



Meng Donglai 孟冬来

05.2024

It all started with "Hairy Legs."

"Hairy Legs" is a character I created in 2019, when I was deeply immersed in the exploration of psychoanalysis, especially fascinated by the meanings behind the images that appeared in dreams. I didn't like things that were too straightforward; instead, I was drawn to decryption games that sparked my interest because they required rational analysis and imaginative thinking, connecting to many different aspects. For example, I had a dream of strange monsters that cut a large wound on my mother's belly, and we had to escape by boarding a spacecraft, with the monsters relentlessly chasing us. Here, the belly, the wound, the spacecraft, and the monsters actually were symbols in the dream that correspond to real-life events.

This inspired me to create a symbol that was meaningless on its own but took on special meaning when placed in a particular context. Just like my mother's belly, which was uninteresting by itself but meant a lot when linked to me. I then saw my legs—two legs covered in very thick hair... In short, they became the protagonist in my stories.

My works usually appear in series, like different novels, each with its own independent storyline but all revolving around a common theme—immersive daydreaming (a psychological phenomenon). Narrative is the core of my creation; I prefer subtlety over directness, and the canvas, unlike books, cannot progress page by page but must instantly encompass everything. Following the logic of writing and adding hidden clues in the flat world is my trick. I believe it's also interactive, like a

little monster, its meaning varying in different people's dreams, often related to their experiences and backgrounds. So, by using the audience's imagination to interpret and decipher the images, it becomes much more vivid and interesting.

The new "nobody cares" series is also based on this. Through two-dimensional paintings, I explore the aspects of immersive daydreaming and narrative techniques. This time, the stage for the "Hairy-Legs people" is set on Earth, in the corners where nobody pays attention, where they embark on their new stories. I use Google Maps' street view mode for my creations. The choice of location is random, whether in the southern or northern hemisphere, urban or rural areas. I choose wherever my finger lands, of course, with some adjustments for composition. These ordinary yet mundane scenes may never involve me, but they often constitute the important daily lives of others. Through Google's street view cars, we are able to meet in the virtual network, seemingly experiencing nothing yet going through a particularly special adventure.

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这要先从毛腿人说起。

毛腿 (hairy-legs) 是我在 19 年创造的一个形象，当时沉浸在对精神分析学的浅薄的探索之中，尤其是对在梦境中出现的形象所对应的现实含义而着迷，我不太喜欢很直观的东西，相反这种需要破译的解密游戏能激起我的兴趣，因为它需要理性的分析和发散的想象，关联到许许多多的方面，比如我曾梦到许多奇形怪状的怪物，他们在我妈妈肚皮上划出了一道很大的伤口，我们不得不坐上飞行器逃跑，它们就在后面不停追赶，在这里肚皮、伤口，

飞行器以及怪物，他们就是梦境里的符号，与现实事件有所对应。

经历一场特别的奇遇。

这给了我灵感，我应该创造一个符号，它本身毫无意义，但是被放在特殊的语境中就有了特殊的含义。就比如我妈妈的肚皮，本身十分无趣，但是当与我联系到一起时，它便意味着很多。然后我看见了腿——两条毛发非常浓密的腿。在青春期的时候我并不觉得腿毛是什么羞耻的事情，我穿着短裤，大方的展示着，但是成年后事情好像就变了，周围的女性习惯于剃毛，以光洁的皮肤为主流的审美，我并不太理解，但也有模有样地学习着，以至于不再敢在公共场所展现我没剃毛的腿……总而言之，一条粗壮的腿上配着像刺猬一样的毛发，成为了我故事中的主人公。

我的作品通常以系列的形式出现，就像一本本不同的小说，拥有着独立的故事情节。但是它们都围绕着一个共同的主题——沉浸式白日梦。（一种心理现象）。叙事性可以说是我创作的内核，就像我说的那样，我不太喜欢过于直观的东西，而画布则平得不能再平了，不能像书本那样一页一页推进，瞬间就将全部收入眼中。而遵循写作的逻辑进行创作，在平板的世界里添加隐藏的线索是我的小窍门。同时我认为这也是交互性的，就像一个小怪物，在不同人的梦境里含义不同，它往往是跟自身经历和背景相关联，所以运用观众自己的想象力，对画面进行联想和破译，就变得生动有趣了不少。

新的系列 *nobyday cares* 同样基于此。通过二维的绘画来对沉浸式白日梦和叙事方式这两个方面的探索。这一次，毛腿人的舞台来到了真实地球，在谁都不在意的犄角旮旯里开启他们新的故事。我利用谷歌地图的街景模式进行创作，位置的选择是随机的，南半球、北半球、城市、乡村，点到哪里就选哪里，当然为了构图我也会稍作选择。这些普通又平凡的场景或许永远都不会有我的参与，但它们往往是另一些人重要的日常生活。通过谷歌的采景车，我们得以跨越时空在虚拟的网络里相遇，似乎什么也没发生，又似乎



Inflatable sculptures

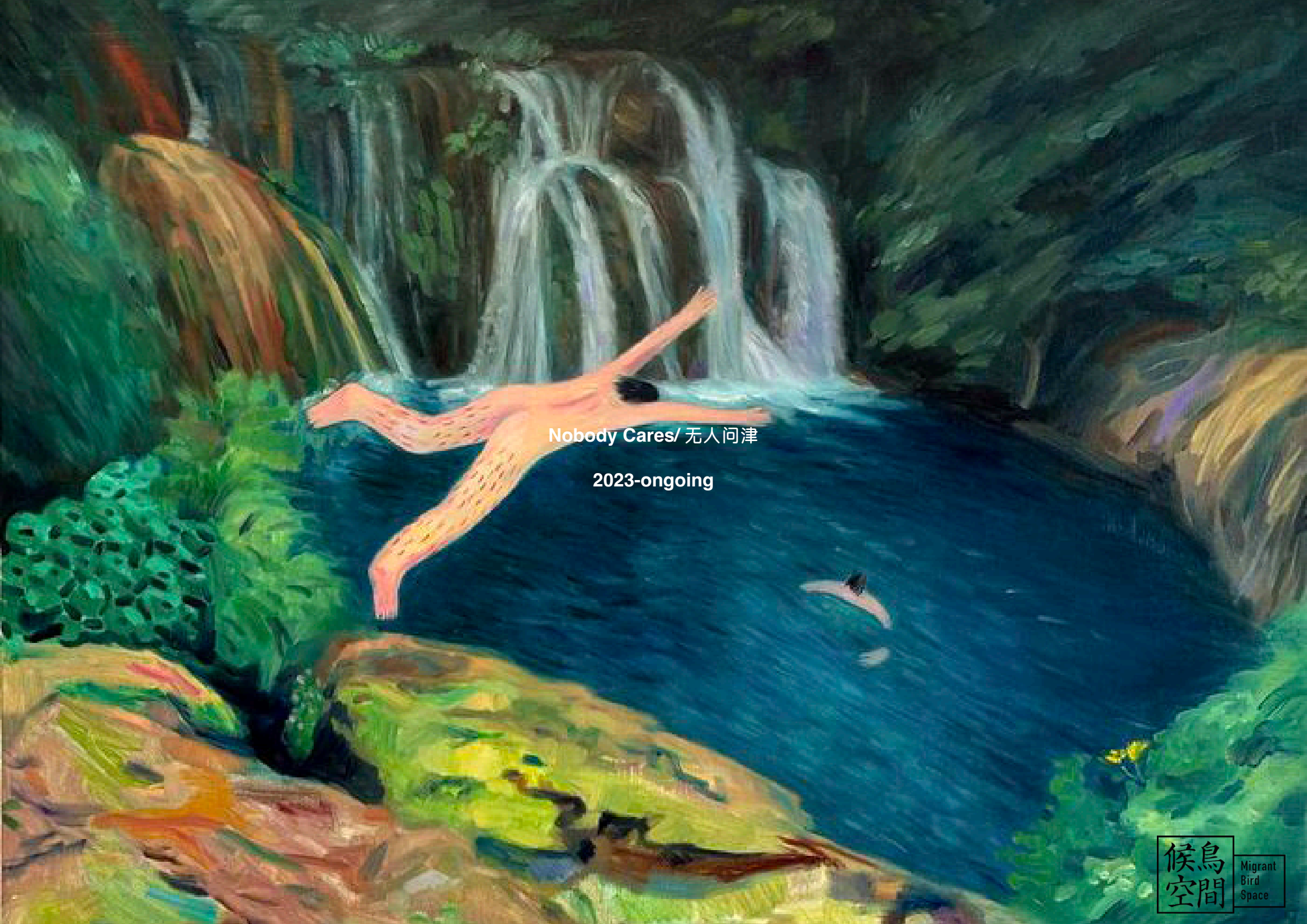
Oxford cloth

3 meters long (left), 3 meters high (right)

Big Art 2023, Amsterdam



(photo credit: Almicheal Fraay)



Nobody Cares/ 无人问津

2023-ongoing

This time, the hairy-legs creatures have arrived on the real Earth, opening their new stage in the unnoticed nooks and crannies, where no one pays any attention.

I create using Google Maps' street view mode, with the location selection being random – the Southern and Northern Hemispheres, cities, and countryside; I pick wherever the cursor lands. Of course, for composition's sake, I make some choices, and then I reinterpret based on the street views generated by the real images. These ordinary and commonplace scenes may never have my direct involvement, but they often make up the daily lives of other people. Through Google Maps car, we finally meet, transcending time and space. It seems as though nothing has happened, yet it feels like a unique adventure. But we all know that it's virtual, even if people can access the exact locations mentioned in the titles of the works (coordinates), they won't be able to see the same flower, car, or the surrounding environment.

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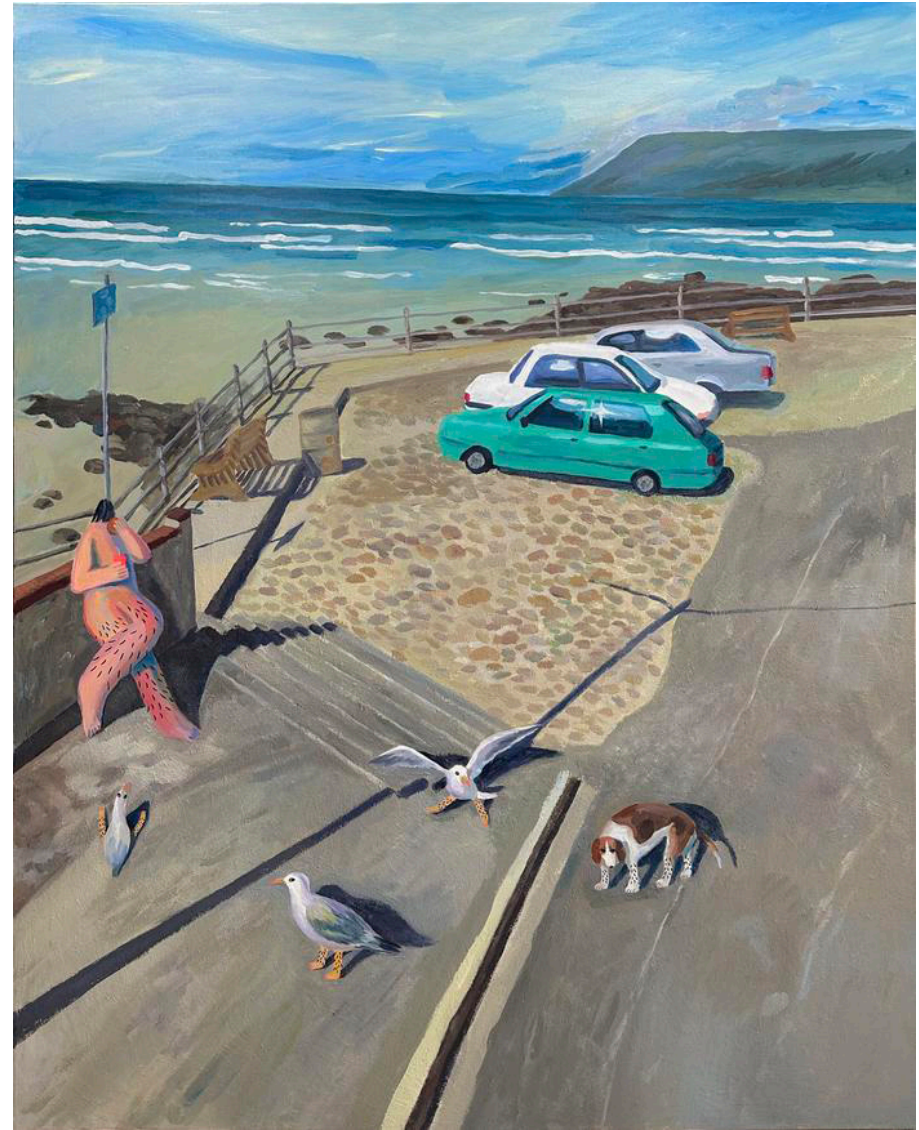
这一次毛腿生物的舞台来到了真实地球，在谁都不在意的犄角旮旯里开启他们新的故事。

我利用谷歌地图的街景模式进行创作，位置的选择是随机的，南半球、北半球、城市、乡村，点到哪里就选哪里，当然为了构图我也会稍作选择，然后根据地图生成的街景重新创作。这些普通又平凡的场景或许永远都不会有我的参与，但它们往往又组成另一些人的日常生活。通过谷歌的采景车，我们得以跨越时空在虚拟的网络里相遇，似乎什么也没发生，又似乎经历一场特别的

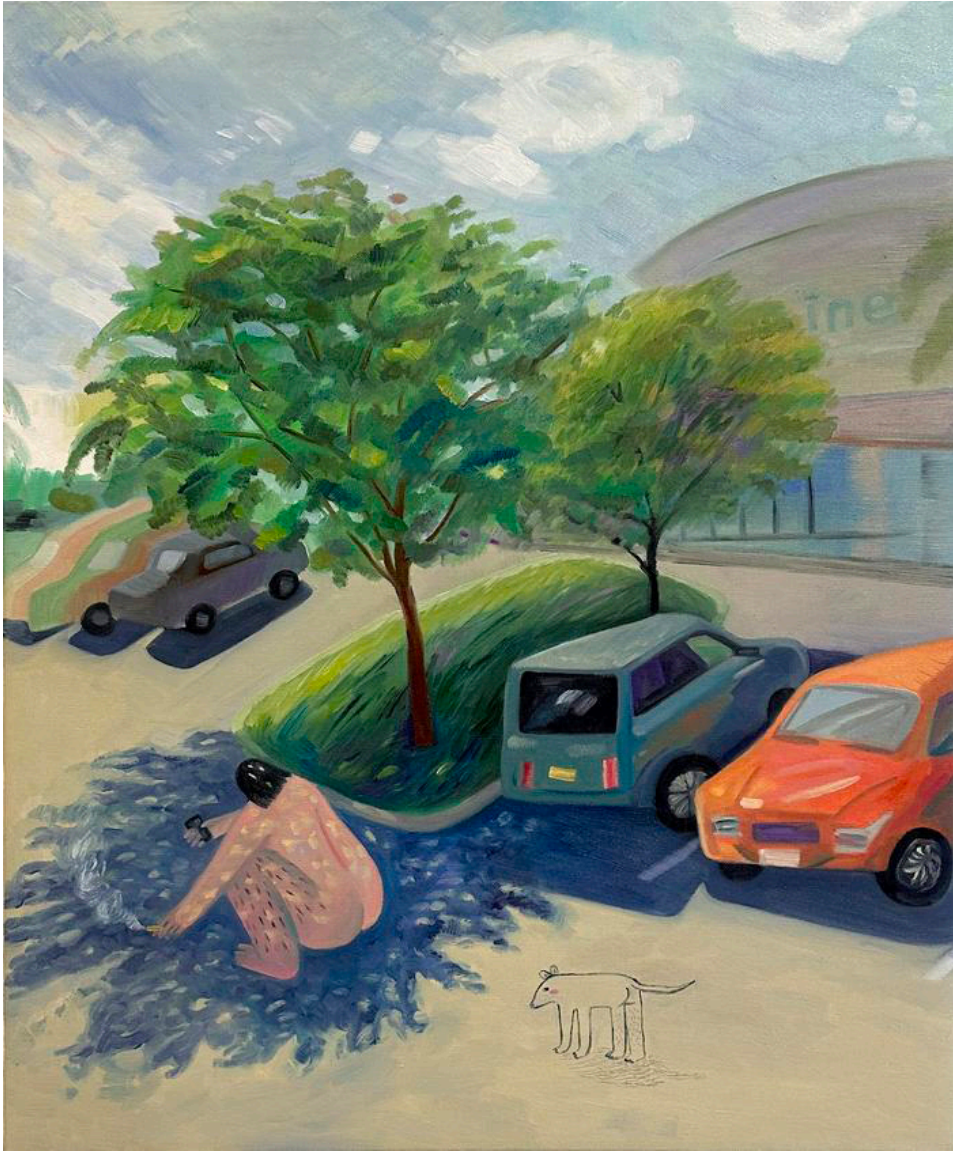
奇遇。即使人们可以访问作品标题中确切的位置，他们也无法看到同一朵花，汽车，或者周围的环境。



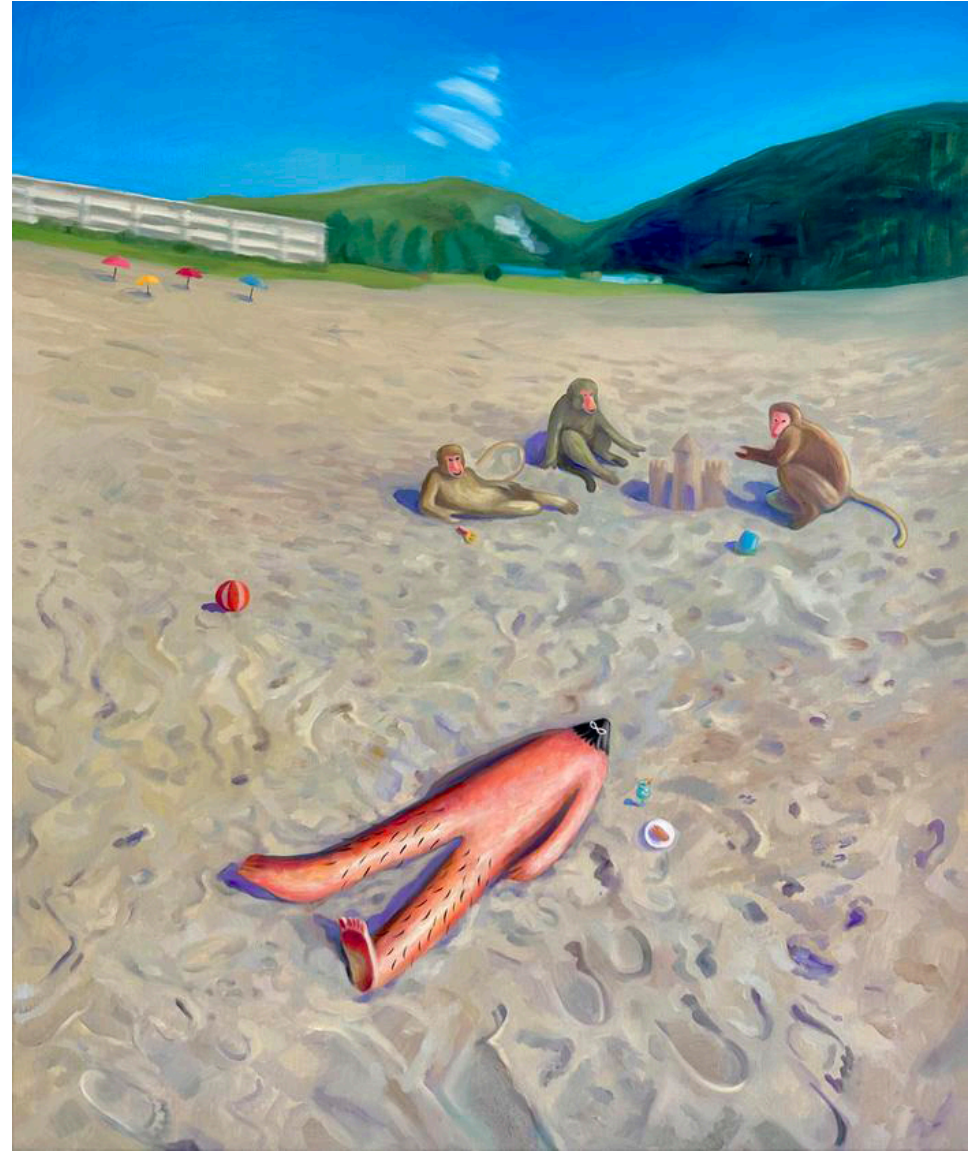
(-16.4790975, 145.4638895)
2023 acrylic on linen 60x50cm



(-34.1092235, 18.4687438)
2023 acrylic on linen 120x150cm



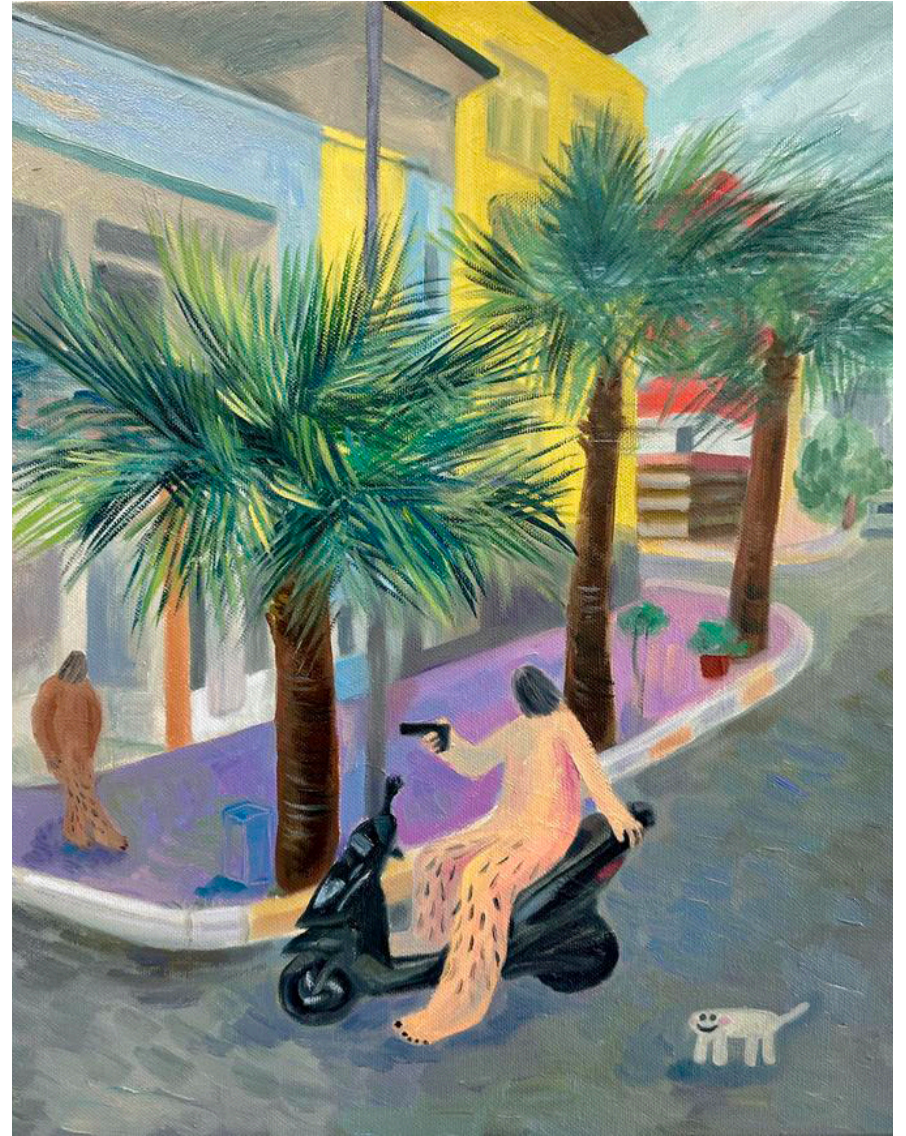
(26.5578115,-81.8723312)
2023 oil on canvas 65x54cm



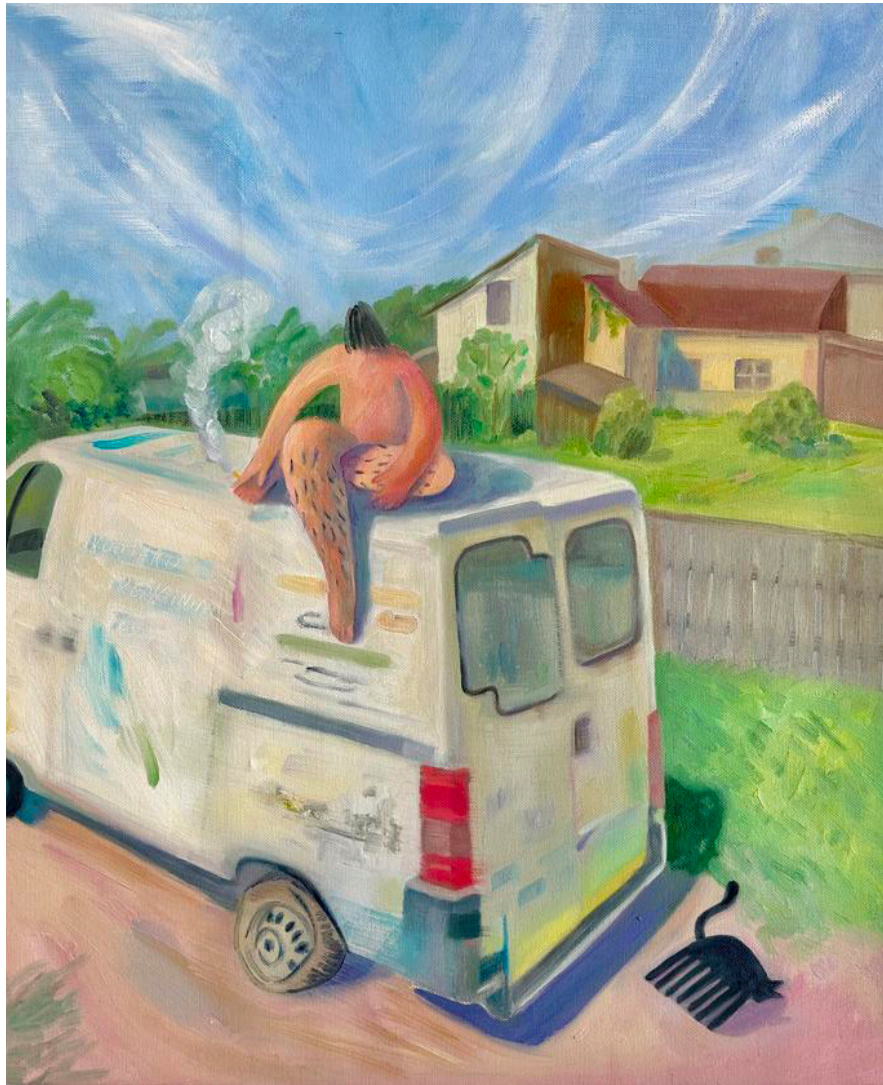
(34.6580629,1389263748)
2023 oil on canvas 100x120cm



(36.8129863,10.1803267)
2023 acrylic on linen 120x150cm



(36.0778334,32.8338975)
2023 oil on canvas 41x33cm



(54.9078509,23.8908756)
2023 oil on canvas 55x46cm



(36.8234188,-4.7068039)
2023 oil on canvas 100x100cm



(68.353732,18.843398)
2023 oil on canvas 100x100cm



(-54.8325059,-68.3477937)
2023 oil on canvas 135x155cm



(37.1365394,-8.4532891)

2024 oil on canvas 155x170cm



(37.1365394,-8.4532891)
2024 oil on canvas 155x170cm



(22.3565601,91.7754306)
2023 oil on canvas 81x65cm



(25.0460319, 121.5113003)
2023 oil on canvas 73x60cm



(33.2898697, 13.5926789)
2023 oil on canvas 81x100cm



(36.8139759,10.1801852)
2023 acrylic on linen 100x120cm



(44.4875468,16.1428790)
2023 oil on canvas 92x73cm



(52.2716174,104.4436670)
2023 oil on canvas 81x100cm



(64.1448381,-21.9298522)
2023 acrylic on linen 100x120cm



MONSTER / 怪物
2023

Taking care of my nephew has been an interesting experience. I have discovered that this five-year-old boy has a vivid imagination for monsters. He truly believes in the existence of these evil creatures with ten eyes and a sinister presence. He believes they lurk outside in the courtyard or fly overhead, waiting to pounce and devour him.

This fascinating phenomenon reminded me of "The Little Prince" by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, at the same time Dionysus, Peter Pan, and Nezha in Chinese mythology. They have sparked my thoughts on 'Puer Aeternus' psychological status.

The Puer Aeternus, a term coined by psychologist Carl Jung, refers to the eternal boy or Peter Pan syndrome, a psyche that represents a longing for adventure and a refusal to grow up and a symbol of innocence and rebellion, and a search for meaning.

For me, the monsters in my nephew's imagination represent the unknown, the dangers and uncertainties of growing up, and the fear of leaving behind the comfort and security of childhood. It has also made me reflect on my experiences and how I have used immersive daydreaming to escape and comfort my daily life. Based on all these, I created a pair of strange 'good friends' in my painting series, a little boy with a horse face and a horse with a boy's face, alluding to each other spiritually. They wandered through forests, suburbs, towns and cities and met other monsters. They are happy and lonely.

Sometimes people are obsessed with the illusion of youth and hope to be

a teenager forever, but ignore the real danger of it, and necessarily the price. It could be a trap created by the era or just an alarmist. Who knows? At least, the 'Monsters' offers a possibility of how individuals use escapism and fantasy to deal with the complexities of life and a deeper approach to their sense of self.

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照顾我的侄子是一次有趣的经历。我发现这个五岁的男孩对怪物的想象力非常丰富。他真的相信这些长着十只眼睛的凶恶存在的邪恶生物的存在。他相信它们潜伏在外面的院子里或飞过头顶，等着扑过来吞噬他。

这个迷人的现象让我想起了安托万·德·圣埃克苏佩里的《小王子》，同时也让我想起了中国神话中的酒神、小飞侠和哪吒。他们引发了我对“Puer Aeternus”心理状态的思考。

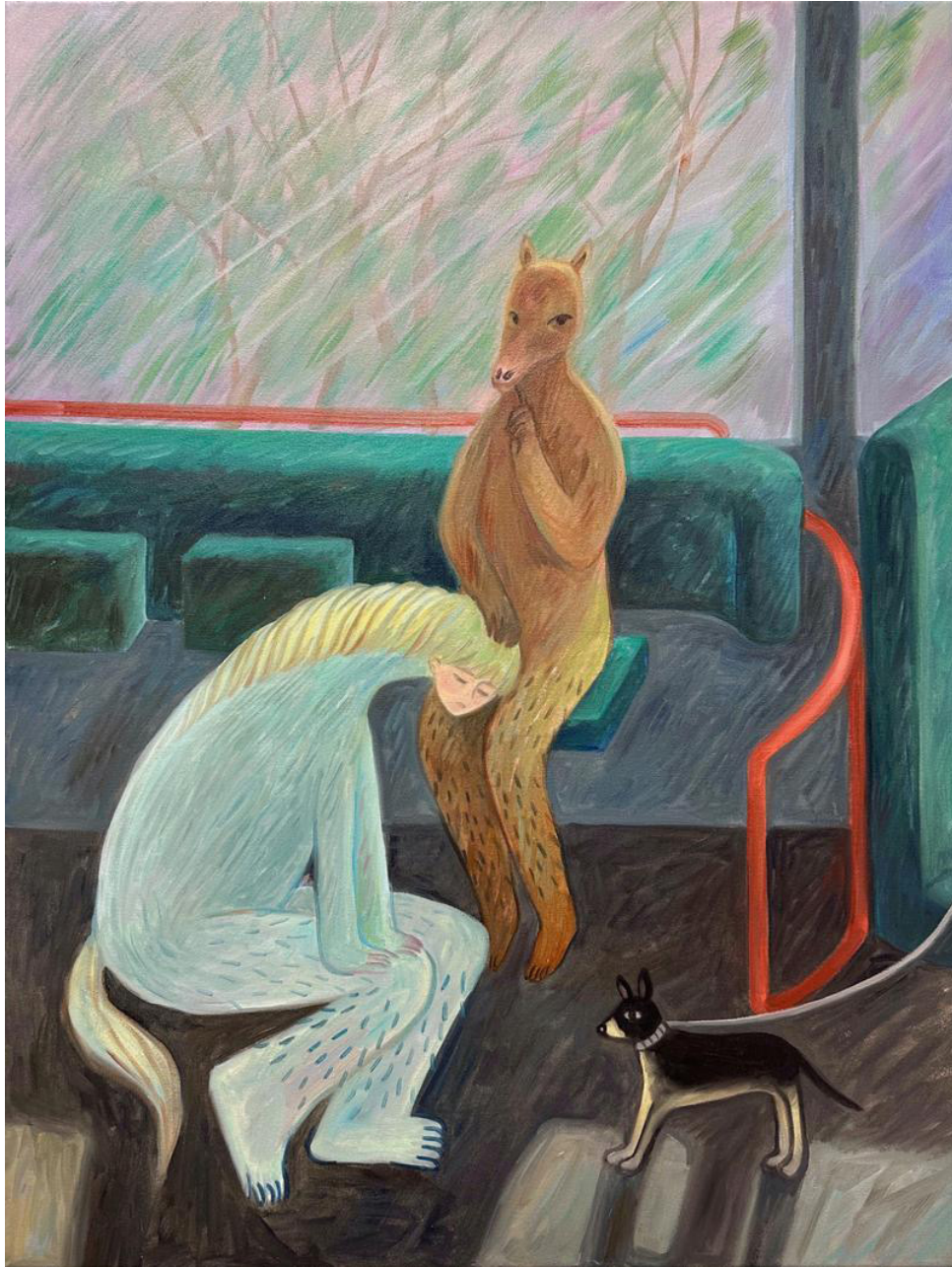
Puer Aeternus (永恒少年) 是心理学家 Carl Jung 创造的一个术语，指的是永恒的男孩或彼得潘综合症，一种代表渴望冒险和拒绝成长的心理，是纯真和叛逆的象征，也是对意义的追求。

对我来说，我侄子想象中的怪物代表着未知、成长过程中的危险和不确定性，以及对离开童年舒适和安全的恐惧。这也让我反思自己的经历，以及我如何利用身临其境的白日梦来逃避和安慰我的日常生活。基于这些，我在我的绘画系列中创造了一对奇怪的“好朋友”，一个马脸的小男孩和一匹男孩脸的马，在精神上相互暗示。他们在森林、郊区、城镇和城市中游荡，遇到了其他怪物。他们快乐而孤独

有时人们执着于青春的幻想，希望永远是少年，却忽略了它真正的危险，以及必然付出的代价。这可能是时代的陷阱，也可能只是危言耸听。谁知道？至少，“怪物”提供了一种可能性，即个人如何使用逃避现实和幻想来应对生活的复杂性，以及更深入地了解他们的自我意识。



Winterland
oil on canvas
100*80cm



Bus
oil on canvas
60*80cm



Selfie
oil on canvas
50*60cm



Pijnacker shadow
oil on canvas
80*100cm



Let me do it for you ~
oil on canvas
100*120cm



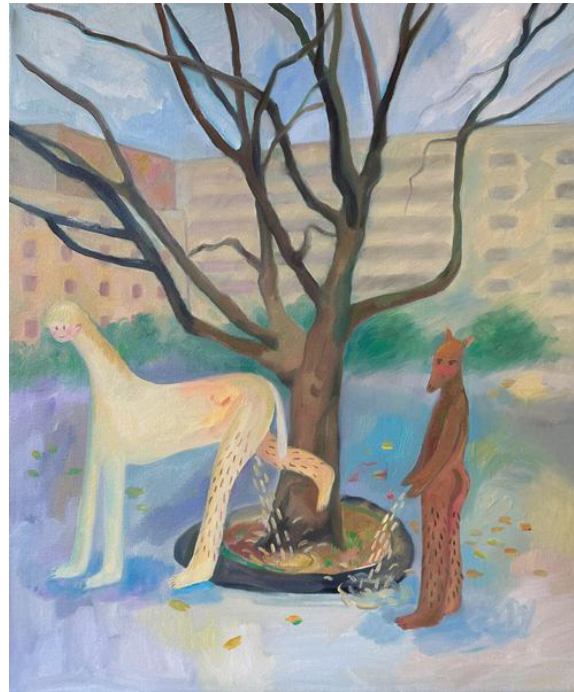
Uninvited guest
oil on canvas
80*80cm



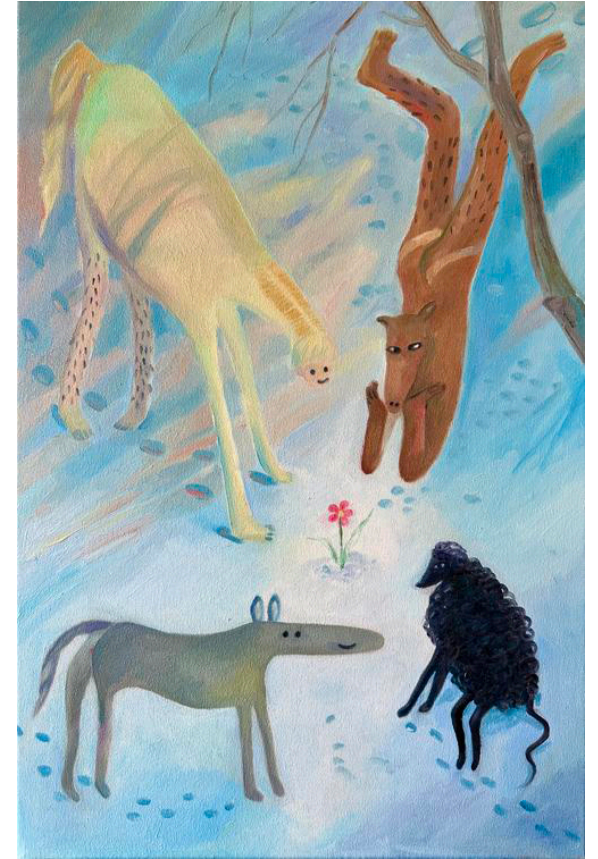
Big big frog
oil on canvas
60*40cm



Happy! Happy! Happy!
oil on canvas
60*40cm



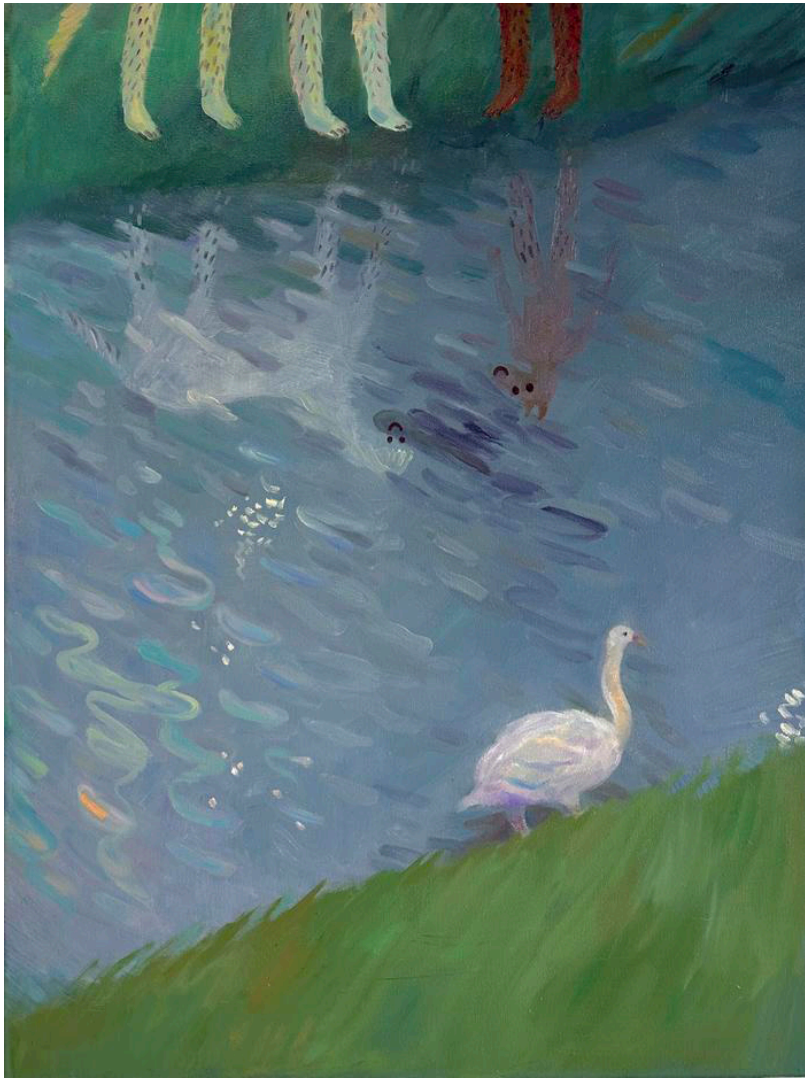
Watering the spring
oil on canvas
60*50cm



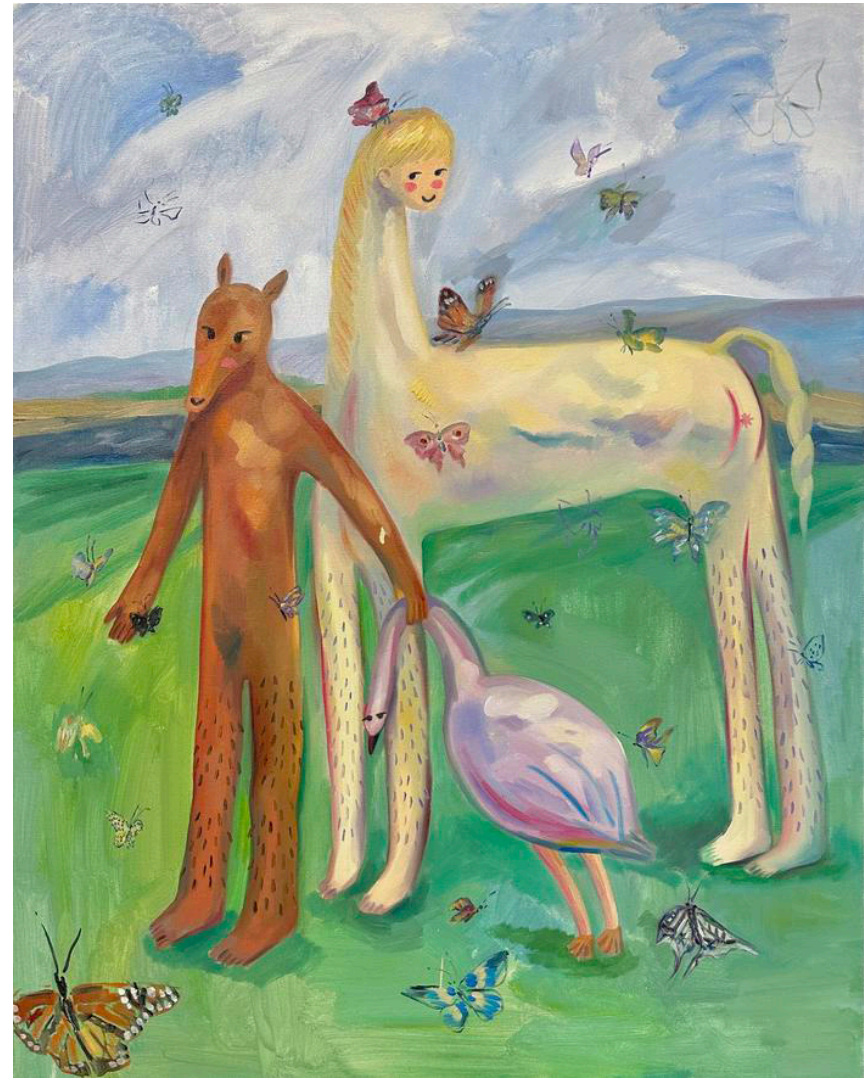
Byebye winter
oil on canvas
60*40cm



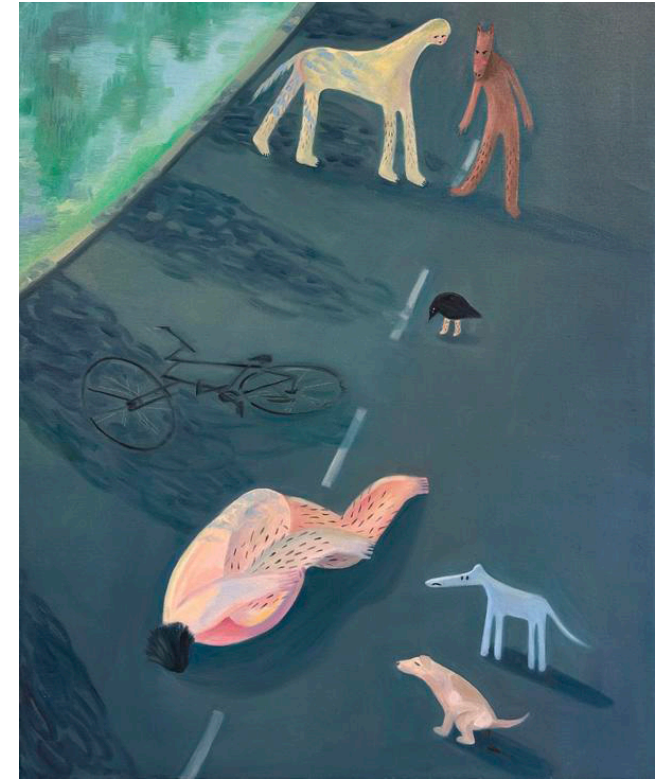
Back home
oil on canvas
55*46cm



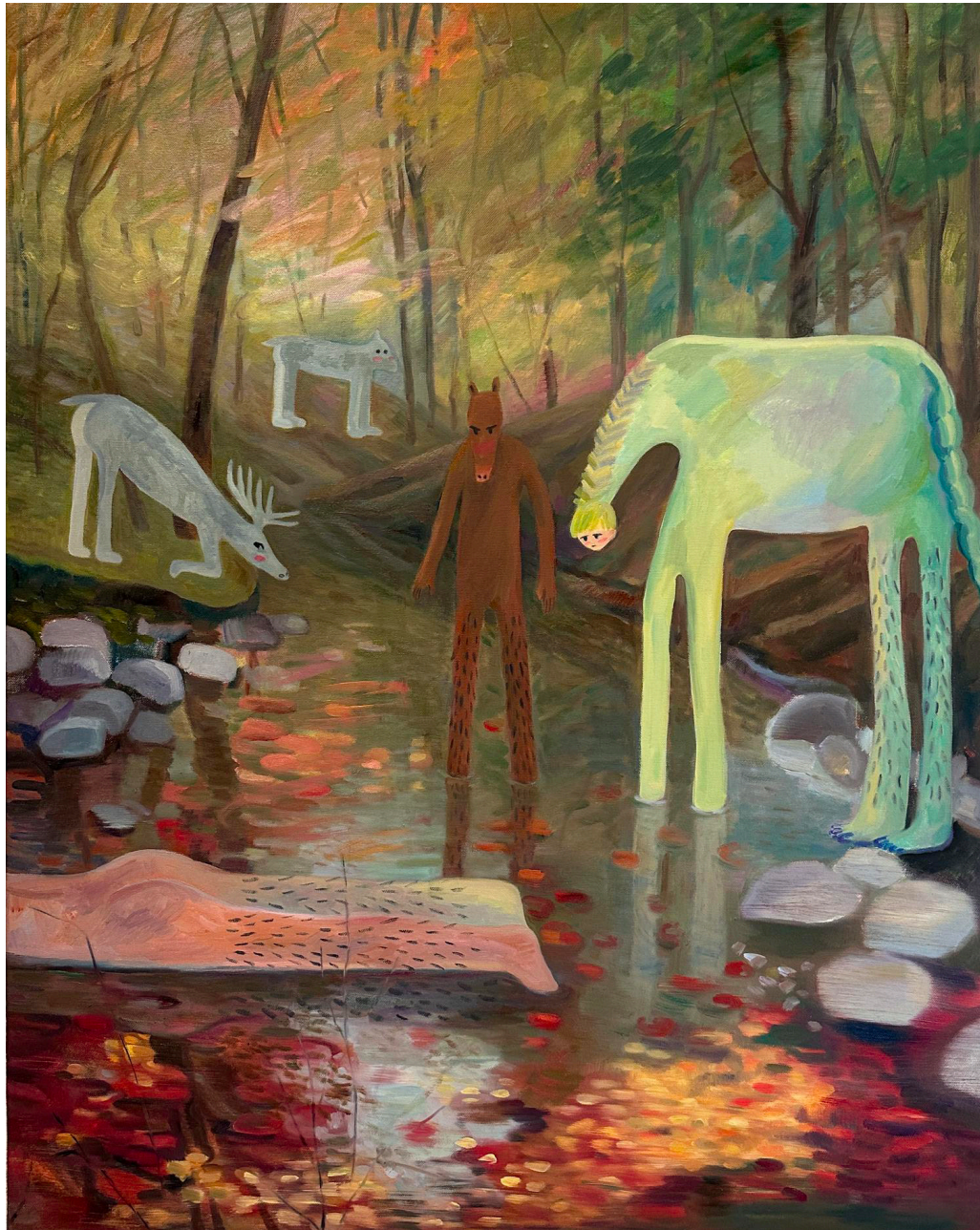
Crime in progress
oil on canvas
60*80cm



Terrine de foie gras à l'orange
oil on canvas
81*65cm



N473,Delft (1, 2)
oil on canvas
100*100cm
73*60cm



Death, love and growth

oil on canvas

92*73cm



Monster
oil on canvas
60*80cm

Donglai Meng (B.1994, Dalian, China)

Currently living and working in the Netherlands

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EDUCATION

2017-2019 MA Fine Arts, Master Institute of Visual Cultures AKV
St.Joost, Den Bosch, the Netherlands

2013-2017 BA Oil Painting, Academy of Fine Arts of Rome, Rome, Italy

ARTIST RESIDENCY

2022 Foundation B.A.D, Rotterdam, the Netherlands

2021 OAZO AIR, Amsterdam, the Netherlands

2021 Nieuw en Meer AIR, Amsterdam, the Netherlands

2020 WitteRook, Breda, the Netherlands

2019 Studio Kura, Fukuoka, Japan

AWARDS/GRANTS

2023 Artists Start 2023-24, Mondriaan Fonds

2021 Artist Project grants, Mondriaan Fonds

2020 Stipendium Emerging Artists 2020-21, Mondriaan Fonds

SELECTED EXHIBITION

Solo Exhibition

2024 What A Windy Day, KennaXu Gallery, Shenzhen, China

2024 The Moon Slides Over the Sea, Willem Twee Kunstruimte, Den Bosch, the Netherlands

2022 Oh! My Dog!, Cha x Art, Amsterdam, the Netherlands

2022 The Baron In The Trees, Foundation B.A.D, Rotterdam, the Netherlands

2021 A Porn Writer, OAZO AIR, Amsterdam, the Netherlands

2021 Make Lemonade, AAIE Center, Rome, Italy

2021 A Murder Case, Nieuw en Meer, Amsterdam, the Netherlands

2020 Four States, Funspace Gallery OnlineRoom, Rome, Italy (Online)

2020 Middy Dreaming, WitteRook, Breda, the Netherlands

2019 Hairy Legs Shrine, Studio Kura, Fukuoka, Japan

2017 Poetic Game, Palazzo Velli Expo, Rome, Italy

Group Exhibition

2024 Magnifica, AAIE Center, Rome, Italy

2024 A Touch, A Glance, Hexagon Gallery, K11 MUSEA, HongKong, China

2024 Abstracte Narratieve Vormen, Galerie Ecker, Breda, the Netherlands

2024 FLYFLYFLY, KennaXu Gallery, Shenzhen, China

2024 '2024', Moosey Gallery, London, the UK

2023 Fever Dream, FRANS HALS Museum, Haarlem, the Netherlands

2023 A piece of angel cake, What Art Can Do project space, Amsterdam, the Netherlands

2023 DIONYSUS, DAKE Art Museum, Chengdu, China



2023 One day I'll fly away, Galerie SANAA, Utrecht, the Netherlands
2023 Atari, No Man's Art Gallery, Amsterdam, the Netherlands
2023 Venti Sussurranti, AAIE Center, Rome, Italy
2023 Spring Musings & Muddy Feet, Galerie SANAA, Utrecht, the Netherlands
2023 Launch show of Curated By, Huis Vasari, Amsterdam, the Netherlands
2022 Draw the Line II- The Female Gaze, Wobby.club, Kunstpodium T, Tilburg, the Netherlands
2022 Pets and Animals, Kollektion Kitsch, WORM, Rotterdam, the Netherlands
2022 Abitudine Artistica Ideologia Eccellente, AAIE Center, Rome, Italy
2022 In a pig's whisper, De Vishal, Haarlem, the Netherlands
2022 The Shadow Of The Void, AAIE Center, Rome, Italy
2022 Crisis Kunst, Niffo Galerie, Rotterdam, the Netherlands
2022 Prospects 10th, by Mondriaan Fonds, Art Rotterdam, Rotterdam, the Netherlands
2022 We are all guests#8, Foundation B.A.D, Rotterdam, the Netherlands
2022 Biennale di Todi, Tower Gallery by AAIE Center, Todi, Italy
2021 Needles in the hay, The curators room, Amsterdam, the Netherlands
2021 With permission from the officer, PuntWG, Amsterdam, the Netherlands
2021 #artistsupportpledge, De Balie, Amsterdam, the Netherlands
2021 CONTEMPORARY VENICE 2020, Palazzo Albrizzi-Capello/ THE ROOM Contemporary Art Space, Venice, Italy
2020 Art in the Time of Coronavirus & Social Distancing, Circle Foundation website (Online Exhibition)

2019 Graduation Exhibition - POSTCOMPOST, Master Institute of Visual Cultures AKV St.Joost, Den Bosch, the Netherlands
2019 Dream Power, Theater Vascello, Rome, Italy
2019 Percorso d'Arte a Castiglione III edizione, Palombara Sabina, Italy
2018 Transition, Eye Research Lab, Eye Filmmuseum, Amsterdam, the Netherlands
2018 What Do We Dance For? Gallery Nectar, Tbilisi, Georgia
2017 TRACCE 2017, San Domenico, Italy

ART FAIR/ AUCTION/ EVENT

2024 Affordable Art Fair, Hong Kong, China (with AAIE Center)
2023 Big Art, Amsterdam, the Netherlands
2023 Springboard art fair, Utrecht, the Netherlands
2022 Dead Darlings, Amsterdam, the Netherlands
2022 THIS art fair, Amsterdam, the Netherlands
2021 THIS art fair, Amsterdam, the Netherlands
2021 CONTEMPORARY VENICE 2020 - ITSLIQUID International Art Fair, Venice, Italy

ARTIST TALK/PRESENTATION

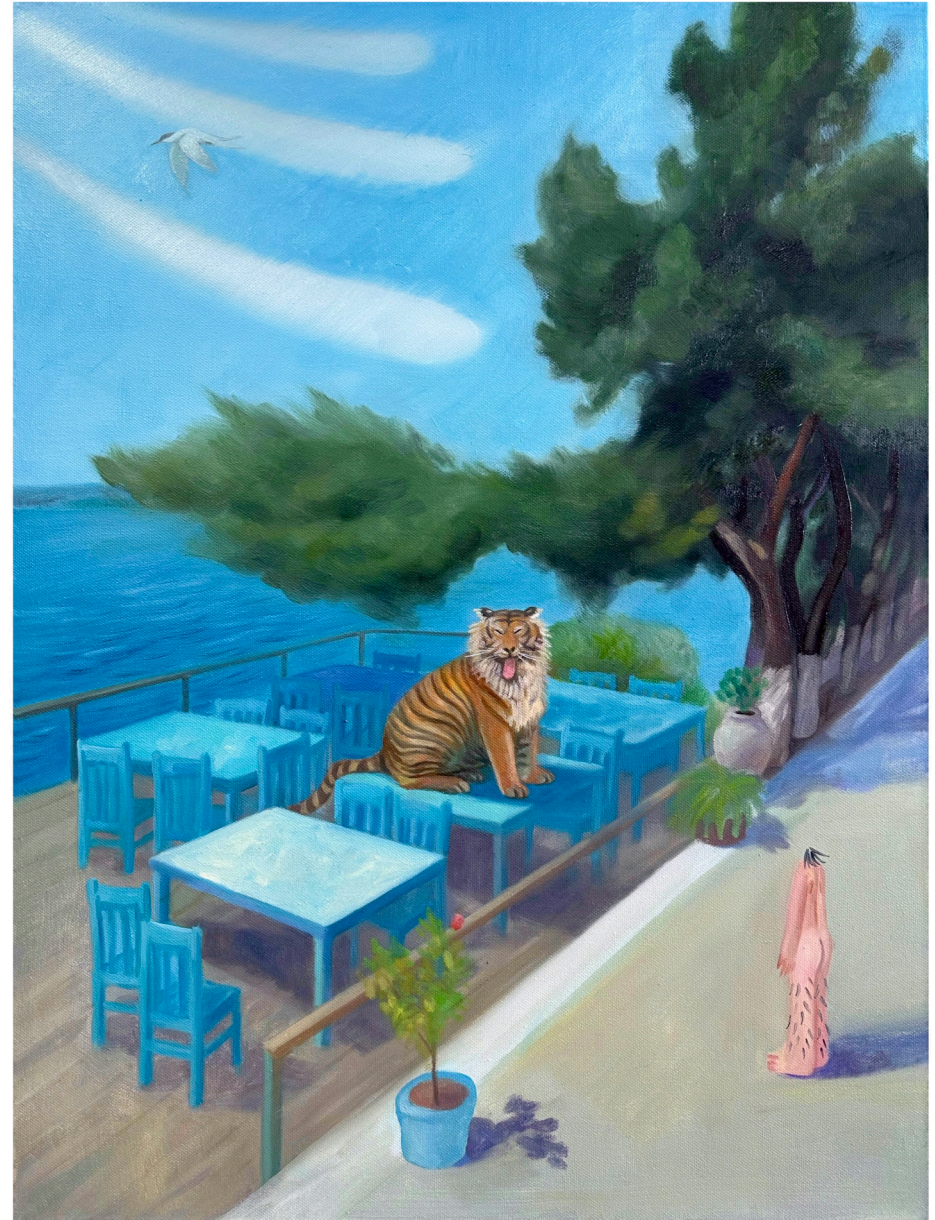
2019 Research Presentation, V2_, Lab for the Unstable Media, Rotterdam, Netherlands

WORKSHOP

2020 kidz-residency for Breda Cultuurnacht at Witte Rook, Breda

2019 organizer of the workshop “Brown shoes don’t make it” at St.Joost master institute, Den Bosch (with Hossein Daneshpajoo, Monique van de Ven, Simon Oosterhuis)

2018 organizer of the workshop “Incense in the room” at St.Joost master institute, Den Bosch (with Peng Zhang)





(-5.1119459, -36.6358128)
2024, 50x60 Cm
oil and Acrylic on canvas



(52.5234697,
13.3895196)
2024
40 x 50 cm
oil and Acrylic
on canvas

CONTACTS



Migrant Bird Space is a Berlin & Beijing-based art foundation and gallery, providing a showcase for artists as well as art agency services in China & Europe. Working out of the gallery space at Koppenplatz in the heart of Berlin, the foundation offers a professional platform for cross-cultural communication between China and Europe with a focus on contemporary Chinese art. Promoting both established and emerging artists, Migrant Birds provides gallery spaces for exhibitions in Beijing and Berlin, an artist-in-residence program, regular talks and lectures, as well as support in liaising with Museums, universities, private institutions and more.

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