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Fou Gallery announces Shuling Guo's solo exhibition "5-6 pm" opening on August 1 in New York

TIME: 2020.7.24



Fou Gallery is delighted to announce that the first show since COVID-19 – Shuling Guo's solo exhibition *5-6 pm* – will be held from August 1st to October 4th. The title comes from her oil painting series *5-6 pm*, which will be presented together with her *Skin* series in this exhibition. A two-day open house with the artist's presence will be hosted in the first weekend of the exhibition, registered by appointment only to maintain social distance.

In the northern hemisphere's winter around 5 to 6 pm in the evening, the sun descends towards the horizon and the daylight gradually dims to end the day. This is the moment when the sky becomes a glamorous kaleidoscope of colors. Known as "Ōmagatoki (the time of meeting demons)" in Japanese Shintoism, the twilight, when night alternates with day is believed to be one of the occasions—with sudden changes of natural phenomenon—where non-human spirits appear. Shuling Guo's *5-6 pm* series, depicting subtle changes of colors and light, were created from her contemplation and observations of these moments. She has a keen and accurate intuition for interactions and shifts between different states, which results in a touching reproduction and amplification of subtle perceptions, her paintings being full of delicately honed shades and gradients.

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Shuling Guo, *5—6 pm-13*, 2020. Oil on board, 12 x 12 inches. Photograph by Yun Kai ©Shuling Guo, courtesy Fou Gallery.

Guo's application of colors is inspired by her dedicated study of artist and educator Josef Albers's color theory: "In visual perception a color is almost never seen as it really is—as it physically is. This fact makes color the most relative medium in art." (1963) In other words, our understanding of colors is not simply true to its physical properties, but rather subjective, variable and non-repetitive in our mind as circumstances change continuously. With a faith in perceiving rather than seeing colors, Guo is able to capture and re-render ephemeral beauty and a flowing atmosphere beyond the mundane with her sensitivity and concentration, although her themes of work are all just segments of everyday life. The visual imagery of her work is minimal; but through a deliberate presentation of a myriad of transitions of tones and shades, her visuals are divorced from generality and are sublimed into a higher level of emptiness and tranquility with spiritual shock.



Shuling Guo, *Skin-1*, 2020. Oil on board, 12 x 12 inches. Photograph by Yun Kai ©Shuling Guo, courtesy Fou Gallery.

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5–6 pm series is Guo's depiction of a number of vivid evenings in her memory. Sunset emanates a dazzling glow and casts a rich spectrum over the sky, the sea, and a corner of a wall. There are almost no concrete figures in Guo's framing, but only empty scenes with mere light and colors that spread their fluctuations onto the painting surface. Skin series portrays the impressions of light being softly refracted when it penetrates petals and leaves. By magnifying commonly-overlooked details, images of objects are decontexted and thus become abstract. Colors in the paintings present similar lightness and clarity, yet subtly shift between warm and cool hues. The emphasized appeal of generic things sparkles the audience's interest to observe life from unexpected perspectives.



Shuling Guo, *Skin-5*, 2020. Oil on board, 12 x 12 inches. Photograph by Yun Kai
©Shuling Guo, courtesy Fou Gallery.

Guo's art practice is also influenced by Mark Rothko's signature works. In Rothko's large-size paintings, symmetrical rectangular blocks in contrasting or complementary colors end with delicately blurred edges, seemingly floating on the base color and vibrating against each other. Although the color blocks in Rothko's paintings are extremely pure and abstract, they convey intense emotions that overwhelm the audience immediately. Guo believes the most important essence of art is to evoke ubiquitous but precious memories and emotions that dwell in every human, therefore she hopes her art can create striking moments for her audience through the emptiness and simplicity in her expression.

As part of a young generation born around the late 1980s, Shuling Guo grew up during a time when globalization continued to accelerate. Back then, the ever-growing openness, flexibility and freeness of the cultural and artistic environment in China gifted this generation the opportunity to immerse themselves in many unique subcultures and foreign cultures, which ultimately resonate and integrate with their innate Chinese culture. Guo appreciates the "Wabi-Sabi" aesthetics derived from Japanese Zen Buddhism which esteems austerity and humility, and considers ephemerality,

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impermanence and imperfectness inevitable in the beauty of all substances. Consequently, her paintings capture evanescent instants and atmospheres, refresh typical impressions of ordinary things, and leave room for limitless imagination with her seemingly-abstract frames. Moreover, she regards painting as a spontaneous behavior that is nearly physiological, complying with the most genuine sound from her heart. It sprouts from her nature without any pretension, and thus appears as the most direct image of her aesthetic and faith. Every year Guo spends a lot of time living on a sailboat and paints all by herself. Being far away from the hustle and bustle, she is able to reflect and meditate thoroughly on her inner spirit, naturally fertilizing her life and creation with growing authenticity as time goes by.

About the artist



Shuling Guo in front of her work *5—6 pm-22* (2020). Photograph by Selkie ©Shuling Guo, courtesy Fou Gallery.

SHULING GUO (b. 1986, Guangdong Province, China)
Graduated from the Oil Painting Department of Central Academy of Fine Arts, Beijing (B.F.A.) in 2010. She immigrated to the United States in 2019, and now lives part time in Philadelphia and part time traveling on the sailing vessel Selkie. In 2012, she had her first solo exhibition *Secret Fragrance* in Beyond Art Space in Beijing. Since then, her work has been widely exhibited in Beijing, Los Angeles, Philadelphia and among other places. Her works have been included in the permanent collections of Central Academy of Fine Arts Art Museum (Beijing) and Art Museum of Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts (Guangzhou). In August 2020 she has her first solo exhibition in New York at Fou Gallery: 5—6 pm.

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About the curator



Lynn Hai at Fou Gallery, Photograph by Echo He ©Lynn Hai
LYNN (LIANG) HAI (b. 1990, Tianjin, China)

After graduating from Architectural Association (London), Hai gained her Master's in Design Studies from Art, Design and the Public Domain program at Harvard University (Boston). Being active as a curator and art writer in New York, she is also a partner and the Art Director of Fou Gallery. Her curatorial experiences includes: Wendy Letven: Lines Falling Together in Time (Fou Gallery, 2020); Michael Eade: Past is Present is Future (Fou Gallery, 2019); Harvard Club Dwelling At the Present Interior Design Exhibition and Forum (Harvard Club, New York, 2019); Zaha Hadid Young Artists Foundation Exhibition (Roca Gallery, London, 2013); Flow Fields - Confluence in Urban Picnic (Matedero, Madrid, 2013) and Flow Fields - Dilution in 2013 Lisbon Triennale (Sinel de Cordes Palace, Lisbon, 2013).

FOU GALLERY is an apartment gallery and creative lab based in New York. Fou is dedicated to promoting creative talents and projects of our time. As suggested by its name, Fou is both a denial of the mainstream commercial gallery model and an active contributor to a new, organic art community. With the belief that the enjoyment of art is an essential part of everyday life, Fou offers a vibrant, inspirational selection of original works in art and design, and hosts various events to create a diverse and accessible art space.

About the exhibition

Open House: August 1st–2nd, 11 am–8 pm, by appointment

Curator: Lynn Hai

Location: Fou Gallery, 410 Jefferson Ave #1, Brooklyn, New York, NY 11221

Courtesy of the artist and Fou Gallery, for Chinese information, please refer to:

<https://www.fougallery.com/shuling-guo-5-6pm>

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