

AUGUST 26 - SEPTEMBER 24, 2023

Kaifan Wang

Is the spot on the neck bitten by
mosquitoes?

OPENING: AUGUST 26, 2023, 5-8 PM
GNYP GALLERY ANTWERP

Studio Picture: Kaifan Wang, Is the spot on the neck bitten by mosquitoes?
solo exhibition at GNYP Gallery Antwerp in 2023
Styling: YENTSE



Kaifan Wang

Is the spot on the neck bitten by mosquitoes?

AUGUST 26 - SEPTEMBER 24 2023

The young artist Kaifan Wang presents his first solo exhibition in Belgium at GNYP Gallery's new venue in Antwerp. He created many of the works during a residency in the atelier above the gallery space. His canvases are larger than ever. Operating within the medium that he masters, he consciously challenges the relationship between his body and the canvas. He has to jump up to reach the upper parts of the canvas: he flirts with the limits of what is reachable for his body. In this way, a small degree of chance enters the work, but above all an energetic movement.

Kaifan Wang applies the paint for his abstract undulating forms with sponges and oil pastels. During the Corona crisis, he saw many students from the Chinese community in Berlin, where Wang lives and works, move back home. They left some of their belongings behind, among them their mattresses. He took them over, cut them open and turned them into painting tools so the mattress fabric evolved into sponges. The mattresses have remained present also in another way: in sculptural installations that engage in a dialogue with the paintings.

Because the mattresses have been used, they carry the traces of people; visible, as a possible imprint of the body, and invisible in DNA residues. They are carriers of intimacy, of things that happen at home. That suggestion of sensuality also resides in the questioning title of the exhibition: *Is the spot on the neck bitten by mosquitoes?* What if that spot is not a mosquito bite, but a hickey? That abstract, vague spot could also be a sign of a very intimate relationship between human bodies.

However, the title also implies an inside-outside relationship in case it does refer to a mosquito bite: organisms from outside can cause an allergic reaction and thus have an impact on our skin. Also the mattresses signal an externality in this particular constellation - living between different communities and cultures. Kaifan Wang makes this duality between inside and outside explicit by stripping the mattresses and only showing the bed springs. The inherent tension and movement in the springs is reflected in the dynamics of the paintings.

The way the paint has been applied to his canvases, layered in different materials and textures, hints at Wang's art historical inspiration sources; it is not only reminiscent of how medieval frescoes were constructed, but also how they are now being recovered in layers. Seeing through the damage of centuries of exposure to weather conditions and deterioration by human action (via touch or even just breathing), remaining fragments of the original paintings are visible and consequently, the wall unites several pasts in the present.

In his still young oeuvre, Wang has made a transition from more autobiographical work to the painting that is universally abstract, with a great openness to the viewer's interpretation. More than before, his art of painting unfolds on the fluid, transparent boundary between an individual human body and nature, exposing the limitations and complexity of both. Titles such as *Vibrating Air*, *I Sneezed on the Grass*, *Whispers in Soot*, and *Restless Meadow* refer to the relationship between body and nature, but they also have an important unifying factor: the wind.

Wind is a force of nature and a carrier of variety of ephemera: from words to sighs, from sounds to smells and of our breathing. Wind can also cause devastation. Even in all its apparent softness, it can make things difficult for humans, as a transmitter of pollen, insects, disease and infection. Indeed, Hippocrates writes that the west wind can make people sick, while according to Voltaire, the east wind drives people to somberness and even suicide. In the myth of Eros and Psyche, Zephyrus, the west wind that is a harbinger of spring, is the one who transports Psyche to the enchanted castle of Eros, uniting the lovers. In another myth, both Apollo and Zephyrus fall in love with the young mortal Hyacinthus, but Hyacinthus is more attracted to Apollo. In a furious fit of jealousy, Zephyrus causes a discus to suddenly change direction, and is thus responsible for Hyacinthus' death. The wind can be gentle and loving, but it can also be harsh, erratic and deadly.

Throughout art history, wind has been rendered in a huge variety of ways, from blowing personifications with bulging cheeks in the Renaissance to single dashes or curls in the air in pop art. Kaifan Wang does not represent wind as such but fills his paintings with a similar openness and inspiration. Wind touches our mental and physical state of being through the skin and breathing. Perhaps these undulating abstract forms also give us goosebumps. They are immersive and fickle like the wind itself: they carry the vagueness of memory, the fragile energy of a breath and the determined force of a storm.

Tamara Beheydt

Kaifan Wang
Whispers in Soot
2023

oil, oil stick, acrylic on canvas

78 3/4 x 59 in
200 x 150 cm





Kaifan Wang
Whispers in Soot II
2023

oil, oil stick, acrylic on canvas

78 3/4 x 59 in
200 x 150 cm

Kaifan Wang
Whispers in Soot III
2023

oil, oil stick, acrylic on canvas

78 3/4 x 59 in
200 x 150 cm



Installation View: Kaifan Wang, *Is the spot on the neck bitten by mosquitoes?* solo exhibition at GNYP Gallery Antwerp in 2023





Installation View: Kaifan Wang, *Is the spot on the neck bitten by mosquitoes?*
solo exhibition at GNYP Gallery Antwerp in 2023

Kaifan Wang
Tumbleweed II
2023

oil, oil stick, acrylic on canvas

78 3/4 x 59 in
200 x 150 cm





Installation View: Kaifan Wang, *Is the spot on the neck bitten by mosquitoes?*
solo exhibition at GNYP Gallery Antwerp in 2023



Kaifan Wang
Restless Meadow
2023

oil, oil stick, acrylic on canvas

63 x 47 1/4 in
160 x 120 cm

Kaifan Wang
Restless Meadow II
2023

oil, oil stick, acrylic on canvas

63 x 47 1/4 in
160 x 120 cm



Installation View: Kaifan Wang, *Is the spot on the neck bitten by mosquitoes?*
solo exhibition at GNYP Gallery Antwerp in 2023



Kaifan Wang
Hickey on the neck
2023

oil, oil stick, acrylic on canvas

63 x 47 1/4 in
160 x 120 cm





Kaifan Wang
I sneezed on the grass II
2023

oil, oil stick, acrylic on canvas

63 x 47 1/4 in
160 x 120 cm

Installation View: Kaifan Wang, *Is the spot on the neck bitten by mosquitoes?*
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Installation View: Kaifan Wang, *Is the spot on the neck bitten by mosquitoes?*
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previous page:

Kaifan Wang
Tumbleweed
2023

oil, oil stick, acrylic on canvas

78 3/4 x 110 1/4 in
200 x 280 cm

Four parts each:
78,74 x 27,56 in
200 x 70 cm



previous page:

Kaifan Wang
Vibrating air
2023

oil, oil stick, acrylic on canvas

78 3/4 x 110 1/4 in
200 x 280 cm

Four parts each:
78,74 x 27,56 in
200 x 70 cm

Installation View: Kaifan Wang, *Is the spot on the neck bitten by mosquitoes?*
solo exhibition at GNYP Gallery Antwerp in 2023



KAIFAN WANG

*Is the spot on the neck
bitten by mosquitoes?*

26 August – 24 September, 2023

Kaifan Wang was born in 1996 in Hohhot, China. Wang's work is informed to a certain extent by his childhood memories of his home city, which has a long cultural history, also marked by urban development and the alienation from natural environment. Drawing from his memories and life experiences, Wang expresses in his work a kind of latent struggle, which might develop, also formally, into synthesis of ideas and forms. Acknowledging that Chinese and Western abstract paintings have originated from different intellectual traditions, Wang reflects in his work on various cultures and identities. From a young age, Wang studied traditional Chinese painting before moving to Beijing, where he encountered and researched contemporary art. The artist studied in Shanghai and Florence, before completing his Fine Arts education at the Universität der Künste in Berlin in 2022. Wang currently lives and works in Berlin.

 @kaifan_wang

Scan here for more information about the exhibition
 Scan the QR code to see more info over the smartphone



Installation View: Kaifan Wang, *Is the spot on the neck bitten by mosquitoes?*
solo exhibition at GNYP Gallery Antwerp in 2023



Kaifan Wang
Ah-choo knotted in the air II
2023

oil, oil stick, acrylic on canvas

94 1/2 x 74 3/4 in
240 x 190 cm



Kaifan Wang
Ah-choo knotted in the air III
2023

oil, oil stick, acrylic on canvas

94 1/2 x 74 3/4 in
240 x 190 cm

Installation View: Kaifan Wang, *Is the spot on the neck bitten by mosquitoes?*
solo exhibition at GNYP Gallery Antwerp in 2023





previous page:

Kaifan Wang
Hickey on the neck II
2023

oil, oil stick, acrylic on canvas

94 1/2 x 126 in
240 x 320 cm



previous page:

Kaifan Wang

I sneezed on the grass III

2023

oil, oil stick, acrylic on canvas

74 3/4 x 94 1/2 in

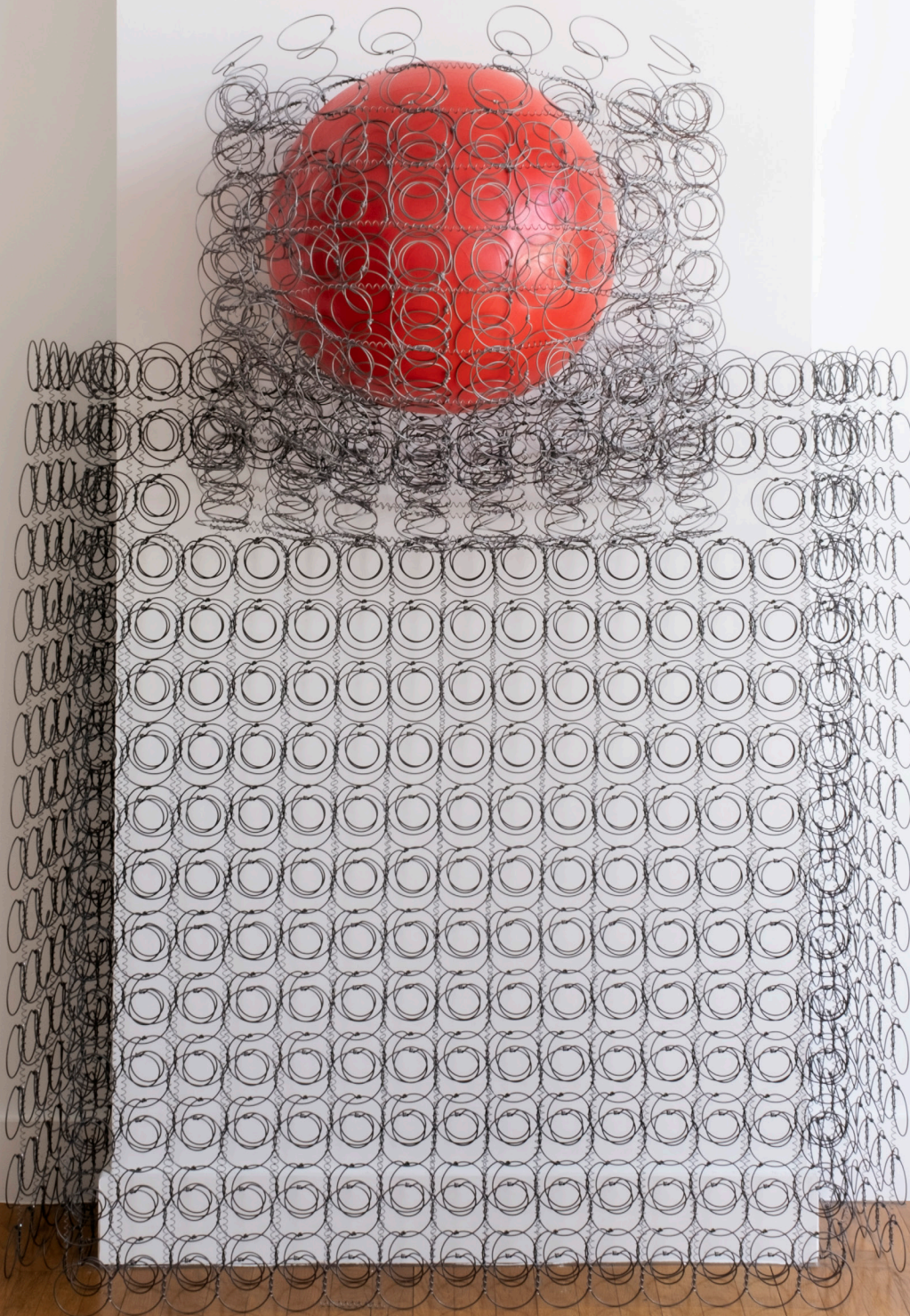
190 x 240 cm

Installation View: Kaifan Wang, *Is the spot on the neck bitten by mosquitoes?*
solo exhibition at GNYG Gallery Antwerp in 2023



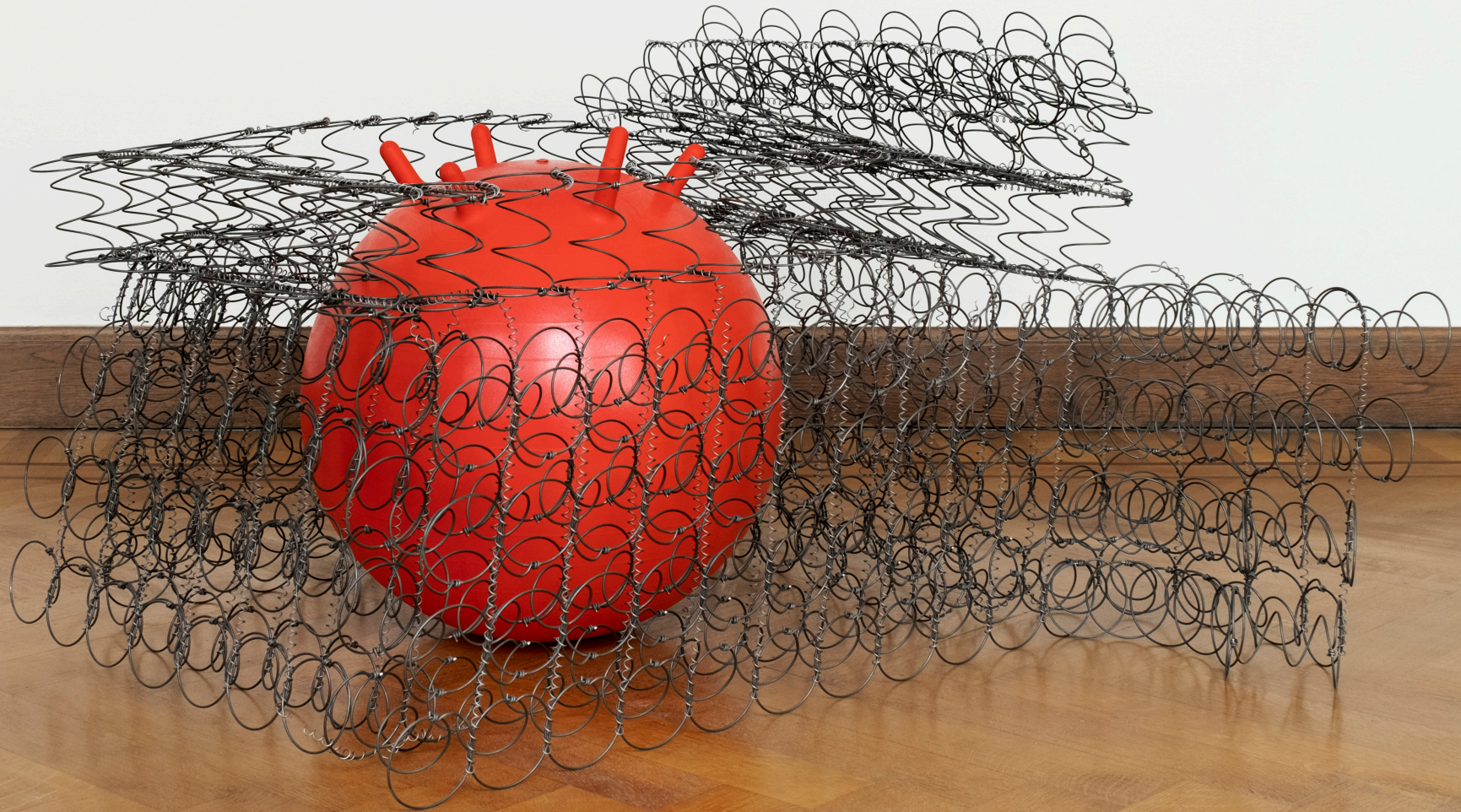
Kaifan Wang
Spot on the neck
2023

metal, plastic
79 1/2 x 57 1/2 x 39 in
202 x 146 x 99 cm



Kaifan Wang
Spot on the neck II
2023

metal, plastic
26 x 45 x 45 1/2 in
66 x 114 x 115 cm







Kaifan Wang
Spot on the neck III
2023

metal, plastic
24 1/2 x 39 1/4 x 40 1/2 in
62 x 101 x 103 cm

Kaifan Wang
Spot on the neck IV2023

metal, plastic
22 x 60 2/3 x 68 in
56 x 154 x 173 cm



Kaifan Wang

Kaifan Wang was born in 1996 in Hohhot, China. Wang's work is informed by his childhood memories in his home city, which has a long cultural history whose traces are undermined by urban development and the alienation of natural environment. Drawing from his memories and life experiences, Wang expresses in his work a kind of struggle, which develops, also formally, into reconciliation and a self-created sense of security through painting: in Wang's paintings violent collisions are slowly covered and summarised by careful lines and moods. Acknowledging that Chinese and Western abstract paintings have completely different intellectual processes, Wang reflects on culture and identity, without offering easy answers that lead to immediate satisfaction. From a young age, Wang studied traditional Chinese painting before moving to Beijing, where he encountered contemporary art. The artist studied in Shanghai and Florence, before completing his Fine Arts education at the Universität der Künste in Berlin. Kaifan Wang is currently based in Berlin.



Kaifan Wang

Solo Exhibitions

2024

Upcoming solo show

Commune Gallery, Vienna (Austria)

2023

upcoming solo show, Gene Gallery x Shanghai Art Week,
Shanghai (China)

Is the spot on the neck bitten by mosquitoes?

GNYP Gallery, Antwerp (Belgium)

Lunar Fountains

Long Story Short LA, Los Angeles (USA)

2022

whistling dune

GNYP Gallery, Berlin (Germany)

Mauerspechte

HVB KunstCUBE B2, Berlin (Germany)

Group Exhibitions

2023

upcoming group show, Commune Gallery, Vienna (Austria)

10, 10 year anniversary exhibition, Unit London, London
(UK)

Upcoming group show, Bordercrossing: Possibilities and
Interactions, Yuz Museum x Forbes, Shanghai (China)

Briefly Gorgeous, PhillipsX, Seoul (Korea)

Inquiry to the Wall, Soul Art Center x Tang Contemporary
Art x Gallery Weekend Beijing, Beijing (China)

2022

Poppy and Recollection

Migrant Bird Space, Berlin (Germany)

A Light And A Heavy Body

Cao Chang Di International Art Village, Beijing (China)

Sleeping Promises

felfünf Metropolenhaus, Berlin (Germany)

A Chinese Journey • Contemporary Ink

Löwenpalais, Berlin (Germany)

2021

Observation • Angle

FFA Art Center, Nanjing (China)

Kristallisierte Bewegung

KUB Galerie, Leipzig (Germany)

I'm an alien

Raum Für Sichtbarkeit Galerie, Berlin (Germany)

2020

Chinese Contemporary Art Exhibition

KUB Galerie, Leipzig (Germany)

Abwehrmechanismen

Kunstraum, Berlin (Germany)

2019

Caused BY Hair

Performance Art, Himalaya Museum, Shanghai (China)

SACI Studio Arts College International Exhibition

Florence, Italien

LernLaden Pankow Gruppe Ausstellung

Berlin (Germany)

Linken am Schöneberg Gruppe Ausstellung

Berlin (Germany)

Fluxus+museum Gruppe Ausstellung

Potsdam (Germany)

ATALA Kunstsaal Gruppe Ausstellung

Berlin (Germany)

2018

Auslandschinesen Kunst Ausstellung

Nei Mongol Kunst Museum, Hohhot (China)

CONTACT & INQUIRIES

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