

## Skin Gesture Body | ZHANG Yunyao

Duration: 29 July 2017 – 10 September 2017

Address: Don Gallery, Unit 302, 2879 Longteng Avenue, Shanghai

Opening: Saturday, 29 July 2017, 4-7pm

ZHANG Yunyao delves into an expansive body of drawing by incorporating felt as the support for the medium to express his desire for locating an unfixed meaning of emotions through an intercorporeal narrative. The visible marks left by the artist function as an a-tectonic form that articulates the monumental whole of his authoring language for shaping a struggling self.

In this vein, felt is applied as a critical infrastructure built into the “thing” level of his practice, demonstrating the urgency of drawing to be established as a defined field involving the developmental account of image making, from the materiality of textures to the ontology of figures. The relationships between felt and the chosen subjects are thus actively configured by the artist to engage aesthetic agendas encoded within performative actions.

Among the effects of the profusion of textiles, garments, chandeliers, mythological figures with various tones of light and shadow on felt is the sense that the substances they are made of might transmute into one another. The contemplation of the limitations of the physical world is given by the direct or apparent external references suggesting the artist’s ongoing interest in self-imposed restraint, driven by his affection for a responsive dynamic between things.

The conceptual triad that functions as a vehicle to motivate the artist’s further experiment in favor of his own psychological conditions are the three coexistent realms of skin, gesture and body, constituting a collaborative process of drawing for the rethinking of its specificity. Such a triad meant to be perceived as a geometry of situations states a relational view that drawing is the order of successive movements and events, where iconographical models and traditions are brought together for a phenomenological showing of new historicism and its power in art.

Since the state of decay is the most ornamental element that would eventually be at the core of the spatiality of a handmade crafted image, the effort wasted in creating superfluous details are embodied as nothing short of a simulation. The idea to have felt absorb pigment, charcoal and graphite is rather a provisional decision to elaborate upon an empirical result.

The works on show this time are selected from the artist’s recent practice of felt drawing. He translates the sculptural character of static forms into the photographic finish of negative images by shedding light on how the surface of the bodies can straight forwardly reach out beyond the composition of limbs. Felt as a material is capable of denoting the signs of wear as a means of inexorable promotion through the passage of time.

The artist manufactures bruises and scratches on felt, offering a gentle hint of the correlation between skin and gesture. By a deliberate revelation of the beauty of ruins, a genuinely popular taste among the literati in the eighteenth century, he revolts against the norm of body and replaces it with the collage of figurative expressions, describing the alienation of the architecture of the world. The mere purpose is to address such themes as endurance and spectacle. The manipulation of focus further reinforces the complexity of the haptic-optical merit of felt drawing.

ZHANG Yunyao was born in Shanghai in 1985 and graduated from the Department of Oil Painting, Academy of Fine Arts at Shanghai Normal University in 2007. ZHANG Yunyao’s works have been widely exhibited in different art institutions, including chi K11 art museum (Shanghai, 2016), CAFA Art Museum (Beijing, 2015), Museum of Contemporary Art Shanghai (Shanghai, 2013), etc. His solo exhibitions include “Nec Spe, Nec Metu” (Perrotin, Hong Kong, 2017), “After Evensong” (Don Gallery, Shanghai, 2015), “Touch Point” (01100001 Gallery, Beijing, 2013), “Mirage” (Don Gallery, Shanghai, 2013), “Paradbox” (Don Gallery, Shanghai, 2011), etc.