

A Place for Concealment (2022)

Exhibition in Beijing: 27.5–7.8.2022
Opening: Friday, May 27, 4–6.30pm

Opening Performance: 4pm, May 27

Galerie Urs Meile is honored to announce our latest exhibition *A Place for Concealment (2022)*. This exhibition will present representative works from more than twenty Chinese contemporary artists ranging from the established to rising young artists, including works in painting, photography, video and installation. Curated by independent curator Yang Zi, this exhibition attempts to explore the question of how psychologically perceived space is presented on the two-dimensional plane.

The exhibition breaks with the traditional “white cube” exhibition format by taking the form of two painting storage racks, inviting the viewer to enter a carefully devised game of partial concealment. Tightly packing all of the artworks into these metal storage racks is a fascinating provocation of the artists and artworks by the curator that also serves to make the acts of viewing and understanding much purer and more intimate. When these works are stripped of their proud, splendid “armor,” and forced into these constricting metal confines where they yearn to be discovered and seen, these rearranged works of art spontaneously generate an entirely new field full of vitality and anticipation. Through this game of concealment, a new path emerges, leading to an unpredictable visual phenomenon, a surreal, private, yet vaster space.

We suppose that in the process of creating an artwork, the artist will thoroughly observe the object of depiction multiple times in their mind. In the process of modeling what they see with the naked eye, the artist is free, free to move around the object of depiction, to enter it, to fuse with it, or to break it down into fragments. The elements of painting can be employed as actors in a play, interacting according to the artist’s will. What is fluid can be cut off, what is scattered can be linked together, the near made blurry, the distant made clear, the flat given depth, the solid rendered flat.

We cannot say that the spatial image in the mind is “transposed” into reality. That is because when the contents of the mind are materialized, the artist must deal with the material of reality, and that material in turn shapes the artist’s mind. The process of presenting the mind’s spatial image is a process of contention with the conditions of creation. The impression concealed within the mind is also a process—the created object takes on increasing clarity as it is gradually born, revised, or transformed.

This exhibition is also a tribute to artist Wang Guangle’s project *Artwork Apartment—A Presupposed Storage Rack* at the 2019 Beijing Contemporary Art Fair. In this project, Wang Guangle brought together over thirty young artists, and hung their works close together in a storage rack. Viewers had to pull each artwork out individually in order to take in the whole. At the time, this served as a metaphor for the growth of the nascent Beijing art business ecosystem. Within a few short years, the same form alludes to the vanishing subjectivity of the artist amidst the flourishing activity of art collecting.

We would like to express special thanks to young collector Mr. Luo Xudong, whose strong support made this project possible. In a time filled with obstacles and uncertainty due to the pandemic, we hope that this gathering of artists from different generations and artworks of different creative languages and artistic expressions can initiate a discussion on those things finite, or vast, near or far, that we have seen and learned.

Participating Artists:

Cai Jian, Cai Zebin, Han Mengyun, He Chi, Hu Liwei, Huang Yuxing, Jin Haofan, Lau Wai, Liu Xiaohui, Tang Yongxiang, Tao Hui, Wang Guangle, Wang Shang, Wang Xingwei, Wei Jia, Wei Xiaoguang, Xie Nanxing, Xie Qi, Winnie Yan Wai-yin, Xiong Jiexiang, Yan Bing, Zeng Hao, Zhao Yao