

JOHN YOUNG SILENT TRANSFORMATIONS 31 JULY - 31 AUGUST

ARC
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GALLERY

ARC ONE Gallery is delighted to present *Silent Transformations*, an important new body of work by leading Australian artist John Young.

Highly regarded in Australia and internationally for his commitment to intellectual rigor and aesthetic finesse, in *Silent Transformations* Young explores the sublime inherent in metamorphosis in a series of new abstract and representational paintings.

These meticulously painted canvases are meditations on the process of transformation. As Young describes, they point to “*the moment when a caterpillar changes into a moth, when deformation and reformation exist side by side. Here, banal time continues unperturbed outside of the cocoon. We see the transformation of a caterpillar into a moth, but at that moment, what is inside the cocoon knows not what it is. There is a sublime, metaphysical and indescribable paradox between the one state and the other – and this change yields two different qualities of time. Within change, there is a melancholy. Once recognised, it’s impossible to see the world of forms in the same way again. In this silent transformation, form leads to a great formlessness and then back to form yet again. And so, the world goes, not kept static in ideal forms, but eternally and melancholically transforming.*

The original bares little significance: we lose sight of it and forget, as it is now hybridised into another, and yet another. In our mourning of forms gone, in our loss, our eyes try to adjust, to trace new edges, searching for a new significance of the world - as it is when sitting Shiva. This too will be our plight, as our own bodies hybridise and are augmented with the robotic and the algorithmic.”

-John Young, 2019

The exhibition is presented in three thematic groups: *The Fairweather Transformations* take inspiration from Ian Fairweather, tracing the transfiguration of this nomadic artist’s work; *Shiva* mourns the forms lost within transformation; and finally, *The Mute Palace* shows that not all transcultural and hybridised forms will be permitted witness. Like the caterpillar changing into a moth, these paintings are evidence of silent transformation, of that which is unsayable, barely discernible; those gaps between civilisation that abound and enrich our world.

John Young Zerunge was born in Hong Kong and moved to Australia in 1967. Young read philosophy of science and aesthetics at the University of Sydney and then studied painting and sculpture at Sydney College of the Arts. His investigation of Western late modernism prompted significant phases of work from a bi-cultural viewpoint, and he has devoted a large part of his three-decade career towards regional development in Asia, participating in significant touring exhibitions in the Asia-Pacific region including Art from Australia: Eight Contemporary Views, (1991, South East Asian Museums), Transcultural Painting (1994-5, Taiwan, China,



John Young, *Fairweather Transformation XIII*, 2019, oil on Belgian linen, 106 x 76 cm.



John Young, *Shiva III*, 2019, oil on Belgian linen, 71 x 89.

Hong Kong), Systems End (1996, Japan and Korea), as well as representing Australia at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in Antipodean Currents (1995, USA). Young has regular solo exhibitions in Australia and also shows in Berlin, Shanghai and Hong Kong.

From 31 August - 20 October this year, The Lives of Celestials, a comprehensive survey exhibition of three recent History Projects by Young will be exhibited at the Town Hall Gallery, Boroondara. In 2005-06, a survey exhibition covering 27 years of works was held at the TarraWarra Museum of Art, Victoria, curated by Maudie Palmer. The Bridge and the Fruit Tree, a survey exhibition covering works from 2000-2012 was exhibited in February-March 2013 at Drill Hall Gallery, Australian National University, Canberra, curated by Anthony Oates and Terence Maloon.

Three separate monographs have been written on John Young's works and projects by Dr. Graham Coulter-Smith (1993, Schwartz City Publications); and Dr. Carolyn Barnes and William Wright AM (2005, Craftsman House, Thames & Hudson); and Dr Carolyn Barnes and Professor Jacqueline Lo (Australian National University Drill Hall Gallery). In 2017, Young released a new publication of The Macau Days with novelist Brian Castro, supported by the J.M Coetzee Centre for Creative Practice. John Young's work features in prominent museum collections in Australia and internationally, and recently has been acquired in depth by M+ Museum, Hong Kong.

For all enquiries, interviews and images please contact ARC ONE Gallery at
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