

Feng Zhixuan: Trek

Artist	Feng Zhixuan
Curator	Leo Li Chen
Opening	16:00 – 19:00, Nov 04, 2024
Exhibition Period	Nov 04, 2024 – Jan 04, 2025
Venue	MadeIn Gallery, No.1, -1F Sunken Garden, Lane 9 Qufu Road, Jing'an District, Shanghai

How do we find our bearings between the flux of the starry sky, land, and ocean? How do we regain autonomy within the material objects of animal specimens, industrial materials, and the human body? Feng Zhixuan's solo exhibition "Trek" questions the tension between contemporary geopolitics and individual experience through the lens of blurred geographical boundaries and the decentralization of subject-object relationships.

The exhibition places the body within a seemingly static yet inherently dynamic geographical framework, emphasizing the vulnerability and limitations of the body: terrains that are marked and depicted become oceans and mountains again through human-induced imprints and overlaps, while the body continues to reconstruct both the three-dimensional and horizontal orders. The functionality of hydrofoils and their battleship-like formations illustrate the duality of geopolitics and consumerism. Streetlights, narwhal bone fossils, and palm trees highlight the way an individual perceives geographical forces and the body's experience within them through industrial imitation of nature. The continuity of time and the persistence of matter is thus fractured, showcasing the intertwining of the body with technology and capital in contemporary society.

Feng Zhixuan's artistic creations utilize industrial casting techniques, fiberglass, traditional Chinese herbal medicine, and found objects to reconstruct a specimen-like natural form and scene. Sports equipment gains functionality by referencing biology and interacting with the body. On this level, warships and military equipment also represent how power exerts control over geographical space and encroaches upon the body. By juxtaposing plants, archaeological elements, and industrial production materials, Feng Zhixuan mimics the historical traces of materials in his work, revealing the contradictions and precarity of individuals under technological dependency. In the end, we are merely trekking in the drift between the material and symbolic worlds.

About Feng Zhixuan

Feng Zhixuan (b.1993, Wenzhou, Zhejiang province, China) lives and works in Shanghai and Beijing. A member of the Royal Society of Sculpture, he graduated from the Public Art Department of China Academy of Art in 2015 and the Sculpture Department of the Royal Academy of Arts in 2018. Feng Zhixuan is constantly inspired by multiple life and artistic experiences. His work causes cultural resonance through non-fictional material levels, using rare materials in daily life for producing historical action. The cultural elements in his works are revealed from highly personalized material forms, transformed into historical and improvisational narratives which create nomadic island civilizations that transcend a single period and location. His sculptural installations always encompass a tension that dynamically fuses elements of mythology, decoration, adventure and space imagination. Materials serve as the binder of culture and the result of confrontation in Feng's work, each of which is full of traces of "resistance" to the contemporary urban environment and dehumanizing production. In virtue of a nomadic process of creation and exhibition, Feng seeks to establish autonomous structures of vertical experience, cultivating an ecosystem of Anthropocene imagination while scavenging from the ruins of thermal industry.

Feng's recent exhibitions include: Solo exhibitions: "The One", MadeIn Gallery, Shanghai, 2023; "Parallel Soul: The Ultimate Guide to the Natural History", Gene Gallery, Shanghai, 2022; "Conjure a Compo Site", Gene Gallery, Shanghai, 2019; "Northern Scenery", Plate Space, Beijing, 2019. Group Exhibitions: "Echoes Among Us", Jing'an Sculpture Park, Shanghai, 2024; "Urban Fluidity", Wuhan Biennial, Wuhan, 2024; "Dream Time", UCCA, Beijing, 2024; "Crossing the River by Feeling the Collectors", David Chau's Collection, iag, Shanghai, 2023; "Demonstration: The Art of Decision-making Techniques", Fosun Foundation, Shanghai, 2023; "Unknown Pleasures", Soulart, Beijing, 2023; "We Borrow Dreams from Others, Like Debt", MadeIn Art Museum, Shanghai, 2022; "Spring Rhapsody", KWM Art Center, Beijing, 2022; "Spicy Gluten and Youth Power: A Generational Insight", Epoch Art Museum, Wenzhou, 2022; "Emotion and Universe", HMAc, Chengdu, 2022; "USB", MadeIn Gallery, Gallery Func, Qiao Space, in the Park, Shanghai, 2021; "Hereditary Territory", Powerlong Museum, Shanghai, 2021; "A truck is parked in the grass near a tree in doubt", Erlangen Confucius Institute Art Space, Nuremberg, Germany, 2020; "Pull Up the Stake", Qi Mu Space, Beijing, 2019; "Global Living Room", dePot, Shanghai, 2019; "Violence in Silence", Spectrum Art Space, Shanghai, 2018; "Too Much Information", Seventeen Gallery, London, Britain, 2018; "TheRehab\Lab", Hackney Gallery, London, Britain, 2018; "THE COMING COMMUNITY", The Crypt Gallery, London, Britain, 2017; etc.

About Leo Li Chen

Leo Li Chen is an independent curator and writer based in Beijing, China. He was the Director of Research in Magician Space, Beijing, and an independent curator in Hong Kong and mainland China. His main research focuses on geopolitics, performativity and moving images, to explore the complexity of identity and

subjectivity that transcends geographical barriers. He has curated the exhibitions, *Unidentified Object* (Song Art Museum, Beijing, 2024), *How Far, How Close* (Aranya Art Center, Beidaihe, 2023); *Facets* (Gallery Weekend Beijing Public Sector, 2023) ; *The Racing Will Continue, The Dancing Will Stay* (Guangdong Times Museum, Guangzhou, 2019); *Today Could Have Been a Happy Day* (Taikang Space, Beijing, 2018); *That Has Been and Maybe Again* (Para Site, Hong Kong, 2016); *Adrift* (OCAT, Shenzhen, 2016), and so on. He was a resident researcher at Asia Art Archive in 2016, and at MMCA Korea in 2019. He gained the New York curator residency fellowship by Asian Cultural Council in 2019.