

Hong Hao: New Works

Sept 30 – Nov 10, 2022
 12/F, H Queen's
 80 Queen's Road Central
 Hong Kong



Hong Hao, *The Realm of Matters No.15*, 2021 © Hong Hao, courtesy Pace Gallery

Hong Kong – Pace is pleased to present an exhibition of new work by the Chinese conceptual artist Hong Hao at its Hong Kong gallery. On view from September 30 to November 10, the presentation will spotlight mixed media paintings that the artist has created in the past two years. This includes his 2022 series *Micro Sentence*, which will be shown to the public for the first time in Pace's upcoming exhibition in Hong Kong, as well as the latest works from Hong's most representative *Reciprocating* and *Everchanging Appearance* series, and his acclaimed *The Realm of Matters* series of recent years.

As one of the most active conceptual artists in China since the late 1990s, Hong is known for his dexterous and witty handling of ready-made materials, invigorating the Chinese contemporary art scene with his practice. Hong's artistic approach and intervention to society and the public sphere always starts with the individual, gradually developing a self-sufficient conceptual system with a certain oriental aesthetic sense of harmony. Over the past decade, the artist has increasingly focused on the expressive potential of the material itself, continuing his observation and reflection on the social construction of value.

In one of his new works, titled *Everchanging Appearance No.32* (2022), the artist uses plastic gel, exposed to different temperatures, to produce a fragmented texture like the "ice cracks" of ancient porcelain. Controlling the ambient temperature in the manner of ancient artisans, Hong explores the interesting contrast between the random and meticulous aspects of this process, reflecting the contrived construction of aesthetic taste. In this sense, the civil aesthetic has become a sort of ready-made as the materials, used by the artist skillfully and accurately in his works.

Hong's *The Realm of Matters* series, which he began in 2020, centers on the development history of porcelain. In *The Realm of Matters No.12* (2021), the artist arranges ancient porcelain fragments—purchased on a trading platform for cultural relics—into a specific pattern that recalls cosmic images such as the asteroid belt. Within this colorful, geometric composition, porcelain fragments fall gently onto the canvas, revealing their original states to viewers.

The light blue color and smooth texture of Song Dynasty porcelain evoke specific historical memories and narratives. The pinnacle of the beauty of ancient Chinese craftsmanship, porcelain wares were once reserved for exclusive use by royalty. Pieces that were not selected for the royal family were broken and buried to prevent others from taking them into their possession. A millennium later, these discarded fragments attracted the attention of researchers, and they started to circulate as commodities, traded and collected by members of the public. Porcelain fragments have been assigned



different roles throughout history—from works of art to commodities. As such, they reflect the mercurial nature of the commodity society, embodying the relationship between objecthood and value.

On his canvases featuring porcelain fragments, the artist has left some indecipherable sentences that originate from slogans of modern Western thought or the reflective philosophical aphorisms of the ancient East by those who shaped human society in a powerful way.

Once again, Hong, in his characteristically playful style, brings contemporary and personal subjects into conversation with long and complex material and cultural histories. Through his practice, Hong often explores the dialectical relationships between appearance and substance, between the tangible and the intangible, between generation and annihilation. His work examines the constructed nature of social ideas and offers a contemplative pause of the consumption and consumer culture by manifesting materiality in its own right.

Hong Hao (b.1965, Beijing) graduated from the Printmaking Department of the Central Academy of Fine Arts, Beijing in 1989. Much of Hong Hao’s work features assembled scanned images of various found objects including maps, books, tickets, receipts, banknotes, food, and containers. In his 2009 solo exhibition Hong Hao: Bottom at Beijing Commune, the artist exhibited a series that features the bottom half of everyday objects. By arranging the scanned images according to their forms and colors, he deconstructs the functional property of the materials and reproduces an undifferentiated, flattened, deliberately superficial world of aesthetics. Hong Hao’s work is included in numerous public collections including the Museum of Modern Art, New York, U.S.A; the British Museum, London, U.K; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, U.S.A; the Fukuoka Asian Art Museum, Fukuoka, Japan; the J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, U.S.A and the Ullens Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing, China, among others. The artist currently lives and works in Beijing.

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. As part of its commitment to technologically engaged artists within and beyond its program, Pace launched a hub for its web3 activity, Pace Verso, in November 2021.

Today, Pace has nine locations worldwide, including a European foothold in London and Geneva, 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’s long and pioneering history in California includes a gallery in Palo Alto, which operated from 2016 to 2022. Pace’s engagement with Silicon Valley’s technology industry has had a lasting impact on the gallery at a global level, accelerating its initiatives connecting art and technology as well as its work with experiential artists. Pace consolidated its West Coast activity through its flagship in Los Angeles, which opened in 2022. 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. Pace’s satellite exhibition spaces in East Hampton and Palm Beach present continued programming on a seasonal basis.

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