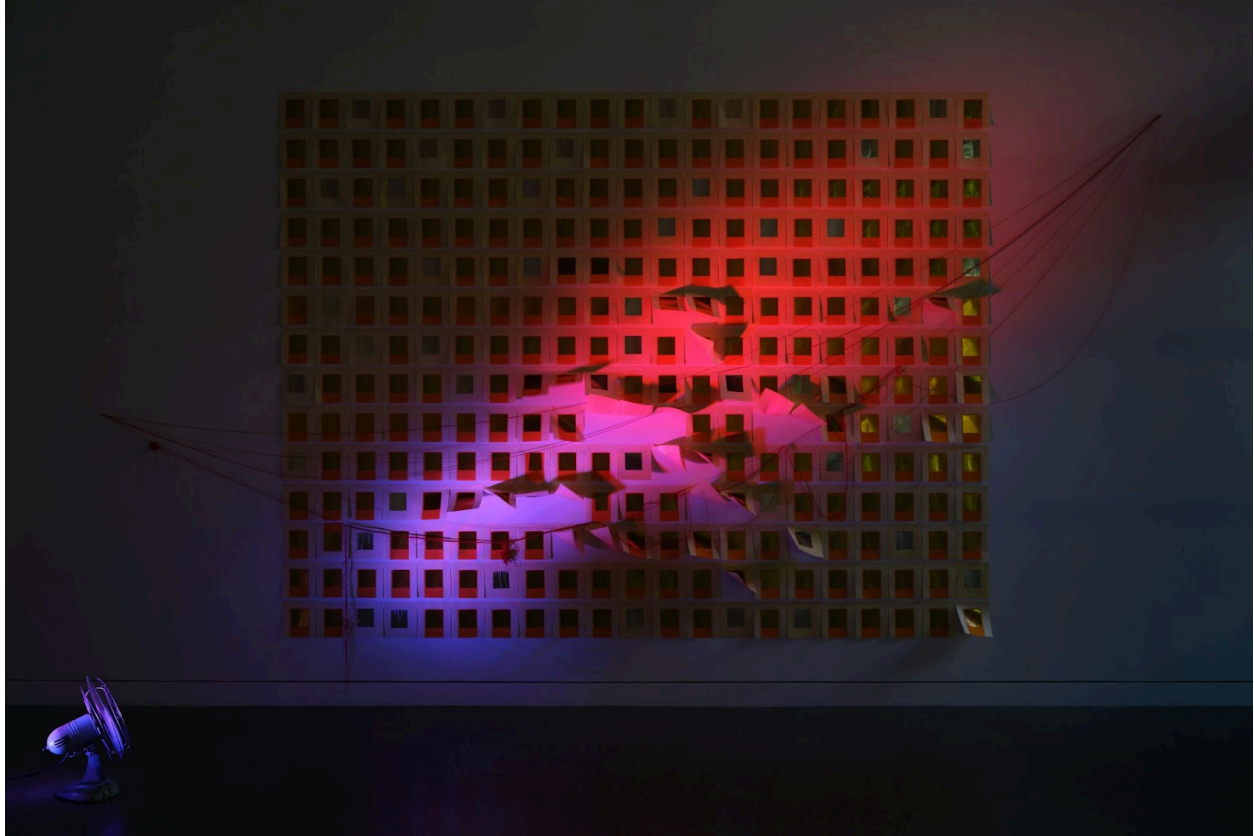


Last updated: March 14, 2024

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



**Presented by FOR-SITE** in partnership with Fort Mason Center for Arts & Culture, ***Yunfei Ren at The Guardhouse*** opens to the public on **March 23, 2024** with a **Public Opening Reception with the Artist** on **April 4, 2024**.

San Francisco, CA, March 14, 2024 — Following the success of The Guardhouse Program's pilot year, FOR-SITE launches its second year of programming with an installation by **Yunfei Ren**, a visual artist living in the San Francisco Bay Area, working in installation, sculpture, photography, and sound. Ren's art practice centers on the immigrant experience, exploring ideas about displacement, racial identity, and belonging in the context of history, citizenship, and queerness.

Selected through an open call for proposals, Ren is among three artists who will present new work this year viewable 24 hours a day through the windows of The Guardhouse. Installations at The Guardhouse highlight specific cultural and natural histories of the site, strengthening FOR-SITE's commitment to supporting site-specific interventions addressing the most pressing issues of our time.

The Guardhouse, a former military guard station at the main entrance to Fort Mason Center for Arts & Culture, is situated with views of the iconic Golden Gate Bridge and San Francisco Bay. Calling forth the Golden Gate's history as a point of entry for transpacific migration, Ren's installation at



The Guardhouse commemorates the more than 300,000 Chinese immigrants who endured a several weeks-long steamship voyage from southern China to San Francisco during the California Gold Rush (1848-1855) up until the U.S. Congress enacted the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, when Chinese laborers were banned from entering on the basis of racial identity. The installation is situated on the waterfront with views of Angel Island, where

between 1910 and 1940 an estimated several hundred thousand Chinese, Japanese, and other immigrants entered the United States through the Angel Island Immigration Station in pursuit of the "American Dream."

To create his installation, Ren makes unorthodox use of Joss papers, which are traditionally burned as ancestral offerings in Chinese culture, by eclipsing the interior walls of the historic building. The individually tacked papers flutter inside The Guardhouse against the forced air of an oscillating fan reminiscent of one that cooled the artist's childhood home. "I have been obsessed with building portals that look into the past and connect me to the history of transpacific migration," Ren says. Joss paper is tied to the Qingming Festival, also known as the Tomb Sweeping Festival, in which

families pay respect to ancestors by caring for their gravesites and making offerings. In recognition of the holiday, and at the artist's expressed request, FOR-SITE is holding a public opening reception with Yunfei Ren and curator Lisa Ellsworth on April 4, 2024, 5-7 p.m. with remarks starting at 5:30 p.m.

## About FOR-SITE

Established in 2003 by Founding Executive Director & Chief Curator Cheryl Haines, **FOR-SITE** is dedicated to the creation, understanding, and presentation of art about place. Highly acclaimed, major FOR-SITE projects include: *Lands End* at the former Cliff House (2021-2022), *Sanctuary* (2017-2018); *Home Land Security* (2016); *@Large: Ai Weiwei on Alcatraz* (2014-2015); *International Orange* (2012), a group show honoring the 75th anniversary of the Golden Gate Bridge; and land-art installations by Andy Goldsworthy currently on view in the Presidio, including *Spire* (2008) and *Wood Line* (2011).

## About The Guardhouse Program

FOR-SITE's **The Guardhouse Program** is designed to support three selected artists annually, each of whom will activate the former military guard station with a temporary art installation responding to the natural and cultural significance of the site and its surrounding area. FOR-SITE launched the program in January 2023, presenting installations by **Kija Lucas, Judith Selby Lang & Richard Lang**, and **Tanja Geis**, curated and managed by Lisa Ellsworth.

## About the Artist

**Yunfei Ren** (b. 1987, Wuhan, China) is a visual artist living in the San Francisco Bay Area. Working across installation, sculpture, photography and sound, Ren's art practice centers on the immigrant experience, exploring the complexity of identity and belonging in the context of history, citizenship, and queerness. Ren creates conceptual "portals" through which he seeks to connect the past with the present, transporting the visiting public across time and encouraging contemplation about our contemporary lives.

**The Guardhouse Program is presented by FOR-SITE ([for-site.org](http://for-site.org)) in partnership with Fort Mason Center for Arts & Culture ([fortmason.org](http://fortmason.org)).** The Guardhouse Program is made possible thanks to generous support from the ARB Fund.

## **About Fort Mason Center for Arts & Culture (FMCAC)**

A decommissioned military installation converted into a nonprofit cultural center, FMCAC hosts a lively mix of arts, educational, and cultural programming. Each year FMCAC provides more than \$2 million in support to local arts organizations, enabling groups to produce diverse and innovative artworks at the historic waterfront campus. With a four-decade history as an arts and culture destination, FMCAC is now focused on reinvigorating its programming and amenities to better engage the evolving Bay Area creative community. Central to this new vision is the commissioning and presentation of adventurous and unconventional artworks best realized in nontraditional or historical settings.

## **IMAGES (top to bottom):**

Photo credit: Yunfei Ren

Detail of installation in process; Photo credit: Lisa Ellsworth

## **FOR CALENDAR LISTINGS:**

Exhibition dates:

*Yunfei Ren at The Guardhouse*, March 23 - June 9, 2024

Public Opening Reception with the Artist, April 4, 2024, 5-7 p.m.; remarks begin at 5:30 p.m.

Location: The Guardhouse, Fort Mason Center, 2 Marina Blvd., San Francisco, CA 94123

Hours: Open daily, 24 hours a day, viewable through the windows

Admission: Free

Information: [for-site.org](http://for-site.org)

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