

Jichi Zhang

My sculptural practice is grounded in discarded industrial membranes—transparent plastic sheeting, protective wraps, and architectural covering materials. These materials were designed to protect, isolate, and obscure, keeping things “intact.” I reverse their function and treat protection as a structure that fails. Rather than stabilising what they cover, the materials are pushed into states of exposure and fragility through tension, airflow, and gravity. The work, therefore, is not a finished object but a continuously unfolding system: it holds form between generation and collapse, and produces a hesitation between what is visible and what can be understood.

What matters to me is not what a material resembles, but how it refuses definition. Transparency does not guarantee clarity; in fact, excessive transparency can lead to informational overload and hinder judgment. Through suspension, stretching, sagging, and partial fixing, I construct forms that operate simultaneously as barrier and residue. The works appear as if they are still performing a protective task, while also demonstrating that protection has already broken down.

Space here is not a backdrop but a component of the work. I often press these materials toward the boundary between wall and air, positioning them between a painterly reading of surface and a sculptural occupation of volume. The viewer’s distance and movement determine how glare, folds, and creases emerge and disappear. Time is also structured rather than incidental: material fatigue, deformation, and the differences that arise through reinstallation become constitutive elements of the work, not “damage.”

Ultimately, these works return to a simple but stubborn question: when structure begins to yield, does meaning become more precise? I try to move “fragility” from an emotional descriptor into a sculptural fact—something that can be seen, discussed, installed, and reinstalled—so that instability is not a weakness to be corrected, but the very condition through which the work becomes legible.









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