

Fou Gallery announces “Meng Du: Embers” featuring her latest works will be open on Nov. 30

by SUE WANG on Nov 22, 2019 • 10:26 am



Fou Gallery is pleased to announce that Meng Du’s solo exhibition *Meng Du: Embers* will be on view from November 30, 2019 through February 16, 2020. The exhibition will present her latest glassworks and installations combining glass and fabric materials. This is the second solo exhibition of Meng Du held by Fou Gallery; it aims to explore the connection between uncertain memories and the present, and between dreams and reality, while attempting to depict the invisible emotions deep in our hearts—the sadness, the fear, and also the hope—which have always existed there, intertwined and fleeting.

Du began planning the theme for this solo exhibition *Embers* during the summer of 2018, while she attended the Glass Nexus Forum at Norths Land Creative in Lybster, United Kingdom. As wood combusts, it is rapidly transformed into glowing embers: they have the physical properties of ash, but at their core remain hot as raw flame. Though embers are small, light, neglectable, they are also important catalysts for further combustion—unrestrained, the little embers often

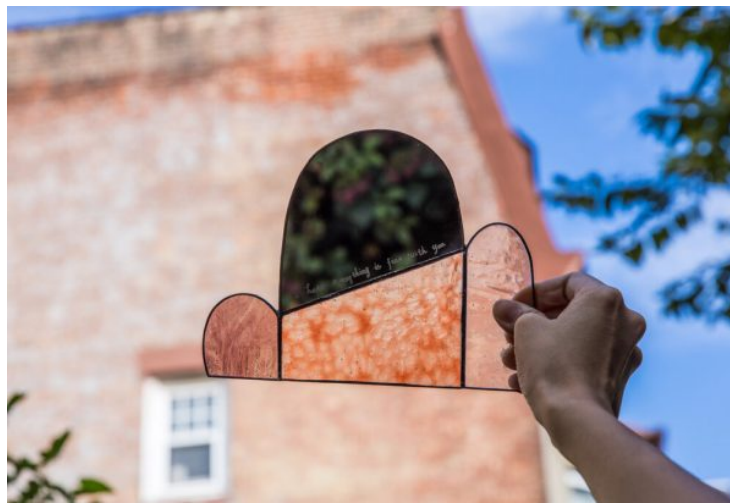
allow wildfires to spread for thousands of kilometers. Embers have within them the power to destroy and consume everything, but they also contain the elemental power of rebirth—they produce life from death. Fire releases valuable nutrients trapped within the dead branches that carpet the forest floor, and begins a new life cycle for the forest's metabolism. Embers can also bring to mind the process of glassmaking—silicon sand and other materials melt into a liquid state at extreme temperatures of above thousands centigrade degrees, which is then cooled and solidified into crystal-clear glass, through the slow process of annealing and temperature control.



Meng Du, *Place*, 2019; Kiln-formed glass, silver foil, 4.5×4.5×4.5 inches.
Photograph by Peichao Lin ©Meng Du, courtesy Fou Gallery

The sudden deaths of Du's grandmother and the husband of a close friend inspired the creation of her *Letter* and *Ripple* series, which include nine small pieces, two long Stain / Tiffany glass, and four circular glass mirror Stain / Tiffany glass. Du combined the colored mosaic glass with the mirror, and engraved them with some drawing and common phrases. Stain / Tiffany glass is often used in religious window design because of its translucency. People standing outside the window and looking in can only see the patterns, and can't see into the interior of the church,

while the people inside the can enjoy the magnificent refraction of light through the glass, as though observing a miracle. The mirror has exactly the opposite optical effect – people can only see themselves in front of the mirror, but can't see the world behind it. The dividing line between the glass and the mirror is like a crease in a letter. A letter to others is actually a letter to oneself. Whether this letter can actually be delivered or not is no longer of consequence. In the endless time, light fills every void—it penetrates through the glass and reflects from the mirrors. During the exhibition, Fou Gallery will prepare some postcards for visitors, who may sit down and write a letter to friends and loved ones who live far away.



Meng Du, *I Hope Everything Is Fine with You*, 2019; Glass, copper foil, 8.1x0.2x 6.1 inches.
Photograph by Peichao Lin ©Meng Du, courtesy Fou Gallery

Another series in this exhibition is *Embrace*, which combines glass and fabric. During her time as an Artist in Residence at the Glass Program at Aichi University of Education in Japan, Du produced some murrine canes, which were wrapped in a thin white outer layer, with a trace of red thread in the middle, and embroidered on mosaic fabric dyed with tea—with sharp sections pierced into the soft fabric. In October 2019, Meng visited Chiharu Shiota's solo exhibition in Tokyo and was amazed by her presentation of "nonexistent existence" through spatial installations and began to rethink her own artistic practice. The *Embrace* series will be hung and float in the gallery space's air, where the audience may stroll through and directly confront their inner restlessness and quietness, yearning for embrace while expecting distance. Two pieces of Du's newly cast glass pieces will be situated at the north and south ends of the gallery. Glass and plants are intertwined, like parts of a body, as though a group of nameless dramatic characters have embarked on an unknown journey and perform their own verses in the story.



Meng Du, *How Have You Been*, 2019; Glass, copper foil, 9.65x0.2x6.5inches.
Photograph by Peichao Lin ©Meng Du, courtesy Fou Gallery

“Life is just a series of isolated moments. With memories and fantasies, many meanings emerge, then disappear, and then reappear.” Du Meng is an alchemist, transmuting dreamlike memories and reality into stories, and then integrating them into her crystal-clear glass to narrate the moments that are always moving and fleeting in our minds. “Because the minds the Tathagata speaks of are not minds, but are [expediently] called minds.” Meng always pays attention to the connection between the individual inner world as well as the collective subconscious of human beings. She boldly—yet cautiously—unfolds the fragile inner world of herself, and makes us realize that our deep minds are malleable, sometimes fragile and sometimes firm, sometimes obscure and sometimes crystal-clear. If we pay close attention to everything around us—the inside of the polished mirror that reflects the window sill of the old house, the shape of the white cloud as it appears behind the obscuring glass, and the freshly healing wounds scratched by glass shards—we may be made aware of this. Du not only showcases these tiny phenomena, but also shows a world she created, a world that requires one to hold one’s breath, to look closely, and to clear the mind. In this way, we not only enter into the world created by Du, but also deeper into our own inner universes.



Meng Du, *I Hope Everything is Fine with You*, 2019. Glass, copper foil, 8.1×0.2×6.1 inches.
Photograph by Peichao Lin ©Meng Du, courtesy Fou Gallery

While *Meng Du: Embers* is being shown at Fou Gallery, Du will also participate in *Mind the Gap*, a group exhibition held at the Delaware Contemporary showcasing works by contemporary Chinese female artists from different generations. Du's work *Everywhere, Nowhere No.2*, an installation wherein six pigeons comprised mostly of glass and silver foil will land randomly throughout the exhibition hall. With the whistle of pigeons, the scene metaphors the passers-by in a metropolis. Another work in Du's series, *Everywhere, Nowhere No.1*, is now in the Shanghai Glass Museum's permanent collection.

Corresponding with the exhibition, Mandarin Stage Group will present a musical concert *In This Chaos* on December 7 at Fou Gallery, featuring lyrical numbers from several significant rock musical books. Through the lens of each character and their narrative, these selected songs attempt to expose the journey of self-struggle that every individual has to go through in this chaotic world. Discovering the inner and outer tumult, the feelings of anxiety, depression and unsettledness that may eventually lead us down the road towards a binary status: flaring up or dying out, like embers.



Meng Du blowing glass, 2018, Shanghai Museum of Glass, Photograph by Eugene Neduv
©Meng Du, courtesy Shanghai Museum of Glass and Fou Gallery

MENG DU (b.1986, Beijing, China) graduated from the Graphic Design program of the Central Academy of Fine Arts, Beijing (B.F.A.) in 2008 and the Digital Art program at the Department of Glass Program of Rochester Institute of Technology (M.F.A.) in 2013. Currently, she is living and working in Beijing. Her work has continued to exhibit in China, Europe, and the United States. Her recent exhibitions include: *Meng Du: The Room*, Shanghai Museum of Glass, Shanghai (2018); *The International Exhibition of Glass Kanazawa* at Shiinoki Cultural Complex, Ishikawa Prefecture, Japan (2016); *Flow Grow: 2015 Qingdao Contemporary Glass Art Exhibition* at Qingdao (2015); and *Design Shanghai 2013 City of Craft and Design* at Power Station of Art, Shanghai (2013). In June 2016, she had her first solo exhibition in New York: *Meng Du: The Climb, The Fall* at Fou Gallery. The same year, she won the Honorable Mention for The International Exhibition of Glass Kanazawa (Kanazawa, Japan). In 2018, she won the 2018 Saxe Emerging Artist Award at 48th Glass Art Society Conference (Venice, Italy). She is the youngest artist to present a solo exhibition at the Shanghai Museum of Glass.

FOU GALLERY is an apartment gallery and creative lab based in New York. Fou is dedicated to promoting the creative talents and projects of our time. As suggested by its name, Fou is both a denial of the mainstream commercial gallery model and an active contributor to a new, organic art community. With the belief that the enjoyment of art is an essential part of everyday life, Fou offers a vibrant, inspirational selection of original works in art and design, and hosts various events to create a diverse and accessible art space.



About the exhibition

Dates: November 30, 2019 – February 16, 2020

Artist's Talk: November 30, 2019, 4–5 pm

Opening Reception: November 30, 2019, 5–8 pm

Location: Fou Gallery, 410 Jefferson Ave #1, Brooklyn, New York, NY 11221

Hours: Saturday 11 am–6 pm, or by appointment (info@fougallery.com)

Curator: Echo He

Courtesy of the artist and Fou Gallery, for further information please visit www.fougallery.com.

<http://en.cafa.com.cn/fou-gallery-announces-meng-du-embers-featuring-her-latest-works-will-be-open-on-nov-30.html>