



"Staging realities," *meer*, May 1, 2025

Staging realities

17 Apr — 11 May 2025 at ShanghArt in Singapore, Singapore



Staging realities, exhibition view. Courtesy of ShanghArt

ShanghArt Singapore is proud to present Staging Realities, a group exhibition featuring works by Lynn Hershman Leeson, Melati Suryodarmo, Tang Maohong, Yang Fudong, Zhou Tiehai and Zhu Jia.

Implying a state of “becoming”, the exhibition showcases portrait works in which the subjects are depicted in staged or posed positions, whether in stillness or in motion. Rather than seeking to represent everyday scenes from the real world, the works suggest an ongoing endeavor to form new, fictional or imagined ones. With each mise en scene, the artists empower us as viewers to experience their works on our own terms, forming new perceptions and in turn, creating alternative realities.

Drawing from ancient Chinese classics and paintings, Yang Fudong’s Endless Peaks series takes us on a journey traversing time and space in his investigation into the essence of human spirituality. Also borrowing elements of traditional portraiture but this time Western, Zhou Tiehai and Tang Maohong re-enact their subjects: Zhou depicting his in *A dog’s life* and *The Duke of Wellington* in an idealised manner to convey their elevated status and position of power and importance; while Tang takes a classical, sculptural approach in his *A Part of Classics – 3*. For both artists, their injection of contemporary humour brings a plot twist to their narratives.

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The works of Melati Suryodarmo and Lynn Hershman Leeson reveal the role of the camera lens and its relationship with whom it captures. Suryodarmo's *Tomorrow, As Purposed* series, which began as a dance theatre piece inspired by Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, invites viewers to observe and question, the bodily content framed in theatrical gestures. In a seemingly reversal of positions in Leeson's *Reach*, the camera—usually out of sight from the audience, becomes the centre of attention. This exploration of identity is also reflected in Zhu Jia's *Zero*, through the performance and introspection of self by his female protagonist.