

SPURS GALLERY

Zhou Yan: Cloud 9
May 25–July 7, 2024

Gallery I | SPURS Gallery, D-06, 798 Art Zone, No. 2 Jiuxianqiao Road, Chaoyang District, Beijing

SPURS Gallery is thrilled to announce the opening of “Cloud 9”, Zhou Yan's second solo exhibition with the gallery, on May 25, 2024. The exhibition will showcase his latest series of video, sculptures, paintings and installations. The exhibition, in Gallery I, is also presented concurrently with Gallery Weekend Beijing 2024. Following his debut exhibition with the gallery, “Pale Fire”, in 2020, Zhou shifts his focus to the split between the elitism and the anti-intellectualism during the global outbreak, which procured from his personal relationships that drastically evolved in the past four years. Disentangling the artist's personal emotions and unspeakable life experiences, the exhibition, “Cloud 9”, pronounces his skepticism and endless quest about the system and its operation.

His experimental use of game engine is amplified by his current work in real-time video installations. The exhibition centerpiece *Blind Field* (2022–2024) is inspired by Zhou's 20-minute inspection in an MRI scanner, where the audience can enter the staged site and disrupt the video imagery by compulsively stepping onto the interactive pedal. The work advances an anxiety of having a restricted vision; one's inability to judge based on prior knowledge or experience under the given circumstances, or even further coerced into a remorseful contemplation.

Most works in the exhibition are snippets of Zhou's life during the pandemic. The animation installation *Trophy* (2024) mimics the display of card collections when a video game has been won. Three short animations flash within, symbolizing the obliteration of the process—once the commands are delivered, the mission is completed. The process, however, is resurrected in *Shortcut* (2024), a commentary based on Zhou's bouldering experiences. The vestiges of intense motions are scattered over the gallery space: we find two climbing holds while the finishing hold hangs in the air.

The golden sculpture *Endless Waiting* (2024) lies in a corner; the assemblage of outdoor functional fabric in *Nothing* (2024) drapes in the air; the lights in videowork *Trap* (2024) shimmer now and then: Zhou carefully collects scattering thoughts and memories, polishes them, and poses them as testimonies of causes and effects. He idolizes these “dull, unimportant, and negligible” scraps of modern life, and gives them immense care in his works.

The exhibition will remain on view until July 7, 2024.

About the artist

Zhou Yan (b. Beijing) received his BFA in Visual Communication from the School of Design, Central Academy of Fine Arts, and his MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

Zhou Yan's practice explores issues of interrelationality and codependency between individuals and collectives. He spots on the minutiae of things, approaching the forgotten realms of causality through various methods. Carefully weaving these remnants as they can be fragmented, linear, accidental and mystical. He works in a variety of media from video installations and gaming to artist books. His works have been exhibited at various international venues and programs, including

SPURS GALLERY

Solo exhibitions: "Cloud 9," SPURS Gallery, Beijing, 2024; "Lazarus," Click Ten Art Space, Beijing, 2022; "Pale Fire," SPURS Gallery, Beijing, 2020; "Arriving the Fold," an online exhibition, Centre for Experimental Film, 2020; "No Quarters," the Bunker Space, Beijing, 2019; "West of the Sun," PPPP Space, Beijing, 2019.

Group exhibitions: "Motion Is Action—35 Years of Chinese Media Art," BY ART MATTERS, Hangzhou, 2023; "Art's Language, Artists' Game," OCAT Shenzhen, Shenzhen, 2022; Frieze London, London, 2021; "Wake Up Crying," an online exhibition, Centre for Experimental Film, 2020; "How Do We Begin?," X Museum, Beijing, 2020; "The Ecstasy of Time: Reframing the Medium of Knowing," He Xiangning Art Museum, Shenzhen, 2017; the 30th Stuttgarter Filmwinter Expanded Media, Stuttgart, 2017; "E.M.B.C.L.," Flux Factory, New York, 2017.

Screenings: the 29th Chicago Underground Film Festival, Logan Theatre, Chicago, 2022; "Shards from the Mirror of History," Gene Siskel Film Center, Chicago, 2019; "Old Images," the 65th International Film Festival Oberhausen, Oberhausen, 2019; the 14th Athens Digital Arts Festival, Athens, 2018.

He also has four artist books collected by the Joan Flash Artist Book Collection, Chicago.

Zhou Yan was awarded 2023 "RanRan" Young Artist Prize, "The Exploration Award," and nominated for 2020 AAC Young Artist of the Year Award.