

Marlborough

PRESS RELEASE

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XU LEI
NEW WORKS

MAY 12 - JUNE 18, 2016

NEW YORK, NEW YORK: The Directors of Marlborough Gallery are pleased to announce *Xu Lei: New Works*, an exhibition of works in Chinese ink and mineral pigments on silk by Xu Lei. The exhibition, which opens on May 12th and will remain on view until June 18th, will be the artist's first solo exhibition with Marlborough Gallery. While Xu Lei has been a prominent artistic figure in his native China since the mid-1980s, this occasion marks his first major solo exhibition in the United States.

Trained in classic Chinese painting techniques, and using traditional tools, the artist, who has had ties with the avant-garde "85 New Wave" movement, utilizes his own visual language in order to explore the relationship between the notions of "emptiness" and "phenomenal form."



Augmented Dream, 2015
Chinese ink and mineral on silk
60 5/8 x 106 1/4 inches
154 x 270 cm

In his refined and singular practice, Xu Lei retraces and revives the past while creating a dialogue between modernity and tradition. Using rich hues, especially his favored blue, the artist evokes fantastical places—mountains, seas, skies—that are layered with noble emotion. Xu Lei has said that for him, color is ideology. His *Rainbow Stone* paintings from 2015 appear to be caught in the act of becoming themselves, and as writer Lilly Wei observes in the catalogue published to accompany the exhibition, evince a transition “in which the end is the beginning, the beginning the end in perpetuity.” In *Augmented Dream* (2015), a majestic white horse stands on a rock amongst crashing waves, enveloped in a blue mist that invokes its own kind of dream state. *Landscape Fugue* (2015), an astounding mural-sized work which stretches to over nineteen feet, mimics classic Chinese scrolls in scale. In this landscape, an expanse of blue partially obscures a mountain range that appears simultaneously imposing and weightless. In *Dream on Wire* (2015), an almost life-sized horse balances on a wire across mountains, in between swaths of yellow and green, and perhaps between the past and future, east and west.

Xu Lei has mounted solo exhibitions at Jiangsu Art Museum, Nanjing, China (1994); Library of Congress Asian Division, Washington, D.C. (2008); Asia House, London, England (2011); Today Art Museum, Beijing, China (2013); and National Museum of China, Beijing, China (2016). Since graduating from the Fine Arts Department of Nanjing Arts Institute in 1984, his work has been included in numerous group exhibitions all around the world.

Xu Lei's work can be found in public collections including Shanghai Art Museum, Shanghai, China; Jiangsu Art Museum, Nanjing, China; Beijing Today Art Museum; Beijing, China; and Nanjing Arts Institute, Nanjing, China.

A fully illustrated catalogue with essays by Michael J. Hatch, Tang Keyang, and Lilly Wei will be available at the time of the exhibition.

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