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FEATURE / ART & CULTURE

## First solo takes a new look at how we shape life



By Tan Weiyun

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New York-based artist Joanna Pousette-Dart is presenting her first solo exhibition in China at the Lisson Gallery Shanghai. The works continue to explore the curvilinear format, a means of expressing her perceptions of the natural world.

Born into a family steeped in the arts, Pousette-Dart absorbed much through osmosis while also drawing her own inspiration from myriad sources, such as Mozarabic manuscripts, Romanesque paintings, Mayan and Islamic art, and Chinese landscape painting and calligraphy.

But trips to the southwestern desert of the United States in the 1970s and 1980s proved to be a turning point.



Installation "Joanna Pousette-Dart," 2022, at Lisson Gallery Shanghai

Standing on the boundless lands, with distant mountain ranges that extended for miles to meet the vast sky, the artist reconceived the primitive relationship of figure to the horizon, the seeming curvature of vast space and the editing element of one's peripheral vision.

In the 1990s, she abandoned the rectangular format and began experimenting with shaped panels, where she interpreted how she felt about the vast nature, the prismatic light, and the ever-changing dialogue between Earth and sky.

The 10 paintings, created for this exhibition, immerse viewers in an enormous expanse of nature.

Pousette-Dart's manipulation of colors, which shift subtly in tone from light to dark or warm to cool, possibly presents how the wild world looks from dawn to dusk, day to night, while the interplay of blues, ambers, oranges, yellows and grays evokes the constantly shifting light.

Each painting on each panel seems to have its own sense of light and its own particular stance.

Of the 10 paintings, two are configured in forms with a hollow on either the top or bottom edge of the canvas.

Unlike Pousette-Dart's typical smooth, long, curvaceous lines, the irregularity evokes the shape of clouds or some unknown elements of the landscape.

All the works in this exhibition are untitled – open for any interpretation.

To Pousette-Dart, the power of abstraction is that viewers find their own way to connect with a painting while the harmonic convergences of line, form and color set off a certain sensory connection that transcends a single meaning.

**Exhibition info:**

Date: Through August 27 (Tuesdays-Saturdays), 11am-6pm

Venue: Lisson Gallery

Address: 2/F, 27 Huqiu Rd

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