

HdM GALLERY

FAN JING | FALL TO THE MORTAL WORLD

CURATOR: CRYSTAL YAO

2025.9.13 - 2025.10.25

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

Who will contemplate the depths of human darkness with us?

—— On "Metamorphosis" in Fan Jing's Recent Works

In Fan Jing's recent works, there is a rare intensity of life that hovers over scenes of conflict, characterized by three parts jest and seven parts violent fantasy, leaving us in awe before the canvas and making it difficult to grasp their entirety in a single viewing. The intricate dynamics and solid forms always seem to retreat into dim obscurity after just a glance, perpetually leaving us wanting more, as if some details remain undiscovered—this is not a scene meant to be comprehended in a mere "glimpse." Although this impression might be broadly attributed to her painting techniques and themes, often simplistically labeled as "classical" in style, it is, in essence, more akin to the creativity Fan Jing has revitalized by channeling the spirit of classicism. To identify and contemplate the reasons behind the metamorphosis of these aberrant creatures under her brush is akin to picking up a knife and fork—the very utensils we, as gourmets at the table, ought to grasp.

By Crystal Yao

HdM GALLERY is pleased to present a solo exhibition by artist Fan Jing, opening on September 13, 2025, and running through October 25, 2025. The exhibition features over twenty of the artist's paintings completed in the past two years.

This exhibition continues and further develops the themes of Fan Jing's 2023 solo show "As You Like It". As the title "Fall to the Mortal World" suggests, Fan Jing constructs scenes that appear to draw from mythological narratives, yet she romanticizes the most mundane, worldly "raw materials" and grafts them onto myth-inspired races. Through tensions filled with violence, conflict, and provocation, she pulls the "divine" down from its pedestal and creates a fallen paradise of the absurd.

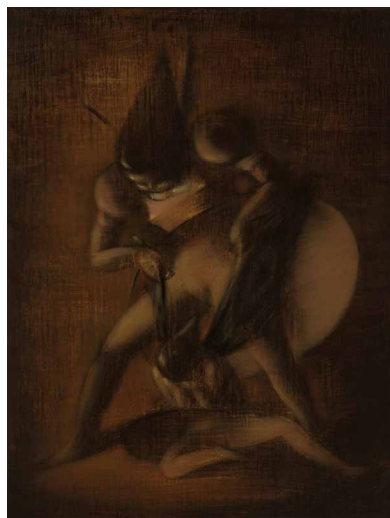
Compared to her works of previous stage, Fan Jing has amplified the intentional sense of humor present in earlier stages. The conflicts and violence are now more direct; the figures take up a larger portion of the canvas, and the dynamics between them have become more complex and expansive. While female figures remain central to her work, their identities are more ambiguous than before—no longer clearly identifiable as the Young Pioneers, ballerinas, or housewives frequently seen in her earlier paintings. These monumental, sculptural "giants" heighten the visual tension with sharply pointed breasts, large and muscular limbs, and insect-like wings that seem to sprout from their bodies. The exaggerated sexual features are not eroticized but instead suggest aggression.



The Night Watch, 180 × 250 cm, 2025



Rehearsal, 85 × 100 cm, 2025



Punish for Longing the Worldly Pleasures,
40 × 30 cm, 2024



Test Flight No.2, 140 × 100 cm, 2025



Mother and Son, 70 × 50 cm, 2025

Hybrid creatures—such as centaur-like women or butterfly ladies—appear on the scene, affirming the metamorphosis resulting from intense desires while intensifying the theatricality of the compositions.

Fan Jing's strong technical foundation underpins her classical approach. She skillfully uses stage-like lighting to produce dramatic contrasts between light and shadow. In her current works, the use of highly saturated colors has been further reduced. Instead, detailed rendering and subtle transitions of light and shadow enhance the sense of volume in the painted subjects. These techniques contribute to the dramatic tension and sense of pressure within the compositions. A precarious sense of equilibrium also adds unease. In the work "Test Flight", for example, the composition is visually balanced on both the vertical and horizontal axes, yet the entire weight of the central figure is precariously supported by only two pointed breasts—prompting the viewer to question the very nature of that stability. Similar balancing acts appear in other works as well. What is more daring is the way Fan Jing places exaggerated human poses into intense scenarios while deliberately positioning private body parts at the visual center of the composition—as seen in works like "Mother and Son" and "Punish for Longing the Worldly Pleasures". This marks an escalation from her earlier implicit provocations regarding the disciplining of the female body. Here, challenges to sexuality and identity are laid bare. Her attention to dislocation and disorder reflects a female gaze that observes and testifies to the absurdity of reality.

In "Fall to the Mortal World", Fan Jing employs a subversive humor in portraying violent scenes, provoking open-ended interpretation through entanglement and confrontation.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Born in Beijing in 1983, Fan Jing graduated from Capital Normal University's School of Fine Arts, majoring in oil painting. She currently lives and works in Beijing. Her work predominantly centers on the human figure and consistently explores the confrontation, conflict, and balance between opposing forces—both in content and form. Her paintings have been exhibited in Beijing, Shanghai, Hong Kong, Paris, and Singapore, and are collected by important private collectors and foundations.

ABOUT THE CURATOR

Dr. Crystal Yao studied at the Central Academy of Fine Arts (MA Art History) and Department of Chinese of Sun Yat-sen University (PhD Modern Literature). She now lives in Beijing and works as an independent scholar and curator. She focuses on History of Material Culture and Media Studies, tends to work with artists from different intellectual backgrounds, and looks forward to fostering a new sensual experience that connects and creatively transforms classical and early modern Chinese cultural resources in a global context.



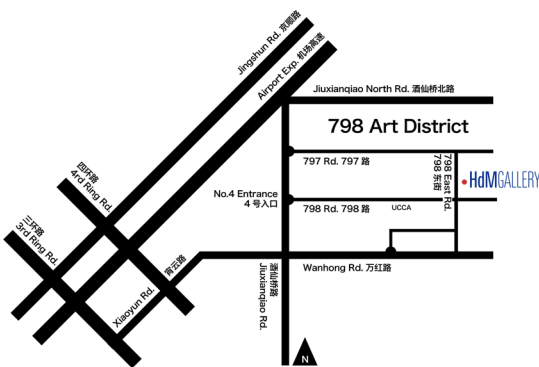
Beijing space



Beijing space



Founders



HdM GALLERY

Created in 2009 by Hadrien de Montferrand with the support of Laurent Dassault and Olivier Hervet, HdM Gallery specializes in all disciplines of contemporary art – painting, sculpture, video and installation - with a particular focus on Chinese artists. Based in Beijing, it opened a project space in Paris in 2021.

The gallery is dedicated to supporting recognized artists from different horizons; most of its Chinese artists are in the early stage of their career and the gallery promotes their work abroad. International artists on the other hand are more established and the gallery mainly attempts to raise awareness of their work in China.

Besides its normal exhibition program, HdM Gallery participates in art fairs in China and abroad including Art Basel Hong Kong, Art021 Shanghai, Art Brussels and Art Geneva, produces academic catalogues, and organizes institutional shows for its artists.

FOUNDERS

Hadrien de Montferrand has long served as a bridge between the Art worlds of China and Europe. His more than seven years at various auction houses and Art institutions included roles as marketing director for ARTCURIAL, the largest French auction house, and for the Ullens Center for Contemporary Art in Beijing.

Laurent Dassault , an entrepreneur to the core, helped to found Arquana, continental Europe' s leading horse auction house, in 2006. His entrepreneurial spirit extends to his charitable activities as well: Laurent serves as the administrator of the "Friends of Pompidou Museum' s Association" in Paris, and heads the development committee for the auction house ARTCURIAL.

Olivier Hervet graduated with an MA in Classics from Oxford University in 2008. After working for Hadrien de Montferrand Gallery since its inception in 2009 where he developed the gallery' s network of young collectors, he became a partner in 2012 with the goal of opening a second space in China.

Gallery Contact

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Duration: 13 September 2025 - 25 October 2025

Opening Hours: Tuesday - Saturday from 11am to 6pm

(Or by appointment)

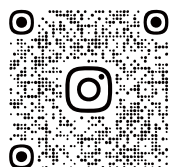
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