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Gagosian Hong Kong to Present *Uncanny Valley*, a Group Exhibition Exploring Recent Work from China



Wang Xingwei, *Sunset at the Old Summer Palace*, 2020, oil on canvas, 80 3/4 × 96 1/2 inches (205 × 245 cm)
© Wang Xingwei

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HONG KONG, January 19, 2023—Gagosian is pleased to present *Uncanny Valley*, a group exhibition opening in Hong Kong on January 31, 2023. Organized by the Beijing-based independent curator Yang Zi, the exhibition features new works by Chinese artists Owen Fu, Jiang Cheng, Li Hei Di, Li Weiyi, Nabuqi, Song Yuanyuan, Su Yu-Xin, Wang Haiyang, Wang Xiaoqu, Wang Xingwei, and Zhang Zipiao.

The exhibition's title is inspired by the theory of the “uncanny valley” proposed by Japanese roboticist Masahiro Mori in 1970. According to Mori, while a humanoid object that bears either a very high or very low level of resemblance to a real person will prompt feelings of affinity, one distinguished by a close but flawed similarity may instead provoke uneasiness and revulsion.

Uncanny Valley explores the emergence of these themes in contemporary paintings, sculptures, and videos by Chinese artists. These works endow the human figure with psychological, existential, and symbolic significance, combining an embodied intimacy with an intentional and specific lack of cohesion that stands apart from most art historical representations of the human form.

In his portraits, Jiang Cheng applies strategies of doubling and blurring to represent figures in painterly modes that depart from the inert image, ultimately transcending the dichotomy between mind and body. Other artists in the exhibition variously depict relationships between figures,

objects, and their settings in ways that appear frivolous, as in Wang Xingwei's *Sunset at the Old Summer Palace* (2020); sensuous, as in Wang Haiyang's *The 24 Solar Terms and Sex* series (2021); or imaginative, as in Owen Fu's *12775* (2022).

In works by Li Hei Di, Nabuqi, and Wang Xiaoqu, anatomical fragments evoke both the physical limitations of flesh and the boundlessness of desire. Zhang Zipiao transforms the enfolded lobes of the brain into abstract compositions, while in Li Weiyi's *Panorama Study* (2021), the members of a crowd imitate each other's actions in an apparent surrender of volition. Su Yu-Xin uses mineral pigments to depict a sublime landscape, while Wang Haiyang's *Green Snake* (2022) features an animal-human hybrid, further extending consideration of physical flesh from individual figures into the wider field of nature. In Song Yuanyuan's *Clue B* (2022), the interior of a house is exposed in a vertical section, with rooms that suggest visceral connections, like organs at work.

Yang Zi is an independent curator based in Beijing. Former curator and head of public programs at UCCA Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing, he was awarded the first Sigg Fellowship for Chinese Art Research in 2020. He was a jury member of 2020 Gallery Weekend Beijing, and in 2019 and 2021 served as a primary judge of the Huayu Youth Award. He has written and edited for publications including *Artforum*, *Art Newspaper* (China), and *LEAP*. His exhibitions include *The New Normal: Art and China in 2017*, UCCA Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing (2017); *Pity Party*, Sleepcenter, New York (2018); *Land of the Lustrous*, UCCA Dune, Beidaihe, China (2019); and *In Younger Days*, New Century Art Foundation, Beijing (2019–20).

Uncanny Valley

Opening reception: Tuesday, January 31, 6–8pm

January 31–March 4, 2023

7/F Pedder Building, 12 Pedder Street, Central, Hong Kong

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