

HdM GALLERY

SQUARE ROOM:

PIPER BANGS | MASKS FALL GENTLY

2025.11.29 - 2026.01.03



Curtain Call, 139.7 × 180.3 cm, 2025



Panopticon Stage, 100.3 × 139.7 cm, 2025



Dressing Room, 180.3 × 139.7 cm, 2025

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

HdM Gallery is delighted to present *Masks Fall Gently*, the first solo exhibition in China by American artist Piper Bangs, opening on November 29, 2025 at HdM Gallery Square Room, Beijing. In this exhibition, the artist unfolds a trio of conceptual structures—stage, actors, and light through supple brushwork, intricate spatial construction, and sensually charged objects, with the “mask” serving as a central metaphor threading through the entire body of work.

Piper Bangs’ practice is grounded in a deep study of 19th-century academic painting techniques, Rococo ornamentation, and the luminous structures of the Dutch Golden Age. Yet beyond this lineage, she turns toward reflections on contemporary visual culture, personal experience, and the accelerated conditions of the present. In her imagery, the mask functions not merely as a tool of concealment, but as an index of what is revealed when layers of perception slowly fall away. From thick impasto and sculptural strokes to the recurring motif of the pear, Bangs constructs a visual continuum that oscillates between humor and gravity, body and material, stillness and motion, sensuality and narrative.

The Threefold Structure of the Work

The stage, in Bangs’ paintings, is never a simple backdrop but a meticulously orchestrated spatial apparatus. The opening of curtains, the tilt of light, the suspension of fabric... these stenographic elements build a self-referential system in which the stage becomes the site of the gaze, the place where the mask begins to loosen, and where intention, power, and vulnerability surface. It questions the visible structures of power and calls into reconsideration the act of looking itself: Who is observing? What is seen? Why do we look?

The actors are her personified objects. Pears, drapery, architectural fragments, and ambiguous bodily forms form a cast suspended between life and stillness. They belong neither fully to the human nor to the material. They breathe, fade, fall, and revive, performing scenes of presence again and again in the flow of light. These actors seem caught in the process of performances going awry — removing a mask, hovering between self-disclosure and self-protection. They are expected to be beautiful yet restrained; they are subjected to the gaze and gradually grow weary under its weight.

Light is the most elusive presence in Bangs’ work. It does more than illuminate; it acts as a being imbued with consciousness and intention. It glides across surfaces, gathers in folds, and recedes in reflections, like ripples of time passing over the objects. Its soft glow and diffusion create a texture of time, moving the image into a threshold where dream and waking, perception and memory blur. Light becomes a narrative agent and almost a hand—gently easing the mask away, exposing the structural and emotional strata beneath. It is simultaneously an external optical phenomenon and an internal projection



Piper Bangs

of awareness.

Across Bangs' paintings, there prevails a state of suspended existence: objects floating, structures destabilized, time seemingly paused. This psychological lightness allows viewers to undergo their own moment of "mask-shedding," confronting their emotions, desires, and uncertainties through the act of looking. Thus, Bangs' narrative turns inward, toward perception itself, toward the sedimentation of time within the body, and toward the lived texture of feeling.

This exhibition is made possible with the collaboration of Megan Mulrooney Gallery.

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

Piper Bangs (b. 2002 in San Antonio, TX; lives and works in Los Angeles, CA) is a painter who earned her BFA in Drawing and Painting at Laguna College of Art and Design in Spring 2024. Bangs has had solo exhibitions at Megan Mulrooney Gallery in Los Angeles, CA and The Watermill Center in Watermill, NY and was recently an artist in residence at the Mack Art Foundation this winter. She has exhibited her work in venues such as Sehwa Art Museum in Seoul, South Korea, Uffner & Liu Gallery in New York, NY, The Pit in Palm Springs, CA, and the Contemporary at Blue Star in San Antonio, Texas, among others.



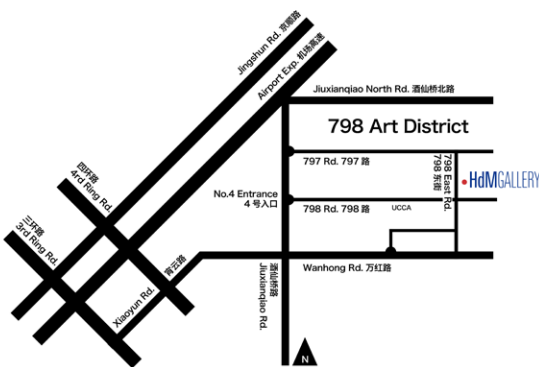
Beijing space



Beijing space



Founders



Gallery Contact

+86 10 56877540

press@hdmgallery.com

798 Art District, No.2 Jiuxianqiao Road

Chaoyang District, Beijing, China

Duration: 29 November 2025 - 3 January 2026

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

(Or by appointment)

www.hdmgallery.com

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.

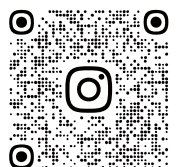
Olivier Hervet graduated with an MA in Classics from Oxford University in 2008. After working for Hadrien de Montferrand Gallery since its inception in 2009 where he developed the gallery's network of young collectors, he became a partner in 2012 with the goal of opening a second space in China.



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