

## ***Plants, Balloons and Bell Jars***

Artist: Ru Xiaofan

2017.10.27 – 2017.12.1

KWM artcenter is pleased to present 'Plants, Balloons and Bell Jars', a solo exhibition by the French Chinese artist Ru Xiaofan. There are 61 artworks in the exhibition with mediums ranging from ceramics and bodiless lacquerware, oil and watercolour painting as well as dead butterflies, all produced over a 30 year period from 1986-2016. He graduated from L'Ecole des Beaux arts in Paris where he presently lives and works. His works are deeply influenced by the methodologies of the early 20th century European art movements Surrealism and Dadaism which he applies to Chinese culture.

He is interested in the combination of ancient Chinese artisanal techniques such as Yangzhou bodiless lacquerware and Longquan celadon ceramics with contemporary mediums such as car spray paint fusing a classical allure with a contemporary sheen. Most clearly this is demonstrated in his works *In Deep Meditation* (2013) where he places a celadon flower-headed Buddha in the middle of a dining plate and *Cent Fleur* (2009) where he marries bodiless lacquerware with spray paint, implying the divinity of the everyday life with humor and elegance. Furthermore in his watercolours *Red Bamboos* (2016) which appear at first to be a stage set of a science-fiction film, he defamiliarises the cultural symbolism of the Bamboo and reworks it as a symbol of a futuristic landscape. His experiments depict everyday daydreams triggered by both Eastern and Western traditions.

The works usually start from ordinary domestic objects, like house plants, balloons, butterflies, plastic toys and containers. Often attracted by their common beauty, he prefers not to question or over analyse why. Rather he accepts his immediate subconscious response. In spite of his intuitive reaction, his works are highly finished, painted with a clear sense of form often alluding to faith, politics and the human condition. He shares a similar fascination with the uncanny, unformed and unexplained as surrealist artists did 100 years ago.

These artworks, derived from quotidian objects, are transformed into oneiric scenes through the juxtaposition of unrelated objects such as flowers and lips, bamboos and dinner plates and glass jars and toy armies creating a state of unreality. An example of this is the DNA series (2014-16) where the artist bought, from a Parisian Antique market, a group of postcards from a French 1917 expedition to Yunnan, representing sino-franco communication 100 years ago, which incorporated butterfly wings into the image. He then painted, in contrast, highly modernist colour shapes and blocks and surrounded the resulting image in a large white passe-partout and historical gilded frame referencing the museum world of science and natural history.

To engage with a surrealist perspective is, both to position oneself into a human dreamscape as well as experience a new interpretation of reality. The popularity of Ru Xiaofan's work lies in the viewer being

touched and relieved when they confront the work, a sympathetic escape from the world, where daily pressures and daily motivations are often interchangeable.

## About the Artist

Ru Xiaofan

1954 Born in Nan Jing, China.

1982 Fine Arts Department of the Normal University, China.

1986 L'Ecole des Beaux arts in Paris.

1990 La Casa Velasquez, Spain (received scholarship).

2004 included in The Contemporary Artists Dictionary of LA Rousse, Editor Pascale Le Thorel.

Lives and works in Paris, France.

## Public Collection

Collection of Fondation Colas, Museum of Ursulines, Today Art Museum, Seoul Museum of Contemporary Art, Realization of the fresco of La Coupole, National Fund of Contemporary Art, Foundation Salomon, Regional Fund of Contemporary Art, Collection Sosume, Foundation Michelin, Grand Prize.

## 金社艺术中心 (KWM artcenter)

The KWM artcenter opened on 20th October 2016. It is located on the second floor of the WFC centre CBD in Beijing. The new art center is supported by the law firm King & Wood Mallesons and an KWM artcenter affiliated private art fund. The KWM artcenter has over 700 sqm of exhibition space, including an exhibition space, a VIP room and an educational space. It will be used to present and promote artists both domestically and overseas. In particular, it will act as a rare art institution at the heart of the economic central area in Beijing. It will provide high-quality art educational activities and courses aimed to cultivate art lovers and collectors. It serves to improve the international influence of Chinese Art and become a powerful communicator of Chinese Contemporary Art.