

hands-on

Not Listed in Order

Sam Ng

08 - 28 February 2025

Online Exhibition



hands-on

Hands-on is pleased to present *Not Listed in Order*, an online presentation of recent works by Sam Ng.

In his phenomenological approach to painting, Sam Ng explores the complex relationship between imagery and the painted surface, blurring the lines between abstraction and figuration. His work reflects a deep engagement with memory and loss, drawing from fragments of the past to create a visual language that speaks beyond time and context.

Born in a city marked by political turmoil, Ng experienced a profound shift in his perception of reality, a subtle yet inescapable feeling of absence that follows him. This void, deeply personal yet universal, persists in his work, where the present often feels like a projection of a past that remains unresolved. As Italo Calvino writes in *Invisible Cities*, “everything bears the imprint of the past,” and this idea is central to Ng’s practice. His work investigates how history and memory linger, leaving traces that continue to shape our understanding of the world.

Ng’s inspiration comes from the everyday, finding meaning in the ordinary and the fleeting moments that often go unnoticed. For him, nothing is ever just “being-in-itself” if observed closely. Every action, object, and moment carries potential for deeper understanding, revealing layers of significance once overlooked. Through painting, Ng reimagines these moments, giving them an eternal presence that transcends the constraints of time and space.

The theme of forgetting runs throughout Ng’s practice, drawing from Milan Kundera’s *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting*. Forgetting is not simply the inability to recall: it is the subtle erasure of history, identity, and memory, a process that shapes our lives without our awareness. Ng confronts this notion, questioning how collective and personal histories are obscured or deliberately buried. His paintings are an attempt to reclaim these lost fragments, reasserting their presence and significance. For Ng, painting becomes an act of recovery, a way to revisit and reinterpret memories and histories that have been neglected or forgotten. His paintings become a means to speak through silence, to give voice to what has been erased, and to depict the presence of absence.

Colour is central to Ng’s exploration of memory and emotion. Each hue is carefully selected to evoke specific feelings, creating an atmosphere that is both calm and unsettling. His works are deliberately vague, leaving traces and fragments for the viewer to follow, yet never fully revealing their meaning. This allows the viewer to engage with the work on a personal level, resonating with their own experiences and memories, much like an emotional landscape waiting to be discovered.

In *Not Listed in Order*, Sam Ng invites us to reflect on the complexity of memory, forgetting, and the way history shapes our lives. Each piece is a fragment of the past reimagined, a delicate balance between what is remembered and what is lost. Through his work, Ng offers a space to pause and reconsider what has been overlooked, urging us to reconnect with the silent, forgotten parts of our shared and personal histories.

SAM NG | About the artist

Born in 1999 in Hong Kong, Sam Ng lives and works in London, where he graduated with first-class honours in BA (Hons) Fine Art from Central St Martins in 2022.

Growing up in a fast-paced city, Sam is acutely aware of the passage of time and has learned to capture the essence of ordinary moments, infusing them with beauty and meaning to preserve the fleeting emotions they hold within a still frame. Sam uses painting as a medium to sculpt time, creating works incorporating both the future and the past. The practice captures the essence of significant and mundane elements, giving form and shape to the lightness and weight of everyday life. Painting becomes a method to encapsulate the significance of the ephemeral in daily existence, preserving the present in its most vibrant form- not merely depicting events but conveying a deeper meaning within them. In these reveries, nothing changes, yet everything exists differently under the portrayal of the small and trivial. Every piece tells a story- a story of a single thing and a story of everything.

Sam Ng's works were exhibited in notable venues, including the Beep Painting Biennial 2024: I Won't Stay In A World Without Love at Elysium Gallery, Swansea, and Just The Powder of the Flute at Safehouse, London, in 2023. Other exhibitions include The Lido Open 22 at The Lido Stores, Margate, and Innocent Pleasures Suit Me hosted by Warbling in London, both in 2022. Sam was long-listed for the Beep Painting Biennial 2024 and received the SCMP Student of the Year – Visual Artist Award in 2016.