

New York Exhibition

CHIH-CHIEN WANG

A BRIGHT CIRCLE

March 10 – April 22, 2023



Chih-Chien Wang, Cabbage Flower #1  
(2011), Inkjet on Dibond, 50 x 40 in.

Arsenal Contemporary art is proud to present Chih-Chien Wang: A Bright Circle, the artist's first solo exhibition in the United States. Organized in collaboration with Pierre-François Ouellette art contemporain and curated by Erika Del Vecchio, this selection of works from the last eighteen years is an ode to the everyday. Through his work, Wang conjures a way of seeing the world with a renewed sense of wonder. Patterns of an insect's wings, the delicate filaments of a flower's petals, or the peel of an orange all become larger than life, thereby revealing a hidden world of beauty that lies right beneath our nose. By presenting these details in such large and vivid formats, Wang invites us to appreciate the complexity and grace that reside in the most banal of things.

Teetering between abstraction and representation, Wang borrows from the language of painting to expand the vocabulary of his medium of predilection: photography. Frozen Stream portrays the surface of a frozen lake. The piece adopts painterly properties that recall Jackson Pollock's action paintings or Cy Twombly's frenetic scribbled surfaces. Other pieces in this selection evoke vanitas in which the passage of time is subtly perceptible. The artist's hands are visible in some of his pieces, captured as he alters and manipulates his subjects in the midst of the creative process and shot from his own perspective. Two Items in a Box shows two branches of perky flowers and green leaves in a clear plastic box. Over the course of thirty days, the artist visited the composition daily, gently shaking the box before taking an image. Life achieves yet another cycle and the series is completed. Through the act of documenting, the artist has developed a ritualized way of seeing that has come to define his visual language and artistic identity.

Nature is at the foreground of all of Wang's work. It is for him an inexhaustible source of inspiration. A ray of sun on a bedsheet, Light on Green Cloth is presented reclining against one of the columns of the gallery as if it were a mirror to the window across the room. Nearby, the window sill offers a temporary resting area to the gallery-goers. This is an invitation to sit in the space, take in the work, let it move you. To understand his work is like reading a poem. First you see the obvious, a cloth, moss, a piece of

fruit; and then you discover, a wave, a cloud, a bright circle. Hold your breath, close your eyes. These are gifts.

**Chih-Chien Wang** (b. 1970 in Tainan, Taiwan and works in Montreal, Canada). His work has been exhibited at the Künstlerhaus Bethanien (Berlin), Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal, Art Gallery of Mississauga, Darling Foundry (Montreal), Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, the National Gallery of Canada (Ottawa), and Jack Shainman (New York) among others.

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