

# Wang Wenting: Mastering Fire

**Artist:** Wang Wenting

**Curator:** Zhao Xiaodan

**Coordinator:** Wang Jing

**Exhibition Dates:** 2025.12.26-2026.1.31

**Venue:** Hive Shanghai

**Address:** First Trust Co. Building, 270 East Beijing Road, 200001, Huangpu District, Shanghai, China

Hive Center for Contemporary Art is pleased to announce that it will present *Mastering Fire*, the latest solo exhibition of artist Wang Wenting (b.1985), opening on December 26, 2025, at the gallery's main space in Shanghai. As the artist's third presentation at Hive, following *Zosimos' Fantasy* (2022) and *Spectra of Being* (2023), this exhibition reorganizes her practice to activate a renewed resonance within a broader cultural horizon. Curated by Zhao Xiaodan, the exhibition will remain on view through January 31, 2026.

Wang Wenting's practice has long revealed a pronounced sense of artistic agency. From the abundance of material motifs she absorbed in museums during her early years, to the metal forms generated through contemporary technologies, she persistently explores the imaginative boundaries that can be extended from material foundations. In *Mastering Fire*, she constructs a multidimensional space through painting, works on paper, and metal sculpture—each unfolding around the central motif of fire. The artist was born in the heartland of the Yangshao and Erlitou cultures, where fire once shaped the forms of pottery, metallurgy, and early civilization; her childhood was equally embedded in the micro-environment of a foundry, a site defined by heat, metal, and modern machinery.

For Wang, fire is not only a central thread through which the artist understands the relationships among matter, technology, and the self, but also an invisible force that has accompanied her growth. The prehistoric shards she collected from different cultural strata still retain the residual heat of firing. This diffuse historical awareness quietly converges with the multisensory experiences through which she later felt, firsthand, the force of fire shaping metal in the factory. In her work, fire is more than a physical phenomenon of light and heat, it is a primordial energy rooted in civilization, bodily memory, and consciousness, simultaneously refracting human intuition, desire, and imagination across different historical periods.

Within the framework of modernity, the meaning of fire has shifted from divine worship to an internally generated mode of experience. Ancient mythologies, such as the Promethean narrative of "stealing fire," position fire as a transcendent gift; yet for Wang, "mastering fire" is an experiential mechanism closely tied to personal perception. When she approaches fire as a way of thinking and imagining, its flicker, volatility, and instability enter the inner rhythms of emotion and will, becoming a luminous thread embedded deep within the body. The artist moves among these states—at times a master of fire, at times immersed within it, at times becoming matter itself—circulating between perception and creation and ultimately reaching purification and transformation through repeated dissolution and solidification.

The exhibition constructs a dynamic narrative of fire through three distinct media. Large-scale paintings generate cascading fire curtains through surging brushwork and layered color, releasing visual apparitions charged with Romantic intensity; works on paper offer a more restrained reflection on the morphological lineage of human-made objects; while monochromatic metal works drift between the two, revealing the sensory scale between the "fire tamer" and matter. Together, the three media pull against and respond to each other within the exhibition space. The tension between exuberant color and the murmurs of materiality reveals how fire propels the artist to recalibrate the internal rhythm of her life. Within this ongoing rite of rekindling, Wang Wenting redraws the boundary between subject and world, making fire an entryway into expanded perception and imagination.



蜂巢当代艺术中心  
HIVE CENTER FOR CONTEMPORARY ART

蜂巢 | 北京

Hive | Beijing

www.hiveart.cn

蜂巢 | 上海

Hive | Shanghai

Wechat:蜂巢艺术(ID: HIVEART2013)

蜂巢·生成 | 上海空间

Hive Becoming | Shanghai

Instagram:@hivecontemporaryar