

# Kiang Malingue

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# SSSSSSSSSSSCULPTURESQUE

(Artist) Evgeny Antufiev, Eric Baudart, He Yida, Phillip Lai, Heidi Lau, Oren Pinhassi, Lee Relvas, and Nicole Wermers

Kiang Malingue is pleased to present *SSSSSSSSSSSCULPTURESQUE*, an exhibition of artworks by Evgeny Antufiev, Eric Baudart, He Yida, Phillip Lai, Heidi Lau, Oren Pinhassi, Lee Relvas, and Nicole Wermers. By assuming the form of a piece of functionless furniture, a Han Dynasty ceramic burial object, or a toothbrush tree, and by making playful use of mattress springs, a stack of Robin Day chairs, window blinds, rice, dollar bills, door frames, and some Balenciaga coats, the artworks in the exhibition examine the ways in which sculpturesque realities can contribute to our reflection upon domesticity, survival and existence in a post-pandemic era.

Phillip Lai has been pondering labourious means of survival for more than three decades. By manually making perfectly shaped, quasi-industrial forms that may be handled as either a kitchen worktop, or a component for an aeroplane's hull, Lai's impeccably smooth, punctured surfaces re-associate manual means with basic needs and infrastructural necessities. The floor work *Untitled* (2018) folds a large sheet of fibreglass around a thick pile of used clothes, encasing what is supposed to enclose and protect a human body. It also exemplifies the artist's astute sense in consolidating nebulous forms, providing frameworks for situations that seem arbitrary. Formally addressing the dimensionality of the relief genre itself, the wall-based, portal-like *Untitled* (2018), retains or is on the verge of splashing a handful of rice. By emphasising what is essential to life, Lai questions the ways in which one may handle a sculpture, or how a sculpted reality of urgency can handle and receive humans.

Turning from the matter-of-factness of the manual world to the glamour that the contemporary reality has to offer, Nicole Wermers examines the subtle changes in public space, and the evolution of elements and factors within. Her sculptures reflect upon the design of products from ashtrays to office furniture, revealing another infrastructural aspect of life that insidiously shapes our vision and body. Both of Wermers' two recent chair stack works in the exhibition dashingly don glamorous Balenciaga coats, but unlike works from the artist's previous series, these in an eerie way do not suggest the absence of a user who probably has just left the room – nobody sits on a stack as such. Cunningly avoiding a narrative that suggests the absence of a user who probably has just left the room, these chair stacks - rendered unusable since the coats are sewn into the chairs - instead portray a fashionable, acephalic anti-scarecrow figure at work.

Developing her sculptural practise, writer, musician and artist Lee Relvas uses the most obvious readymade of all: money. Speaking of a psychological-existential crisis that took place when she moved from the Chicago DIY art scene to the New York art world, Relvas acknowledges that one's financial status has to do with her artistic freedom and whether it is possible for an individual to "solve capitalism". Inspired by *The House of Mirth* by Edith Wharton Relvas creates a series of artworks by incorporating actual dollar bills in her bentwood sculpture. The *House of Mirth* (2020) named directly after Wharton's novel is a meticulously structured, sculpturesque scene decorated with rubber bands, erasers and dollar bill origami, in which an enveloped human figure in a rather down posture sits on a swing. It is also an honest statement that

addresses one's state of mind, and the potentiality of materials in the hands of a sculptor, even when it comes to money, a material that is at once "too real and totally fictional," according to the artist.

Lee Relvas reflects upon her practise in relation to the idea of being suspended, a term that frequently appears in the post-pandemic era. Also interested in creating suspended situations is He Yida, whose *Urban waste imitation 3* (2019) echoes Phillip Lai's work by staging a carefully choreographed fall. In giving a voice to the visually overlooked, He challenges the aesthetics of the ordinary, and frequently uses "poor" materials, forging new relationships and functionalist purposes. The door panels, door frames and assorted hardware are assembled as such, for a common and critical goal: to maintain balance as a constellation of things. *There was light coming through shining on the imaginary city 1 & 2* (2019) also in the exhibition prints shiny yet ruined scenes on window blinds that crack and droop, presenting once again a balance that opens and maintains portals to safe, domestic environments.

Regarding the composite assemblage of things and the possibility to create and live with pseudo-natural beings in a domestic environment, Oren Pinhassi's *Untitled (toothbrush tree)* (2019) is born out of a logic the artist has developed called "Erotic Construction". It is a fluid logic that acknowledges the ways in which things are shaping in and are immersed in each other, conceived for a new kind of construction in which categories — nature/architecture, artificial/natural, body/furniture — collapse into each other and form objects that recognise the fragility of our bodies and the environment. In the anthropocene, humans altered what nature is, so mass-produced objects like toothbrushes sprout like flowers out of it. For Pinhassi, it is also an attempt to suggest a coming together of people to participate in an imaginary group oral activity of care and tenderness. The different number of toothbrushes coming out of each leaf/petal suggest that same number of users/bodies who would come together for this intimate activity. The leaves/petals and the holes in them are referencing wall mount toothbrush holders, enmeshing together nature and furniture.

Eric Baudart flips the comfort a domestic setup has to offer in-side-out. Known for reinvigorating a Duchampian tradition of readymade art, Baudart creates *Multispire* (2014) as exactly what the title suggests: a matrix of spirals. By mounting the work on the wall, the spring mattress stripped bare assumes an alternative position, suggesting either a creative way to sleep, a tough night, an archaic type of torture device, or living conditions of the bare life. The dizzying visual aspect of the work changes its form as an Op Art piece would: a flat, symmetrical monochrome surface from afar and from the front, *Multispire* only reveals itself as a strange relief that attempts to embrace and support, as you step to its side. Baudart's *Fauteuil* (2008) is another piece of impossible furniture: there is nothing underneath its cozy appearance. The materials and methods used in creating the work are properly sculptural; as a result, the texture of the couch is not soft to the touch. More pertinent is the fact that it is a ghost couch, not unlike the clichéd figure of the bedsheet ghost. Perfectly unaggressive, *Fauteuil* presents a mere façade that is playfully deceptive.

The untitled bronze vase (2021) and the mosaic work (2022) by Evgeny Antufiev belong to the artist's total project that explores anew the relationship between the living and the dead. Deeply interested in post-secular conditions, Antufiev creates the bronze vase and embellishes it with figures and creatures on the surface that remind one of folklores, childhood legacies and obscure rituals. His mosaic work is also considered an essential element that decorates, narrates and protects: Antufiev conceives his immersive, total exhibitions as tomb-like

environments, in which relics and artefacts are considered magical, empowering their owner and user – the artist himself – as he embarks on a journey for eternity.

Finally, also exploring an uncanny domesticity in relation to memory and life is Heidi Lau, as she builds and adorns spaces and ritual instruments prepared specifically for the apparitional. Lau's multi-faceted architectural miniatures and vessels contemplate what home, intimacy and safety mean today. She uses the old, universal material of clay to create works such as the *Chainlink Vessel II* (2022) and *Dreaming* (2021), referencing the artist's own photographic documentation of her hometown Macau, piecing together architectural elements from historical buildings that no longer exist. The series of highly textured, seemingly grotesque ceramic works also reference mingqi: ceramic burial objects found in tombs from Han Dynasty onward. Corresponding to today's post-secular condition, Lau, an avid reader of Taoist classics, ponders the reality of another world, in which sculpted objects are deemed critical to the life and survival of apparitional beings.

(About Evgeny Antufiev)

Evgeny Antufiev (b. 1986 in Kyzyl, Russia) lives and works in Moscow, Russia. He graduated from the Institute of Contemporary Art, Moscow in 2009, winning the Kandinsky Prize for the Young Artist: Project of the Year' during his studies. Selected solo exhibitions include *Dead Nation: Eternal Version, Villa Giulia*, National Etruscan Museum, Rome (2021); *Dead Nation: Golden Age Version*, Chiesa di San Giuseppe delle Scalze, Naples (2019); *When art became part of landscape*, Manifesta 12, Palermo, Multimedia Art Museum, Moscow, Russian Academy of Arts, Moscow (2018); *Immortality Forever*, M HKA Museum of Contemporary Art, Antwerp (2017); *Immortality Forever*, Moscow Museum of Modern Art, Moscow (2015).

Antufiev's work has also been part of group shows at New Museum, New York; Galeria Municipal Porto, Porto; Museo Civico Medievale di Bologna, Bologna; Fondation Cartier, Paris; Collezione Maramotti, Reggio Emilia; Baltic Triennial 13, Contemporary Art Centre, Vilnius; Triennial of Russian Contemporary Art, Garage Museum of Contemporary Art, Moscow; Manifesta 11, Zurich; Palais de Tokyo, Paris.

(About Eric Baudart)

Eric Baudart (b. 1972, Paris) has been exhibited internationally. Solo exhibitions include: Centre d'art Contemporaine Les Tanneries, France (2019); *one, maybe two Parsecs*, Edouard Malingue Gallery, Hong Kong (2018); *choo choo mama...*, Edouard Malingue Gallery, Hong Kong (2017); *Avec & Sans*, Fondation d'Entreprise Ricard, Paris (2011); and *Miroirs d'Archimède*, La Verrière Hermès, Brussels (2008), Fondation Antoine de Galbert, La Maison Rouge, Paris (2007); and *Sieben auf einen Streich*, Marta Herford Museum, Herford (2006).

Recent group exhibitions include: *Shared Coordinates*, The Art House, Singapore (2018); *Jardin des Tuileries*, Paris (2016); *GOLD*, Neuberger Museum of Art, New York (2015) and Bass Museum of Art, Miami (2014); *L'origine des choses*, La Centrale for Contemporary Art, Brussels (2013); *Retour du monde*, MAMCO, Geneva (2013); *Intrusions - Collection du FNAC*, Le Petit Palais, Paris (2007). In 2011 Baudart was the recipient of the Meurice Prize for contemporary art. Baudart's work is held in various notable museum collections, including the MFA, Boston and the MAMCO, Geneva.

(About He Yida)

He Yida (b. 1980, Shanghai) currently lives and works in Shanghai. She graduated from Chelsea College of Art and Design, London in 2007.

Recent solo exhibitions include: *Dwells in the Solid Shadow of the Unreachable*, Edouard Malingue Gallery, Shanghai (2019); *Right Misplacement*, A+ Contemporary, Shanghai (2016), *In Case*, C-Space, Beijing (2013).

Recent group exhibitions include: *Very Natural Actions*, Tai Kwun Contemporary, Hong Kong (2019); *Longan*, House of Egorn, Berlin (2019); *A Tree Fell in the Forest, and No One's There*, Power Station of Art, Shanghai (2018); *Condo Shanghai: Soul of the Soulless*, Edouard Malingue Gallery, Shanghai (2018); *One Second Ago*, Edouard Malingue Gallery, Hong Kong (2017); *NAN KAN: Inexplicit Ethics and De-ranking Perspective*, Surplus Space, Wuhan (2016); *Peepshow*, Long March Space, Beijing (2015); and *Follow*, MOCA Shanghai, Shanghai (2011). In 2018, He Yida completed a residency at the Centre for Chinese Contemporary Art, Manchester supported by the Liverpool Biennial.

(About Phillip Lai)

Phillip Lai was born in 1969 in Kuala Lumpur, currently lives and works in London. Recent solo exhibitions include: *Drunken Sailor*, Stuart Shave/Modern Art, London (2021); *In the Half Life*, Edouard Malingue Gallery, Hong Kong (2018); *Besides*, Camden Arts Centre, London (2014); *Introduction and Jargon*, Transmission Gallery, Glasgow (2009); and *Phillip Lai*, The Showroom, London (1997).

His work has been shown in group exhibitions in such institutions as The Hepworth Wakefield, Wakefield (2018); John Hansard Gallery, Southampton University, Southampton (2015); Nottingham Contemporary, Nottingham (2014); City Gallery Prague, Prague (2012); Tate Modern, London (2010); Cubitt, London (2008); Overgaden Institute for Samtidskunst, Copenhagen (2007); and Midway Contemporary Art, Minneapolis (2007); CCA, Glasgow (2005); Hayward Gallery, London (1999); MoMA, New York (1998); and ICA, London (1995). In 2018 the artist was shortlisted for the Hepworth Prize for Sculpture. His work is held in the following collections: Arts Council Collection, London; Nomas Foundation, Rome; Sifang Art Museum, Nanjing, China; Camden Arts Centre, London; Tate, London.

(About Heidi Lau)

Heidi Lau (b. 1987, Macau, China) lives and works in New York. Selected exhibitions include *Recent Sculpture*, Matthew Brown, Los Angeles (2022); *Empire Recast*, Grand Lisboa Palace, Macao (2021); *The Primordial Molder*, The Bronx Museum of the Arts, New York (2017); *The Obscure Region II*, Macau Art Museum (2014); and *In the Garden*, Newhouse Center for Contemporary Art, Snug Harbor Cultural Center & Botanical Garden, New York (2012).

Lau's work has been exhibited in international institutions including the Museum of Arts and Design, New York; the Bronx Museum of the Art, New York; the Museum of Chinese in America, New York; BRIC, New York; and the Macau Museum of Art, among others. Lau's practice has been supported by numerous residencies and awards, including the Green-Wood Cemetery Residency, Greenwich House Pottery Fellowship, NYSCA/NYFA Artist Fellowship, Colene Brown Art Prize, Emerging Artist Fellowship at Socrates Sculpture Park, Lower Manhattan Cultural Council Process Space, the Martin Wong Foundation Scholarship, and the Joan Mitchell Foundation Painters and Sculptors Grant. In 2019, Lau presented *Apparition* for the Macau-China Collateral Exhibition at the 58th Venice Biennale.

(About Oren Pinhassi)

Oren Pinhassi (b. 1985) graduated from the Yale School of Art in 2014. Recent solo shows include *The Crowd*, Edel Assanti, London and St.

Cyprian's, Clarence Gate; Castello San Basilio, Basilicata, 2019; Palazzo Monti, Brescia, 2019; *One in the mouth and one in the heart* at Skibum MacArthur, Los Angeles, 2018; *Springs* at the Petach Tikva Museum of Art, Israel, 2017; *Nature Calls* at RIBOT Gallery, Milan, 2017; *Hanging Gardens* at New Capital Projects, Chicago, 2016. Group exhibitions include *Guilty Curtain*, Kölnischer Kunstverein, Cologne, 2021; *O Sole Mio*, Parasol Unit, London, 2020; *Hocus Pocus*, Museo d'Arte Contemporanea di Lissone, Lissone, 2019; *This Is Not A Prop* at David Zwirner, New York, 2018. Completed residencies include Outset Contemporary Art Fund's Bialik Residency, 2017, the Shandanken Project at Storm King Sculpture Park, New York, 2016 and the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, Maine, 2014. Pinhassi has been awarded numerous prizes including The Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant, 2018; Fannie B. Pardee Prize, Yale School of Art, 2014; The Art Slant Prize, 2014; Shlomo Witkin Prize, 2011 and the Excellence Program Scholarship, Israeli Ministry of Education, 2011. Pinhassi lives and works in New York City.

(About Lee Relvas)

Lee Relvas (b. 1981) is living and working in New York, NY. Her work encompasses sculpture, writing, music, and performance. She had solo exhibitions at Artist Curated Projects, Los Angeles; and The Fireplace Project, East Hampton, NY. She was the recipient of the Rema Hort Mann Foundation Emerging Artist grant in 2016. Her work has been included in group exhibitions and performances at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Site 131, Dallas; ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives, Los Angeles; the Brooklyn Museum, New York; Kunsthaus Bregenz, Austria; and Orchard, New York, among many others. In 2015, she participated in the CreativeTime Summit in New York City. In 2018-19, Relvas participated in the Sharpe-Walentas Studio Program in Brooklyn, NY. She has released six solo albums of music, and currently records under the moniker Rind. From 2004 to 2010 she made work under the name Dewayne Slightweight.

(About Nicole Wermers)

Nicole Wermers was born in 1971 in Emsdetten, Germany, and is currently based in London. She studied at the Academy of Fine Arts of Hamburg from 1991-1997 and received an MFA from Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design, University of the Arts London in 1999. In 2015, Wermers was nominated for the Turner Prize. Solo exhibitions include *Emscher Folly*, Emscher Kunstweg, Oberhausen (permanent public art commission - 2020); *Women between Buildings*, Kunstverein Hamburg, Hamburg (2018); *Manners*, site-specific commission for Tate Britain, London (2013); *Il Dehors*, Villa Massimo, German Academy, Rome (2012); *Masse und Auflösung*, Aspen Art Museum, Aspen, Colorado (2007); *Earring*, site-specific sculpture, Camden Arts Centre, London (2006); *Chemie*, Secession, Vienna (2005).

Her work was also included in *A Women Qualities*, Kunstmuseum Moritzburg, Halle (Saale), (2021); *Magical Soup*, Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin (2020); the Turner Prize exhibition at Tramway, Glasgow (2015-2016); *Display Show*, curated by Celine Condorelli, Stroom den Haag, The Hague (2016); *Überschönheit*, Salzburger Kunstverein, Salzburg (2015); Villa Massimo Stipendiaten, Martin-Gropius Bau, Berlin (2013); Re-generation, Museo d'Arte Contemporanea (MACRO), Rome (2012); *Crazy House*, Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt (2012); *The New Décor*, Hayward Gallery, London and the Garage Centre, Moscow (2010-2011); Tate Triennale, Tate Britain, London (2006).

Wermers' work is included in the permanent collections of Tate Britain in London; Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, New York; Kunsthalle Hamburg; Museum für Moderne Kunst in Frankfurt; Mont Blanc Collection,

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Haamburg; Government Art Collection, London; Karl-Ernst Osthaus Museum in Hagen; the DGZ Bank Collection in Düsseldorf; and Bundeskunstsammlung, Bonn among others.