

Ao Jing

Ao Jing (b.1993) currently works and lives in Beijing. She graduated from Goldsmiths College, University of London and the Royal College of Art's Contemporary Art Practice (Pathway: Public Sphere). Ao's artworks explore how different materials transformed into varied series of sculptures, performances and visuals under artistic expressions in different environments. In turn, the ambiguous relationship between "material" and "immaterial", "conscious" and "unconscious", is explored in a non-dualistic context.

Compared to the current mode of artistic production, which is dominated by dialectical thinking, Ao's work is more narrative literature, constantly asks questions and wanders through doubts. In the process, all her attitudes, choices, confusions, etc. about life are honestly presented in her works.

Her solo exhibition includes: Sleepy Time, START Museum, Shanghai, CN (2024); Theory of Emotion, SUHE HAUS – Skyline, Shanghai, CN (2024); In the Pit, Magician Space, Beijing, CN (2023).

Her recent group exhibitions include: The Quest of Young Artists, Each Modern, Taipei, TW (2024); Weaving in Entanglement, Mending in Punctures, 69 Art Campus, Beijing, CN (2024); META MEDIA ART FESTIVAL, Shanghai, CN (2023); Where Wood Stands, P.art Group, Shanghai, CN (2023); Invisible V.4: The Silence of Nature, Zhi Art Museum, Chengdu, CN (2023); Vacuum, Yuan Art Museum, Beijing, CN (2023); To the Public: Please Read the Exhibition the Way One Perceive the Woods, Magician Space, Beijing, CN (2022); Encounter & Foresight: A Contemporary Art Exhibition Recommended by Collectors, Blanc Art Group, Beijing, CN (2022); A Couple of, Hive Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing, CN (2021); When and Only When, the Strong Wind Rolled up the Surge, Aranya Art Center, Qinhuangdao, CN (2021); Hereditary Territory, Powerlong Museum, Shanghai, CN (2021).

She obtained UCCA Young Associates' Choice Awards (Beijing, 2023).

Dialogue | Floating Space

J=Ao Jing

M=Magician Space

M: Where did the inspiration of the solo exhibition "In the Pit" come from?

J: In the spring, a pile of Chinese yams that my mother gave to me sprouted tremblingly in my studio, growing higher and higher, breathing and coexisting with the rocks, branches, and mantis egg sheaths that I gathered impulsively from mountainside and garden. They happened to send a kind of invitation as I passed by, and in response, I reshaped their forms of growth with pottery. I have no preconceived vision of what such natural objects will eventually become. I see them happen in different environments through time and serendipity.

To a certain extent, I prefer to follow the materiality of the material and reduce deliberate control. For example, in the case of pottery, I hope the material to be detached from the conventional notion of "artifact", and to become more "autonomous" in my hands, returning to the material itself, which I see as a lump of earth. I try my best to integrate the material into my environment on a conscious and physical level, allowing it to enter my field without looking directly at it, and avoiding controlling and designing the material completely with my consciousness.

M: It sounds like you develop a relatively equal relationship with materials by observing the way they exist. Of course, the materials have their own immutable properties, how do you intervene into them besides those properties?

J: The trust in matter and the sincere knowledge of material are the foundation of my creation. I have used sandalwood, string, drumhead, horsehair, fish bone, and of course more materials. I concern on how to link materials. On the contrary, the pure material is "not important" in my works. What kind of material I use depends on the state of my life, the message I feel from my body and surroundings, which is a kind of natural intuition.

What I concern about is not the material itself, but the abstract relationship between materials.

I believe that materials have their own energy, and that in working with materials and utilizing them, I absorb energy from them, and that materials are more perceptive than I am. In the process of paralleling with them, I feel again the energy that they bring. Such invisible energy returns to me, being absorbed and transformed and then returning back, over and over again.

M: It means that you treat materials with a wandering structure?

J: Merely creating a piece of work is not my goal. Once I have found the initial landing point for one piece of work, I want to keep supplementing the structure, and eventually they intertwine into a more abstract relationship.

I don't think the relationship can be determined by crude or refined results. For me, it is a matter of choice and awareness. I prefer to choose a suitable degree between the two, a degree that can hold my thinking, feeling and spiritual breath, and allow the uncertainty in the work to stir up multiple degrees of cognitive freedom.

For example, in Floating Illusion - the three sound works in the exhibition, I used rational, volumetric motor and iron construction to connect the trembling Chinese yams and threads underneath. The motors swing regularly, but because of the structural change underneath and the gaps in the connection, the metal bells or ceramic bells make unanticipated sounds. All of these— from the motor to the copper wire to the sound— are my materials, they are equal. There is no primary or secondary concern. They relate to each other in a way that produces a connection, but I am no longer a part of it. I want to avoid being too purposeful and deliberate into the creation, somehow as a way for me

to develop the sensibility.

M: Let's talk more broadly. How do you think about the relationship between the whole space and the works?

J: I want to present a kind of " leaving blank." I do not just mean the empty physical space. I want to leave rooms for my thoughts and feelings, so that I won't release all of them.

I don't want to overload objects. The feeling of water overflowing does not make me comfortable. I accept the rough parts of creations and want to realize something through those processes. When you physically have a relationship with the material, it is not right to stubbornly polish it, hammer it, remodel it, and change it into what you think it should be. After knowing what the material is, it is not right to ignore it and then intervene in an obsessive manner.

I need to be very relaxed and at ease. But it must be based on my personal experience, which is relatively empty at the moment. That is why I like the uncertain, seemingly fragile part of the work, which is a kind of critical and nerve-touching place. This ambiguity can slip away at any time, or it can remain there all the time. Such uncertain part is somehow the base of my creation, not at random, but closer to impermanence.

M: Talking about the impermanence, you use sound differently than you did in the past, which aimed at creating sound events. But this time, sound is more like one of the properties of materiality. Has your understanding of sound changed?

J: In my past works, I wanted to use sound to create a field in the public space, and to make sound objects to invite people into my world. Now I think that sound is one of the materials in the creation, and it is not in conflict with other sounds in the space of

humanities—the two can be in a harmonious dialog. Therefore, although the exhibition hall is full of sounds, it is only when you get close to them that you realize where they come from, and that they are integrated with the outside world as a whole. I think this kind of sound can be interpreted as a kind of "uncontrived sound", which speaks and expresses itself in a wavering and vivid manner, waiting to be discovered as a kind of tenuous existence.

I have probably dropped some of my "obsessions," or at least I have tried to, in comparison to what I did before. For example, let's say there is a person dancing, her/his movements under a garment are different from those in the nude. But that does not mean that the latter is freer. Both are actions taken by the body when facing a situation. The "obsession" I am talking about is the cloth wrapped around the body at this stage. I am feeling the freedom from the "restriction" of the cloth. This is what I am pursuing in the solo exhibition and in the future.

M: Talking about limitations in your works, intuitively I would think about how different materials from different sources relate to each other. For example, stones and branches, the relationship or compatibility of different materials has limitations, how do you understand such boundary and limitation?

J: There are limits not only in terms of materials, but also in terms of space, time, technology, and so on, but those are the limits that allow me to find the best state and capture the most appropriate feelings within the established framework. I am trying to express myself honestly with material. If you trust the material, the material will speak for itself, and sometimes I even trust the materiality of the adhesive. The freedom I know is to utilize energy within certain boundaries. I have too many objects piling up in my studio, sometimes even blocking my connection with them. In the exhibition space I have fewer choices, instead I am more able to choose and trade-off from a framework.

M: How does your subjective mind work in such freedom in the process of choosing and trade-off?

J: I believe that the constant perception of the material world will give me a spiritual feedback. This invisible energy, whether it is spiritual perception or not, is absorbed and reflected to the outside world as it acts on each individual. I think it is somewhat similar to the concept of "being (you)" and "not being (wu)". After the creation of the work, I step into the gallery again as a viewer, and at this time, some of the things that accompanied the "creator" or "me" are slowly disappearing. At the same time, some things are growing. My relationship with them is fluid and coexisting.

I describe my works as narrative because they are closely related to my experiences, my changes—my daily life, my thoughts at all times, subtle changes of mind, and even my sense of body, not only the body of creation, but also the body of daily activities and the state of health. During my menstrual period I have to take a break to bring my work to a standstill, and the relationship between mind and body during this time is subtle and influential. All those things generate a story about me. I use my work to present the "me" of the moment. The materials, sounds or colors narrate who I am. In the process of integrating and re-digesting those things, a so-called "story" is generated. However, it will be expressed in a neutral way.

MAGICIAN SPACE

魔金石空间

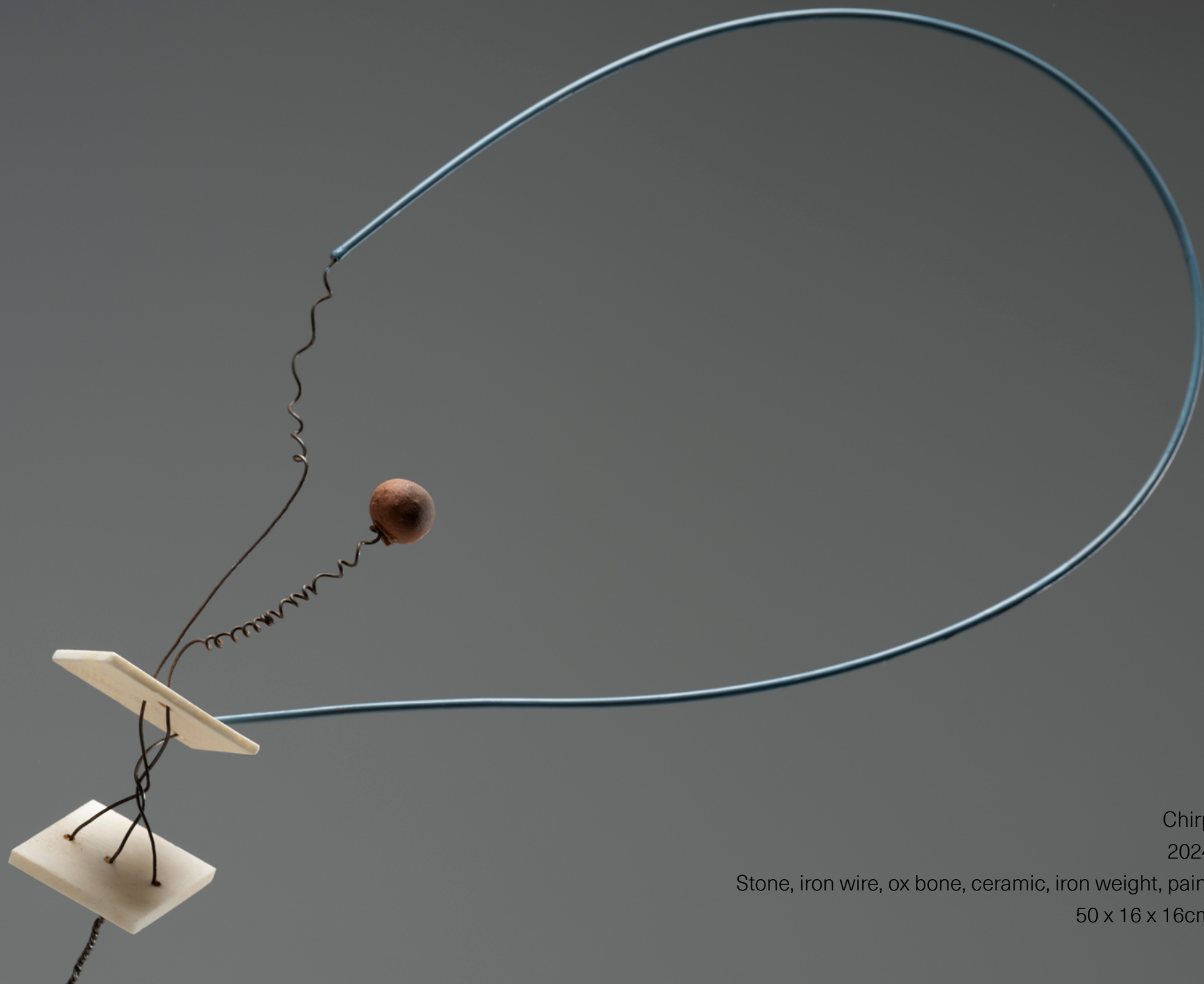
Chirp

2024

Stone, iron wire, ox bone, ceramic, iron weight, paint

50 x 16 x 16cm





Chirp

2024

Stone, iron wire, ox bone, ceramic, iron weight, paint

50 x 16 x 16cm



Nest

2024

Wood, iron wire, cat hair, ceramic, string, ox bone

30 x 66 x 30cm



In the Pit
2023
Exhibition view



In the Pit

2023

Wood, copper, strings, iron, ceramic, cinnabar bead

60 x 40 x 100 cm



Flush

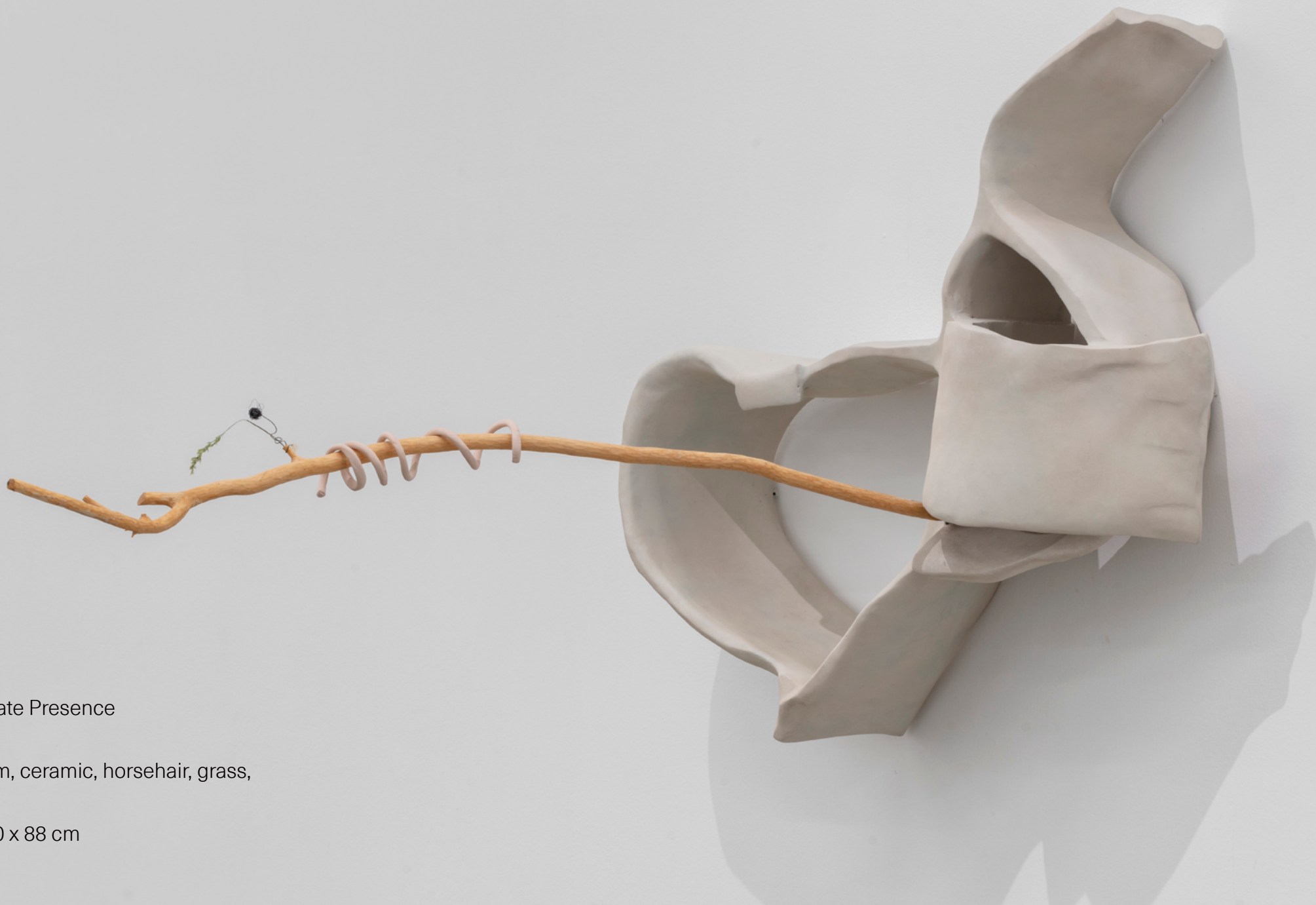
2023

Copper, ceramic, horsehair, iron

28 x 60 x 17 cm



In the Pit
2023
Exhibition view



A Fortunate Presence

2023

Aluminum, ceramic, horsehair, grass,
iron wire

138 x 100 x 88 cm



A Fortunate Presence
2023

Aluminum, ceramic, horsehair, grass,
iron wire

138 x 100 x 88 cm



Artificial Worm

2023

Copper, ceramic

105 x 43 x 96.5 cm

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In the Pit
2023
Exhibition view



Metaphor

2023

Stone, plank, ceramic, tree branch

28.5 x 80 x 27 cm

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Metaphor

2023

Stone, plank, ceramic, tree branch

28.5 x 80 x 27 cm

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魔金石空间

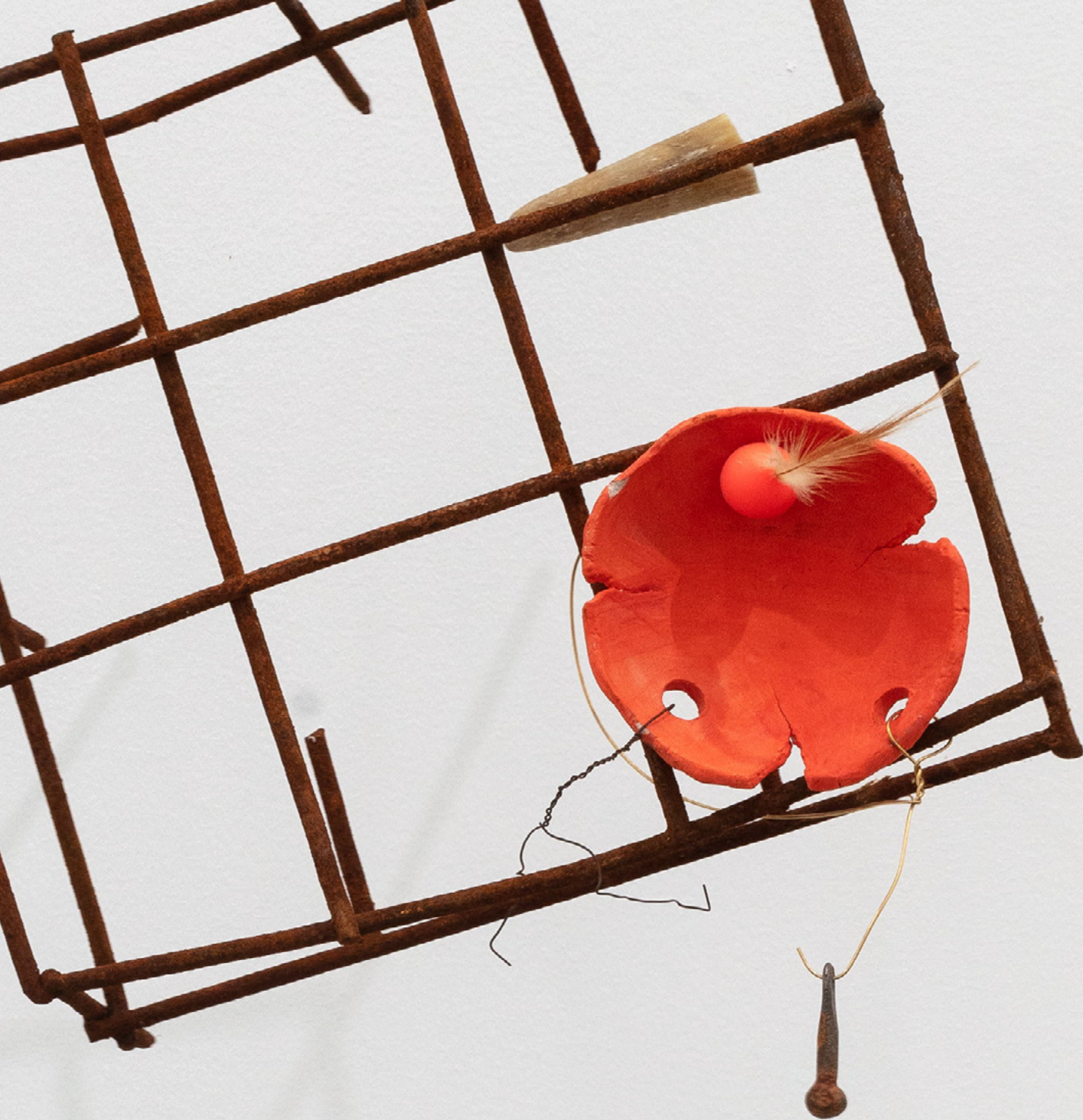


The Moist Sun

2023

Iron, deer horn, ceramic, copper, iron, cat's ball

43 x 34 x 30 cm



The Moist Sun

2023

Iron, deer horn, ceramic, copper, iron, cat's ball

43 x 34 x 30 cm

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魔金石空间



In the Pit
2023
Exhibition view



Hidden Power

2023

Iron, copper, fiberglass

186 x 120 x 140 cm



Hay Wagon

2023

Ceramic, sheepskin, horsehair, wax rope, ginkgo

27 x 22 x 35 cm



Hay Wagon

2023

Ceramic, sheepskin, horsehair, wax rope, ginkgo

27 x 22 x 35 cm



Floating Delusion II

2023

Ceramic, copper, electric motor, wax wire

168 x 65 x 80 cm

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Floating Delusion II

2023

Ceramic, copper, electric motor, wax wire

168 x 65 x 80 cm

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The One-eyed King

2023

Tree branch, ceramic, spring, Chinese Honeylocust Spine

51 x 87 x 30 cm





The One-eyed King

2023

Tree branch, ceramic, sping, Chinese Honeylocust Spine

51 x 87 x 30 cm

A Pea-like Candy Ball

2023

Copper, Chinese Honeylocust Spine,
ceramic, iron, cinnabar bead

24 x 22 x 18 cm



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Morning Dew

2023

Glass, steel, motor, wood

55 x 150 x 150 cm



Morning Dew

2023

Glass, steel, motor, wood

55 x 150 x 150 cm



Superstitious Restraint

2023

Stoneware, 3D printed resin, bronze, horsetail, calf tooth
(naturally fallen off)

114 x 34 x 35 cm



Superstitious Restraint

2023

Stoneware, 3D printed resin, bronze, horsetail, calf tooth
(naturally fallen off)

114 x 34 x 35 cm



Superstitious Restraint

2023

Stoneware, 3D printed resin, bronze, horsetail, calf tooth
(naturally fallen off)

114 x 34 x 35 cm

Pause
2023
Bronze, fish bait, horsetail, fish bone, wood
84 x 31 x 38 cm





Pause

2023

Bronze, fish bait, horsetail, fish bone,

wood

84 x 31 x 38 cm



Humph! A Cough

2023

Neighbor's tree that died naturally, copper, aluminium, fish hook, coral,
ceramic, leather, rope, a gourd my mother planted unsuccessfully

230 x 140 x 120 cm



Clever Disguise

2022

Aluminum, tree branch, wood

24 x 12 x 18 cm



Untitled

2021

Stoneware, steel, skin, wood

94.5 x 26.5 x 4.5 cm



Untitled

2021

Stoneware, steel, skin, wood

70 x 55 x 13 cm

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魔金石空间

引

2021

Stoneware, steel, string

15 x 9.3 cm





引

2021

Stoneware, steel, string

15 x 9.4 cm



A Missed Encounter

2021

Aluminium, acrylic, water, stainless steel,

plastic tubes

Variable Sizes

Ao Jing

- 1993 Born in Beijing, currently lives and works in Beijing
- 2017 Goldsmiths College, University of London
- 2019 Royal College of Arts Contemporary Art Practice (Pathway: Public Sphere)

Solo Exhibition

- 2024 Sleepy Time, START Museum, Shanghai, CN
Theory of Emotion, SUHE HAUS –Skyline, Shanghai, CN
- 2023 In the Pit, Magician Space, Beijing, CN

Group Exhibition

- 2023 META MEDIA ART FESTIVAL, Shanghai, CN
Where We Wood Stands”, P.art Group, Shanghai, CN
Invisible V.4: The Silence of Nature, Zhi Art Museum, Chengdu, CN
Vacuum, Yuan Art Museum, Beijing, CN
To the Public: Please Read the Exhibition the Way One Perceive the Woods,
Magician Space, Beijing, CN
- 2022 Encounter & Foresight: A Contemporary Art Exhibition
Recommended by Collectors, Blanc Art Group, Beijing, CN
- 2021 A Couple of, Hive Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing, CN

Prize

- 2023 UCCA Young Aoung Associates Choice Awards, CN

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