

Groupshow with
Ai Weiwei, Bian Qing, Chen
Zuo, Han Zishi, Klodin Erb,
Li Kejin, Liang Yujue, Mai Ta,
Wang Xingwei, Xie Nanxing

Anker Protocol - 2.0
A Place of Concealment

Galerie Urs Meile, Zurich Ankerstrasse
February 5 – April 2, 2026
Opening: Thursday, February 5, 2026, 6-8pm

Curated by Yang Zi

Galerie Urs Meile is pleased to announce *Anker Protocol 2.0 - A Place of Concealment*, the second chapter of the gallery's multi-part exhibition program, presented at its Zurich Ankerstrasse space. Continuing the gallery's long-standing commitment to international artistic exchange and its more than three-decade engagement with contemporary Chinese art, the exhibition brings together ten artists working across painting, installation, and moving image. Curated by independent curator Yang Zi, the exhibition expands upon a thematic inquiry first introduced in *A Place of Concealment* (2022) at Galerie Urs Meile Beijing.

While the 2022 iteration focused on the internal psychological mechanisms of artistic production, *Anker Protocol 2.0* turns toward a moment of rupture: the instant when a sealed package is opened and unforeseen possibilities emerge. Conceived as a distribution hub or an unfinished display site, the exhibition space is populated by wooden crates scattered across the room, with artworks appearing as if newly unpacked. These works escape their containers like unpredictable forces, charged with emotional intensities ranging from desire and aggression to vulnerability, isolation, and loss.

At the same time, each artwork functions as a container in its own right, concealing something that exceeds both intention and interpretation. Concealment is no longer approached as an inner psychological mechanism to be decoded, but as an irreducible surplus, something that persists even after artistic expression appears complete. As elements of lived reality quietly infiltrate the exhibition, what remains concealed within art ultimately affirms its autonomy and its capacity to exceed the control of both artist and viewer alike.

Artists

Ai Weiwei (b. 1957, Beijing, China; lives and works in Portugal)

Ai Weiwei's practice spans sculpture, installation, film, and social intervention, persistently engaging questions of displacement, authorship, and political visibility. *Anker Protocol 2.0* presents works from the iconic *Fairytales* project (2007), originally developed for *documenta 12*. Everyday suitcases become carriers of personal memory and collective movement, functioning simultaneously as literal containers and symbolic devices. Concealment here operates through mobility: lived experiences remain hidden within objects that circulate globally, bearing the weight of migration, transit, and historical displacement.

Bian Qing (b. 1983, Tianjin, China; lives and works in Beijing)

Bian Qing's recent *Solvable Set* series (2025) explores systems, logic, and uncertainty through carefully structured painterly compositions. While the titles suggest rational resolution, the images themselves remain open-ended, marked by subtle disruptions and unresolved relationships. Concealment operates as a structural condition: clarity is continuously implied but never fully attained. The paintings thus oscillate between order and instability, exposing the limits of systematic thinking.

Chen Zuo (b. 1990, Hunan, China; lives and works in Beijing)

Chen Zuo employs a precise and disciplined painting language to construct scenes that appear calm yet psychologically charged. In works such as *Untitled (Rivals)* and *Untitled (Flicker)* (2024–2025), moments of tension are frozen within ambiguous narrative situations. Through controlled composition and restrained colour, concealment becomes a fragile balance between control and vulnerability, where meaning is suspended rather than resolved.

Han Zishi (b. 1990, Beijing, China; lives and works in Frankfurt)

Han Zishi's video and installation practice explores perception, energy, and psychological resonance through immersive audiovisual environments. *The Moth and the Light Shunner (Portrait I)* (2025) employs ultraviolet light, vibration, and digital imagery to create a hypnotic spatial encounter. Oscillating between attraction and avoidance, exposure and retreat, the work frames concealment as a dynamic process that unfolds through sensory tension rather than narrative revelation.

Klodin Erb (b. 1963, Winterthur, Switzerland; lives and works in Zurich)

Klodin Erb is among Switzerland's most renowned contemporary artists. Rooted in painting yet consistently pushing beyond its traditional limits, her practice moves fluidly between painting, film, installation, and collage, shaped by a strong sensitivity to the emotional and social conditions of the present. For *Anker Protocol 2.0*, Erb presents works from the series *Herzammer* (2023–2024), which seeks to "democratize" veneration by envisioning a shared chamber for many hearts, particularly those of women. Through coloured leather and anatomical references, the works unfold between material intimacy, memory, and spiritual presence.

Li Kejin (b. 1990, Nanjing, China; lives and works in Hangzhou)

Li Kejin's work is characterized by a restrained and introspective painterly language that privileges atmosphere over narrative clarity. In *Swallow* (2023), muted tonalities and subtle figuration create a suspended pictorial space in which presence feels fragile and distant. The image appears to hover between emergence and disappearance, suggesting concealment not as an act of hiding but as a quiet withdrawal. Through this withholding, emotional intensity is amplified rather than resolved.

Liang Yujue (b. 1991, Anhui, China; lives and works in Shanghai)

Working primarily with analog film and time-based media, Liang Yujue investigates the fragile boundary between documentation and fiction. *War Story* (2020), shot on Super 8 film and transferred to HD video, presents a silent and fragmented narrative composed of portrait and archival landscape imagery. By erasing spoken language, the work allows omission and temporal gaps to become central expressive forces. Concealment emerges through absence, transforming memory into a perceptual experience.

Mai Ta (b. 1997, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam; lives and works in Ho Chi Minh City)

Mai Ta's practice combines painting with reflections on memory, place, and emotional displacement. Her small-format works *a secret, the south, and blue river* (2025) function as intimate visual fragments that resist explicit narration. Suggestive landscapes and restrained imagery act as quiet containers of personal and cultural memory. Meaning surfaces only through prolonged attention, allowing concealment to operate through intimacy and restraint.

Wang Xingwei (b. 1969, Shenyang, China; lives and works in Beijing)

Wang Xingwei is known for his ironic and often unsettling dialogue with art history, ideology, and contemporary social structures. His painting *Devil Trapped in Supremacist Space* (2020) stages a collision between abstraction and figuration, historical trauma and ideological symbolism. By misaligning visual languages and cultural references, Wang constructs ambiguous pictorial narratives in which meaning is never fully disclosed. Concealment functions here as a strategy of delay and displacement, suspending interpretation within layers of painterly and conceptual tension.

Xie Nanxing (b. 1970, Chongqing, China; lives and works in Beijing)

Xie Nanxing's painting practice navigates between abstraction and figuration through repetition, fragmentation, and rhythmic painterly gestures. The monumental triptych *Untitled (Slightly Faster)* (2023) unfolds as a sequence of shifting visual states, in which forms appear and dissolve simultaneously. Rather than offering a fixed image, the work draws viewers into a prolonged encounter where perception is constantly deferred. Concealment emerges through movement and temporal delay, resisting immediate recognition and stable meaning.

Curator

Yang Zi is an independent curator based in Beijing. He studied philosophy and religious studies at Nanjing University and has previously worked as editor at LEAP magazine and as curator and Head of Public Programs at UCCA Center for Contemporary Art. In 2025, Yang Zi was invited to curate the debut solo exhibition at the London based non-profit art space Yan Du Projects (YDP). His curatorial practice critically examines perception, embodiment, and the psychological as well as institutional conditions of contemporary art.

In 2017, Yang Zi was a finalist for the Hyundai Blue Prize, one of the most significant awards supporting emerging curatorial and artistic practices in China. In 2020, he was awarded the inaugural Sigg Fellowship for Chinese Art Research by M+ Museum, Hong Kong. He has also served as a preliminary jury member for the Huayu Youth Award in 2019 and 2021.