

WHITE CUBE

Press Release

Shao Fan

Refrain / 复沓

22 May – 27 June 2026

White Cube Mason's Yard

White Cube presents the first exhibition in the UK by Beijing-based artist Shao Fan (also known as Yu Han, b. 1964), opening on 22 May at Mason's Yard.

Deeply engaged with traditional Chinese culture, Shao Fan's practice mixes past with present. His ethereal works span paintings, sculptures and installations and explore the interconnectedness of humanity and nature.

Shao Fan's deep understanding of his cultural heritage was shaped by his upbringing in Beijing. Both his parents were renowned artists and professors at the Central Academy of Fine Arts, and he learnt to paint at an early age. The exhibition presents the artist's meticulously rendered ink-on-rice-paper paintings, which feature elements of the natural world, including animals, vegetables and fruits. All of these allude to historical Chinese customs and beliefs, whilst also drawing on elements of Western art history.

A recurrent motif in the exhibition is the apple, which appears in *Fruit 2125* (2025) and *Fruit 1924* (2024), referencing both 17th-century Dutch still-life painting and Georgia O'Keeffe's lyrical, organic imagery. These are presented alongside *In The Name of the Rabbit 0322* and *In The Name of the Rabbit 1022* (both 2022), which recall Albrecht Dürer's *Young Hare* (1502), and *Chinese Cabbage 1425* (2025), in which Shao Fan evokes the domestic rituals of winter cooking in northern China.

Observing the principles of Tao, Shao Fan often enters a meditative state when making the paintings, arising from an intense period of concentration. Delicate washes of ink are applied through repetitive, precise strokes, informed by the techniques of calligraphic painting, such as those from the Song dynasty (960–1279), and processes associated with Liangzhu jade art artefacts of the Neolithic era.

'Shao Fan: Refrain / 复沓' is on view at White Cube Mason's Yard from 22 May until 27 June 2026.

For additional information, interview requests or press images please contact:

Irene Del Principe, Press Officer, White Cube

E: irenedelprincipe@whitecube.com

M: +44 (0)7734 995 878

Notes to Editors:

- Shao Fan (also known as Yu Han) was born in 1964 in Beijing, China, where he continues to live and work. Solo museum exhibitions include Het Noordbrabants Museum, Netherlands (2020); Ludwig Museum im Deutschherrenhaus, Koblenz, Germany and Suzhou Museum, China (both 2018). His work has appeared in numerous group exhibitions, including at M+, Hong Kong (2021); Kunstmuseum Luzern, Switzerland (2018); Deichtorhallen Hamburg, Germany (2014); Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris (2014); The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (2013); amongst others. In 2008, Shao Fan was the gold medal winner of the RHS Chelsea Flower Show in London for his design 'I Dream I Seek my Garden'. His work is part of many museum collections, including The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Victoria and Albert Museum, London; Fukuoka Art Museum, Japan; Centre Pompidou, Paris; National Art Museum of China, Beijing; and M+, Hong Kong.
- White Cube's exhibition programme extends across locations in London, Hong Kong, Paris, New York, Seoul and online. Since its inception in 1993, the gallery has exhibited the work of many of the world's most highly acclaimed contemporary artists.
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