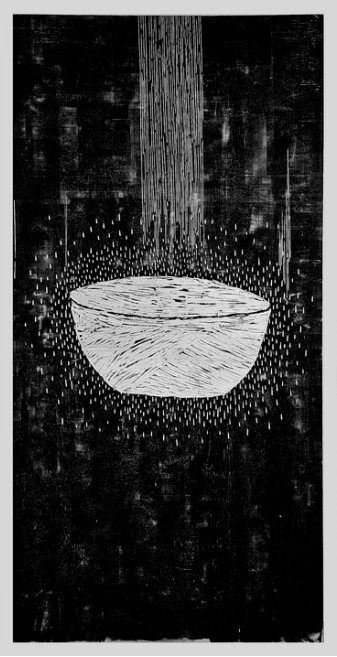
WEIGHT

Gallery 1, LASALLE College of the Arts

7 Nov–15 Dec 2026





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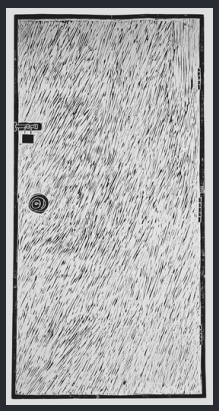
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INTRODUCTION



INTRODUCTION

WEIGHT is a recalibration by Zhang Fuming of the meanings and intentions of making woodcut. The process of examining how he works to create a woodcut is self-reflexive. Going beyond the historical burdens of woodcut art, Zhang needs to create from a clean slate.

Such production involves the logical selection of actions and objects. Zhang pares down woodcut preparation and its actions, re-creating the imagery of its physical work and methods. He underscores the grinding slowness, the uneven, messy and repetitive nature, the physicality and laborious motions of art-making.

Zhang's other consideration is the choice of objects to document as images. Items from his home and work life appear on the cuts of wood and their prints. These are as idiomatic as they are real—a door, locks, and walls; baby toys; a trophy; a rice bowl; a bird on a barbed wire fence. The images are magnified, simplified, each thought framed singularly on its own matrix of wood or paper.

The truth of each frame belongs to Zhang, and to anyone who values the deeper meanings of what he has drawn. There is no conclusion, only a shared consciousness of his work, and the purity of what he has left on the matrix.

Cause –
the onus of what to make

The hope of many artists is to be given time, funds and space to make the thing that is urgently growing in their mind. Having been awarded the prestigious Young Artist Award (2024) by the National Arts Council, Singapore, Zhang Fuming has entered into that delicate space of the dream. However, the dream is not weightless, nor does it disappear in the clear light of day. Its reality offers a clean slate to work on, which brings the artist to a decision point.

Easy to fulfil the dream by making many new artworks that morph from earlier works; developing intelligent themes and techniques with new equipment and space. It is, after all, the road to being established and moving around the art gallery circuit. Then, for Zhang, there is the burden of what an artist should make. The argument is existential—to move forward as a maker of art, he must instead consider where he is now, also where were his similar others then?

The predicates of the existential argument are of woodcut as an art form. How should it exist now, even if only from his point of view? The medium of woodcut has always been a means to an end, whether for leisure, commerce, politics or art.

It was, in past practice, the cheap and quick medium for getting an image on the press. In hours, it could elicit the laughter or wrath of many, printed in comics, newspapers and journals, or as posters plastered by unknown hands on a forbidden wall. After the intense years of post-war nationalisations between the late 1940s and 1970s, and a couple of decades later, the development of digitisation, woodcut as a medium became largely used by artists with reduced political energy.

This is not to denigrate the history of woodcut, as a plethora of bold, pertinent artworks have been made in most cities or nations as a critical, irreplaceable medium for social commentary in their coming of age. Zhang himself bears a depth of consideration for his predecessors' works and their significance.

In Singapore, Foo[1] notes that in 1966 the artists Choo Keng Kwang, Foo Chee San, Lim Yew Kuan, Lim Mu Hue, See Cheen Tee and Tan Tee Chie produced a large exhibition of 95 prints aptly titled *Woodcuts.*

They also note that there was no recurrence of this massive show, and that artists had begun to use the woodcut medium to depict local landscapes and peoples, rather than an earlier barbed social commentary for press. Some artists have contended that the use of woodcut for individual artistic expression was a purification of the medium.

The National Gallery Singapore collection includes woodcut prints by Choo Keng Kwang, Lim Mu Hue, Koeh Sia Yong and Cheong Soo Pieng (and others) that straddle both the socially-conscious works by the former three, as well as the idyllic, stylistic work of Cheong Soo Pieng. It appears that the move to purify the motives of making art has been influential in how the use of this medium has changed over time.

For Zhang Fuming working in woodcut, the process of cleaning out his practice is an enactment of his due diligence. He is the protagonist in the studio whose concern is how he should make works. This is his artistic cause. It is not simply the gathering of images and ideas for working on a matrix. In this major production of work, Zhang re-thinks how he should approach his matrix.

[1] Foo Kwee Horng, Koh Nguang How and Lim Cheng Tju.
A Brief History of Woodcuts in Singapore. BiblioAsia. Singapore.
https://biblioasia.nlb.gov.sg/all-sections/vol-2-issue3-oct-2006-singapore

Having worked on woodcut for more than ten years, he is conscious that his relationship to each slab of wood has been one of labour. Each image gouged in timber is due to the hands of the labourer. In the current climate of re-thinking individual attitudes of achievement, Zhang's purposeful 'slow' making is a gestural effort that he considers primary to his process. Through this, a realisation settles upon him that he is not making an image on timber, that is besides the point.

BUT THE DEPTH OF EACH GOUGE, THE CUMULATIVE CARVING, THE FORCE AGAINST TIMBER, THE SCENT AND WEIGHT OF WOOD, ITS LAYERS, CHIPS AND PEELS, ARE LITERALLY, THE WORK OF THE ARTIST.

The image that emerges from each exercise of gouging is a secondary concern, it is a framework for the effort of mark-making. But the depth of each gouge, the cumulative carving, the force against timber, the scent and weight of wood, its layers, chips and peels, are literally, the work of the artist. Then only, the image comes to being, then does it have credence.

Hence Zhang, bearing the burden of responsibility, has been methodical in his process. He must start with timber, decide how it should be broken down: so that the total expanse of timber that he began with at the point of working in his studio, is fully represented in the exhibition against the amount of labour applied to each timber sheet measuring 122 by 244 centimetres.

Indeed, more than a few pieces are the full sheet size, and this, Zhang is aware, indicates the mass, the strength, and the workload required to work the piece. Hence the artworks that emerge are either whole, half, a part of, or in some cases, an assembly of more than one full-sized plywood sheet. This also dictates the size of a print, if Zhang finds the character of the timber and his carving are appropriate to print on paper.

The image

Zhang has decided that not every set of marks on a timber plate is meant to be an image that needs to be printed. The carved, inked and painted timber matrix is the completed work. It is not just meant for printing. The natural order of making woodcuts is reversed; no longer is the wood base simply a negative plate. Instead, if it is printed, the work on paper is the new matrix where the negative image is formed. In doing this, Zhang has redeemed the wooden matrix from being just a plate, an 'image negative', to being the primary artwork in his woodcut practice.

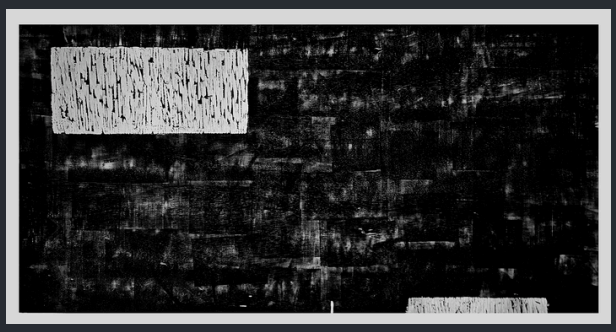
This brings us to Zhang's image board for this suite of work. At first glance these seem like random images—a long bench, a door, toddler's blocks, a child's action getting on a toy car, an oversized fern, Zhang's ubiquitous rice bowl, a field of rice grains, a huge trophy. Each image has been chosen and is depicted as something commonplace to Zhang. At the same time, these objects or occurrences are triggers to his thoughts of what defines some of himself. They form self-conscious, ironic comments on Zhang's own personal symbolism, although they may also be identifiable to many of us.

The imagery he has worked into the layers of his timber are wrought with the marks of Zhang's sense of hilarity, each is a questioning of the everyday that he embraces. He remarks in a Whatsapp message to me about the bench artwork: "It's so absurd I love it". And indeed some images bear an aura of the absurd because they are greatly amplified; or positioned in the gallery so that the image becomes a symbol or icon of what one might in reality expect in that place.

In this way, the works and their images perform complimentarily to give an insight into the weighty thoughts of the artist-as-labourer in a daily cycle of turmoil, work, idea-crunching and completion. *WEIGHT,* as an astute, disciplined body of work, behoves us to consider the action of making essential the understanding of the end product, the final work of art. In this there is purity.

Seah Tzi-Yan
Exhibition curator
Oct 2026

ARTIST



STATEMENT

ARTIST STATEMENT

For a long time, making an image was the most natural part of my practice. I would encounter something, draw it, carve it, print it. There was a fairly direct relationship between seeing something and wanting to turn it into a woodcut.

Preparing for *WEIGHT,* strangely, I found the search for images becoming much more difficult. I became extremely conscious of what it meant to make another woodcut, and of what the accumulated effort of working in this medium for so many years had come to represent.

Part of this probably comes from some frustration with being compartmentalised as an artist. I have worked primarily through woodcut for more than a decade, and inevitably the medium becomes part of how people identify the work, sometimes before the work itself is considered. I started asking myself whether I was choosing an image because the work needed to exist, or because I knew how to turn it into a convincing woodcut.

At the same time, the actual doing has never become difficult for me. Cutting is still very natural. I can enter the physical activity of making without needing to intellectualise every decision beforehand. This difference between searching and doing became increasingly important while developing work for the exhibition.

My early attraction to woodcut was connected to social realist practices. It was never simply about adopting their imagery. What interested me was the belief that art could remain connected to ordinary life, work, social conditions and things people recognise. There was a directness to that position that I still value.

But I also think that what it means to make socially relevant work changes with time. I am less convinced now that the social condition of an image has to be communicated through an obvious narrative. Sometimes the physical act involved in producing the image says as much as the image itself.

Woodcut has very little distance between action and consequence. A cut removes something permanently. The amount removed affects what can receive ink and what eventually appears on paper. Pressure changes the transfer. Imperfections remain. Even when the resulting image looks simple, there can be an accumulation of decisions, hesitation and labour behind it.

Over the course of making *WEIGHT,* I became increasingly interested in what happens when that labour does not receive its expected reward.

Normally, carving produces an image. A matrix produces a print. Repetition produces more images. Greater production gives you more things to display.

A number of the works in *WEIGHT* interrupt that sequence. In fact, every print displayed in this exhibition is an edition of one. I can hear the groans — “all that carving, and only one print?”

Sometimes a block remains a block. Sometimes a prepared surface produces no image. Sometimes many impressions are made but most of them are withheld from view. In the video, carving continues without arriving at a finished image. The activity is visible but its progress becomes difficult to measure.

I realised that I was becoming interested in doing a large amount of work while refusing some of the usual evidence of that work.

A LADDER, TROPHY, DOOR, PODIUM, FENCE, KEYBOARD, BENCH. THEY ARE FAMILIAR THINGS, BUT MANY OF THEM ALSO ORGANISE THE WAY A BODY MOVES, WORKS, WAITS, ENTERS, PROGRESSES OR IS POSITIONED.

This is quite different from simply celebrating labour. I don't think labour automatically has value because there is a lot of it. And I don't want the exhibition to become a demonstration of endurance or craftsmanship. I am more interested in the expectation that labour should result in something—visibility, progress, achievement, an object, a reward—and what happens when that relationship becomes uncertain.

Maybe this is also where the ordinary objects appearing throughout the exhibition come from. A ladder, trophy, door, podium, fence, keyboard, bench. They are familiar things, but many of them also organise the way a body moves, works, waits, enters, progresses or is positioned.

I don't think of them as a fixed symbolic vocabulary. I am not interested in saying that a ladder equals ambition, or a fence equals restriction. I would rather leave them close to their ordinary function and allow their meaning to shift through scale, cropping, material and placement.

Increasingly, I also don't assume that every work should end as a print.

The block used to be the thing I needed in order to arrive at the print. Now I am much more conscious of the matrix as something with its own physical history. It has weight, scars, ink, warping and evidence of decisions that the eventual impression cannot completely carry.

This has changed the question I ask myself while making work. Instead of beginning with “What image do I want to print?”, I am trying to ask what does this work need to become?

Sometimes the answer is still a print. Sometimes it is a block, a stack of paper, a field across the floor, or an action occurring repeatedly in time.

I don't see this as abandoning printmaking. If anything, these works come directly from spending many years working through the medium. Pressure, transfer, repetition, reversal and removal are so familiar to me that I no longer need all of these to result in a conventional print.

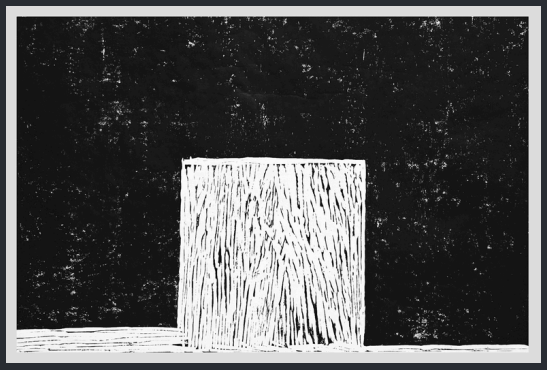
The image is still important to me. I am not trying to get rid of imagery or become purely process-based. But I think the image now has to share space with the actions and materials that allow it to exist.

Perhaps that is the point in my practice that *WEIGHT* documents.

It is a moment where I still recognise the language I have been working with for years, but I am less interested in protecting its boundaries. I want to know what remains when the image is no longer automatically treated as the final reward for making it.

Zhang Fuming
Oct 2026

ARTIST



DETAILS AND BIOGRAPHY

THE ARTIST

Bio

Zhang Fuming (b.1989) is a Singaporean artist whose practice examines labour, repetition, social observation, and the relationship between image and object. Working primarily through woodcut and relief carving, he is known for large-scale black-and-white works in which the physical acts of cutting and printing remain visible within the finished image.

Rather than treating the print as the sole outcome of the process, Fuming's practice increasingly foregrounds the carved matrix itself. Through scale, repetition, accumulation, and shifts in presentation, his works consider how labour becomes embedded in material, and how an image can move between print, surface, object, and physical space.

Fuming received Singapore's Young Artist Award in 2024. His solo exhibitions include *Traces of Presence* (Art Outreach, 2025), *Props and Poses* (AC43 Gallery, 2022), *V. Atas* (Telok Ayer Arts Club, 2019), *Poised for Success* (AC43 Gallery, 2016), and *The Quest; The Exquisite Rice Bowl* (ION Art Gallery, 2015).

Solo exhibitions

- 2026 *WEIGHT,* Institute of Contemporary Arts Singapore
- 2025 *Traces of Presence,* Art Outreach, Singapore
- 2022 *Props and Poses,* Ac43 Gallery, Singapore
- 2019 *V. Atas,* Telok Ayer Arts Club, Singapore
- 2016 *Poised For Success,* AC43 Gallery, Singapore
- 2015 *The Quest; The Exquisite Rice Bowl,* AAF Young Talent Programme Winners' Solo, Singapore

Selected group exhibitions

- 2025 Triennial Cultural Showcase 2025, Permaisuri Zarith Sofiah Opera House, Johor Bahru
- 2025 *60/60: Singapore in Focus,* Instinc Space, Singapore
- 2025 *Resist & Dye,* aNERD Gallery, Singapore
- 2025 *The More We Get Together,* Global Cultural Alliance, Singapore
- 2024 *Printmakers Network, Drawing Etc.* Creative Space, Singapore
- 2023 *Spatial Narratives,* Art Porters, Singapore
- 2019 *YTP Reunite,* Ion Art Gallery, Singapore
- 2018 *Bon A Tirer,* AC43 Gallery, Singapore
- 2018 *You Don't Need 100 Editions,* Institute of Contemporary Arts Singapore
- 2017 *The Singapore Story,* American Club, Singapore
- 2017 *Buku Mini 2,* Ace House Collective, Jogjakarta, Indonesia
- 2017 Singapore Printmaking Festival, Singapore Art Week 2017, Millennial Walk, Singapore
- 2016 Inauguration Exhibition, AC43 Gallery, Singapore
- 2016 The 21st Century Maritime Silk Road Art Week, Xiamen, Fujian Province, China
- 2015 *Presence and Distances,* Flaneur Gallery, Singapore
- 2014 Young Talent Programme, Affordable Art Fair, Singapore
- 2014 *DAYDREAMS + NIGHTMARES,* The Substation Singapore, Singapore

Awards

2024 Young Artist Award 2024
2014 Young Talent Programme 14/15 Solo Exhibition Prize

Selected press and features

2025

- 'Arts Picks: Artists Of An Isle documentary, Baroque concert Suckerpunch, woodcut show', *The Straits Times,* 21 Aug 2025
- 'Arts Picks: Masters show at Opera Gallery, The More We Get Together, UOB's painters exhibition', *The Straits Times,* 16 Oct 2025

2024

- '曾一边送餐一边创作 青年艺术家奖为张富铭注入强心针', *8World,* 27 Nov 2024
- '(2024年青年艺术家奖) 版画家张富铭：艺术创作传达个人心声', *Lianhe Zaobao,* 27 Nov 2024
- 'Young Artist Award 2024: Recipients take Singapore arts to a global stage', *The Straits Times,* 27 Nov 2024
- '黑白遇彩色 版画刻良缘', *Lianhe Zaobao,* 16 Aug 2024

2023

- 'Arts Picks: Arab Street art sale', *The Straits Times,* 28 Dec 2023
- 张富铭、林加淇版画联展 各自刻画 "空间叙事", *Lianhe Zaobao*
- 'Arts Picks: Experiments with wood', *The Straits Times,* 14 Dec 2023
- 'Spatial Narratives, a dual exhibition at Art Porters Gallery', *Le Petit Journal,* 7 Dec 2023

2022

- '张富铭展出木刻版画本貌', *Lianhe Zaobao,* 17 Dec 2022
- 'Arts Picks: Zhang Fuming', Tan Chin Boon and City Chinese Orchestra', *The Straits Times,* 15 Dec 2022

2021

- '(新画彩) 第四集 张富铭与林加淇：刻刀下的偶然', *Lianhe Zaobao*

2020

- 潘雪儿, ‘晨光/潮流解码：空间共享和改造 将艺术融入餐饮和购物体验’, *Channel 8,* 8 Jan 2020

2019

- Toh Wei Li, ‘New exhibition tracks careers of eight young artists’, *The Straits Times,* 7 Jan 2019

2018

- Ng Siang Ping, ‘百胜楼艺术节画展 10, 画廊展书画瓷壶’, *Lianhe Zaobao,* 24 Nov 2018

2017

- Ng Siang Ping, ‘2017年艺坛新星期待新光芒’, *Lianhe Zaobao,* 2 Jan 2017

2016

- Ng Siang Ping, ‘张富铭个展“成名在望” 用木刻版画说本地故事’, *Lianhe Zaobao,* 27 Dec 2016
- Huang Lijie, ‘Art Picks: Singapore Biennale Christmas and more’, *The Straits Times,* 23 Dec 2016

2015

- Jamie Huang, ‘Young Talent Programme Winners' Solo Exhibitions’, *Art Hop,* interview, 19 Sep 2015
- Sonia Kolesnikov—Jessop, ‘3 Emerging Southeast Asian Artists to Discover’, *BLOUINARTINFO,* 7 Sep 2015
- Deepika, ‘More Intimate fair for visitors’, *The Straits Times,* 2 Sept 2015
- Mayo Martin, ‘Affordable Art Fair: From cartoons to woodcut prints’, *Today,* 2 Sep 2015

2014

- Mayo Martin, ‘Affordable Art Fair S'pore: What does a S$100 artwork look like?’, *Today,* 19 Nov 2014

Selected publications

- 2025 *The More We Get Together,* Global Cultural Alliance, Singapore. Contributing artist.
- 2025 *60/60: Singapore in Focus,* INSTINC, Singapore. Exhibition publication/catalogue.
- 2024 *Cultural Medallion & Young Artist Award 2024,* National Arts Council, Singapore. Featured artist/Young Artist Award recipient.

Selected talks, workshops and public programmes

- 2025/26 Woodcut Demonstration, National Gallery Singapore
- 2025 Educators' Woodcut Workshop, National Gallery Singapore
- 2025 Artist-in-School Scheme, Fairfield Methodist School (Secondary), Singapore
- 2025 Artist-Facilitator, Public Art Project, NUS Museum × Residential College 4, National University of Singapore
- 2025 Lead Artist, Serangoon Polyclinic Community Public Art Project, National Healthcare Group, Singapore
- 2024 Woodcut Workshop, STPI × Drawing Etc., Singapore

Selected public and institutional collections

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Singapore
- Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources, Singapore

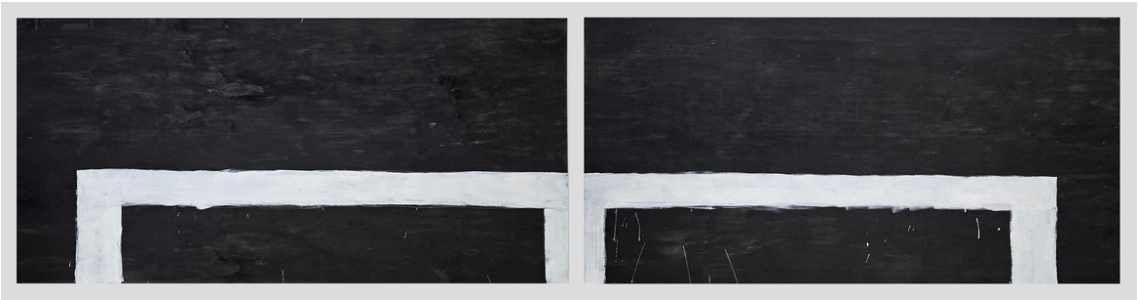
Education

2011 Diploma In Fine Arts, LASALLE College of the Arts, Singapore



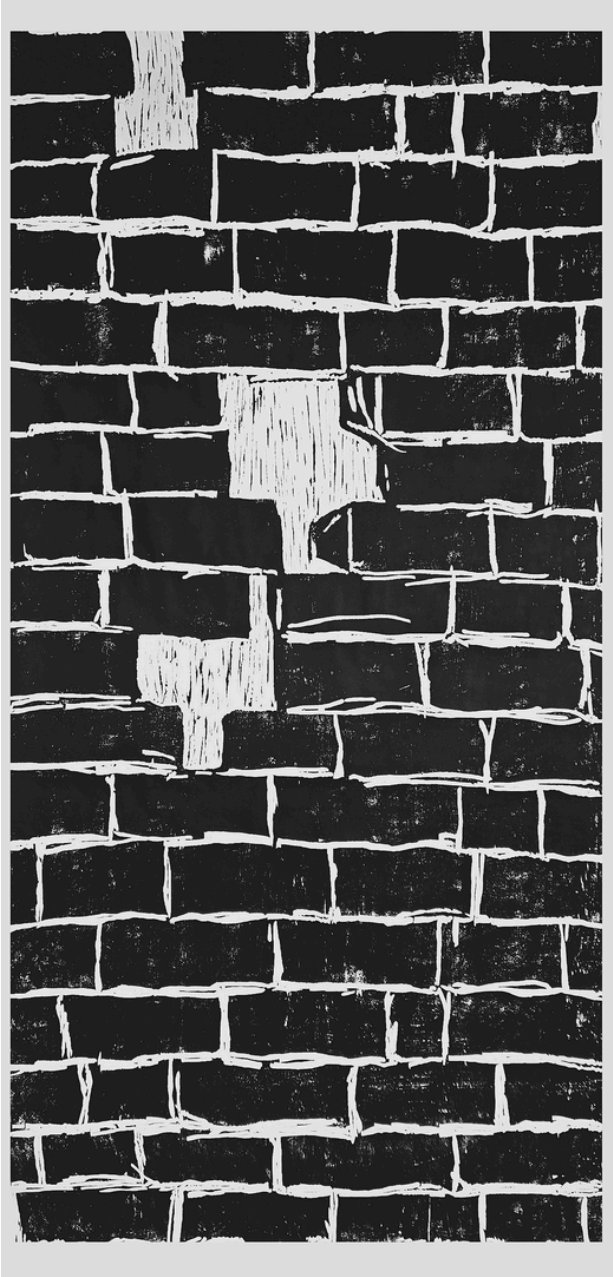
ARTWORKS

***Bench*, 2026**



Paint and gesso on plywood, 2 panels

488 × 122 × 0.9 cm overall



***Bricks*, 2026**

Woodcut on paper, unique impression

244 × 122 cm

***Typing*, 2026**



Woodcut on paper, unique impression

110 × 110 cm



***Fence*, 2026**

Woodcut on paper, unique impression

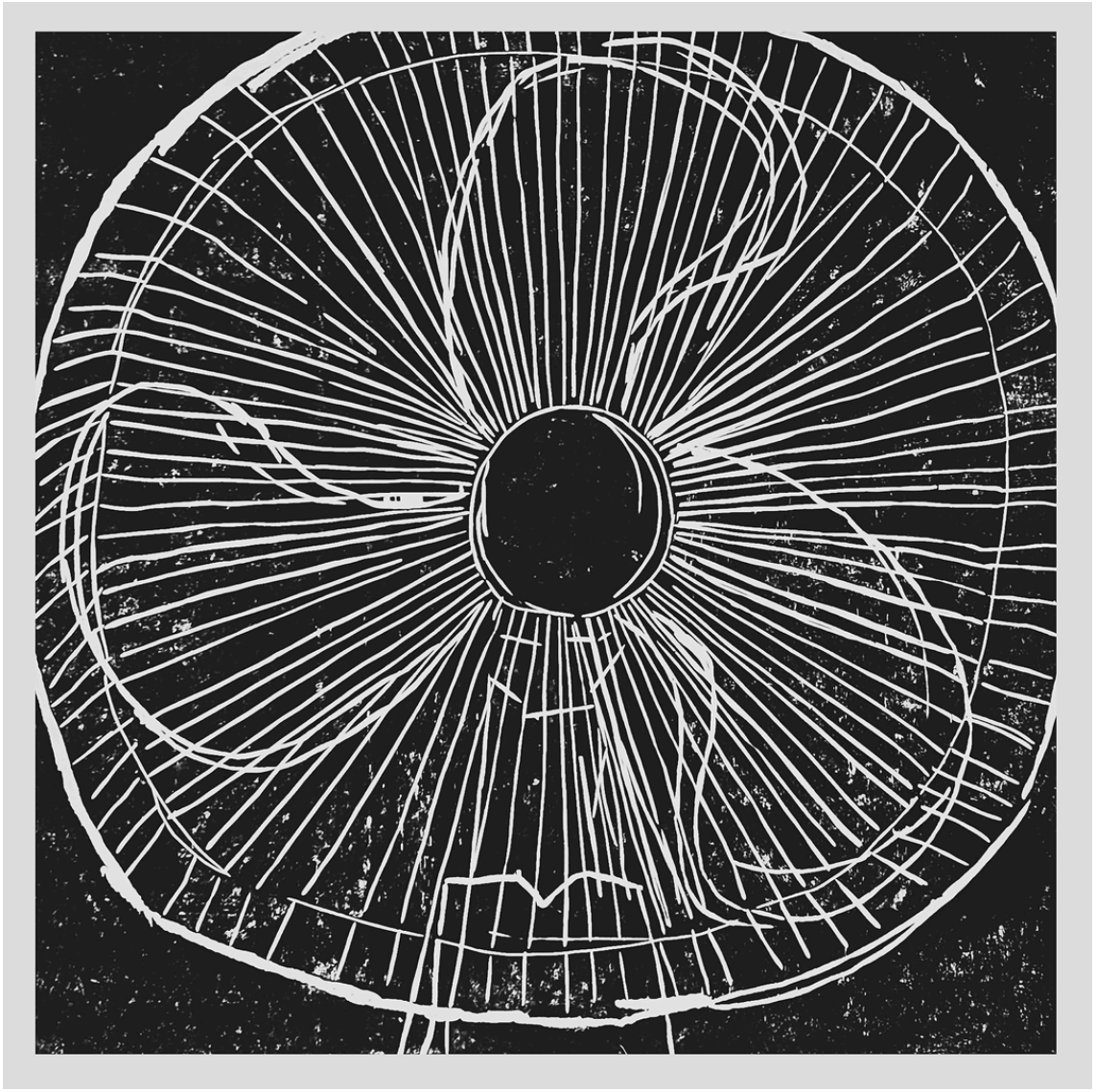
110 × 110 cm

***Trophy*, 2026**



Woodcut on paper, unique impression

244 × 122 cm

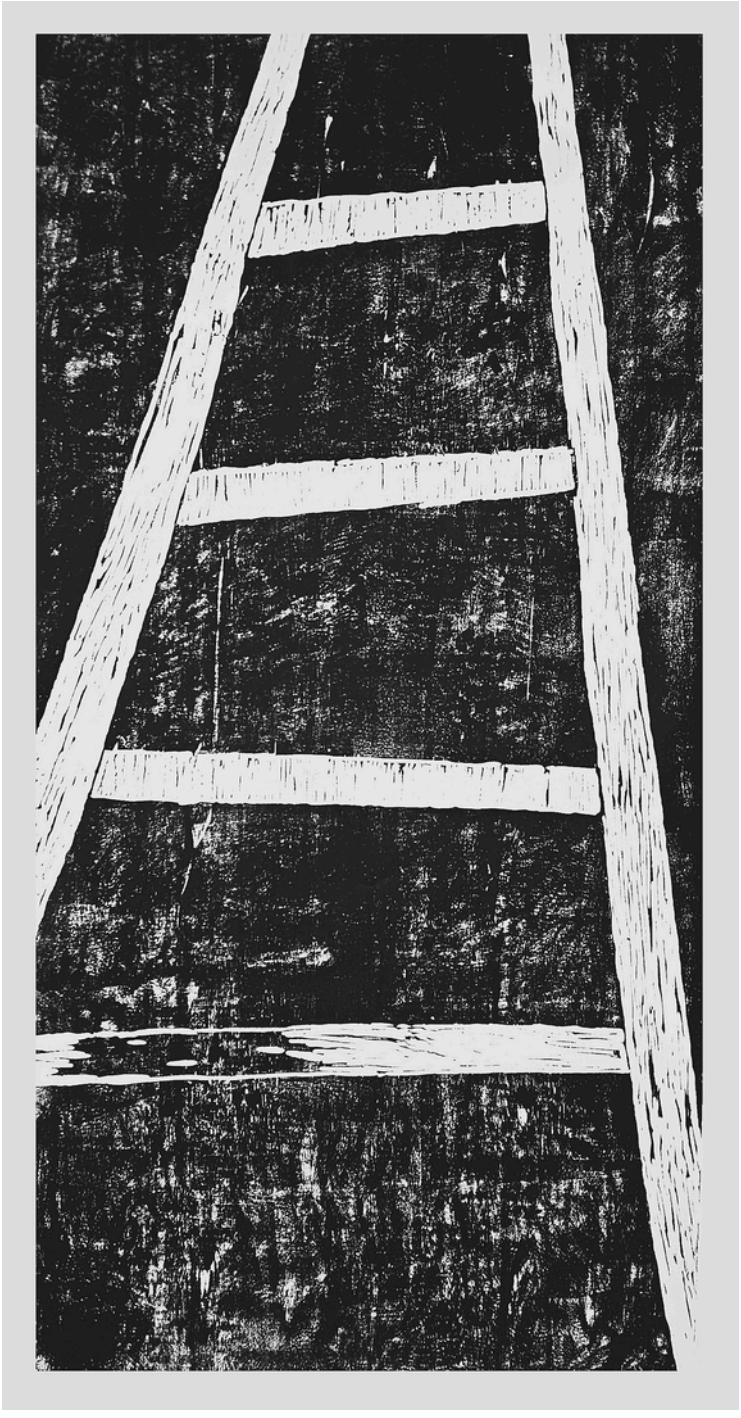


***Fan*, 2026**

Woodcut on paper, unique impression

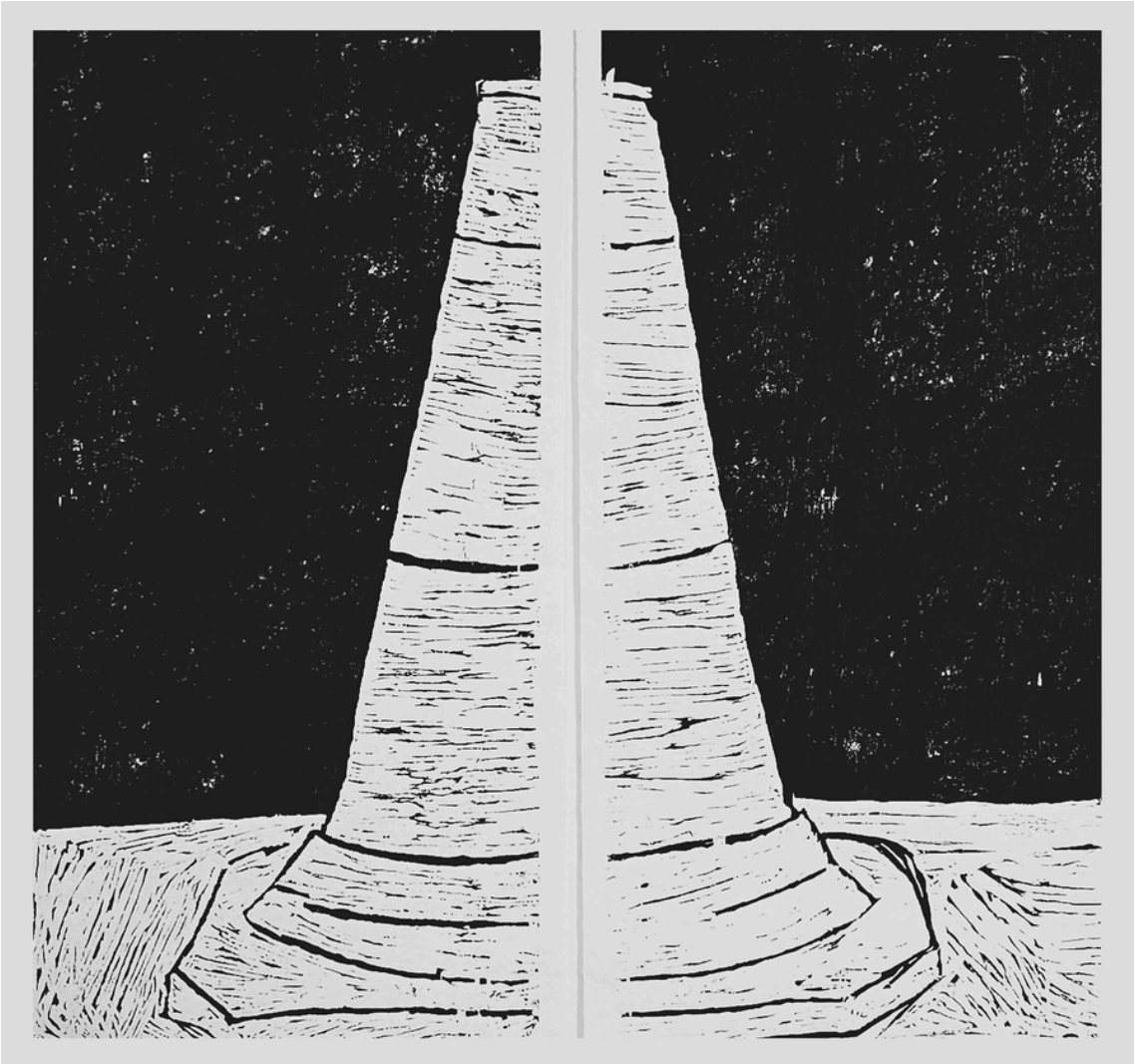
110 × 110 cm

***Ladder*, 2026**



Woodcut on paper, unique impression

244 × 122 cm



***Cone*, 2026**

Woodcut on paper, diptych, unique impression

122 × 122 cm overall

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