

## SHANG LIANG: MORTAL AT THE HELM

Artist	Shang Liang
Opening	March 20, 2021 16:00 – 19:00
Exhibition Period	March 20 – April 30, 2021
Venue	MadeIn Gallery, L1-03&04, One Museum Place, 388 Shan Hai Guan Road, Jing'an District, Shanghai

MadeIn Gallery is pleased to present artist Shang Liang's solo exhibition "Mortal at the Helm", opening on March 20th, 2021. This is the artist's second solo exhibition in the gallery. Shang Liang's art practices focus on the ritualized body in human life and the visual symbolization of portraiture, creating a unique visual symbol and language that are different from traditional portraits.

The artist's solo exhibition in 2019, "New Order", has once announced the birth of an independent species with a distinctive and strong visual image, which is not only full of heroic physical capacity, strength, and authority, but also constitutes a vague metaphor of loneliness and contradiction. While this exhibition gathers the artist's in-depth development of the visual image in the following two years since 2019, and extends from painting to the field of sculpture.

Shang Liang's creation develops from "The Real Boy" series to the later "Good Hunter", "Sofa Man" and "Boxing Man" series. These muscular new species with labels of body and strength express mankind's ongoing demand for image-creating. This is not only a way to record, imitate, and pass on to the world, but also the power to reshape mythology and the ideal world. It is a way for "mortals" to try to grasp, influence, and control the world, but still carries blurry manipulation of the body and subtle competition against the outside world.

As the subject of mass fascination and consumption, the image of teenager in "Good Hunter" series possesses primitive animality and the exposed violence that hasn't been domesticated by society. Their posture is borrowed from the ancient Egyptian and Greek statues in western sculpture and painting traditions – they are considered the idealized human bodies with divinity, endowed with eternity in body, physique and spirit. In another series "Sofa Man", the artist uses an almost exaggerated painting technique to present an ambiguous image, where a group of human with bloated muscles are trapped in the sofa. It visually conveys a soft touch, as well as the delicate relationship between body and mind. And the "Boxing Man" series directly deprives the face and organs of human with the reconstructed unknown, and replaces the head with the image of boxing gloves. The image in the series gradually evolve and mutate in the miniature arena presented in the artist's works, thus declaring the game order of the new world.

## Shang Liang

Shang Liang, born in Beijing in 1981, lives and works in Beijing and Shanghai. She graduated from the Oil Painting Department and the Experimental Art Department of the Central Academy of Fine Arts in 2004 and 2011. In recent years, notions of masculinity, heroism and the vocabulary that relates to them, such as power, strength and conquest, among others, have constituted major features in Shang's works. Through repeated and textural brushstrokes she creates portraits, which unlike traditional ones, are based on specific characters as symbols revolving around these themes. Figures evolve through various series of paintings and sculptures, beginning with the "The Real Boy" series and followed by the series "Good Hunter", "Sofa Man" and "Boxing Man".

Recent exhibitions include: "Shanghai Plaza", Shanghai Plaza, Shanghai, China, 2020; "Hello, future! Where are we?", Field Art Center, Beijing, 2020; "The Logic of Painting", Shijiazhuang Art Museum, Shijiazhuang, China, 2020; "New Order", MadeIn Gallery, Shanghai, China, 2019; "Advent: Inventing Landscape, Producing the Earth", Qianshao Contemporary Art Center, Shanghai, China, 2019; Porsche "Young Chinese Artist of the Year" nominees' exhibition, Beijing Exhibition Hall, Beijing, China, 2019; "Meeting the Future – International Exhibition for Contemporary Art", S x V Museum of Modern Art, Qingdao, China, 2019; "Extreme Mix" Guangzhou Airport Biennale, Guangzhou, China, 2019; "YOHOOD 2018 global trend of Carnival", Shanghai World Expo exhibition hall, Shanghai, China, 2018; "PLAY", MadeIn Gallery, Shanghai, China, 2018; "Form Consumption Over Substance", MadeIn Gallery, Shanghai, China, 2017; "Brewer J.C. Jacobsen's Portrait Award-the 2015 Portrait Now!", The Museum of National History, Copenhagen, Denmark, 2015; "One Of Few", Xin Beijing Gallery, Beijing, China, 2016.