



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Solace: Venerable Shi De and Joe Ferriso

December 14, 2022 – February 10, 2023



Ven. Shi De, 冬忍 (*Winter Fortitude*), 2022. Mixed media on Xuan Paper, 17.25 x 15.25 in (40 x 34 cm).

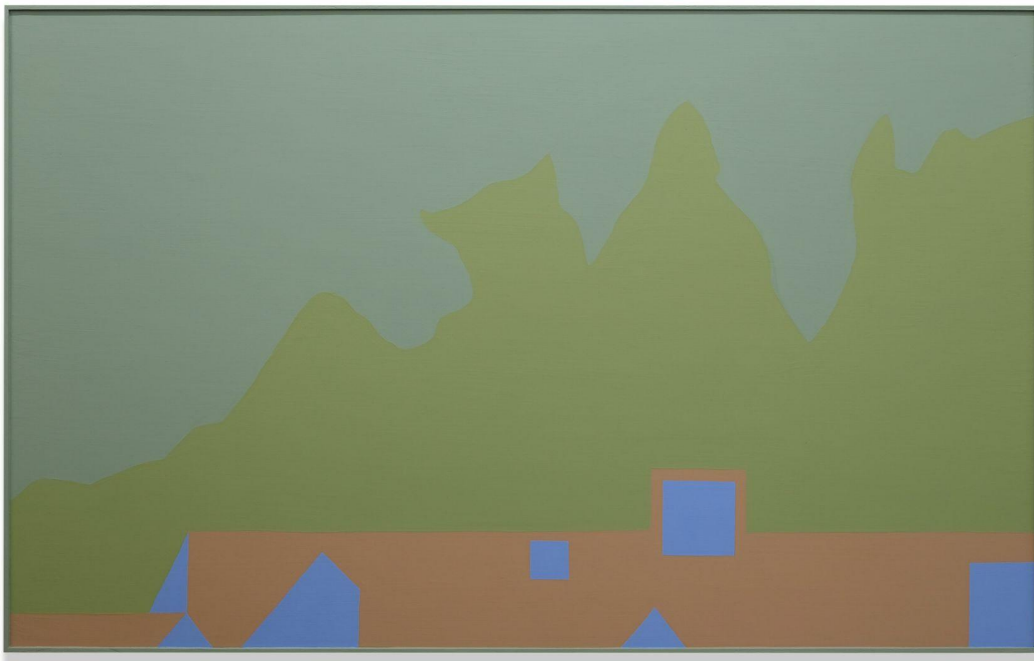
November 22, 2022 (Palo Alto, CA) - Qualia Contemporary Art is pleased to announce *Solace*, a group exhibition of new works by the Venerable Shi De and artist Joe Ferriso. The show explores the practice of art making as it relates to the artist's journey toward personal and spiritual contentment. Artists are often depicted as solitary figures, yet the fruits of such isolation in the

studio often bring about the purest joys. *Solace* will be open from December 14, 2022, to February 10, 2023, with an opening celebration hosted on December 17th from 4:30–6:30 PM PDT.

Ven. Shi De’s seal carvings and works on paper are closely tied to her Buddhist faith. Referencing the five aggregates, Shi De views art as a transcendent state that links thousands of years of human existence. Greater than the traces left by brush, ink, paper, or stone, Shi De’s paintings, calligraphy, and carvings are created with the essence of life itself, producing truthfulness, goodness, and beauty. In the artist’s own words:

“When the knife or brush touches the stone or paper, my body and mind follow, creating images with certainty and accuracy. In that moment, I am completely unaware of external things. My whole body, speech, mind, and environment become one, blending inner and outer elements, mutual cause and effect.”

For decades Shi De has cultivated a mindfulness-based, meditative artistic practice in harmony with her spiritual practice as a nun. Having initially given up art making upon entering nunhood in 1991, the 1999 “921” Earthquake in Taichung, Taiwan, shocked her to her core. She resumed pen, ink, and seal carving to describe the incredible post-disaster rebirth. From that moment onwards, she has relied on the teachings of the Dharma, finding peace and joy in her creations and in her solitude.



Joe Ferriso, *Moonraker*, 2022. Acrylic on plywood in painted frame. 44 x 27 ½ x 1 ¼ in.

For artist Joe Ferriso, the architectural and natural beauty of Sea Ranch, CA, has offered the perfect environment through which to explore the landscape of the psyche. Using the architectural lines of the Sea Ranch as a framework to fill with color, Ferriso's ensuing paintings hover at the edge of non-objective painting and pictorial painting, never fully revealing whether to be viewed as elevation or plan view, mental space, or physical space. Reflecting on his process, the artist explains:

"When I go on walks, it is not uncommon to be alone for miles. This distance allows for reflection and imagination to take root. The Sea Ranch is a sculpture garden of large and small wooden boxes filled with people, thinking, living, and creating in an otherwise sparsely inhabited stretch of coastline. I find the homes here to be beautiful, sad, and dynamic, sometimes simultaneously."

From a trove of collected house paints that were rejected or abandoned, Ferriso has built a catalog of colors that are often impure – grays and beiges – that when used in context, read as colors as opposed to neutral tones. This spectrum of colors functions as the artist's personal lexicon, connecting meaning, significance, memory, and information, to value, saturation, and hue. In Ferriso's process, the very combination or assembly of color is an expressionistic gesture.

Both Shi De and Ferriso find refuge and creative fodder in isolation. *Solace* at Qualia Contemporary Art presents the work of these artists to the public; produced in quiet solitude, the works on view will engage viewers, empowering them to find peace within.

About Ven. Shi De

Ven. Shi De was born in 1956 in Zhudong, Taiwan. She graduated from the National Taiwan University of Arts in 1978, with first place in the Art Exhibition of Calligraphy and Seal Carving. From 1984 to 1990, Ven. Shi De taught at Feng Chia University, Providence University, Tamkang University, Tunghai University, and the National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts. When Ven. Shi De entered the Buddhist monastic life, she adhered to guidelines prescribed by Ven. Hong-Yi and focused on the practice of precepts, samadhi, and wisdom for eight years. After the magnitude 7.6 earthquake that struck Taiwan on September 21, 1999 (known as the 921 earthquake), Ven. Shi De returned to the arts. She blends serenity and joy from the practice of Chan Buddhism in her artwork, from calligraphy and painting to seal carving and pottery. Her work explores the wonder of nature and embodies Ven. Shi De's compassion and wisdom.

Ven. Shi De has exhibited nationally and internationally at the Taichung City Dadun Cultural Center, Taichung, Taiwan; ARThis Fine Art, Taichung, Taiwan; Da-Ku Art Gallery, Taichung, Taiwan; National Taiwan University of Arts, Taipei, Taiwan; Taipei Songshan Airport, Taipei, Taiwan; Hui Feng Tang Art Gallery, Taipei, Taiwan; Hsinchu City Art Gallery, Hsinchu City, Taiwan; Oriental Art

& Cultural Center, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; Tai Pei Buddhist Centre and Mahabodhi Monastery, Singapore; Silicon Valley Asian Art Center, Santa Clara, CA; Taipei Economic and Cultural Office, New York, NY; Flushing Town Hall, Queens, NY; and more. In 2013, she received the Golden Goblet Award for Art in Calligraphy and has written several publications on Dharma and Buddhist practice. Ven. Shi De currently lives and works in Taiwan.

About Joe Ferriso

Joe Ferriso grew up in Long Island, New York. He received his Bachelor of Fine Arts in 2003 from The Cooper Union and his Master of Fine Arts in 2018 from Stanford University. From 2010 to 2015, he co-founded and worked at Anzfer Farms, an experimental furniture studio. Ferriso's artwork is primarily concerned with color relationships as they relate to our built environment, taking inspiration from Sea Ranch, California where he lives.

Ferriso has held solo and group exhibitions nationally, with a focus in California and New York, at Park Life Gallery, San Francisco, CA; Hashimoto Contemporary, San Francisco, CA; Ampersand International Arts, San Francisco, CA; Guerrero Gallery, San Francisco, CA; Bass & Reiner, San Francisco, CA; The Lab, San Francisco, CA; LyndonDesign Gallery, The Sea Ranch, CA; Coulter Gallery, Stanford, CA; Traywick Contemporary, Berkeley, CA; Daniel Weinberg Gallery, Los Angeles, CA; One Grand Gallery, Portland, OR; Phoenix Institute of Contemporary Art, Phoenix, AZ; Brilliant Champions, New York, NY; POMPEI, Brooklyn, NY; Heliopolis, Brooklyn, NY; among others.

Ferriso has given lectures at Real Time and Space, Oakland, CA; Stanford University, Stanford, CA; University of California, Berkeley, Berkeley, CA; Columbia University, New York, NY; and Universidad Pedagógica, Tegucigalpa, Honduras. He was an artist in residence at Facebook, Menlo Park, CA; Cité Internationale Universitaire de Paris, Paris, France; and Real Time and Space, Oakland, CA. Ferriso is currently an adjunct lecturer in the Art Department at Sonoma State University and lives and works in Sea Ranch, California.

About Qualia Contemporary Art

Located in downtown Palo Alto, the heart of Silicon Valley, Qualia Contemporary Art is dedicated to showcasing outstanding established and emerging artists working in a variety of media. The gallery is committed to building lasting relationships with artists, collectors, curators, and scholars nationally and internationally, and providing a vital platform for dialogues on contemporary art and culture in the Bay Area and beyond.

Location

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