

An abstract painting featuring a dense composition of organic, rounded shapes in warm tones of yellow, orange, and pink. The brushstrokes are visible, creating a textured, layered effect. The overall mood is warm and expressive.

COMMUNE

KAIFAN WANG

BULL WASHER

29.02.24- 05.04.24

EXHIBITION TEXT

BULL WASHER

Kaifan Wang's chosen title for his first exhibition in Austria - Bull Washer - derives from the legend which supposedly took place during an ancient siege of Salzburg in which the people pretended not to suffer from starvation by painting a bull in different colours to prove an abundance of supplies. However, the main relation is the aspect of the later washing of the bull in the river as a gentle gesture of protection, gratitude and recreation. Through this, Wang's paintings and videos focus on the thematical approach of erasure and the application of these elements within two differentiating cultural boundaries.

The most direct relation to the titular tale is the video Look Back, which endlessly loops a Mongolian bull in the outskirts of Hohhot, the capital of Inner Mongolia and Wang's hometown, seen from the main highway. The plain directness of the motionless bull as an agrarian symbol for the politically charged landscape of Inner Mongolia, being defined by Han Chinese as well as Mongolian cultures, delivers a monument of stability and local identity. This stands in contrast to the video Bull Washer, where the act of erasure is explored through performative painterly gestures of a brush wiping the snow from the walls at Teufelsberg in Berlin. The site of Teufelsberg is a non-natural hill created in the twenty years following the end of the Second World War, consisting of rubble moved from the destroyed buildings of West Berlin. The site itself is unique in Germany as the rubble covers the incomplete construction of a Nazi military college designed by Albert Speer which the allies were unable to destroy with explosives and thus chose to cover with the debris. The video sequences the alternation between aggressive sweeping of snow from the main walls to unveil its underlying structures, contrasted by the intimate stillness in the woods and the gentle movements of taking off layers of snow from frozen blossoms and twigs nearby.

These elements of historical and cultural effacing and the dichotomy between the aggressive components with a gentler erosive act of erasure are key to the thematic and technical aspects of Wang's painting practice. The gestural movements from which the layers of paint are composed upon the canvas are then left to dry and scratched from the surface, creating a process of removal that retains an echo of the previous action and colour. The compositions seem to wander and aim for an exterior position outside the limitation of the image and the dripping effects add to the fluidity of the historical references and aspects of time that mutates and abstracts.

The contradictions within the emotive gestures lead into a dialogue between the traditions of abstraction within Western and Chinese painterly techniques. In this regard, Wang is interested in the violent and dominant movements that have a prevalence within the western canon of abstract painting with bold colour fields applied as if with force. However, simultaneously the works possess an aqueous quality that feels bequeathed from the traditions of Chinese ink painting, with a flowing constitution moving through the dilution of colour across the strokes of paint. The integration of these aspects and the interrogation of the duality of their cultural signifiers and displacements, ultimately encapsulates the essence of Wang's practice, through the tender exploration of both his own cultural identity and a wider interest in the manner through which we construct and erase ancestral histories.



Bullfight II, 2024
oil, oil stick, acrylic on canvas
150 x 200 cm



Cow Wash II, 2024
oil, oil stick, acrylic on canvas
120 x 160 cm



Federleicht an Zweigen, 2023
oil, oil stick, acrylic on canvas
160 x 120 cm



Cow Wash, 2023
oil, oil stick, acrylic on canvas
160 x 120 cm



Federleicht an Zweigen II, 2023
oil, oil stick, acrylic on canvas
160 x 120 cm



Bullfight, 2023
oil, oil stick, acrylic on canvas
160 x 120 cm



Handful of Brambles, 2024
oil stick, acrylic on canvas
60 x 50 cm



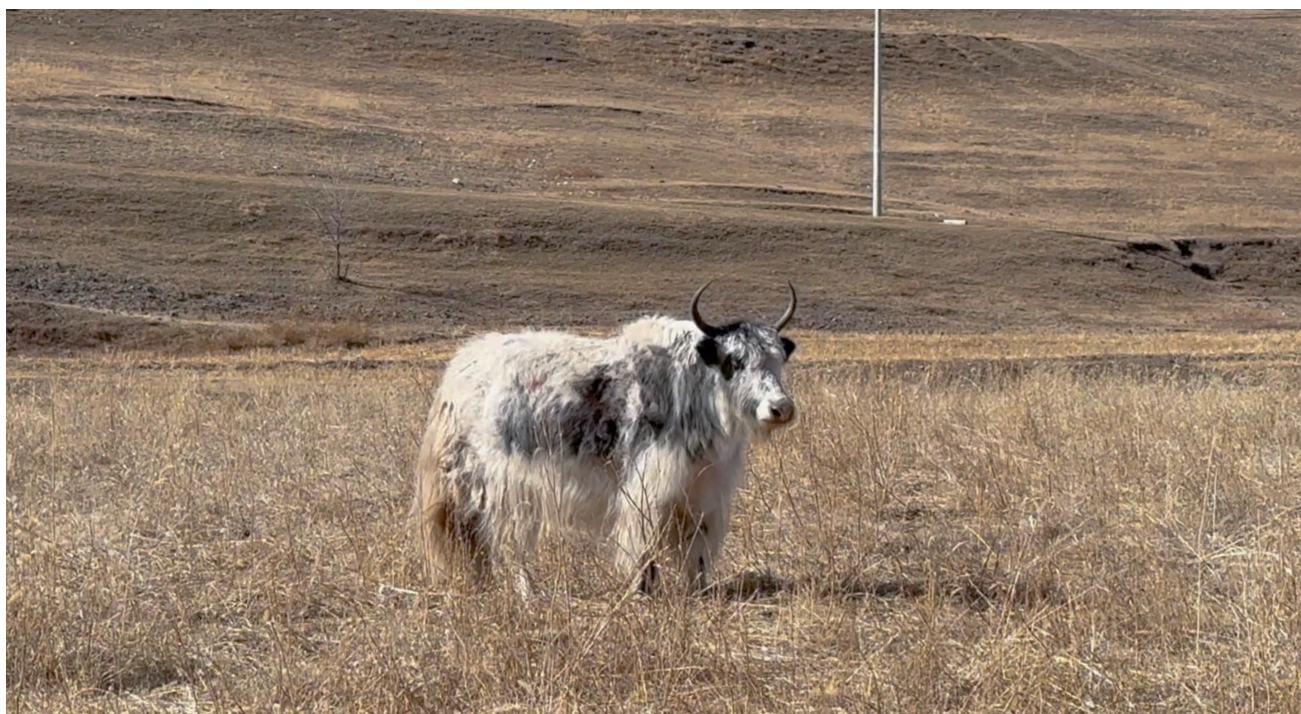
Handful of Brambles II, 2024
oil stick, acrylic on canvas
60 x 50 cm



Handful of Brambles III, 2024
oil stick, acrylic on canvas
60 x 50 cm



Bull Washer, 2024, video, colour, sound



Look Back, 2023, video, colour

BIOGRAPHY

KAIFAN WANG

Born in 1996 in Hohhot, China.

Lives and works in Berlin.

EDUCATION

2022 Meisterschüler, Berlin University of the Arts (Fine Arts)

2022 M.A, Berlin University of the Arts (Fine Arts)

Supervisors: Prof. Robert Lucander (Painting, Graphic), Prof. Ursula Neugebauer (Sculpture, Space)

2019 Studio Arts College International (SACI) Art Exchange, Florence, Italy

2019 East China Normal University Exchange Program, Shanghai, China

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2024 'Bull Washer', COMMUNE, Vienna, Austria

2023 'Cross Ventilation', curated by Junyao Chen, Gene Gallery, Shanghai, China

2023 'Is the spot on the neck bitten by mosquitoes?', GNYP Gallery, Antwerp, Belgium

2023 'Lunar Fountains', Long Story Short LA, Los Angeles, USA

2022 'Whistling Dune', GNYP Gallery, Berlin, Germany

2022 'Mauerspechte', HVB KunstCUBE B2, Berlin, Germany

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2024 'Group Exhibition, Alexander Berggruen, NYC, USA

2023 'Never the Right Time', COMMUNE, Vienna, Austria

2023 'TEN: The First Decade', Unit London, London, UK

2023 'Bordercrossing: Possibilities and Interactions', curated by Wu Hung, Yuz Museum, Shanghai.

2023 'Briefly Gorgeous', curated by Joan Tucker, Songwon Art Center, Seoul, South Korea

2023 'Inquiry to the Wall', Tang Contemporary Art, Beijing, China

2022 'Hallen #3 – Temporary Chapter', Wilhelm Hallen x Berlin Art Week, Berlin, Germany

2022 'Poppy and Recollection', Migrant Bird Space, Berlin, Germany

2022 'A Light And A Heavy Body', Bonian Space x Caochangdi Art District, Beijing, China

2022 'Sleeping Promises', feldfünf Metropolenhaus, Berlin, Germany

2021 'Observation Angle', FFA Art Center, Nanjing, China

2021 'Crystallized movement', KUB Gallery, Leipzig, Germany

2021 'I'm an alien', Raum Für Sichtbarkeit Gallery, Berlin, Germany

2020 "SHI" Chinese Youth Contemporary Art Exhibition', KUB Gallery, Leipzig, Germany

2020 'Defense Mechanisms', ArtRoom, Berlin, Germany

2019 'Caused BY Hair', Performance Art Group Show, Himalaya Museum, Shanghai, China

2019 'In Contatto/In Kontakt', SACI Exchange Exhibition, Palazzo Jules Maidoff, Florence, Italy

2019 'Vielfalt durch Bildung', LernLaden Pankow, Berlin, Germany

2019 'Farbe, Ausdruck und Experiment', DIE LINKE am Schöneberg, Berlin, Germany

2019 'FLUXUS+Studios, Fluxus+ Museum', Potsdam, Germany

2018 'Biennale of Overseas Chinese Artists', Inner Mongolia Art Museum, Hohhot, China

All prices are excluding VAT

OPENING RECEPTION:

29.02.24
18:00-20:00

EXHIBITION DATES:

29.02.24- 05.04.24

OPENING HOURS:

Wed-Fri, 12:00-18:00



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