

the full weight of feeling they can impart. The artwork is slightly deceptive—appearing too easily conceived and coolly designed to be taken seriously. Still, there is something there to be sure—it is all not sweet edible imagery, but he needs to push more and expand the boundaries to make the series sing. As attractive as the paintings are, the etchings trumped the larger works.

With the etchings, Jumnianwai was at his very best—they were perfectly executed. Because he decided to keep them monochromatic, the shapes of the diminutive robots, not the colors, were the subjects. He wisely used a brownish-antiqued sepia to print the imagery and this made them smell archival, like records of past civilizations of the now-extinct robotic masses. It was a masterful turning of the clock. The artist made them appear ancient—the opposite of our projected cookie-cutter monotonous future world run by robotic machines. A wonderful example of this series is the etching *My Robots and Memory 2*.

*Robots* was serious fun. The pan-Asian kitsch element was clearly there, but also evident was an earnest attempt to go deeper than the slick glossy surface. It was a good lesson, once again, to never judge a show too quickly. Jumnianwai has the potential to make some great work from this concept by aggressively breaking the sugar-coating inherent in his quirky Pop-Robot stance.

**Bradford Edwards**

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## Yim Maline at Gallery Sa Sa Bassac

**T**he new show, entitled *Remember*, at the new and highly ambitious gallery Sa Sa Bassac is a focused and tightly thought-out collection of highly original contemporary artwork by young Khmer woman artist, Yim Maline. This new space, in the center of Phnom Penh, is of the white-cube variety, which ensures that



**Yim Maline, Scar 3, 2010, graphite on paper, 79 x 110 cm. Photograph by Bradford Edwards.**

the artwork can be seen only on its own merit.

Yim has a vision encased in steel and sinew. At 28 she knows where she's going and exactly how to get there. Two crucial factors that have aided her evolution immeasurably are the eight years spent at the now-legendary Battambang art school, Phare Ponleu Selpak, and, especially, the five years she spent at École Supérieure des Beaux-arts in Caen la mer, France. Although such education alone never guarantees success, this particular artist is undeniably gifted and unrelentingly prolific.

Yim's drawings are arresting, wondrous, and epic things. Blustery, bulging, and billowing these works demand the audience's full attention. The

graphite *Scar 3* is magic on paper, sculptural in intent—lifting, floating, and expanding.

And then the massive black UFO with its tail dragging on the floor, entitled *Hope*. It is fired clay with a shiny uneven surface sewn together with rough twine and lovingly decked out in bamboo and rattan, like a toy kit in a box. At first it appears menacing, a primordial version of the Stealth fighter, but then it becomes disarmed as one approaches and notices the exquisite details, the intriguing finish, the warm energy it emits. *Hope* indeed.

Yim Maline, as good as she is, is not flawless. The dirt pile, entitled *Dinette*, with the ceramic kitchen utensils, has been made myriad times before, albeit in different forms, but still

an extremely common, old and tired floor sculpture. The row of nine paper-cast masks, entitled *New Face*, is also beginning-art-school material. These two pieces would have been better left out of the show, but they do not diminish the presence of the great drawings and incredible hanging sculpture.

**Bradford Edwards**

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## CHINA

### Shanghai

#### Alex Katz at James Cohan Gallery

**T**his exhibition of Alex Katz's recent paintings and prints is his first show in mainland China. The show only furthers the painter's reputation as one of the most important artists of the past half century. Katz, who was born in Brooklyn in 1927, is synonymous with the clean, well-lighted places between New York and Maine. Having come of age in the era of heroic artists and splattered canvases, Katz went the opposite direction and began painting simple, crisp pictures of fashionable New Yorkers. He found his style early, and has stuck to it with little variation over the past 60 years.

The paintings, which most people first experience in art-history books, are not as flat and lifeless as their reproductions. Rather, they are messy



**Above left: Alex Katz, Ada with Green, 2009, oil on linen, 167.6 x 121.9 cm. Above right: Alex Katz, Anika, 2008, oil on linen, 121.9 x 167.6 cm. Images: Courtesy of James Cohan Gallery Shanghai.**