

Peng Zuqiang makes moving images. His recent exhibitions and screenings include Times Art Center Berlin, Antenna-tenna, Antimatter, IDFA, UCCA Beijing, Open City Documentary Festival, and Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. He has received fellowships and residencies from the MacDowell, Skowhegan, OrganHaus and the Core Program. Peng is the recipient of the 'Jury Special Prize' from the 8th Huayu Youth Awards and a 'Special Mention' from Festival Film Dokumenter, Yogyakarta for his first feature film, *Nan* (2020).

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ANTENNA SPACE

Sideways Looking

Peng Zuqiang

13th April-12th June 2022

Open 12-6pm Thursday-Sunday

Cell Project Space presents *Sideways Looking*, the first UK solo exhibition by Chinese artist Peng Zuqiang, including newly commissioned and recent moving image installations, and the artist's first book project *Hindsights*, to be published by and launched at Cell Project Space in June 2022. For the first time throughout Cell's exhibition programming the show will span across all three exhibition spaces, including the first floor gallery and two recently opened spaces on the site's ground floor.

Building upon the artist's ongoing formulation of a sensuous moving image language, *Sideways Looking* suggests gesture and opacity as forms of reciprocity to part ways with the dominant regimes of visibility.

Split across two floors, the 5 audiovisual channels of moving image installation *keep in touch* appear fragmented with moments of silence, uneasy gossip, and coded bodily communication to consider the complexity of contact, touch and solidarity. Emerging from one reel of Super 8 film and a brief prompt given to a group of friends, the artwork's polemic tension arises as a sense of being together-in-difference brushes against the fleeting, unstable solidarity that comes through such shared refusal to become easily legible as subjects and identities.



Sight Leak, a 16mm black & white single-channel installation, reconfigures Roland Barthes' memoirs of his 1974 journey to China, published posthumously, from the perspective of a local tourist visiting Changsha, the artist's hometown. Sparse scribbles on a trip that Barthes saw as a dud become a point of departure. As the French intellectual was unable to access the city beyond the route orchestrated for the delegation, the city's social and cultural fabric remained to him inscrutable, thus, in his own words, dull. His judgments about China are refracted in Peng Zuqiang's work as fragments of dialogues on class, queerness and desire, responding to the reflections on the same matters elicited alongside Barthes' sense of eroticism. Decentering the importance of the speaking subject, *Sight Leak* at once looks for and places in doubt transient moments between gazing and looking, to which one responds neither in resistance nor in acknowledgement.

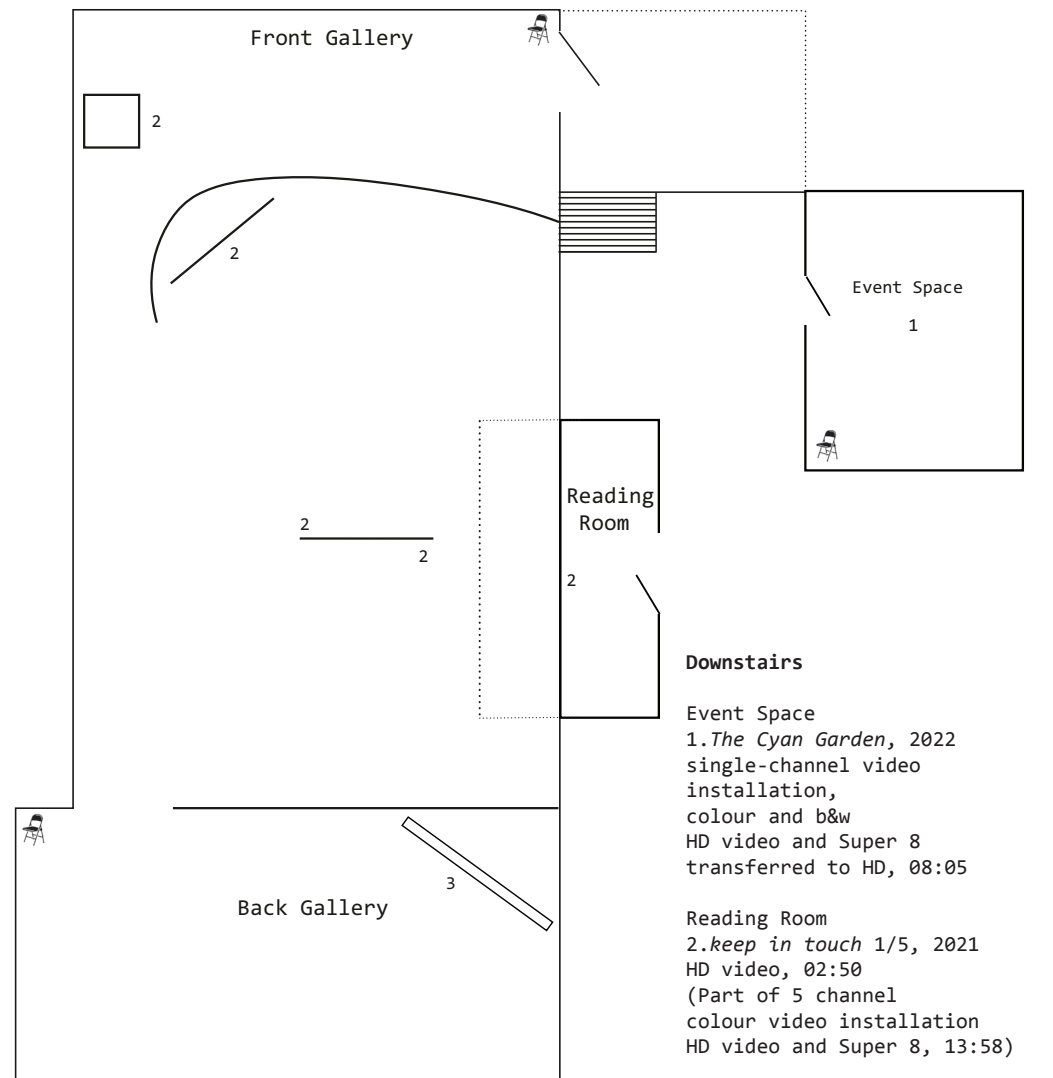
Newly co-commissioned for *Sideways Looking*, *The Cyan Garden* considers the limits of giving form to the past which cannot cohere into memory. In part filmed on 'Lucky', a discontinued b&w 16mm film reel stock intended for military aerial detection, the moving

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image revolves around a radio station that was not supposed to be detected and an Airbnb apartment ‘The Lover’, run by Peng’s friend in their hometown. Between 1969 and 1981, a Malaysian communist underground radio in exile ‘Voice of the Malayan Revolution’ resided in what is now soon to be a resort. Projected on a holographic screen producing shadowy after-images, the work flickers between radio static, bursts of archival jingles, ruins of the radio station and choreographed scenes of the Airbnb apartment decorated in imagined ‘Southeast Asian’ style. Contemplation on a revolution’s fraught relation to emancipation, *The Cyan Garden* interweaves visual notes on contemporary urbanisation, revolutionary bodies, stifled romance and inability to remember ‘rightly’ as love songs lull in the background.

A choreography of non-linear narrative, silences, associative images, and coded communication between bodies, the show marks Peng Zuqiang’s most comprehensive project to date. *Sideways Looking* is a meditation on affect, kinship and collectivity counter to the enclosure of identity and the individual subject. It suggests the agency of tacit, silent and partially inscrutable gestures as a visual vernacular that neither erasure nor transparency can permeate.

Curator Adomas Narkevičius



Downstairs


Event Space
 1. *The Cyan Garden*, 2022
 single-channel video
 installation,
 colour and b&w
 HD video and Super 8
 transferred to HD, 08:05

Reading Room
 2. *keep in touch 1/5*, 2021
 HD video, 02:50
 (Part of 5 channel
 colour video installation
 HD video and Super 8, 13:58)

Upstairs

Front Gallery
 2. *keep in touch 2-5/5*, 2021
 Super 8 transferred to HD, 8:10
 (Part of 5 channel colour video
 installation
 HD video and Super 8, 13:58)

Back Gallery
 3. *Sight Leak*, 2021
 single-channel video
 installation, b&w
 16mm and super 8mm film
 transferred to HD video, 12:15

 Access note: there is a black folding chair in the corner of the event space and first floor galleries marked with a chair icon.

Please help yourself or ask the gallery team for assistance.