

A.I.

Gestures of Resistance
5 October - 25 November 2023
1a Tenter Ground, London E1 7NH

LINSEED and A.I., in collaboration, are delighted to present the group exhibition *Gestures of Resistance*, featuring six artists with Asian backgrounds: Weixin QUEK CHONG (b. 1988, Singapore), Min Jia (b. 2001, Ürümqi, China), Samak KOSEM (b. 1984, Thailand), Asami SHOJI (b. 1988, Japan), Rachel YOUN (b.1994, USA), ZHENG Zhilin (b. 1991, Guangdong, China). The exhibition takes place at A.I. (1a Tenter Ground, London, E1 7NH) from 5 October to 25 November 2023. Spanning paintings, videos, sculptures, and installations, the works on display give form to the perplexity experienced in different social and cultural contexts. Revealing traces of desire, affection, the tactile, and the intimate, *Gestures of Resistance* illuminates how the body confronts, disentangles, balances, and reshapes the relationships of different powers.

Upon entering the gallery, we are confronted by a silicon sculpture by WeiXin Quek Chong. Suspended from the ceiling, it is bound by steel chains evoking the pleasurable play of constriction and release. Also suspended *Jaded Purrs*, a translucent latex installation echoing a gesture, re-examining the tactile and skin-like nature of the material. Zheng Zhilin's work showcases her recent research on different dancing gestures on stage in an attempt to accentuate the theatricality and elasticity in her signature portrayal of robust and unwieldy torsos and limbs. The jazz dancer in Zheng's *Storyteller*, though depicted in an illustrative format, defies a typological reading. His deadpan face seems to be a misfit with his twisted body. Zheng's sinuous delineation achieves a slow-motion effect, leaving the body stuck between the past and the present, in between the two dancing poses. Similarly, it is difficult to tell whether the convulsing sculptures by Rachel Youn are euphoric or startled. Youn's work enlivens artificial plants through discarded massagers, bridging the functional and the decorative. Born to a Korean father as a pastor in America, Youn finds that the Koreans flock to the church less for religious purposes than to have company with fellow Koreans. For the artist, one thing in common with attending a church and a queer dancing party is the gesture of vulnerability that ignites the space, epitomized by the convulsions of these sculptural installations.

Resonating with Youn's kinetic work, Min Jia and Asami Shoji's paintings evoke a haptic experience through the body. The hand is a prominent feature looming on Asami's murky canvas steeped in fits of gloom. In *23.8.30*, the hands create a wonderfully soothing loop between figures in erratic contours. Instead of endowing physicality, the artist addresses the gentle feeling of touch through the dissolving flesh that often overflows the outlines—an effect achieved through a thick priming of white paint. Akin to an allusion to mythological anthropomorphism and bestiality in Asami's paintings, the character in Min Jia's *Into the Ocean's Arms* is having intercourse with a ghost-like figure. Min Jia has been enamored with Chinese folklore depicting insatiable bodies that transform into different shapes. The hands in Min Jia's work seem more provocative with, for example in *Wind Catcher*, the fingers pinching the fabric or catcher over the protagonist. With a piece of gauze overlaid on the painting, the hands become a self-reflexive writing of the relationship between the painting and the viewer. These artists no longer emphasize the presence through traumatic expression but to capture the delicate connections and instigate a dialogue.

In Samak Kosem's video work *Habibi*, an effeminate dancer flails his arms with the raucous music. As noted in Carl B. Holmberg's study of popular culture, certain gestures refer to gender, which is probably most ostensive in transvestite dance^[1]. In South Asia, there is the re-emergence of the tradition of *Bacha Bazi* or *the dancing boys* where boys are trained to perform as girls for male audiences. However, through a lens akin to live-streaming vision, Kosem's work takes a soft landing on the beholder with a tinge of entertainment instead of outright misery. As the camera closes up to the protagonist's body and face, their eyes and gestures get more intimate and erotic. The dance spins about queerness and longing, which, with Kosem's frequent shot reverse shot fabricating a strained dialogue with the Muslim male audience, raises the question of the subject and object of desire against the backdrop of intersectionality.

These six artists no longer emphasize their presence through traumatic expression but capture the delicate connections and instigate a dialogue.

[1] *Gesture, Body Image, and the Fashion of Sex Toys in Sexuality and Popular Culture*, Carl B. Holmberg.

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About the Artists

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Weixin QUEK CHONG was born in Singapore in 1988, and currently lives and works in Madrid, London, and Singapore. She graduated from the Royal College of Art, where she received her MA in 2014. Weixin's works are inspired by hybridity, metamorphosis and sensorialities. Her recent projects are inspired by processes of transformation and adaptation in the biodiverse world and human society - incorporating sensorial-based explorations that frequently involve tactility, sound, and immersive environments.

Her selected solo exhibitions include: *deepdreams_sublimed*, 2021, A.I. Gallery, London; *sft, crsh, ctrl*, 2018, Singapore Art Museum, Singapore. Her recent selected group exhibitions include: *Gestures of Resistance*, 2023, LINSEED in collaboration with A.I., London; *If Forests Talk 2*, curated by Kent Chan, 2022, Singapore Art Week 2022, Singapore; *Esplanade Performing Arts Residency*, 2022, choreographer Astrid T. Sweeney, Singapore; *Object of Desire*, 2021, Gerðarsafn Museum, Reykjavik; *Ů*, 2021, Museo Siglo XXI Zapadores, Madrid; *Fantasia/ Ficción*, 2021, Dufort Gallery, Madrid; *Nammu: Aguas Primordiales*, 2021, Universidad Nebrija with Aural Galería, Madrid; *Circuitos de Artes Plásticas*, 2020, Sala de Arte Joven de la Comunidad de Madrid, Madrid; *Object of Desire*, 2019, Institute of Contemporary Arts, Singapore; *President's Young Talents 2018*, 2018, Singapore Art Museum, Singapore; *Soft/Wall/Studs in Cemeti Art Institute*, 2018, Cemeti Art Institute, Yogyakarta.

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Min Jia was born in 2001 in Ürümqi, China. They completed their BFA in Interdisciplinary Sculpture at Maryland Institute College of Art in Baltimore, USA in 2021, and are pursuing their master's studies at Universität der Künste Berlin in Berlin. They currently live and work in Berlin and Toronto. Their work approaches narratives of adaptation through a queer, diasporic, and disabled lens. Visually borrowing from hentai, boys love/girls love manga, as well as Chinese folk arts and crafts, their paintings depict the necessity to fill and be filled—eating, dwelling, burying, touching—how our bodies transform into interchanging vessels that carry one another and the environment at large.

Their solo exhibition: *Everything, Everywhere*, 2021, Student Space Gallery, MICA, Baltimore. Their recent group exhibitions include *Gestures of Resistance*, 2023, LINSEED in collaboration with A.I., London, *X Museum Triennial 2023: Home Is Where the Haunt Is*, 2023, X Museum, Beijing; *Feedback Loop*, 2023, MKG127, Toronto; *Tattarattat*, 2022, Hunt Gallery, Toronto; *Diapause*, 2022, Beaver Hall Gallery, Toronto; *Art Toronto*, 2021, The Plumb, Toronto; *Second Nature*, 2021, Good Family Farms, Meaford; *Look Beyond*, 2021, Daesan Gallery, Ewha Womans University, Seoul; *Diasporasian Futures II*, 2020, Project 40 Collective, 187 Augusta; *Toronto Wormwood (duo exhibition with Tyler Brunner)*, 2020, 1811 Eutaw Place, Baltimore.

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Samak KOSEM was born in Bangkok in 1984 and raised in Rayong and Nonthaburi. He obtained his BS and MA in anthropology, and is pursuing his doctoral studies in Social Sciences at Chiang Mai University. He currently lives and works in Chiang Mai. Experimenting with the complexes of visual culture through the lens of ethnography by movie image, photography, objects, and texts, Kosem investigates transnational sexuality frameworks that circulate and connect to sexual discourse, practice, and subjectivities on individual migratory and religiosity. Refiguring the ideas of queer, posthuman, and trans-borders/bodies into the conventional narratives, Samak's work questions the mobile forms of sexual citation and assemblage as persuasion to undo stories and allow new meanings of sexuality.

His recent solo exhibitions include: *Sacrifice*, 2019, VER Gallery Project Room, Bangkok; *Not Waving But Drowning*, 2019, Gallery Seescape, Chiang Mai; *Otherwise Inside*, 2018, WTF Gallery, Bangkok. His selected group exhibitions include: *Gestures of Resistance*, 2023, LINSEED in collaboration with A.I., London; *My Pick*, 2023, CADAN Yurakucho, Tokyo; *Storytellers -Through the lens of contemporaneity*, 2022, nca | nichido contemporary art, Tokyo; *Emotional Asia*, 2022, Fukuoka Asian Art Museum, Fukuoka; *Leave i_t_ and Break n_o_ Hearts*, 2022, 100 Tonson Foundation, Bangkok; *Leave the past where it belongs*, 2022, a.e.y. space, Songkhla; *Crossing The Line*, 2022, SAC Gallery, Bangkok; *Errant Life, Promiscuous Form*, 2021, Gravity Art Space, Manila; *Survival of the Exceptional*, 2020, Tainan Art Museum, Tainan; *Displace, Embody*, 2020, Vargas Museum, University of the Philippines, Quenzo City; *Embracing Otherness, Exploring Muslims*, Japan Foundation, Bangkok; *Phantoms and Aliens | The Invisible Other*, 2020, Richard Koh Gallery, Singapore; *I Think The Old Days Are Really Gone*, 2020, Thammasat Anthropology Museum, Bangkok; *Taipei Dangdai*, 2020, Nichido Contemporary Art, Taipei; *Beyond Bliss*, 2018, Bangkok Art Biennale, O.P. Place, Bangkok.

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Asami SHOJI was born in 1988 in Fukushima, Japan. She obtained her MFA in printmaking from Tama Art University in Tokyo in 2012. She currently lives and works in Tokyo. Shoji's work envisions lines, the contours of the creatures in her paintings, as a threshold that opens up dimensions characterized by their movements, rather than boundaries segregating the opposites. The spatial experiences conjured by her paintings transcend the static realm, giving birth to a dynamic tableau where sensory perceptions intermingle and flow unrestrictedly. Her work invites the viewer into intricate narratives and sensory explorations, painting not merely a visual image but also imprinting a visceral experience upon the consciousness, offering a multifaceted exploration of the intricacies of existence and perception.

Her selected solo exhibitions include: *From Tbilisi with Love*, 2022-23, DECAMERON, Tokyo; *Tomorrow's Unseen Mythologies*, 2021, gallery21yo-j, Tokyo; *Diagram of the Mud*, 2018, Cale, Tokyo; *During a Night*, 2017, Tokyo Wonder Site, Tokyo. Her selected group

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exhibitions include: *Gestures of Resistance*, 2023, LINSEED in collaboration with A.I., London; *Yearning for Vision*, 2023, Taro Okamoto Museum of Art (Kanagawa), Ashikaga Museum of Art (Tochigi), Kurume City Art Museum (Fukuoka); *50 seconds*, 2023, soda, Yebisu International Festival For Art & Alternative Visions 2023, Tokyo Photographic Art Museum, Tokyo; *Eyes of the wind Vol.1*, 2022, Obscura, Tbilisi; *The Way of Paintings*, 2022, SOMPO Museum, Tokyo; *Tokyo Wonder Wall 2015*, 2015, Tokyo Modern Art Museum, Tokyo; *The 18th Taro Okamoto Memorial Award for Contemporary Art*, 2015, Taro Okamoto Museum of Art, Kanagawa.

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Rachel YOUN was born in 1994 in Abington, PA, USA. They received their BFA from the Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts at Washington University in St. Louis, and is currently an MFA candidate at Yale School of Art. They currently live and work in New Haven. Working across sculpture and installation, Youn sources materials with a history of aspiration and failure through online secondhand shopping. Youn rescues electric massagers from suburban limbo, fastening artificial plants to the machines to create kinetic sculptures that are clumsy, erotic, and absurd. Haunted by their immigrant father's pursuit of the American Dream, their work identifies with the replica that earnestly desires to be real, and the failed object that simulates care and intimacy.

Their recent solo exhibitions include: *Well Adjusted*, 2023, Night Gallery, Los Angeles; *No Pain No Gain*, 2022, Sargent's Daughters, New York; *Revival*, 2022, Soy Capitán, Berlin; *Gather*, 2020, Great Rivers Biennial, Contemporary Art Museum, St. Louis. Their selected group exhibitions include: *Gestures of Resistance*, 2023, LINSEED in collaboration with A.I., London; *Restraint*, 2023, Sargent's Daughters, New York (forthcoming); *The Land of Exile*, 2023, Aranya Art Center, Beidaihe (forthcoming); *Off-Worlds*, 2023, YveYANG, New York (forthcoming); *Petromelancholia*, 2023, BRUTUS, Rotterdam; *FINDERS KEEPERS*, 2023, VSOP Projects, Greenport; *The Butterfly Effect*, 2023, Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Turin, Italy; *You Were Bigger Than the Sky, You Were More Than Just A Short Time*, 2023, Gallery Belenius, Stockholm; *Ecologies of Elsewhere*, 2023, Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati; *Hotspot*, 2022, Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Rome; *NGXX*, 2022 The Naughton Gallery at Queen's, Belfast; *K60*, 2022, Wilhelm Hallen, Berlin, Germany; *Forest through the Trees*, 2022, Laumeier Sculpture Park, St. Louis; *A Knife to Carve a Knife With*, 2022, La Clinica, Oaxaca; *Stranger Things*, 2022, here, Pittsburgh; *Retrograde*, 2022, Galerie du Monde, Hong Kong; *Sweeping the Chimney from the Mantle of the Earth*, 2022, Charlotte Street Foundation, Kansas City; *Shrubs*, 2022, Night Gallery, Los Angeles.

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ZHENG Zhilin was born in Guangdong in 1991, and currently lives and works in Guangzhou. She graduated from the Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts, where she received her BFA in 2014 and MFA in Painting in 2017. Zheng's practice revolves around an exploration of imaginative spaces and the abstraction of body language. By juxtaposing contorted and dislocated features, she fabricates verisimilar and illusionary landscapes, which trigger a sense of ambivalence and uncanniness. She distorts physical perspectives to reveal grotesque movements in the flowing kaleidoscopic scenes, often with subjects of rounded and sturdy human figures, or quotidian articles that are both dynamic and static. Laying coatings of marks on paper, her work adapts a meticulous process using coloured pencil to showcase the loose and fluid exchange of pictorial elements within the detailed drawings.

Her recent solo exhibitions: *illuminated standstill*, ZONAMACO, 2023, LINSEED, Mexico City; *Pedesis*, 2022, LINSEED, Shanghai. Her recent group exhibitions include: *Gestures of Resistance*, 2023, LINSEED in collaboration with A.I., London; *X Museum Triennial 2023: Home Is Where the Haunt Is*, 2023, X Museum, Beijing; *NEW/NOW*, 2023, ART SG, LINSEED, Singapore; *Watch the Fire from the Shore*, 2021, LINSEED, Shanghai.