



Dan Jian The Bow Whispers to the Arrow

Sat Jul 15, 2023 - Thu Sep 7, 2023

Opening Reception July 15, 7-9pm

Dan Jian's drawings are meditations on the act of looking; her work reminds us that our stories are constantly evolving. In *The Bow Whispers to the Arrow*, motifs, scenes, and topographies flow ambiguously, leading the viewer to imagine a narrative of place both familiar and distant.

Jian constructs work mainly using dust. Charcoal dust and burned ashes are first mixed and fixed on translucent paper; the process allows the medium to form gravitational washes, similar to the effect of ink. Then, through an incremental process, she uses scissors, an Exacto knife, and glue to create introverted landscapes filled with imaginary narratives and symbols. The result is her interpretation of an inner world of remembered images on the dusted ground.

These new works navigate the tension between the past and present in monochromatic compositions and layers of cutout collage. Her (re)creations float between recollection of old memories and construction of new meanings: mundane modern images pulled from the Texas landscape seamlessly merge with non-western and ancient pictorial motifs, linking to Jian's interest in diverse visual traditions and the in-betweenness of them. A deliberate lack of grounding shrouds floating subjects and contributes to a sense of mystery, urging viewers to keep looking while contemplating the unknown. Various meanings of home and belonging are referenced throughout her work. Each work functions as an open-ended formal search that examines how one negotiates personal, cultural, and geographic space.

About the Artist

Dan Jian (born Hubei, China) is a visual artist based in Fort Worth and assistant professor of Art at Texas Christian University. Jian received her B.F.A. from Tyler School of Art and Architecture at Temple University and M.F.A. from The Ohio State University.

Jian's studio work explores an inner world of stored images and reflects on the shifting space of narrative and memory in an abstracted landscape. Her work has been exhibited nationally across the US and internationally in China, Italy, and Korea. Her recent solo shows include: Kansas City Art Coalition in Kansas City, MO, the Louise



Hopkins Underwood Center for the Arts in Lubbock, TX, Cris Worley Gallery in Dallas as well as the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco. Jian is also a residency alumnus of the Ragdale Foundation, Vermont Studio Center, Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, Kimmel Harding Nelson Center for the Arts, and a Finalist for the Don Bachardy Fellowship in London, UK. In 2022, Jian was one of four Community Artists selected by the Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth.