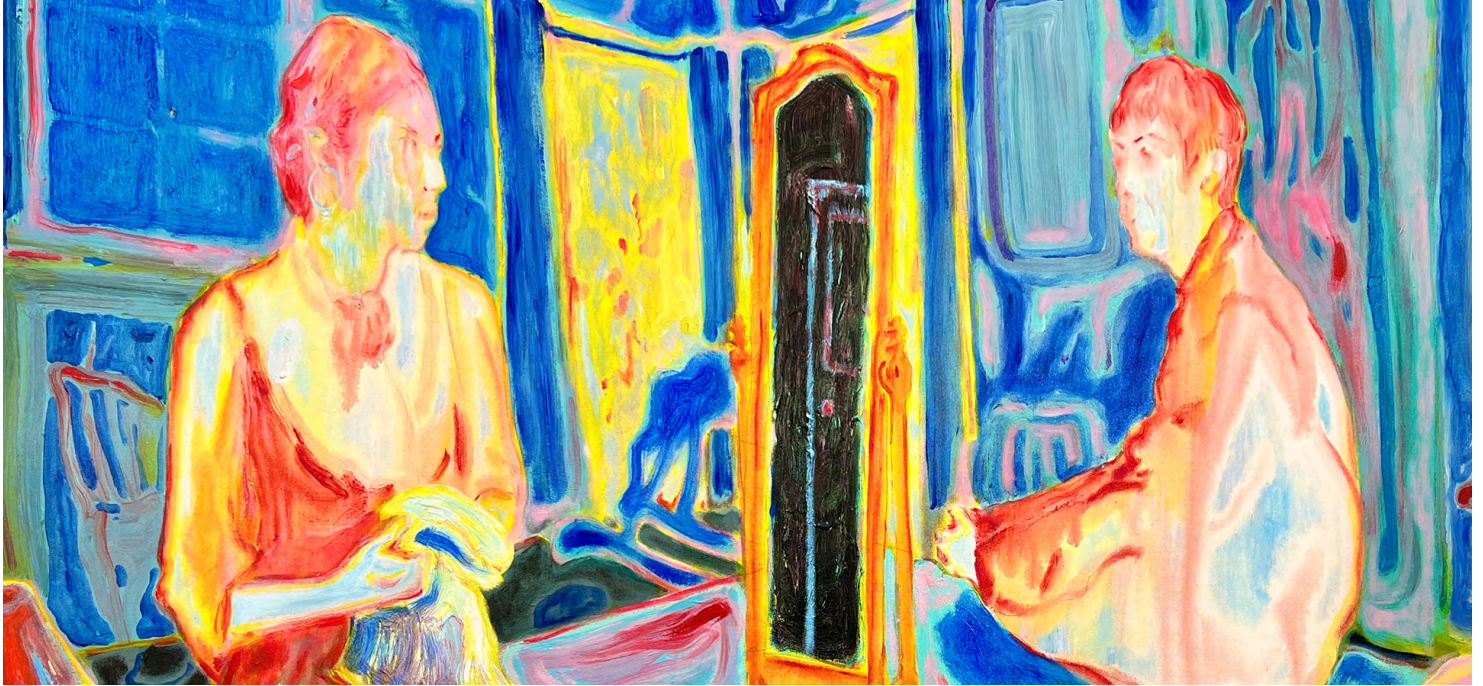


Xi Zhang: *Double Reflection*

February 17 – April 6, 2024



Xi Zhang
Double Reflection Part II (detail)
2022-2023
Acrylic on canvas
60 x 72 in (152.4 x 182.9 cm)

OPENING RECEPTION
Saturday, February 17
4 – 7 PM

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MARC STRAUS is pleased to present *Double Reflection*, Xi Zhang's second solo exhibition with the gallery.

In this series of recent paintings, Zhang considers his experiences as part of a generation that has witnessed the profound integration of the Internet into our daily lives. Fascinated by the phenomenon of the transition from mainly physical to mostly virtual, Zhang observes that nowadays we often interact with substitutes for physical objects and real people. Many elements in the *Double Reflection* series—such as backgrounds, shapes, decorations, and colors—are inspired by designs found in digital games and animations, serving as symbols for the object substitutes we interact with in our real lives. The protagonists of Zhang's paintings represent real people, taking inspiration in style and subject from late 19th-century, early Impressionist, and realist paintings.

"I intend to emulate the landscape we live in as the atmosphere of my paintings. In essence, I aim to capture the realness of humanness in our combined virtual and physical surroundings." – says Zhang of his *Double Reflection* series.

Informed by his inner dialogue with his younger self, Zhang's images bridge the past and present and embrace imperfections, much like his

coexistence with the self of his youth. The resulting works are expressively painted cathartic vistas that bring video game and animation designs into the traditional painterly world.

Zhang's paintings have always manifested the psychological weight experienced in moments of turmoil and tribulations. In his oneiric narratives, melancholia is a familiar companion—overbearing landscapes and foreboding atmospheres suppress his lonely protagonists, obscuring the delineation of fantasy and reality.

Born in 1984 in Kaifeng, China, Xi Zhang studied painting at Beijing Institute of Art and Design. In the early 2000s, he moved to the United States to continue his studies at Colorado's Rocky Mountain College of Art and Design in Denver. He received his Bachelor of Fine Arts in painting in 2008 and was recognized by the Denver Post as the "Emerging Artist of the Year".

Zhang received his MFA in painting from the University of Colorado, Boulder in 2011. The same year he was named one of the "12 Best Colorado Artists Under 35" as well as one of seven "Pathfinders" in the arts. In May 2020, Zhang was awarded the SeeMe Grand Prize in Painting by a panel of judges including Jerry Saltz and Christine Kuan for Art Saves Humanity.

Zhang's work was most recently included in exhibitions at the Utah Museum of Contemporary Art, Salt Lake, UT (2023); the UCCS Galleries of Contemporary Art at the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs (2023); Hua Yuan Murray Hill Art Museum, Shen Zhen, Guang Dong, China (2023); and the Kimball Art Center, Park City, UT (2020). Earlier exhibitions include the Shang Hai Art Museum, Shang Hai, China (2016); Biennial of the Americas, Denver Art Museum (2013); URRRA, Buenos Aires, Argentina (2012); University of Colorado Art Museum, Boulder, CO (2011); Song Zhuang Art Museum in Beijing (2006). His work was featured on media as CNN (2011); PBS (2013); NPR (2013), and Juxtapoz Magazine (2014). Selected awards include the Emerging Artist of Year (2008); The Pathmaker (2011); Top twelve artists under age 35 (2012); The Catherine Doctorow Prize in Contemporary Painting (nominated 2015); The John Moores Painting Prize (China, finalist 2016); and Gold Award Winner in painting from Art Forward Contest (2016). His work has been acquired by some of the most prominent contemporary collectors and curators in the US and in Europe.

An opening reception will be held on Saturday, February 17 from 4 to 7 PM. The artist will be present. Gallery opening hours are Tuesday through Sunday, 11 AM to 6 PM.



Xi Zhang
Smoke Ring, 2019–2022
Acrylic on canvas
58 x 72 in (147.3 x 182.9 cm)