

MAKE ROOM

collect@makeroom.la

GHOST YENI MAO YURI YUAN

FRIEZE LONDON ADVANCE PREVIEW

Booth S8

9 October - 13 October 2024



Make Room Los Angeles is excited to participate in the 2024 Frieze London Curated Section “*Smoke*,” featuring a presentation of new works by artists Yeni Mao and Yuri Yuan. Curated by Pablo José Ramirez, “*Smoke*” brings together two artists who explore the intangible and often haunting aspects of form and material. “*Smoke*” explores the transformational potentials of raw materials and the ephemeral nature of landscapes. Through distinct practices, both Yeni and Yuri Yuan bring their unique perspectives to the exhibition, creating a dialogue between sculpture and painting that resonates with themes of solitude, grief, and the subtext of destruction.

Yeni Mao's five-part series delves into Pacific Rim ghost traditions and the shared perspectives on death, afterlife, and ancestry in Latin America and Asia. Crafted from high-fire Zacatecas stoneware cylinders supported by blackened iron armatures, the sculptures portray fractured bodies—limbs, horns, and torsos—that serve as both figurative forms and timeless artifacts. Surface patterns inspired by car floor mats create a dialogue between industrial and artisanal, reflecting traditional body ornamentations like tattoos and scarifications. Using iron oxide-infused clay and metal finishes reminiscent of burnt blood, Mao explores the temporal nature of craft, universality, and cyclical states through primal materials and evocative imagery.

Combining imagination and observation, **Yuri Yuan's** paintings explore the concept of landscape as a “ghost” that harbors personal and collective histories, haunting our present days. With a predominantly blue, green, and red color palette drawn from Chinese ink painting and Tang ceramics, set at various times of the day and in different seasons, these paintings evoke a sense of impending danger and an undertone of violence. The absence of clear figures in these landscapes conjures fragmented narratives that invite contemplation.

Yeni Mao's (b. 1971) sculptures possess a captivating narrative undertone, often drawing from the artist's transnational background. Themes of displacement, migration, fragmented and sexualized bodies, and their connection to the built environment are interwoven throughout Mao's work. Using a variety of materials (such as ceramic, volcanic rock, brass, steel, and leather), Mao skillfully contrasts textures, volumes, and densities to create sculptures and installations that evoke both abstract and anthropomorphic elements, occasionally taking on a zoomorphic quality. These artworks possess a domestic allure or industrial character, serving as a subtle nod to the cultural influences surrounding the artist and the non-Western traditions he has left behind. Mao's practice is alchemic insofar as his work is reduced to the most primal materials in order to transform them into what he terms "objects of significance".

Yeni Mao is a Chinese-American sculptor based in Mexico City. He received a BFA from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago and subsequently trained in foundry work in California and the architectural industries of New York. Among his recent notable exhibitions are "Yerba Mala" at Campeche in Mexico City, "I desire the strength of nine tigers" at Fierman Gallery in New York, and a public sculpture with Brooke Benington at Canary Wharf, London. Additionally, his work is included in the collection of the Kadist Foundation (San Francisco & Paris), SOHO House (CDMX), CC Foundation (Shanghai), and Jumex Museum (CDMX).



YENI MAO

Born 1971, Canada; Lives and works in Mexico City

Yeni Mao

fig 31.4 hull and echo, 2024

red oxide impregnated zacatecas stoneware with
copper and oxide patina, blackened steel

19 x 10.5 x 10 in

48.26 x 26.67 x 25.40 cm

YM.24.24

£ 8000.00 GBP



The surface markings on the stoneware are pressed and carved with patterns pulled from car floor mats. For Mao, these markings create a dialogue between the industrial and the artisanal as presentations of the past and the future, through a pattern that suggests the ornamentations of the flesh present in such traditions such as tattoo, scarification, and piercing.





Yeni Mao

fig 31.5 hull and echo, 2024

red oxide impregnated zacatecas stoneware with
copper and oxide patina, blackened steel

26.5 x 11 x 8 in

67.31 x 27.94 x 20.32 cm

YM.24.25

£ 8000.00 GBP





Yeni Mao

fig 31.7 hull and echo, 2024

red oxide impregnated zacatecas stoneware with
copper and oxide patina, blackened steel

21 x 15.5 x 12 in

53.34 x 39.37 x 30.48 cm

YM.24.26

£ 8000.00 GBP

All materials used are in a physical state catalyzed by heat, and only exist as we experience them in our current, human range of time and temperature. Mao uses this triad of primal materials, their ornamentation, and shifting imagery as a meditation on the temporal implications of craft, universality, and cyclical states.





Yeni Mao

fig 31.6 hull and echo, 2024

red oxide impregnated zacatecas stoneware with
copper and oxide patina, blackened steel

21 x 15.5 x 12in

53.34 x 39.37 x 30.48 cm

YM.24.27

£ 10,000.00





Yeni Mao

fig 31.8 hull and echo, 2024

red oxide impregnated zacatecas stoneware with
copper and oxide patina, blackened steel

61 x 17 x 18.5in

154.94 x 43.18 x 46.99 cm

YM.24.28

£ 15,000.00





Yuri Yuan (b. 1996, Harbin, China) delves into the profound realms of longing and loss through surrealistic approach in her paintings. By utilizing visual symbolism, metaphors, and elements of magical realism, she creates external landscapes that mirror the internal psychological states of both herself and her audience. By emphasizing the unexplainable, Yuan's works represent a new, achingly contemporary sea change for figurative painting.

Yuan holds an MFA in Visual Arts from Columbia University, New York, NY, and a BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL. She was a recipient of the Helen Frankenthaler Scholarship at Columbia University in 2020, and the Elizabeth Greenshields Foundation Grant in 2019 and 2022. Yuan's work has been exhibited at Christie's, NY; Villepin Gallery, Hong Kong; Alexander Berggruen, NY; Make Room Gallery, Los Angeles, CA; Simon Lee Gallery, London, UK; Moss Arts Center, Blacksburg, VA; Lenfest Center for the Arts, New York, NY; Sullivan Galleries, Chicago, IL; among others. Her work is represented in the public collections of the Columbus Museum of Art, Columbus, OH, and The Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, CA. Yuan currently lives and works in New York, NY.



YURI YUAN

Born 1996, Harbin, China; Lives and works in New York

Yuri Yuan
September, 2024
Oil on Linen
60 x 48 in.
152.40 x 121.92 cm
YY.24.05

£18,500.00 GBP





Yuan reinterprets the myth of Sisyphus, replacing the iconic boulder with a grave-like hole beside the figure, inspired by Courbet's *A Burial at Ornans*. The exaggerated clouds, based on plein air studies from Yuan's studio, loom over the figure, evoking a sense of engulfment. This work explores themes of fatalism and features an experimental color palette, departing from Yuan's usual tones.



Yuri Yuan

Echo, 2024

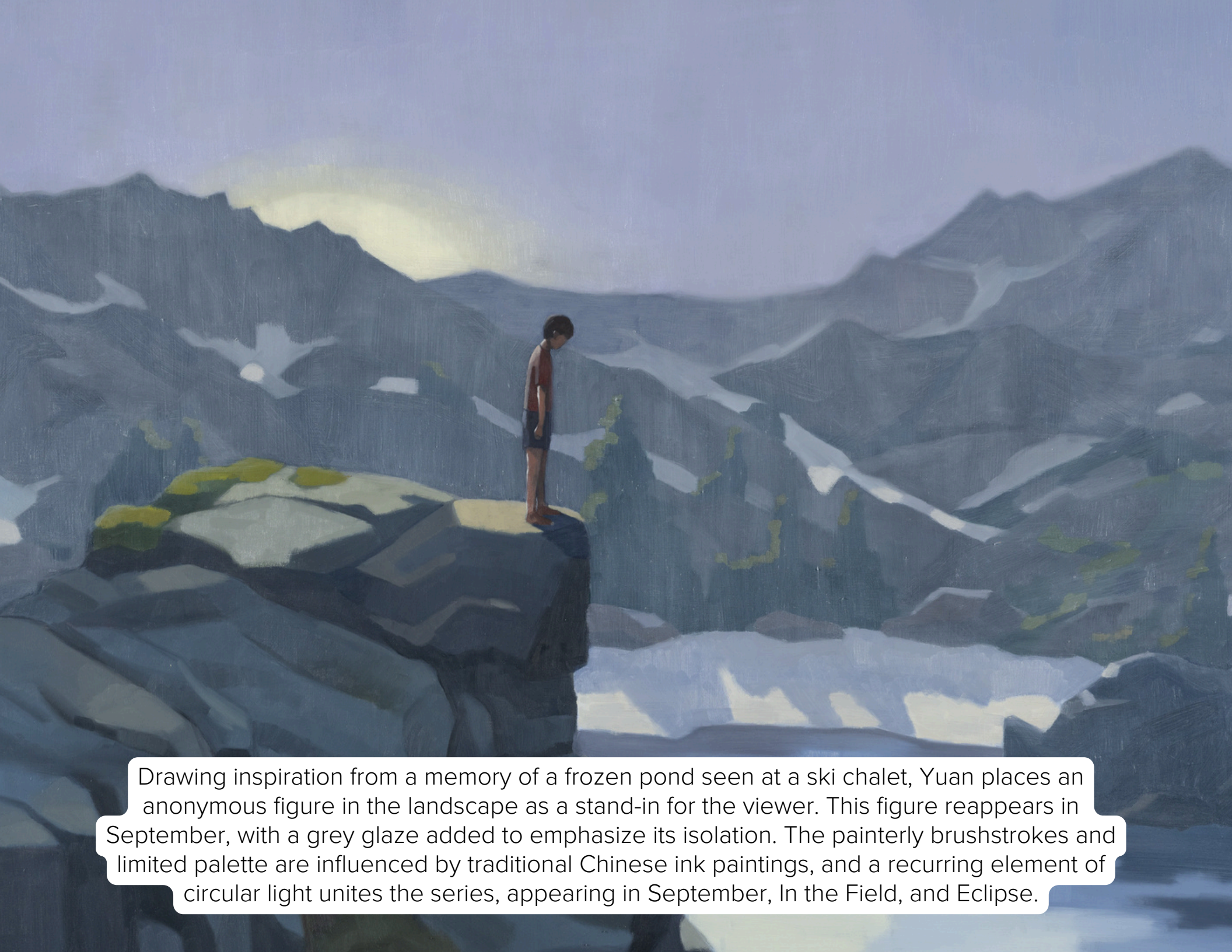
Oil on Linen

48 x 60 in.

121.92 x 152.40 cm

YY.24.03

£18,500.00 GBP



Drawing inspiration from a memory of a frozen pond seen at a ski chalet, Yuan places an anonymous figure in the landscape as a stand-in for the viewer. This figure reappears in September, with a grey glaze added to emphasize its isolation. The painterly brushstrokes and limited palette are influenced by traditional Chinese ink paintings, and a recurring element of circular light unites the series, appearing in September, In the Field, and Eclipse.



Yuri Yuan

In the Field, 2024

Oil on Linen

48 x 60 in.

121.92 x 152.40 cm

YY.24.06

£18,500.00 GBP



Yuri Yuan

Eclipse, 2024

Oil on Linen

60 x 48 in.

152.40 x 121.92 cm

YY.24.05

£18,500.00 GBP





Sometimes, the artist desires an escape from her life, to hide away like a hermit. She wondered if the best place to hide from everything would be the other side of the sun. This painting is the most surreal in this series. Inside the black hole, everything is black and white, existing in a different dimension. She was also thinking about the movie Everything Everywhere All at Once, where the black hole symbolizes nihilism.



Yuri Yuan

Michael Doesn't Like the Spotlight, 2024

Oil on canvas

40 x 30 in

101.60 x 76.20 cm

YY.24.01

£ 12,000.00





Yuri Yuan

Michael Wants His Privacy, 2024

Oil on canvas

40 x 30 in

101.60 x 76.20 cm

YY.24.02

£ 12,000.00



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collect@makerroom.la

+1 (323) 450-9228

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