

JAMES COHAN GALLERY SHANGHAI

IN MEMORY OF A LANDSCAPE II: Lu Song, Wei Jia, Xie Fan

NOVEMBER 18, 2015 - JANUARY 3, 2016

Opening reception: Wednesday, November 18, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

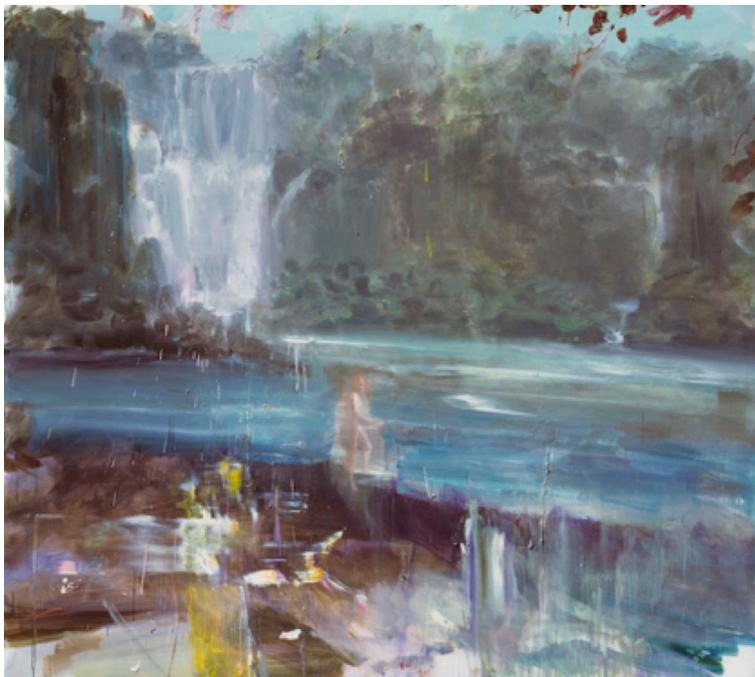
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WEI JIA 韦嘉

One Man's River 一个人的河流, 2015

Acrylic on canvas 布面丙烯

190 x 210 cm

and a legendary figure in the art world in the 1960s. Both exhibitions play on the poet's idea that art should be deeply intimate and often autobiographical. The opening line of one of O'Hara's important poem begins: "My quietness has a man in it, he is transparent..."

The artists from both Part I and Part II use landscapes as a metaphor for the self: a place where their memories and most intimate feelings reside. In Part I, the viewers were invited to experience landscapes that are devoid of man but not mankind (Chen Yujun and Yuan Yuan's dilapidated

James Cohan Gallery Shanghai is pleased to present *In Memory of a Landscape II: Lu Song, Wei Jia and Xie Fan*, the second installment of the highly acclaimed and successful 2014 exhibition *In Memory of a Landscape (Part I)*. *In Memory of a Landscape II* opens November 18th, 2015 and continues through January 3rd, 2016.

The title of the exhibition gives a subtle nod to the influential American poet Frank O'Hara who was also a curator at New York's Museum of Modern Art

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interiors or Huang Yuxing's polluted rivers signifying the effects of rapid urbanization.) The anxiety and displacement felt by these artists are channeled toward landscapes of decay.

The artists in Part II (Lu Song, Wei Jia and Xie Fan) transfer a similar anxiety but in a different manner. Instead of creating landscapes tarnished by pollution, isolation and greed, they paint almost surreal and mystical scenes of nature and the natural world. They have made the conscious decision not to depict the harsher realities; rather, they reinvent the notion of a neo-utopia or Garden of Eden. This escapism allows the artists to live within their fondest memories of a simpler time when nature, not globalization, was the most awe-inspiring and powerful force.

Wei Jia, the oldest of the three painters, was born in 1975 in Sichuan Province. Trained in the art of lithography at the Central Academy of Fine Arts, Wei Jia's approach to painting is precise and methodical. Although each brush stroke is highly expressive, each is meticulously painted. His landscapes take shape over weeks and months of deliberate layering. In contrast, **Lu Song**, born in 1982 in Beijing, who paints spontaneously. Trained at Wimbledon College of Art London where he received his MA and BA, Lu Song's approach to each canvas is experimental. He layers a combination of acrylic and oil paint while applying putty to the paintings surface. He then peels away the putty between the intervals of color, resulting in a distressed or weathered effect. If he is not satisfied with the final painting, he simply keeps layering and peeling until a new landscape appears.



LU SONG 吕松
Coming Home 回家, 2015
Oil and acrylic on canvas 布面油彩、丙烯
200 x 150 cm

Unlike Wei Jia and Lu Song, who predominantly use acrylic on canvas for their landscapes, **Xie Fan**, born in 1983 in Chongqing, has chosen to explore the medium of silk. Trained at the Sichuan Academy of Fine Arts in oil painting, Xie Fan wanted to find a medium that would breathe life into his landscapes and give them a three dimensional quality. Silk, as he found out, produces a translucent glow, a shimmer that ripples as the light hits and penetrates the canvas. Similar to Wei Jia, Xie Fan paints methodically, layering pigment, dot by dot, over long periods of time. His silk paintings are

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optically dynamic—abstract from up close; clusters of green or blue, but from a distance the landscapes gel and become vibrant, flowing rivers or giant trees with rustling leaves.



XIE FAN 谢帆
Landscape 景, 2015
Oil on silk 绢上油画
200 x 50 cm x 6

The landscapes in this exhibition are uncorrupted by man. Although there are human figures in both Wei Jia's and Lu Song's paintings, these figures never seem prominent; rather, blend in like camouflage and are painted as if part of the foliage. In Wei Jia's *One Man's River* and Lu Song's *One Day of Being as Adam Polo*, the figures are painted in browns and greens, their arms and legs blend seamlessly into the flora and fauna. The figures appear to be apparitions, specters passing by the trees and waterfalls or faeries cavorting within the landscape. In contrast, Xie Fan's landscapes do not have a "spirit guide". Instead, the water and trees become the supernatural forces. Because of the translucency of the silk, Xie Fan's shimmering trees and water emerge as celestial beings.

For further information please contact Vera Yu at vyu@jamescohan.com, for additional press images or interview requests please contact Alexis Lu at alu@jamescohan.com, or call the gallery +86 21 54660825. Gallery hours: Tuesday - Saturday 10:00 to 18:00; Sunday 12:00 to 18:00; and Mondays by appointment.