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THE UPCOMING

Zhang Enli: The Box at Hauser & Wirth | Exhibition review

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Sometimes art just does it for you and sometimes it leaves little impact. Perhaps it's a personal thing, but Zhang Enli's supersized paintings of wrappings and trails of rope leave one underwhelmed. The loose wash of the paintings dilutes both the colour and intensity of the ideas, leaving little suggestion of depth. Large in scale, the smaller reproductions carry an intensity seemingly lost in the originals.

Art exhibitions can sometimes make the viewer feel that they are not seeing what is supposed to be there. The exhibition script eloquently tells us what to think by interpreting the art in the best possible way, but leaves us unconvinced and unmoved.

Others may well visit and feel quite differently. Zhang Enli is an internationally exhibited Chinese artist, and at the private view it was said that all the works have already been sold to collectors.



The paintings are often two and three metres high and long. It does occur that they might be completely wonderful viewed from some distance, but in the gallery there is no chance of that. The sculptural installation is a room-sized plywood box you can go into, like entering a painting. Sketchily painted across the walls, floor and ceiling, it's hard not to think of similar projects that regularly crop up at art degree shows every year.

The artist leaves his drawn pencil grids in the paintings, an interesting detail that adds a layer of meaning to his process, but what the viewer is left longing for is even a small area of something intricate or exquisite to give the paintings focus.



Eleanor MacFarlane

Zhang Enli: The Box is at Hauser & Wirth from 10th January to 28th February 2014, for further information visit [here](#).