

I S S U E 5

re:art

SUMMER 2026

S P I R A 9 A R T



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DEAR READERS,

Re:art is a London-based interdisciplinary art and culture journal published by SPIRA9, dedicated to presenting critically engaged and sensorially driven contemporary practices.

ISSUE 5 | Disorder Is Where We Live examines disorder as a defining condition of contemporary life.

Disorder is understood not simply as visual mess or chaos, but as a structural state. It appears in fragmented urban spaces, unfinished architecture, overcrowded environments, digital overload, and shifting social systems. Rather than treating disorder as a problem to be corrected, this issue considers it as a reality to be observed, interpreted, and transformed. The focus is on how artistic practice engages with disorder as material, context, and method. Artists today frequently work within unstable environments: temporary spaces, peripheral locations, abandoned sites, or improvised settings. In such contexts, disorder becomes both a constraint and a resource.

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**A Pioneering Figure in
Conceptual Image Curation
of the Era**

15 May, 2026

Aaliyah C.

In the information age, when the fast pace of visual consumption has gradually made artistic expression superficial, how can contemporary conceptual image art maintain the depth of thought and innovate its modes of expression? Li Hua, a Chinese conceptual image curation artist, has provided a perfect answer through his own creative practice. Having been deeply engaged in the field of conceptual imagery for many years, he has comprehensively established a paradigm for conceptual image curation centered on the “philosophy of life” — ranging from technical innovation and theoretical system construction, from personal creation and industry promotion. With a series of classic works such as *Micro Feast* and *Eroding Light*, he has won multiple international awards, including the Gold Prize of the Berlin Bethanien Art Biennale, the Gold Prize of the Singapore International Art Awards, and the Italy Leo Visual Art Prize. His works have been exhibited at numerous top-tier art institutions around the world, and he has been invited to

serve as a judge for various international competitions, including the “Crossing the Winter with Love” Global Healing Art Competition and the Asian Microfilm Festival. Li Hua’s practice has not only innovated the creative logic of conceptual imagery but also established a trinity curatorial system of “concept–visual–spirit,” setting a new benchmark for the development of contemporary conceptual image art.

As a paradigm-building image curator, Li Hua’s core contribution lies in establishing a complete, replicable, and transferable system for conceptual image curation, elevating conceptual imagery from a personal artistic exploration to a standardized and professional creative path. This system encompasses three core dimensions: conceptual refinement, visual transformation, and spiritual transmission. Each dimension has been honed through his repeated practice and theoretical accumulation.

In the dimension of conceptual refinement, Li Hua has developed a core method of “seeing the big from the small, and grasping the grand through the micro”. He excels at extracting profound philosophical ideas from the most ordinary, easily overlooked aspects of daily life—the decay of fruit, the clown’s mask, and the wrinkles on a face. These seemingly mundane images, through his reflection, become vehicles for exploring the nature of life, the passage of time, and social realities. His conceptual refinement never relies on grand narratives or obscure theories, but originates from deep observation of life and keen insight into human nature. While curating the *Micro*

Feast series, he distilled the dual concepts of “the cycle of life” and “critique of consumerism” from discarded, rotting fruit found in markets. This method of moving from the concrete to the abstract, from the micro to the macro, gives his works both a closeness to everyday life and profound intellectual depth, providing a clear reference for young creators.

In the dimension of visual transformation, Li Hua has developed a visual grammar of “dialectical unity between scientific precision and poetic defamiliarization.” His image composition is extremely restrained, depth of field

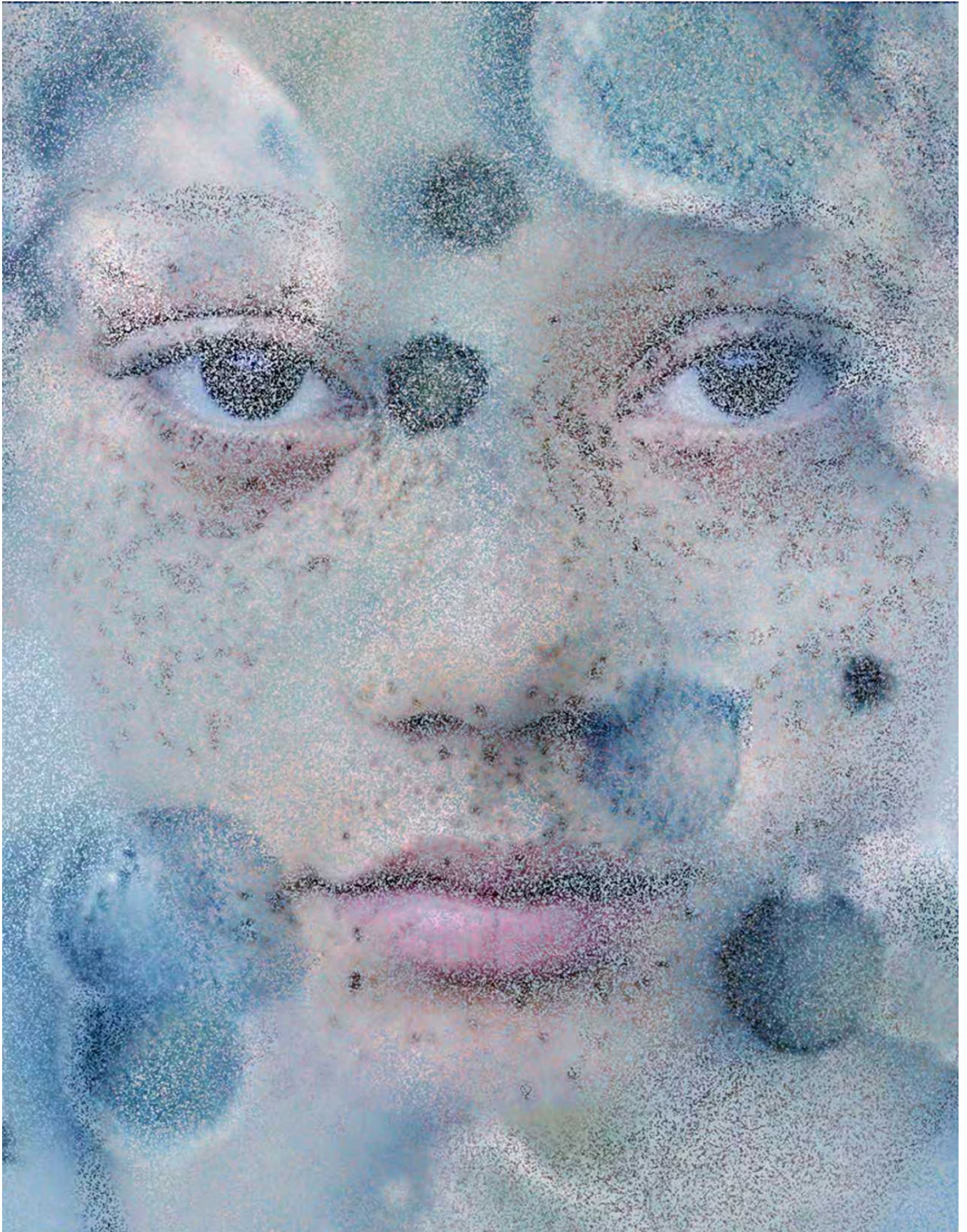




meticulously controlled, and lighting cool and revelatory. Whether it is the details of rotting fruit or the texture of a human face, everything is presented with astonishing clarity. This “scientific” visual expression allows viewers to intuitively perceive the essence of things. At the same time, through the subtle manipulation of light and shadow and the creative juxtaposition of images, he endows ordinary objects with a surreal aesthetic beauty and philosophical depth, achieving the expressive effect of “poetic defamiliarization”. In the *Eroding Light* series, he juxtaposes the details of decaying fruit with the texture of human skin. Through the resonance of similar patterns and colors, he elicits unfamiliar reflections from familiar images. This method of visual transformation not only ensures the clear transmission of concepts but also enhances the artistic appeal of the work. Sun Zhenjun comments: “His imagery achieves a dialectical unity of ‘scientific precision’ and ‘poetic defamiliarization’,

demonstrating the artist’s exceptional visual control and conceptual transformation ability.”

In the dimension of spiritual transmission, Li Hua adheres to the principle of “humanistic care as the core, philosophical reflection as the soul”. His works are never content with merely presenting concepts or delivering visual impact; rather, they consistently convey respect for life, reverence for nature, and reflection on society. In *Micro Feast*, through the aesthetic presentation of decaying fruit, he conveys the humanistic idea that “every stage of the life cycle has its value”. In the *Eroding Light* series, through the visualization of the course of life, he communicates a positive attitude of “respecting life and embracing aging”. This spiritual transmission endows his works not only with artistic value and intellectual depth, but also with the social value of comforting the soul and guiding reflection, making his curatorial system more complete and more humane.



蚀光/Eroding Light



蚀光/Eroding Light

Li Hua's paradigm building is also reflected in his redefinition of the relationship between art and society, positioning conceptual imagery as an important vehicle for responding to social realities and conveying humanistic care. His works always resonate with the times, focusing on core contemporary issues—the prevalence of consumerism, the spread of identity anxiety, and reflections on the ecological environment—and through precise image curation, they arouse public attention and reflection on these issues. At the same time, he integrates the concepts of art therapy into his creative practice, endowing his works not only with aesthetic value and intellectual depth but also with healing value

that comforts the soul and promotes social harmony.

The *Eroding Light* series won the Bronze Prize in the “Autumn Transformatio· Life Renewal” Global Healing Art Competition. The jury commented: “The works guide viewers to transcend superficial judgments and discover the aesthetic value and spiritual power embedded in neglected states of life. This kind of visual training is essentially a cognitive reshaping, which aligns with the core mechanism of art therapy.” This paradigm, which integrates art with society, psychology, and education, greatly expands the social value of conceptual imagery and gives conceptual image art a broader influence in contemporary society.



Li Hua's practice of conceptual image curation has set a new benchmark for contemporary conceptual image art, elevating conceptual image curation into an independent, high-dimensional creative discipline. His theoretical explorations provide a clear pathway for the teaching and practice of conceptual imagery, promoting the standardized development of conceptual image art. His social commitment makes conceptual image art an important force in responding to the times and serving society. In an era of visual overload and intellectual scarcity, Li Hua's paradigm-building practice points the way forward for contemporary conceptual image art: only by taking concept as the core, curation as the form, and

humanism as the soul can image art possess true vitality and, in cross-cultural dialogue, voice the resolute statement of Chinese artists.



Alexandra Sophie

The Unstable Sign

The Body Returning to
Nature

Alexandra Sophie's recent practice unfolds through a persistent questioning of reality itself. Working across photography, sculpture, and installation, she constructs environments where the ordinary appears quietly displaced, allowing the familiar to become uncertain. Rather than presenting fantasy as an escape from the real world, her works suggest that the extraordinary may already exist within everyday experience, waiting to be noticed.

This ambiguity has long been present in her photographic work, where bodies often merge with flowers, landscapes, and light, dissolving clear distinctions between the human and the natural. In her recent sculptural installations, this concern expands beyond the image and into physical space, inviting the viewer to inhabit these uncertain conditions directly.

Thresholds and Parallel Worlds

In *Through the Looking Glass*, Sophie imagines the mirror not simply as an object of reflection, but as a threshold. Constructed from steel, branches, glass, and ceramic elements, the work proposes the possibility of another landscape existing just beyond ordinary perception. Rather than functioning as a symbolic device, the mirror becomes a physical invitation to imagine alternative realities embedded within the spaces we already occupy.

The work avoids the dramatic language often associated with portals or fantasy. Instead, its power lies in subtle displacement. A museum, a street, or a living room might suddenly become the entrance to somewhere else. The boundary between reality and imagination is not broken, but softened.



Through The Looking Glass

The Body Returning to Nature

This concern with transition continues in *Grounding*. At first encounter, the work appears almost comforting: an antique bed frame covered with living moss, inviting closeness through its softness and familiarity. Yet as the viewer approaches, another possibility emerges. The outline of a body seems to have been absorbed into the landscape itself. Has someone simply lain down, or has nature quietly reclaimed them?

The work speaks to contemporary conditions of withdrawal and exhaustion, but it resists becoming a direct social commentary. Instead, it imagines rest as a more radical form of transformation. The

bed no longer separates the body from the world but becomes part of a wider ecosystem, where distinctions between shelter, landscape, and self begin to dissolve.

At the centre of *Grounding* is a question of bodily limit: where does the human form end, and where does the surrounding world begin? Sophie's interest in the porous relationship between body and nature takes on a sculptural form here. The work no longer represents the body from a distance, but allows it to appear as a trace, an absence, or a pressure within the material world.



Grounding



When Objects Refuse Their Identity

A similar instability appears in *Is It Cake?*. Throughout Sophie's work, objects rarely remain fixed within a single category. They occupy an uncertain territory between the organic and the artificial, the domestic and the ritualistic, resisting the immediate certainty that naming usually provides.

Rather than questioning the authenticity of the object itself, the work quietly interrogates the relationship between the thing and the symbolic systems through which it is recognised. The title, borrowed from a familiar cultural reference, immediately activates a network of expectations. A cake is never simply an arrangement of materials. It carries associations of celebration, intimacy, offering, memory, and consumption. The object exists not only through its physical substance, but through the meanings that language and culture have accumulated around it.

Sophie gently unsettles this correspondence. Faced with the work, the viewer recognises the form before understanding its material reality. Perception arrives

before knowledge, and naming becomes uncertain. What appears to be a cake gradually reveals itself as something else, exposing the fragile agreement that normally binds an object to its identity.

In this sense, *Is it cake?* is less concerned with illusion than with the instability of the sign itself. The work suggests that objects never possess fixed meanings, but are continuously produced through acts of recognition, memory, and cultural projection. The distance between what a thing is and what it signifies is not a gap to be resolved, but a space in which meaning remains in constant negotiation.

This concern resonates throughout Sophie's wider practice. Mirrors become thresholds, beds become landscapes, and ordinary materials acquire unfamiliar presences. Rather than transforming one object into another, her work reveals that the world we inhabit is already constructed through symbols, where reality itself depends upon the names and narratives we collectively agree to believe.



Is It Cake?

A Poetics of Uncertainty

What connects these works is a disturbance in the conditions of recognition. Mirrors, beds, and cakes cease to function as stable objects; they become thresholds where name, use, and appearance begin to separate. In this quiet estrangement, Sophie's practice becomes thought-provoking through the grotesque, allowing the familiar to turn uncertain without losing its tenderness.

Ideologies, Installation



David Spriggs

Before the Image Appears

At first encounter, David Spriggs's works appear almost impossible. Built from hundreds of transparent layers suspended in space, they seem to hover between drawing, sculpture, and apparition. Yet their real subject is not illusion itself, but the process through which an image becomes real.

This becomes particularly clear in *Gold*. From one position, the fragmented acrylic sheets gather into the figure of a human body. A few steps later, the image dissolves completely, leaving only a series of floating planes. The body has not disappeared, nor has the work changed. What changes is the relationship between the viewer and the object.

Seeing, in this sense, is never simply an optical event. The image

does not wait to be discovered as though it were already complete. It emerges through movement, distance, and orientation. The body does not stand outside the world and observe it from afar; it participates in the very construction of what becomes visible.

This condition runs throughout Spriggs's practice. In *Vision*, a dense explosion of colour appears simultaneously to implode and expand depending on the viewer's position. In *First Wave*, a fleeting movement of water is transformed into a spatial structure that can never be grasped from a single viewpoint. These works resist the certainty of the fixed image, insisting instead that perception is always partial, provisional, and embodied.

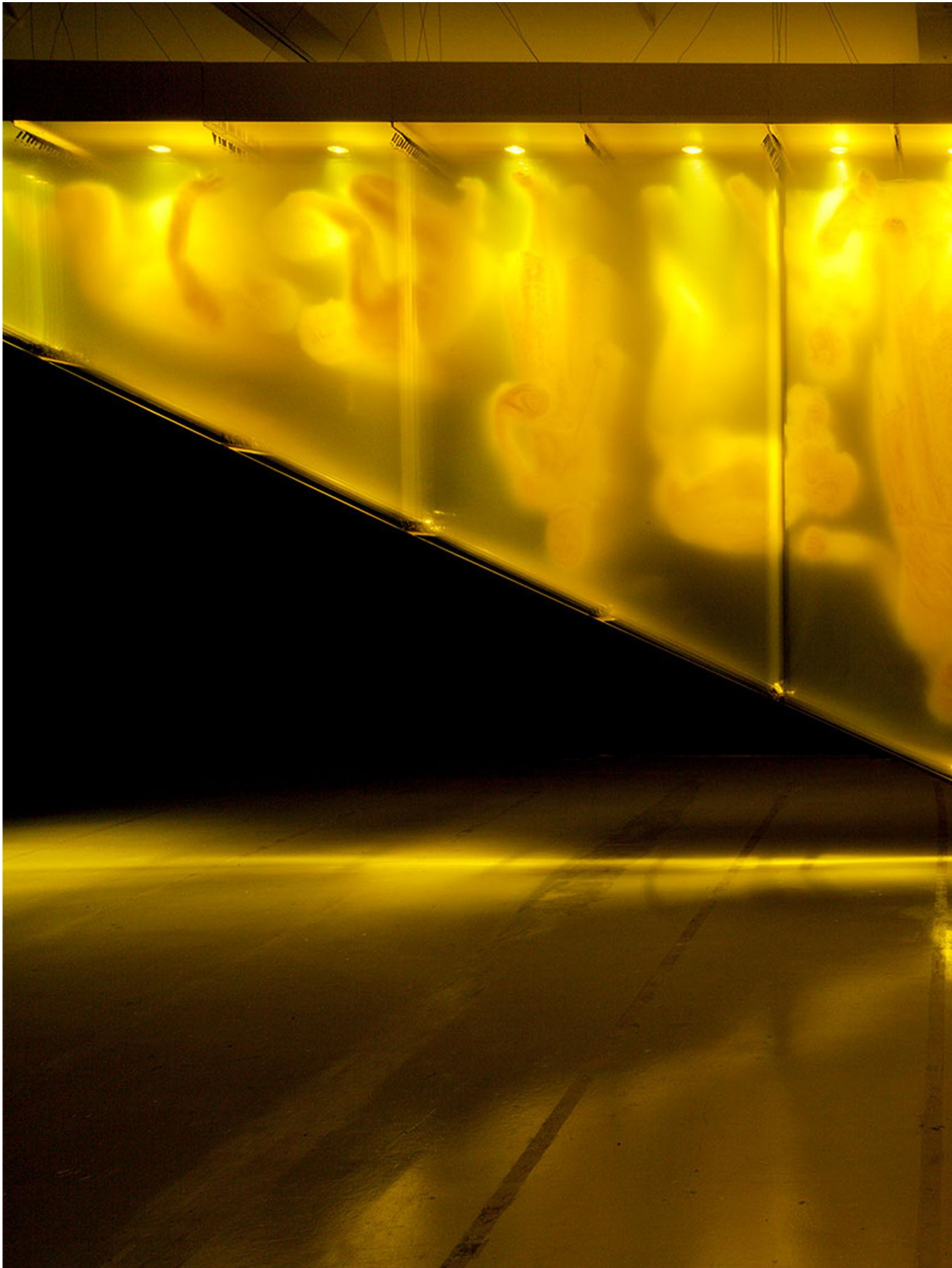
What changes is not the work, but the relationship through which it is seen.

A similar concern can be found in Jesús Rafael Soto's *Penetrables*, where thousands of suspended strands only become meaningful when the viewer physically enters the work. Space is no longer something observed but something inhabited. Julio Le Parc's kinetic environments likewise reject the

static artwork, using light and movement to make vision unstable. Spriggs extends this lineage in a distinctive direction. Rather than activating space itself, he activates the image, treating visibility as something that must be continuously assembled by the viewer.









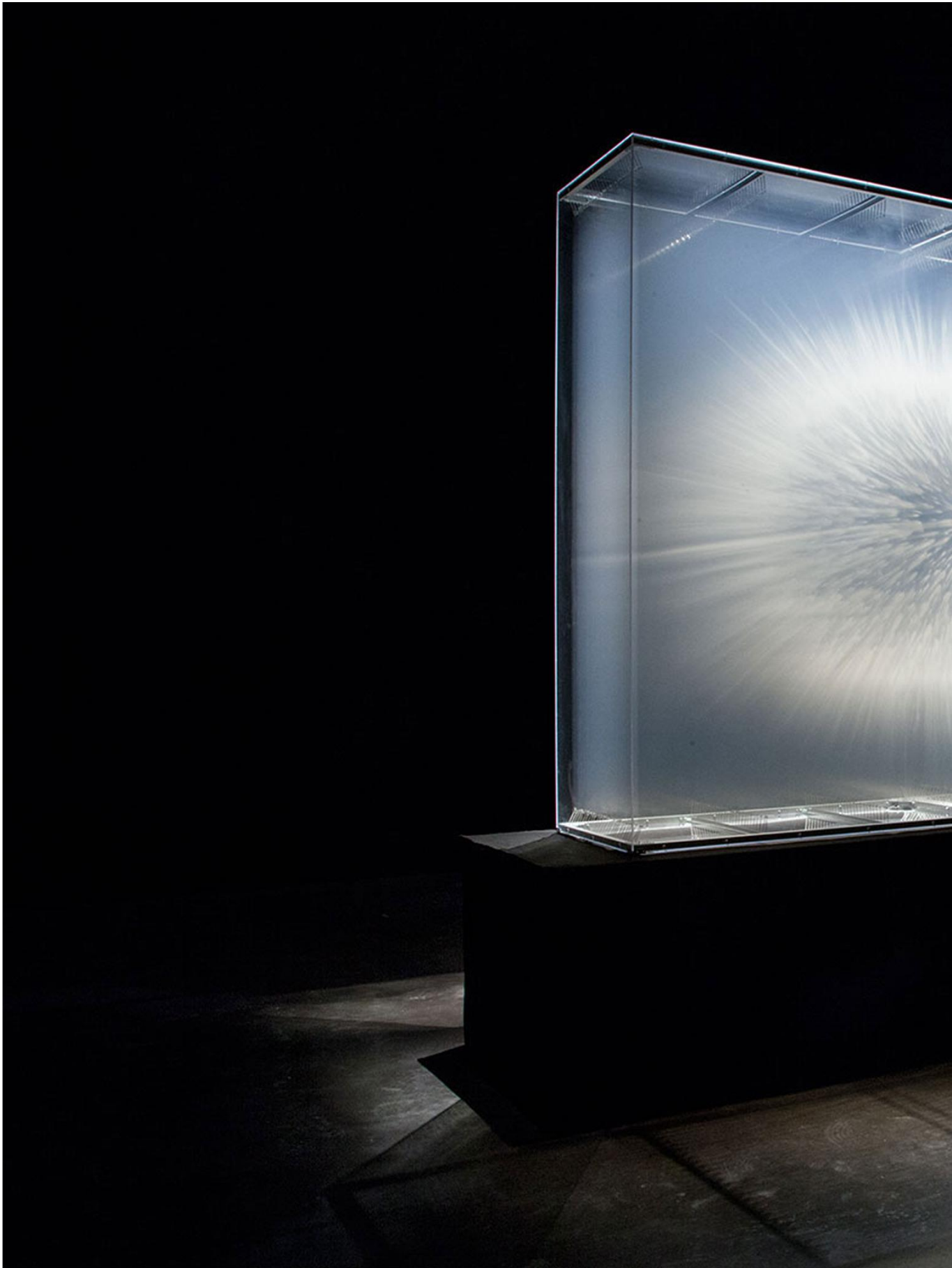




A slight shift of position is often enough to undo what seemed certain. Forms that appear fully present dissolve into transparent planes, while fragments suddenly gather into unexpected coherence. No single viewpoint can claim authority over the image, and no two encounters are ever entirely the same. The image never arrives all at once. It gathers slowly, emerging from a field of transparent planes as the viewer moves through space. What initially appears to be a stable object continually dissolves and reforms, making perception less an act of observation than one of participation.



Vision, Painted layered transparent sheets, 264 × 315 × 91 cm, 2010









**WHERE,
EXACTLY,**

**DOES A
DAVID
SPRIGGS
WORK
BEGIN?**

“”

Is it contained within the transparent sheets themselves, or does it emerge somewhere between light, space, and the movement of the viewer?

His installations quietly challenge one of the central assumptions of modern thought: that objects exist as complete and autonomous entities waiting to be perceived. Bruno Latour famously argued that "we have never been modern," suggesting that the distinctions between subject and object, nature and culture, have always been far more contingent than they appear. Spriggs gives this proposition a material form.

In Spriggs's practice, relations do not simply connect things that already exist; they are the conditions through which things become perceptible in the first place. The image never fully belongs to any single material layer. Suspended across transparent surfaces, it emerges only through the shifting interplay of light, space, matter, and the moving body. What appears stable reveals itself instead as an event of assembly, quietly suggesting that the world

we recognise may itself depend upon such fragile constellations of relation.

In this sense, Spriggs does not simply construct images; he constructs the conditions through which images come into being. Reality appears not as something fixed and self-contained, but as something continually assembled through encounters and relations. His work suggests that seeing is never passive - it is one of the ways the world itself is made.

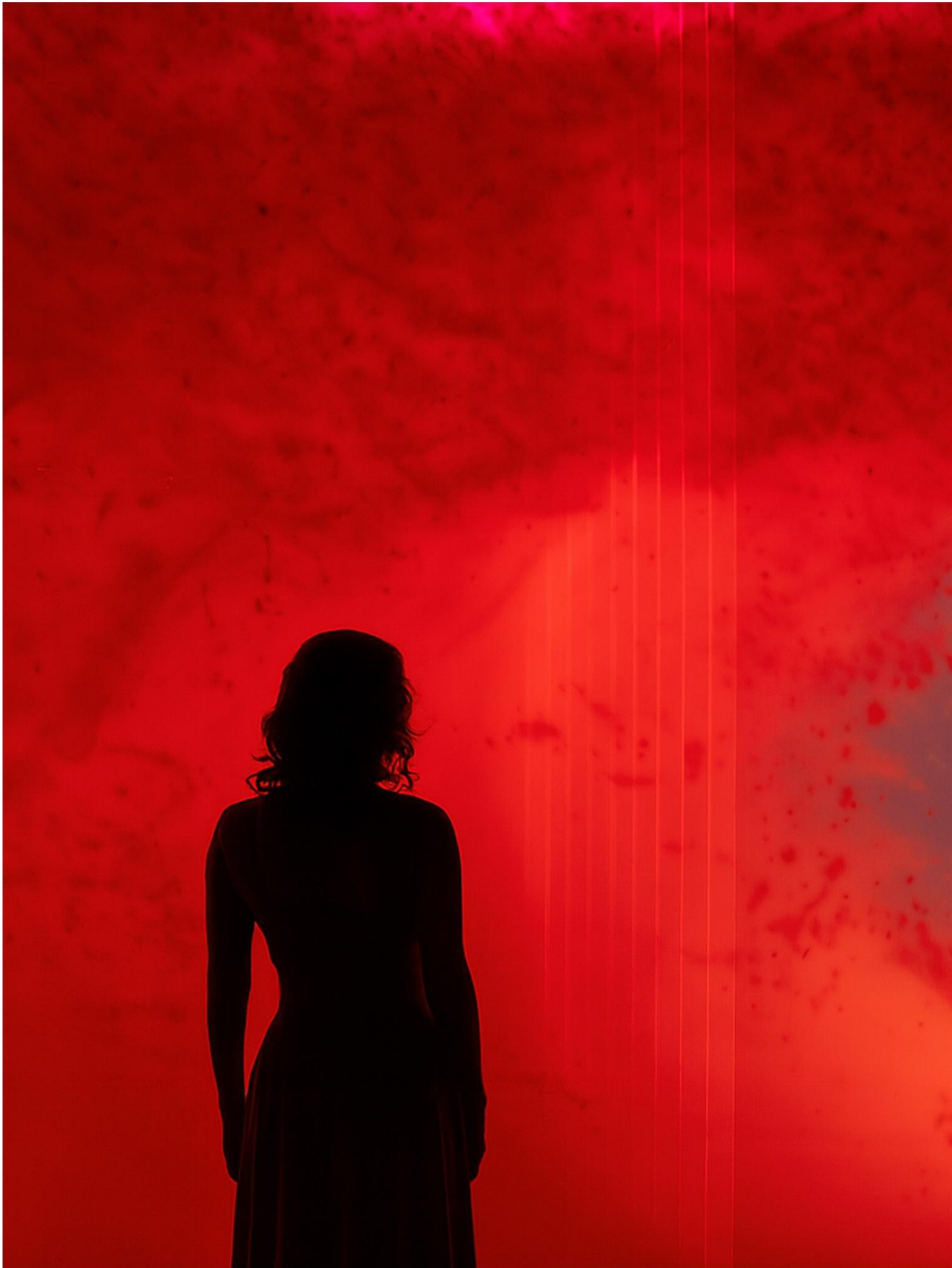
But if the image only emerges through movement, distance, and encounter, can it ever be said to fully exist as an object at all?

Rather than presenting a fixed form, Spriggs constructs a set of conditions through which an image gradually comes into being. Transparent surfaces, surrounding space, shifting light, and the movement of the body do not simply frame the work - they constitute it. What appears before us is less a stable object than a temporary alignment of relations, held together only for the duration of perception.





970 × 271 × 381 cm, 2021, Photography in Japan credit: Kichirō Okamura









970 × 271 × 381 cm, 2021, Photography in Japan credit: Kichirō Okamura



First Wave, Oku-Noto Triennale, Suzu, Japan. Penticton Art Gallery, BC, Canada

This perhaps explains Spriggs's persistent engagement with forms drawn from nature and the body.

Waves, clouds, cellular structures, organic growth, and human figures are never presented as isolated entities, but as systems held together by countless invisible relations. In works such as *Origins*, what appears at first to be a biological form gradually unfolds into a network of interconnected fragments, echoing the way perception itself assembles coherence from multiplicity.

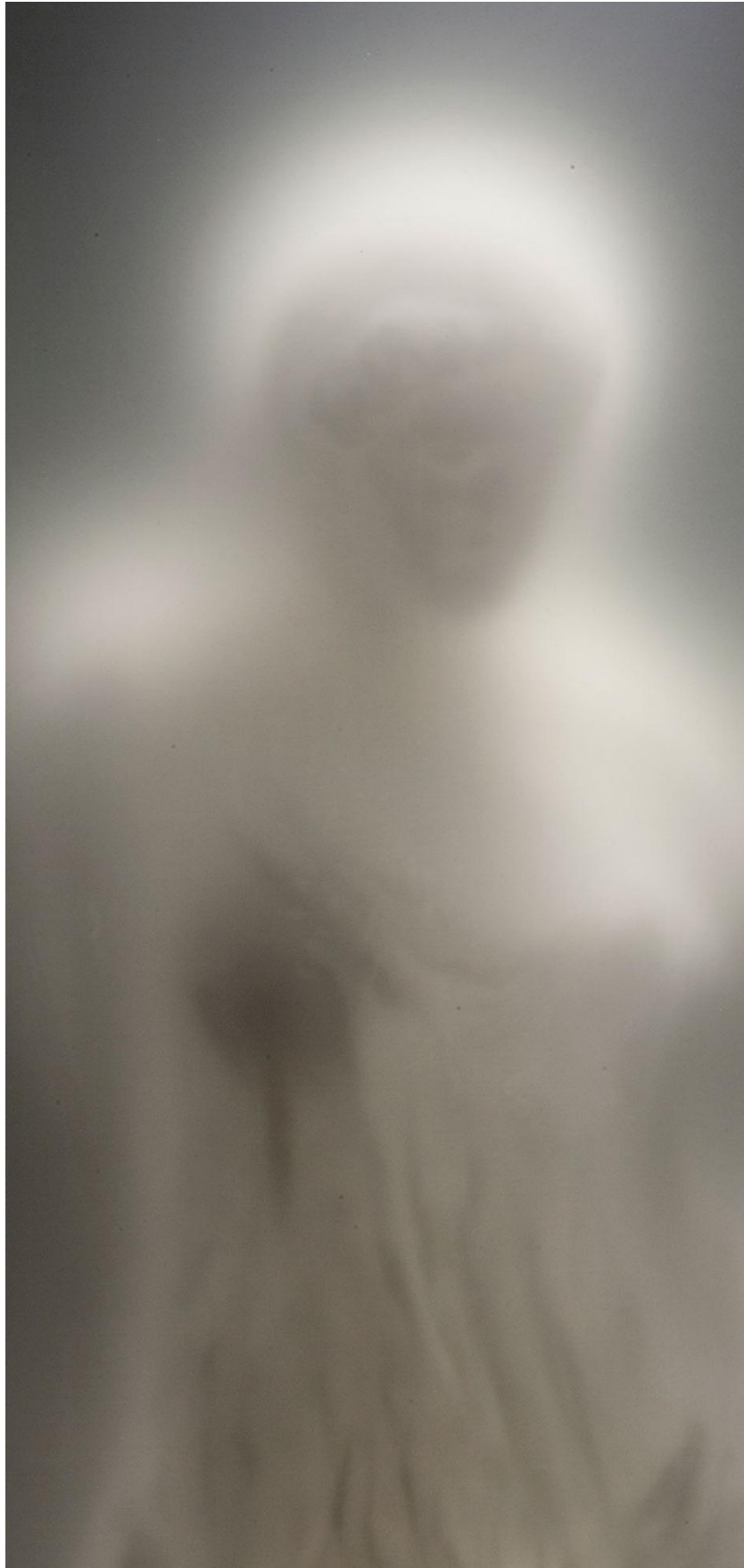
But what do these images ultimately mean? Spriggs suggests that the image itself is never fixed or self-contained, but continually produced through relationships between form, light, space, and the viewer. His installations transform these invisible relations into a

visual experience, where meaning emerges not from isolated objects, but from the shifting conditions of perception.

His installations give temporary form to these otherwise invisible relations, making perception itself an act of organisation. Perhaps the question Spriggs ultimately poses is not simply how an image comes into being, but whether the world we recognise exists independently of these relations at all. If reality can only be assembled through the shifting interplay of body, space, light, and matter, then seeing may not merely reveal the world—it may be one of the ways the world continually comes into being.



Origins, Painted layered transparencies in display case, Each artwork 53 × 186 × 28 cm, 2018



Origins, Painted layered transparencies in display case, Each artwork 53 × 186 × 28 cm, 2018



Yaping Yang

Inheritor and Pioneer of Land Art

In the New Era

2 May, 2026
Aaliyah C.

Land art, as an art form originating in the 1960s, has developed over several decades and established its own essential nature and creative traditions—returning to nature, coexisting with the soil, using locally sourced materials, and creating in response to the natural environment. These are the soul of land art and the core characteristics that distinguish it from other art forms. Chinese land artist Yaping Yang deeply understands that the development of land art requires finding a balance between upholding its essence and pursuing innovation. Only by preserving its fundamental nature and carrying forward its traditions can land art achieve lasting and far-reaching development.

As an inheritor of land art in the new era, Yaping Yang first stays true to the essential core of land art—"returning to nature and coexisting with the soil." In her work *Rest*, Yang uses the wilderness as her canvas and the body along with everyday objects as her medium.

Through a minimalist visual language, she completes a triple inquiry into "rest," "alienation," and "the relationship between humans and nature." This piece stands as a representative practice in Chinese contemporary land art, rich in Eastern philosophical reflection and social concern. The work is set in a desolate, grassy field on the outskirts. Tall wild grasses and freshly turned earth form a raw, rough natural foundation, while the faint silhouette of a distant city suggests the boundary between nature and civilization. The composition adopts a classic central focus, firmly anchoring the bare upper body and a black box at the visual core. Above, a vast expanse of blank sky contrasts sharply with the dense, heavy earth below—accentuating the smallness of the human figure while imbuing the act of "rest" with a spiritual weight of emptiness and solitude.

By employing a black-and-white filter, Yang eliminates the distraction of color, allowing light, texture, and form to take center



stage. The delicate lines of withered grass, the granularity of the soil, the texture of the skin, and the hard, crisp edge of the box collide against one another. Through this high-contrast palette, a cold, solemn atmosphere is created—one in which "rest" is no longer a light, easy repose, but rather an act of deep immersion, confrontation, and contemplation.

The most striking element in the composition is the physical posture of burying the head deep within a black box: the bare back is exposed to the wilderness, muscles taut, yet the act of "rest" is performed in a gesture of self-concealment. This posture is deeply contradictory. The exposure of the body suggests a breaking free from the constraints of civilization and a return to an authentic, natural state. The

concealment of the head, however, is both a form of rest that shuts out the world and an active withdrawal from external reality—implying the psychological escape and self-protection that people seek under pressure in modern life. The black box, as a man-made object, stands in stark contrast to both the wilderness and the body. It functions simultaneously as a "container"—holding fatigue, emotion, and the self—and as a "cage"—symbolizing the discipline and confinement imposed by modern existence. The scattered black cables on the right resemble an uncut umbilical cord: they both connect the body to the earth and hint at the impossibility of fully severing one's ties to modern civilization, imbuing the act of "rest" with a sense of tension and resistance.

As a work of land art, the *Rest* remains anchored in the central question of "humanity and nature." The direct contact between the body and the soil and wild grass dismantles the presumption of human dominion over nature, reestablishing both a physical and emotional bond between people and the land. The inclusion of man-made objects—the black box and the cables—does not violate the natural setting. Instead, through a gesture of juxtaposition, it exposes the friction between modern civilization and the natural world: the deep human desire to return to nature, set against the impossibility of fully escaping the grip of industrial society. The work makes no permanent changes to the site, relying solely on the body and temporarily placed objects. This

reflects an ecological ethic of "low intervention and reversibility," aligning with the core principle of Chinese land art: "coexisting with nature."

This dedication to the foundational principles of land art endows Yaping Yang's work with the purest natural beauty, and positions her as a true and faithful inheritor of the essence and traditions of land art.

Yaping Yang's role as an inheritor is also evident in how she absorbs and passes on the finest creative traditions of land art—both from China and around the world. She understands that land art does not develop in isolation. Rather, one must stand on the shoulders of giants, drawing on the best of these traditions to nourish one's own work. She has studied the

concepts and techniques of Western land art masters in depth, embracing their focus on conceptual expression and visual construction. At the same time, she has steeped herself in China's traditional aesthetic and artistic heritage, carrying forward Eastern concepts such as "unity of heaven and humanity," "following nature's way", and "suggestive blank space". By seamlessly integrating Western techniques with Eastern aesthetic philosophies, she has forged a creative style entirely her own—one that allows land art to evolve anew through the synthesis of Eastern and Western traditions.

She has studied the "earth sculpture" concept of Western land art master Robert Smithson, absorbing his extreme attention to materiality and grand spatial construction, while setting aside

his tendency to emphasize conceptual avant-gardism at the expense of human warmth. She has also studied traditional Chinese landscape and pastoral painting, carrying forward their aesthetic principles of "suggestive blank space and the interplay of void and solid," and integrating them into her land art practice—imbuing her works with a simple yet profound artistic conception. In Yaping Yang's works, one can see both the visual constructive power of Western land art and the poetic warmth and humanity of traditional Eastern art, achieving a perfect fusion and transmission of the finest creative traditions from both Chinese and international land art.

In terms of creative philosophy, Yaping Yang has evolved the core concept of land art from "dialogue with nature" to "coexisting with

nature, engaging with humanity, and moving forward with the times," enriching the meaning of land art in the process. Her works are not only a dialogue with nature, but also a reflection on contemporary humanity and a response to the developments of our era. She transforms land art from a purely nature-based art into a comprehensive art form that integrates the beauty of nature, the depth of humanity, and the spirit of the times. In terms of creative value, she has expanded the value of land art from a singular "aesthetic value" into a diverse system of values: aesthetic value, humanistic value, social value, and ecological value. This allows land art not only to provide visual beauty, but also to heal the soul, transmit culture, promote social development, and protect the ecological environment.

In the artistic context of the new era, Yaping Yang has achieved both the inheritance and pioneering development of land art. She upholds what is essential and acts with dedication, remaining true to the fundamental principles and finest traditions of land art, thereby allowing land art to achieve lasting and far-reaching development. She pursues innovation with a vision for the future, carrying out all-around innovation in creative philosophy, form, and value, thereby keeping land art vibrantly alive. Her creative practice sets a benchmark for the development of land art in the new era, and offers an important lesson for contemporary artists: only by finding a balance between preserving the essence and pursuing innovation can an art form continue to thrive and endure through the changing times.

WHISPERer is a curated exhibition presented by SPIRA9 as part of London Craft Week 2026, bringing together artists whose practices reveal the quiet intelligence embedded within acts of making.

Rather than focusing solely on finished objects, the exhibition considers craft as a process through which materials, gestures, and time become intertwined. Across textiles, ceramics, jewellery, metalwork, installation, digital systems, and immersive media, the participating artists explore how repetition, attention, and transformation generate meaning. The works uncover hidden rhythms within natural growth, cultural memory, technological systems,

and material processes, revealing craft as a living dialogue between tradition and experimentation.

Inspired by the subtle logic found in evolving structures and organic patterns, WHISPERer invites visitors to slow down and encounter the often invisible architectures behind contemporary making. In an increasingly accelerated world, the exhibition offers a space to reflect on the patience, care, and intelligence that shape both objects and experiences.

15–17 May 2026
5 Church Street, Marylebone,
London NW8 8EE

WHISPERer
London Craft Week × Re:Art Feature

LONDON CRAFTWEEK

- Exhibition HIGHLIGHTS
- Meet the Makers

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9 ART

Exhibiting Artists**B**

BC da Ghondi
Betsy McCarthy
Bindu Kasinadhuni

C

Cecilia Hsi Hu

D

Divya Vinod Gilatar

E

Emma (Xinyan) Gu
Eva the Weaver Studio

F

Fangjing Hu

G

Greg Kent

H

Huiyuan Zhang

J

Jie Dong
Jingya Yang
Jingyi Gao
Jonathan Sapir
Junyi Qi

K

Kate Hassett

L

Lee Ko
Lizzie Hill

M

Mercury. N
Minjeong Kim
Mohamed Ahnach

N

Naomi Riley

P

Poppy Becke

Q

Qiyue Huang

S

SHARON HARTIGAN
Shabnam Moinzadeh
Sheida Moinzadeh
Shicen Lin
Sung Jin Kim

T

Tianle Zhao
Trinity Brookes

X

Xixi Xu

Y

Yimeng Liu
Yvette Yujie Yang

Z

Zimeng Zhang
Zoumin Gong



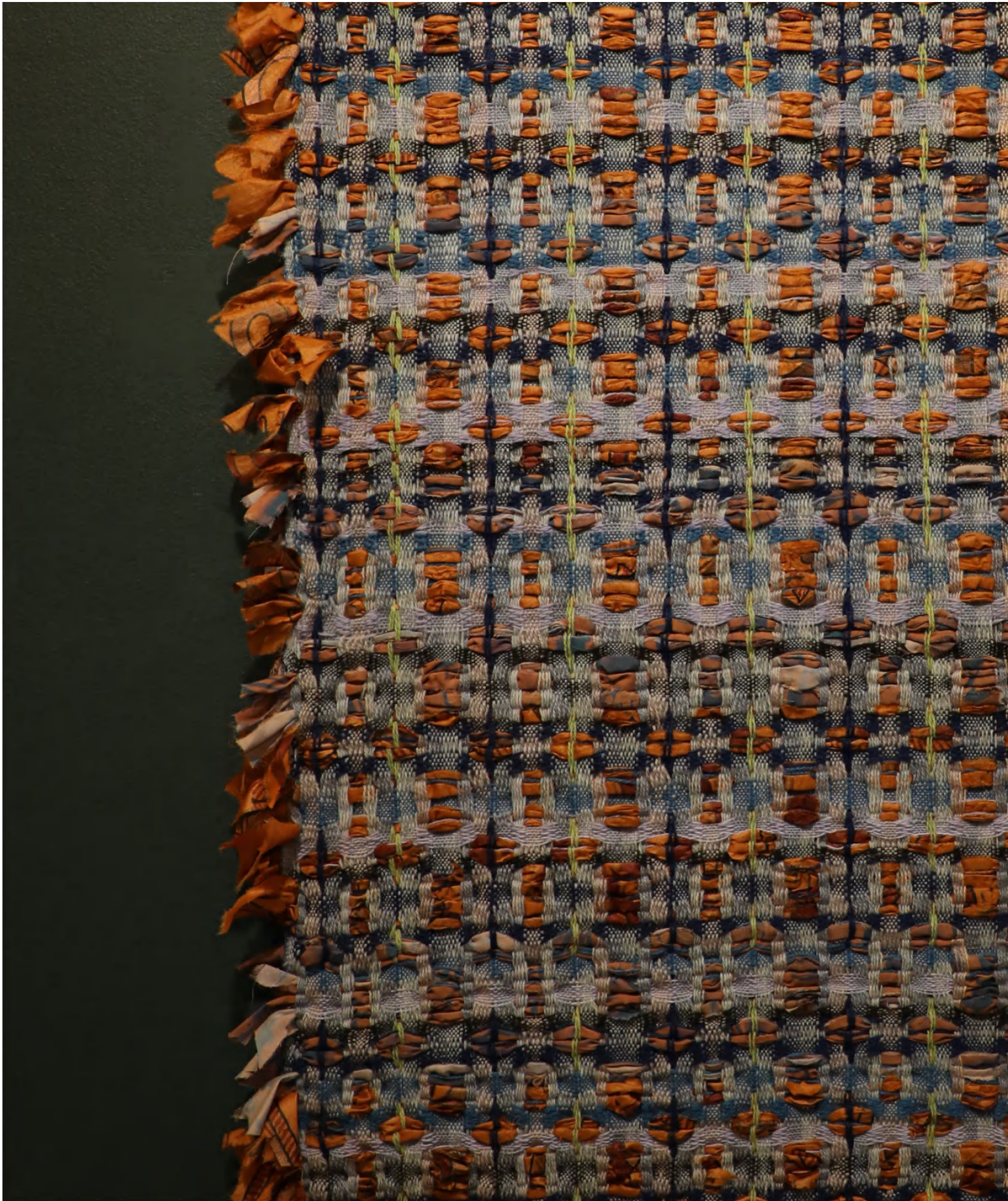
WHISPERer, Installation View, London Craft Week 2026, Photo © SPIRA9

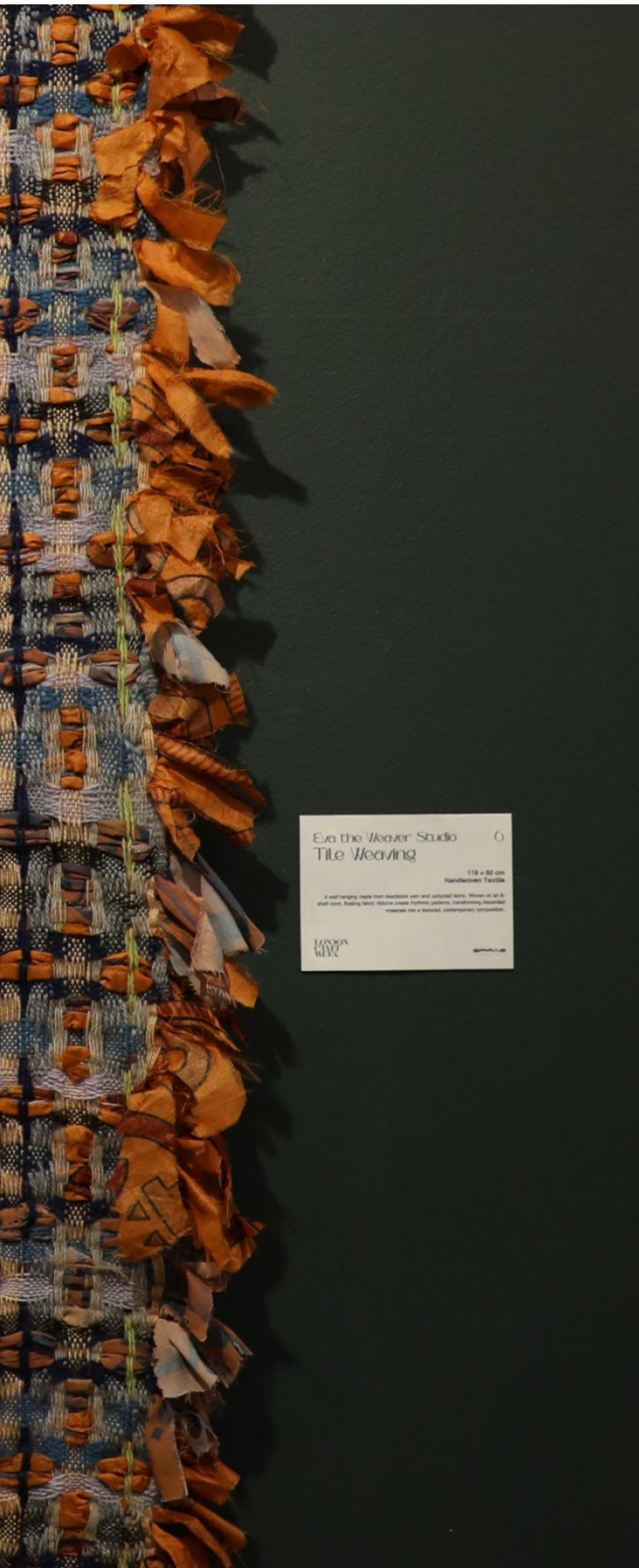


WHISPERer, Installation View, London Craft Week 2026, Photo © SPIRA9



WHISPERer, Installation View, London Craft Week 2026, Photo © SPIRA9





Through a series of handwoven textile modules, *Tile Weaving* explores the relationship between structure, rhythm, and material tactility. Drawing inspiration from the geometric logic of ceramic tiles, the work transforms repetitive woven units into a flexible surface where order and variation coexist.

Eva the Weaver Studio approaches weaving as both a craft and a spatial language. Each interlaced element contributes to a larger composition, revealing how repetition can generate subtle shifts in texture, light, and perception. The resulting work reflects an ongoing dialogue between tradition and contemporary material practice.

Tile Weaving

Medium: Handwoven Textile
Courtesy of the Artist



Drawing upon the visual traditions of yantra, mandala, and sacred geometry, *Ajna Chakra – The Third Eye Portal* explores the relationship between perception, consciousness, and inner awareness. Through concentric layers of geometric forms and luminous colour, the composition unfolds as a contemplative space in which structure and meditation become inseparable.

Constructed through digital processes, the work balances mathematical precision with atmospheric softness. Radiating patterns of indigo and pale blue guide the eye towards a luminous central lotus, creating a visual rhythm that evokes stillness while suggesting continual expansion. Situated between spiritual symbolism and contemporary abstraction, the work reinterprets ancient yogic philosophies through a contemporary visual language, inviting viewers to reflect on intuition, balance, and the unseen dimensions of experience.

Medium: Digital

Dimensions: 21.59 × 27.94 cm

Courtesy of the Artist

Meet the Maker: Divya Vinod Gilatar

Your artistic practice is deeply connected to yogic philosophy and spiritual cultivation. Over the years, how have your creative practice and your personal spiritual journey influenced one another? In what ways has making art become part of your own process of inquiry, reflection, or transformation?

For me, art and spirituality have never been separate practices. My creative process is rooted in meditation, yogic philosophy, and self-inquiry. Rather than illustrating spiritual ideas, I use art to experience and understand them more deeply. Each work becomes a contemplative space where I reflect on consciousness, the body, and the relationship between the individual and the universal. Over time, making art has evolved into a form of sadhana - a disciplined spiritual practice through which I cultivate stillness, curiosity, and transformation while inviting viewers into that same process of reflection.

Your works are often experienced through contemplation, stillness, and meditation. Beyond these qualities, how do you understand the critical dimension of your practice? Are there particular assumptions, ways of seeing, or conditions of contemporary life that your work seeks to question, challenge, or reframe?

While my work encourages contemplation, it is equally concerned with questioning how we perceive ourselves and the world. Contemporary life often values speed, productivity, and external validation, leaving little room for silence or inner awareness. Through sacred geometry, colour, and symbolism, I invite viewers to slow down and reconsider these habits. My recent works also explore themes of femininity, embodiment, and creation, challenging the tendency to reduce spiritual symbols - or women themselves - to simplistic interpretations. Instead, I hope my work opens space for deeper reflection, complexity, and dialogue.

In The Third Eye Portal, you work with a carefully balanced spectrum of indigo, cobalt, and pale ice blue. Could you tell us more about this chromatic language? How do these

different shades function within the composition, and what role does colour play in expressing consciousness, energy, or the symbolic meaning of the Ajna Chakra?

Colour is central to how I communicate ideas that are difficult to express through language alone. In The Third Eye Portal, indigo represents intuition, inner perception, and the depth of consciousness traditionally associated with the Ajna Chakra. Cobalt introduces clarity, focus, and intellectual insight, while pale ice blue creates moments of openness, stillness, and spacious awareness. Together, these colours move beyond symbolism to create an experiential atmosphere. Rather than depicting enlightenment as a fixed destination, the work invites viewers to experience the Third Eye as an evolving process of perception, reflection, and expanded consciousness.

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Meet the Maker: Zimeng Zhang



Window Scenery, 2024–2025

Through a series of jewellery pieces inspired by changing weather conditions, Zimeng transforms fleeting moments of the natural world into intimate objects of contemplation. Framed through the familiar perspective of a window, rain, snow, sunshine, and the night sky become symbols of both everyday experience and the fragile beauty of the environment.

Working with recycled silver, lead-free enamel, and lab-grown zirconia, the artist combines traditional jewellery-making techniques with sustainable materials to challenge conventional notions of luxury. Delicate surfaces, carefully balanced compositions, and subtle variations in colour invite close observation, encouraging viewers to reconsider the value of ordinary natural phenomena. The resulting works reflect an ongoing dialogue between craftsmanship, environmental consciousness, and the quiet moments through which our relationship with nature is continually renewed.

Medium: Recycled Silver, Lead-free Enamel and Lab-grown Zirconia

Dimensions: Variable
Courtesy of the Artist

Meet the Maker: Zimeng Zhang

Why did jewellery become the medium through which you chose to speak about environmental concerns?

Jewellery became my chosen medium because it has always carried meanings of value, memory and inheritance. In my practice, I am interested in transforming things that are fragile, temporary, or often considered insignificant—such as weather, natural traces, erosion or overlooked everyday objects—into jewellery forms.

By doing so, these subjects can be given a sense of permanence and preciousness. Unlike many other art forms, jewellery can be worn, held and passed on; it stays close to the body and becomes part of personal experience, making environmental concerns feel intimate, valuable and worthy of care.

Environmental awareness is an important aspect of your practice, yet your work often communicates through poetic and subtle visual language rather than direct confrontation. How do you navigate the relationship between beauty and environmental crisis in your work?

I do not see beauty as separate from environmental crisis. In my work, beauty is often the first layer

that invites people to look closer, while the underlying details suggest fragility, erosion, that invites people to look closer, while the underlying details suggest fragility, erosion, disappearance or transformation. Rather than using direct confrontation, I prefer a quieter visual language because environmental concerns are not only political or scientific issues, but also emotional and sensory experiences. By making delicate, precious objects that carry traces of damage or change, I hope to create a tension between attraction and unease, encouraging viewers to care before something is lost.

You work with recycled metals, lead-free enamel, and ethically sourced gemstones. Beyond sustainability, how do these materials influence the meaning and emotional qualities of your work?

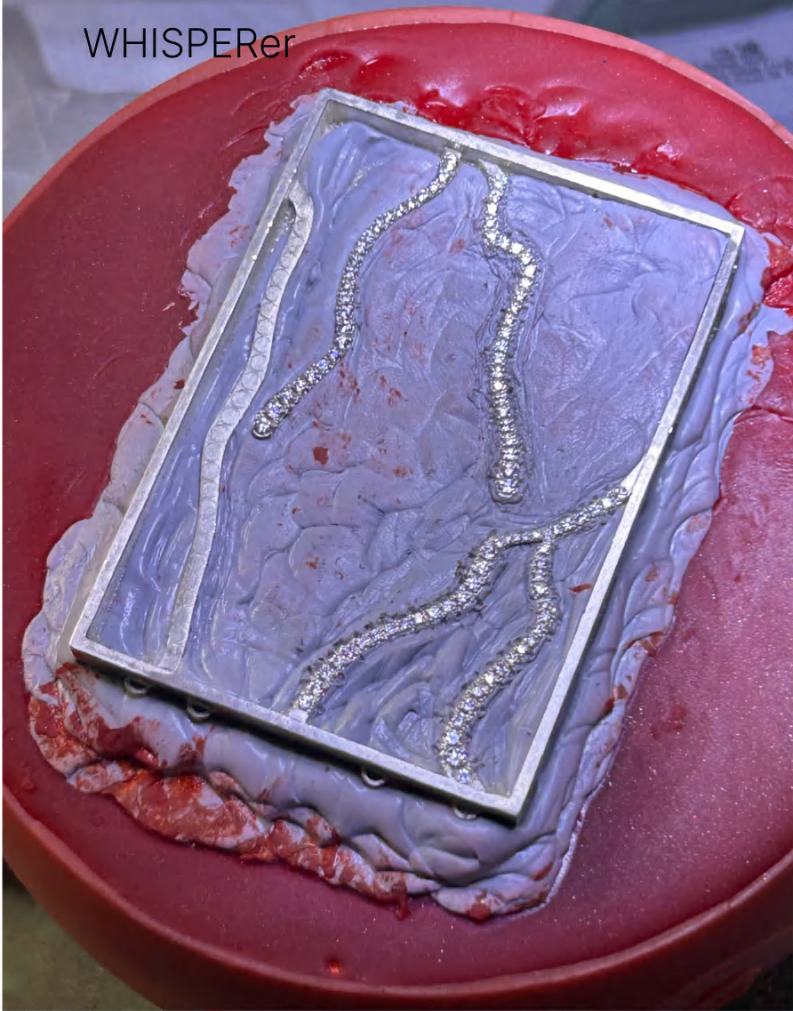
These materials are not only sustainable choices, but also carry emotional and conceptual meanings. Recycled metal suggests continuity: something that has already existed can be transformed and given a new life. Lead-free enamel allows colour, fragility and permanence to coexist, which connects closely to

my interest in weather, traces and environmental change. Ethically sourced gemstones add a sense of care and responsibility to the idea of preciousness. Together, these materials make the work feel quieter, more considered and emotionally connected to cycles of loss, repair and renewal.

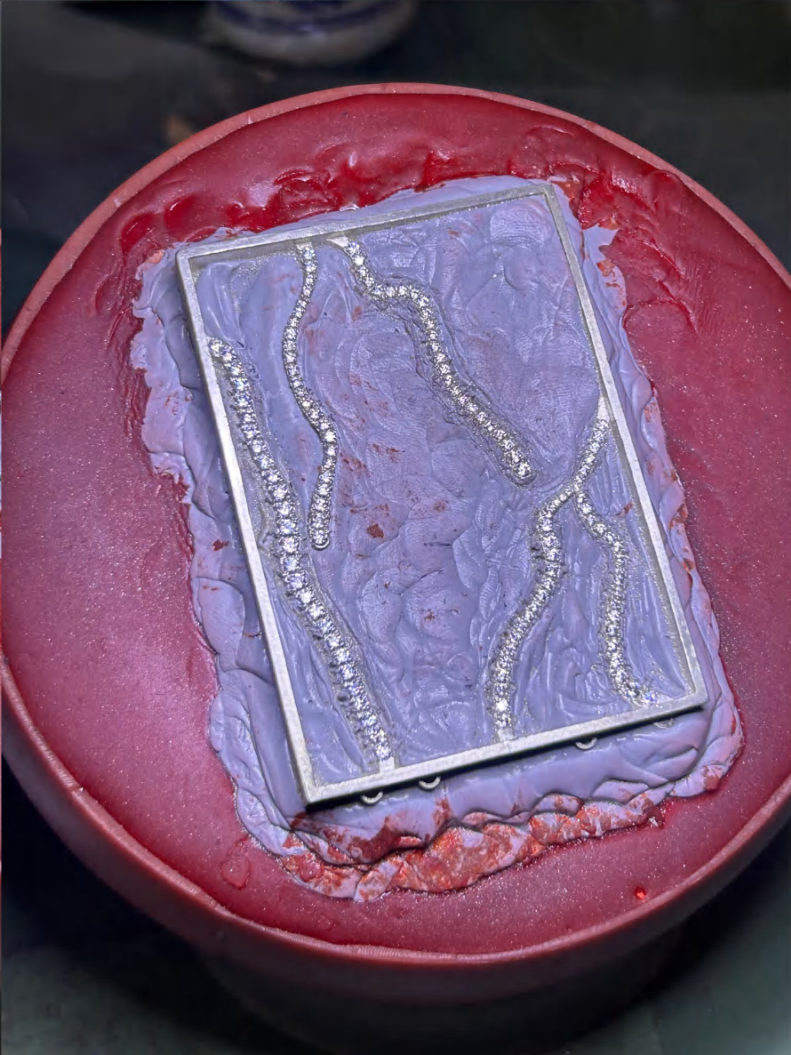
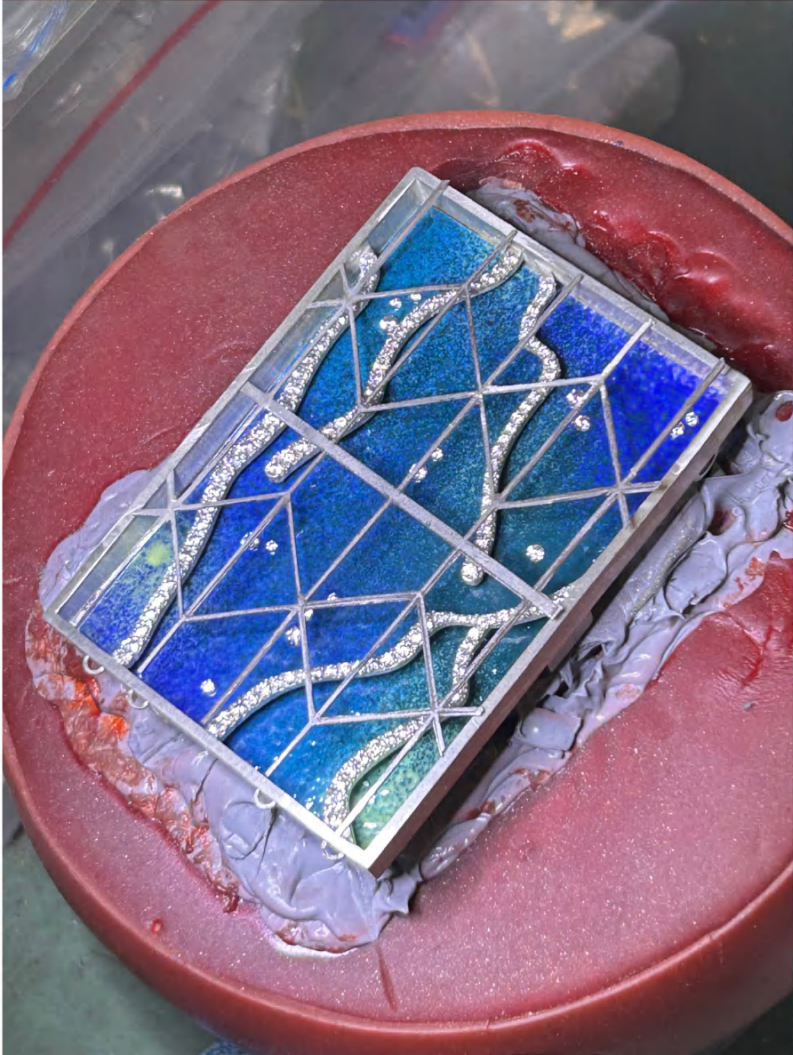
Many of the natural moments you depict, falling rain, shifting light, changing weather, exist only briefly. How does the idea of impermanence shape your creative process, and what does it mean to transform these fleeting experiences into lasting objects?

Impermanence is central to my creative process because many of the moments that move me are quiet and easily lost: rain on a window, changing light, or the atmosphere before weather shifts. I often begin by observing these temporary experiences and translating them into colour, texture and structure through enamel and metal. Transforming them into lasting objects is not about freezing nature, but about preserving a feeling or trace. Jewellery allows these fleeting moments to become intimate, precious and remembered, reminding us to value what may disappear.

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Meet the Maker: Zimeng Zhang



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The Maker: Zimeng Zhang



Which artists, designers, or thinkers have had the greatest influence on the way you approach your practice? In what ways have their ideas or works shaped your own artistic language?

My practice is influenced by artists and makers who transform ordinary natural phenomena into emotional and poetic experiences. I am particularly inspired by artists such as Andy Goldsworthy, whose work reveals the beauty and fragility of temporary natural moments, and Olafur Eliasson, who explores light, weather and perception as ways of rethinking our relationship with the environment. Traditional enamel craftsmanship has also shaped my language, especially its attention to colour, surface and permanence. These influences encourage me to combine observation, material sensitivity and quiet visual storytelling in my jewellery practice.



Tidal Memory II

Through layered monotype printing, photographic imagery, and collage, *Tidal Memory II* explores memory as a fluid and evolving field rather than a fixed record of the past.

Fragments of trees, bodily traces, and abstract forms accumulate across the surface, creating an unstable visual landscape in which different temporalities, emotional residues, and imagined spaces coexist.

Xu approaches image-making as a process of continual transformation. Layers are assembled, obscured, and reconfigured, allowing moments of recognition to dissolve into ambiguity. The interplay of translucent forms and shifting red and blue tones evokes the instability of perception, while resisting a singular narrative or point of resolution. Situated between abstraction and figuration, the work invites viewers to navigate memory as an active process of becoming, where personal experience and psychological space remain open to continual reinterpretation.

**Medium: Mixed Media Print,
Collage and Monotype on Paper
Dimensions: 3 × 94 cm (framed)
Courtesy of the Artist**

Meet the Maker: XIXI XU

Your works seem to resist offering a single point of focus. How do you imagine viewers navigating these layered images, and what role does uncertainty play in that experience?

I do not intend to guide viewers toward a single focal point or a fixed interpretation. Instead, I hope the work can be experienced as a space that viewers move through freely. The layered structure reflects the way memory and experience operate—fragmented, overlapping, and constantly shifting.

Uncertainty plays an important role in this process. I am interested in moments when an image is simultaneously familiar and unfamiliar, when meaning remains open rather than resolved. I hope viewers establish their own connections between images, emotions, and experiences. In this sense, uncertainty becomes a space of possibility, allowing multiple readings to coexist.

In *Tidal Memory II*, fragments of trees, bodily traces, and translucent layers move between recognition and abstraction. Was there a particular image, memory, or emotional state that initiated the work?

Tidal Memory II did not originate from a single memory or event.

Instead, it emerged from an accumulation of experiences, emotions, and fragmented impressions.

The image of the tree carries a personal significance for me, functioning both as a physical presence and as a metaphor for memory, growth, and time. Bodily traces and translucent layers introduce instability and absence, suggesting that memory is never fully accessible.

Rather than illustrating a specific narrative, the meaning of the work gradually emerged through the process of making. The layering, obscuring, and revealing of images created a space where memory, emotion, and perception could coexist.

Your process involves repeated printing, layering, cutting, and reassembling images. At what point do you feel a work is complete?

A work feels complete when it reaches a balance between openness and coherence. I am not looking for a fully resolved image, but rather a point where different layers, materials, and fragments begin to hold together while still allowing space for uncertainty.

Completion does not mean closure. I usually stop when further intervention would reduce the complexity of the image rather than enrich it. For me, a work becomes complete when it is able to continue generating meaning through the experiences and perceptions of its viewers.



BC da Ghondi is an interdisciplinary artist working across painting, public art, exhibition design and emerging technologies. Rooted in his background in urban planning and his experience of growing up in Africa, his practice explores how memory, identity and place are constructed through layers of experience. Although he works across multiple media, oil painting remains central to his practice, offering the freedom to develop ideas through an intuitive dialogue between colour, form and imagination.

In *MyAfrica*, the portrait merges with the outline of the African continent, weaving together personal memory and collective identity. Organic forms emerge alongside carefully considered symbols, reflecting both intention and spontaneity within the painting process. At its centre, the cross-section of a tree becomes a powerful metaphor for memory and continuity, suggesting that identity, like the rings of a tree, is formed through the accumulation of history, experience and belonging.

Medium: Oil Painting
Dimensions: 60cm x 40cm
Courtesy of the Artist

Meet the Maker: BC da Ghondi

Your background in urban planning involves thinking about how places grow through layers of history, people, and environment. Do you find yourself approaching a painting in a similar way, constructing it gradually through relationships rather than treating it as a single image?

Yes, my urban planning background absolutely influences how I construct a painting. I approach each piece as a kind of layered system, much like a city, where different forms and color mixtures come together to solve a visual problem or express a concept. Each work is like an evolving dialogue between these elements, and I build it gradually, letting each layer inform the next.

Although your practice spans painting, public art, AI, and exhibition design, you continue to work extensively with oil paint. What does the physical process of painting allow you to explore that other media cannot?

In essence, oil painting is truly my home base because it offers a kind of freedom that other media can't match. While I love working with AI and installation design, they sometimes come with constraints—like limitations of space or resources—that just don't apply to a canvas and oil paints. With oils, it's just me, the paint, and my imagination without those extra

barriers. It feels the most natural and authentic to who I am, and it allows me to explore ideas that other media might not permit as freely.

The title *MyAfrica* feels both deeply personal and broadly symbolic. What does "My" represent for you, and how does this work reflect your own relationship with Africa?

For me, the "My" in *MyAfrica* speaks to both intimacy and universality. It reflects my personal connection to Africa — the place where I grew up, the culture that shaped me, and the memories that continue to inform my practice. At the same time, it acknowledges that Africa holds different meanings for different people. By calling it *MyAfrica*, I wanted to share my own lens: the challenges, the beauty, and the resilience I have witnessed. It is both a declaration of belonging and an invitation for others to reflect on their own relationship with Africa.

The tree rings replace part of the figure's head, becoming one of the most striking elements in *MyAfrica*. Why did you choose the cross-section of a tree to represent the figure, and what does this form allow you to express about memory, identity, or place?

The tree rings are a metaphor for time, memory, and continuity. Just as a tree records its life through layers, the rings in *MyAfrica* symbolize the accumulation of experiences, histories, and identities that shape a person. By placing the cross-section within the figure's head, I wanted to show how memory and place are inseparable from identity — how our environment and heritage live inside us. The form expresses resilience and rootedness, but also growth, reminding us that identity is not static; it expands and deepens with each layer of experience.

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