Early 2019 Wenhuan Shao had the opportunity to explore the alpine landscape. He engaged with the majestic Swiss mountain ranges and trained his lens on Swiss natural landmarks such as the Matterhorn and the Aletsch Glacier. After a three months residency and a first exhibition with Crochetan Theatre in Monthey, he will now present his series THE SOFTEN THE GLOW at Three Shadows Photography Art Center.

Taking photographs is just one step in Shao Wenhuan’s creative process. By assembling numerous focal points into a complete image that seems to conform to perspective (reality), he hides hundreds of moments in one image, creating something like the spiritual depictions of grand landscapes in nineteenth-century Romantic painting. He intervenes in the images using multiple artistic methods in addition to collage. Paint strokes, cuts, tears, abrasions, and stains all appear in the works, forming rich layers of natural and man-made detail. He also leaves tranquil white spaces in the images and uses black ink to give the sculptural glaciers a deeper black. These “scars” that appear in the images or in nature seem to hint at the pain hiding within the landscape. In his ongoing series Galaxy Box, Shao constructed programmed lightboxes as rectangular spaces that frame images of the Alpine night sky in distant Switzerland. The twinkling lights from human presence pierce the silence of the mountains and rivers; landscapes constantly vanish and are reborn in the fragmented images that persist in our eyes. The points of light and specks of dust in the shadowy mountain forests or the vast starry sky are visual wonders outside of the “experience” that Shao Wenhuan has created, inspiring both anxiety and fascination. Set against the exhibition’s title, “The Soften, The Glow,” the scars of mechanical violence constitute a poetic satire, highlighting the direct and indirect damage to landscapes caused by changes to human life and the resulting acceleration in natural resource extraction.

**Exhibition** from 29 June to 28 July 2019.
Time: Tuesday-Sunday, 10:00-18:00
Location: Three Shadows Photography Art Centre
155A Caochangdi, Chaoyang District, Beijing