

Seeing and Being Seen

ARTIST:

Anna Yan

Junxian Pan

Lexiong Ying

Ling Qiao

Wenqian Liu (Vincy)

CURATOR:

Shijia Song

Seeing and Being Seen

"Seeing and Being Seen" is a photography exhibition centered around the intricate dynamics of observation. Whether we are aware of it or not, every one of us is constantly engaged in the dual role of observer and the observed. In our everyday lives, this relationship feels so natural and commonplace that we rarely stop to consider its deeper implications. Yet it is precisely this ongoing interplay of looking and being looked at that shapes our connections with others and with society at large.

Using photography as the primary medium, this exhibition explores the complexities embedded in the act of looking. Through the camera lens, we are not only shown what the photographer sees, but also how they themselves are perceived and defined by the world around them. Some works are figurative, others abstract; some offer a gentle gaze, others confront us with intensity. The tension between seeing and being seen unfolds into broader themes of identity, power, gender, privacy, and aesthetics.

Photography has never been merely a means of documentation—it is always a form of positioning. Who is looking? What is being seen? Why is it seen this way? These questions lie at the heart of the exhibition. Beneath every image, beyond the surface of composition and light, lies a projection of the photographer's subjective perspective—a reflection of their relationship with the world.

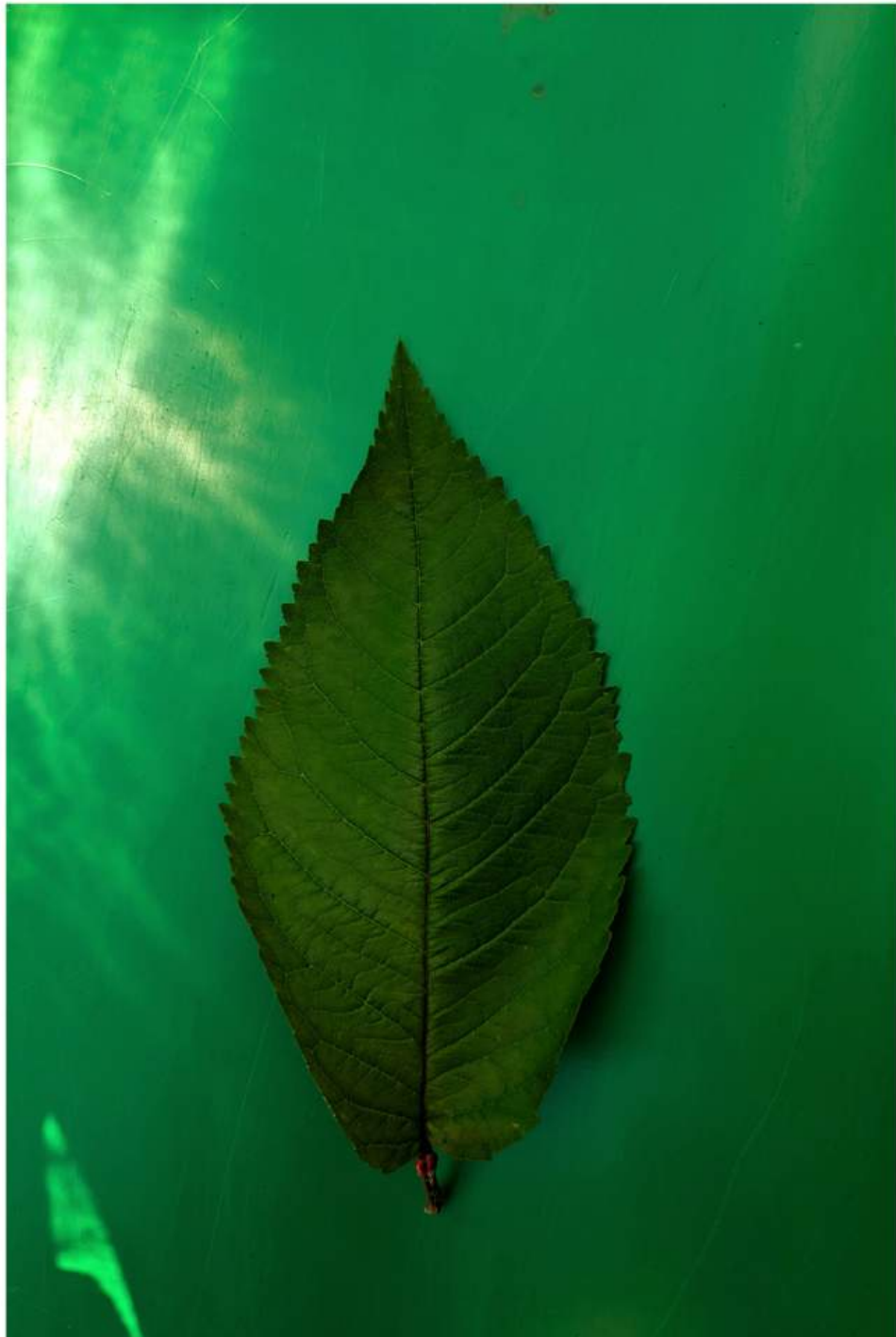
More importantly, this exhibition is not only about how photographers see, but also about how their subjects respond to being seen. In an era dominated by digital media and pervasive surveillance, to be seen can be an act of vulnerability, a loss of agency—or it can be an act of resistance and self-expression.

Through this collection of works, we aim to invite the audience to reflect on their own roles within the complex relationship of seeing and being seen.

Anna Yan

@missssss_aiko

I am a graphic designer, but I am also drawn to a children's picture book. I created the story and the picture books for the children around 6-12, and welcome to my fantasy World.





Anna Yan
*Whispering in Early
Summer, 2025*
10.2x15.2 cm

This work emphasizes the texture and quality of tree trunks and leaves, employing photographic techniques to profoundly showcase the beauty found in the details of natural elements. The rough bark, mottled growth rings, and intricate veins of the leaves are vividly captured, as if they are chronicling the passage of time and the traces of life.

The images are taken using macro photography and specially processed with light and shadow to enhance the tactile qualities of these natural materials, allowing viewers to feel as though they can "touch" the textures depicted within the photographs.





Junxian Pan

@junxianpan_

Junxian Pan, is a photographer specializing in visual storytelling. Her work explores the boundary between reality and illusion, searching for cracks where fantasy seeps into everyday life. By blending urban aesthetics with surreal elements, she constructs narratives that hover between dream and reality. Through the interplay of light, color, and composition, she captures overlooked emotional moments, evoking an uncanny sense of familiarity in familiar settings.

Her inspiration draws from urban spaces, body awareness, emotional memory, and social identity. She is particularly interested in how images serve as a bridge between individuals and the world, reshaping perceptions of reality. Beyond documenting the visible, her work delves into the hidden emotions, stories, and symbols that lie beneath the surface of visual representation.

In recent years, her works have been exhibited at London and Europe. Her photography has also been featured in PAP Magazine, earning attention from the art community. Continuously pushing the boundaries of image-making, she actively collaborates across disciplines, working with artists, designers, and creatives in technology to explore the future of visual art.

Currently based in London, she continues to expand the possibilities of photographic narratives, exploring the fluid nature of identity, memory, and reality through her lens.



Junxian Pan
The Tales from other place, 2025
84.1 x 59.4 cm

"I have been a stranger in a foreign land." — Exodus 2: 22

How do we understand our own ethnicity? Beyond skin and blood when we been created, identity is shaped by culture and environment. Unlike first-generation immigrants educated in their homeland or second-generation immigrants born abroad, those who leave home young to study elsewhere are often called "1.5-generation" immigrants.

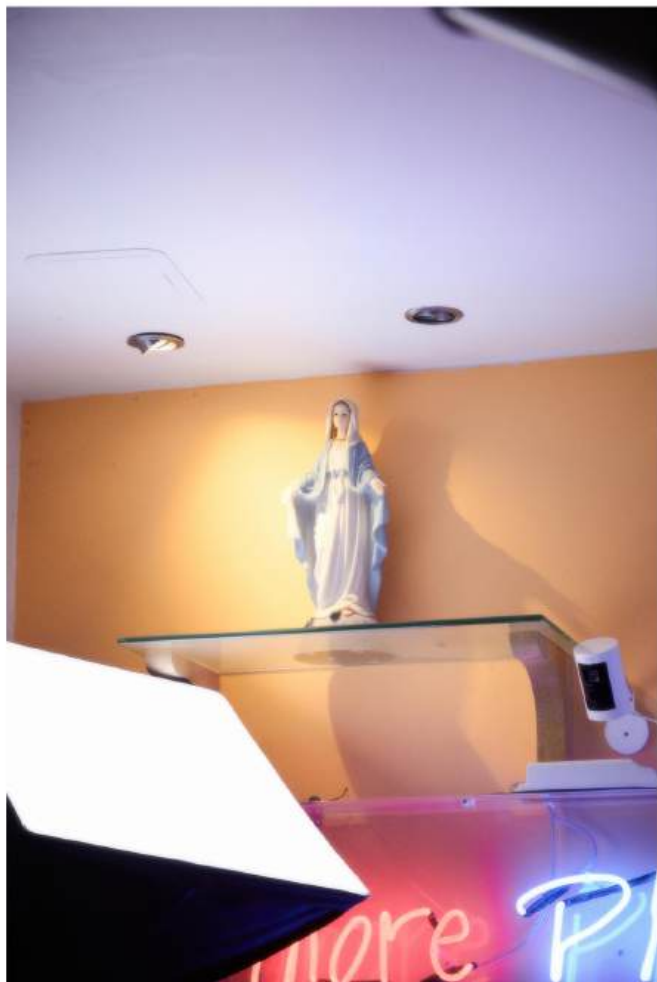
They step into a new country before being fully shaped by the old one. Facing cultural shocks, their defenses are still forming.

They become strangers in both lands — the homeland and the host country each feel foreign. When exposed to yet another culture, they are like houses with open doors, taking in winds from every direction.

They are open and accepting, but within the swirl of cultures, questions arise: How to find the self? How to face the true self? How to define where they belong?

They are many among us — speaking Chinese, loving Indian food, holding British degrees, studying the Qur'an. But who are they?

This series is the first part of a larger project focusing on young immigrants — exploring how growing up between cultures creates a sense of estrangement. That alienation may appear in daily habits, or stretch into abstraction and surrealism. Rather than judge this "alienation," the project treats it poetically — like strange, vivid flowers in a garden, shaped by the touch of many different pollinators.



Junxian Pan
The Tales from other place, 2025
 21.0 x 29.7 cm





Lexiong Ying

@lexi.visual

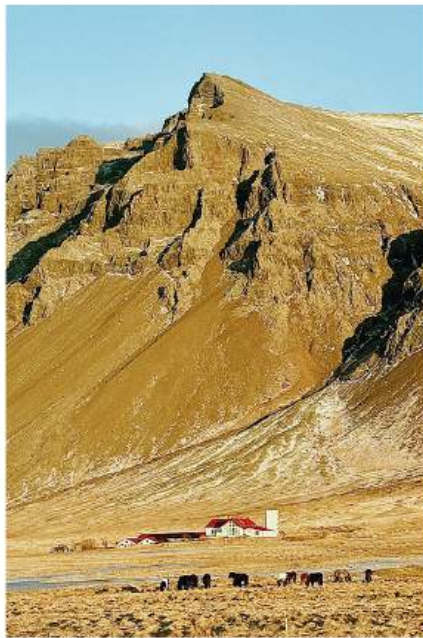
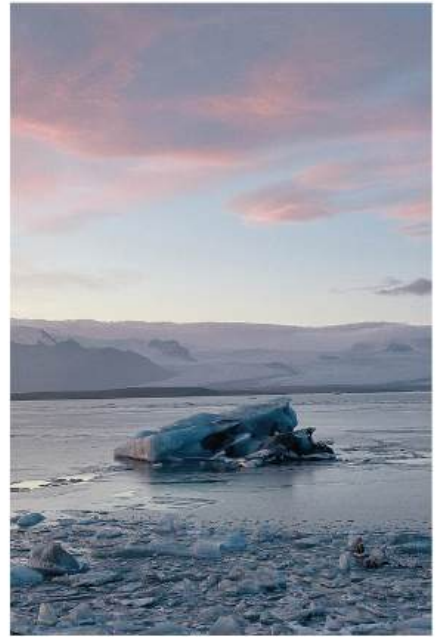
Born in Shanghai and based in London, is an interdisciplinary artist working across various visual media. She holds a Master of Arts in Data Visualisation from the University of the Arts London and a bachelor's degree in Fashion Design with Marketing. Her work has been exhibited internationally in cities including London, Düsseldorf, Paris, and Barcelona, and has been featured in a range of media platforms.

Lexiong's practice explores contemporary existential dilemmas and cultural mythologies, delving into themes such as emotional flux, technological saturation, and the fragility of human connection. Through a language of playful symbolism and subtle irony, she constructs visual narratives using diverse media, including 3D-printed sculpture, experimental photography and video, and mixed-media installations.

Beyond her artistic endeavours, Lexiong practices fortune-telling, blending spiritual wisdom with contemporary insights. This integration enriches her multidisciplinary approach and adds a deeper philosophical dimension to her work.



Lexiong Ying
Icelandic Fantasia, 2025
14.8 x 21cm



Icelandic Fantasia presents a contemplative visual study of one of Earth's most geologically expressive landscapes. In Iceland, the planet reveals its inner architecture—glaciers rest upon active volcanic beds, tectonic rifts split ancient grounds, and black sand beaches stretch like inked margins along the coastline. This body of work documents these phenomena with a quiet reverence, seeking not spectacle, but presence.

Through restrained compositions and natural light, the photographs highlight the sculptural forms, tonal subtleties, and temporal fragility of Iceland's terrain. Each frame becomes a meditation on impermanence, scale, and the silent dialogue between the Earth's enduring processes and the human gaze.

More than a portrait of place, Icelandic Fantasia is an invitation to reflect on the geological forces that shape not only landscapes, but the conditions for life itself.





Ling Qiao

@qiaoling_jolyne

Ling Qiao, a graduate in Computer Art. Proficient in creating across multiple media, encompassing AI art, generative art, 3D art, ceramics, and glassmaking.



Ling Qiao
Porcelain Graveyards
2025
10.2 x 15.2 cm



This work was filmed in Jingdezhen, the world's porcelain capital. Every year, large groups of people come here to experience pottery-making and engage in related industries. The area is dotted with numerous ceramic waste heaps filled with discarded defective pieces. As a non-renewable resource, ceramic cannot be naturally degraded or regenerated. These waste piles stand abruptly across the landscape, resembling one tomb after another.





Wenqian Liu (Vincy)

@vincy_ins

Wenqian Liu is a visual artist and photographer whose work explores memory, belonging, and the quiet poetics of everyday life.

Working primarily with Leica and Rollei film cameras, she adopts a slow, observational approach to image-making, focusing on emotionally resonant moments drawn from family, faith, and local cultures.

Her debut solo exhibition *Distant Cold Surge: Homecoming and Drifting* opened in Shanghai in 2024, followed by group shows in Beijing and Leicester. Her work has been described as “tender yet quietly powerful”, balancing documentary sensibilities with a deeply personal gaze.

In 2025, she co-curated *Doc Photo 8*, a photography exhibition in the UK that brings together socially engaged image-makers to explore themes of migration, community, and place.

Her photographic and curatorial interests include vernacular narratives, intergenerational memory, and the aesthetics of stillness in contemporary documentary practice.

Shot on the Tibetan plateau, this photograph captures a solitary yak beneath a shifting sky. The image forms part of *Echoes from the Dust*, an ongoing series reflecting on how individuals confront inner questions of faith, identity, and existence in moments of solitude and stillness.

Here, belief is not tied to ritual or dogma—it emerges in silence, in distance, in the spaces where one walks alone. The yak, both a symbol of survival and spirituality, becomes a quiet counterpart to these internal landscapes.

The series invites a slower kind of looking, and resists offering answers. Instead, it creates space for viewers to stay with the tension between self and beyond—to pause, and perhaps, to listen.



Wenqian Liu (Vincy)
Belief
2023
90 x 60 cm

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www.mmxgallery.com/

