

## *Zhuo Xiong: Nomadic Threads, Oxidized Dreams*

August 6–September 13, 2025

Fou Gallery, New York

**Address:** 89 Fifth Avenue, Suite 701, New York

**Opening:** August 9, 2025, 4–8 pm

**Curator:** Cao Yi

(New York — August 6, 2025) Fou Gallery is pleased to present *Nomadic Threads, Oxidized Dreams*, a solo exhibition by Inner Mongolian artist Zhuo Xiong, on view from August 6 through September 13. Zhuo Xiong’s art merges the deeply personal and the universally resonant, weaving a layered narrative of identity, migration, and transformation. From the desolate grasslands of Inner Mongolia to the bustling metropolis of New York, his expressions shape a new body of work that reflects the tensions between adaptation and rootedness, and the challenge of discovering a sense of self amid perpetual movement and change.



Zhuo Xiong’s early life in Inner Mongolia was steeped in the rhythm of nomadic existence. Sandstorms, freezing winters, and the warmth shared in family tents embodied a life shaped by ecological necessity and ancestral tradition. The memory of loss and adaptation brought on by constant movement profoundly shapes his art, expressed through textured surfaces, intricate lines, and organic materials—most notably wool, a recurring device that serves as a metaphor for protection and interconnectedness with the natural world.

His migrations from Inner Mongolia’s pastoral landscapes to Guangzhou, London, and New York trace a journey of artistic and personal evolution. Zhuo Xiong’s work resists simplistic East-West fusion, instead juxtaposing traditional Mongolian symbols—tassels, wool felt, and Tibetan Buddhist motifs—with modernist abstraction. These elements are vessels of cultural memory, articulating the tensions and negotiations inherent in the diasporic experience and illuminating the layered complexity of identity.

While the threads of migration in Zhuo Xiong’s work evoke movement and continuity, his concept of “oxidized dreams” offers a contrasting meditation on temporality. His use of casein and oxidation processes reveals a fascination with time’s erosion. The worn yet expressive portraits in his work embody both transience and permanence, while personal objects—such as shoes—serve as metaphors for the footprints of his travels and his ongoing quest for identity.

Zhuo Xiong uses stitched wool and painted canvas—techniques rooted in traditional Mongolian craft. This practice of stitching animal skins, where the resulting scars symbolize both healing and pain, resonates deeply with his artistic exploration. By exposing the connections and intersections between materials, Zhuo Xiong draws attention to disconnection and contrast, resisting seamless cultural fusion. In his hands, stitching becomes an artistic act of memory and resistance, transforming traditional craft into a bold statement on the complexities of diasporic identity.



Ultimately, Zhuo Xiong's work moves beyond personal narrative to confront universal questions of identity, belonging, and transformation. Embracing complexity and contradiction as vital to the human condition, he weaves the resilience of nomadic life with the poetic decay of oxidized dreams, turning vulnerability into strength and erosion into renewal. His art invites viewers to contemplate their own emotional, geographic, and existential paths—finding meaning not just in where we arrive, but in how we journey.

\*The press release is based on the curatorial essay by Cao Yi.

**Artist** Zhuo Xiong (b.1988, Inner Mongolia, China) After graduating with his B.F.A. from the Guangzhou Academy of Art in 2016, Xiong went on to earn his M.F.A. at the Royal College of Art in London in 2018. His work has since been exhibited at Shekou Gallery, Shenzhen (2024); OM Gallery, Shanghai (2023); Leo Gallery, Shanghai (2022); Courtauld Institute of Art, London (2021); and LVS Gallery, Seoul (2020). He currently lives and works in New York. Xiong's work draws deeply from his childhood as an ethnic minority growing up in a nomadic region of Inner Mongolia during China's assimilation policies. Marked by the region's transition from traditional nomadism during the assimilation policy period, his practice navigates the tensions between cultural heritage and modernization. He works primarily with materials tied to the pastoral lifestyle—such as felt, sheepskin, cowhide, rabbit fur, and mineral pigments—integrating them with painting to evoke memory, resistance, and transformation

**Curator** Cao Yi is a curator, writer, and arts administrator based in Chicago and Beijing. She develops curatorial projects to foster cross-cultural dialogues, exploring nuanced dynamics of culture, history, and identity, particularly as they manifest in "global" Asia. Yi currently serves as the Director of the Society for Contemporary Art at the Art Institute of Chicago. From 2019 to 2023, she was the Curatorial Director of Arts of Asia at the Art Institute. Previously, she served as the Curatorial and Education Program Manager at the Carnegie Museum of Art from 2014 to 2019. Her selected curatorial projects include *If Shadows Could Shine* (2024) at apexart NYC, *Liu Wei: Invisible Cities* (2019) at moCa Cleveland and Cleveland Museum of Art, and *Ai Weiwei: Circle of Animals / Zodiac Heads* (2016) at Carnegie Museum of Art (Pittsburgh). Her bilingual writings have been featured in *Art Asia Pacific*, *Museum 2050*, *Art Institute of Chicago Articles*, *Cleveland Museum of Art Blog*, *Carnegie Museum of Art Storyboard*, and *artnet News*, among others.

**FOU GALLERY** Established in 2013, believes in the power of art to heal, transform, and foster deeper connections with oneself and the world. We create spaces where art serves as a tool for emotional and spiritual healing, offering moments of tranquility, reflection, and renewal. Our gallery goes beyond exhibitions, providing an immersive experience where art becomes a practice of mindfulness. Additionally, we are committed to amplifying the voices of Asian diaspora artists and providing a supportive community. Through curated exhibitions, healing sessions, and community gatherings, Fou nurtures a shared journey toward balance, inner peace, and a harmonious relationship with the earth, while celebrating the diverse cultural narratives that enrich our collective experience.

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