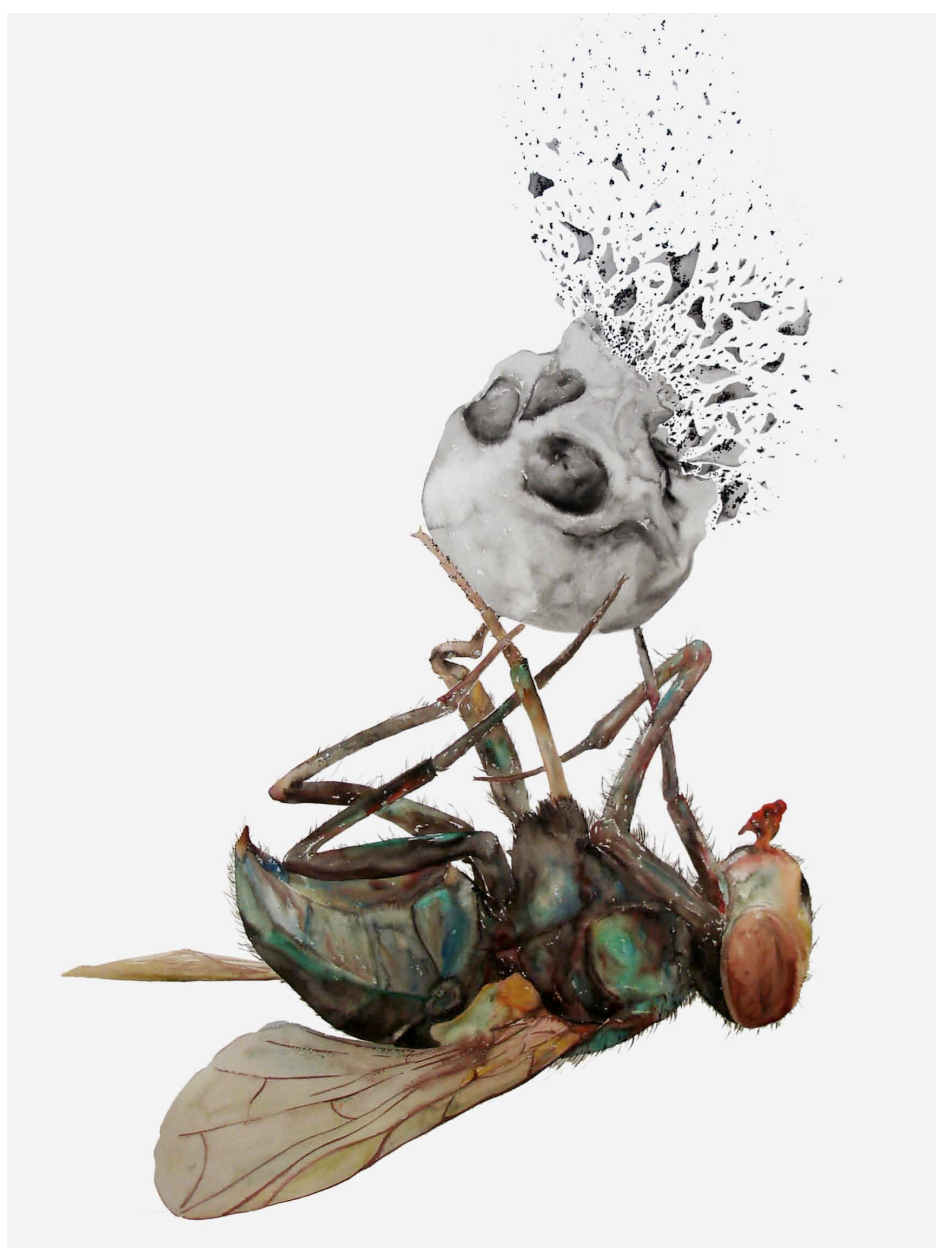


PRESS RELEASE

HANKANG HUANG

Fragment of Numerous Impacts



Hakang Huang

"Fragment of Numerous Impacts"

February 19 - April 4, 2009

Galerie bertrand & gruner is pleased to present the first solo show of Hankang Huang in Switzerland.

Born in Suzhou (China) in 1977, Huang lives and works in Paris and China.

His work bears within it the tensions and questions wrenching modern China, a country torn between a history going back thousands of years, a teeming contemporary culture and aggressive economic development. What is man's place in a society that is constantly changing? How should social progress be considered?

Suzhou's traditional beauty is echoed in the meticulous design of Huang's works, while the artist's chosen technique is deeply rooted in the tradition of Chinese painting.

Huang shows perfect mastery of the watercolor medium and delights in modernizing it, making use of synthetic pigments that he applies after the initial color wash to lend that first layer an oddly glossy, vibrant aspect. The technique of watercolor, whose principle is of course the dilution of pigment in water, perfectly suits what the artist wishes to express. Indeed, Huang enjoys mixing unexpected subjects to give rise to hybrid images that are at once gentle, poetic and ironic.

In this regard, we might mention, for instance, *Overlapped History*. The tiger and the panda, which are both wild animals that are native to China, live in two distinct environments and aren't usually led to meet in their natural surroundings. Huang has nevertheless chosen to show them entwined in an ambiguous pose. Are they resting atop one another in complete safety or frightened of one another? The artist doesn't settle it one way or the other. Rather, he chooses to represent a suspended moment, the perplexed reflection of a China caught in a bind (between tradition and modernity, between different international trends, and so on).

Hyper Model also reveals a blend of hybrid elements. The huge crocodile carcass affords barely a glimpse of the young woman and her delicate legs. The thickness and roughness of the animal's hide contrast with the model's own silky skin. And despite the weight of the crocodile, the woman is depicted striding forward. Again, Huang is questioning us. Is the animal devouring the young woman or is she arrogantly exhibiting the product of her most recent hunt? Like an allegory, the half-human half-animal figure turns a critical eye to consumer society. To hunt amounts to being hunted. How to strike a balance between these two positions seems to be the question raised by the artist.

To enhance the impact of these improbable forms, Huang has chosen to isolate them on the expanse of the white page. Devoid of context, taking part in no particular story, these hybridizations are so many means invented by the artist to introduce a dialogue around the question of human beings and their connections with the world, whether cultural, social or political.

galerie bertrand & gruner
16, rue du Simplon
1207 Geneva - Switzerland
tel. +41 22 700 51 51
fax. +41 22 700 56 77
info@bertrand-gruner.com
www.bertrand-gruner.com