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Elaine YJ Zheng
Shuang Li: *I'm Not*
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New York Lowdown: 7 Exhibitions to See Over Spring, 2024



Shuang Li, *Lord of the Flies* (2021/2022). Producer Naomi Yu; Wardrobe Direction Dre Romero. Performance view: *Where Jellyfish Come From*, Antenna Space, Shanghai (8 January–20 March 2022). Courtesy the artist and Peres Projects.

Shuang Li: *I'm Not*

Swiss Institute, 38 St Marks Place

1 May–25 August 2024

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For the artist Shuang Li who grew up in a small town in Fujian, China, the angst-filled lyrics of My Chemical Romance introduced the possibility of subcultural belonging and a view into the English language, the elusiveness of which her latest work explores.

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At Swiss Institute, Li presents new sculptures and video installations that look at her own involvement with fandom to explore how language, identity, and relationships can be mediated through screens and the internet. On the ground floor, an architectural model resembling those sighted in real estate showrooms Li visited with her parents as a child nods to the country's current economic challenges, with businesses forced to shut down and soaring youth unemployment contrasting the optimism brought about by market reform in the 1990s.

In the music video I'm Not (2024), Li re-writes the lyrics to the band's song 'I'm Not Okay (I Promise)' (2004) in Mandarin and English. An army choir conducted by a young girl sings along to the artist's rendition, paying tribute to the voices that articulated feelings shared by millions. Projected above the rippling surface of the heart-shaped fountain Heart is a Broken Record (2023) are stock images of blood drips and pumping veins. Footage of crowds awaiting the band to take stage is intercepted within the montage, cut right before they come into view.