

Back Doris Guo

8 December 2023 — 17 February 2024



Empty Gallery is pleased to present *Back*, Oslo-based artist Doris Guo's first solo exhibition in Asia. Existing in the interstices between embodied duration and affective labor, Guo's practice coalesces around the cultural and material gestures which structure our attempts to form a communal life.

Back centers around a collaborative project of material care which Guo and her mother, Weili Wang, have undertaken to organize and conserve the latter's artwork. Formerly lodged undisturbed around her Seattle home, Wang's oil paintings and sketches—mostly executed between 1980 and 1990 around the Yangtze River Delta—bear witness to an artistic life partially abridged by circumstance. These works are presented as diptychs together with Guo's pinhole photographs depicting the suburban interior of Wang's study—replete with cardboard boxes, filing folders, and other marginalia. With their crowded, seemingly off-the-cuff compositions, Guo's photographs channel domestic inertia into aleatory landscapes. Poised somewhere between comfort and claustrophobia, their gauzy surfaces and indefinite forms go beyond merely simulating the ambiance of memory to express something of the unconscious abstraction with which we move through the world. In parallel, Wang's works in various media bear witness to a series of complex movements between the urban and the rural, the intimate and the official, personal expressivity and sanctioned style—during a now lost moment of social change.

Guo uses the formal grammar of the diptych not only to create novel juxtapositions between works of radically different means and eras, but more importantly, to create a space of charged potentiality between the individual components of each pairing. The works truly exist in this ellipsis between one frame and the next—within the imaginative leap needed to reconcile the emotional, ideological, and spatio-temporal differences of one concrete life-world with another. Underneath the facticity of Wang and Guo's relationship lies the radical difference embodied by any two lives given aesthetic form, even those as close as mother and daughter. However, we are also forced to think about what might connect them—with all of the aesthetic strangeness which this may constitute. Perhaps, this psychic labor is nothing more nor less than the mundane telepathy of daily communication transposed into the space of the gallery.

Guo's diptychs constitute a highly personal form of evidence, speaking to the paradoxical manner in which physical or geographical proximity can amplify distance, and separation can foster feelings of closeness; the familiar, but rarely remarked upon intertwining between intimacy and anomie. This body of work is accompanied by a suite of new projector sculptures in which found objects are enlarged and transmuted. In these sculptures, the quietly domestic assumes the charged contours and haunting proportions of memory. Appropriating devices which are commonly used for tracing and enlargement, pieces such as *Fallen Jewelry* (2023) present enigmatic tableaux in which the ambient residues of past trauma are transposed into the space of the present. They function as both commentary and enactment, furnishing a mirror-stage within which the human compulsion to project—to return to past objects in search of comfort, mastery, or familiarity—is met with both deference and gentle derision.

DORIS GUO (b.1992, San Francisco) currently lives and works in Oslo. She received her BFA in Painting from Pratt Institute in 2014 and recently graduated from the Oslo National Academy of the Arts in 2023. Solo exhibitions include *disorientations* at VI, VII, Oslo (2023), *Shanghai San Francisco Richmond Seattle New York Oslo (TRACE)* at Victoria, Seattle (2023), *inge*, New York (2022), *9PM Til I at Éclair*, Berlin (2019), *XO* at Bodega, New York (2019), *Coffee & Tea* at Princess, New York (2018) and *Joss* at Real Fine Arts, New York (2017). *Back* at Empty Gallery, Hong Kong is her first solo exhibition in Asia.

Recent group exhibitions include *X Years*, VI, VII, Oslo (2022), *When the Word Becomes Flesh*, Baader-Meinhof, Omaha (2022), *Post Box Group*, Copenhagen (2022), *Welding in Space*, LEMME, Scion (2021), *Remnant, Artifact, Flow*, Thierry Goldberg Gallery, New York (2021), *Misunderstandings (A Theory of Photography)*, Plymouth Rock, Zurich (2020), *01102020*, Fisher Parrish Gallery, Brooklyn (2020), *Cruise Kidman Kubrick*, Galerie Maria Bernheim, Zurich, (2019), *Pastoral (Grind and Drone)*, 47 Canal, New York (2019), *The Parisian Nights*, Crèvecoeur, Paris (2019).

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郭凱

2023 年 12 月 08 日至 2024 年 02 月 17 日



Empty Gallery 欣然呈獻駐奧斯陸藝術家郭凱在亞洲的首次個展《Back》。郭氏的創作立足於體現時間和情感勞動的夾縫之間，融匯文化和物質象徵元素，締造我們實踐公共生活的嘗試。

展覽《Back》聚焦郭氏與母親王偉黎對王氏藝術品的共同維護和保養。在1980年至1990年期間，王氏在長江三角洲地區創作油畫和素描。這些作品本來安放於她位於西雅圖的家中，見證了藝術家因客觀條件而縮短的藝術生涯。這次展覽把這些畫作連同郭氏的針孔照片，以雙聯畫的形式呈現於觀眾眼前。照片描繪了王偉黎位於郊區的房子，書房裏放滿紙皮箱、文件夾和其他雜物，以密集、看似未加思索的構圖將家居惰性投射至偶然風景之中，雖予人舒適自在的感覺，但同時讓人對擁擠空間的恐懼油然而生。其輕薄透明的表面和含糊的形式不僅模擬記憶的氛圍，還表現了我們生活所伴隨著的無意識抽象思考。與此同時，王氏的多媒體創作見證了城市與鄉村、親密與公開、個人表現與認可風格之間一系列錯綜複雜的改變，尤其正值這永不復返的社會變革時刻。

透過運用雙聯畫的藝術表現形式，郭氏不僅同時展出以截然不同的手段所創作、時代迥異的作品，構成煥然一新的對比，更重要的是，藝術家在每組作品之間開拓一個充滿潛力的空間。這些作品存在於畫框與畫框的空隙之間；觀眾只要運用想像力，才得以調和不同現實世界中的情感、意識形態和時空差異。即使二人如母女般親密，王氏和郭氏那確鑿不移的關係代表著的，是任何兩個被賦予美學形式的生命都會體現的根本差異。然而，這也驅使我們思考如何將他們連結起來——鑒於這在美學層面上有可能顯得不自然。也許，這種精神勞動無非是把日常溝通中的平凡心靈感應轉移至我們身處的畫廊空間之中。郭氏的雙聯畫構成一種高度私密的佐證，以看似南轅北轍的方式，闡明物理或地理上的靠近如何放大距離，且分離如何營造親密感，以及在親密與社會失範的之間，讓人們熟悉但甚少談論的事物互相交織。

同場展示一組嶄新的投影機雕塑，當中現成物被放大和扭曲，讓靜謐的家居被賦予蘊涵力量的輪廓和縈繞心頭的回憶。《墮落的珠寶》(Fallen Jewellery, 2023) 等作品挪用了通常用於描摹和放大的裝置，呈現出神秘的場景，當中過去創傷的痕跡被轉置於當今的空間中。這些作品既是評論也是再現，提供了一個（字面上的）鏡像舞台。舞台上，人類渴望以過去物件重拾安慰、控制或熟悉感——這投射自身感受的衝動既受到尊重，同時也稍遭揶揄。