

Hao Jingban: I Witness

Reference Gallery

October 23, 2026 – February 28, 2027



OCTOBER 15, 2026 Cambridge, MA – The MIT List Visual Arts Center announces *Hao Jingban: I Witness* (October 23, 2026–February 28, 2027), on view in the Reference Gallery. Organized by Natalie Bell, Chief Curator, the exhibition presents *I Witness* (2025), a three-channel video installation that turns to feeling and intuition to consider bodily responses to loss and grief in the years following the pandemic.

Blending documentary sensibility with poetic construction, Hao Jingban creates evocative, formally experimental moving image installations. Film offers Hao a way to understand others. Her earlier projects are rooted in archival research and fieldwork, tracing how histories that have been obscured, forgotten, or suppressed endure in the present. Voiceover, slow motion, and outtakes become tools for giving visual form to what lies at the edges of direct representation. Working slowly, Hao builds trust with her subjects over months or years, holding space for refusal, anonymity, and fragmentation. That trust shapes what appears on screen, while her cinematic strategies give form to what remains felt rather than shown.



An evocative three-screen montage filmed in Beijing, *I Witness* follows people living in the wake of different kinds of loss. One channel observes an older woman in the rhythms of her daily routine: sleeping, eating, cleaning.

Another channel follows a loose collective pacing a grassy riverside park in Beijing. Participants pause, crouch, lie on the ground, or continue to amble as a group moving through an open field, while poetic text surfaces across the screen as voiceover. For Hao, who had previously focused her work away from public space, the scene offers a study in collective movement, with participants connected through the simple, shared act of walking together.

The third channel features eight participants engaged in a somatic practice inspired by Authentic Movement, a therapeutic method in which one person moves with closed eyes while a partner observes as witness. Working in pairs, they give form to loss through movement, and their voices, as they share what surfaced, are the only ones heard in the work.

The work's soundtrack gathers breath, murmurs, weeping, coughs, and the low hum of electronics, with the silence surrounding these sounds resonating most. Dwelling in the register of affect, largely outside of language, *I Witness* asks whether witnessing can also take place in silence, opening a space where the grief of others might be felt through the body.

I Witness marks a turning point in Hao's practice. In the years following the pandemic, as she became a parent, she turned from the rational frameworks that had shaped her research toward feeling and intuition, approaching history as something present, unfolding, and ongoing. *I Witness* considers how deeply history, and grief, can inform physical embodiment and movement.

I Witness (2025) is a three-channel video installation, 54 minutes and 41 seconds in duration, commissioned jointly by the Han Nefkens Foundation, Mori Art Museum, M+, and Singapore Art Museum, in an edition of six with two artist's proofs.

Hao Jingban: I Witness is organized by Natalie Bell, Chief Curator.

RELATED PROGRAMMING

Artist Talk: October 22, 2026, 5:30–6:30 PM

Fall Exhibitions Opening Reception: October 22, 2026, 6–8 PM

IMAGE CAPTIONS

Hao Jingban, *I Witness*, 2025. Three-channel video installation, 54:41 min. Commissioned jointly by the Han Nefkens Foundation, Mori Art Museum, M+, and Singapore Art Museum. Image: Courtesy the artist and Blindspot Gallery.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Hao Jingban lives and works between Yunnan Province, China, and Berlin, Germany. She received a BA from Goldsmiths, University of London, and an MA from the University of London. Recent solo exhibitions have taken place at Mori Art Museum, Tokyo (2025); Matadero Madrid (2020); and OCT Contemporary Art Terminal, Xi'an, China (2019). Recent group exhibitions have taken place at venues including the 36th Bienal de São Paulo (2025); Rockbund Art Museum, Shanghai (2025); TANK Shanghai (2024); West Bund Museum, Shanghai (2023); and Seoul Mediacity Biennale (2021); among others. Hao's works are in the collections of M+, Hong Kong; Centre Pompidou, Paris; Frac Bretagne, Rennes, France; the Power Station of Art, Shanghai; and Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona.

SPONSORS

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ABOUT MIT LIST VISUAL ARTS CENTER

The List Visual Arts Center is a creative laboratory that provides artists with a space to freely experiment and push existing boundaries. As the contemporary art museum at MIT, the List Center presents a dynamic program of six to nine special exhibitions in its galleries annually, including a program of evolving site-specific work by emerging artists known as List Projects, as well as a broad range of educational programs, events, and scholarly publications. Beyond the full slate of special exhibitions and projects it presents each year, the List Center maintains and adds to MIT's Permanent Collection, a collection of more than fifty site-specific artworks throughout the campus; commissions new works through the MIT Percent-for-Art program; oversees the loan of artwork for the campus (in the President's House, labs, and administrative offices); and oversees the Student Loan Art Program, which lends approximately seven hundred works of art annually to MIT undergraduate and graduate students.

MEDIA CONTACTS

DEPARTMENT PR

Sarah Brown McLeod | sarah@department-pr.com

Roberta Zertuche | roberta@department-pr.com



20 Ames Street
Building E15-109
Cambridge, MA 02139

listinfo@mit.edu
617-253-4680
listart.mit.edu