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Encountering Past Times and Spaces—'Yuan Yuan: Alternative Realities'

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## Encountering Past Times and Spaces—'Yuan Yuan: Alternative Realities'

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June 07, 2018 by [Carol Wang](#)



*Installation view of 'Alternative Realities' at Palazzo Terzi. Image courtesy of Edouard Malingue Gallery.*

Have you ever thought of viewing oil paintings in a historic palace? The exhibition 'Alternative Realities' will allow you to do just that! While looking at Yuan Yuan's exquisite oil paintings exploring the passing of time and space, you will get to delve into the lost memories and past glories of Palazzo Terzi in Bergamo, one of the most iconic cultural landmarks of Bergamo. Presented to you by Edouard Malingue Gallery, this exhibition will lure you into "alternative realities" you have never imagined before.



*Installation view of 'Alternative Realities' at Palazzo Terzi. Image courtesy of Edouard Malingue Gallery.*

Yuan Yuan, a graduate from the Hangzhou China Academy of Fine Arts, is known for his highly detailed and realistic oil paintings of architectural subjects. Though resembling photographs to some extent, Yuan Yuan's works have a unique atmosphere, at times dark, humid and wet. The layering of transparent paint creates that distinctive visual effect, as if you can really touch and feel the texture of the rooms. This is evident in *Dried Food*, *Mandarin Duck*, and *Dancing Hall*, where the texture of food, fabric and daily utensils are rendered with such precision and meticulousness. This traditional Chinese painting technique is integrated with the attention to naturalistic representation in Western art, so that the resultant paintings possess this uncanny resemblance to reality.



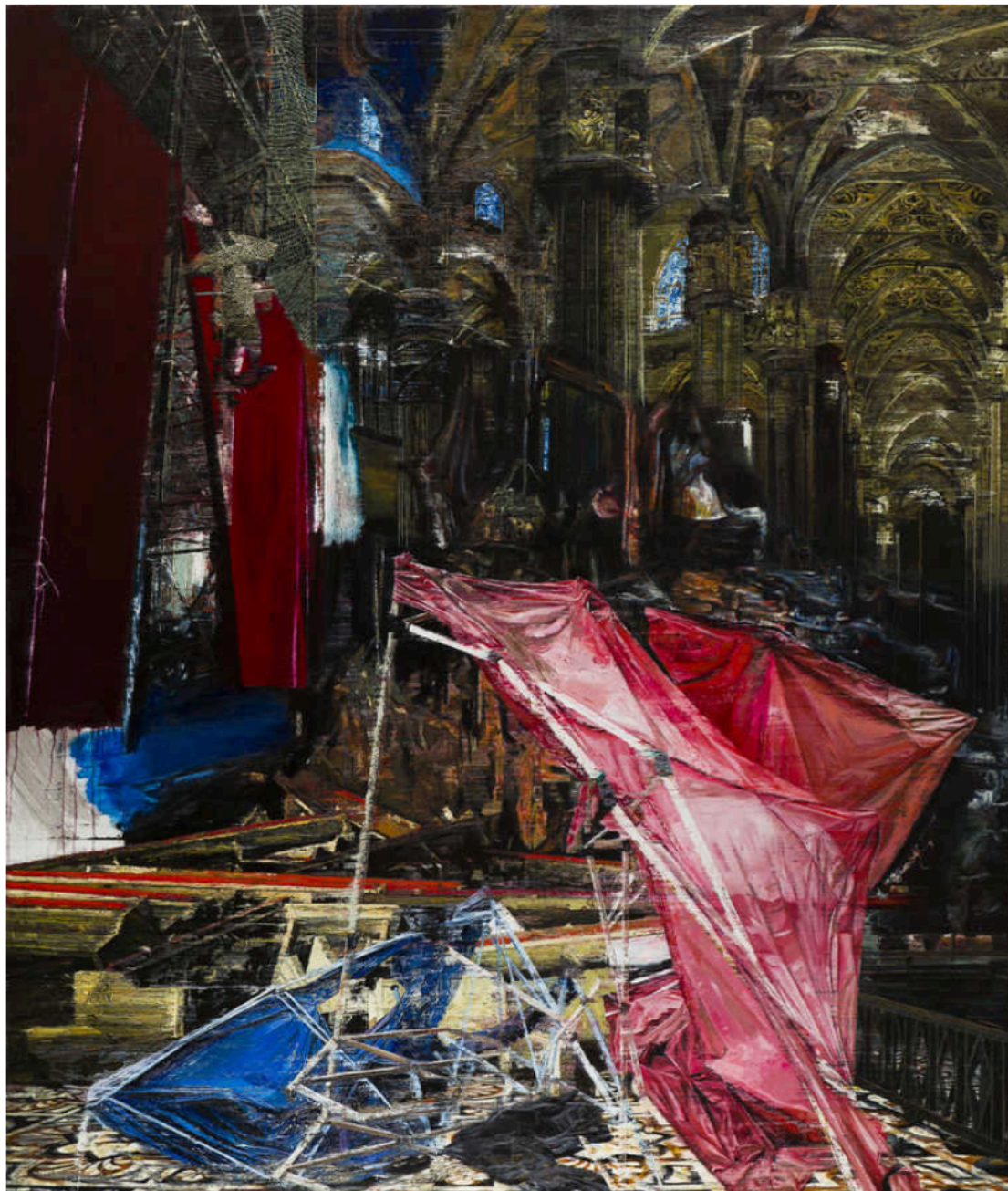


*Yuan Yuan, "Dried Food", 2018. Oil on canvas, 189 x 122 cm. Image courtesy of the artist and Edouard Malingue Gallery.*



What is most astonishing is the depiction of mosaics and tiles, especially with the careful drawing of thousands of tiny individual tiles and blending hues within the same colour scheme. Through the accurate compositions and his attention to details, it is clear that Yuan Yuan works in a highly structured and orderly way, while assimilating the Chinese tradition of layering transparent paint and Western baroque architecture.

In the context of 'Alternative Realities', Yuan Yuan responds to the interiors of Palazzo Terzi, and renders with his own style the elements representing the aura and history of the palace. Each room in the historic palace is displayed with his paintings, thereby transformed into "alternative realities" of the past and future. As Yuan Yuan discussed in the conversation with the curator Dr. Valentina Locatelli, "My paintings encounter Palazzo Terzi and its multifaceted heritage, composed of various times and spaces. The concept of alternative time and the process of understanding the juxtaposition between forever and the moment are central to my work." The ongoing conversation between the physical space and Yuan's works reflects the passing of time and a space devoid of human presence.





The visual impact of an imaginary alternative space and time is complemented by the display method at Palazzo Terzi. Yuan Yuan's works sometimes are hidden from plain sight and blended into the palatial rooms; at other times they are slightly highlighted by contemporary hanging techniques, leaning against the brocade wall tapestries or the frame of an imposing chimney.



*Yuan Yuan, "Mandarin Duck", 2018. Oil on canvas, 200 x 200 cm. Image courtesy of the artist and Edouard Malingue Gallery.*

Imbued with narratives from passage of time, 'Alternative Realities' provokes a shift between actualities, and conveys a sense of transition and history. Yuan Yuan works in the gap between modernism and tradition, between Chinese and Western art styles, and ultimately between past and present to produce a new space and time, suspended between cultures.

Information and images courtesy of Edouard Malingue Gallery.



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**Location:**

Palazzo Terzi  
Piazza Terzi, 2 - 24129  
Bergamo, Italy

**Exhibition Period:**

9 June – 23 July 2018

**Hours:**

Fri–Mon: 10:00 – 2:00, 14:00 – 18:00  
Or by appointment