

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Games People Play

*Curated by Irina Stark*

JW Projects is pleased to present ***Games People Play***, the first solo exhibition in Singapore by Shanghai-based Chinese artist **Ge Hui**. Borrowing its premise and title from Eric Berne's seminal book Games People Play, the exhibition explores the subtle, often unspoken psychological strategies that shape human relationships, social roles, and cultural performance.

Created around the time of the Shanghai COVID lockdown, this body of work sees Ge Hui deepen his longstanding interest in interpersonal behavior, translating Berne's theories of transactional analysis into a visual language that is at once playful, introspective, and quietly provocative. The works in the exhibition come from the artist's personal collection and are complemented by a new large-scale painting created specifically for this presentation. Across his oeuvre, Ge Hui explores the rituals, negotiations, and coded interactions that shape daily life—revealing how individuals perform, compete, collaborate, and conceal within both intimate and public spheres.

Rather than illustrating psychological concepts directly, Ge Hui reimagines “games” as poetic metaphors: shifting spatial arrangements that suggest power dynamics; distorted silhouettes that hint at emotional distance; repeated gestures that evoke the cyclical nature of human patterns. His works invite viewer to consider not only the games we play with others, but also the ones we play with ourselves—out of habit, fear, desire, or hope.

The painting ***Shadow Self*** depicts a dreamy woman accompanied by a monkey. Could the monkey be her totem animal, or perhaps a reflection of her inner state of mind? The term “shadow self,” popularized by psychologist Carl Jung, refers to the unconscious aspects of one’s personality that have been rejected or suppressed—emotions, desires, or traits considered unacceptable. Jung believed that integrating the shadow self through a process known as shadow work involves recognizing and accepting these hidden parts in order to become a more complete and balanced individual.

***Figure Three*** portrays three intertwined characters, suggesting a close bond that might exist among friends, or perhaps hinting at a love triangle. It may also allude to psychological triangulation—a manipulation tactic in which a third person is drawn into a two-person relationship or conflict to control communication, create division, or gain power.

The paintings ***Big Fish*** and ***A Little Bird Told Me*** are installed facing each other, establishing a visual dialogue. One depicts a self-assured male figure resting comfortably on a giant red fish; the other features a gender-fluid figure posing with a bird—long a symbol of freedom or a bearer of secret messages in classical painting traditions.

The two-panel work ***Lion’s Gate*** serves as the focal point of the exhibition, portraying a group of friends enjoying their time in a surreal landscape. The orchid-laden tree and the lion both

reference Singapore's iconic symbols—the “jungle city” and the Merlion. The title also echoes the concept of the “Lion’s Gate Portal”, a moment in astrology believed to offer powerful opportunities for manifestation, clarity, and transformation, with origins tracing back to the beliefs and wisdom of ancient cultures.

## **Notes to editors**

### **About Artist**

Born in Jiangsu in 1983, **Ge Hui** lives and works in Shanghai. His practice centers on an exploration of the body and its forms. He approaches images of the human figure, animals, and plants as distinct formal elements, assembling them through continual shifts in perspective and focus. By recombining these components into structures charged with tension, Ge Hui creates a new visual order—one that challenges conventional ways of seeing and resists habitual interpretation. Ge Hui works are held in private and institutional collections in China and internationally.

### **About Curator**

**Irina Stark** is a Los Angeles-based art advisor and curator with a particular focus on the Asia Pacific region. In the last three consecutive years, she was included in ARTnews’s lists of ‘The Top 75 Art World Professionals’ and ‘The 135 Top Art World Professionals’. Prior to establishing her creative consultancy, Irina worked for over 15 years at leading European and American commercial art galleries and institutions. She holds an MA in Art History and Curatorial Studies from University of Sorbonne Paris 1 as well as an MPhil in Geopolitics from French Institute of Geopolitics.

### **About JW Projects**

Founded in Singapore in 2022, JW PROJECTS specialises in modern and contemporary works by internationally established artists from different geographical regions and aims to providing them the opportunity to exhibit outside of their own areas. The gallery also nurtures and promotes emerging regional talent, presenting a varied programme of solo and group exhibitions with a strong focus on works of art on canvas, paper, sculpture, photography and new media.

### **Exhibition Details**

**Venue:** JW Projects, 3 Kim Yam Road, #01-01, Singapore 239321

**Dates:** 20 January – 22 March 2026

**Opening Reception:** Tuesday, 20 January, 4-7pm

For press inquiries, images, and further information, please contact:

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