

PHOTOFAIRS SHANGHAI

影像上海艺术博览会

Press Release

Exposure Award 2020

11 September - 9 October 2020

Photofairs.org

PHOTOFAIRS is delighted to announce an exhibition of works by US based Chinese artist **Guanyu Xu (Gaotai Gallery, Urumqi)**, this year's recipient of the Exposure Award powered by MODERN EYE. Announced alongside Xu is runner-up **Sameer Tawde (UP Gallery, Taipei)**. A digital presentation by a selection of artists that submitted to this year's Exposure Award is available from 11 September via photofairs.org.

Launched in 2019 the Award provides a complimentary exhibition platform to any gallery with a solo presentation of experimental work by an artist pushing the boundaries of photography. Due to the global pandemic and the cancellation of PHOTOFAIRS Shanghai 2020, artist and gallery are instead invited to present in the next edition of the fair which is returning to the Shanghai Exhibition Center in September 2021. The work of runner-up Sameer Tawde is on display at the Modern Studio space from 11 – 20 September as part of PHOTOFAIRS' newly launched initiative **Weekend of Photography**, a programme of photography exhibitions and events in Shanghai and beyond running from 11 – 13 September 2020.

Winning for *Temporarily Censored Home* Xu's work features photographs of his parent's home in Beijing covered in intricately layered photographic collages. Secretly installed and taken down each day while his parents were out of the house, these collages reflect parts of Xu's identity unknown to his family and comprise family pictures, adverts and portraits of the artist with other gay men. Through these temporary installations Xu reclaims the conservative home he grew up in as a queer space of rebellion and freedom.

Commenting on his work Guanyu Xu said: *I was born and raised in a conservative family in Beijing, where expressions of overt non-heteronormative behaviour were forbidden. My father is a military officer and my mother is a civil servant. Both of them still do not know I'm gay. Growing up in China with limited representation of LGBTQ people, I turned my attention to Western films and fashion [...] the juxtaposition of torn pages from film and fashion magazines that attracted me during my teenage years and staged self-portraits with other gay men in the U.S creates a self-reflective relationship between the image production of power and my investigation of the intersectionality of race and sexuality.*

The judging panel for the Exposure Award 2020 includes: **Cao Dan**, President of MODERN ART and Publisher of The Art Newspaper China and LEAP; **Sunyoung Kim**, Curator of The Museum of Photography Seoul, South Korea; **Gwen Lee**, Co-founder and Director, Singapore

Photography Festival and Director, DECK, Singapore and; **Lu Ni, Executive Director**, Xie Zilong Photography Museum (XPM) and Secretary General, Alliance of Chinese Photography Museums.

Discussing the work of Guanyu Xu the judging panel commented: *Every artist has a "point of origin" for their work, be it experiential, psychological or even subconscious. It is impressive to discover how artists communicate these personal narratives with a creative visual language in unpredictable ways. In Guanyu Xu's work a large number of images and physical spaces are juxtaposed, interspersed and nested to form a series of sophisticated and complex installation of photographs that collapse the boundaries between time, space, and dimensions. His focus on the conflicts between individuals, family and society raises questions not only around identity and gender but also about race and culture.*

In the work of runner-up Sameer Tawde, *Dialogues of an Introvert*, everyday objects, sculptures and miniature sets are featured in a series of fantastical photography that visualise the human psyche and look to draw attention to the separation and, at times, feelings of alienation between the self and the outside world.

Alongside Xu and Tawde the Exposure Award digital exhibition also includes work by the following selection of artists: **Roland Biermann (Galerie Du Monde, Hong Kong)** showcasing *Apparition* and *snow+concrete*, two bodies of work that encourage viewers to consider their own power in a world filled with uncertainty; **Zheng Fang (Time Space Gallery, Beijing/Zhengzhou)** with *Fantasie Impromptu* a series of surrealist black & white photographs in which the body language and contortions of a dancer act as expressions of the artist's subconscious; **Ma Hailun (Gaotai Gallery, Urumqi)** presents *Hometown* a collection of colourful portraits of Urumqi and Uyghur neighbours and residents of her native Xinjiang region; **Zou Jingyao (L.A.P Gallery, Wuhan)** exhibits images from his series *Visit The Web Celebrated Sites* and *QR Codes*, a commentary on our consumer and social media obsessed culture.

Marisa Kriangwiwat Holmes (Unit 17, Vancouver) is represented with *Open Hearts* which explores different image making processes within advertisements, social media and entertainment as a way of noting the current state of image circulation; **Zhang Yunfeng (West Gallery, Shanghai)** presents *Quarantine Period*, a visual and written record of the artist's time during lockdown; and **Yichen Zhou (MiA Collective Art, New York/Beijing)** showcases *A Guidebook of Image Reading*, an examination of our ability to read images autonomously in a time when we are constantly and indiscernibly exposed to them.

For more information about Weekend of Photography please visit photofairs.org/weekend

PHOTOFAIRS Shanghai will return in September 2021.

For any further queries please contact:
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Notes to editors

ABOUT PHOTOFAIRS

PHOTOFAIRS is a joint venture between Angus Montgomery Arts and the World Photography Organisation and is part of a wider network of leading contemporary art fairs including Taipei Dangdai, Sydney Contemporary, India Art Fair, Art Central Hong Kong and Art Düsseldorf. Angus Montgomery Arts has more than 40 years' experience in the contemporary arts sphere, establishing successful fairs around the globe and delivering high quality, regional art fairs that serve the needs of collectors and galleries.

PHOTOFAIRS is supported by Friends of the Fair including: **Yang Bin**, collector (Beijing); **Xue Bin**, collector & co-founder New Century Art Foundation (Singapore); **Alan Chan**, collector & designer (Hong Kong); **Isaac Chueng** Chairman, Videotage (Hong Kong); **Jean-Francois Dubos** President, Maison Européenne de la Photographie à Paris, (Paris); **Natasha Egan**, Executive Director, Museum of Contemporary Photography, Columbia College (Chicago); **Wang Jun** Collector and Founder, Light Society (Beijing); **Louise Lau**, Collector & Founder, Guangzhou 33 Contemporary Art Centre (Guangzhou); **Jiyeon Lee**, Curator & Managing Director, Suum Projects (Seoul, Korea); **Jiang Ning**, collector (Shanghai), **Christopher Phillips** Independent critic and curator (New York); **Andrew and Lingling Ruff**, collectors & founders, 166 Space (Shanghai), and **Lu Xun** Collector / Founder & Director, Sifang Art Museum (Nanjing)

GUANYU XU

Guanyu Xu (b.1993 Beijing) is an artist currently based in Chicago. He was the recipient of the Fred Endsley Memorial Fellowship (2015) and the James Weinstein Memorial Fellowship (2018). He is the winner of the Lenscratch Student Prize (2019), the Foam Talent Award (2019), Lensculture Emerging Talent Award (2019), Kodak Film Photo Award (2019), and he is a Runner-up of the Aperture Foundation Portfolio Prize (2019). His works have been exhibited and screened internationally including the Aperture Foundation, New York; ICP Museum, New York; Athens Photo Festival, Greece; Format Photo Festival, UK; Fotomuseum Winterthur, Switzerland; Mint Museum, Charlotte; 36th Kasseler Dokfest, Germany, and others. His work can be found in public collections including The Art Institute of Chicago and the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. His works have been featured in numerous publications including The New York Times, ArtAsiaPacific, The New Yorker, W Magazine, Aint-Bad Magazine, Harper's Magazine, Musée Magazine, Der Greif, and China Photographic Publishing House.

Guanyu Xu's photographic interventions offer an exploration of his complex personal history and identity; born and raised in China, Xu moved to the US in 2014. His work bridges the gap between the personal and political, highlighting the disparities and connections between the two nations, in which his intersectional experience of the US meets his conservative familial experience of China. www.xuguanyu.com

GAOTAI GALLERY

Gaotai is the first international art center and contemporary art gallery in Xinjiang, China. As a social enterprise, Gaotai aims to promote cross-regional and cross-cultural dialogue between local and international artists through major exhibitions, public forum, and other social events. Founded by Xing Musa Ma in 2019, who was born and grew up Xinjiang and has previously studied and worked in Beijing, Dubai, Geneva and NYC. As a member of Schwarzman Scholars, Musa hosts a master degree in global affairs from Tsinghua University. Gaotai currently represents artists from both China and regions along the ancient silk road, features works revolve around environmental, cultural, and gender concerns.

Visitor Information

Venue: Modern Studio, Building 7,10 Middle Jianguo Road, Shanghai

Dates: 11 – 20 September 2020

Opening Times: Tuesday – Sunday, 11:00 – 20:00 ; closed on Mondays

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