

# I AM A ( ).

West 101, 830 Yanan Middle Rd, Jing'an District, Shanghai

22 February 2025 – 9 April 2025

Curator: Charlotte Xu

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From 22 February to 9 April 2025, EY PROJECTS is pleased to present its inaugural exhibition in Shanghai titled "I Am a ( )." Featuring works by Zhaochen Chen, Gulja Holland, Anissa Mack and Hao Ni, the exhibition investigates the multi-layered relationship between men and animals in the contemporary context. This marks the first presentation of Holland's and Mack's works in China.

Since the Paleolithic era, humans have depended upon animals for work, transport, clothing, and leisure. In many senses, the entire field of anthropology is concerned with the passage from nature to culture, and the relationship between men and animals embodies the history of civilisation. The oldest known paintings found in caves depict bulls and horses. Today, animal imagery exists in every medium imaginable. Images necessitate the act of looking. Men scrutinize animals – whether chimpanzees in zoos, elephants in circuses, fish in aquariums or dogs at home. Through this gaze, humans become aware of themselves and their differences from animals. As initiators of the stare, humans *claim* power, seeking to judge and exploit these creatures.

Throughout history, men hunt animals. Men sacrifice animals for religious and spiritual reasons. Men turn animals into metaphors for moral righteousness as well as decadence. In post-industrial societies, as John Berger claims, animals are treated as raw materials and manufactured commodities (Berger, 11). They become food sources, are sterilised, sexually isolated, deprived of habitats, and forced into roles as domestic companions or spectacles in zoos and aquariums.

When animals transform into spectacle, they disappear (14). The need for hidden cameras, telescopic lenses, and flashlights to capture animals' natural states ironically reinforces their invisibility. In *I Am a ( )*, artists employ diverse mediums to reveal animals' *otherwise* invisible or forgotten existences. Imagine the gallery as a zoo: Zhaochen Chen's installation *I Caught You* mimics humanity's *scrutinising* gaze toward other species; Gulja Holland's paintings foreground animal subjects whose eyes *return* the viewer's gaze; Hao Ni's works explore how pets and owners *mutually shape* each other's identities; Anissa Mack uses mylar balloons and helium tanks to critique the treatment of animals as *soulless* props.

The exhibition intentionally recreates the experience of visiting a zoo — moving from cage to cage, pausing at one "specimen" before the next — yet replaces live animals with artistic representations. By inviting audiences to stare at these works, the show questions anthropocentrism. As ethologist Frans de Waal provokes: Are we smart enough to know how smart animals are?

## Bibliography

Berger, John. *Why Look at Animals?*. Penguin Books, 2009.



## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

### Hao Ni

Hao Ni (b. 2000) is a painter based in Shanghai, China. He graduated from the East China Normal University in 2024. His work combines personal and collective social narratives. Animal is a motif that repetitively appears in his practice. He often departs from domesticated animals, such as pets, in everyday scenes, converting these quotidian images into symbols that contain collective significance. His work often invites the audience to exchange perspectives with the subject in his painting, allowing the viewers to reflect upon the ways their identity is linked to those of others surrounding them, whether it is their pets, the characters appeared in movies they have seen, or the toys that accompany them.

In addition to painting, Hao Ni has created multiple public commissioned sculptures for major institutions and occasions, such as the Daimaru Department Store (W Nanjing Rd, Shanghai), the International Art Festival (Shanghai) and ARTRA (Wuxi & Shenzhen). His work has been featured in *Art China*, *AD China*, and *Madame Figaro*.

**His solo exhibitions** include:

“Roaming in the Paracosm”, Cub\_ism\_, Shanghai (2024); “I believe”, WestBund DREAM xiang chǎng unit, Shanghai (2024); “Rabbit Bobo” Public Sculpture, West Nanjing Rd, Shanghai (2023); “Birds Returning” Public Sculpture, Shanghai International Art Festival (2023), Wuxi Ecological Art Festival (2024), Shenzhen Jindi Weixin x Wuji Art Season (2024).

**His selected group exhibitions** include:

“Returning to the Landscape”, Cub\_ism\_, Shanghai (2023); “Multiple Refraction – the Ghost of Modernism”, Cub\_ism\_, Shanghai (2023); “GE-SICHT”, Cub\_ism\_, Shanghai (2023); “Painting Tiny Times”, 33ml Offspace, Shanghai (2023).

### Gulja Holland

Gulja Holland (b. 1990, Malta) is a figurative painter based between Malta and London. She graduated with an MA in painting from the Royal College of Art in 2021 and obtained a BA (Hons) in Fine Art from Leeds Arts University in 2015. Self-identity, environmental destruction and existentialism are recurring themes in her work. Her most recent series explores apocalyptic narratives through a reversal of scale of animals and humans to convey the ever-increasing instability of hierarchical order brought about by the arrival of the Anthropocene.

Her work has been featured in the *Economic Observer Review*, *Times of Malta* and the *Malta Independent*.

**Her solo exhibitions** include:

“A New Gothic”, Spazju Kreattiv, Valletta (2023); “When Your Voice Shakes”, Studio 87, Valletta (2021).

**Her selected group exhibitions** include:

“Possible Worlds”, Spazju Kreattiv, Valletta (2023); “WOP5”, Blue Shop Cottage, London (2023); “MARA”, Bureau Iniala x Marie Gallery 5, Valletta (2023); “Living Residue”, Omnu Creatie Houses, Lisbon (2022); “London Grads Now. 21”, Saatchi Gallery, London (2021-2022).



## Zhaochen Chen

Zhaochen Chen (b. 1998) is a multi-disciplinary artist based in London, UK. She graduated from the Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing and is currently pursuing her master's degree at the Goldsmith. Departing from an individual perspective, her work explores the entangled relationship between the internal and the external reality. Using images, sound, video and installation, her work combines various media to abstractly visualise the discomfort and conflict brought about by contradictory relationships, attempting to break through barriers and boundaries and inviting the viewer to enter and perceive the state of existence of different groups in society.

She was the finalist for the “Central Academy of Fine Arts Future Artist Award”.

Her **duo solo exhibition** includes:

“Red Velvet and Cherry Bombs”, Xiangshan Art Commune, Hangzhou (2022)

Her **selected group exhibitions** include:

“Youth Art 100”, Guardian Art Center, Beijing (2023); “Situation Jiaxin”, Project Z Pleated Space, Donguan (2023); “The Solidified Melody”, National Centre for the Performing Arts, Beijing (2022); “Excess Daily”, Mo Fang Space, Chengdu (2022); “Spirit of Porcelain” Jingdezhen International Ceramic Art Biennale, Jingdezhen Ceramic University, Jingdezhen (2021).

## Anissa Mack (Guest Artist)

Known for her sculptural and mixed media works that take state fairs as inspiration, Anissa Mack (born 1970) is an American contemporary artist currently works in Brooklyn, New York. She received her BA in Studio Art from Wesleyan University and an MFA from Tyler School of Art. She has also created commissioned public projects and performances for the Santa Barbara Contemporary Arts Forum (California), WaveHill Gardens (Bronx, New York), The Public Art Fund (New York), and the Queens Museum (New York). Her work is included in the collections of the Whitney Museum of American Art and the International Center of Photography.

Anissa Mack's idiosyncratic sculptures are memories made manifest. Her work attempts to recapture fleeting senses, visual misunderstandings and forgotten everyday people through meticulously made objects. Sidestepping the expectation of linearity and a single visual style, Mack's sculptures instead mirror the personal and haphazard way that we experience the world. Her work exists as one large assemblage that can always be reshuffled, remade and re-understood — centering the viewer as an active participant. Her work spans sculpture, photography and performance but always uses the remaking of objects and images as an overarching strategy. Mack's unfaithful copies reveal how the common act of remembering can become complicated, strange and distinctly contemporary.

Her work has been featured in numerous major media outlets such as *the New York Times*, *Artforum*, and *ARTnews*.



# 我是一只（ ）

上海市静安区延安中路830号西栋101

2025.2.22 – 2025.4.9

策展人：徐蕴慧

2025年2月22日至4月9日，艺外（EY PROJECTS）将在上海项目空间举办首个展览《我是一只（ ）》。展览将展出倪好、陈昭辰、茱莉亚·霍兰德、阿妮萨·马克的作品，深度探讨当代语境下人类与动物间的多层次关系。这也是茱莉亚·霍兰德和阿妮萨·马克在中国的首次展览。

自旧石器时代起，人类便依赖动物来完成工作、运输、提供衣物甚至娱乐等活动。从某种意义上说，人类学的核心是探讨从自然到文化的过渡，而人与动物的关系构成了文明史的一部分。已知最古老的壁画描绘的就是公牛和马。如今，动物的图像几乎存在于所有可以想象的媒介形式中。图像的存在意味着观看的行为。人类审视动物，无论是动物园里的黑猩猩、马戏团里的大象、水族馆里的鱼还是家里的狗。通过凝视这些动物，人类意识到了自身与动物间的差异。同时，作为凝视者，人类成为评判者，给予自己权利，寻找所有生物中可以被利用的特质。

纵观人类历史，动物被狩猎，动物被用作祭祀，动物的形象也成为道德正义或堕落的隐喻。正如英国艺术批评家约翰·伯格所言，在后工业社会中，动物被视为原材料和可以生产的商品（Berger, 11）。它们是食物的来源，它们被绝育、与它们的群体隔离、剥夺原始栖息地，同时有些成为人类的宠物和家庭伙伴。它们进入动物园、水族馆，成为让人们津津乐道的视觉奇观。

当动物成为一种景观时候，它们便消失了（14）。人们使用隐藏摄像头、望远镜镜头、闪光灯等设备试图捕捉动物在自然中的常态，这进一步证明了这些真正的“常态”在人类所处的世界中是看不到的。在展览《我是一只（ ）》中，艺术家们从自己的视角出发，通过多种媒介试图捕捉那些常被忽略或遗忘的动物形象。请想象展览空间为一个动物园或水族馆，艺术家陈昭辰的装置作品《抓到你》模仿了人类审视其他物种的眼睛，也是整个展览的点题之笔。茱莉亚·霍兰德的绘画直接描绘动物，强调它们的眼睛在凝视时也具有回望的能力。倪好的作品通常涉及家养动物，探讨宠物与其主人之间的身份如何相互影响和交织。阿妮萨·马克通过使用金属薄膜气球和氦气罐，评论了人们对动物灵魂与精神的剥夺，以及将动物视为道具和消遣的现象。

从某种意义上说，参观动物园，人们从一个笼子走到另一个笼子，这就像参观画廊一样：人们停在一幅画前，然后继续走到下一幅。这次展览通过展出不同的动物形象有意重现了这种体验。展览鼓励观众仔细凝视这些作品、这些动物，同时鼓励观众质疑以人类为中心的强势姿态。或许我们都应该问自己动物行为学家法兰斯·德瓦尔提出的那个问题：我们真的足够聪明去了解动物有多聪明吗？

## 引用

Berger, John. *Why Look at Animals?*. Penguin Books, 2009.



## 艺术家介绍

**倪好**（中国，2000——）是一位常驻中国上海的艺术家的，华东师范大学在读研究生。他的作品结合了个人和集体的社会叙事，其中，动物是他创作中反复出现的主题。他常常从日常场景中的家养动物（如宠物）出发，将这些平凡的图像转化为具有集体意义的符号。他的作品邀请观众与画中角色交换视角，让观众反思自身身份认同的行程与其周围环境的关系，无论是他们的宠物、看过电影中的角色，还是陪伴他们的玩具……在绘画之余，倪好参与全国各地多个公共艺术项目，其作品曾在上海、无锡、深圳等机构和企业进行展览，其作品也被《艺术当代》、《安邸AD》、《IDEAT理想家》、《FIGARO费加罗》等主流杂志广泛报道。

他的个人展览包括：“异想漫游记”，库比森画廊，上海（2024）；“我执”，西岸DREAM xi`ang cha`ng单元，上海（2024）；“啵啵兔”公共雕塑，南京西路大丸百货，上海（2023）；“艺鸟归巢”公共雕塑，上海国际艺术节（2023）、无锡蠡湖生态艺术节（2024）、深圳金地威新x无集栖息之所艺术季（2024）

他参与的部分群展包括：“重返地景”，库比森画廊，上海（2023）；“多重折射——现代主义的幽灵”，库比森画廊，上海（2023）；“被凝视者”，库比森画廊，上海（2023）；“绘画小时代”，33ml Offspace，上海（2023）

**茱莉亚·霍兰德**（马耳他，1990——）是一位活跃于马耳他和伦敦之间艺术家。她于2021年毕业于皇家艺术学院，获得绘画硕士学位，并于2015年从利兹艺术大学获得美术学士（荣誉）学位。自我认同、环境破坏和存在主义是她作品中反复出现的主题。她最近的系列作品通过动物和人类尺度的逆转来探索世界末日叙事，以传达由人类世到来所带来的等级秩序日益不稳定。她的作品曾被《经济观察评论》、《马耳他时报》和《马耳他独立报》等媒体报道。

她的个人展览包括：“新哥特”，马耳他国家创意艺术中心，瓦莱塔（2023）；“当你的声音颤抖时”，Studio 87，瓦莱塔（2021）

她参与的部分群展包括：“可能的世界”，马耳他国家创意艺术中心，瓦莱塔（2023）；“WOP5”，Blue Shop Cottage，伦敦（2023）；“MARA”，Bureau Iniala x Marie Gallery 5，瓦莱塔（2023）；“活着的残余”，Omnu Creatie Houses，里斯本（2022）；“伦敦毕业生·当下21”，萨奇画廊，伦敦（2021-2022）

**陈昭辰**（中国，1998——）是一名跨媒介艺术家，现工作于伦敦和背景。她毕业于北京中央美术学院，目前正在伦敦金史密斯学院攻读硕士学位。从个人视角出发，她的作品探索了内在与外在现实之间复杂的关系。通过使用图像、声音、视频和装置，她的作品结合了多种媒介，以抽象的方式可视化由矛盾关系带来的不适与冲突，试图突破障碍与界限，并邀请观众进入并感知社会中不同群体的存在状态。她的作品曾入围“中央美术学院未来艺术家奖”。

她的双个展包括：“红丝绒与樱桃炸弹”，象山艺术公社，杭州（2022）

她参与的部分群展包括：“青年艺术100”，嘉德艺术中心，北京（2023）；“情境嘉欣”，Project Z 褶空间，东莞（2023）；“凝固的旋律”，中国国家大剧院，北京（2022）；“过剩的日常”，莫方空间，成都（2022）；“瓷的精神”景德镇国际陶瓷艺术双年展，景德镇陶瓷大学，景德镇





(2021)

**阿妮萨·马克**（美国，1970——）（特邀展览艺术家）是一位活跃于美国布鲁克林的当代艺术家，她以受美国州立博览会启发的雕塑和混合媒介作品而闻名。她于卫斯理大学获得纯艺术学士学位，并在泰勒艺术学院获得艺术硕士学位。她还为圣巴巴拉当代艺术论坛（加利福尼亚）、WaveHill Gardens（纽约布朗克斯）、公共艺术基金（纽约）和皇后区博物馆（纽约）创作了委托公共项目和表演作品。她的作品被永久收录于惠特尼美国艺术博物馆和国际摄影中心。

马克的独特雕塑是记忆的实体化身。她的作品通过精工细作的物件，试图重新捕捉那些稍纵即逝的感官、视觉误读与被遗忘的日常人物。马克的雕塑避开了线性叙事与单一视觉风格的常规期待，转而映照出我们感知世界时那种私密而随机的状态。她的创作犹如一座庞大的拼装体，始终可被重新排列、再造与诠释——观者由此成为主动的参与者。她的艺术实践横跨雕塑、摄影与行为表演，但始终以对物件与图像的反复重构为核心策略。马克那些“不忠实的复制”揭示了回忆这一寻常行为如何变得混沌、诡谲，并透露出鲜明的当代特质。

她的作品曾被《纽约时报》、《Artforum》和《艺术新闻》等重要艺术媒体报道。

