

THOMAS DANE GALLERY

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Artist's first solo exhibition in London offers new perspective



Xie Nanxing showcases his first solo exhibition *A Gift Like Kung Pao Chicken* at the Thomas Dane Gallery in London. [Photo provided to China Daily]

The Chinese artist Xie Nanxing, who hails from the southwestern city of Chongqing, is showcasing his first solo exhibition in London, which features work that draws on both his Chinese academic education and his museum visits in Europe.

The exhibition, *A Gift Like Kung Pao Chicken*, at the Thomas Dane Gallery in London's St James's district, spans two gallery spaces and includes a selection from Xie's collection *Spices* that was previously exhibited at Beijing's Ullens Center for Contemporary Art.

The gallery said the satirical title inspired by a Chinese dish, is "typical of an artist fascinated by codes and conventions while simultaneously shifting and upending their meaning".

The *Spice* collection includes *Spice No. 7*, which some critics have said resembles Leonardo da Vinci's *The Last Supper*. Xie insists his painting has nothing to do with *The Last Supper* but that its focus is on the arrows in the painting that are a satirical nod to his Chinese art education as well as his experience and personal views.

Also on view in the gallery at 11 Duke Street is a new series of portrait paintings of the artist's close friends drawn from studio sessions or photographs.

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Each portrait has elements relating to each person's social identity, personality, and Xie's understanding of the sitter. The portraits are made using a canvas print technique, a method that references Chinese ink painting. A rough woven canvas is placed over the surface of the work, which acts as barrier to the painting beneath. Each brush stroke then seeps through the surface, leaving "spots and circles" and traces of the original.

Xie said: "The spots that are left behind are fundamentally linked—as evidence—to the completed work. These surplus materials carry some of that work's meaning. They are like its shadow."

He said he has worked with canvas prints for a while now and feels "they can have more of a voice," especially as he finds ways to "unearth their different functions, to open up their range of expression".

<http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/201906/10/WS5cfe7ceaa31017657723060d.html>