



**QIANYU FU**  
**ERIN G**  
**BETTY YOUNG KIM**  
**DAVID SAMI**  
**SHAMAN**  
**MIAO WANG**  
**TIANJIAO WANG**  
**ARTHUR JOHNSON WEISS**



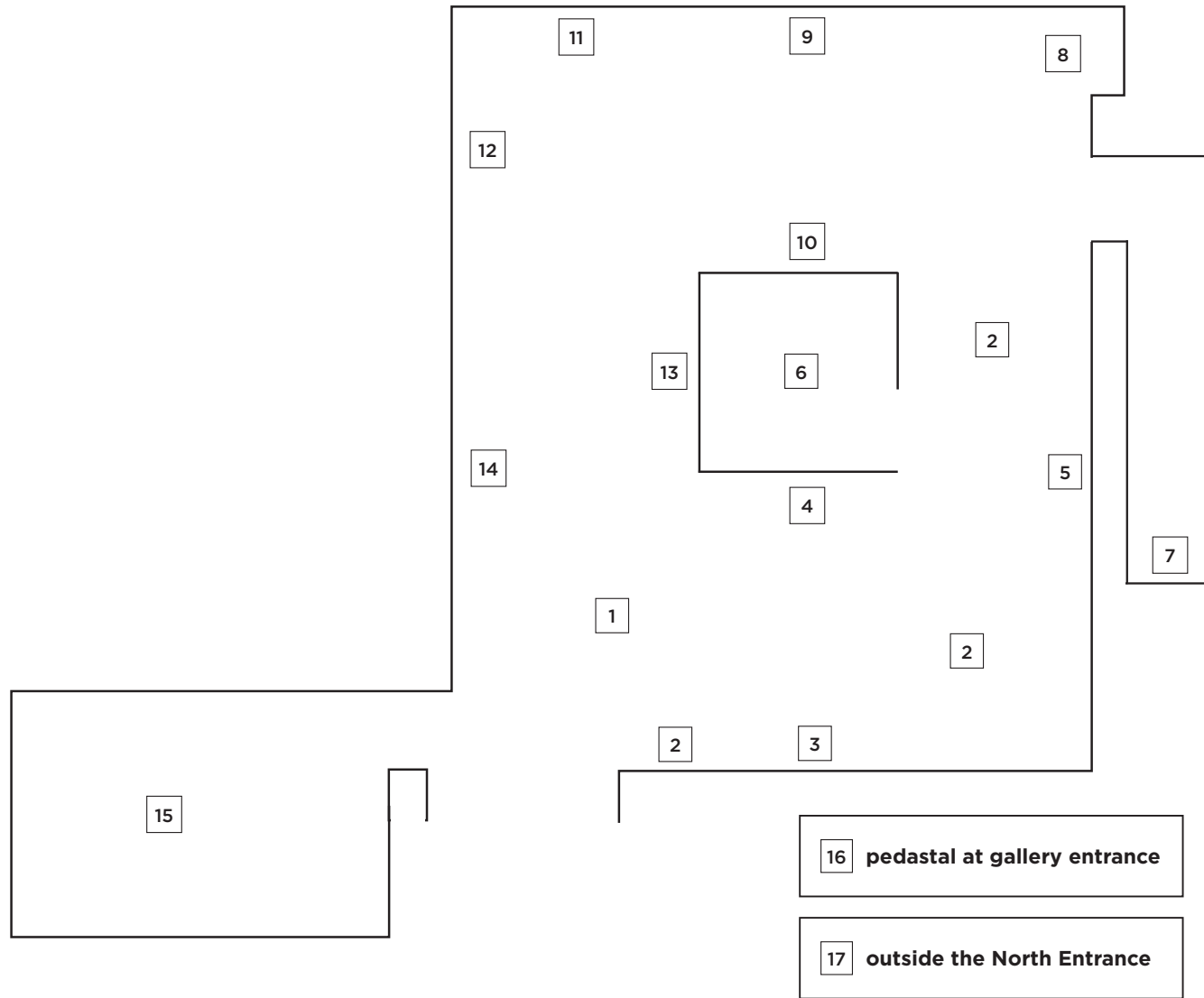
Wrong  
And  
Strong

University of Chicago  
Department of Visual Arts  
MFA 2024 Thesis Exhibition

May 3 – June 9, 2024

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# EXHIBITION WALKTHROUGH



- 1 ***Pain Adjacent (bag)***  
Betty Young Kim  
2024  
mixed media
- 2 ***Go Fishing***  
Qianyu Fu  
2024  
mixed media
- 3 ***Famine[REDACTED]***  
David Sami  
2024  
oil on burlap on tar paper
- 4 ***no title***  
Miao Wang  
April 25, 2024-June 9, 2024  
watercolor on synthetic paper
- 5 **علقوما**  
David Sami  
2024  
oil on burlap
- 6 ***Robert's Baby***  
Arthur Johnson Weiss  
2024  
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oil on burlap

- 8 ***Transmissions***  
David Sami  
2023-2024  
mixed media
- 9 ***MARTIN EDEN***  
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video
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Erin G  
2024  
cotton duck, acrylic yarn
- 11 ***corpus shaman***  
2023  
ink on paper and others
- 12 ***Into the white***  
David Sami  
2024  
oil on sheetrock
- 13 ***life shaman***  
2024  
mixed media  
*This installation will continuously shift in form and content over the course of the exhibition, informed by input from visitors. You are welcome to provide suggestions by texting 312-287-1453.*

- 14 ***Pain Adjacent 2-5***  
Betty Young Kim  
2024  
archival pigment prints
- 15 ***From Elsewhere to Somewhere***  
Tianjiao Wang  
2023-2024  
HD video with sound, 3-channel, synchronous loop (15:37)
- 16 ***monk shaman***  
2024  
porcelain, biodegradable plate, and water marker
- 17 ***Use fake money to buy a fake gun***  
Qianyu Fu  
2024  
cement, rain

16 **pedastal at gallery entrance**

17 **outside the North Entrance**





9



8









You wake up in the mourning: wrong again.

The insatiable and the instable, the small yearnings that last.

Cyclical seams and small endings, like bathroom mirrors, occasion us moments of reflection. Like how the cyclical seems and the answer offers a series of questions different for us each. *When is it done?* is different from *when is it over?* Just as the performer is both themselves and what they are doing, like how you can always see through quotation marks or parentheses. A surface is a space.

The art sneaks out at night to rearrange itself, wet on the walls and ready for a fight.

Time evinces itself in petrified bananas, whispers in the HVAC wind, lingering ashes. The shapes of what's missing, missed and held in remain.

There is the small grace and cosmic confounding at the heart of our encounters. How, among the million-verses did we end up in the exact same place at the exact same time? Of course there are systems at work, applications and administration offer spreadsheets and other grids that help order, help offer a sense of inevitability. But those systems rely on belying: the likelihood of most anything happening is vastly overwhelmed by the sheer number of ways it could have but didn't.

An exhibition is such an encounter: all of this work and these works together for a moment. We love saying *constellation* so much because it reminds us that the shapes we see, the connections we draw, are as much about our position as the position of the constitutive parts. Sometimes you are the eyes seeing the face and sometimes you're the nose in who knows whose pareidolic fantasy.

I had the occasion to meet many of these practices earlier this semester as a guest at their critiques and after the invitation for this essay came and with it the context of the title, a tribute to the recently departed and legendary Pope.L, I was struck by the strange symmetry that exactly ten years and approximately 8 miles away, he performed that role for me in my final graduate critique. I say this less as trivia or worse as feet-filling and more to offer eternal observation that some element of the artist's work is in connection.

How do you make paintings in the midst of a genocide? How can we disentangle process and progress? What is performance of self? Of others? Is the object always the remnant of the act? What's the some, the other, every and how does the valence of translation challenge a landscape? When the image becomes a new image, an object, what happens to its past? What is fixity in the flux? Does bringing paratext into the text expand or contract, for the work is in the world? Where in the work is the world? Where in the world is the work?

It is not for nothing that the sites of production and the sites of exhibition in the Logan Center are about as close as they can be (literally stacked) and as far as they can be (the artist's work—if not the art work—is finished when it hits these walls; as the audience clocks in at the meaning making market).

When I hear people say "at the end of the day", I wonder if they just can't remember the word *night*.

I considered play, like enjoy and play, like character. Monster moves.

Miao Wang's paintings keep changing. Most nights they make their way up the stairs and are transformed: what appear at first as textural monochromes concerned with surface and phenomenology reveal and conceal themselves—like an animation for the slow

motion viewing of a tree—as performative objects, as records of time, labor and attention. Likewise, shaman's practice of objects—by turns highly concerned with craft and texture alongside vernacular arrangements, transformed and transfigured through juxtaposition, intervention and repositioning—feels akin to his chaotic and metamorphic (if not meta-metaphoric) performance. There is an assertion and reminder of tempo: the temporariness and temporality of the artwork, its status in space, our shifting role in its resolution.

Responding to the violences, histories and presents of global politics as enacted on and by the individual, Betty Young Kim and David Sami's works do more than bear witness, they become sites of what-is-a-witness-ness(lessness). Sami's work in the exhibition is urgent, like if newspapers still mattered and they were made by hand and on materials of construction and deconstruction. To see work so deeply engaged in this exact moment attempt something like reportage amid the strange experience of an endlessly mediated world in which distances and time have collapsed, leave us to the impotent challenges of the here and now. Kim's work proposes an animated archive in which images—formal and informal; personal and professional; intimate and anonymous—are reconsidered and through radical reformation made anew. The renewed images' already dense associations and possibilities of latency and obfuscation assert themselves now as objects of display.

The dynamic, materially-inventive sculptural works Qianyu Fu presents are filled with perfect moments for the attentive experiencer. Making coy investigators of us all, the checklist as object and its attendant moments for (literal) curious reflection reward our own physical and metaphysical repositioning—your changing sightline and the pause that brings are spaces of reconsideration about time, material, surface, junk and the built in the building. This approach to collage is mirrored in Tianjiao Wang's three-channel

video installation that expands and explodes her film *From Elsewhere to Somewhere* to assert how language is endlessly connected to place, both in its specificity and the uneasy, necessary work of translation. Moving images move, time is their meter and matter, of course, but it's the way the personal commingles and lenses the disparate that our attention is honed.

The space of the character, as something that is acted and activated, is key to the other video installations in the show, by Arthur Johnson Weiss and Erin G's. G's work applies and slyly adapts Jack London's *Martin Eden* to their own practice: the imposter syndrome, pressures and anxieties of a young artist brought into institutional and sometimes hostile situations is laid bare to the degree that its play with confession, projection and performativity become subject matter: in its definitional sense (which would seem redundant for other words, sublime for this), irony is as about opposites, how they coexist and the friction and polyphony that creates. Weiss' ongoing and embodied research into the sensationalized Baby Jessica saga of the late 1980s, is fascinated with and participates in the problems of representation, re-presentation and how the real becomes mythic through a rapacious media imagination that we, the real, cannot possibly handle. The spectacle consumes and the fodder of its feeding are digested and we, now the chompers, hunger against our better judgements. Weiss plays each character—including captivated audience—with directed camp, an irony manifest queer, to complicate and make complicit participation.

An instability and fascination with the possible permeate *Wrong & Strong*. The works serve as reminders of how our coincident times and place, our need for self-determination and the things we make for the places we are, are deeply entangled, more a constellation, a sightline, a conspiracy than a thesis. We can agree on the strong and consider the wrong, like a late-night karaoke chorus.



*Go Fishing*  
2024  
mixed media





**Go Fishing, 2024**

- African beads
- Bricks
- Ceramic bowl
- Ceramic beads
- Ceramic tiles
- Concrete mix
- Copper ring
- Dark fabric
- Dark fabric
- Dark fabric
- Fishing net
- Flax
- Glass blocks
- Glass vase
- Glass sheet
- Glass sheet
- Ironstone
- Laminated wood flooring
- Maple
- Nanopaper
- Plastic netting
- Photo animation
- Photo target
- Pine Lumber
- Plastic Blue Square Tube
- Plastic strips
- Poster
- Red
- Spray paint
- Spring string
- Synthetic stone
- Vase



**Go Fishing**

2024

mixed media



**Go Fishing**  
2024  
mixed media



**Use fake money to buy a fake gun**  
2024  
cement, rain




**ERIN G**



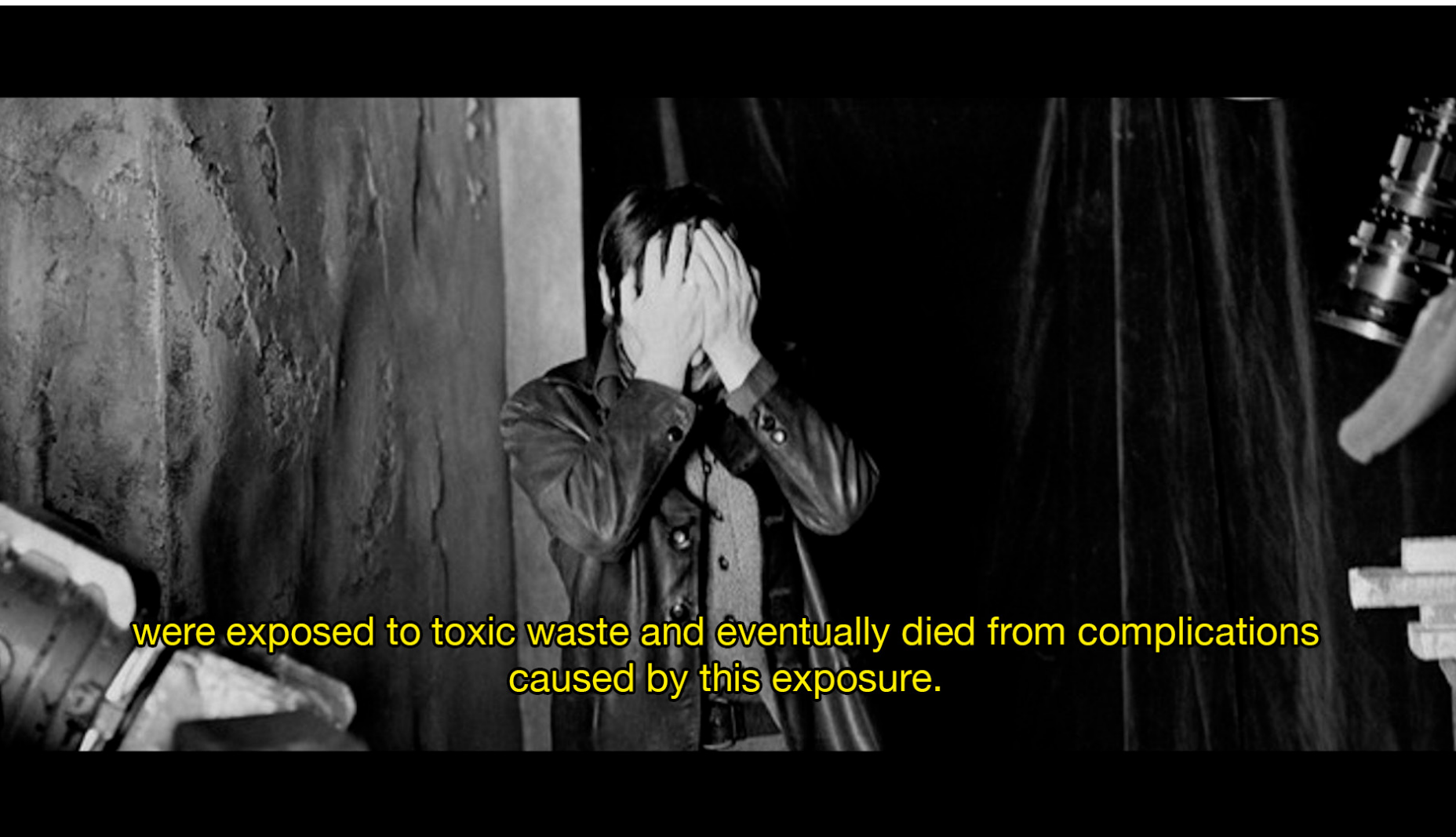
**MARTIN EDEN**

2024

cotton duck, acrylic yarn



so I guess I'll keep making weird little movies.

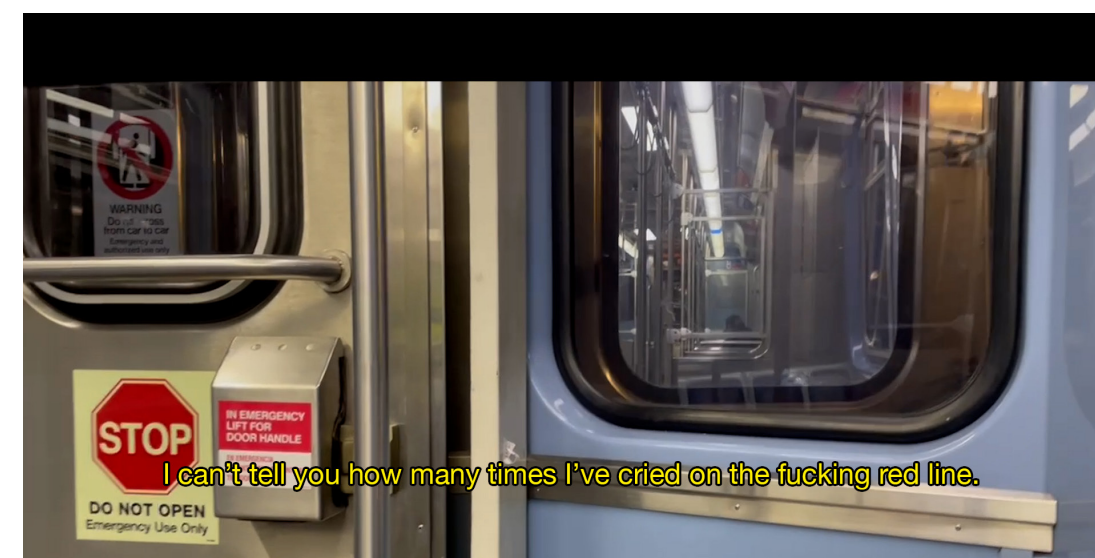


were exposed to toxic waste and eventually died from complications caused by this exposure.

**MARTIN EDEN**  
2024  
video



I guess, when I think about it,



I can't tell you how many times I've cried on the fucking red line.

**BETTY  
YOUNG  
KIM**

***Pain Adjacent 2-5***  
2024  
archival pigment prints

***Pain Adjacent (bag)***  
2024  
mixed media







***Pain Adjacent 2-5***  
2024  
archival pigment prints



*Pain Adjacent (bag)*  
2024  
mixed media

## DAVID SAMI

There is a violence inherent to mark-making. A line cuts, segments, and fragments form in drawing, writing, and language. [Resolution] in screens, images, and conflicts is a constructed category. Coherence and peace are ideological. They frame how images are valued and how history is remembered. Painting serves as a formal and conceptual tool to question assumptions of seeing, knowing, and remembering within a constructed historical archive.

*Into the white*  
2024  
oil on sheetrock



*Famine[REDACTED]*  
2024  
oil on burlap on tar paper



ولاد الجيران  
2024  
oil on burlap



علقوها  
2024  
oil on burlap



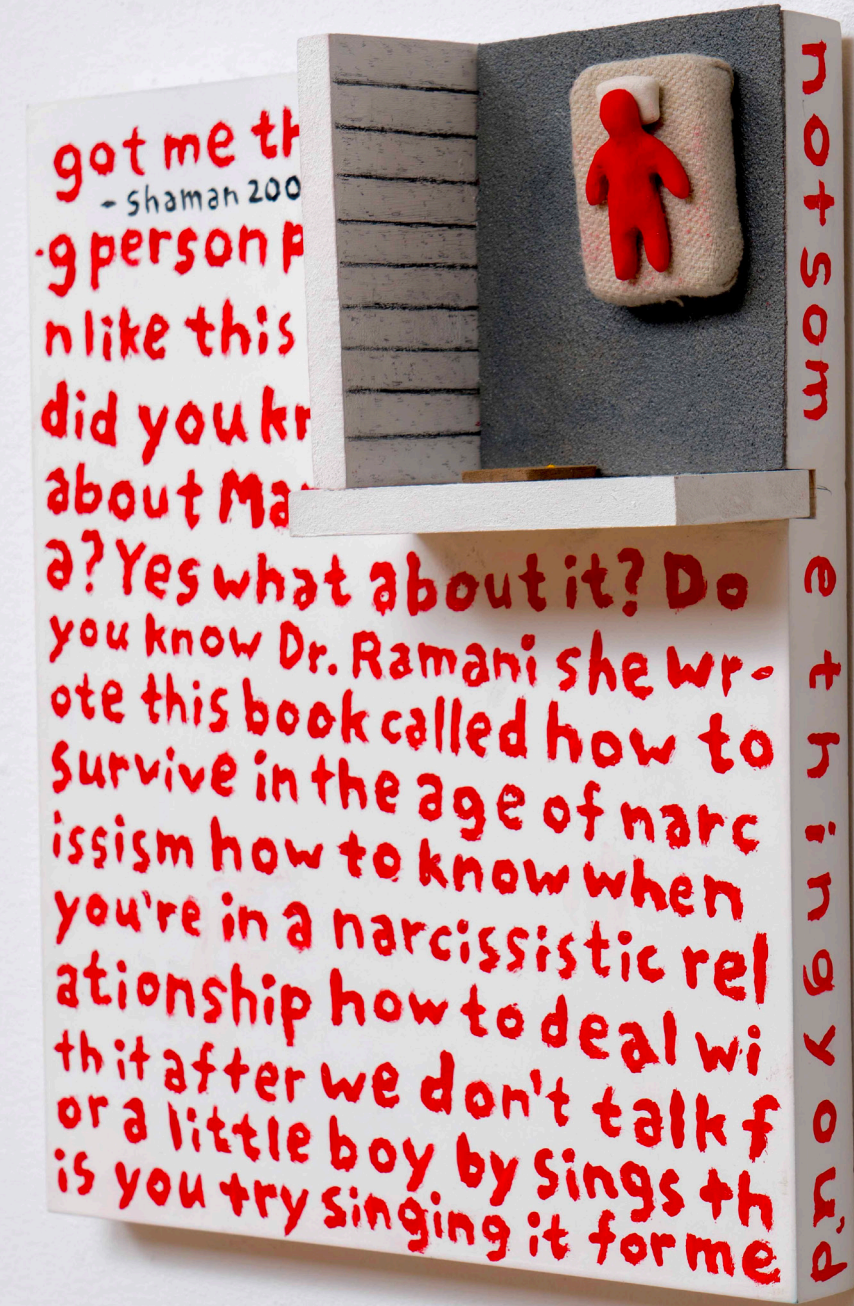
*Transmissions*  
2023-2024  
mixed media

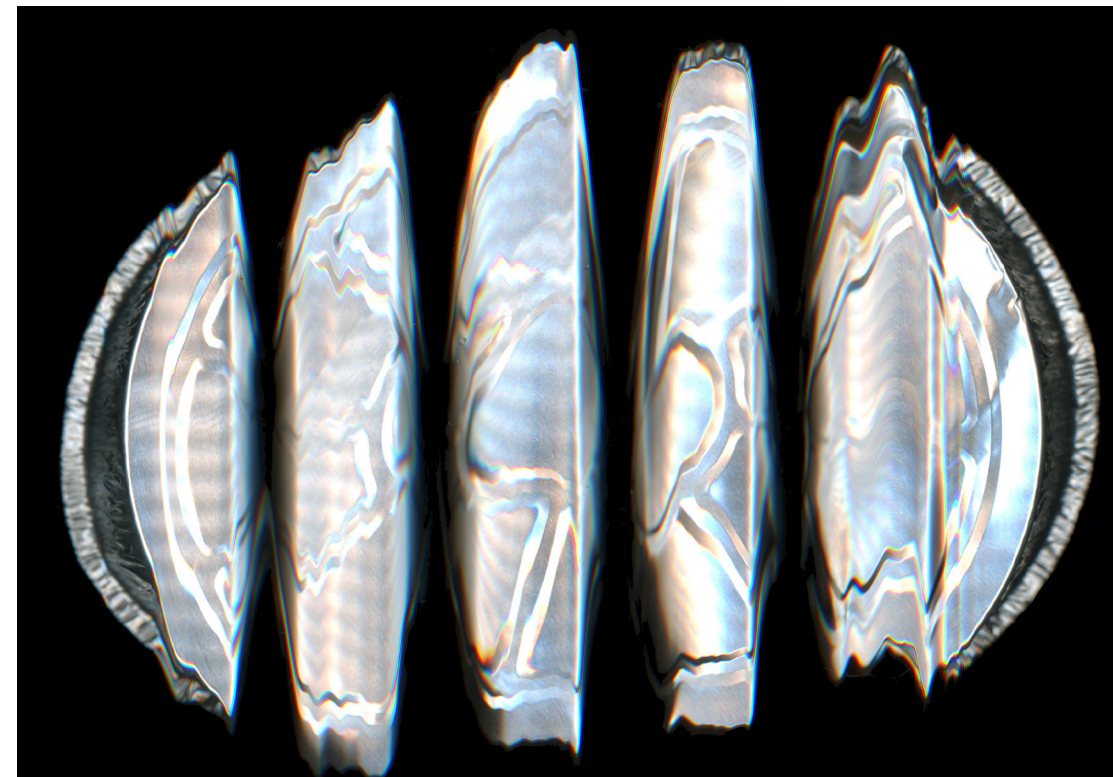


# SHAMAN

i believe in the excellence of life.

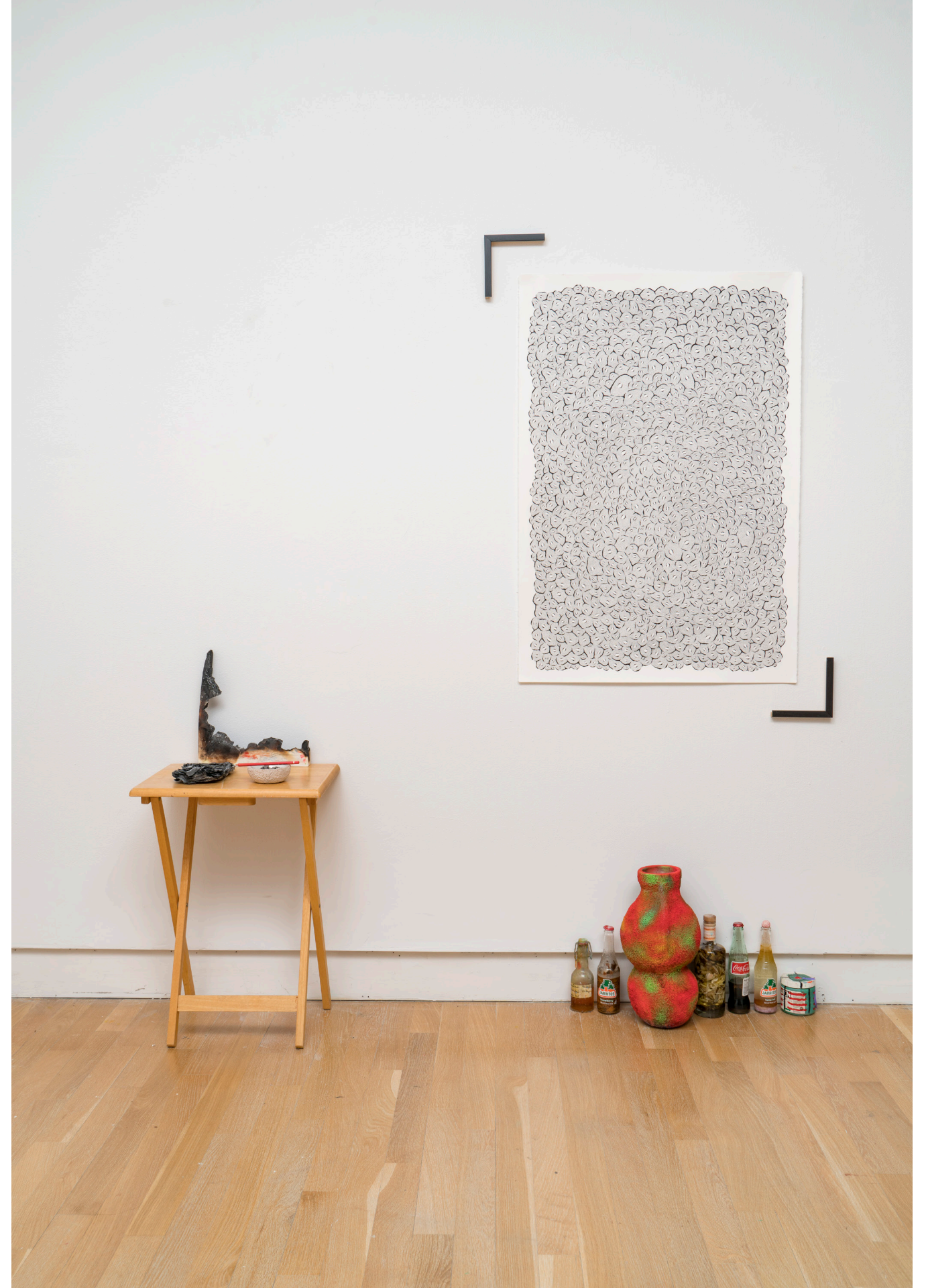
*life*  
2024  
mixed media





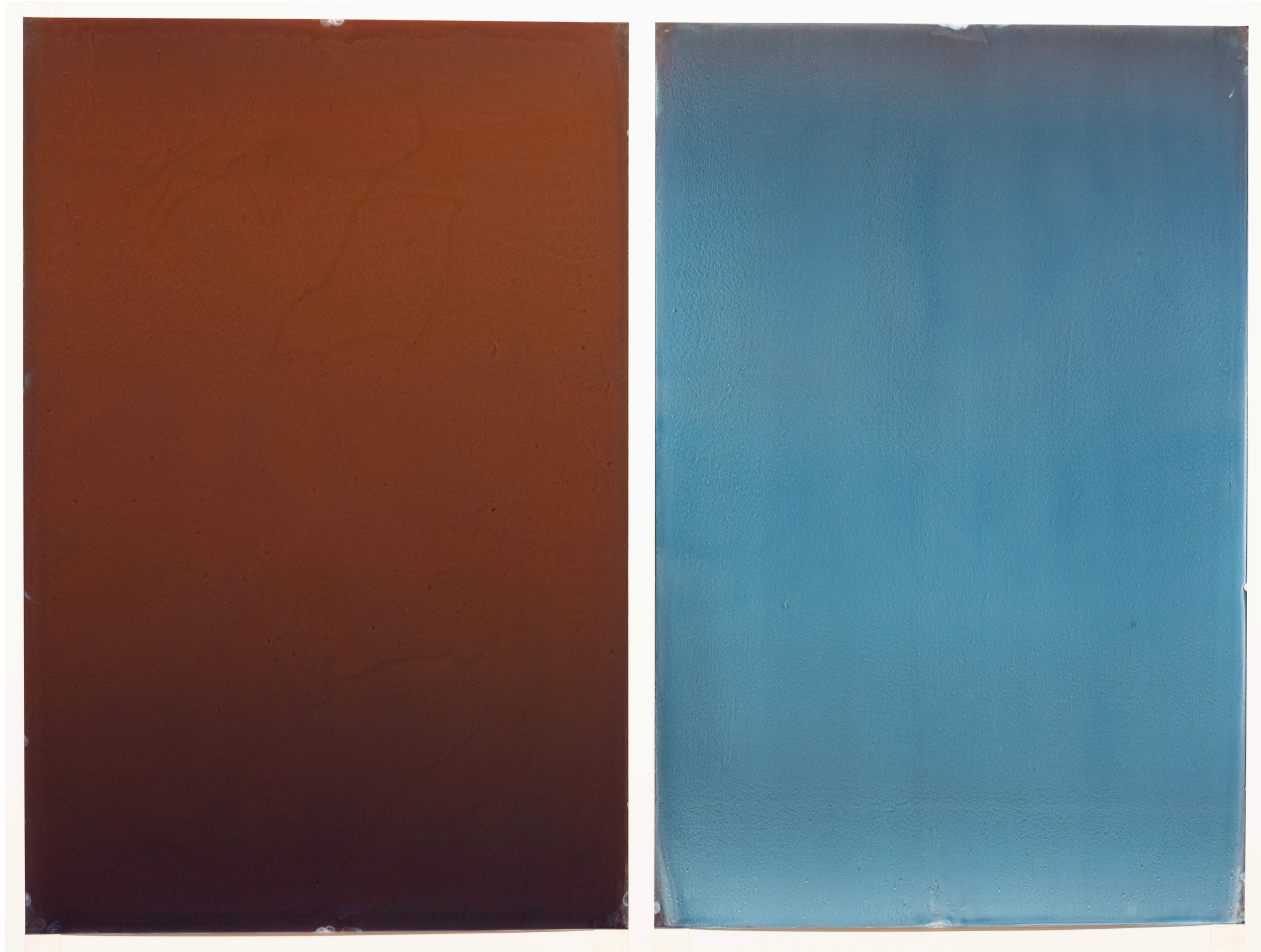


**corpus**  
2023  
ink on paper and others





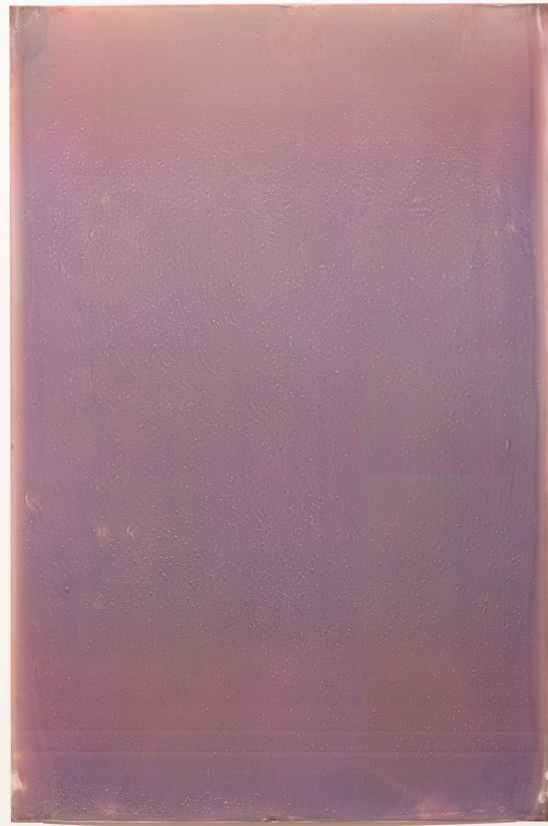
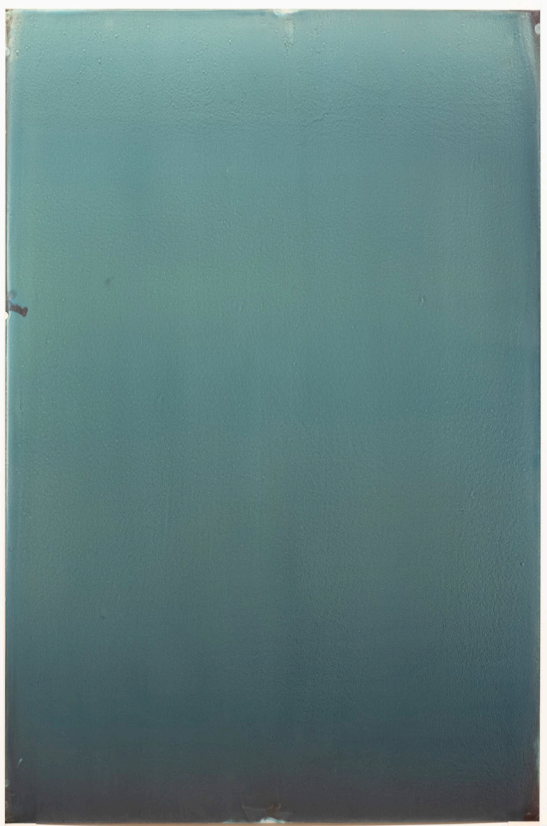
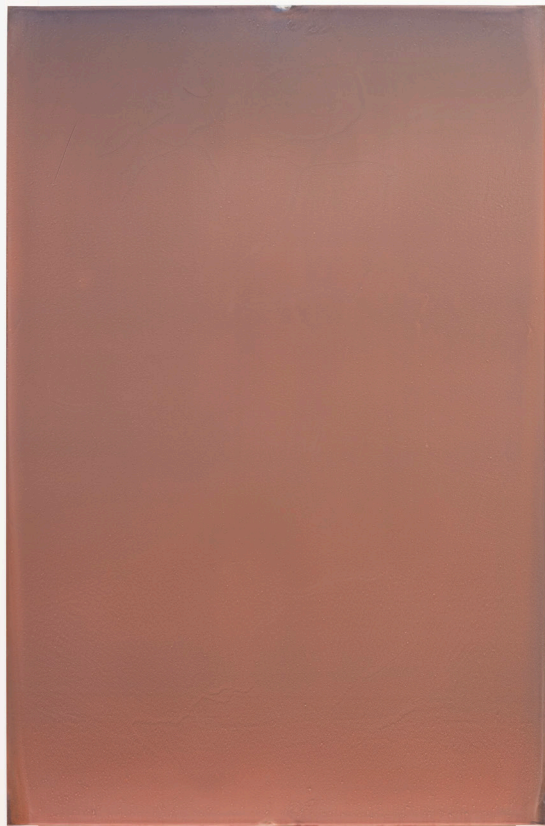
MIAO WANG



46

47

*no title*  
April 25, 2024-June 9, 2024  
watercolor on synthetic paper





# TIANJIAO WANG

If you are reading this catalog, it means that you have somehow come to know me. Thank you for crossing paths with me. I would also like to thank my parents for choosing to bring a child to the world, allowing me to experience this world.

After the flowers are gone,  
aren't seeds usually left behind?



花完了，謝了，  
不都留的种子嗎？



***From Elsewhere to  
Somewhere***

2023-2024

HD video with sound, 3-channel,  
synchronous loop (15:37)





ARTHUR  
JOHNSON  
WEISS



*Robert's Baby*  
2024  
mixed media









**The DoVA MFA Class of 2024 is grateful to:**

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DoVA faculty, staff, and students**

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