

GARAGE CURATED BY  
LARA DEN HARTOG JAGER  
21 OCTOBER – DECEMBER 2023

EENWERK is excited to announce *Faint of Heart*, an exhibition of works by Ai Ozaki and Peng Zhang, curated by Lara den Hartog Jager. This exhibition will inaugurate EENWERK Garage, an art space in the garage of the gallery for emerging artists, curated by various young curators.

*Faint of Heart: Constant pictures and thoughts but not being able to piece them together. A tingling sensation at your fingertips. Memories sticked to a wall with tape. Curd, whey, pressure and release. Digesting theories and things. Trying to catch a glimpse through the fog. Swallowing stones. Being unable to. About tactility and tomorrow. Soil and sun. Rashes and runs. Dust and feathers.*

The expression “Not for the faint of heart” originated in the medical field. The term was used to describe patients who had weak hearts and couldn’t handle challenging or stressful situations due to their condition. Nowadays it is often used to remark that someone lacks courage, strength, or confidence. The exhibition takes this expression as a starting point. It explores being overwhelmed, feeling unable to swallow. How to gather your thoughts when they are shattered on the floor? How to find back the roots that connect you to yourself and the outside world? Do we need to strengthen our body, or can a weak heart actually be the cure in itself?

Ai Ozaki (b. 1991, Saitama, Japan) will return to the original meaning of the word ‘garage’, exploring the ways in which it functions as a space to preserve. A central element in her practice is investigating the ways her body interacts with ‘the Other’. This includes not only people, but all living things – even herself, her organs and her language. She notices that people are often distant from themselves and the world surrounding them. To explore this sense (or absence) of connection, her installation of ceramics and video works will look at issues of preservation through acts of eating and digesting.

Peng Zhang (b. 1990, Pingxiang, China) will take over the gallery’s greenhouse, in which he will create an ever-growing installation. His work is rooted in his memories of rural life and captures moments from the village of Shijian Cun, where he grew up in the countryside of southern China. By utilizing soil and seeds he reconnects with his heritage and explores different rhythms in relation to the land. Collaborating and remembering through simplicity and slowness, while creating an ever-changing future with the earth.

LARA DEN HARTOG JAGER (1999) writes and curates. She grew up in Amsterdam and studied Liberal Arts and Sciences at University College Utrecht, where she focused on art history, political science and philosophy. She obtained her MA History of Art at the Courtauld Institute of Art in London, specializing in contemporary art and the interactions between the museum, society and politics. Her essays appeared amongst others on Hard//Hoofd. In 2022 she was nominated for the Young Art Criticism Prize with her essay *To the barricades: Moving between museum and society*. She is currently continuing her studies with an MA business administration, specializing in the cultural sector.

AI OZAKI (1991, Saitama, Japan) is a visual artist who works with video, photography, ceramics, painting, and text, to investigate the ways her body interacts with 'the Other'. This does not only include people, but all living things – and even herself. She often notices that people do not understand each other and are distant from themselves and the world surrounding them. We don't know what birds are thinking, for example, or how our own bodies function, we cannot even control our own organs. In her practice, she is interested in imagining communication with these close yet so far away and incomprehensible beings and things. She aims to puzzle together a picture of the ways in which people attempt to gain an understanding of these bodily functions and the myriad of ways in which we try to connect to ourselves and the beings around us.

Ai Ozaki graduated in 2017 from from Tokyo Zokei University, Faculty of Art and Design, Department of Fine Arts. Her work has been exhibited in multiple group shows, amongst others, at Art Center Ongoing, Tokyo, Fujisawa City Art Space, Kanagawa, Spiral Hall, Tokyo and Gunma Museum of Modern Art. In 2022 she moved to Amsterdam and started her residency at the Rijksakademie van beeldende kunsten.

PENG ZHANG'S (Pingxiang, China, 1990) work is rooted in his memories of rural life. He dives into his past and attempts to capture memories from the village Shijian Cun, where he grew up as a child in the countryside of South China. In his installations he explores themes such as closeness and togetherness, as well as simplicity and slowness, specifically in relation to the farmland and his heritage. Peng Zhang: "My work is characterized by earthly tones which reflect this landscape. During the making process, I bring my base to the land and work as a farmer by bending over or kneeling on the land or collaborating with other people and livestock as ways of producing. My materials stem from the land and nature and my techniques originate from rural life which in essence could be seen as mirroring a farmer's relationship to their land."

Peng Zhang (Pingxiang, China, 1990) graduated from China Academy of Art, Hangzhou in 2015, and from St/Joost Art Academy, Den Bosch in 2018. Solo shows of his work have been organized at Plantium, Hilversum, Supuxin Art Space, Hangzhou and WitteRook, Breda. His work has also been part of multiple group shows, amongst others at Billytown, The Hague, De Brinkhorst, Amersfoort, Sinarts Gallery, The Hague and Shanghai Oriental Art Center, Shanghai. In 2021 he started his residency at the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten which he completed this year.