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A SOLO EXHIBITION BY YEO SHIH YUN

with collaborators

**EUGINIA TAN
HENRIK CHENG
KELLEY CHENG
NG YUAN CI
TAN WEIYING**

Location
: Supper House, 222 Tagore Lane, #04-03, S(787603)
Opening
: 20 April 2023 (Thurs), 6pm to 9pm
Exhibition Dates
: 21-30 April, 2pm to 8pm (Closed on Mon & Tues)
Artist & Collaborators' Talk
: 26 April (Wed), 7pm to 8pm
Performance Dates
: 21 & 28 April (Fri), 7:30pm - 8pm
: 22 & 29 April (Sat) 4pm - 4:30pm

SEPT

A SOLO EXHIBITION

with collaborators

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In the same vein as her usual abstract expressionist approach, the paintings are intuitively created with the element of surprise often coming from a collaboration, another signature of the artist, whereby she pulls herself out of her comfort zone by either immersing herself in an unpredictable situation or inviting an unexpected “guest” into her works, sometimes almost to deliberately create a hurdle for her to overcome, as new problems often lead to new solutions. Some of her past “collaborators” include trees, toy robots and other artists of course. For Septum, she has chosen a writer, two performance artists, a dramaturg and a designer as her collaborators.

After the paintings were completed, writer Euginia Tan was invited to respond to the paintings with words. Each poem was crafted to respond specifically to each painting. Encouraged by the artist to react intuitively rather than logically, abstractly rather than functionally, the poet took an unconventional approach of infusing a visual layer to the words. Much like the physical act of the artist moving across the canvas and allowing the paint to settle, the words seem to take on a kinetic energy that explodes and settles fluidly into different formations on the pages.

Septum as a new series for Shih Yun is familiar and surprising at the same time. Bearing her signature of bold strokes and strong composition, but with fresh colours and a new found fluidity, the artworks once again demonstrated the artist’s philosophy of rejecting pre-conceived ideas and allowing her strokes to go with the

flow.

Water has existed since the beginning of life. In Genesis 1:2, even before God created man, “The earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters.” With water, came man - it is the origin of man and many things, including art, as painting needs water in different ways, even the simple act of washing/cleansing your hands after a session of painting.

Across cultures and religions, water is a symbol of life, and in fact, human beings rely on water to live. Often used as a metaphor for birth, creation, purity, wisdom and death, water flows through our lives from beginning to end, and our relationship with water is not just physical but spiritual.

In this new series of seven paintings by artist Yeo Shih Yun—which inspired the name of the show “Septum”, Latin for “seven”—water too is the driving force behind her creations. An artist who is no stranger to using water-based medium such as Chinese ink, Septum sees the artist experimenting with a new kind of paint and a new method of painting, applying her paint using industrial sponges, instead of brushes. The final artworks are a result of not just sponging paint on the canvas, but the masterly control of how much of the water-based medium is allowed to seep through these sponges. And as how water is also closely associated with birth/rebirth, Septum marks another new chapter in the career for the established artist, pushing her boundaries with her techniques, medium and expression.

BY YEO SHIH YUN

UM An introduction by Kelley Cheng

ARTIST AND COLLABORATORS

Yeo Shih Yun (1976, Singapore) is a highly regarded Singaporean artist whose innovative approach to ink painting has garnered international acclaim. After obtaining a Bachelor degree in Business Administration from the National University of Singapore in 1998, Yeo pursued a Diploma in Communication Design at LASALLE-SIA College of the Arts in 2001, followed by the Post Baccalaureate Programme in painting at the San Francisco Art Institute in 2002.

Yeo's experimental fusion of traditional ink painting with contemporary mediums such as new media and performance art has resulted in dynamic and unpredictable works that challenge conventional notions of the medium. Her unique creative process has earned her recognition, including a 2011 commission by the Singapore Art Museum and the People's Choice Award for "Conversations with trees," which was nominated for Sovereign Asian Art Prize Finalists in 2012 and auctioned by Christie's Asia. She has also won the UOB Painting of the Year Competition (Distinction in Abstract category) twice, in 1999 and 2007.

Yeo has held exhibitions in major cities including Singapore, Hong Kong, Taipei, Shanghai, Tokyo, and New York, and has completed numerous commissions, including National Gallery Singapore's "My Ink-credible Adventure" and her solo exhibition at Esplanade, titled "Chance Encounters," in 2021. Her groundbreaking works have been showcased in "Generative Art and the Future," hosted by Poly Auction China, and she participated in the "NFTs + The Ever-Evolving World of Art" Tezos exhibition at Art Basel Hong Kong in May 2022.

In 2017, Yeo published her first book, "INKPULSE: The Art of Yeo Shih Yun", which chronicles her creative process and highlights her pursuit of new depths and perspectives within and beyond Abstract Expressionism. Additionally, Yeo is the Founder of "INSTINC," an independent art space in Singapore.

Yeo's innovative approach to ink art has made a significant impact on the development of the medium both in Singapore and internationally. Her contributions to the art world have been widely recognized and she continues to push the boundaries of the medium with her unique approach and experimental techniques.

Eugenia Tan is a multi-disciplinary writer based in Singapore. She has experience in various creative forms including poetry, prose and theatre. Her third poetry collection, Phedra (Ethos Books) was nominated for the 2018 Singapore Literature Prize. Her play-writing credits include Holidays (under mentorship of Joel Tan), Tuition (Twenty Something Theatre Festival), Modest Travels (produced by Tan Kheng Hua for Uniql), Fortunes (The Necessary Stage Playwrights' Cove), The Rat Trap (Gateway Theatre Artist-In-Residence). The Rat Trap was nominated at the 2022 Straits Times Life! Theatre Awards for Best Actor (Lim Kay Siu).

Her work has been featured in several literary journals. She also pens curatorial essays and contributions for visual artists in Singapore. She is continuing her multi-disciplinary writing forays after having the privilege of collaborating with notable practitioners within the diverse arts community of Singapore.

Ng Yuan Ci is a theatre practitioner from Malaysia, an alumna of the Drama and Visuals Department (Theatre Major), New Era University College, 2017. She independently practised performance, direction and design, resulting in three years of freelance on-stage and backstage work. She loves anything that relates to the arts as it allows her to see things from different perspectives. She believes that the power of art soothes our souls and hopes that her works can continue to move, connect, and inspire people while allowing her opportunities to travel the world!

NG YUAN CI
MUSICIAN, CHOREOGRAPHER, PERFORMER

YEO SHIH YUN
ARTIST

KELLEY CHENG
GRAPHIC DESIGNER

Kelley Cheng is a modern day polymath who has immersed herself in the roles of editor, writer, curator, spatial designer, theatre/film set designer, graphic designer, educator and public speaker. Trained as an architect, she is the founder and creative director of The Press Room, an interdisciplinary design studio. Besides design, from F&B businesses to an art gallery, her "creations" are diverse and unpredictable. An active educator, she has served as adjunct lecturer at Nanyang Technological University, Glasgow School of Art Singapore, National University of Singapore, and LaSalle College of the Arts, and is a visiting professor at the HangZhou Academy of Art. Kelley is also a frequent name in international design judging panels including Red Dot Awards, Nagoya-Do!, Design for Asia Award, Creative Circle Award, James Dyson Award, etc. In 2019, the National Design Centre presented her 20-year retrospective exhibition "Proportion & Emotion: 20 years in Design with Kelley Cheng" celebrating her achievements, and in 2020 she was conferred the SkillsFuture Fellowship and the prestigious President's Design Award "Designer of the Year 2020", both presented by the President of Singapore.

In 2021, she founded Studio SML (www.studiosml.net), a non-profit online archival of Singapore designers' stories.

HENRIK CHENG
DRAMATURG

Henrik Cheng is a "theatre generalist" from NYC, now based in Singapore. For 18 years they have dabbled in stagecraft, stage/production management, lighting/sound design and now currently performing, devising, dramaturging, and directing. Arriving in Singapore in 2015, to pursue performance training with traditional Asian forms at the Intercultural Theatre Institute. Henrik's amalgamation of experiences allows them to approach projects centering on experience design, and act as a consultant for varying types of live events. Henrik personally, gravitates towards creating works that provide hope, are healing, and encourage positive and proactive change.

Some notable projects Henrik has taken on as a performer and deviser, are - "The Silence Bubble", a project tackling the stigmas surrounding mental health issues / conditions, and "part/wh", a piece exploring and presenting the possibilities and how expansive the framework that are 'theatrical experiences', The Substation's "Novel Ways of Being" in 2021.

As a director, Henrik created a piece for "Long Distance Affair", the piece was designed for an international theatre viewing over Zoom. The pieces enabled audiences to participate and enjoy intimate interactive performances with performers across the world, from the comfort of their own home, it was co-produced by PopUp Theatrics and Juggerknot Theatre.

Tan Weiyong performs and facilitates in the realm of theatre. Her artistic sensibility was stirred at the Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan Arts & Cultural Troupe, cultivated and provoked at the Intercultural Theatre Institute (class of 2017), and presently, continues to evolve with every work that comes her way. She believes that art can solace and empower, and seeks out collaborations across various performance mediums for that to happen. Weiyong is currently an associate artist with Chowk Productions.

EUGENIA
WRITER

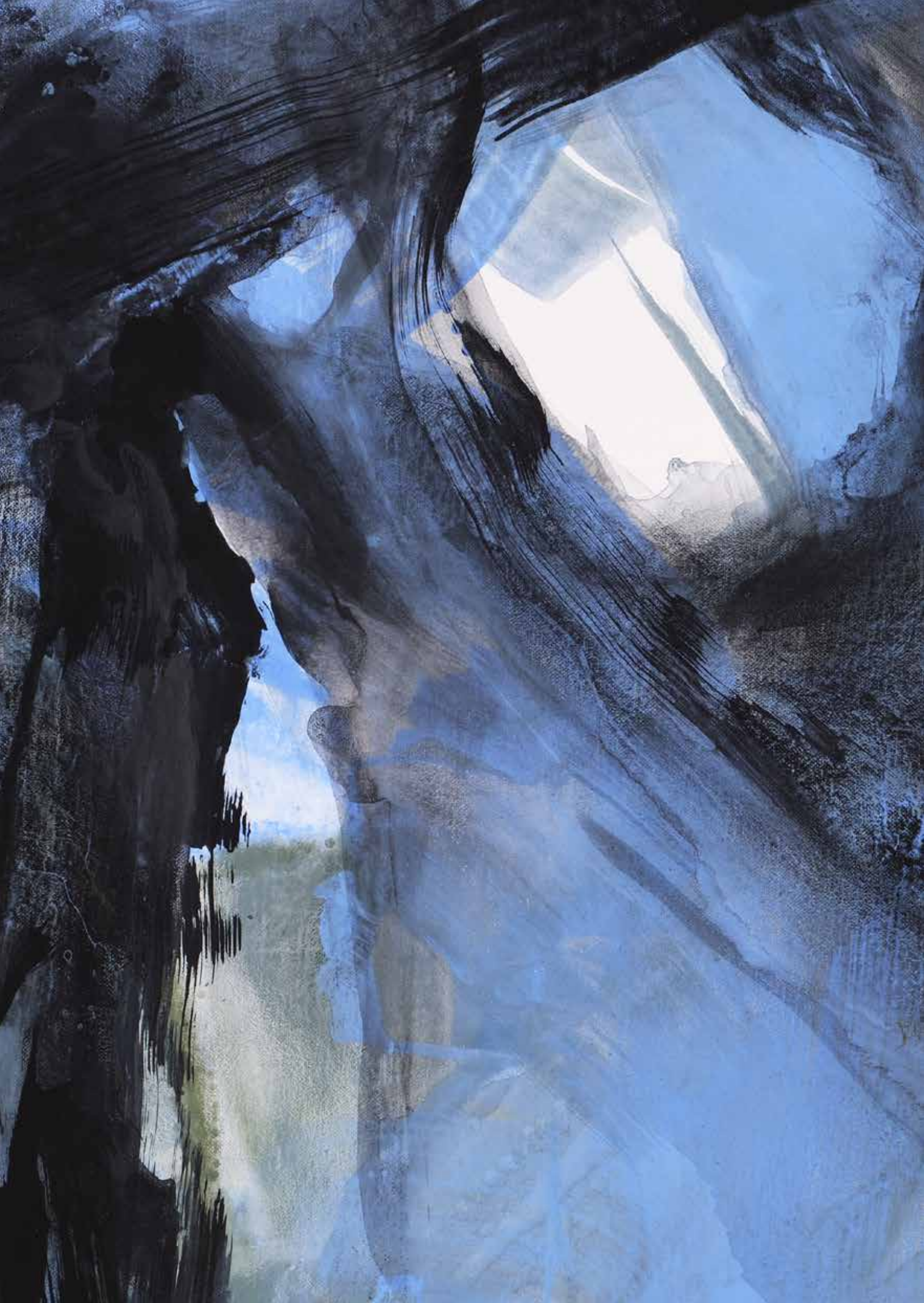
TAN WEIYONG

WORK #3

Flowing

Rhythm

Artist : Yeo Shih Yun
Poet : Euginia Tan
Title : Flowing Rhythm
Size : 1580 x 1120 mm
Medium : Paint on linen
Year : 2022



GULF

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WORK #1

Different

Flow

Artist : Yeo Shih Yun
Poet : Euginia Tan
Title : Different Flow
Size : 1580 x 1120 mm
Medium : Paint on linen
Year : 2022



PUDDLE

what gives

rise?

a swell of roving mud,

nudged soil

the earth is tilled by rain

lain

dry with

dappled sun

a wet hearth

morning daze

drooling in

mounds of damp pronounce

reflections

regrets

regressions

shallow depths spread

cowered, rumbling

(at a touch)

the shelter of large trees

their essence

funnelling

stay put

a bird drinks

bathes

migrates

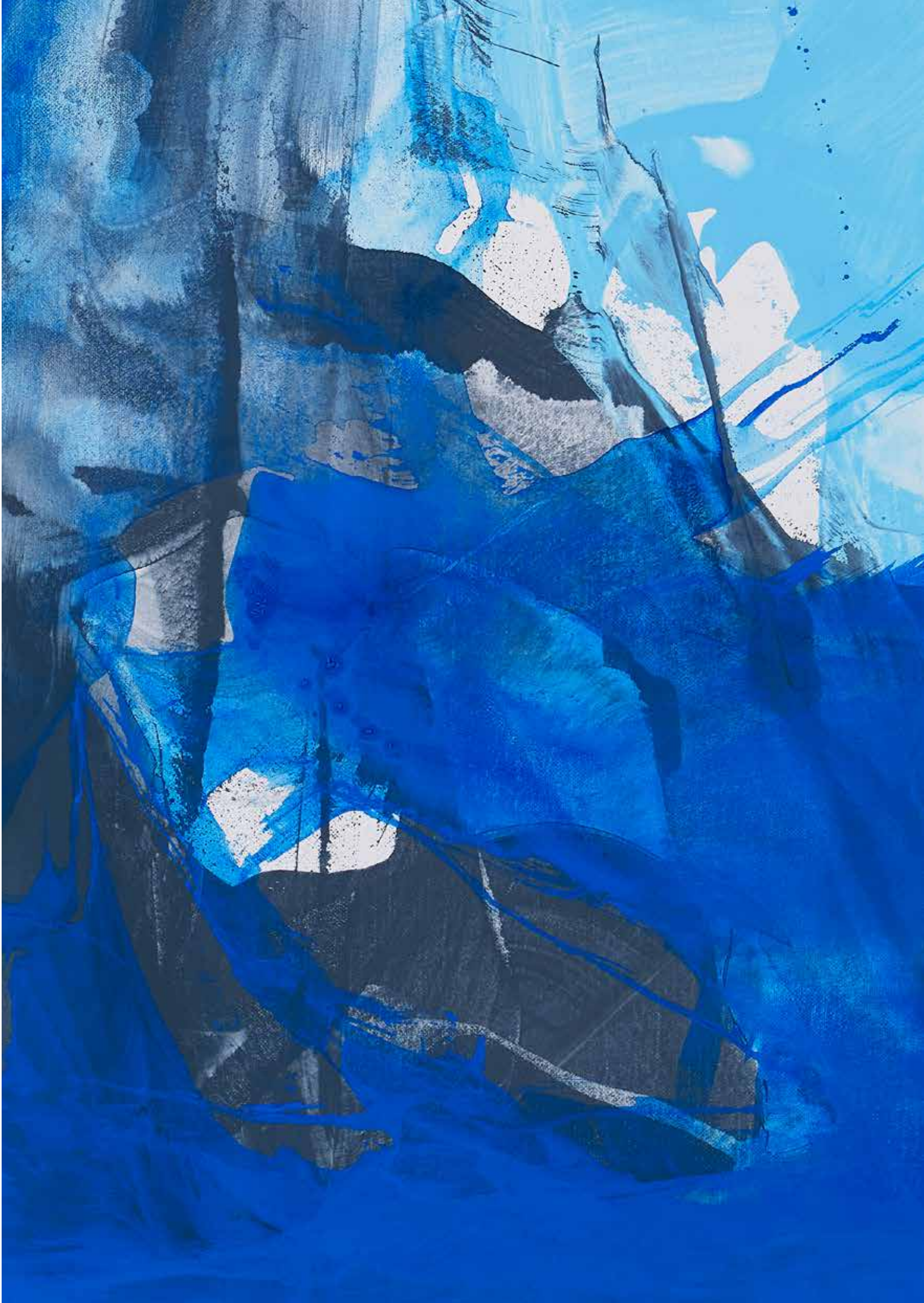


WORK #2

Flowing

Light

Artist : Yeo Shih Yun
Poet : Euginia Tan
Title : Flowing Light
Size : 1580 x 1120 mm
Medium : Paint on linen
Year : 2022



SEDIMENT

we hang, by the skin of our teeth
 we hang, by the skin of our teeth
 we yank at the strands of our hairs
 we yank at the strands of our hairs
 we yank at the strands of our hairs
 we tug at the folds of our gut
 we tug at the folds of our gut

hairs

at best, we learn, at worst, we yearn
 at best, we learn, at worst, we yearn
at best, we learn, at worst, we yearn
 at best, we learn, at worst, we yearn
 on foot, we loot, at root, at moot
 on foot, we loot, at root, at moot
 on foot, we loot, at root, at moot
 on foot, we loot, at root, at moot
 by day, we sweep, by night, we weep
 by day, we sweep, by night, we weep
by day, we sweep, by night, we weep
 by day, we sweep, by night, we weep

we hang, by the skin of our teeth
 we hang, by the skin of our teeth
 we yank at the strands of our hairs
 we yank at the strands of our hairs
 we yank at the strands of our hairs
 we tug at the folds of our gut
 we tug at the folds of our gut

hairs



WORK #6

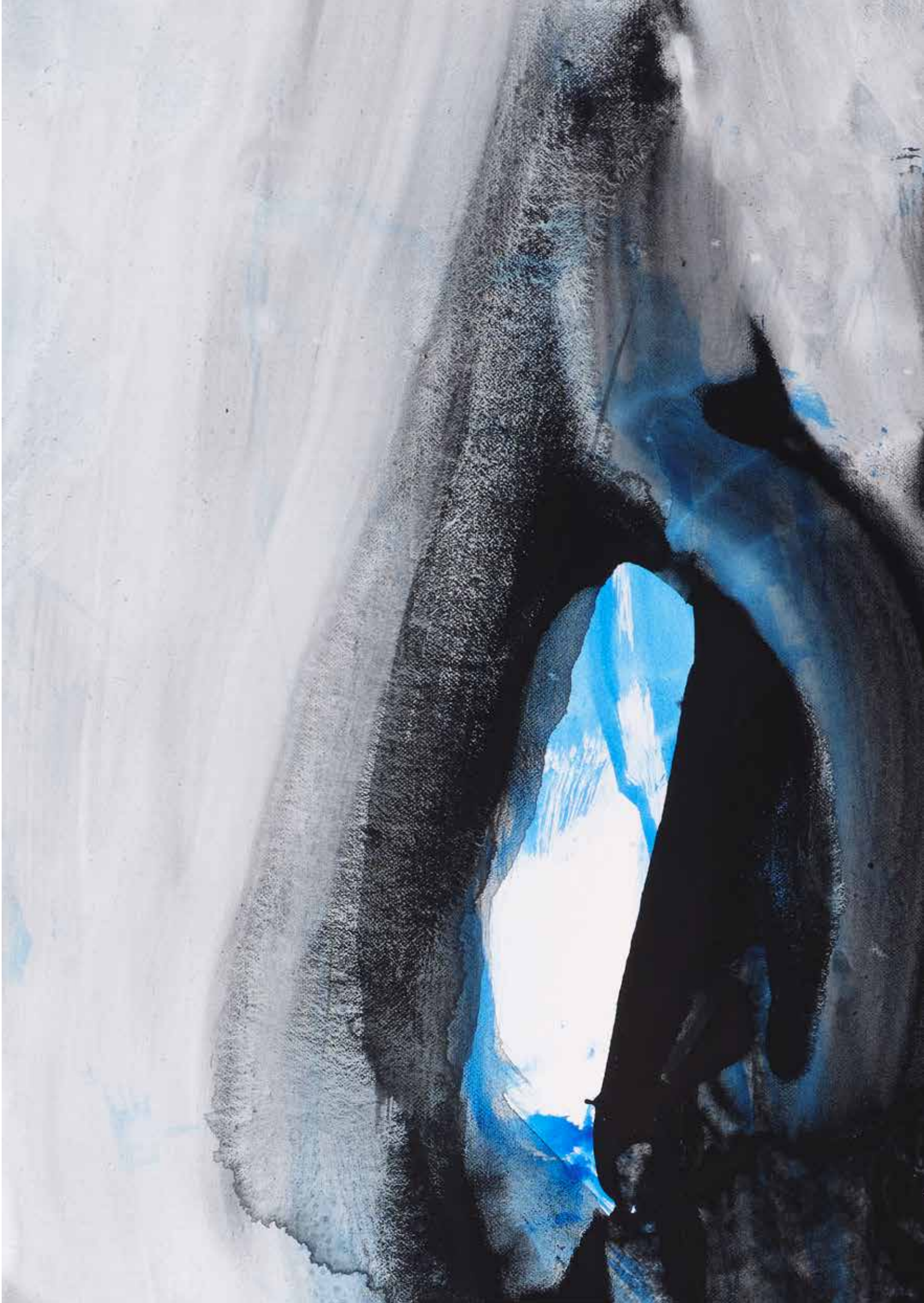
State

Of

Flow

Artist : Yeo Shih Yun
Poet : Euginia Tan

Title : State of Flow
Size : 1580 x 1120 mm
Medium : Paint on linen
Year : 2022



LAGOON

one tongue of a nun
two lungs of our sons
three slugs to the jaw
four talons to a claw
five puns for our fun
six rays of a sun
seven runs of our laws
eight days for our wars
nine months to our flaws

1 – tongue, nun, a
2 – lungs, sons, ours
3 – slugs, jaw, the
4 – talons, claw, a
5 – puns, fun, ours
6 – rays, sun, a
7 – runs, laws, ours
8 – days, wars ours
9 – months, flaws, ours

tongues-
nuns-
lungs-
slugs-
jaws-
talons-
claws-
puns-
fun-
rays-
suns-
runs-
laws-
days-
wars-
months-
flaws-

ours.
ours,
ours:
ours;
ours/
ours?
ours!
*ours**
“ours”



WORK #4

Flowing

Thought

Artist : Yeo Shih Yun
Poet : Euginia Tan
Title : Flowing Thought
Size : 1580 x 1120 mm
Medium : Paint on linen
Year : 2022





WORK #7

The Smell Of Flowing Time

Artist : Yeo Shih Yun
Poet : Euginia Tan

Title : The Smell of Flowing Time
Size : 1580 x 1120 mm
Medium : Paint on linen
Year : 2022



GLACIER

a hardened cold
blue coal
towers of power
collapse of giants
even tyrants melt

an ugly wince
a gargoyle freezes
chalk palaces
landscape ogres
even names recede
the pang of trust
ice rust
a pelvic thrust
echoes of whale call
even lovers hunt

cliffs of glass
an avalanche
powder and dust
old alps groan woes
even skin turns rough

(how do
you do?)
(when last
you danced?)
(where will
you go?)
(what have you
asked?)
(who is
your task?)

colossal mars
a fleet of stars
frost nebulas
the caves have lures
a queen's white furs

we cure our slurs
at moons on earth
the cold eyes us
her wrath on spires
ancestral hurt
orbiting
seas of spectacle
crashing, roaring
sliced fury
divided jury



WORK #5

Of
Time

and

River
Flow

Artist : Yeo Shih Yun
Poet : Euginia Tan

Title : Of Time and River Flow
Size : 1580 x 1120 mm
Medium : Paint on linen
Year : 2022



SWAMP

A heavy heart, a marsh
Mammoth roots protrude
The beat of their own drum
A march
Of bog and murk and mud
Thick love
A syrup of wetland, a trove
The water's lard

The peat of honesty
A fungal art
Turf of dark green
Sprawling tar-like sheen
The swamp pulls back
Its stage drapes
Her massive overgrowth
Reeking of primal life
Survival lush, a pubic bush

A humid hush
The soggy compass
Of our morals, the rush
Amphibian traffic
Lurking like rotting bark
A prophet's ark
Predicting storms
Weathering muck
The remedy of luck





SEPTUM Website

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