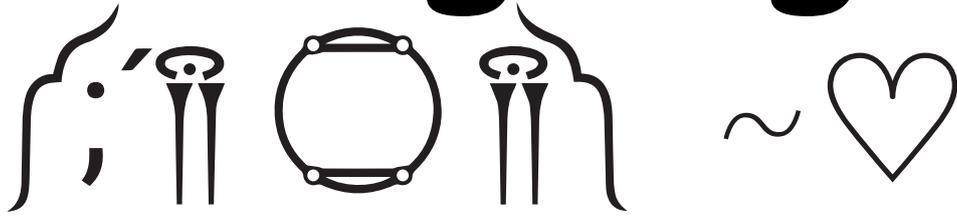


Wong Ping



16.06–18.09

Exhibition Guide
English

Kunsthall Stavanger

Wong Ping



16.06–18.09.22

Kunsthall Stavanger is proud to present the first solo exhibition in Scandinavia by the Hong Kong-based artist Wong Ping. The exhibition continues Kunsthall Stavanger's focus in 2021–22 on artists working with digital and screen-based art, which will culminate in the launch of a new digital platform in September 2022.

Through animations, sculptures and installations, Wong Ping tells stories that challenge our habitual ideas of human desire, loneliness, shame and repressed sexuality.

Wong's animations are rendered in a bright aesthetic reminiscent of early video games. This light-hearted, humorous, and accessible visual language helps to diffuse lewd and offbeat stories that explore dark corners of human nature, in which protagonists often experience deep psychological issues, as well as simultaneously disguising meditations on larger societal structures such as immigration, social relations, economic anxieties, and morality.

As a Hong Kong native, Wong's observations of the city's residents' daily lives and mindsets are a central element in his works, where he presents reflections on the changing social and economic environment in the region, with emphasis on Hong Kong's tense relations with mainland China. In the context of a community under siege, specifically wherein political dissent has become tantamount to criminal behavior, the artist's playfully subversive practice is as important, powerful and progressive as any.

Wong's work creates a hallucinatory, surreal, and frightening image of contemporary life. In describing his practice, he points to his favorite song by The Velvet Underground and its lines, "I'll be your mirror/Reflect what you are, in case you don't know".

Wong Ping was born in Hong Kong in 1984, and received his BA from Curtin University, Perth, Australia in 2005. In 2018, he was the recipient of the inaugural Camden Arts Emerging Arts Prize, and in 2019, he was one of the winners of The Ammodo Tiger Short Competition at the 48th International Film Festival Rotterdam. Wong has completed a residency at the Chinese Centre for Contemporary Art (2015).

Solo exhibitions by Wong Ping include *Your Silent Neighbor*, New Museum, New York (2021); *Heart Digger*, Camden Arts Centre, London (2019); *Golden Shower*, Kunsthalle Basel, Switzerland (2019); *Who's the Daddy*, CAPRI, Düsseldorf, Germany (2018); and *Jungle of Desire*, Things that can happen, Hong Kong (2015). His work has been featured in important group exhibitions such as *One Hand Clapping*, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York (2018); 2018 Triennial: *Songs for Sabotage*, New Museum, New York (2018); *XO State Dark: Aristophanes*, Arts Centre Melbourne (2017); *RareKind China*, Centre for Chinese Contemporary Art, Manchester (2016); *Mobile M+: Moving Images*, M+, Hong Kong (2015); and *Essential Matters*, Borusan Contemporary, Istanbul (2015).

Wong's animation films have been presented at numerous international festivals, in Belgium, United Kingdom, Mexico and Australia.

Wong's work is held in several permanent collections including Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; M+, Hong Kong; KADIST, Paris/San Francisco; Fosun Art Foundation, Shanghai, among others.

GALLERY 1

Wong Ping's Fables 1 (2018)

Single channel animation, 13:00 min

Inspired by the Grimm Brothers and Aesop's Fables, the stories in the video create new fables for our modern age. *Wong Ping's Fables 1* offers moral guidance through a bizarre storyline with anthropomorphic characters. The video tells the stories of an elephant, a chicken, and a tree who are forced to confront obstacles and their fears. Each character is flawed, and as in traditional fables, their stories reference fundamental principles or rules of conduct. Wong says: "The tradition of fables providing a maxim is similar to the tradition of the artist's statement: It intends to explain where an explanation might not be needed. In the Internet Era, we don't have time for fairy tales — we want everything to be short and pithy."

Wong Ping's Fables 2 (2019)

Single channel animation, 13:00 min

Wong Ping's Fables 2 comprises two back-to-back animations, each of which presents a fictional story with imaginary characters, communicating a moral lesson to the viewer. Jumping between the tales of a wealthy imprisoned cow and a con-joined triplet rabbit (which visitors will also meet in physical and oversized form in the foyer and gallery 5), the video touches upon issues of greed, incarceration, digital consumerism, narcissism, and desire.

Please note that the videos on the two screens will play one after the other, and not simultaneously.

GALLERY 2

An Emo Nose (2015)

Single channel animation, 04:23 min

An Emo Nose tells the story of a man's relationship with his own heart-shaped nose. In a nod to Pinocchio's 'lying nose', the protagonists' nose physically grows away from him with every negative thought. Exploring themes of loneliness and isolation, the nose eventually separates from him completely, leaving him alone to be a social out-cast or 'emo'.

GALLERY 3

Sorry for the late reply (2021)

Single channel animation, 15:00 min

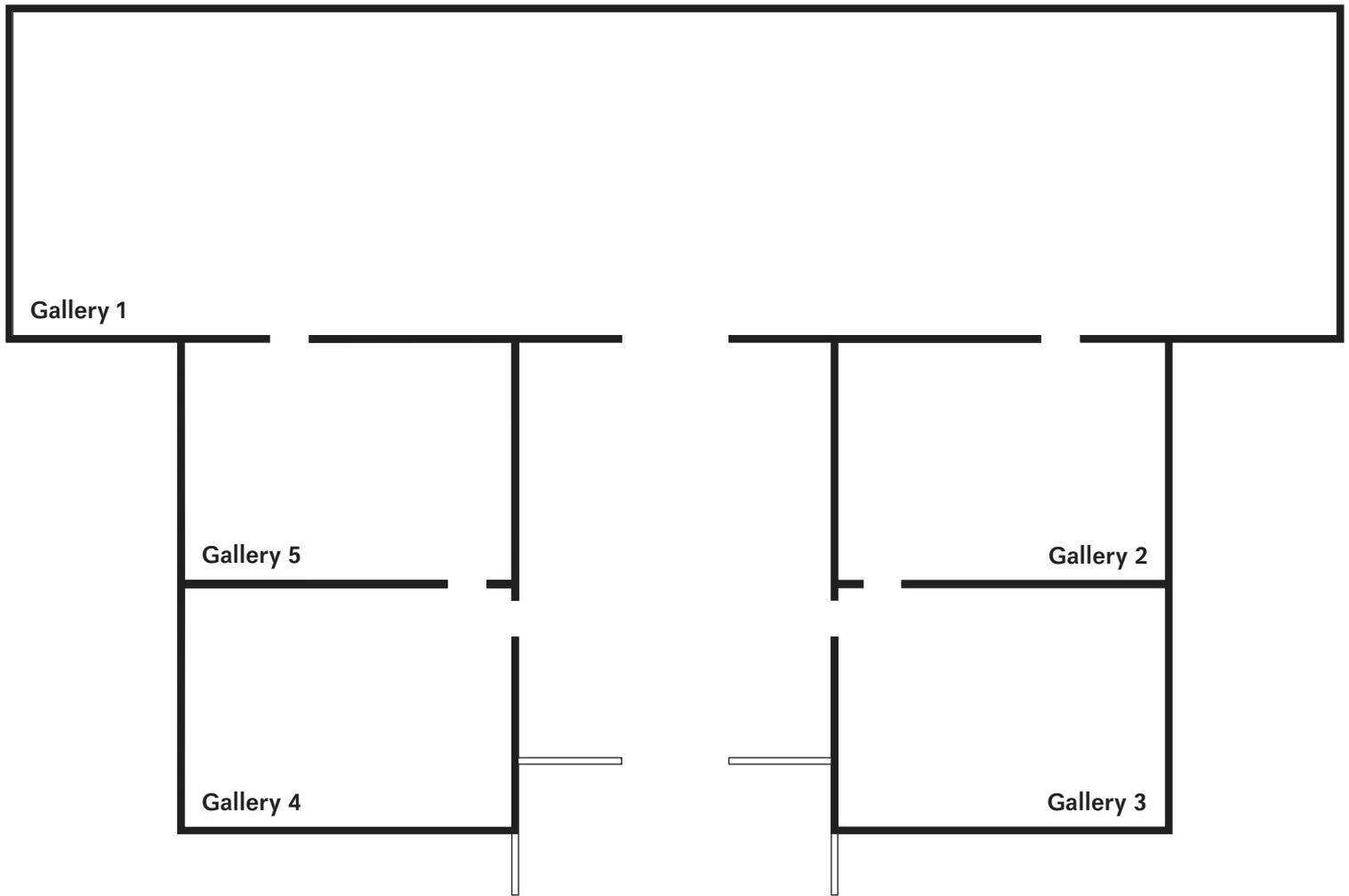
Sorry for the late reply is a dark and surreal journey where a hobby fisherman who witnesses a lightning strike at sea, recognizes the lightning in an advertisement for varicose vein cream, and becomes so obsessed with the varicose veins on the leg of a female sales manager that he faints. When the fisherman wakes up and discovers that he is trapped inside the woman's leg, he tries to find an escape route, but is unable to free himself from his own fantasy. In a painterly dream sequence, a pet chameleon becomes a symbol of the fear of offending others, while a cemetery scene—as the video as a whole—provides an insight into humanity's deepest and most shameful desires.

GALLERY 4

The Other Side (2015)

Two channel animation, 08:00 min

Reflecting on themes of emigration and belonging, *The Other Side* tells the story of a man leaving the comfort and familiarity of home, visualized as a mother's womb, to venture across the ocean, only to return after he finds that things are mostly the same on the more utopian other side. *The Other Side* reflects on the primal longing to return to where we came from, as well as human nature's desire to want what we cannot have. The work also reflects on the waning freedom of Hong Kong's younger generation, who sees their freedom, privacy and autonomy gradually disappearing, with many choosing to move elsewhere.



On the heels of Kunsthall Stavanger's multimedia and moving image exhibitions *LEAN* (group show curated by Legacy Russell), Bárbara Wagner and Benjamin de Burca's large-scale presentation of *Swinguerra*, and Peggy Ahwesh's survey exhibition *Vision Machines*,  is exemplary of the institution's heightened focus on screen-based works and video art. This series of exhibitions will culminate in the forthcoming debut of the Kunsthall's new website and online-only exhibition platform in September 2022.

Kunsthall Stavanger would like to thank Tanya Bonakdar Gallery for their support with the exhibition, and Stavanger Art Museum for equipment support.

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Hours
Wednesday–Sunday, 11–4

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