

闫珩：苦艾酒 | YAN HENG: Absinthe  
阿拉里奥画廊上海 ARARIO GALLERY SHANGHAI

2019.10.25 – 2020.1.10



**Arario Gallery Shanghai** is pleased to announce Chinese artist Yan Heng's third solo exhibition "**Absinthe**" at the gallery space in Shanghai, from October 25, 2019 to January 10, 2020.

**Duration:** 2019.10.25 - 2020.01.10

**Opening:** 2019.10.25 (Fri.), 4 - 7 pm

**Preview for Press:** 2019.10.25 (Fri.), 4 pm

**Address :** Arario Gallery Shanghai A2,

1F, No. 2879 Longteng Avenue, Xuhui District, Shanghai

➤ **Individual interview upon RVSP**

**Please contact :** [pr@ararioshanghai.com](mailto:pr@ararioshanghai.com) / 1312 777 9474

## About the exhibition

**Arario Gallery** is pleased to announce Yan Heng's solo exhibition "**Absinthe**" opens on October 25, 2019, in Shanghai. The exhibition will be on view until January 10, 2020. This is the artist's third solo exhibition at Arario Gallery Shanghai.

The exhibition title "*Absinthe*" is derived from the artist's eponymous series of works. During his residency in Paris, France, he visited various art museums to see the masterpieces. Artists as Degas, Manet, Van Gogh and Picasso are all absinthe lovers. Degas and Picasso even have works titled *Absinthe*. The absinthe has also become an essential clue to connect these legendary figures. Yan Heng takes absinthe as an entry point, which is not only a salute to these artists but more of a reinterpretation.

The *Absinthe* series was first exhibited in 2017, in which the artist adopted figurative approach to represent subversive context with solid painting skills, which delivered a classical charm beyond time limit ; in the meantime, Yan Heng also continue his creative approach presented in his first solo show at Arario Gallery, i.e. the combination of painting and installation, to express his constant concern on social change, technological progress and their impacts on humanity, hence articulating the characteristics of our time. Originality, technology, nature and society have always been the theme of artist's continuous exploration. . In his 2016 solo exhibition "*Frequency Modulation*" at Arario Shanghai, Yan Heng established a dialogue between the originality of life and modern technology that created the tension and conflicts in between. The animal and human skulls commonly found in his artworks symbolize the natural cycle of life; while the installation elements that represented the modern technology such as computer mainboard, the blackboard written full of chemical formulas convey the manipulation by technology of the human in artist's eyes.

The artworks of *Absinthe* series in this exhibition will continue to present artist's exploration of the painting language and materials. One can also detect the traces of his residency life in Paris. As a center for art and culture, Paris has always been a hub where many art masters convened; yet after the terrorist attack in 2006, Paris showed nothing but decadence. Paris Metro, as a unique public venue, not only preserved Art Nouveau design that the artist has been very obsessed with, but also formed a special atmosphere gathering people from different races and cultural backgrounds. The visual elements of Yan Heng's work begin here, where the masterpieces of Rodin and Dali appeared in the painting together with installation, readymade and mixed media to showcase the absurd mixture of classical art, legends of art deco masters and European pattern etc.

Another series works exhibited in the exhibition titled "*Poem Porn*" was begun during the artist's residency in Australia in 2018. Living alone in the sparsely populated Lallal pasture, where the vastness of the land seemed to have put a pause on time. Yan Heng felt that only figurative approach were not enough to release what he felt at that moment, instead, he turned to purer materials for his creation, which seemed to be more efficient in this special environment. On this primeval Australian pasture, the fantasy and reality coexist. The completion of life cycles of the plants and animals is just a solemn ritual. To articulate this, the artist chose animal skulls, concrete, and gold-leaf as his materials to express the

tremendous contrast between modern civilization and the primeval ecology, as well as the extreme impacts and perceptual acquisition. The artwork *Poemporn·Kiko No. 1* is the most special piece for the use of oyster. Oysters possess its original biological appearance yet delivering an elegance of modern civilization. In the process from fishing, washing, cooking till its final procedure on a table in a fancy restaurant, the oysters have to stay fresh for its delicacy, and at the same time, often paired with good wines and table etiquette. While the artwork will go to an exquisite white-box space from a chaotic artist studio. The oysters and artworks are different in nature, yet conducting a similar ceremony. *Poem Porn* series conveys the notion of the coexistence of the wildness and elegance, which is just the artist's interpretation of contemporary art.

### **About the artist**

Yan Heng was born in 1982 and graduated from the department of oil painting, Lu Xun Academy of Fine Arts in 2007. Yan Heng combines painting with installation to create an artistic form, by which to communicate with the audience and to convey the message he attempts to express. He has been holding a stubborn belief in figurative painting; has always been interested in the change of the society, development of scientific technology and the possibility they can bring to the humanity; as well as specializes in exploring unlimited possibilities in ordinary and simple daily life. Therefore Yan Heng's works are mostly re-expression of figurative characters, objects and external environment, and to reflect the artist's critical stance on man's excessive reliance on objects that invade the human cognitive domain by juxtaposing those old broken objects and paintings. Yan Heng's works are also persistent and well-balanced, sharing the characteristics of a wide amplitude of possibility and abundant amount of encoded stories and emotions.



© Wang Miao

### **Selected Solo Exhibitions**

- 2016 *Yan Heng "De la peinture"*, Galerie Sator, Paris, France
- 2016 *Frequency Modulation (FM)*, ARARIO GALLERY, Shanghai, China
- 2015 *Yan Heng Solo Exhibition*, Wada Fine Arts, Tokyo, Japan
- 2014 *Highway Inn*, ARARIO GALLERY, Seoul, Korea
- 2012 *LA BOTANIQUE DU RÊVE*, Galerie Sator, Paris, France
- 2011 *Yan Heng*, Gallery Yang, Beijing, China
- 2010 *Fabled Landscape*, Tang Contemporary Art, Hong Kong, China

### **Selected Group Exhibitions**

- 2018 *Seed of the Silk Road: 2018 Young Artists Guest Exhibition*, Shanghai Himalayas Museum, Shanghai, China
- 2017 *VOICE OF ASIA*, Arario gallery, Shanghai, China
- 2016 *Infinitive - 2016 Chengdu Donghu Young Artists Exhibition*, Chengdu International Cultural Art Center, China
- 2014 *Really: Arario Museum Collection*, Arario Museum, Seoul, Korea
- 2013 *BIDIRECTIONAL PUNCTUM*, Hive Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing, China
- 2012 *Becoming Peninsula I: Symptoms*, Iberia Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing, China

### **Collections**

Yan Heng's works have been collected by museums, organizations and renowned private collectors including Arario Museum, Yuz Museum, New Century Art Foundation, How Art Museum and Mr. Qiao Zhiqing etc.

**Selected artworks:**



*Absinthe · Pont Marie* (detail)

*Oil and installation on canvas*

230 x 380 cm

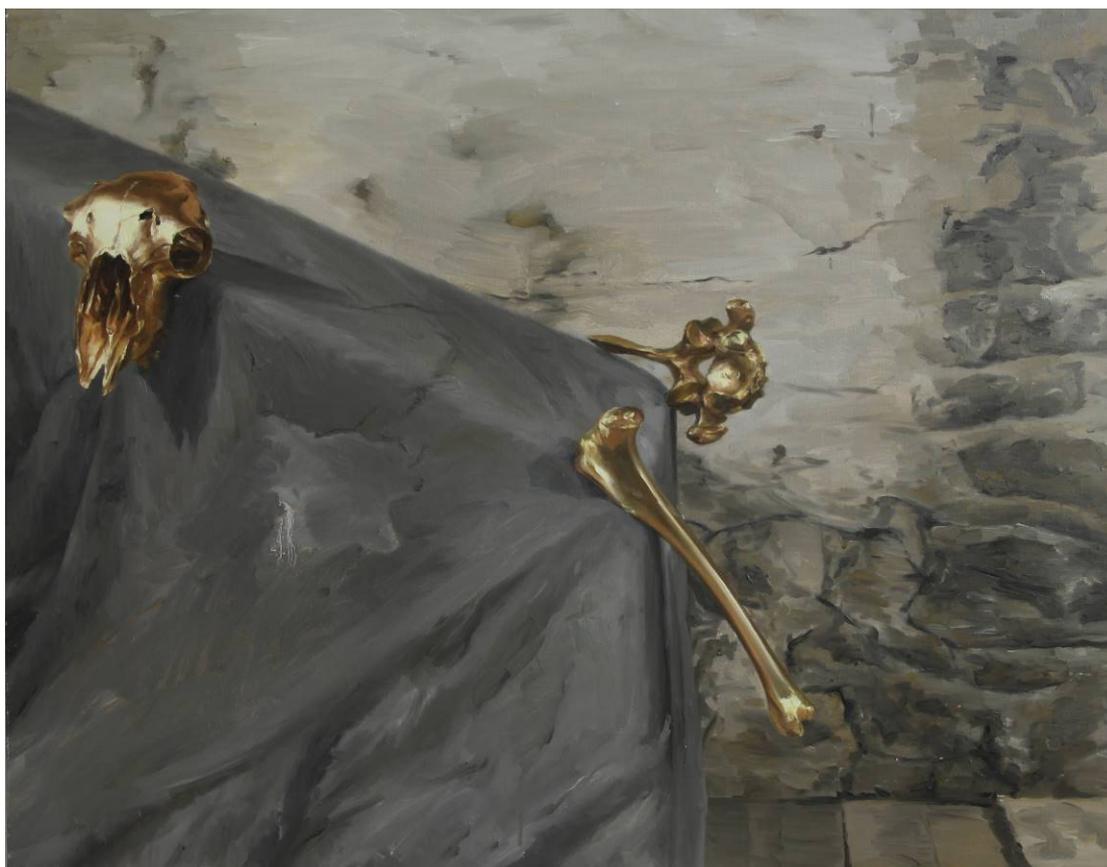
2019



*Absinthe · Belleville* (detail)  
*Oil and installation on canvas*  
215 x 260 cm  
2019



*Poemporn · Kiko No.2*  
Installation  
138 x 138 cm  
2019



*Poem Porn*  
Oil on canvas  
98.5 x 128cm  
2019