

eX de Medici presents The Wreckers at Sullivan+Strumpf Sydney

30 November - 21 December 2019

One of Asia-Pacific's leading contemporary art galleries, Sullivan+Strumpf is pleased to announce a new exhibition by Australian artist eX de Medici, *The Wreckers + Wei Rong Wu* in Sydney on 30 November – 21 December 2019.

More than 12 months in the making, *The Wreckers* escalates the artist's ongoing interrogations of the global political, economic and environmental crisis and the devastating ramifications of power and greed.

Comprising of two large works, the exhibition presents an enormous and intricate watercolour illustration, *The Wreckers* and a landscape painting, *Farmer and Foreigner*, created in collaboration with Chinese-Australian artist Wei Rong Wu.

Spanning six metres, *The Wreckers* is a sprawling scene of violence and destruction, created in de Medici's unique aesthetic, drawing on her background as a tattooist. The heavily coded work shows a mass of wrecked cars against a black star-spangled banner, adorned by flowers and interspersed with the names of "the Wreckers – the worst people responsible for doing the worst things in the world".

Sullivan+Strumpf, co-founder and director, Joanna Strumpf says the exhibition builds on de Medici's first depiction of a wreckage in *Live the (big black) Dream*, 2006, which features a train crash and foreshadowed the Global Financial Crisis.

"*The Wreckers* is a boldfaced and thought-provoking prediction by the artist of the next metaphorical car crash to come. De Medici uses the paradox of beauty and ruin to sound the alarm on the unfolding climate catastrophe."

The daughter of a political scientist, eX de Medici said she was raised to ask questions and likes to explore the broader global and political picture.

"I can smell a crash at 100 paces. Right now, I'm concerned about the growing opacity of government and indifference of the masses, who are distracted by a tidal wave of entertainment." says De Medici.

Farmer and Foreigner is a large collaborative landscape painting created by de Medici with Rong Wu during a three-week trip the artists took to China earlier this year.

The 11-metre-long unfolded Chinese painting album records their shared travel experiences. The watercolour and ink painting depict the steep, beauty of the mountains, serene ancient town and the variable current water merge into the sky. Rong Wu synthesises the traditional Chinese painting technique and the contemporary concept to draw the freedom of the space, colour, sound and movement. Symbols such as seals carved from tree trunks and stone and calligraphy represent the artists and their feelings during the creation of the work.

During the creation of this work, De Medici was influenced by her first visit to China and a book given to her by her father when she was 17 years old, which explores the function of art in post-revolutionary China in 1964.

eX de Medici's *The Wreckers + Wei Rong Wu* is on view at Sullivan+Strumpf Sydney from 30 November to 21 December 2019. Entry is free. For more information, please visit www.sullivanstrumpf.com

Exhibition Details

eX de Medici *The Wreckers + Wei Rong Wu*

Sullivan+Strumpf Sydney, 799 Elizabeth St, Zetland NSW

30 November – 21 December 2019

EXHIBITION OPENING

Friday, 29 November 6 – 8pm

PANEL DISCUSSION

Saturday, 30 November from 3.15pm

Join us for a panel discussion facilitated by contemporary arts writer, curator and broadcaster Julie Ewington, with Barbara Cleveland (Frances Barrett and Diana Baker Smith) and eX de Medici and Wei Rong Wu to discuss their new show at Sullivan+Strumpf Sydney.

-ENDS-

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About Sullivan+Strumpf

Sullivan+Strumpf is one of Asia-Pacific's leading contemporary art galleries, representing the most engaging Australian and international artists of our time. Founded in 2005 by co-directors Ursula Sullivan and Joanna Strumpf, Sullivan+Strumpf has spaces in Sydney and Singapore and represents 39 established and emerging artists and artist estates from across the Asia-Pacific and East Asia. The gallery presents an ambitious program of diverse exhibitions, publications and talks, and an international art fair schedule spanning Australia, China, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Taiwan. Sullivan+Strumpf has proudly helped to foster the careers of some of the most significant contemporary artists in the region and remains dedicated to supporting artists to realise their visions and forge long-term artistic careers. www.sullivanstrumpf.com

eX de Medici Bio

Although continually shifting in subject matter, eX de Medici's intricate watercolours form ongoing interrogations of the politics of power and the relationship between life and death. Beneath their beautiful ornamentations, themes of violence and destruction are orchestrated through the imagery of firearms, helmets and other military paraphernalia wreathed by organic detritus. This unique aesthetic draws from the artist's background as a tattooist and recalls the vanitas tradition. De Medici's miniaturist technique and technical virtuosity invites close examination through which the spectator becomes caught in a paradoxical vacillation between the beautiful and the repulsive.

In her recent watercolours, alive with nests of mobile phone towers, gas masks, clusters of surveillance cameras and rounds of "expanded ammunition", the language of flower painting is juxtaposed against emblems of power and death. de Medici warns of the dangers of governmental control in an increasingly digitised world.

de Medici's work is held in numerous public collections in Australia including the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra and most State Galleries. Selected solo exhibitions include, *Smithereens*, Sullivan+Strumpf Singapore (2018); *Cold Blooded: eX de Medici*, Drill Hall Gallery, Australian National University, Canberra (2013); *eX de Medici*, Urima University, Iran (2013); *eX de Medici/Vexed Generation*, Fashion Space Gallery, London College of Fashion, London, UK (2010); and *Soft Steel*, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne (2003).

Recent group exhibitions include *The Ideal Home*, Penrith Regional Gallery and the *Lewers Bequest (2018/19)*; *Two Houses: Politics and histories in the contemporary art collections of John Chia and Yeap Lam Yang* Institute of Contemporary Arts Singapore, LASALLE College of the Arts (2018) *Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art: Dark Heart*, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide (2014); *Conflict: contemporary responses to war*, University of Queensland Art Museum, Brisbane (2014); *Like*, Casula Powerhouse, Sydney (2012); *Freehand: Recent Australian Drawing*, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne (2010); and *Perspectives*, Australian War Memorial, Canberra (2010). In 2009, de Medici participated in the Artist in War Program as an Official War Artist through the Australian War Memorial, ACT, in the Solomon Islands Peace Keeping Mission. De Medici won the National Works on Paper Prize in 2002, and was a finalist for the Rockhampton Gold Award 2016.

About Wei Rong Wu

Wei Rong Wu was born in Shanghai, China and moved to Australia in the early 90's where she has since been living and working. She is graduated at the Painting workshop at the ANU School of Art & Design with a Bachelor of Visual Arts degree. She has presented works at the exhibitions "To Fly", "Dreamland" and "Art of the Collection" held in GAFFA, Gallery Klei Sydney and ANU School of Art and Design Gallery ACT.

Contacts

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