

# *Durian on the Skin*

Curated by Gan Uyeda

*Ann Greene Kelly, Brach Tiller, Candice Lin, Danica Lundy, David Douard, Gabriel Mills, Isaac Soh Fujita Howell,*

*Joeun Kim Aatchim, Kelly Akashi, Liao Wen, Maren Karlson, Mire Lee, Rebecca Manson, Rindon Johnson,*

*Ruben Ulises Rodriguez Montoya, Srijon Chowdhury, Tomás Díaz Cedeño*

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There was a tree growing beside the water. It stretched roots into both the land and sea, drew water and salt up into its thick, convoluted trunk. It was a durian tree in full flower, and its yellow buds were already sending out that strange and marvellous odour that might be crudely described as cat piss blended with unadulterated euphoria. I made myself as small as a worm, crawled through the tiny aperture of a barely opened bud, and coiled myself round and round its small black heart. I closed my eyes and went to sleep. In my sleep, I dreamt the flower opening, dreamt it drinking sunlight and warming my belly with the heat. Its petals dropped half onto the ground and half into the ocean. I coiled more tightly than ever around the heart. Slowly, a shell grew over me, leather-hard and spiky on the outside, but on the inside smooth, veined and sticky moist. Around me seeds grew thick, and over them a dense yellow-white flesh. As the meat grew plump, that terrible and heavenly cat-piss smell intensified to an almost unbearable degree. Sometimes I felt disgusted by it, but sometimes it comforted me. I stretched a little, readjusting my coils around the fattest seed. She knew I was coming.

Larissa Lai, *Salt Fish Girl*. Toronto: Thomas Allen Publishers, 2002. p.208

*Durian on the Skin* brings together diverse practices that center the body as a sensational hub of impulses and discharges. Pulled apart, reassembled, reimagined, and transcended, the body becomes a place for navigating mythic inheritances and preparing for a dystopian future that has already arrived. In this way, the physical senses act as a passageway, mediating between deep past and all that is to come.

## **Ann Greene Kelly**

Ann Greene Kelly transforms household objects such as chairs, reconstructing them into distorted assemblages of plaster and fabric. Artifacts from our present moment, her sculptures reconfigure one's perception of form and function, allowing viewers to fantasize about the previous origins or afterlives of the material before them. Through her works, a delicate demarcation is made between objecthood, operation, and repose. Kelly's recent exhibitions have been presented at the New Museum, New York, NY; Chapter NY, New York; Paul Soto, Los Angeles; Nordenhake, Stockholm, Sweden; Made in L.A. 2020, Hammer Museum and Huntington Gardens, Los Angeles; and Matthew Brown, Los Angeles. Her solo exhibition at Paul Soto, Brussels is currently on view until October of this year.

## **Brach Tiller**

Brach Tiller's meticulous paintings traverse software space, bringing the body into the digitally surreal. Deliberately rendering forms that complicate comprehension, Tiller renders human bodies and the built environment in forms that are forms that are bulbous and fleshy but also mechanical and android-like. His works generate views of cyborgian possibilities. His recent exhibitions have been presented at River House Arts Gallery, Toledo; Marthas Contemporary, Austin; Future Gallery, Berlin; Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit; and Shin Gallery, New York City. He received his MFA at the Cranbrook Academy of Art in 2021.

## **Candice Lin**

Candice Lin examines the legacies of colonialism through the lenses of gender, sexuality, and the global flow of commodities. Through a rigorous, cross-disciplinary research practice, Lin seamlessly blends academic historiography with a genre-defying materials study. Her solo exhibition "Seeping, Rotting, Resting, Weeping" is currently on view at the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive. She has presented in numerous international biennials, including the current Venice Biennale, as well as recent showings in the Taipei Biennial, the Hammer's Made in L.A., Prospect New Orleans, Gwangju Biennale, and Athens Biennale, among others. She is Associate Professor of Art at the University of California, Los Angeles.

## **Danica Lundy**

Describing her language as 'a visceral hyper-reality that shows everything at once,' Danica Lundy makes complex figurative paintings that draw inspiration from her own experiences as a teenage athlete growing up in rural Canada. Simultaneity, multiple perspectives, and superimposition are recurring tropes in Lundy's work, which exploit painting's capacity for translucency and x-ray vision. Lundy's exhibition *Stop Bath* was recently on view at White Cube Bermondsey. She has exhibited internationally, with solo shows in Canada, Italy, Germany, and the United States. Her work is in the public collections of Dallas Museum of Art, Institute of Contemporary Art Miami and Sydney Modern Project, New South Wales. Born in Salt Spring, Canada, she currently lives and works in New York.

## **David Douard**

David Douard's compositions often represent a blend of earthly and fabricated ecosystems. Redefining the relationship between virtual and physical realms through an amalgam of natural and synthetic materials such as wood, metals, magnets, and plastic, Douard's acute attention to detail, like the placement of gears or wires, emblemize the expansion of digital technology, algorithmic learning, and the all-pervasive networking of society. His recent solo exhibitions have been presented at the Serralves Foundation, Porto; Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris; and Rodeo Gallery, Piraeus and London. Douard has participated in numerous biennials including Biennale de Geneve; Gwangju Biennale, and Taipei Biennial. He graduated from the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Paris in 2011. The artist lives and works in Aubervilliers, France.

## **Gabriel Mills**

Gabriel Mills' oil paintings explore the liminal space between physical sensations such as sight, touch, and sound, evoking the potent middle space between dreaming and consciousness. Often working in multipart panel compositions, his paintings interplay texture, color, and depth to create vivid, and saturated visual monuments. Deep-diving into the complexities of the mind, heart, and spirit, Mills juxtaposes outward and inward sight in a wide ranging exploration of time and presence. Mills received his MFA in Painting and Printmaking from the Yale School of Art New York. His recent solo exhibitions have been presented at Green Hall Gallery, New Haven, and Established Gallery, New York. The artist lives and works in New Haven.

## **Isaac Soh Fujita Howell**

Isaac Soh Fujita Howell's paintings incorporate detailed imagery of machinery and man into scenes that are analyzed, broken up and reassembled into abstracted form. Howell skillfully layers a multitude of viewpoints into one centralized scene, as if to represent the subject in a greater context of digital, political, and algorithmic voyeurism. He has previously exhibited at Galerie Dengyun; Fondation des États-Unis, Paris; and Klaus von Nichtssagend Gallery, New York. Howell received his MFA from Yale University in 2017. Howell lives and works in New York.

## **Joeun Kim Aatchim**

Joeun Kim Aatchim's glimmering sculptural works are an extension of her larger painting and drawing practice that shapes itself around personal memories, nostalgia, fantasy, allusion, and Korean folklore and poetry. Often using an array of materials like Korean silk and mineral pigments, Aatchim creates carefully crafted diaristic works that blend materiality, color, and texture into luminous compositions. Recent solo exhibitions include her first solo exhibition with François Ghebaly, New York earlier this summer; Make Room, Los Angeles; Harper's, East Hampton; and Vacation Gallery, New York among others. Aatchim received her BFA from New York University, as well as her MFA from Columbia University. She lives and works in New York City.

## **Kelly Akashi**

Kelly Akashi's cast bronze and beeswax works explore the interrelationship between artist and object, continuing her investigation into temporality and materiality. Akashi frequently deploys materials like glass, wax, and bronze, materials whose transition from molten to solid indexically capture a moment in time. Creating an interlocking complex that freezes time and touch with absolute finesse, Akashi's work gracefully unites human and nature. Her solo exhibition *Formations* recently opened at the San Jose Museum of Art and will travel to multiple museums across the country. Other recent solo exhibitions include *Francois Ghebaly*, Los Angeles; *Tanya Bonakdar Gallery*, New York; and *SculptureCenter*, New York. Her works reside in the collections of LACMA, Los Angeles; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn; and Sifang Museum, Nanjing. She lives and works in Los Angeles.

## **Liao Wen**

Trained as a marionette puppet maker, Liao Wen creates humanoid sculptures characterized by an uncanny, doll-like quality. Contorting materials that mimic the human body such as carved limewood and silicone into extreme postures, Wen heightens our own bodily perception. Wen often couples these soft, anatomical forms with rigid materials like metal, glass or stone. In *Almost Hysterical*, a metal table supports bent and twisted limbs; In *Resist*, a metal cord weighted with a circle of tear-shaped glass orbs dangles from the ceiling and pierces through the center of the sculpture. These cool, metallic elements lend a clinical quality to Wen's psychologically striking sculptures. Liao Wen graduated from the printmaking department of Sichuan Fine Arts Institute in 2016, and received a Master's degree in Experimental Art from the Central Academy of Fine Arts China in 2019. Recent solo exhibitions include *Capsule*, Shanghai. She lives and works in Shenzhen, China.

## **Maren Karlson**

Maren Karlson's distinctive visual language seamlessly merges the soft and ethereal with the mechanical. Her muted abstract compositions reveal the inner mechanisms of complex, imagined bodies, natural and man-made alike, with fluidity and precision. Hints of human anatomy, auto parts, and plant life flicker in and out of focus in each work as thin washes of oil coalesce and take shape. In *Solvent*, Karlson's central machine-like form is rendered transparent atop a field of swirling, fleshy anatomical forms. Recent solo exhibitions of Karlson's work have been held at *Soft Opening*, London; *Ashley*, Berlin; and *in lieu*, Los Angeles. Her work has been included in group exhibitions at *The Drawing Center*, New York; *Jessica Silverman*, San Francisco; among others. Maren Karlson lives and works in Los Angeles.

## **Mire Lee**

Mire Lee's sculptures and installations command attention through their visceral magnetism. In sinewy sculptural work, Lee dares viewers to step closer, challenging their preconceived notions of selfhood, social acceptability, and hygiene in the face of fleshy, corporeal, vividly active sculptures. Nauseating, slick, and dripping, Lee coalesces the aesthetics of early-stage organisms and future-borne synthetics into acrid, visually stimulating forms. Her recent solo exhibitions have been presented at *MMK Frankfurt*; *Art Sonje Center*, Seoul; *Lily Roberts*, Paris; *Casco Art Institute*, Utrecht; and *Insa Art Space*, Seoul. Lee's work is on view in the current *Venice Biennale*, and has been featured in a number of group exhibitions including presentations at the *Schinkel Pavillon*, Berlin; *Kunstverein Freiburg*, Freiburg; *Antenna Space*, Shanghai; and the *12th Gwangju Biennale*. She earned her MFA from the *Seoul National University College of Fine Arts*.

## **Rebecca Manson**

Rebecca Manson relies on close observations of her own garden and the countryside north of New York City to create her technically spectacular, often gravity-defying ceramic sculptures. Delicately manipulating porcelain into fallen leaves in various states of decay, weeds, wildflower petals, and even tufts of fur, Manson utilizes her finely tuned sculptural vocabulary to translate her surroundings into materially surprising works. Rebecca Manson lives and works in New York. She received her BFA in ceramics from the Rhode Island School of Design in Providence, Rhode Island. Recent solo exhibitions include Fairfax Dorn Projects, East Hampton, New York, and Josh Lilley, London.

## **Rindon Johnson**

Rindon Johnson works across numerous modes, from virtual reality and sculpture to poetry and art criticism. Questions of embodiment and technology weave throughout his work: How do we employ digital space, and how are we employed by it? How much is history a virtual construct? What does skin remember? Johnson was born in 1990 in San Francisco on the unceded territories of the Ohlone and Coast Miwok people. His institutional solo exhibitions have included SculptureCenter, New York; Chisenhale Gallery, London; and Albertinum, Dresden. His work was on view in the 2022 Whitney Biennial, as well as in the group exhibition Lifes at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles. He lives and works between Berlin and New York.

## **Ruben Ulises Rodriguez Montoya**

Ruben Ulises Rodriguez Montoya's work focuses on border culture, abjection, and mestizaje, a term that refers to the mixing of racial and cultural groups in Mexican history. Influenced by magic realism, sci-fi, and a personal history of migration, Montoya investigates the violent processes by which histories and communities of color are systematically erased. Mechanical and monstrous, Montoya's shape-shifting works intuitively hybridize myths, industrial and construction materials, and land resources. A solo presentation of Montoya's work was presented earlier this year at Murmurs, Los Angeles and a forthcoming solo exhibition will take place at Sargent's Daughters in New York City. Selected group exhibitions include: Palm Springs Museum of Art; General Expenses, CDMX; Museum of Contemporary Art, Tucson; and Anonymous Gallery, NYC. Montoya received his MFA in Sculpture and Extended Media at Virginia Commonwealth University in 2020.