

Wang Guangle: Faded Colours

1 April – 4 May, 2022

Pace Gallery

5 Hanover Square



Wang Guangle, *220123*, 2022
acrylic on canvas, 160 × 140 cm © Wang Guangle

London—Pace Gallery is pleased to present a solo exhibition of pioneering artist, Wang Guangle. On view 1 April – 4 May, *Wang Guangle: Faded Colours* will showcase a suite of new paintings by one of China's preeminent contemporary abstract painters.

For nearly two decades Wang Guangle has devoted his artistic practice to exploring the abstract nature of the language of art, and how the artist, as the protagonist of this ancient practice, uses it to deal with the internal and external world. Though trained in classical oil painting, Wang's distinctive process-based paintings are driven by his intention to translate an abstract sense of time and death into a tangible experience. The artist's process is rooted in repetition; his systematic layering of acrylic paint over canvas creates enigmatic colour gradations and textured surfaces. For Wang, the act of painting is a meditative, daily exercise akin to Eastern spiritual practices. His paintings are meticulously built-up layer by layer over days and months until he deems them finished, titling them after their date of completion. Through these works, Wang discursively challenges the old adage that 'one cannot step into the same river twice', commenting on the perception of repetition on a rational and cognitive level. This reflection informs his artistic approach.

Wang Guangle: Faded Colours, the artist's second exhibition in London, features two styles of painting. Works such as *220123* and *220222* have a horizontal emphasis that recall specific spaces and moments in time: the blurring of mist and fog or the fall of dusk. In these works, Wang tapers the paintings from the sides, further exaggerating the downward fade of pigment and exposing the painting's edge.

In works such as *220227* or *220225*, Wang applies paint in the same even layers but moves gradually and evenly towards the centre until the rectangular form becomes a trapezoid, transforming the paintings into portals that belie their two-dimensionality. Through his idiosyncratic use of colour and form, Wang's paintings create an illusionistic sense of depth that simultaneously recedes and protrudes from the wall. The seamless blending of opposing colours – pink and silver, red and brown – imbues these paintings with a vivid and engrossing visual power while also symbolising the merging of the immaterial and material, form and time.

Wang Guangle's canvases are sites of contradiction. The precise, methodical application of paint creates a quasi-sculptural quality in the paintings, not quite two or three dimensional. Wang's paintings simultaneously draw attention to the flatness of the picture plane and the canvas's rich illusory capacity. Through his process, imagery and language of formalism, Wang's work speaks at once to philosophical ideas of temporality and to the basic application of paint. It is in these liminal spaces between that Wang is most interested.

Wang Guangle (b. 1976, Songxi, Fujian Province, China), a pioneer of abstract and conceptual painting among his generation, studied at the Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing, where he began exploring the potential of the painting surface as integral to his work. In 2003, he co-founded N12, a collective of twelve fellow graduates who began showing together as a means of securing exhibition space at a time when emerging Chinese art had yet to assert its place in the art market or critical discourse. The group came to represent a generation of diverse artists who developed their work two decades after the Cultural Revolution, unified by a break from formal representation toward individual expression. Wang quickly garnered critical praise for his process-based paintings, wherein the artist translates abstract qualities of the world—such as the passage of time—into paint, simultaneously referring to the materiality of the medium and the act of painting through abstraction and repetition. In April 2021, Wang Guangle opened his fourth solo exhibition at Beijing Commune titled *Waves*.

Pace is a leading international art gallery representing some of the most influential contemporary artists and estates from the past century, holding decades-long relationships with Alexander Calder, Jean Dubuffet, Barbara Hepworth, Agnes Martin, Louise Nevelson, and Mark Rothko. Pace enjoys a unique U.S. heritage spanning East and West coasts through its early support of artists central to the Abstract Expressionist and Light and Space movements.

Since its founding by Arne Glimcher in 1960, Pace has developed a distinguished legacy as an artist-first gallery that mounts seminal historical and contemporary exhibitions. Under the current leadership of President and CEO Marc Glimcher, Pace continues to support its artists and share their visionary work with audiences worldwide by remaining at the forefront of innovation. Now in its seventh decade, the gallery advances its mission through a robust global program—comprising exhibitions, artist projects, public installations, institutional collaborations, performances, and interdisciplinary projects. Pace has a legacy in art bookmaking and has published over five hundred titles in close collaboration with artists, with a focus on original scholarship and on introducing new voices to the art historical canon.

The gallery has also spearheaded explorations into the intersection of art and technology through its new business models, exhibition interpretation tools, and representation of artists cultivating advanced studio practices. Pace's presence in Silicon Valley since 2016 has bolstered its longstanding support of experimental practices and digital artmaking. As part of its commitment to innovative, technologically engaged artists within and beyond its program, Pace launched its own dedicated NFT platform, Pace Verso, in November 2021. The gallery's past NFT projects have spotlighted digital works by Glenn Kaino, DRIFT, Lucas Samaras, Simon Denny, Urs Fischer, John Gerrard, and other artists.

Today, Pace has nine locations worldwide including London, Geneva, a strong foothold in Palo Alto, and two galleries in New York—its headquarters at 540 West 25th Street, which welcomed almost 120,000 visitors and programmed 20 shows in its first six months, and an adjacent 8,000 sq. ft. exhibition space at 510 West 25th Street. Pace was one of the first international galleries to establish outposts in Asia, where it operates permanent gallery spaces in Hong Kong and Seoul, as well as an office and viewing room in Beijing. In 2020, Pace opened temporary exhibition spaces in East Hampton and Palm Beach, with continued programming on a seasonal basis.



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