

LÉVY GORVY

LÉVY GORVY TO PRESENT NEW WORKS BY TU HONGTAO AT WEST BUND ART & DESIGN

Tu Hongtao Booth A110

West Bund Art Center
2555 Longteng Avenue, Shanghai

VIP Preview: 11–12 November 2021
Public Dates: 12–14 November 2021



TU HONGTAO. *The Three Wishes*, 2020–21. Oil on canvas, 82 11/16 × 126 inches (210 × 320 cm) © Tu Hongtao

Shanghai— Lévy Gorvy is pleased to announce its inaugural participation at West Bund Art & Design with a solo exhibition of new works by acclaimed Chinese artist Tu Hongtao. Following the gallery's career survey of Tu's paintings in Hong Kong and *Tu Hongtao: Twisting and Turning*, an exhibition of new works in London in 2020, the 10 new paintings at Booth A110, created during 2020 and 2021, form another significant presentation showcasing the artist's philosophical and aesthetic explorations since the pandemic.

Based near Chengdu, Tu explores the constantly evolving relationship between memory, space, image, and technique in his paintings. A graduate of the renowned China Academy of Art, his work developed within the avant-garde tradition pioneered by Chinese literati painters and poets along with Western innovators. Referencing his encounters with nature, the intricate works presented at West Bund offer reinterpretations of the abstract landscape of time and space, forming a highly personal visual language.

LÉVY GORVY



TU HONGTAO. *Rare Views of Grass*, 2021. Oil and oilstick on canvas, 82 11/16 × 126 inches (210 × 320 cm) © Tu Hongtao

Highlights at the booth include *The Three Wishes*, inspired by a bamboo forest, the work conveys intense feelings through intuitive calligraphic brushstrokes, together with recurring and overlapping space created within the painting. Exemplifying the artist's rhythmical exploration of light, *Rare Views of Grass* and *Autumn View of Fluctuating Peaks* apply oil sticks on top of oil paint layers to present a surging of time and space. Distilled through memory and sensation, lyrical abstractions such as *Purple Light of Qingshen County* and *Into the Forest of River Alley* impart Tu's highly personal "deep impression" of landscapes. Through subjects such as mountains, rocks, trees, and rivers, Tu showcases in these new paintings the infinite possibilities of representation and expression. The volume, brightness and darkness, and spatial depth of the scenes are expressed via stacked colors, creating new visual space and introducing the sense of time and fluidity into the two-dimensional canvas.

With expressive brushworks, the paintings are exemplary of Tu's aesthetic vision— elegantly bringing together diverse artistic approaches to compose a contemporary image of blossoming reverie.

Coinciding with the fair, Lévy Gorvy is thrilled to publish *Truth and Trick*, an essay dedicated to Tu's new works by acclaimed art critic Wu Wei, together with an in-depth interview with the artist by Danqing Li, President of Lévy Gorvy Asia.

About the artist

Born in Chengdu, China, Tu Hongtao graduated with a specialization in oil painting from the China Academy of Art in Hangzhou in 1999. After his brief employment in southern China, Tu returned to Chengdu to focus on painting in 2001. Observing the rapid social and environmental changes in his hometown, he began to compose sardonic cityscapes featuring piles of human bodies and dolls that reflect contemporary feelings of confusion, tension, and desire. From 2008 to 2010, Tu reoriented

LÉVY GORVY

his painting practice, veering further from his earlier Neo-Pop trajectory. Having studied calligraphy as well as both Eastern and Western painting traditions, Tu turned to the theory of “applying calligraphy to painting”—a pivotal development that shifted the direction of traditional painting in the Yuan Dynasty. Tu frequently visited the mountainous Bifeng Valley in Ya’an, Sichuan, for inspiration during this period, adopting recurring motifs from the surrounding terrain. His paintings have gradually metamorphosed from incorporating a mimetic Western three-dimensional space to suggesting an illusionistic “inward psyche” that blurs reality and imagination. Since 2010, Tu has presented increasingly complex compositions that repeatedly layer a single landscape, poetically rearranging the temporal expectations embedded in such a scene. Informed by rich art-historical legacy, Tu’s imagery interrupts linear narratives and employs an expansive use of space in the context of Eastern and Western visual traditions, embodying a contemporary abstract lyricism all his own. In 2018, Tu's solo exhibition *A Timely Journey* was presented by The Long Museum in Shanghai and later traveled to its Chongqing pavilion in 2019. Lévy Gorvy announced its global representation of Tu Hongtao in 2019 and presented *Tu Hongtao* (2020), a career survey of Tu’s paintings in Hong Kong, as well as *Tu Hongtao: Twisting and Turning* (2020), an exhibition in London dedicated to his new works.

Press Contacts

Sue Xu, Lévy Gorvy, sue@levygorvy.com

Yipeng Jiang, P&J Arts, yipeng.jiang@poejay.com

Marta de Movellan, Lévy Gorvy, marta@levygorvy.com