

Hsu Che-Yu

Zoo Hypothesis

20 Jun - 16 Aug 2026

Opening Reception 20 Jun 2026, 8pm

Press Release

Queensway Television is pleased to present *Zoo Hypothesis* by Hsu Che-Yu. Referencing two historical events at a Taiwanese zoo that happened during World War II, the work follows a dialogue between a scriptwriter and a performer. Rendered primarily via 3D-scanned imagery, the work explores the relationship between 'gestures' and 'horrors' through the idea of recreation and control.

Set in a taxidermy studio, the conversation begins with an iconic photo of a memorial ceremony held in a zoo to commemorate animals that died during military operations. In the photo, an elephant kneels between two trainers from the zoo in a forced posture of mourning. The second historical event details the 1944 mass execution of the zoo's animals, ordered by authorities to prevent them escaping their enclosures and causing civilian casualties during air raids. These animals were then taxidermised to permanently freeze their movements and postures.

Across both events, animals were repeatedly manipulated to perform specific gestures to manufacture certain scenes of reality. Did the elephant truly mourn, and what did the rigid postures of the taxidermised animals actually represent? The simplest gestures often carry the heaviest trauma. Referencing historical disasters that instantly wiped out surrounding living beings, leaving only traces of their body postures in that moment, the performer suggests that it is in fact everyday gestures, seemingly unrelated to death, that best embody such devastating catastrophes.

The discussion culminates at the elephant gate of Hsinchu Zoo, built by the Japanese during the colonial rule with the same design derived from the Fukuoka Zoo in Japan, which was itself a copy of the Hagenbeck Zoo in Hamburg, Germany. Across this replica of a replica, the kneeling elephant, and taxidermised animals, the act of replication and reconstruction inevitably creates an overlap between reality and fiction.

This repeated recreation of appearances carries over into the 3D scanning of the zoo and its taxidermy studio, constructing scenes that are simultaneously staged and real, threaded together through the conversation by the scriptwriter and the performer. It is perhaps in the spaces between what we perceive and what we are led to believe, that the deepest horrors quietly lie, hidden from sight yet desperately trying to make their presence felt.

This work was created in cooperation with long-time collaborator, scriptwriter Chen Wan-Yin.

Artist Biography

Hsu Che-Yu (b. 1985) is an artist based in Taipei and Amsterdam. Previously, Hsu obtained a master's degree from the Graduate Institute of Plastic Arts, Tainan National University of the Arts (Taiwan). Since 2019, he had participated in the residency program in HISK (Ghent, 2019–2020) and Le Fresnoy - Studio national des arts contemporains (Tourcoing, 2020–2022). In 2022, he begins his two-year art residency in Rijksakademie in Amsterdam. Hsu Che-Yu works as an artist who primarily creates animations, videos, and installations that feature the relations between media and memories. What matters to the artist is not simply the history of events traceable through media, but also the construction and visualization of memories, be they private or collective.

Hsu has solo exhibitions at Kunstverein in Hamburg (2026), Center of Contemporary Art - Tbilisi (2025), Hong Foundation (Taipei, 2025), Vanguard Gallery (Shanghai, 2025, 2020, 2016), ARGOS centre for audiovisual arts (Brussels, 2024), ILHAM Gallery (Kuala Lumpur, 2024), Fundació Joan Miró (Barcelona, 2023), Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève (2023), MOCA Taipei (2023), Vernacular Institute (Mexico City, 2023), Kuandu Museum of Fine Arts (Taipei, 2023, 2012), Liang Gallery (Taipei, 2022), Taipei Fine Arts Museum (2015), SAT Society for Arts and Technology (Montreal, 2012).

He has participated in the Kunstenfestivaldesarts (Brussels, 2024), Theater der Welt (Frankfurt, 2023), Biennial Sesc_Videobrasil (2023), Bienal de São Paulo (2021), Seoul Mediacity Biennale (2021), Sonsbeek20→24 Quadrennial public program (2021), VIDEONALE.18 (2021), Shanghai Biennale (2018, 2012), London Design Biennale (2018), Asian Art Biennial (Taichung, 2017), and film festivals IFFR International Film Festival Rotterdam (2023, 2022, 2020, 2018) and NYFF New York Film Festival (2020). He was awarded the Videonale Award of the Fluentum Collection (Kunstmuseum Bonn, 2021), the Loop Barcelona Video Art Production Award (Han Nefkens Foundation, 2020), the Taishin Annual Grand Prize (Taishin Bank Foundation for Arts and Culture, 2016), and was a finalist for HUGO BOSS ASIA ART (2019).

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