

ZHOU SIWEI

The Last Bridge

10.09.2019–19.10.2019

opening 13.09.2019, 6–9 pm

After visiting Zhou Siwei's studio on a certain rainy night, I strolled along Suzhou Creek. An anonymous skyscraper far away had already fused into the veil of night, but its top floor was still emitting a dim halo of light. How high up it was, how far away from me, whether it was a shop sign or a strip of landscape lighting, I'm not at all sure. Spots of light with blurred outlines were embedded into the dark night, approximating a pattern, until the three-dimensional space eventually collapsed into a two-dimensional image. This is just the feeling I get when I am faced with Zhou Siwei's paintings. His many-layered brushwork is like night rain: The darkness is by no means pitch-black, but is endlessly superposed to form obscurity – it is simply a record of impressionist light and shadow and a recollection of their interdependency.

The layered monochromes combine into a galaxy-like medium. In this medium, the sense of distance in space becomes blurred, the perspective is withdrawn, buildings – or more precisely structures – separate themselves from gravity and are levitated and distorted in the diffused density. The ornamental essence of arch bridges, latticework and honeycombs pass through an iterated heritage, its source material already losing its initial function – even its materiality – becoming a token, a totem, a stream of information or one could say, a pattern of collective memory. Just as archeologists excavated murals in caves, or epigraphists explored Oracle Bones on which pictographs that infer abstract ideas are inscribed, Zhou Siwei uses familiar representations deriving from those distant times to expand their pictorial spaces to the present.

– Yang Zhenyu

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For 'The Last Bridge', his first solo exhibition with the gallery, Zhou Siwei presents a suite of paintings and sculptures. The delicate forms of the sculptures are made through the meticulous use of digital carving tools, mimicking the handiwork of wood-carving in a virtual process. Zhou Siwei's paintings capture the essence of ubiquitous objects and settings with various hints of space, light, and shadows coming through brilliant, translucent oil color. As Zhou Siwei overlays vivid colors in their original brightness, the image seems to decline in tone, layer by layer. Zhou takes on motifs, such as bridges, solar panels, scaffolding, schematized into formulas and idioms of images, connecting the beholder to the sensual observation. Zhou Siwei's works demonstrate a stance on aesthetic research, toward the emotional state in which reality is placed, rather than the question of reality itself.

Zhou Siwei, born 1981 in Chongqing, China, lives and works in Shanghai, China. Zhou Siwei is a graduate of Sichuan Fine Arts Institute, Chongqing, China. His work has been shown internationally at K11 Art Foundation, Hong Kong (2018); Antenna Space, Shanghai (2017, solo); Guangzhou Triennial (2017); Urs Meile, Lucerne (2015, solo); Aike-Dellarco, Shanghai (2014); Boers-Li Gallery, Beijing (2014); White Space, Beijing (2013); M50 Art Space, Shanghai (2013); Space Station, Beijing (2012); Ray Hughest Gallery, Sydney (2009); Centre Culturel de Rencontre Abbaye de Neumünster (CCRN), Luxembourg (2008); 82 Republic, Hongkong (2007); The 3rd Guiyang Biennial, Guizhou (2007); Nanjing Museum, Nanjing (2005); Artist Commune, Hong Kong (2004).