

Yang Mai (MDes 2016)



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Website (<https://www.yangmai.us>) | Instagram (https://www.instagram.com/_yangmai_/)

Born and raised in Guangzhou, China, Yang Mai is a Chinese artist and currently based in New York.

Mai's work focuses on the possible functions that clothing can have in sculpture and how to articulate these possibilities in the language of gallery installation. By removing commercial seriousness from industrial and introducing playful or exaggerated features, his work hopes to encourage and celebrate our rebellious human nature and establish alternative symbolizations of the present reality.

His work has shown internationally, in the United States his art work has been featured in shows and exhibitions in, such as: Aqua Art Miami Fair, New York Fashion Week, Chashama Non-Profit Art Organization. In 2020, Mai's new body of work will be shown at CUE Art Foundation

Mai holds a Master degree from School of Art institute of Chicago, and a Bachelor degree from Beijing Institute of Fashion Technology.

Current career status/title:

Artist

Recent exhibitions of note/fashion collections or presentations/significant awards:

2020 solo exhibition at CUE Art Foundation, New York, USA

2018-2019 art director at New York Fashion Week



雅昌专稿 | 麦扬：重构制服——观察机制的固定模式

2023-05-04 17:09:51 雅昌原创专稿 作者：罗书银



艺术家麦扬

麦扬是一位以衣服为主要材料进行创作的艺术家。

在当代艺术界，不乏使用衣服进行创作的艺术家，且以女性为主。衣服成为记忆的载体，其中所蕴含的历史、情感、温度成为艺术家表达的主题。他们大多选择借助“废旧衣服”的感性力量，唤起观众的共鸣，记录一段特殊的集体经历。

而麦扬对衣服的选择，有独特的角度和逻辑。

麦扬本科毕业于北京服装学院，之后到芝加哥艺术学院攻读硕士。对于服装，麦扬无疑是熟悉的，而在进入芝加哥艺术学院之后借助服装进行艺术创作，水到渠成。

麦扬是一位辨证多思的艺术家。在选择材料进行创作时，他近乎苛刻。为了屏蔽服装所携带的个人化的信息、直指背后的根本问题，麦扬只选择全新的服装，且以标准化生产的制服为主。这些衣服在现代社会里往往具有极强的指向性。

在他的作品中，服装不再只被视为具有其原本功能性和商业价值的物品，而是被赋予更多的象征意义，呈现出不同的身体形态和社会特性。这一形式展现了群体生活中不同个体之间的普遍性和差异性。借助服装，他对身份及其背后所指向的社会问题发出叩问。



麦扬个展“好！（SAY-SO）”展览现场



麦扬个展“好！（SAY-SO）”开幕现场，北京三影堂摄影艺术中心3.0space

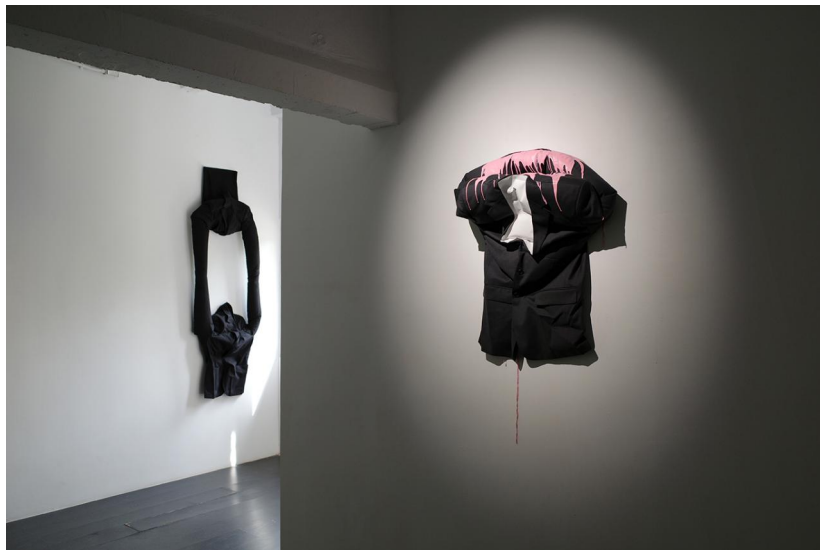
归国后，2023年4月1日至30日，麦扬个展“好！（SAY-SO）”在北京三影堂摄影艺术中心3.0space举行，展出了他近期几件具有代表性的系列作品。





此次展览空间设置非常特别，主展厅位于二层。拾级而上，楼梯左面墙上写着此次展览的名字：“好！（SAY-SO）”，标题大小与位置刚好可以透过楼梯右边窗户从外部看到。

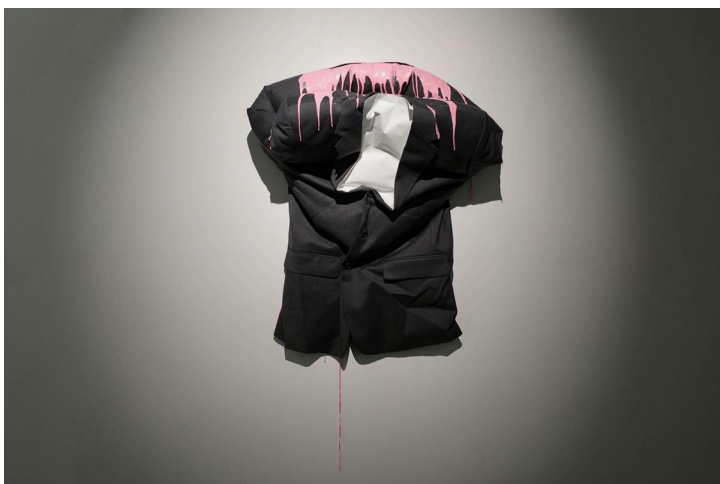
展览主题由中英文两个词构成。在中、英文语境中，这两个词都具有多重指向性。中文“好”字，既可以是赞同、满意、夸奖的表达；也可能是违反个体意愿的表达，比如“怎么样都好”，“你开心就好”等等，包含讽刺意味。而英文中，“SAY-SO”也是类似。借助这两个词的组合，麦扬希望带给观众更多的想象空间，正如他的作品一样。





作品《Shhh! (嘘!)》，2023年

进入二层展厅，首先映入眼帘的是麦扬自2019年开始持续创作的《Shhh! (嘘!)》系列作品。展览现场有两个该系列作品，分别是一个两件黑色的西服和一个单件的西服。这些西服被填充发泡胶鼓起，并在袖口处缝合连接，形成一个闭环。其中单件的西服在表面上喷涂了油漆。





作品《Untitled (无题)》展出现场



作品《Untitled (无题)》，2022年

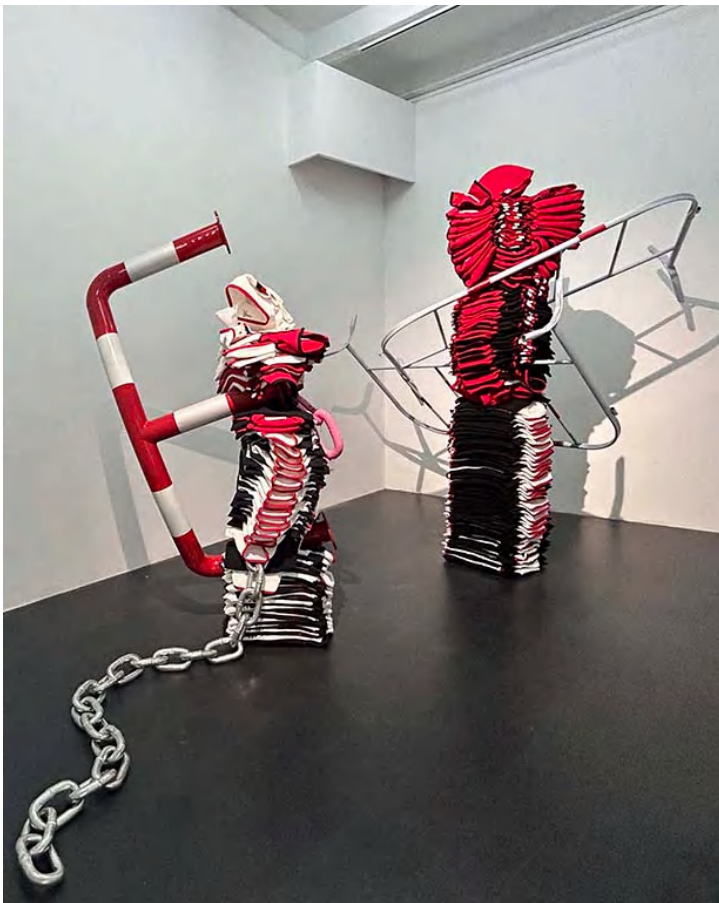
与之遥相呼应的是麦扬另一个长期创作系列《Untitled (无题)》。在这个系列作品中，麦扬通过填充不同款式的Polo衫，来观察不同穿着者的姿态和气质，令人浮想联翩。

在这两个系列作品中，服装都脱离了原本形态，呈现为不同程度扭曲的“身体”，从而使作品获得更加自由的姿态和独立性。在不同观者的凝视之下，引发不同的情绪体验。



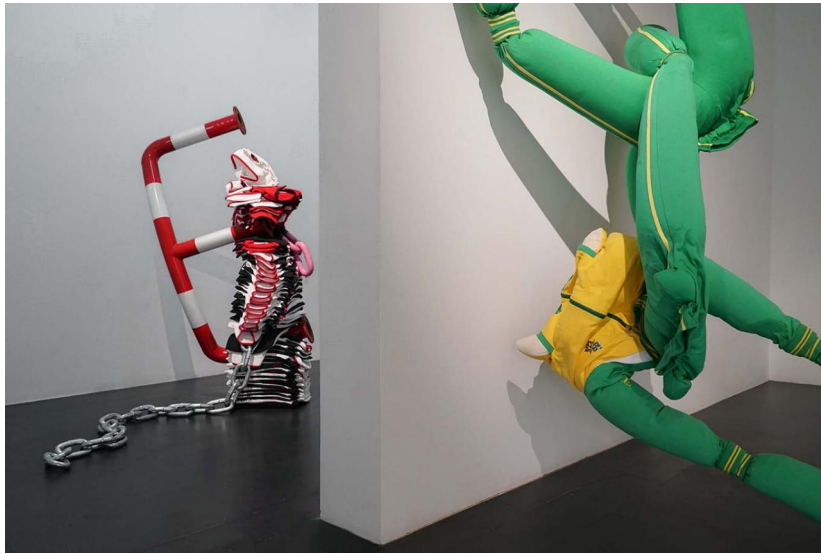
麦扬个展“好！(SAY-SO)”现场，北京三影堂摄影艺术中心3.0space

《怀抱 (Hold Me in Your Arms) 》是由广州市番禺区的校服组成的一件大型装置。这是麦扬2021年回国后创作的。作品是麦扬对校园集体生活的回应，他通过填充校服、缝合衣服袖口与裤腿，并将其相互穿插，形成了一个相互连接的整体。作品在空间中呈垂挂态，带给人一种不稳定的感觉。艺术家借此唤起对特殊校园生活的记忆，具象化受集体同化后的每个个体之间的微妙交织的关系。



作品《UpRise (站起来)》展出现场

《UpRise (站起来) 》系列作品由男式POLO衫堆叠出装置主体，并融合护栏和锁链等元素；通过密集挤压批量生产的服装，将其扭曲出不同的姿态，艺术家对当今的失衡结构进行了有力批判。



麦扬个展“好！（SAY-SO）”现场，北京三影堂摄影艺术中心3.0space

麦扬的创作着眼于今天人们的身份困惑，巧妙地通过重构制服，以批判视角审视群体生活中不同个体的共性和差异，引发深思。

在这次展览中，艺术家麦扬的几件作品被收藏。其中，作品《怀抱（Hold Me in Your Arms）》，2021/2023版、《Shhh！（嘘！）》，2023年，4/4和《Untitled（无题）》，2022，3/3等分别被私人收藏家收藏。



收藏家管女士

管女士曾收藏过艺术家麦扬的作品，并对这些作品有着深刻感受。她认为：麦扬的作品无论是在馆内漫开的《怀抱(Hold Me in Your Arms)》、立于方丈间的《UpRise (站起来)》、肃悬在墙上的《Shhh! (嘘!)》，还是小巧玲珑的《Untitled (无题)》，都充满了生命力。这些作品表达了他对不同维度个人与集体议题的关注和探索，能够引发强烈的情感反应。”



收藏家李先生

而另一位收藏家李先生则收藏了作品《Shhh! (嘘!)》，2023，4/4。李先生表示：“我长期以来一直关注麦扬的创作，并见证了他从纽约到北京的历程。他敏锐地洞察时代话题，以细腻的表达呈现给观众。麦扬独特而成熟的艺术语言，让每一位当代观众都能从他的作品里感受到其中所蕴含的力量并领悟其核心内涵。”

在此次展览结束之际，雅昌艺术网与艺术家麦扬展开了一次特别的对话，跟随他的分享，带我们回顾了此次展览。



麦扬个展“好! (SAY-SO)”现场，北京三影堂摄影艺术中心3.0space

雅昌艺术网对话艺术家麦扬

雅昌艺术网：此次在三影堂摄影艺术中心3.0space的个展是你近期回国后的画廊展览，可否介绍一下你此前的个人经历：

麦扬：在国内读完本科之后，我到美国芝加哥艺术学院留学。毕业后，我搬去纽约创作并参加了一些展览。

我曾在美国纽约、芝加哥和迈阿密的美术馆、非盈利机构、画廊和博览会中多次举办个展和群展，并与这些机构持续保持合作。这些经历让我的作品备受关注，受到了学术和市场的认可。

雅昌艺术网：此次展览主题“好！（SAY-SO）”，由中文和英文两个词组成，充满巧思，为什么会选用这个名字？

麦扬：这两个词在各自语境里，都充满多重含义，而且它们只有放在一起才完整的表达了整个展览的内核。正如作品名字也是中英结合，这都是有意为之，是希望展览、作品可以带给人们多样的感受与体会。

比如这次展览期间，很多亲友、观众来到现场，表达了他们从个人的视角和经验出发，从作品中感受到的力量和情绪。开幕那天，一位观众在看到《Shhh！（嘘！）》时，说仿佛受到了救赎。同时，也有朋友表示从这件作品中体会到了彼此拉扯的感觉。

我的作品很多时候有一种矛盾性和暧昧性。在今天这个强烈民族情绪的环境中，大家很多时候对事物持有非黑即白的观点，但事实远非如此，很多复杂问题需要多角度思考和讨论。

雅昌艺术网：“衣服”是你创作的材料，也是你诉说的语言，为什么会在众多材料中选择了这一个“创作语言”？

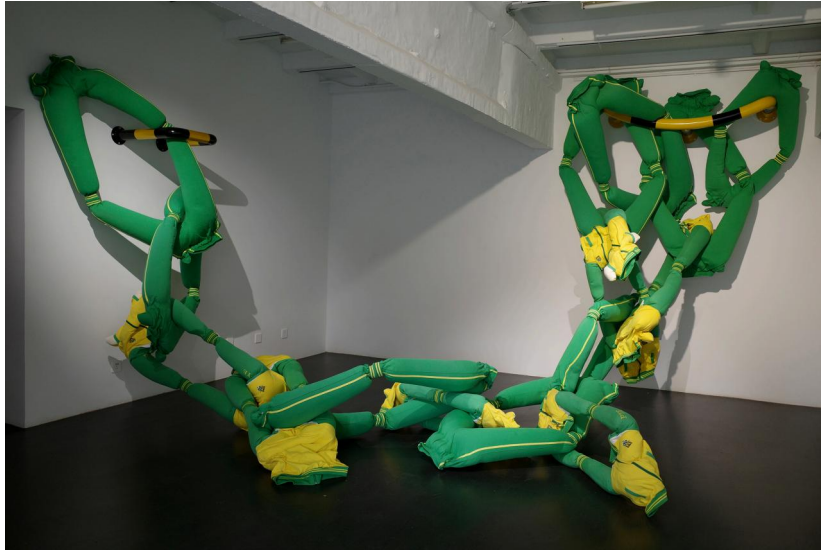
麦扬：衣服本身是一种人类文化的载体，它直接关乎我们对于身体、个体、性别和社会的认知。在我的创作中，衣服是一种符号，它具有直接的象征性，并且只有人才需要穿着衣服，具有人性表达。

我的本科专业是北京服装学院的Fashion Design，因此我对服装材料非常熟悉。在芝加哥艺术学院读研期间，我的专业同样是Fashion，但我专注于艺术研究，而非设计。同时，我的家乡广东发达的轻工业也使我自然地将这些材料融入到创作中。

雅昌艺术网：在当代艺术界有不少艺术家也会使用衣服这个材料进行创作，但你对这个材料的使用似乎有出于你自己独特的理解？

麦扬：我的作品使用的衣服都是全新的。我不用二手衣服，因为我希望排除其中穿着者的历史、记忆所包含的故事，把作品表达更纯粹化。

同时我使用的衣服也尽量忽略其时尚、商业属性，转而批量生产的大众服饰。我希望透过服装讨论身体，身份、或是个体与群体关系的话题，而这种讨论依个体经验不同而带有不确定性，所以我的作品通常呈现出比较抽象、暧昧、矛盾的状态。



作品《怀抱 (Hold Me in Your Arms) 》展出现场, 2021/2023版

雅昌艺术网：此次展览最大的一件作品装置《怀抱 (Hold Me in Your Arms) 》似乎是一个典型的代表？通过这件作品，你试图唤起学生时代特殊的经历与记忆？

麦扬：这件作品首先包含了我的个人经历。我选择了广州市番禺区学校的校服，因为它是我家乡学校的校服，其次它也包含了我们共同的集体生活记忆。

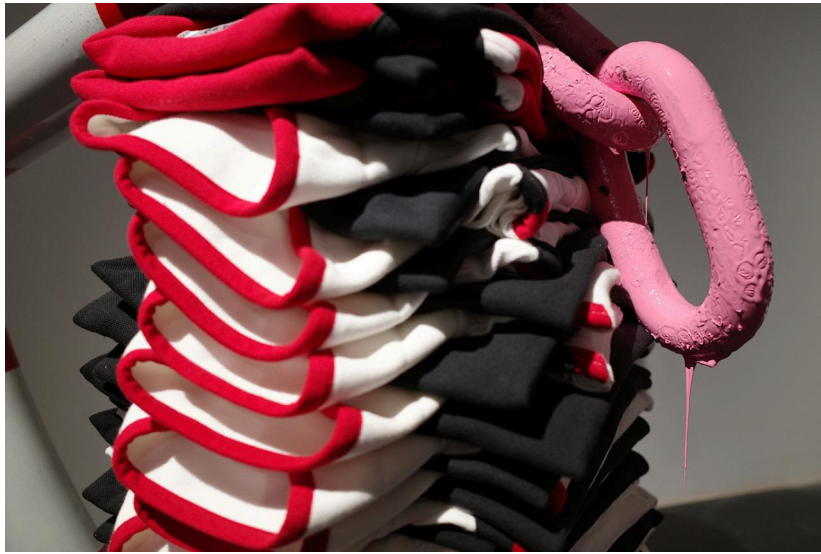
我把校服缝合、穿插，彼此交织，仿佛打了一个死结。这种纠缠在有些人眼里会包含痛苦的情绪，但同时它又很像一个手拉手的群体在快乐地玩游戏。每个人在面对这件作品时，会唤起不同的记忆与感受。

借这件作品，我希望探讨个体与群体的关系。当个体融入群体，就会变成一个单细胞动物，失去辩证思考、判断、表达的能力，很多时候只能从众选择。这种现象不是个别群体的特征，而是全人类共通的心理表现。

作品本身的形态也非常有意思。首先，它可以与空间结合，从上而下垂挂，允许从不同的角度被观察。其次，它在空间中的投影也成为了作品的一部分，使得“交织感”更立体、复杂。

《怀抱 (Hold Me in Your Arms) 》每次的姿态都可以不同，我不会百分之百复制前一次的呈现。这也是作品有意思的地方，每次布展都会是一次新的创作。作品本身既有服从性，又有挑衅的感觉；就像复杂多变的人性，无法、也不应该被用非黑即白的方式进行总结。





作品《UpRise（站起来）》展出现场及细节，2022-2023年

雅昌艺术网：《UpRise（站起来）》系列是此次另外一组较大的装置，选择了标准化的POLO衫作为材料，这样作品的出发点是什么？

麦扬：男式POLO衫某种程度上代表了现代社会里的一些阶级，在男权社会里，这种衣服很具有代表性。

这系列作品所用的POLO衫是我2019年从广州收的一批“冒牌”服饰。当我得到这批材料时，我知道这就是我想要的东西。

作品的成形出于一次偶然。最初创作时，我希望把这些衣服堆叠起来，形成一种不稳定态。要实现这种结构，就必须对衣服进行特殊处理。在处理时，需要不断地做机械重复动作，做久了就变得很烦躁，开始生气，然后就拿起工作室的一把椅子扔了过去，结果椅子就挂在了上面。这个偶然让作品产生了意想不到的效果。这个“暴力”行为在这件作品中反而充满了反抗意味。

雅昌艺术网：在你创作的过程中，这种偶然性经常出现的吗？

麦扬：我做作品一般是50%准备，50%期待。在整个过程中，我与作品是共同成长的关系。

雅昌艺术网：此次展出的几组作品通过选择不同标准化的制服，审视了我们当下社会里各种的身份群体。你会如何总结你自己的创作？

麦扬：我希望通过重构制服，观察社会运行机制的固定模式。

通过“衣服”重新定义身体、身份、社会关系等抽象概念，打破一些刻板印象，从而引发更加自由的思考，进一步解构环境施加于人的限制，构造更多元、包容和开放的话语环境。这其中既带有审视，又提出问题，将回答的权利交给观者。



关于艺术家：

麦扬 (Yang Mai) 是一位艺术家和芝加哥艺术学院客座讲师，现居纽约和北京。他拥有芝加哥艺术学院硕士学位和北京服装学院学士学位，并于2021年获得了美国国家艺术基金会 (National Endowment for the Arts) 的奖项。他的个人展览近期在三影堂艺术中心 (北京, 2023)、全国农业展览馆 (北京, 2021)、COMMON PLACE (北京, 2021-22)、CUE美术馆 (纽约, 2020)、ChaShaMa美术馆 (纽约, 2021, 2017) 等举办。他参与的展览包括Li Tang画廊 (纽约, 2023)、二0一空间 (北京, 2021)、太和艺术中心 (北京, 2021)、LATITUDE画廊 (纽约, 2020)、纽约时装周 (纽约, 2018-19)、纽约艺术博览会 (纽约, 2018)、迈阿密艺术博览会 (迈阿密, 2018)、MC画廊 (纽约, 2018)、芝加哥设计展 (芝加哥, 2016)、Sage Studio (芝加哥, 2016) 等。他的作品曾被纽约时报、Artnet、当代艺术日报、华尔街国际杂志、中国日报、CGTN、Vogue等媒体报道。

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好！SAY-SO

2023年4月1日 - 4月30日

北京



麦扬个展《好！Say-so》在三影堂摄影艺术中心3.0space展出，展览呈现麦扬的装置系列代表作品，由李燕茹策划。麦扬的作品通过重构制服来观察机制的固定格式，共同探讨当下高度统一的个体与群体之间失衡的关系，并将之以矛盾和暧昧的形态展示在观众视野里。

怀抱 (*Hold Me in Your Arms*) 位于展览中心，批量的校服被填充起来，在其缝合的袖口处手手相连，再以上而下的锁链形式堆积而成。其作品是麦扬对校园生活的回应，也是对集体生活剥夺个体特征的讽刺。*怀抱* (*Hold Me in Your Arms*) 与空间中单个装置系列*Shhh!* (*嘘!*) 构成对话，强调个体在群体中寻求认同感却主动失去话语权的处境。展览中其他作品不断深入对话，膨胀的形体拒绝其原本被定义的功能、拒绝参与商业性行为；当“身体”的意识出现时，作品以更加自由的姿态获得了独立性。

麦扬的装置作品呈现了服装对穿着者施加的定性和限制，通过反思其被赋予的权威性，以荒诞而夸张的形态对系统性行为和服从概念发出挑衅，并尝试以一种戏谑实验性的激进方式，将身体从服装的限制中解放出来，从而实现自身的“Unbodied Society”。

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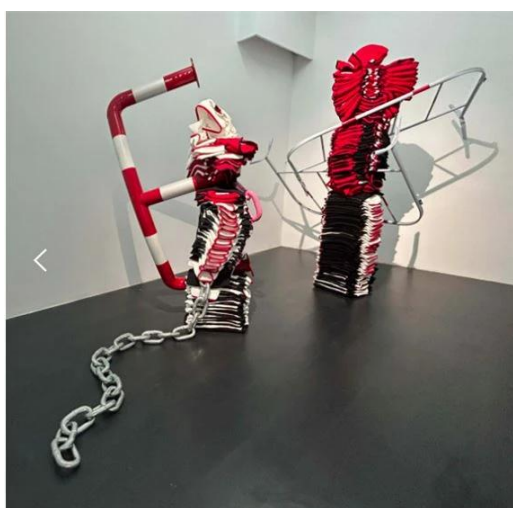
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Yang Mai: 好! (SAY-SO)

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APR 01, 2023 - APR 30, 2023



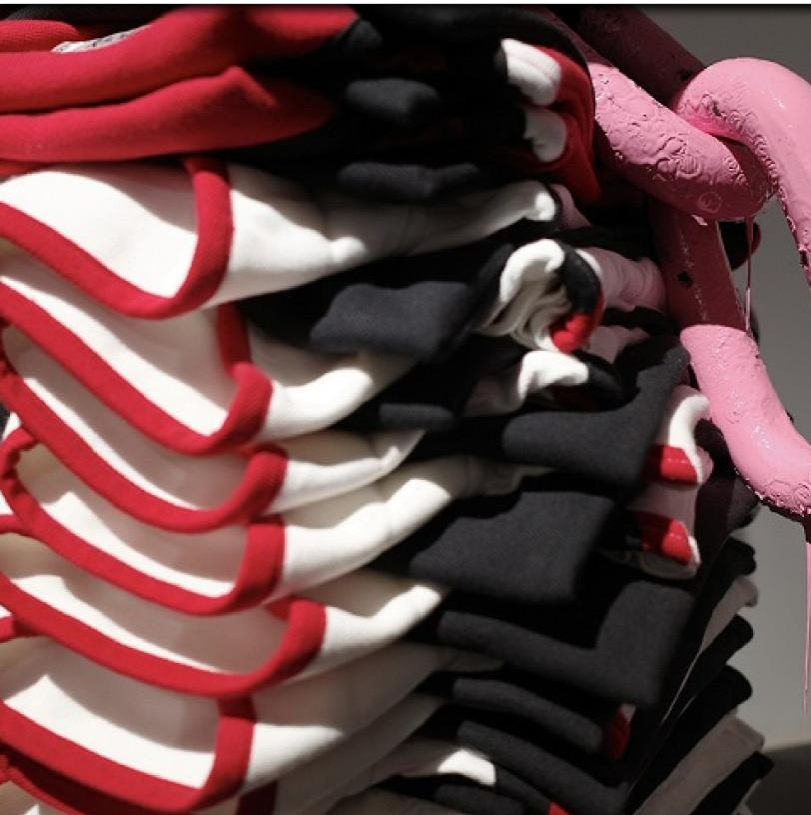
"好! (Say-so)" is a solo exhibition by Yang Mai currently on view at Beijing Three Shadows Photography Art Centre 3.0space. Curated by Yanru Li, the exhibition features Mai's body of work that addresses issues of conformity and systemic inequities in our social structures by using playful and exaggerated elements to reconstruct clothing as a medium. Through his work, Mai reveals the imbalanced relationship between deindividuation and group polarization, which invites to engage in discussions around the contradictory and ambiguous forms he presents.

"怀抱 (Hold Me in Your Arms)" is exhibited in the center and is composed of numerous school uniforms stuffed and connected at the cuffs, forming a chain configuration that ascends from the floor to the ceiling. The artist created this work in response to the experience of school life in China, highlighting the individual identity that often results from group living. "怀抱 (Hold Me in Your Arms)" is part of a larger dialogue with "Shhh! (嘘!)", which emphasizes the struggle of individuals to maintain their identity and the silencing of their voices within a group. The exhibition also features works that reject their intended functions, eschewing commercialized and conformist forms. As the show progresses, other works defy their original forms and expand into unconventional forms. By unleashing the expressive potential of the "body", the works gain newfound independence and liberation.

Yang Mai's work critiques the authority of clothing by exposing its limitations on the wearer. Through satire and experimentation, Mai frees the body from constraints, envisioning an unbodied society.

Artists on show

Yang Mai



Brand News 品牌新闻

麦扬北京个展 《好! Say-so》在 三影堂摄影艺术中 心开幕

艺术家麦扬的北京个人展览《好! Say-so》于4月1日在三影堂摄影艺术中心 3.0space开幕，展期将延长至4月30日。

由李燕茹策划，此次展览展出了麦扬多个装置系列的代表作品，旨在探讨身体与穿着者之间的关系。在麦扬的作品中，服装不再只是具有原本的功能性和商业价值，而是被赋予更多的象征意义，呈现不同的身体形态和社会特性，从而展现群体生活中个体的普遍性和差异性。此次展览引发了对机械性重复生活中固定模式的重新思考和定义。



三影堂
摄影艺术中心
THREE SHADOWS
PHOTOGRAPHY
ART CENTRE

3.0
space

COCHINA888

A Solo Exhibition by YANG MAI,
Curated by YANRU LI:

好!
(SAY-SO)

Three Shadows Photography Art Centre, 155A Caocangdi, Chaoyang District, Beijing.

三影堂
摄影艺术中心
(北京市朝阳区草场铺155A)

2023
04.01-30

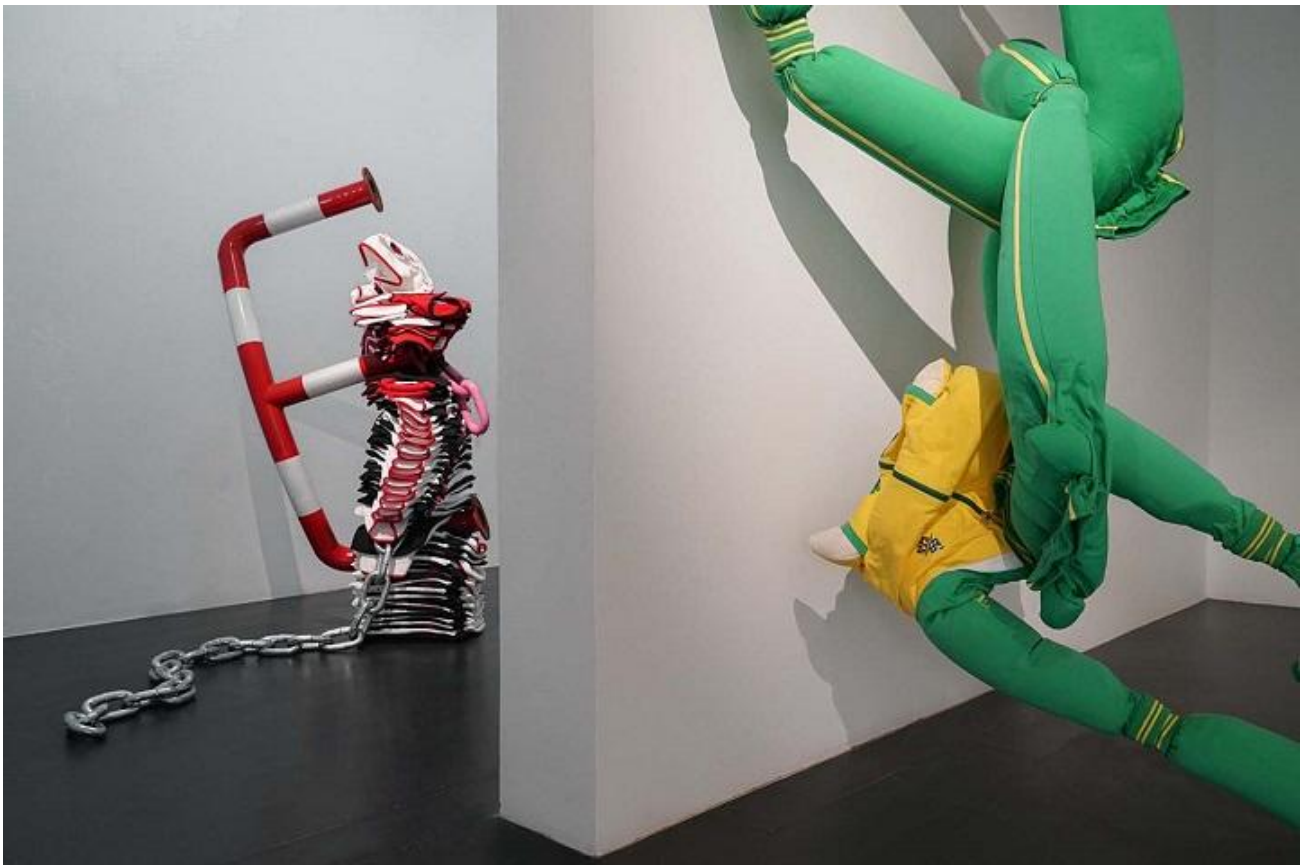
Apr.
1st-30th

艺术家:
杨扬
YANG MAI

策展人:
李燕茹
YANRU LI



艺术家麦扬



展览现场



麦扬

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· 艺术家

麦扬

播报

编辑

讨论

上传视频

★收藏 | 0 | 0

艺术家

麦扬，艺术家^[1]，芝加哥艺术学院硕士，北京服装学院学士，工作并生活于纽约。^[1]

中文名 麦扬^[1]

职业 艺术家^[1]



麦扬的概述图（1张）

目录

- 1 获奖记录
- 2 相关展览
- 3 个人作品

获奖记录

播报 编辑

2021年获得 National Endowment for the Arts美国国家艺术基金会奖。^[1]

相关展览

播报 编辑

2021年，《怀抱》，全国农业展览馆，北京，中国。^[2]

个人作品

播报 编辑

《怀抱》^[2]

《站起来》^[1]

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概述图册(1)

词条统计

浏览次数: 222次

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最近更新: 20210GZ (2022-08-12)

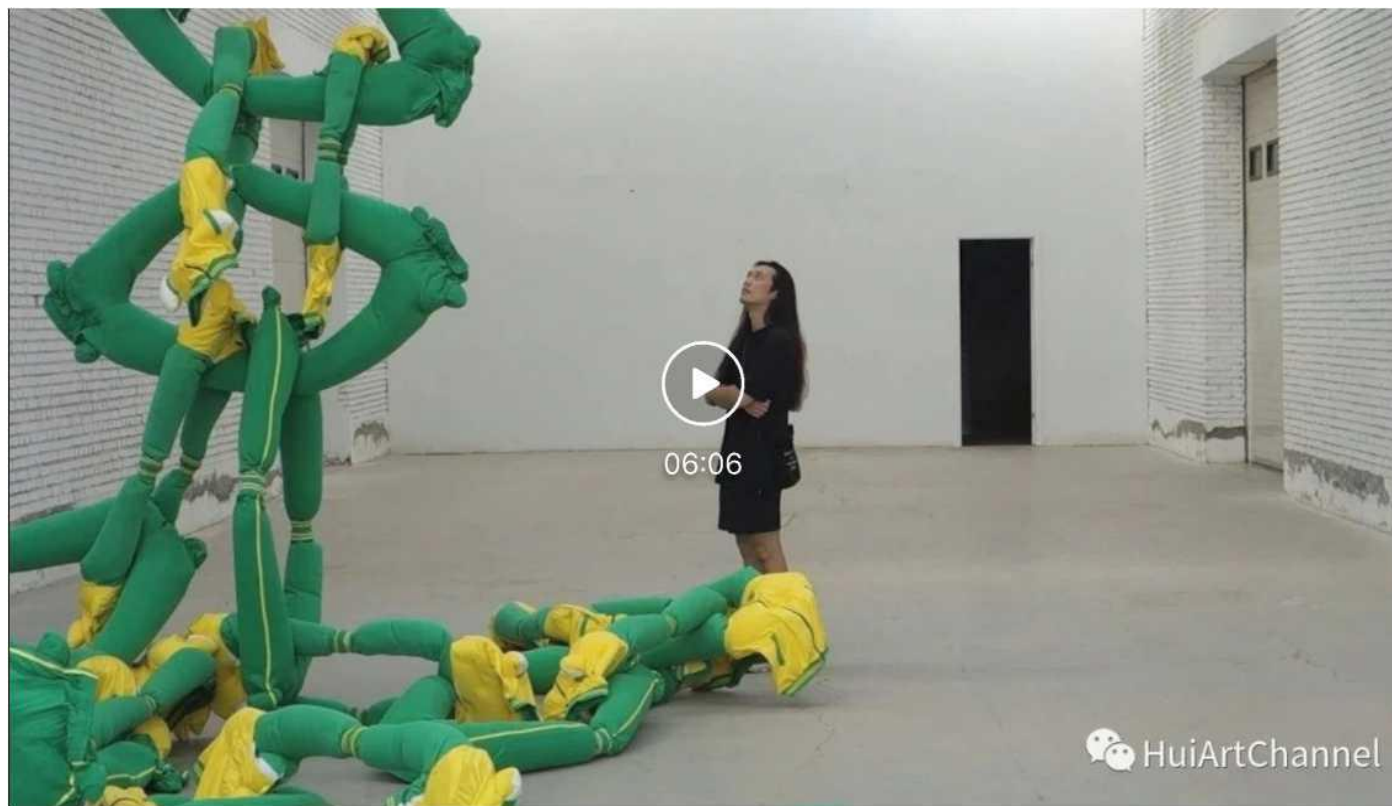
突出贡献榜

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麦扬：怀抱

HuiArtChannel 2021-08-17 19:52



麦扬的创作是对个人情感和生活经历以及集体记忆的回应，他尝试提取和转译事物及材料的固有社会语境下的功能性和工业属性，重新思考其定义，将想象与感受层面的个体与社会间相互调和下形成的微妙不可见形态关系，以开放性的艺术语言重构和塑形。时而以荒诞、欢快的形态发起对系统性行为和服从概念的挑衅。这些膨胀的形体的排列也表明，“身体”是自由相互连结在一起的。不管是叛逆还是服从，交缠与间隙之间暗示着另一种抗力：拒绝参与到它们原本的用途中和脱离人身体的独立性。而在此，美学成为了一种走向激进自由的手段：从必须被身体填入的解放中解放出来，以及要求成为它自身的“Unbodied Society”。

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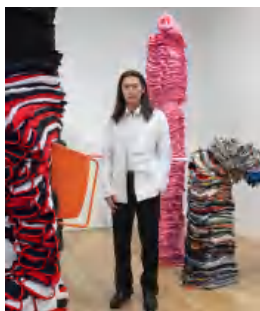


Networking



Expert Exchange: Yang Mai (Artist, MFA'16)

Saturday, October 9, 2021 3:00am - 4:00am CST



School of the Art Institute of Chicago

Expert Exchange offers students and alumni the opportunity to consult with creative professionals and Chicago business leaders about venture ideas and future careers. This is a remote expert Expert Exchange, that will function like a Q&A. Capacity is 7 students.

Yang Mai is an artist born and raised in Guangzhou, China, and currently based in New York City. Mai holds a Master's degree from the School of Art Institute of Chicago, and a Bachelor's degree from the Beijing Institute of Fashion Technology. He has been awarded an National Endowment for the Arts Award in 2021. He was featured in solo exhibitions titled 如果我能说 (If I May Say) at PROJECT 98, Beijing, 2021; Good Morning, China! (早上好, 中国!) at CUE Art Foundation, New York, 2020. Travels to ChaShaMa, New York, 2021; and Made in China at ChaShaMa Non-Profit Art Organization, New York, 2017; His work has been presented at New York Fashion Week in 2018 and 2019. His work has also shown internationally, such as Beijing Taihe Art Center; Aqua Art Miami Fair; The 2016 Design Show in Chicago; and a two-person exhibition at Sage Studio in Chicago. His work has been included in The New York Times, Artnet, Contemporary Art Daily WWD, and more.

Contact
information

Emily Crum,

Location

Program

Coordinator & Career Advisor [Online \(Register for Link\)](#)

Students going

**Cara
Treu**

School
Artthe (/users/31812775)
Institute
of
Chicago

**Gabriela
Agreda**

School
of the
Art (/users/18516178)
Institute
of
Chicago

**Meagan
Murphy**

School
of the
(/users/30301517)

ChaShaMa

(<https://chashama.org>)



Good Morning, China! (早上好，中国!) Yang Mai

Yang Mai's work focuses on the possible functions that clothing can have in sculpture and how to articulate these possibilities in the language of gallery installations. By removing commercial seriousness from the industrial and introducing playful or exaggerated features, his work hopes to encourage and celebrate our rebellious human nature and establish alternative symbolizations of the present reality.

About the Artist:

Yang Mai is an artist born and raised in Guangzhou, China, and currently based in New York City. Mai holds a Master's degree from the School of Art Institute of Chicago, and a Bachelor's degree from the Beijing Institute of Fashion Technology. He was featured in solo exhibitions titled *Good Morning, China! (早上好，中国!)* at [CUE Art Foundation](#), New York, 2020; and *Made in China* at Chashama Non-Profit Art Organization, New York, 2017; His work has been presented at [New York Fashion Week](#) in 2018 and 2019. His work has also shown internationally, such as [Aqua Art Miami Fair](#); [The 2016 Design Show](#) in Chicago; and a two-person exhibition at [Sage Studio](#) in Chicago. His work has been included in [The New York Times](#); [Artnet](#), [WWD](#), [Vogue](#), and more.

For more information visit his website [here](#) or follow his [Instagram](#).

NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT for the **ARTS**
[arts.gov](https://www.arts.gov)

ChaShaMa

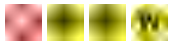
About the Curator:

Shihui Zhou was born and raised in China, where she attended Tsinghua University in Beijing for her BA in art and design. Moving to the United States for graduate study, Zhou worked closely under American visual artist Nick Cave at The School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Zhou is also an alumnus of Textile Arts Center Artist Residency and ChaShaMa ChaNorth Residency program. Shihui's works have been not only shown in the US and overseas, as well featured in The New York Times and other well-known art publications. So far she has been practicing as both a visual artist and curator. She has curated many exhibitions in New York. At the beginning of the year 2020, Zhou founded an artist-run gallery LATITUDE Gallery New York committed to ensuring opportunities for young Asian artists and curators. Zhou is now working and living in Brooklyn, NY, USA.

For more information visit her website [here](#) or follow her [Instagram](#).

**Mar 3 —
Apr 5, 2021**

**37-18 Northern Blvd
Long Island City, New York 11101**



See location → (<https://chashama.org/location/37-18-northern-blvd/>)

Open map → ([http://maps.google.com/maps?q=37-18-Northern+Blvd+Long+Island+City++New+York+11101](http://maps.google.com/maps?q=37-18+Northern+Blvd+Long+Island+City++New+York+11101))

Open hours

Wednesday: 1-6pm
Thursday: 1-6pm
Friday: 1-6pm
Saturday: 1-6pm
Sunday: 1-6pm

*Contact curator Shihui Zhou to schedule visits by appointment.
shihuizhoustudio@gmail.com*

Event

Opening Reception

Mar 3, 2021 5:00pm-8:00pm

Yang Mai: *Good Morning, China!*

(早上好, 中国!)

Curated by David Humphrey

February 20 – March 25, 2020

Opening Reception:

Thursday, February 20, 6-8PM

Exhibition walk-through with Yang

Mai and David Humphrey: Saturday,

March 7, 4-5PM



Yang Mai, *UpRise 8, 9, & 10* (站起来 8, 9, & 10), 2019-20. Deadstock polo shirts, LED tube light, metal, dimensions variable.

CUE Art Foundation is pleased to present *Good Morning, China!* (早上好, 中国!), a solo exhibition by Yang Mai, curated by David Humphrey. Mai recycles deadstock business suits, athletic wear, and school uniforms, garments selected by the artist to signify societal roles and systems of control. Drawing upon his experience growing up in Guangzhou, China, where he studied fashion and continues to source his materials from a shuttered clothing factory, Mai reimagines these materials as chains of balloon-like forms or precarious stacks of neatly folded garments impaled with fluorescent tube lights and folding chairs.

In *Break-mold* (锁链), black blazers are stitched together at the openings of the sleeves and threaded through one another, resulting in a tangled heap of rigid limbs and torsos. Similarly, *Where's Happiness 1* (幸福在哪里 1) interrupts the gallery space with jackets bound together at their openings, stretched into horizontal barricades, and smeared with monotone washes of fluorescent paint. The sculpture, stuffed with spray foam and coated with spray paint in shades of bright yellow, orange, green, and blue, recall masses of bodies stiffened by rigor mortis or linked together to form a human barrier. Meanwhile, sculptures such as *UpRise 7* (站起来 7) stand in vertical opposition, constructed from carefully piled polo shirts which have been violently punctured with a metal school chair.

Mai's sculptures represent the restriction, conformity, and authority that clothing can enforce on its wearer. However, the arrangements of these inflated forms also suggest bodies that are voluntarily entangled with one another, whether in a show of collective resistance or that of a communal gathering. Yet, the hollow appearance of their forms implies another type of resistance: the rejection of their intended use and independence from the human body. In her catalogue essay, Gaby Collins-Fernandez writes, "Mai's work proposes aesthetics as a means toward radical freedom from the perspective of clothes: liberation from having to be filled by bodies, a refusal to participate in commercial distribution, and the request to be considered on their own terms."



Yang Mai, *Where's Happiness 1* (幸福在哪里 1), 2019-20. Chinese school uniforms, paint, foam, PVC pipe, dimensions variable.

Yang Mai is an artist born and raised in Guangzhou, China, and currently based in New York City. Mai holds a Master's degree in Fashion, Body, and Garment from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (2016) and a Bachelor's degree in Footwear and Accessories Design from the Beijing Institute of Fashion Technology (2014). He was featured in a solo exhibition titled *Made in China* at Chashama Gallery, New York, NY, in 2017, and his work has been presented at New York Fashion Week in 2018 and 2019. He has participated in group exhibitions at Aqua Art Miami Fair, FL, 2018; Gallery MC, New York, NY, 2018; The Design Show, Chicago, IL, 2016; and a two-person exhibition at Sage Studios, Chicago, IL, 2016. His work has been included in *The New York Times*, *WWD*, *Vogue*, *Esquire*, and more.

David Humphrey is a New York artist who has shown nationally and internationally. He has received a Guggenheim Fellowship and the Rome Prize, among other awards. An anthology of his art writing, *Blind Handshake*, was published by Periscope Publishing in 2010. He teaches in the MFA program at Columbia University and is represented by Fredericks & Freiser Gallery, NY.

The exhibition is accompanied by a 32-page color catalogue, with texts by Yang Mai, David Humphrey, and Gaby Collins-Fernandez. The catalogue is available online and free of charge to gallery visitors. For more information please contact Programs Manager Lilly Hern-Fondation at lilly@cueartfoundation.org.

CUE Art Foundation is a visual arts center dedicated to creating essential career and educational opportunities for artists of all ages. Through exhibitions, arts education, and public programs, CUE provides artists, writers, and audiences with sustaining, meaningful experiences and resources.

Major programmatic support for CUE Art Foundation is provided by The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts; Anholt Services (USA) Inc.; Aon PLC; Chubb; Compass Group Management LLC; The Milton and Sally Avery Arts Foundation, Inc.; Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP; The Shelley and Donald Rubin Foundation; Vedder Price P.C.; and New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature. This program is supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, in partnership with the City Council, and an award from the National Endowment for the Arts.



The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts



SHELLEY & DONALD RUBIN FOUNDATION

"Uniform, Free-form" by Gaby Collins-Fernandez

January 31, 2020

This essay was produced in conjunction with the exhibition *Yang Mai: Good Morning, China! (早上好, 中国!)*, curated by David Humphrey, on view at CUE Art Foundation from February 20 – March 25, 2020. This text is included in the free exhibition catalogue available at CUE.



Yang Mai, *Made in China*, 2016. Clothes, paint, foam, gold leaf, silver leaf, metal, dimensions variable.

Yang Mai's work asks us to submit to the terms of apparel. Nowhere is this clearer than in his studio, which I visited twice as he prepared for this exhibition. The space bursts with clothing in varying stages of conversion from raw material to finished sculpture. In the middle of the room were groups of business suits, sportswear, and school clothes, stiffened, painted, filled with spray foam, and arranged in constantly fluctuating configurations. Between these were sculptures comprising neatly stacked polo shirts, purposefully drab columns interrupted by off-kilter plastic spheres and fluorescent tube lights. Older sculptures—cylindrical trouser legs—leaned against one corner like lumber. Several large boxes packed with jeans and jackets lined the room, and Mai expected another shipment soon, uniforms this time.

Mai grew up in Guangzhou, China, and studied fashion design there, specializing in accessories. His original ambition was to work with underground fashion designers, as far away from rote commercialism and predictable design as possible, but by graduate school at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, the purely sartorial had lost its appeal. No matter how radical the design, a shirt has to work as a shirt if you want someone to wear it.

Fashion is regularly used to both self-expressive and affiliative ends. But clothes are also a kind of prison, which create legible systems of social control and physical restriction. In our conversations, Mai stressed how uniforms imbue their wearer with particular roles and authority (or lack thereof). He related this to his upbringing in China, and to a certain extent, the societal codification he experienced there. Uniforms were used to communicate social roles and their attendant behavioral expectations: "student," "teacher," "worker." At SAIC, Mai discovered that he could name the constraints of fashion and effectively criticize them—through art.

Mai uses clothing to discuss archetypes, control, and the possibility of freedom. The three sit in a tense relationship, uneasy yet codependent. Mai incorporates rigidity into the visual language of his work—there are times when his garments feel more like shells than fabric. But he also uses the structural characteristics endemic to these clothes as opportunities to reconsider them as objects. Although his garments remain recognizable as types (like "blazer") and communicate their symbolic identities (as a specific school's uniform jacket), the sculptures engage the formal opportunities and limitations of garments, rather than allowing their archetypal significations to determine composition and content.



Yang Mai, Detail of *Where's Happiness 1* (幸福在哪里 1), 2019-20.
Chinese school uniforms, paint, foam, PVC pipe, dimensions variable.

In *Where's Happiness 1* (幸福在哪里 1), traditional Chinese school uniforms are individually inflated and hardened with spray foam, then assembled into color-coded chains and balanced against each other. Each chain of three or four garments is partially painted with transparent washes of one hue predominant in the original fabric—yellow, green, orange, or blue. This establishes visual continuity without denying that some differently colored areas have been coerced into assimilation with paint. Coercion plays a role in their connection as well: the garments are sewn and glued together at their orifices, forced together at holes for arms, legs, and torsos. In *Where's Happiness 1* (幸福在哪里 1), these formal manipulations encourage associative readings that free the garments from adhering to their roles as uniforms, relying on metaphor to undermine the garments' conventional uses. I see limbs and torsos reaching out to each other, as if in desperation, rigid ecstasy, or as a snapshot of teams midway through a bizarre stretching competition. The effect is darkly humorous, somewhere between an exaggerated round of Twister and a cheerful group torture session.

Made in China, Mai's previous body of work, featured tautly stuffed trouser legs, sometimes sequined or dipped in candy-colored paint, which directly engage the relationship between the manufacturing of clothing and the expressiveness of art. The viewer is encouraged to see each sculpture as bifurcated—as both pants

and art; machine produced and individually adorned.

Mai's new works focus on similar themes while integrating these differences in order to create causal relationships between the sculptures' forms and the gestures they perform. For example, a sculpture comprising several khaki pant-legs painted silver suggests organic generation as a compositional strategy, rather than emphasizing the industrial facture of the garments. Each leg emerges like an intergalactic succulent from the waist or leg openings of other trousers, reaching up and down with an awkward sturdiness. The sculpture appears to make itself, like a root, rebelling against its machine-made origins. In this light, Mai's work proposes aesthetics as a means toward radical freedom from the perspective of clothes: liberation from having to be filled by bodies, a refusal to participate in commercial distribution, and the request to be considered on their own terms.

This is a funny freedom. Within the terms of fashion there is not a lot of room for autonomous garments; they are always presented on and in relation to the body. And although the structures of the design, manufacturing, and distribution of clothing are much vaster than any individual, they remain relative to human scale because, like any commodity, they must appeal to human desires. Mai's sculptures don't deny the fact that their source materials were originally made for humans. In their final arrangements, they often resemble cartoon bodies or stick figures. But despite their residual anthropomorphism, the garments feel as though they don't *need* us—or our systems—anymore. They have made do on their own, begun to create their own forms of association and expression, as art. Their physical contours may have been decided in relation to human form, but their permutations and growths perform perversions of this origin. They germinate, contort, and spread with the logic of their own forms, prioritizing their own dimensions, the effects of fabric and mobility of seams over human joints, flesh, and bones. The spray foam that hardens their interiors may be ungainly, and may emphasize the void-ish emptiness of a garment's interior, but it allows them to be seen outside of their use for humans.

Still, within the sculptures' configurations lurks an existential gloom. They strive, emerge, and grow, but toward what? The figures appear to compete, but at what game? What would it mean to win? Mai's sculptures acknowledge that freedom comes as a reaction to forces of control, here enacted by the recognizability of silhouettes and costume. There is no liberty without constraints to be freed from, after all.

This essay was written as part of the [Art Critic Mentoring Program](#), a partnership between AICA-USA (US section of International Association of Art Critics) and CUE, which pairs emerging writers with AICA-USA mentors to produce original essays on a specific exhibiting artist. Please visit [aicausa.org](#) for more information on AICA-USA, or [cueartfoundation.org](#) to learn how to participate in this program. Any quotes are from interviews with the author unless otherwise specified. No part of this essay may be reproduced without prior consent from the author. Lilly Wei is AICA's Coordinator for the program this season.

Gaby Collins-Fernandez is an artist living and working in New York City, whose work has been shown both in the US and internationally. She is a recipient of residencies at Yaddo (Saratoga Springs, NY) and the Marble House Project (Dorset, VT), and was awarded a 2013 Rema Hort Mann Foundation Emerging Art Award. Collins-Fernandez is also a writer about art, a co-founder and publisher of the annual magazine *Precog*, and a co-director of the artist-run art and music initiative BombPop!Up.

Mentor **William Fenstermaker** is an art critic based in New York and an editor at The Metropolitan Museum of Art. He has written catalogue essays on Pierre Huyghe (de Young Museum, 2020) and Shen Fan (Eli Klein Gallery, 2018), and his writings on art, politics, and culture have been published by *Artforum*, *BOMB*, *The Brooklyn Rail*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, *The Paris Review*, *Surface*, and more. Fenstermaker was formerly a reviews editor of *The Brooklyn Rail*. He holds an MFA in art criticism and writing from New York's School of Visual Arts, and is currently a board member and treasurer of the US chapter of the International Association of Art Critics (AICA-USA).

 1 Likes



Exhibition Walk-through with Yang Mai and David Humphrey

Saturday, March 7, 2020
4:00 PM – 5:00 PM

CUE Art Foundation
137 West 25th Street, New York, NY, 10001,
United States ([map](#))

[Google Calendar](#) · [ICS](#)



Yang Mai, *UpRise 4* (站起来 4), 2019-20. Deadstock polo shirts, chair, metal, 93 x 32.5 x 28 inches.

Exhibition Walk-through with Yang Mai and David Humphrey

Saturday, March 7, 2020

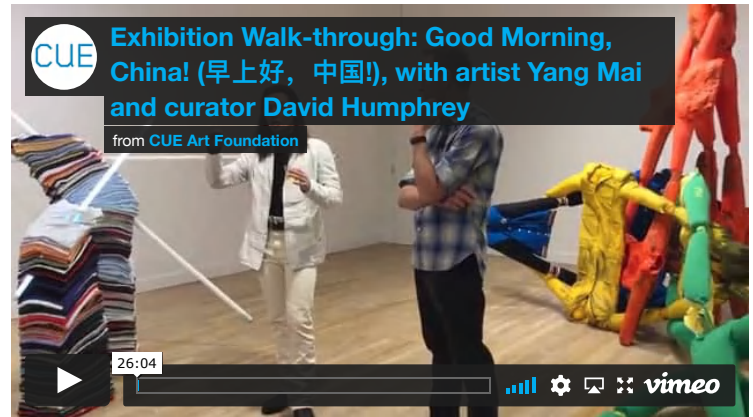
4:00pm - 5:00pm

FREE

Please join CUE on Saturday, March 7 at 4:00pm for a public walk-through of [Good Morning, China!](#) (早上好, 中国!) with artist Yang Mai and curator David Humphrey. Mai recycles deadstock business suits, athletic wear, and school uniforms, garments selected

by the artist to signify societal roles and systems of control. Drawing upon his experience growing up in Guangzhou, China, where he studied fashion and continues to source his materials from a shuttered clothing factory, Mai reimagines these materials as chains of balloon-like forms or precarious stacks of neatly folded garments impaled with fluorescent tube lights and folding chairs.

Mai and Humphrey will be available for questions after the walk-through.



Yang Mai is an artist born and raised in Guangzhou, China, and currently based in New York City. Mai holds a Master's degree in Fashion, Body, and Garment from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (2016) and a Bachelor's degree in Footwear and Accessories Design from the Beijing Institute of Fashion Technology (2014). He was featured in a solo exhibition titled *Made in China* at Chashama Gallery, New York, NY, in 2017, and his work has been presented at New York Fashion Week in 2018 and 2019. He has participated in group exhibitions at Aqua Art Miami Fair, FL, 2018; Gallery MC, New York, NY, 2018; The Design Show, Chicago, IL, 2016; and a two-person exhibition at Sage Studios, Chicago, IL, 2016. His work has been included in *The New York Times*, *WWD*, *Vogue*, *Esquire*, and more.

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CUE Art Foundation is wheelchair accessible. Service dogs are welcome. There is an all-gender, ADA compliant, single stall bathroom in the gallery. The space is not scent-free, but we do request that people attending come low-scent. The closest wheelchair accessible MTA subway stations are Penn Station and Herald Square Station. If you have specific access questions or needs, please contact info@cueartfoundation.org or call 212.206.3583.

Posted in [Events](#), [Talks](#)

Tagged [Yang Mai](#), [David Humphrey](#)

Earlier Event: February 15

Later Event: April 14

The New York Times

Which Art Fair Is for You? Let Our Critic Be Your Guide

One of New York's busiest art fair seasons kicks off this week with the Art Show at the Park Avenue Armory. Nine sprawling exhibitions will follow next week. Here's our critic's guide.

By Will Heinrich Published Feb. 27, 2020 Updated March 4, 2020



The New York Times



Yang Mai's "Uprise 8, 9, & 10 (8, 9, & 10)," 2019-20, will be among the works to seek out during NADA's second gallery open.via CUE ArtFoundation

This fair is for you if what you love is being part of a community. In 2019, the New Art Dealers Alliance had the kind of realization that seems obvious in retrospect: Manhattan itself is already the world's biggest art fair, all year round. This year's second annual New York Gallery Open will include artist talks, performances, and more than 60 member gallerists leading tours of gallery shows in Chinatown, Chelsea and the Lower East Side. It's your chance to get the kind of personal attention they usually reserve for high rollers. *March 5-8; various locations; 212-594-0883, newartdealers.org*

The T List: A weekly roundup of what the editors of *T Magazine* are noticing and coveting right now.

Contemporary Art Daily

March 20th, 2020

Yang Mai at CUE Art Foundation



Artist: Yang Mai

Venue: CUE Art Foundation, New York

Exhibition Title: Good Morning, China! (早上好，中国!)

Date: February 20 – March 25, 2020

Curated By: David Humphrey





Images courtesy of CUE Art Foundation, New York

Trends & Insights

Yang Mai



While the news are filled with headlines about the amount of fashion goods that brands produce each season, Yang Mai's exhibition „Good Morning, China!“

„Mai recycles deadstock business suits, athletic wear, and school uniforms, garments selected by the artist to signify societal roles and systems of control. Drawing upon his experience growing up in Guangzhou, China, where he studied fashion and continues to source his materials from a shuttered clothing factory, Mai reimagines these materials as chains of balloon-like forms or precarious stacks of neatly folded garments impaled with fluorescent tube lights and folding chairs.“ Credits: CUE Art Foundation, New York Curated by David Humphrey





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