

PRESS RELEASE

TANG SHUO *SHADOWS OF BOULDER HILL*

28 September – 18 November 2023
Avenue Louis-Ruchonnet 6
1003 Lausanne

14 September – 4 November 2023
Rue des Vieux-Grenadiers 2
1205 Geneva



Fabienne Levy is delighted to introduce the inaugural exhibition of artist Tang Shuo in Lausanne. "Shadows of Boulder Hill" encapsulates an intimately personal journey. In this remarkable exhibition, we embark on a journey into the artist's past, specifically his cherished childhood memories from Boulder Hill, a place where stories have both their roots and their ongoing chapters. This marks a significant evolution in his artistic expression, as it's the very first time he has woven narrative threads into his canvas. The artist is always self-represented in his works.

Beyond the individual biographical narratives lie shared memories of imagery, emotions, and facts transcending any single cultural tradition. These layers, carefully unveiled within each painting, resonate deeply with our own lived experiences, forging a profound sense of relatability. What truly fuels the exhibition's captivating impact is its remarkable ability to craft a collective narrative that weaves together the multifaceted threads of individual stories. The emotions depicted possess a timeless and universal resonance, rendering them not only contemporarily relevant but also universally comprehensible.

Shadows Of Boulder Hill, is a groundbreaking show. Tang Shuo takes on an unprecedented artistic quest, striving to breathe life into these characters and unveil the captivating tales that surround them. Born in 1987, he spent over a decade in the economically challenged village, where stories transformed it into a micro-society.

"Co-conspirators" portrays the complex relationship locals had with snakes: hunting them for food while fearing their presence due to superstitions. The snake symbolizes diverse meanings in our society, encompassing themes such as danger, desire, rebirth, transformation, and healing, reflecting its multifaceted nature in our collective consciousness.

"Shepherd's Sorrow" narrates the childhood experience of losing a sheep while shepherding. Upon returning home after herding, the artist discovered a missing sheep and harbored deep apprehension about their father discovering the loss. In a desperate bid to locate the lost animal, they embarked on a day-to-night search. The tragedy around this work portrays how losing of a sheep could spell family tragedy, pushing them into dire straits, with starvation and desperate struggles for survival looming large.

"Magician" is an exploration of a childhood memory. Their grandfather once staged a remarkable magic trick for them. In this illusion, a chopstick was mysteriously inserted into a bamboo container brimming with rice,

and with a flourish, the container was lifted, defying the expectations of young onlookers. In essence, the narrative may explore how memories and imaginations come and go, evolve, or fade away over time, emphasizing the impermanence of these mental landscapes.

In "Murderer," the scene unfolds in a nearby village heavily dependent on rice cultivation, where water scarcity leads to communal disputes over irrigation. These conflicts sometimes escalate to fatal confrontations, as depicted in the artwork, where the artist captures the intense emotions of the moment through subtle details, like the murderer's foot placement.

"Woman Foraging for Wild Greens" delves into the artist's grandmother's poignant history during the tumultuous 1960s in China's Great Leap Forward era. This era is remembered as a time of immense social and political changes, and it is estimated that millions of lives were lost to starvation. Amid extreme food scarcity, with the artist's father as a young child and their grandfather absent, the grandmother resorted to foraging wild greens in the wilderness for survival. In harsh winters, she even turned to tree bark for sustenance. The artwork portrays her determination and resilience in the face of adversity during this challenging period.

In "Forbidden Love," the heart of Boulder Hill's tradition binds its inhabitants, preventing romantic relationships within the village due to shared lineage. Adolescence defies these rules, secret liaisons emerge, but vigilant parents expose them, leading to painful separations. The girl marries a distant villager, the boy a neighbor. The painting reflects their hidden love and tradition's sacrifices, embodying a universal struggle for love across generations and cultures.

"Mother Who Lost Her Last Son" depicts a childhood friend's tragic battle with a hereditary kidney disease. Both the mother and elder brother of the protagonist endured the illness, with the elder brother ultimately succumbing. A few years later, the best friend met a similar fate. The artwork portrays the mother holding her dying son, symbolizing resilience in adversity.

"Suicide" explores a tragic tale of a mentally ill villager, possibly triggered by heartbreak or hereditary factors. Relying on psychiatric medications, he remained unemployed but notably overweight. In 2023, he tragically took his own life, prompting the artist to ponder the factors behind this decision. Overwhelmed by loneliness and unable to adapt to the modern world, he succumbed to inner turmoil, seeking liberation from his suffering.

Biography

Tang Shuo (b. 1987) lives and works in London. His initial interest were installation and material art, which he studied at the Central Academy of Fine Arts (CAFA) in Beijing, China. Upon moving to the UK in 2020, he turned solely to painting. His work explores memories of his childhood in rural Southern China, home to many wild animals and tropical plants.

FABIENNE LEVY

Avenue Louis-Ruchonnet 6
1003 Lausanne, Switzerland
+41 21 711 43 20

Rue des Vieux-Grenadiers 2
1205 Geneva, Switzerland
+41 22 320 10 85

www.fabiennelevy.com

@fabiennelevygallery

#TangShuo #ShadowsofBoulderHill #FabienneLevy

Please contact info@fabiennelevy.com for more information.