

# YANQING LOW

b. 1985, Singapore

yqin.art@gmail.com | <http://yqin.art/>

## Artist Statement // Whenever, Wherever (2023)

My paintings are made predominantly with pastels. They begin as charcoal rubbings that I go over with a watercolor wash, generating visual movements and subtle optical mixtures. I follow the traces that both ground and material have left behind, using dry pastels to tease out forms and rhythms until I arrive at a sense of balance. It is a visual balance – its colors, forms and compositions that give that space its structure. Yet, it is also not just that, as Rebecca Purdum once said, “What it looks like is just one small part of a much greater purpose.” When I am painting, these tangible things that I would so reflexively exploit become something else that floats between wanting to clarify what its material space holds, and knowing that such a thing is elusive and ephemeral, much like the powdered pigments that gives these paintings shape.

Like Julie Methru, I am thinking of literal and abstracted space, and the emotional tonalities that we associate with such places and the events that pass through them. As it is in *Chendana* and *A Lament* that were named for their origins, I think of the lives of Georgette Chen and Giotto and the work they have left behind – memories in and of themselves of times long lost. Be they drawings of things, or a material impression, an emotional history is embedded into their visual presentation like a memory. And, like a memory shared that grows with each re-telling, it becomes more of an enduring idea than a past remembered, though we think of them as such all the same.

# YANQING LOW

b. 1985, Singapore

yqin.art@gmail.com | <http://yqin.art/>

## Artist Statement // Grosse Fuge (2023)

Oil, wax, ink, powder and skin – my paintings are made of these as I stitch and press pigments together into some facsimile of sensation. Through them, I contend with the interplay between detachment and power through the displacement of bodily forms.

On 23 May 1618, a group of Bohemian Protestants led by Count Jindřich Matyáš Thurn-Valsassina threw two Catholic governors and their secretary out of a top-floor window of Prague Castle, becoming the unlikely flash point that set off the Thirty Years' War. Of course, we sit in a different point in history today with rather different circumstances, and history should be taken for a cautionary tale more than prophesy. Yet the rhythms of turmoil and conflict remain familiar and resonate in us still – so it does in Ruben's *Consequences of War*, as it does in Beethoven's *Grosse Fuge*.

My disquiet arises thusly in my paintings of disembodied limbs that I whip into a frenzy of vibrant colors and abstracted movements. Their great grasping hands are extensions of my subjective sensations of grip, hold, compression and connectivity. But, the language of their grip is universal in that we understand what it is to grasp, push, and to bear. Their forms coagulate into recognizable shapes in places and fall apart in others, suggesting their ambiguous detachment from a greater whole. A deeper read reveals the presence of other bodily bits – the brain, a vagina, a sphenoid bone – that are themselves wells of physiological mysteries and primordial myth.