

Oil on canvas

130 × 97 cm / 51 1/8 × 38 1/8 inches

6 *Pleurant LVI*, 2018

Watercolour on paper

152.4 × 101.6 cm / 60 × 40 inches

7 *Pleurant LXXVI*, 2018

Watercolour on paper

152.4 × 101.6 cm / 60 × 40 inches

8 *Pleurant LIII*, 2018

Watercolour on paper

152.4 × 101.6 cm / 60 × 40 inches

