

Wu Wei: Freedom from Resistance

Curator: Yang Zi

Opening: 2020.12.19 4pm

Date: 2020.12.19- 2021.1.31

Venue: Tang Contemporary Art Beijing 1st Space

Tang Contemporary Art is proud to announce the opening of "Freedom from Resistance," an all-new solo show for Wu Wei curated by independent curator Yang Zi, in the gallery's Beijing Space I on December 19, 2020.

In the introduction to *Flesh and Stone: The Body and the City in Western Civilization*, Richard Sennett describes how highway engineers created "freedom from resistance,"¹ which allowed people to move without expending any effort and thereby become invested in this resistance-free road system. This created geography lulls travelers into a hypnotic state in which they passively perceive the world. Wu Wei's solo show "Freedom from Resistance" references this modern anesthesia. When confronted with today's urban planning mechanisms, how can we free the body and regain our vitality?

In this exhibition, Wu Wei infuses his work with more expressive visual forms than in the past. Typhon is named for a god in ancient Greek mythology, a fearsome monster who failed in his attempt to overthrow Zeus. In this series, Wu Wei continues to use a technique from his past work, in which he cuts paper to resemble animal fur. However, he has changed the surface to which the "fur" is affixed, using the discarded exterior pieces and interior parts of a car. After being covered with "fur," the worn parts of a black sedan look like long-horned animal skulls. The irregular lines on the inside and outside are revealed, and structures that once had a practical function now have aesthetic significance. Wu applies a similar creative method to several parts of the car, all of which carry the genes of their "mother" vehicle. The organic curls of paper "growing" amidst these intensely industrial lines connect to a primitive era distant from industrial civilization.

Another difference from his previous works is that specific Chinese characters and symbols do not appear in "Freedom from Resistance." Here, Wu Wei abandons circumscribing intellectual frameworks of imagery and language. He enlarges some of the patterns that he had painted on his phone into Fission and Fusion, a painting installation measuring 3 x 6 meters. Wu emphasizes living intuition and belief in a moment, thereby establishing the motivation for the work. The seemingly closed expression of individual will embody an examination of universal fate - those free lines are like calculating the probability of an unknowable realm running inside the world based on a program.

About Artist

Wu Wei was born in 1981, Zhengzhou, Henan Province, China. In 2012, Wu Wei graduated from the Experimental Art Department of the Central Academy of Fine Arts with a master's degree and now lives in Beijing. Wu's works are full of sensual desires, involving topics of civilization, barbarism, and mythology, looking for new feelings and possibilities in materials and space. He won the 6th Anniversary Award for the New Artists Space Award in 2015, and won the 3rd New Star Art Festival Art Award in 2012. He participated in international art residency in Vienna, Austria and Berlin, Germany. His works have been exhibited in Whitebox Art Center (Beijing), Power Station of Art (Shanghai), Art Museum of Nanjing University of the Art, Beijing Minsheng Art Museum, Leonard Pearlstein Gallery (Philadelphia, U.S.A), Asian Library, University of British Columbia (Vancouver, Canada), XC. HuA Gallery (Berlin, Germany), Migrant Bird Space (Berlin, Germany), FLUC Art Space (Vienna, Austria) and many other art institutions; public collections includes Minsheng Modern Art Museum, Central Academy of Fine Arts, Whitebox Art Center, Today Art Museum, Being3 Art Foundation and other institutions.

About Curator

Yang Zi is an independent curator. In 2020, he was awarded the first Sigg Fellowship for Chinese Art Research; he was the jury member of 2020 Gallery Weekend Beijing; in 2019 he served as one of the primary judges of Huayu Youth Award; he was a finalist for the 2017 Hyundai Blue Prize.

He was the curator and the head of Public Programs in UCCA, he was the executive editor on series of UCCA catalogues for artists such as Wang Yin, Liu Wei, Xu Zhen, and Zeng Fanzhi, and curated numerous exhibitions and public programs, including "The New Normal: Art and China in 2017", "Pity Party", "Land of the Lustrous", "In Younger Days", "Golden Flow", and other projects, as well as solo exhibitions by artists such as Zhao Bandi, Xie Nanxing, Bu Di, Zhang Yunhan, Yang Luzi, Yu Honglei, and Zhu Changquan.

Yang Zi has nearly ten years of experience in art critic writing and curation. In 2011, he served as editor of LEAP, and wrote extensively for a range of publications such as LEAP, Artforum China and the Art Newspaper China. He received his bachelor's degree in philosophy and religious studies from Nanjing University.