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Yirui Jia

April 13 – April 16, 2023



Jupiter is pleased to present a solo exhibition of new work by **Yirui Jia** at the tenth anniversary edition of EXPO Chicago from April 13 through 16, 2023. Building upon her characteristic style that fuses a sense of whimsy and play with comedic wit and energized expressionism, Jia's newest paintings take a turn towards greater abstraction.

While much of her previous work featured a Quentin Tarantino-inspired bride with an eye patch and flaming orange hair—who represented a wildly misbehaved version of a classic female stereotype—careening through the artist's cinematic universe, Jia's more recent paintings have moved away from such narrative compositions to expand the identities and complexities of the characters depicted therein. The figures that emerge within the works on view may similarly represent a fearless woman in her own universe, but instead of channeling this energy solely through the eye-patch adorned protagonist of her former works, Jia's figures now take off the eye-patch, open their eyes, and assume a multitude of forms, raging widely from an astronaut, a swimmer, and a pilot to an Egyptian pharaoh.

These characters—such as the ET-like skeleton pictured in *Secret Painter* (2023), deranged caveman in *Caveclown* (2023), or the soldier in *I SPY* (2023)—are not the product of preconceived compositions that are sketched and then executed on canvas, but rather serve as a natural outgrowth of Jia's application of paint to canvas. From an embrace of total abstraction, wherein choices of color, line, texture, and composition are guided solely by whim, certain visual clues begin to present themselves to Jia as she paints. She thus allows them to guide her; effectively absenting the strictures imposed by narrative, she is now free to embrace spontaneity in an unbridled and highly experimental approach to her chosen medium.

The results in many ways mirror her unpredictable mode of making: a woman in a VR headset contends with her indescribable surroundings in *World Class Player* (2023), one of the first paintings that Jia executed via this new process. Inspired in part by *Everything, Everywhere, All At Once*, this painting both in its content and form clearly encapsulates the discombobulation of an individual thrown in and out of space and time, inhabiting multiple realities and often defined by her material constructs: her blue dress the product of spilled paint, her hands comically elongated like the hotdog fingers of Michelle Yeoh's and Jamie Lee Curtis' characters in one of the movie's many universes.

Similarly foregrounding the rapid motion of Jia's brush across canvas, *Super Glue* (2023) exemplifies the unconscious reflexiveness of the artist's material choices and transports the viewer into a cacophonous world akin to a highly cinematic, up-close action shot wherein the speed and sound that objects carry can be visually and viscerally felt. A totalizing, perhaps even magnetized force appears to propel these objects and figures in and out of the frame, as a blond woman floats upside down and a pilot with red laser beams coming out of her eyes collide with one another. While a circular track of white paths outlined in green serves to structure the composition, enmeshing these women within their chaotic environment, the stepped arrangement of the two canvases that comprise this work adds to its dynamism and the sense of motion conveyed within.

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Jia's expanding and increasingly process-based practice consequently engenders far more surreal results that only divulge the depth of their intrinsic humor and psychological complexity to the artist—and thus the viewer—upon completion.

About the Artist

Yirui Jia (b. 1997) moved to the United States from China in 2015, where she subsequently received her BFA from Gettysburg College, Pennsylvania, and her MFA from the School of Visual Arts in New York. Her work has been featured in previous solo and group exhibitions at LKIF Gallery, Seoul; IRL Gallery, New York; Bill Brady Gallery, Los Angeles; Latitude Gallery, New York; We Space, Shanghai; WerkStadt, Berlin; and Hive Art Center, Beijing. Yirui currently lives and works in New York.

Caption: Yirui Jia, *Super Glue*, 2023, Acrylic and glitter on canvas, 72 by 137 in. 182.88 by 347.98 cm. © Yirui Jia. Photo by Adam Reich. Courtesy of the artist and Jupiter, Miami Beach, FL

Press Inquiries: info@jupitercontemporary.com