

# EACH MODERN

亞紀畫廊

## Interview with Xu Qu by Jérôme Sans

By Jérôme Sans, 2017

### **Q: What about the “Maze” painting series? When did you start it?**

Xu Qu: I started “Maze” around 2007, and at the time, I was painting on the studio floor and walls; neither were there regular shapes. The inspiration came from the fact that people are obsessed with discussing the meaning and content of painting and imagery. I was very bothered as there is not much one must express through imagery. So I thought of mazes. When people encounter these shapes, they immediately and actively participate in a visual game instead of agonizing over meanings. This is where my interest lies.

### **Q: How do you connect these two series, “Maze” and “Currency War”?**

Xu Qu: I did not really try to make a connection between the two, and people just know that they are all part of my work. There are similar techniques and concepts; I also consider how to create some conflicts and issues, or to guide the viewer to a unique direction. These are all my purposes.

### **Q: Maze is a universal form that appears since pre-history. In Greece, it means “enclosure of buildings the outcome of which it is difficult to find”. Is it a metaphor of painting?**

Xu Qu: Indeed, but don't forget that human beings designed these things too. Isn't it the same for the transformation of painting?

### **Q: Nowadays, the term “maze” means a complex organization, a concrete organization (architecture, urbanism, garden, landscape...) or abstract (structures, way of thinking...), where you can lose yourself. Is it a contemporary sign of our global digital world?**

Xu Qu: I think it is really hard to represent this world with a few works; it is more about the presentation of individual perception. I do prefer utilizing uncomplicated elements to express my opinions. Maybe this world is just too complex; as you find the entrance, you are already looking for the exit.

### **Q: Some of your paintings from the “Maze” series are made with the same shape of labyrinth, whereas only the colors differ. The eyes of the viewer can just be “loosened” in**

# EACH MODERN

亞紀畫廊

**a way, as the maze seems to continue over the painting, like an infinite image. In this sense, it seems impossible to escape from it. What does it mean toward our system of thought?**

Xu Qu: The repetition and layering show that we are all the same after all. There are differences between individuals, but they are not significant. Simply put, you like green, he likes red, but there is not an inherent difference. After we comprehend this, we might be able to understand ourselves better.

**Q: Not only does this series deal with abstraction and figuration, but it also creates a kinetic effect. What is your relation to kinetic or Op art and sensorial art developed in the 1960s?**

Xu Qu: I have always felt a sense of fearful respect towards art movements I know or don't know well; I hope to understand them beyond what I have read in books and to get in touch with their origins. They are an essential component of my work, emphasizing the layering and diluting of art movements.

**Q: Recently the "Maze" paintings have become double images, like in a mirror and somehow a 3D version. What do you want to reach?**

Xu Qu: It is a visual challenge. I envisioned two opposite maze paintings then thought about where the viewer would be. When we face this pair of mirror images, the eyes will lead us in. In any case, it is my wish to constantly change and not let any possibility slip by.

**Q: How do you envision the future?**

Xu Qu: Follow my own plans.