

The image is an abstract artwork. A large, irregular black shape dominates the center-left portion of the frame. To the right and bottom, there are vibrant, textured areas composed of various colors including blue, orange, yellow, green, and white, resembling thick paint or stone. The overall composition is dynamic and layered.

Guo Hongwei
The Grammar Goes Where
The Metaphor Goes

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Text by
Leo Li Chen

Magician Space is pleased to present Guo Hongwei's second solo exhibition "The Grammar Goes Where The Metaphor Goes," highlighting nine recent paintings by the artist. The exhibition is based on his continuous exploration of material forms and internal structures of natural minerals, as well as their formal evolution within the visual culture genealogy. Guo's use of painterly languages and methods centers around forging a dialogue between material rationality and natural affection, addressing how individuals can find reliable consensus when value judgements conflict daily realities.

The Chinese title "叩石垦壤 (kòu shí kěn rǎng)"¹ resonates with the English title "The Grammar Goes Where The Metaphor Goes," both pointing to the dynamic relationship between the essence and appearance of things: questioning of hills and rocks arises from an deeply rooted ambition to shift the seemingly immovable.; grammatical orders or misreadings flow with the polysemy of metaphorical indications. These paralleled Guo's practice of using

"stones/rocks" to interpret the present. He certifies ancient thoughts through a natural historical approach: traces of material serve as evidence of secular life, which in return reveal how perception traverses the specific and the transcendental. In his paintings, layers of lazurite blue ripple wide, condensing into a gaseous entity; at the verge between black and white, soft sheen of mica sets off the tranquility of tourmaline; the base color of Ru-ware celadon glaze gradually reveals the textures of mountains and earth. Figures take shape amidst these minerals and colors, forming postures either from a fleeting glance of reality or merely a haze of natural chiaroscuro. Thus, the subjects traverse between the physical and the imaginal, witnessing processes of generation and transformation while hinting at the visibility and mobility of existence itself.

All traces of origins eventually point to a concern with the present reality. Drawing upon the aesthetic frameworks and cultural genes accumulated by traditions and generations, Guo transforms the sublime objects into natural ones, allowing the imposing and

the reclusive subjects to recede in favor of individual reflection. He seeks to connect consensus within a shared visual cultural framework, approaching it by "using stones from other mountains to polish jade"—evoking universal perception and resonance amid the heterogeneity that transcends time and predetermined attributes. In his frames, figures and objects seem indistinct, and the specific references are increasingly blurred. It is precisely in this ambiguity that synesthesia quietly emerges. Guo constructs a bridge between natural history and everyday reality through such method. The structure of minerals and the form of figures become traces, images, and metaphors within the image scene, conversing into and influencing one another. He orchestrates perception through the rules of "form," which serves as a direct confrontation of the discord of reality and genuine feeling.

Ultimately, Guo's paintings reflect a reality where subjectivity is gradually dissipating. While we strive to emphasize how to construct subjectivity, Guo instead brings this universal dilemma to the foreground. It

manifests in the fractures of history and memory while lying hidden in the ambiguity of reason and the dislocation of perception. Rationality of nature and chaos of perceptions are inherently unified: the destination reached through the search may well be a certain absurdity. Instead of chasing a singular certainty, perhaps embracing reality is the basis for everything.

¹This expression is borrowed from a well-known Chinese fable, A Foolish Old Man Moves Mountains, and is literally translated as "breaking up the rocks and digging up the earth," which summarizes the operations deployed to move the mountains.

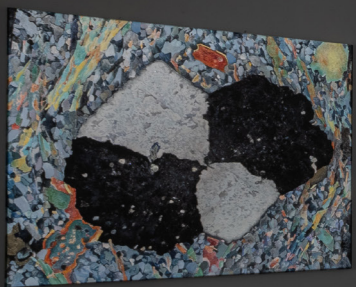
Guo Hongwei (1982, Sichuan) graduated from Sichuan Fine Arts Institute in 2004 and currently lives and works in Beijing.

He explores the multiple meanings of the act of "seeing" from the depiction of nature history objects, and the intertextual reference to vision and fantasy. By investigating different visual systems and switching between media such as watercolor and oil painting, the artist searches for paradigmatic differences in the order of painting.

His work has been shown in solo exhibitions including Magician Space (Beijing), DRC No.12 (Beijing), Chambers Fine Art (New York, Beijing),

and was included in exhibitions at G Museum of Art (Nanjing), Yuan Art Museum (Beijing), M+ (Hong Kong), Times Museum (Guangzhou), Taikang Space (Beijing), Asia Art Archive (Hong Kong), Orange County Museum of Art (California), Padiglione d'arte Contemporanea (Milan), Tampa Museum of Art (St. Petersburg), Oklahoma City Museum of Art (Oklahoma), UCCA (Beijing), Power Station of Art (Shanghai), Shanghai Duolun Museum of Modern Art (Shanghai), CAFA Art Museum (Beijing), Today Art Museum (Beijing), etc.

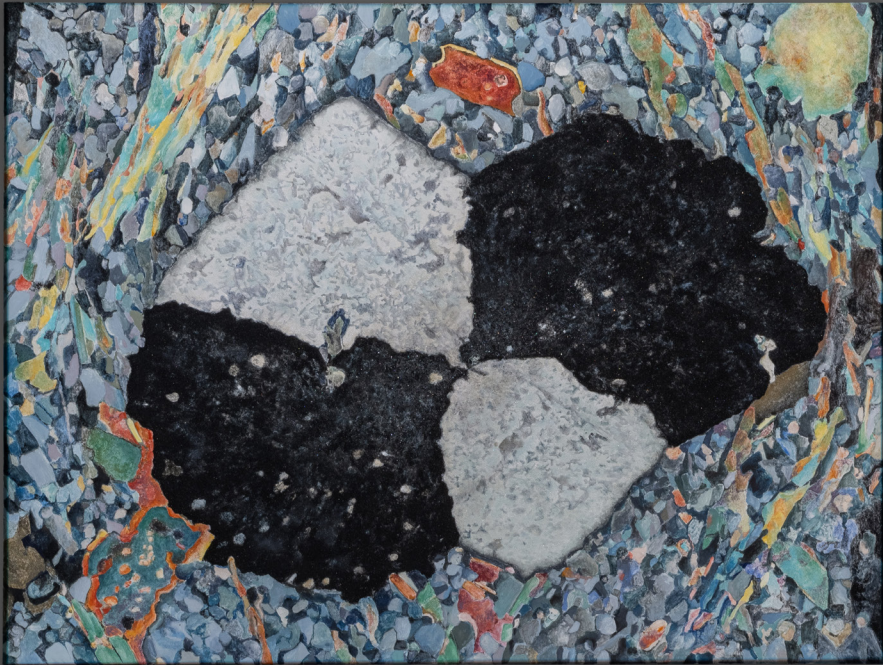
His works are collected by M+, LACMA, White Rabbit Gallery, By Art Matters Museum, DSL foundation, He Art Museum, G Museum of Art, etc.



Exhibition view



Exhibition view



Hourglass
2025
Mineral color on linen
150 × 200 cm





They Go Where Mistakes in Grammar Go
2024

Mineral color on linen

100 × 150 cm





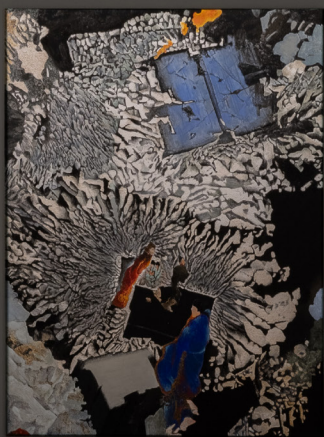
Exhibition view



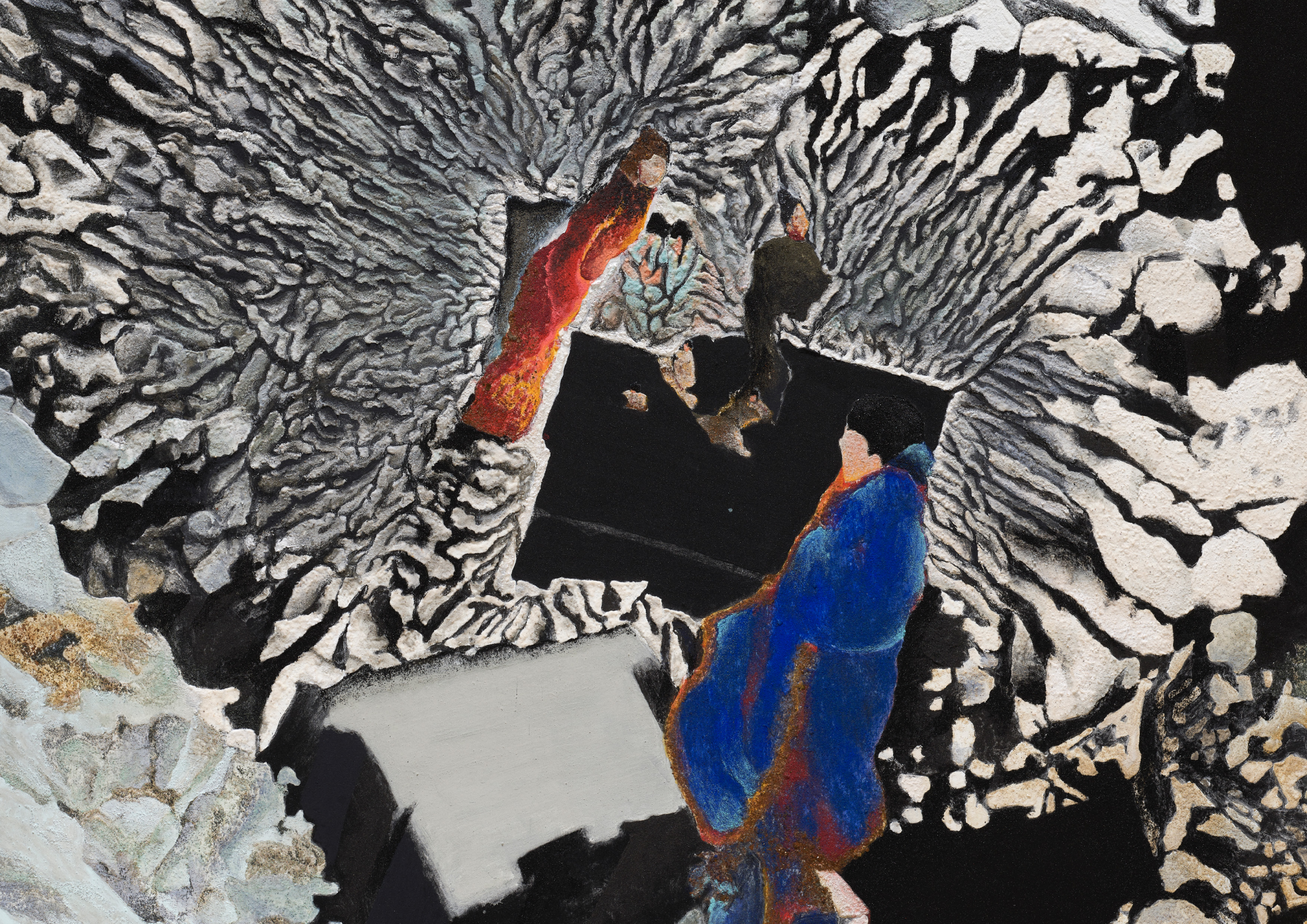
The Myopic Eye of the Soul
2025
Mineral color on linen
150 × 120 cm







Fabricating for Interpretation and Understanding
2025
Mineral color on linen
200 × 150 cm





Exhibition view



It Is Immoral to Use Flying Devices in the Immortal Realm

2025

Mineral color on linen

300 × 200 cm





Exhibition view



We Will Eventually Become Fossils

2025

Mineral color on linen

200 × 300 cm





Solid, Liquid, and Gas

2025

Mineral color on linen

150 × 200 cm





Exhibition view



Exhibition view



They Go Where the Vehicles of Metaphor Go
2025
Mineral color on linen
200 × 300 cm







The Sound Is Like Wind and Waves
2024
Mineral color on linen
150 × 200 cm



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