

向死而生

das Sein zum Tode

Using death as a reference point for life's experience, to truly grasp the value and meaning of life.

Life and death are subjects we cannot avoid and realities we must confront from the moment we enter this world.
生和死, 是我们从来到这个世界开始就无法避免的话题以及必须要面对的事。

This exhibition will explore themes of life and death, presenting the perspectives of artists from diverse cultural backgrounds on mortality and existence, shaped by their respective cultural and folk traditions.
本次展览将围绕生命与死亡展开, 展示在不同文化民俗的影响下, 所呈现出的不同文化背景的艺术家们对于生命和死亡的看法。

Artworks encompass multimedia video installations, photography, textual works, paintings, and site-specific installations.
艺术作品类型包括多媒体视频, 摄影, 文本, 绘画以及装置艺术。

The participating artists hold diverse perspectives on death, broadly categorised as idealists, atheists, and those who believe only what they have witnessed firsthand. Their backgrounds encompass Croatia, Chinese ethnic minorities (Yi and Mongolian), Han Chinese, and Chinese-Australian.

而本次参展的艺术家们对于死亡的看法也是各不相同的, 因此可大致分为唯心主义, 无神论者还有的是只信自己亲眼看到的。艺术家们的身份背景分为克罗地亚, 中国少数民族彝族和蒙古族, 中国汉族以及华裔澳籍。

The artworks sequence from left to right in the gallery 按展厅从左至右的顺序

1. Fenghe Han (Mongolian) and Jidi Ridu (Yi), Documentary of YI, 2024-2025

This documentary chronicles his journey as an atheist filmmaker and cinematographer to China's Yi and Dai ethnic groups, the Changbai Mountain shamans, and Shanxi Province. It encompasses explorations and revelations concerning life and deities, alongside the fusion of daily existence and religious beliefs. The aim is to showcase the symbiotic relationship with life, death, and living among diverse ethnic groups across different regions of China.

2. Frano Dante, The Production Line, 2025

A human life resembles an assembly line, from birth to death being our inevitable journey. The Production Line does not view this process as particularly solemn; instead, it fills the scene with bright, vivid colours. Frano says that when each person departs, they leave with nothing, just as we arrived.

3. Jenny Cui, 惑业苦 (Suffering), 2024

惑业苦 (Suffering) is a triptych of fineliner and acrylic drawings that explore Buddhist notions of dukkha (suffering) and liberation. Two blue drawings depict the goddess Tara observing humanity with compassion, while the central red drawing shows a chaotic world filled with symbolic animals and reaching hands, representing inner turmoil and the three poisons. The contrasting colours and visual tension highlight the struggle between desire and freedom.

4. Jidi Ridu (Yi), No Title, 2020

This was written by Ridu in memory of his late grandfather. In his recollections, he often tended livestock together with his grandfather amidst the deep blue mountains. After the passing of his mom and grandparents, he grew more sensitive. His verse serves more to capture fleeting emotions than to pursue so-called artistic merit. The seven photographic works beside it were captured by him whilst attending an Yi funeral.

5. Jingyao Zhang, Sky Burial, 2025

The Tibetan sky burial serves as the inspiration for this work. The act of cutting apart Tibetan garments and stitching them back together with red thread symbolises the ritual where lamas use knives to divide the remains of those who have passed away naturally into pieces, subsequently offering them to vultures. Within Tibetan Buddhism, this is regarded as a sacred ceremony, representing the act of offering one's body to nature, thereby liberating the soul to enter the cycle of rebirth.