

Genealogy Study of Artists No. 18

Huang Bingjie: Diary

Duration: November 5 - December 25, 2024

Venue: START Museum, S Space, 111 Ruining Road, Xuhui District, Shanghai, China

START Museum will present *Diary*, the first museum solo exhibition by artist Huang Bingjie, on November 5, 2024. This exhibition constitutes the 18th case study within START Museum's Genealogy Study of Artists project. Initiated in 2018, the Genealogy Study of Artists is an ongoing research program at START Museum. The project pioneers a sustained academic platform focused on the interrelationship between individual artistic genealogies and creative practice. Through exhibitions, publications, audio archives, visual documentation, and historical materials, it traces the formation of each artist's work across multiple lines of inquiry.

When discussing Huang Bingjie's paintings, critics most frequently invoke the word "dream." Her creative inspiration often stems from the artist's own intricate and romantic dreams. Yet through Bingjie's visual language, it becomes clear that her dreams are not Freudian projections to be decoded: she endows flowers with eyes not to reveal the fear of being gazed upon, but out of a secret delight in the animism of all things; she paints feet treading waves by the sea not to express repressed anxiety, but to evoke the revelry of dawn's prelude; she brings Medusa into her compositions not out of a desire for seduction, but as an aspiration toward bodily freedom... With remarkable agility, the artist sidesteps Dalí, bypasses Chagall, circumvents Rousseau, and points instead toward a more classical aesthetic—imagination. This is a pure and formidable gift: image born of imagination, granting sensibility to intellect. One might say that reading Bingjie's paintings runs counter to contemporary habits of looking: we cannot treat the image as a riddle to be solved for its meaning; rather, we must receive the image as the final outcome of imagination and feel her emotions through it. This is a mode of reading imbued with a distinctly feminine sensibility—neither satirical nor allegorical nor signifying—connecting, at one end, to the artist's private individual experience, and at the other, to freedom and abandon.

Titled Diary, this exhibition presents rich emotional experiences and imaginative fragments from Huang Bingjie's daily life, featuring 27 new works created over the past two years.

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