

## Hu Yinping: You Can Start Anytime

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### Location:

UCCA Dune

### Media Contact:

Danyu Xu

Director of Communications

+86 10 5780 0258

+86 138 1082 9590

[danyu.xu@ucca.org.cn](mailto:danyu.xu@ucca.org.cn)

Jiannan Hu

Senior Media Relations Manager

+86 10 5780 0258

+86 185 1062 2663

[jiannan.hu@ucca.org.cn](mailto:jiannan.hu@ucca.org.cn)

Press material available at

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From April 27, 2025, to October 12, 2025, UCCA Dune presents “Hu Yinping: You Can Start Anytime,” a solo exhibition by Chinese artist Hu Yinping. Through a series of immersive, futuristic, and whimsical encounters in thematic gallery spaces, the exhibition represents a shift in the direction of the artist’s “Hu Xiaofang” project and its community—exploring broader questions of aesthetics in this novel realm of collective authorship and economic redistribution.

Beidaihe, CHINA—From April 27, 2025, to October 12, 2025, UCCA Dune presents “Hu Yinping: You Can Start Anytime,” a solo exhibition by Chinese artist Hu Yinping (b. 1983, Sichuan province). This exhibition unfolds as a constellation of immersive environments that foreground art’s potential in affecting change through a model of shared creative labor and authorship. Here, the artist’s long-running “Hu Xiaofang” project, originally established to collect and value her mother’s time, reaches a pivotal stage of evolution into new aesthetic directions and propositional futures shaped by collective imagination in a more expansive expression of its founding ideals. Curated by UCCA Curator Holly Roussell, this site-specific exhibition features over 500 pieces, including 7 new series of works commissioned by UCCA Center for Contemporary Art.

Structured as a series of immersive environments, the exhibition envisions an alternative future where labor, memory, and organic life are redefined through collaboration, technology, and evolving social structures. Visitors encounter spaces that explore the quantification of human existence (*Hall of Rest & Records*, *Hall of Lived Data*), the transformation of authorship and participation (*You Can Start Anytime*), and the sensory and material dimensions of memory (*Hall of Familiar Smells*). Elsewhere, alternative positions on agriculture (*Hall of Future Flora*), speculative organic energy (*Hall of Vital Forces*), and the ethics of surveillance and observation (*Panopticon Hall*) blur the boundaries between art, daily life, and imagined futures.

The exhibition opens with an exploration of resilient transformation, as represented by the “Looks Poisonous” series (2024-2025) in the *Hall of Vital Forces*. This work also sets the tone for subsequent exhibition spaces: presenting new community-based working methods, as well as the central exhibition theme of a speculative, collective vision of the future. In this first room,

knit fungi are suspended from the ceiling and situated in an ultraviolet-lit environment, pulsate with hundreds of handstitched LED lights, suggesting an almost sentient presence. They are brought to life and re-imagined by in a novel approach to collaboration between Hu Yinping and the “Hu Xiaofang” collective, which transcends, like the mushrooms, their pre-established roles. Creating the forms with 3D-modeled designs, but then inviting the “Hu Xiaofang” collective to knit skins of the most toxic plants they could imagine, Hu takes on the simultaneous role of organizer, facilitator, and co-creator with the collective for the first time.

The next spaces evolve organically. The *Hall of Future Flora* encircles visitors with the highly imaginative and spectacular site-specific installations of *Potatoes Grow on Trees* (2025) and *Wheat Grows by the Water* (2025)—a humorous commentary on our contemporary alienation from the realities of land and agricultural production, and invitation to contemplate the temporality of human existence in contrast with the quiet and continuous evolution of nature. Such existential reflections continue in the *Hall of Future Memory*, where seven monumental “soul bottles”—3-to-8-meter-tall urns, adorned with intricately knit and embroidered imagery, reflect the “Hu Xiaofang” collaborators’ own interpretations of myths and legends of the seven continents as well as a future “paradise.” By giving the “Xiaofang” community the power of re-transcribing myths to project a future consciousness, Hu Yinping explores new claims in futurity and the positioning of artistic aesthetics.

In the *Hall of Familiar Smells*, Hu Yinping drew inspiration from her own family memories and impressions left behind by different decades to create a distinct olfactory experience. For *It Smells Familiar* (2025), the artist collaborated with Shanghai-based olfactory creator Kaori Oishi to reimagine scent as an archive—one capable of preserving lived experience across time. Drawing inspiration from the lives of her grandmother, mother, sister, and niece—each shaped by a different era—the artist developed five fragrances that evoke familial presence and generational memory. In Hu’s words, “Although the women of my family lived in different times and each carries the flavor of their own era, they also share a certain resilience. Each of these scents is unique yet they have shared origins. It smells... familiar.”

The exhibition concludes with two spaces drawing on contemporaneous realities of data collection, storage and interpretation to question how the seemingly mundane details of everyday existence shape our identities over time and will affect a future yet to be defined. In the luminous *Hall of Rest & Records*, the newly commissioned “Unloading” series (2025) is a playful reflection on the minute yet significant patterns of habit and behavior that shape individual identity. For this space, flashing, candy-colored toilet-bowls and a conveyor-belt of

decadent snacks transform personal life metrics into knitted artifacts, offering a poetic counterpoint to the abstraction of data in contemporary life. The adjacent installation in the *Hall of Lived Data* invites visitors to discover crocheted “life CVs” created by over 100 contributors to the “Hu Xiaofang” project. These tactile records draw on personal memories, daily life, and family histories— a collection of intimate viewpoints into the lived realities of the community.

The *You Can Start Anytime* space functions as a multi-purpose space where visitors are invited to engage directly with the ongoing evolution of the “Hu Xiaofang” project, participating in workshops and viewing a retrospective compilation tracing the project’s development across five key chapters. In dialogue with this space, *Sister Ling’s Garden*, a photographic documentation of a project chronicling her decade-long, non-commercial cultivation collaboration with Sister Ling, a Guangdong-based farmer who has resisted industrial agricultural norms in favor of pesticide-free methods, is shown on lightboxes. Though distinct from most of the works of the “Hu Xiaofang” collective, this project extends shared themes of labor, autonomy, and alternative economic systems. In it, Sister Ling cultivates a plot of land leased to her by Hu under a ten-year agreement—as a project that values creativity and change over market gain.

Rooted in co-creation, the interlinked spaces of “Hu Yinping: You Can Start Anytime” propose a fluid, open-ended vision of social and artistic value systems, challenging traditional hierarchies of labor, authorship, and creative production. As the title suggests, “You Can Start Anytime”—art-making is always open for those ready to engage. Through knitted displays of communal creativity and care, the exhibition unfolds a collective narrative that offers new possibilities for creative life within, yet not confined to, society’s existing artistic and economic structures.

#### **Support and Sponsorship**

Exclusive wall solutions support is provided by Dulux. UCCA thanks the members of UCCA Foundation Council, International Circle, and Young Associates, as well as Lead Partner Aranya, Lead Art Book Partner DIOR, Lead Imaging Partner vivo, Presenting Partner Bloomberg, and Supporting Partners AIA, Barco, Dulux, Genelec, SKP Beijing, and Stey.

#### **Public Programs**

During the exhibition period of “Hu Yinping: You Can Start Anytime,” UCCA will present a thoughtfully-curated series of public programs. On opening day, the exhibition’s curator Holly

Roussell, artist Hu Yinping, and olfactory creator Kaori Oishi will lead a guided tour offering an intimate reading of the works on view. Interweaving perspectives from artistic creation, curatorial concept, and sensory experience, the tour will trace how the “Hu Xiaofang” project has evolved from a modest social initiative into a decade-long artistic undertaking. It will also reflect how handcraft functions as a platform for both personal memory and collective narrative.

A key highlight of the programming is a series of hands-on knitting workshops led by contributors to the “Hu Xiaofang” project. Across three sessions—focusing on stitching, crocheting, and collage-making—participants will engage and experience the handcrafting processes central to the “Hu Xiaofang” community. Participants will experience the expressive potential of textile as a creative medium and gradually immerse themselves in the narratives of women’s labor embedded in these practices. The workshops aim to guide attendees in using textile art as a means of self-expression and personal creation.

Additionally, in the autumn, a conversation has been organized between UCCA Curator Holly Roussell, artist Hu Yinping and Curator of Exhibitions and Collections at CHAT (Centre for Heritage, Arts, and Textile) in Hong Kong, Wang Weiwei, to discuss Hu’s engaged practice from conceptual and textile art perspectives. A particular focus will be on how “Hu Xiaofang” brings women together through textile-making and its contribution to contemporary discourse surrounding social practice and female identity.

#### **About the Artist**

Hu Yinping (b. 1983, Sichuan province; lives and works in Beijing) completed her MFA at the Central Academy of Fine Arts in 2010. Her solo exhibitions include “Hu Yinping: Weaving Realities” (Ming Contemporary Art Museum, Shanghai, 2022); “Snowy White Dove” (Arrow Factory Space, Beijing, 2018); “Tourist” (IAER, Venice, 2017); “Xiaofang” (Arrow Factory Space, Beijing, 2016); and “Thank you” (Space 3, Chengdu, 2016). Her work has been featured in major group exhibitions at galleries and institutions around the world, including “The Story of a Merchant” (kurimanzutto, Mexico City, 2023); “SIGG: Chinese Contemporary Art from the Sigg Collection” (SONGEUN Art Space, Seoul, 2023); “Nián Nián: The Power and Agency of Animal Forms” (Deji Art Museum, Nanjing, 2023); “Incredible Action” (A4 Art Museum, Chengdu, 2022); “Stepping Out!” (Stiftelsen Lillehammer Museum, Norway; Museum der Moderne Salzburg, Austria; Gammel Strand, Copenhagen, 2022); “The Endless Garment” (X Museum, Beijing, 2021); “Body Vision” (Cloud Art Museum, Shenzhen, 2021); “Curtain” (Para Site, Hong Kong, 2021); “Airport Biennale” (Guangzhou, 2019); “Hangzhou Triennial of Fiber

Art” (Zhejiang Art Museum, Hangzhou, 2019); and “Sweet Home” (Power Station of Art, Shanghai, 2017).

#### **About UCCA**

UCCA Center for Contemporary Art is China’s premier museum of modern and contemporary art. Committed to the belief that art can deepen lives and transcend boundaries, UCCA presents a wide range of exhibitions, public programs, and educational initiatives across four architecturally and programmatically distinct locations. Owned by a group of committed patrons, it is funded by donations, sponsorship, ticketing, and proceeds from the commercial activities of UCCA Lab. UCCA has presented more than 200 exhibitions and welcomed more than ten million visitors since its founding in Beijing in 2007 as the Ullens Center for Contemporary Art.

#### **About UCCA Dune**

UCCA Dune is an art museum buried under a sand dune by the Bohai Sea in Beidaihe, 300 kilometers east of Beijing. Designed by OPEN Architecture, its galleries unfold over a series of cave-like spaces. Some are naturally lit from above, while others open out onto the beach. UCCA Dune presents rotating exhibitions in dialogue with its unique site and space, with a particular focus on emerging Chinese and global talents. Opened in 2018, UCCA Dune is supported by UCCA strategic partner Aranya, the seaside cultural and lifestyle community where it is located.

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