

An abstract painting featuring two faces in profile, facing each other. The faces are rendered with soft, blended colors like pink, purple, and yellow. The background is a mix of these colors with some darker, more textured areas. The overall style is painterly and expressive.

JIANG ZHI 蔣志:
CAN I BECOME
BETTER?

這個我能變好嗎？

8.9 - 24.10. 2020



Jiang Zhi (b. 1971, Hunan, China) works with a wide range of media, including photography, painting, video, and installation. Fiction and poetry have also been an important part of his artistic output. Consistently engaging with contemporary social and cultural issues, Jiang consciously positions himself at the intersection of poetics and sociology, while weaving mundane social and personal experiences into his works. Jiang Zhi has had two major solo retrospectives at OCAT Shenzhen (2016) and Times Museum in Guangzhou (2012). His work was also shown in international institutions and biennials, including “Art and China after 1989: Theater of the World” (Guggenheim Museum, New York, USA, 2017); “Canton Express: Art of the Pearl River Delta” (M+ Museum, Hong Kong, 2017); the 9th Shanghai Biennale (Power Station of Art, Shanghai, China, 2012); the 4th Guangzhou Triennial (Guangdong Art Museum, Guangzhou, China, 2012); “Between Past and Future: New Photography and Video from China” (ICP and Asia Society, New York, USA, 2004); “Zone of Urgency”, the 50th Biennale di Venezia (Venice, Italy, 2003); and “P_A_U_S_E”, the 4th Gwangju Biennale (Gwangju, South Korea, 2002). Jiang was awarded the Chinese Contemporary Art Award (CCAA) in 2000; the Academic Award of Reshaping History (Chinart from 2000 to 2009) in 2010; and the Credit Suisse Today Art Award in 2012. Jiang Zhi currently lives and works in Beijing.

蔣志（1971年，生於中國湖南）的創作包括攝影、繪畫、錄像及裝置；小說和詩作亦是他開始藝術創作以來的重要媒介。他長期深入地關注各類當代社會與文化的議題，自覺地處在詩學與社會學這兩個維度的交匯處上，並著力於如何使那些我們熟悉的日常社會和個人經驗轉換進作品文本中。蔣志曾於深圳OCAT美術館（2016）和廣東時代美術館（2012）舉辦個人回顧展。他曾參與多個國際機構展覽和年展，包括美國古根漢美術館的“1989後的藝術與中國—世界劇場”（2017）、香港M+的“廣東快車：珠江三角洲的藝術”（2017）、第九屆上海雙年展（2012）、第四屆廣州三年展（2012）、美國國際攝影中心和亞洲協會的“在過去與未來之間：來自中國的新攝影及錄像”（2004）、第50屆威尼斯雙年展的“緊急地帶”（2003）和第四屆光州雙年展的“暫停”（2002）。蔣志曾獲頒的獎項包括2000年的中國當代藝術獎（CCAA）、2010年的改造歷史（2000-2009年中國新藝術）學術大獎以及2012年的瑞信·今日藝術獎。蔣志現於北京居住和工作。

Jiang Zhi: Can I Become Better? The exhibition features newly made figurative portraits executed in 2019 and 2020, a time of social upheaval and global pandemic, a moment when the anthropocentric world is under threat, when systems of health, economy, and mutual trust are in serious collapse. During this time, the artist made an important pivot from the depiction of objects and nature, to the manifestation of human beings and their inner condition. This ensemble includes works selected from multiple series, such as *Youth*, *Mr. Beard*, *Human Body*, and *Seven Blind People*. The exhibition title “Can I become better?” comes from the artist’s self-reflection and personal response to the question “Can the world become better?”. Despite a certain pessimism from apathy and worry, the artist expresses his passion and optimism based on personal belief and human reality.

蔣志個展《這個我能變好嗎？》展出藝術家於2019年和2020年期間創作的人像繪畫。這兩年間所發生的社會動盪和全球疫症，促使以人為中心的世界受到威脅，衛生、經濟和信任體系面臨嚴重衝擊。在此期間，藝術家從繪畫靜物和自然，轉移至對人類及其內在狀態的體現，成為了重要的轉折點。這組繪畫作品包括數個系列如《年輕人》、《鬍子先生》、《人體》和《七個盲人》。展覽標題可以說是藝術家在動蕩和艱難的時期，對「這個世界能變好嗎？」更多出於自省的回應，雖然帶著悲觀的冷峻和憂患，但同時表現了藝術家基於個人信念和人類現實未來的熱切和樂觀。

Many of the works in this exhibition are portraits painted during the pandemic. Some of them are more abstract, some are more figurative, some are more gloomy, and some are more cheerful. What was your creative state during this epidemic?

JZ: During the pandemic, I kept track of various news and comments on the Internet. At the worst moments during the outbreak, I watched the news for almost seven or eight hours a day, and I felt very heavy. Various emotional reactions including fear, anger, grief...were emerging. We suddenly faced disasters one after another very intensively. The turmoil in Hong Kong, the Cold War between China and the United States, national sovereignty, interests and role disputes... The possibility of human beings hating each other and killing each other is increasing. If the good of human nature is no match for the evil of human nature, it will make people desperate. In addition, the new coronavirus is sweeping through the world, and what we see every day is that life and death are in an instant, and the experience of impermanence is so painful.

All kinds of true and fake news and various kinds of rhetoric made me experience how the subjective state of people affects their perception of and stance on "events". Here we also see many people with good morals, such as doctors, nurses, and volunteers who take care of patients day and night... There are also many selfish manifestations, not just ordinary people, but also politicians, officials, businessmen, and public figures. The greater the power, the more harmful their selfishness. We can see how the "selfishness" of each person profoundly affects people's perceptions and thoughts.

In the face of these various situations in the world, what can art do? How should artists face creation?

JZ: Blindly being fearful, angry or sad does not help. You still need the ability to experience pleasure in life. During the pandemic, I still went to the studio almost every day. I consciously maintain the intensity of my work practice, even more than before, as a healing to myself, which shall not be controlled by fear and sadness.

Creation should be as normal as the three meals of the day. I had a whimsical idea. If I did an exhibition of the paintings during this time, I will call it "three meals a day". Not for fame or fortune, not for roles, not for my own style and label, not for the history of art, not for expressing myself in front of others... Because these are extra selfish desires in addition to "three meals a day". Creation is a basic need for survival, the spiritual need of humanity. I totally accept that I only create improvised paintings.

The name of the exhibition was finally set as "Can I make this better?" Why?

JZ: This is because I have hope in life.

People can live just like this. If there is less "out of selfish desire", will "I" become better? Selfish individuals can only form false and harmful "us". The combination of selfless self is the true "us". Only with such combination of "us" can the world become better.

Therefore, the premise (the only condition, in my opinion) to answer "Can this world be better?" is: "Will I become better with this?"

是次展覽中的作品，不少是在疫期間繪畫的人像，當中有些較抽象、有些較具像、有些較陰鬱、有些較愉悅。這段疫期間，你的創作狀態是如何的？

蔣： 在疫情階段，我不斷追蹤網上的各種消息和評論。在疫情最嚴重的時候，差不多每天看七八個小時，心情非常沈重。各種情緒反應包括恐懼、憤怒、悲痛……紛紛湧現。我們突然非常密集的面對一件接一件的災難。香港社會運動，中美冷戰、國家主權、利益和角色之爭…… 人類相互仇視、自相殘殺的可能性越來越大。如果人性之善敵不過人性之惡，這是會讓人絕望的。又加上新冠病毒的疫情席捲全球，每天看到的是生離死別就在剎那之間，對無常的體會如此痛切。各種真真假假的「真實」報道、各種形形色色的言論，讓我更加體驗到人的主觀狀態是如何影響到對「事件」的感知和表態。在此我們也看到很多品德美好的人，比如那些日夜搶救病人的醫生、護士、志願者……也有很多自私的表現，不僅僅是普通人，某些政客、官員、商人、公眾人物……權力越大者，他們的自私表現危害更大。我們可以看到，每個人的「自私」又是如何深刻的影響左右感知和思想的。

面對世界這些種種處境，藝術能做些什麼？藝術家應該怎樣面對創作？

蔣： 一味的恐懼、憤怒、傷心是於事無補的，生活中還是要有能感受

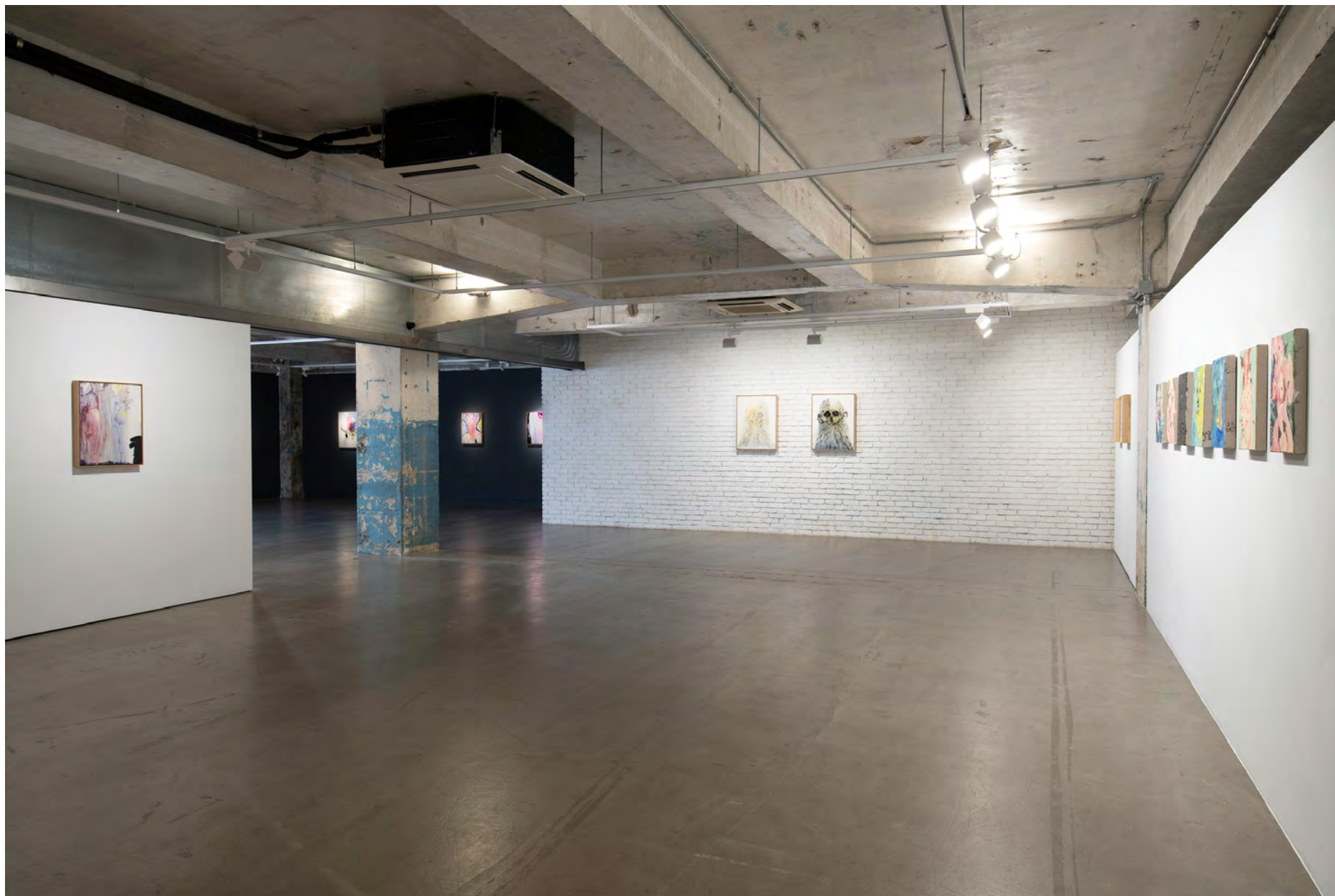
到愉悅的能力。疫期間，我還是幾乎每天都去工作室。我下意識的保持以往的工作強度，甚至比以前更加多，當成對自己的療癒，不能被恐懼和悲傷控制。

創作應該是一個和「三餐飯」一樣的常態。中間我有一個想法，如果我要做一個在這段時間的繪畫的展覽，我就把它叫做「一日三餐」。不是為了名利，不是為了角色，不是為了自我的風格和標籤，不是為了藝術史，不是為了在人前表達自己……因為這些是在「一日三餐」之外，額外的出於自私的慾望。 創作是基本的生存需要，是人的精神需要。我完全接受自己只畫即興而來的畫。

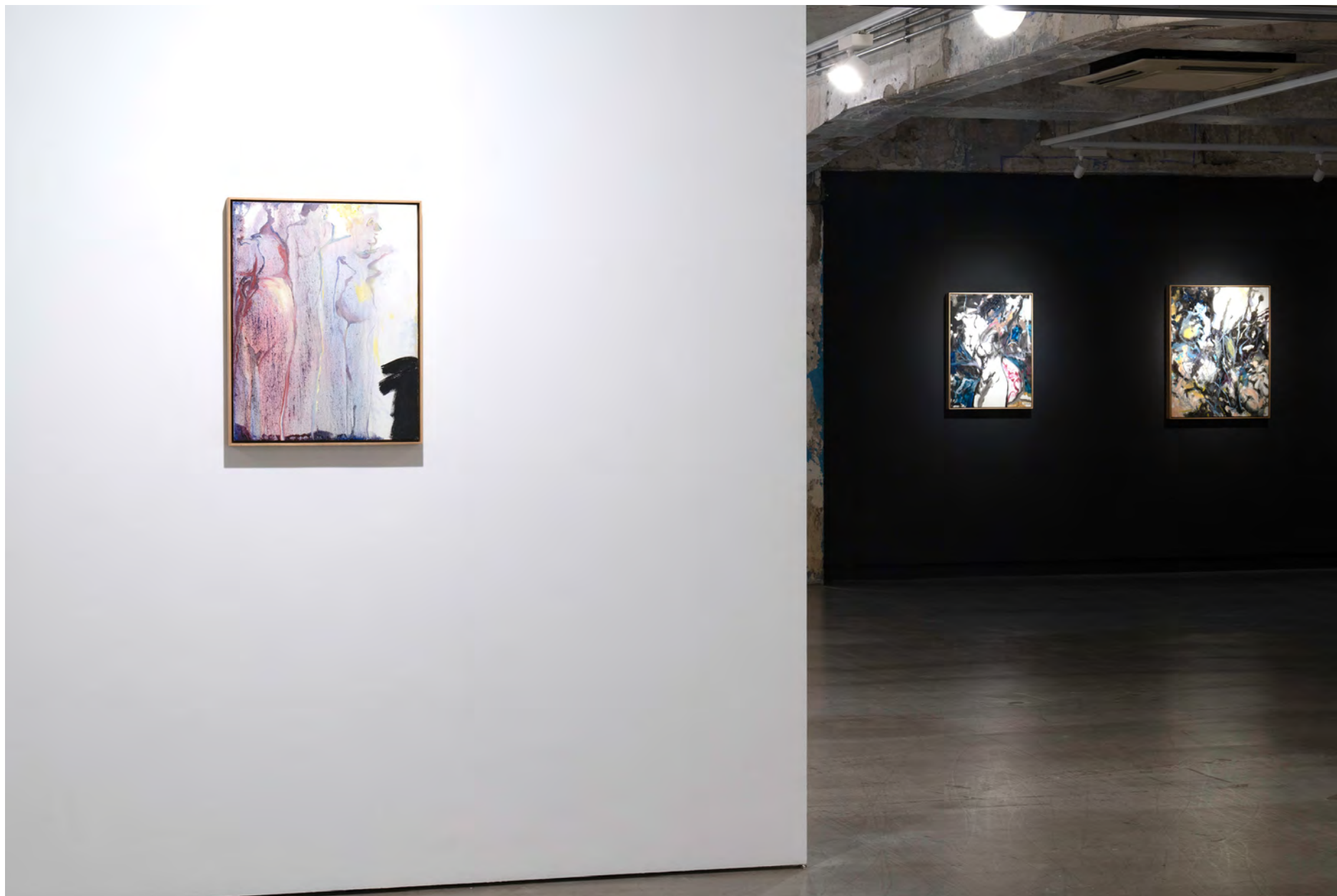
展覽名稱最後卻定為「這個我能變好嗎」，為什麼？

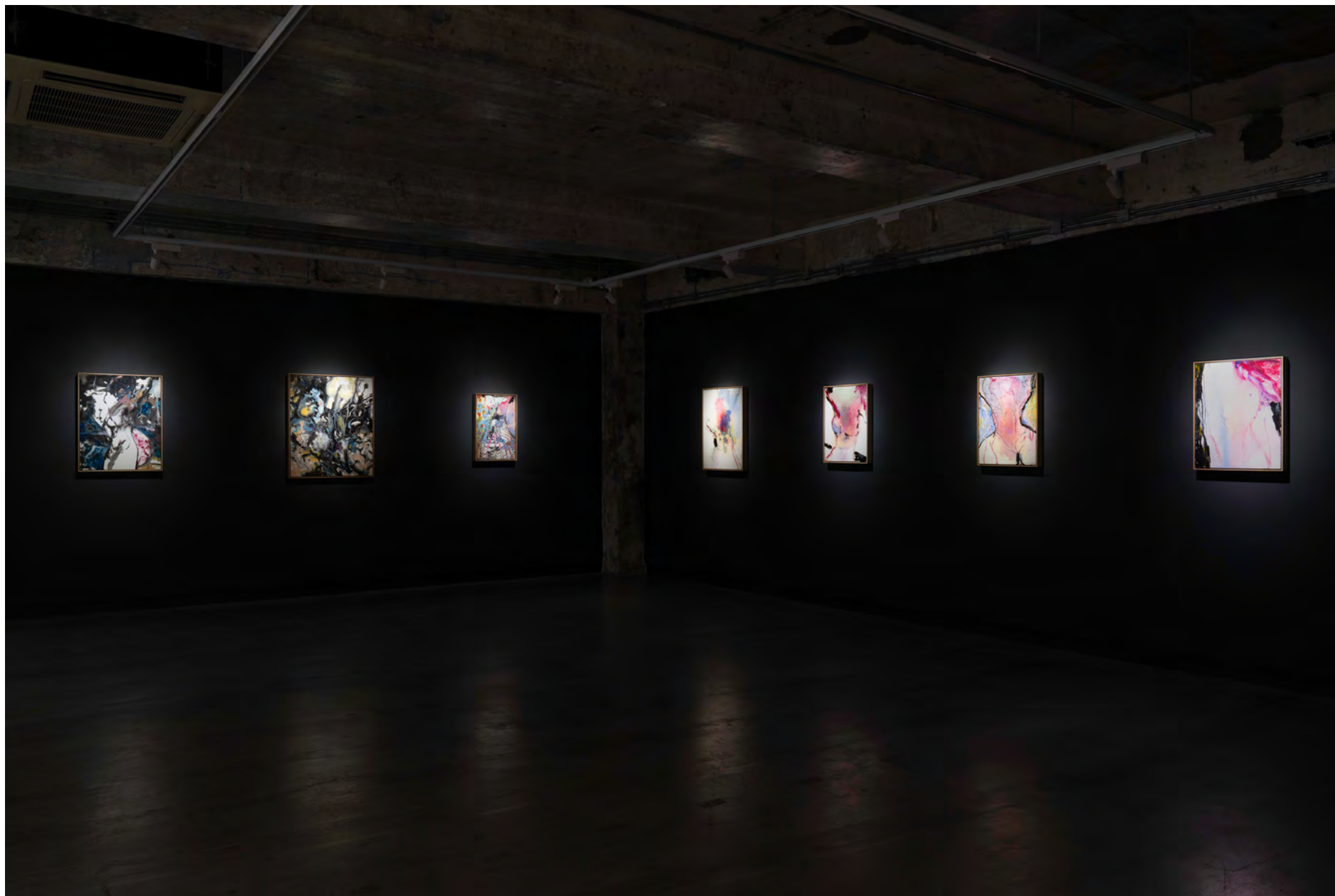
蔣： 這是因為，我對人生抱有希望。


人可以就這樣活著。如果少一點「出於自私的慾望」，「我」會不會變得好一點？自私的個體只能組合虛假和有害的「我們」，無私之我的組合才是真正意義上的「我們」，有這樣的「我們」，世界才能變好。所以，要回答「這個世界能變好嗎？」的前提（我認為是唯一的條件），是在於：「這個我是不是會變得更好一點？」









An abstract painting featuring a central figure that appears to be a human body, rendered in a fragmented and expressive manner. The figure is composed of various colors, including yellow, blue, and red, with dark, charcoal-like outlines. The background is a mix of soft, blended colors like pink, purple, and grey, creating a dreamlike and somber atmosphere. The overall style is reminiscent of expressionism, with a focus on emotional and psychological states.

Skeletons and skulls emerge as key motifs in the paintings. Building on the Christian tradition of memento mori, Jiang allows these visceral bodies to convey the inner state of being alive, an interiority turned external. The tempest of events and experiences from the past year overwhelms and hollows one's mind, melting faces and dissolving brains, leaving behind the cranium. As the status quo of existing order and systems is destroyed and annihilated, a "new world" must rise from the dead. What would this new world look like? The artist thoughtfully asks about the new "self", for the new world is made up of the connection of the "many".

骸骨和頭骨是繪畫中的關鍵主題。蔣以西方藝術 Memento mori (拉丁語片語，意思為「勿忘你終有一死」) 的傳統為基礎，讓這些內臟器官傳達生命的內在狀態，將內在性轉化為外部。掏空了思想，模糊了面孔、融解了大腦，只剩下頭骨。過去一年發生的各種事件和經歷的暴風雨摧毀和瓦解了以往的秩序和體系，一個死而復生的「新世界」必將到來，這個「新世界」將如何？藝術家認為更值得思考的是「這個我」將如何？因為世界是由無數的「我」聯結的「我們」創造。



蒋英 2019





Mr. Beard 《鬍子先生》

2019

Oil on linen

Framed Size: 74.4 x 57.3 x 5.5cm each

JIANG ZHI 蒋志



Flower Stem No.1 《花茎之一》

2020

Acrylic and plant fibres on linen
Framed Size: 66.3 x 36.3 x 7.1 cm

JIANG ZHI 蒋志



Flower Stem No.2 《花茎之二》

2020

Acrylic and plant fibres on linen
Framed Size: 66.3 x 36.3 x 7.1 cm

Jiang's exploration of corporeality materializes in the Human Body series. These are sanguine bodies that are full of life force and vitality, as oil pigments become blood, and brush strokes show veins and musculature out of a chaotic background. The series ends with a Géricault-like composition in Human Body No.6, where a pale body, no less erotic, lies lifeless on an abstract ground. Life and death entwine in the now and disappear into each other.

蔣對人類身體的探索體現於《人體》系列中。在充滿生命力和活力的肉體裡，油彩變成了血液，筆觸顯示出混沌背景下的靜脈和肌理組織。系列以《人體 之六》作結，彷彿西奧多·傑利柯 (Théodore Géricault) 的構圖中，蒼白而情色依然的肉體了無生氣地躺於抽象的背景。當下的生與死糾纏並消失於彼此之中。



JIANG ZHI 蒋志



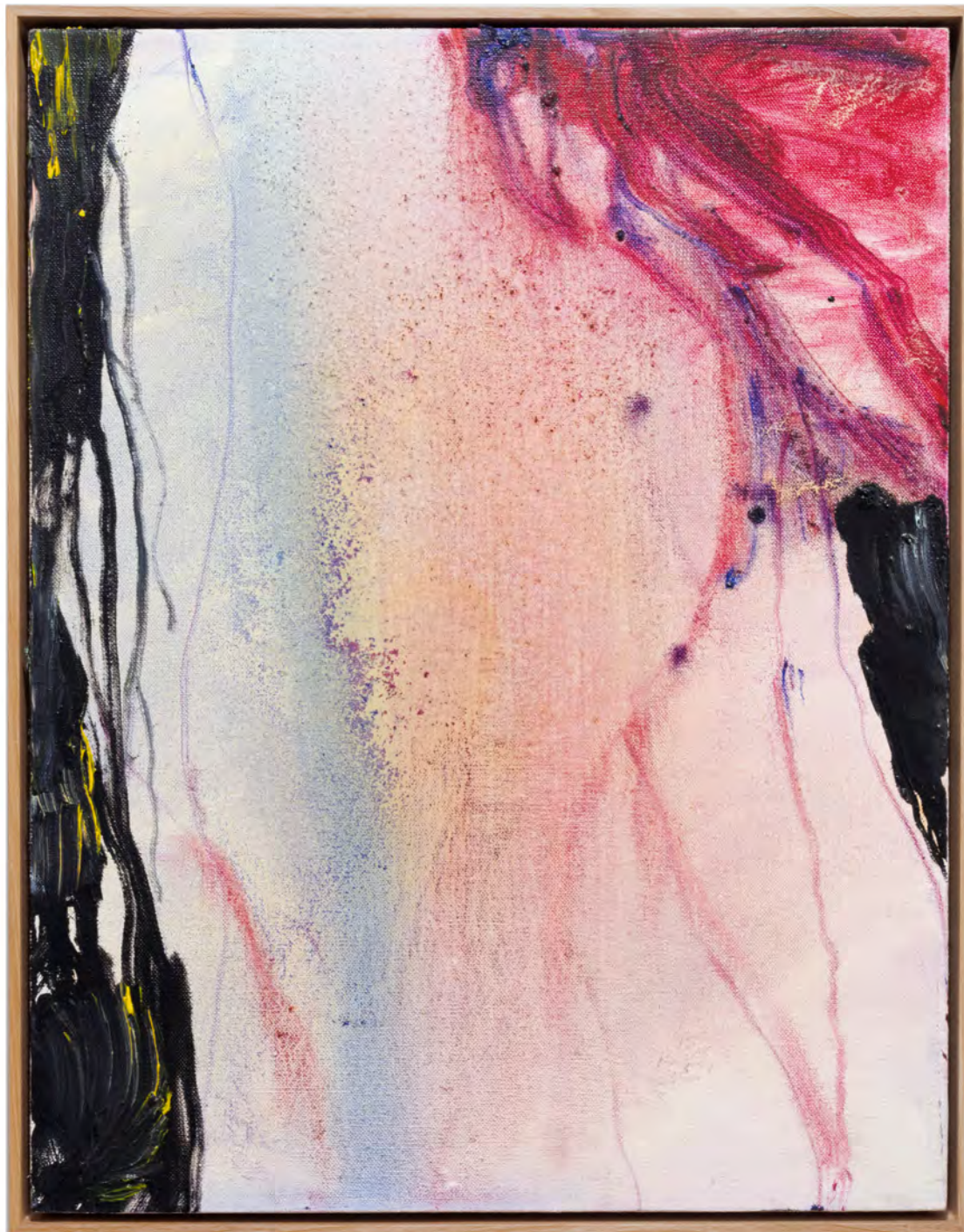
Disguiser 《伪装者》

2015 - 2020

Oil on linen

Framed Size: 62.3 x 42.4 x 6.5 cm

JIANG ZHI 蒋志



Human Body No.1 《人體之一》

2019

Oil on linen

Framed Size: 60.3 x 47.3 x 5.5 cm

JIANG ZHI 蒋志



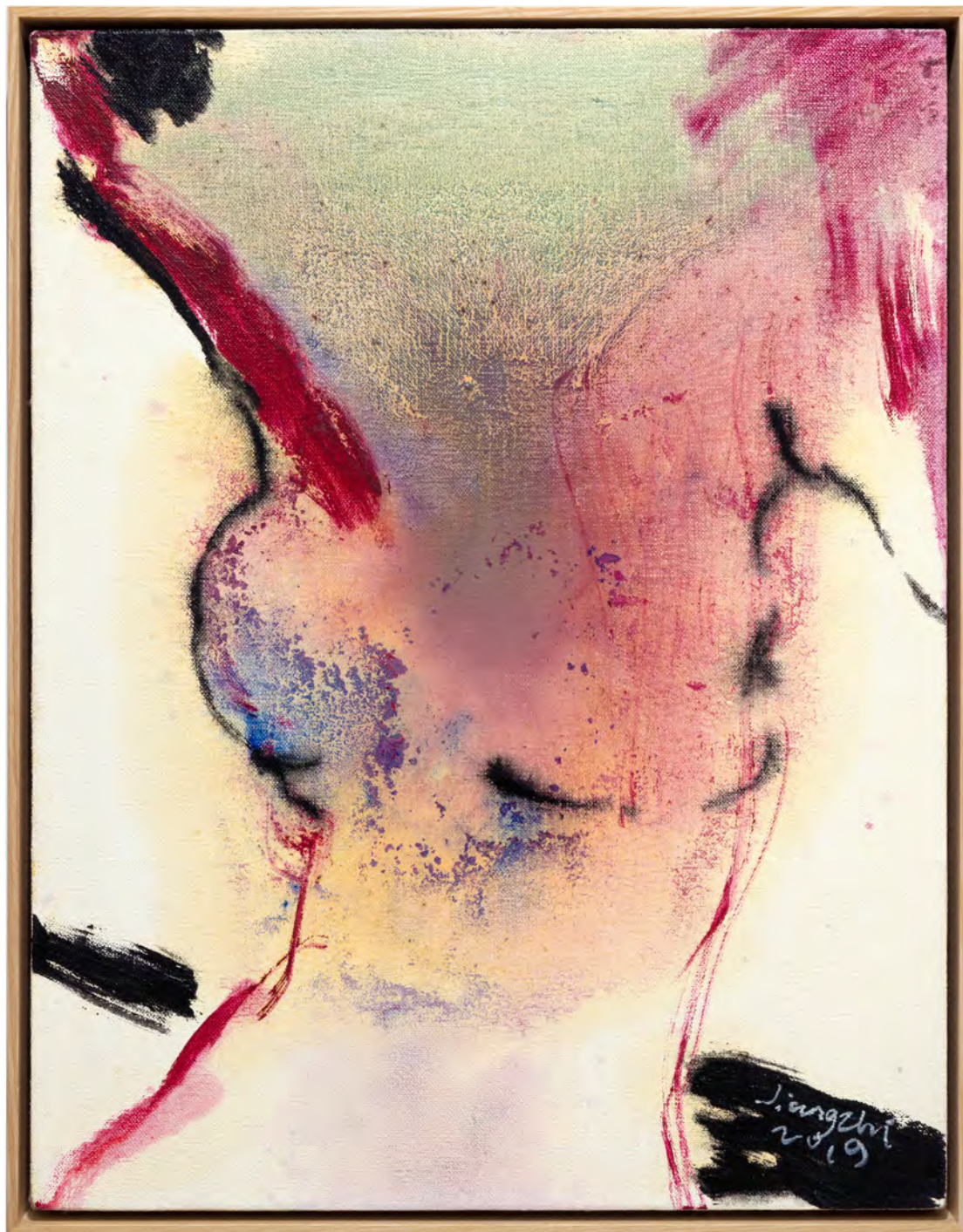
Human Body No.2 《人體之二》

2019

Oil on linen

Framed Size: 60.3 x 47.3 x 5.5 cm

JIANG ZHI 蒋志



Human Body No.3 《人體之三》

2019

Oil on linen

Framed Size: 60.3 x 47.3 x 5.5 cm

JIANG ZHI 蒋志



Human Body No.5 《人體之五》

2019

Oil on linen

Framed Size: 74.3 x 57.3 x 5.5 cm



JIANG ZHI 蒋志



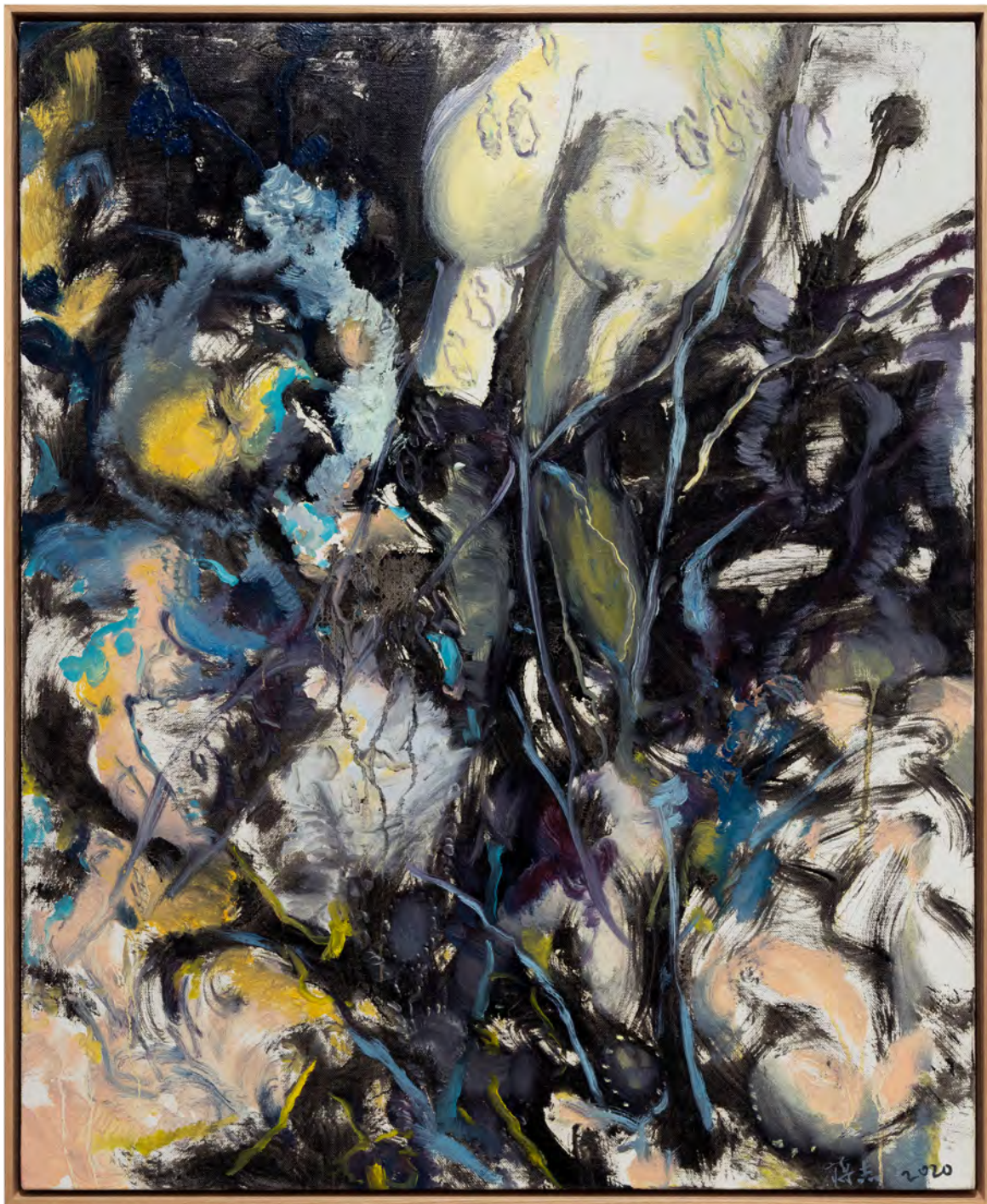
Human Body No.6 《人體之六》

2019

Oil on linen

Framed Size: 74.3 x 57.3 x 5.5 cm

JIANG ZHI 蒋志

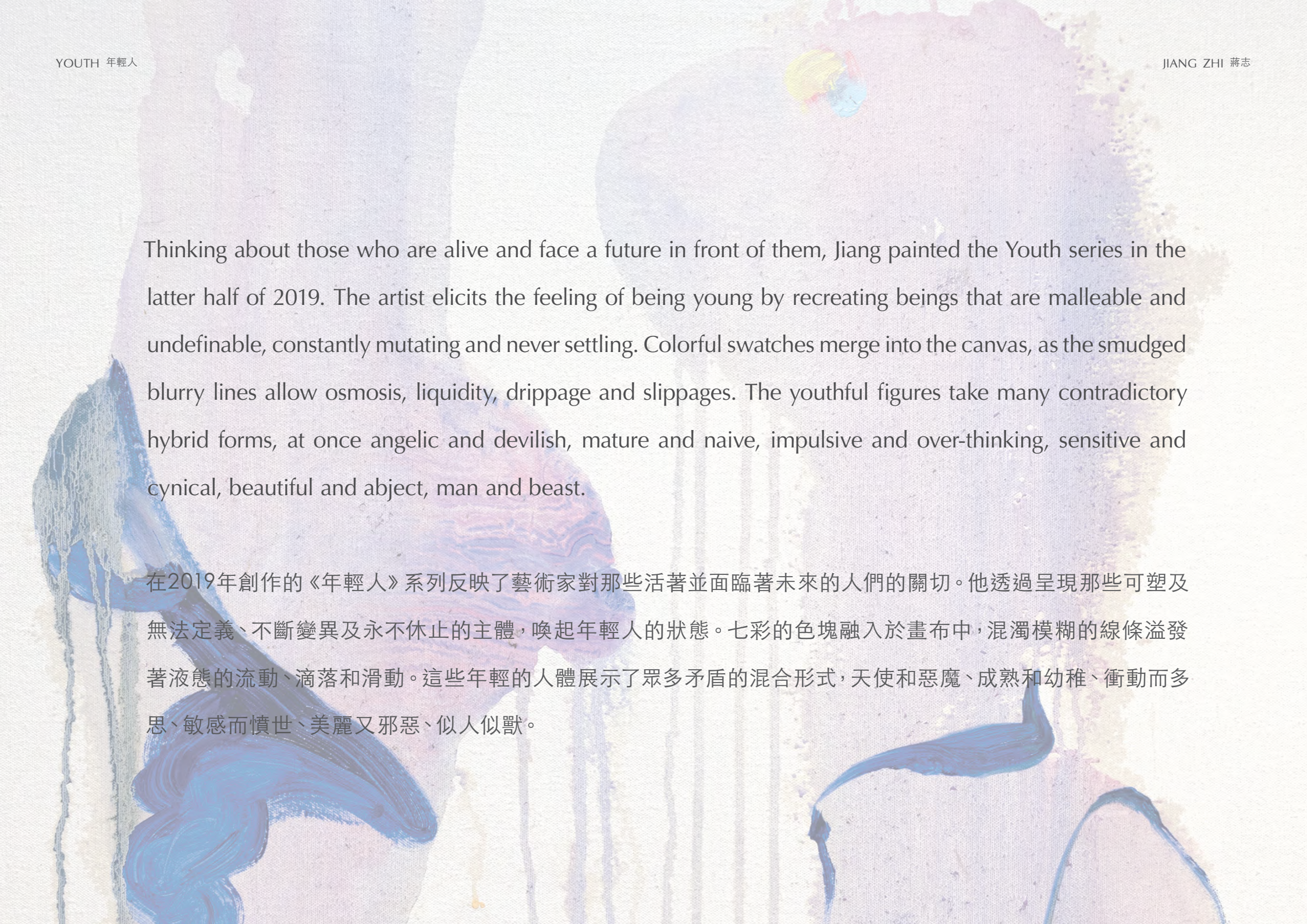


Human Body No.7 《人體之七》

2019

Oil on linen

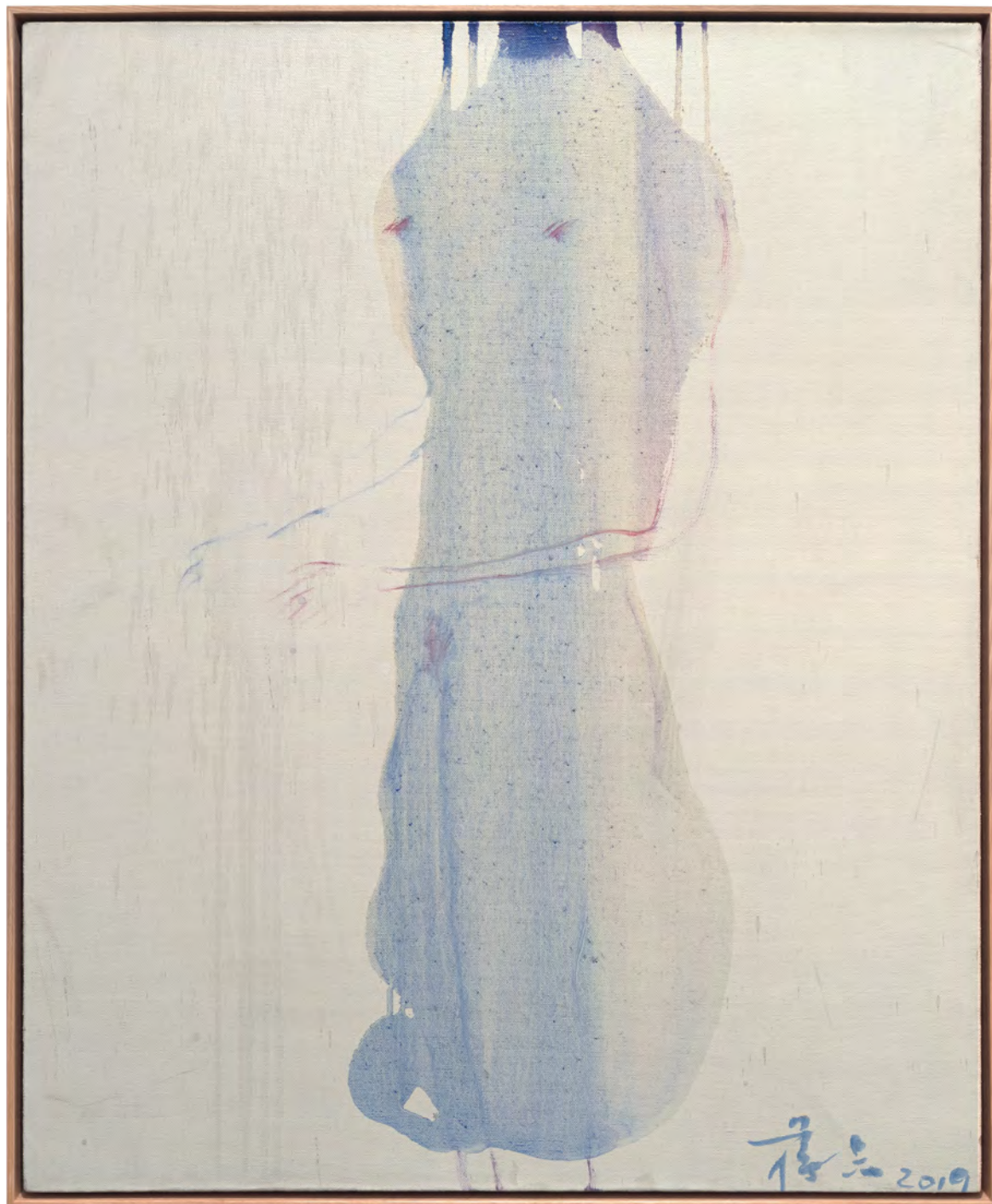
Framed Size: 87.5 x 72.5 x 5.5 cm



Thinking about those who are alive and face a future in front of them, Jiang painted the Youth series in the latter half of 2019. The artist elicits the feeling of being young by recreating beings that are malleable and undefinable, constantly mutating and never settling. Colorful swatches merge into the canvas, as the smudged blurry lines allow osmosis, liquidity, drippage and slippages. The youthful figures take many contradictory hybrid forms, at once angelic and devilish, mature and naive, impulsive and over-thinking, sensitive and cynical, beautiful and abject, man and beast.

在2019年創作的《年輕人》系列反映了藝術家對那些活著並面臨著未來的人們的關切。他透過呈現那些可塑及無法定義、不斷變異及永不休止的主體，喚起年輕人的狀態。七彩的色塊融入於畫布中，混濁模糊的線條溢發著液態的流動、滴落和滑動。這些年輕的人體展示了眾多矛盾的混合形式，天使和惡魔、成熟和幼稚、衝動而多思、敏感而憤世、美麗又邪惡、似人似獸。

JIANG ZHI 蒋志



Youth No.1 《年轻人之一》

2019

Oil on linen

Framed Size: 67.5 x 72.5 x 5.5 cm

JIANG ZHI 蒋志



Youth No.2 《年轻人之二》

2019

Oil on linen

Framed Size: 102.5 x 72.3 x 5.5 cm

JIANG ZHI 蒋志



Youth No.3 《年轻人之三》

2019

Oil on linen

Framed Size: 112.5 x 92.3 x 5.5 cm

JIANG ZHI 蒋志



Youth No.4 《年轻人之四》

2019

Oil on linen

Framed Size: 74.4 x 57.3 x 5.5 cm

JIANG ZHI 蒋志



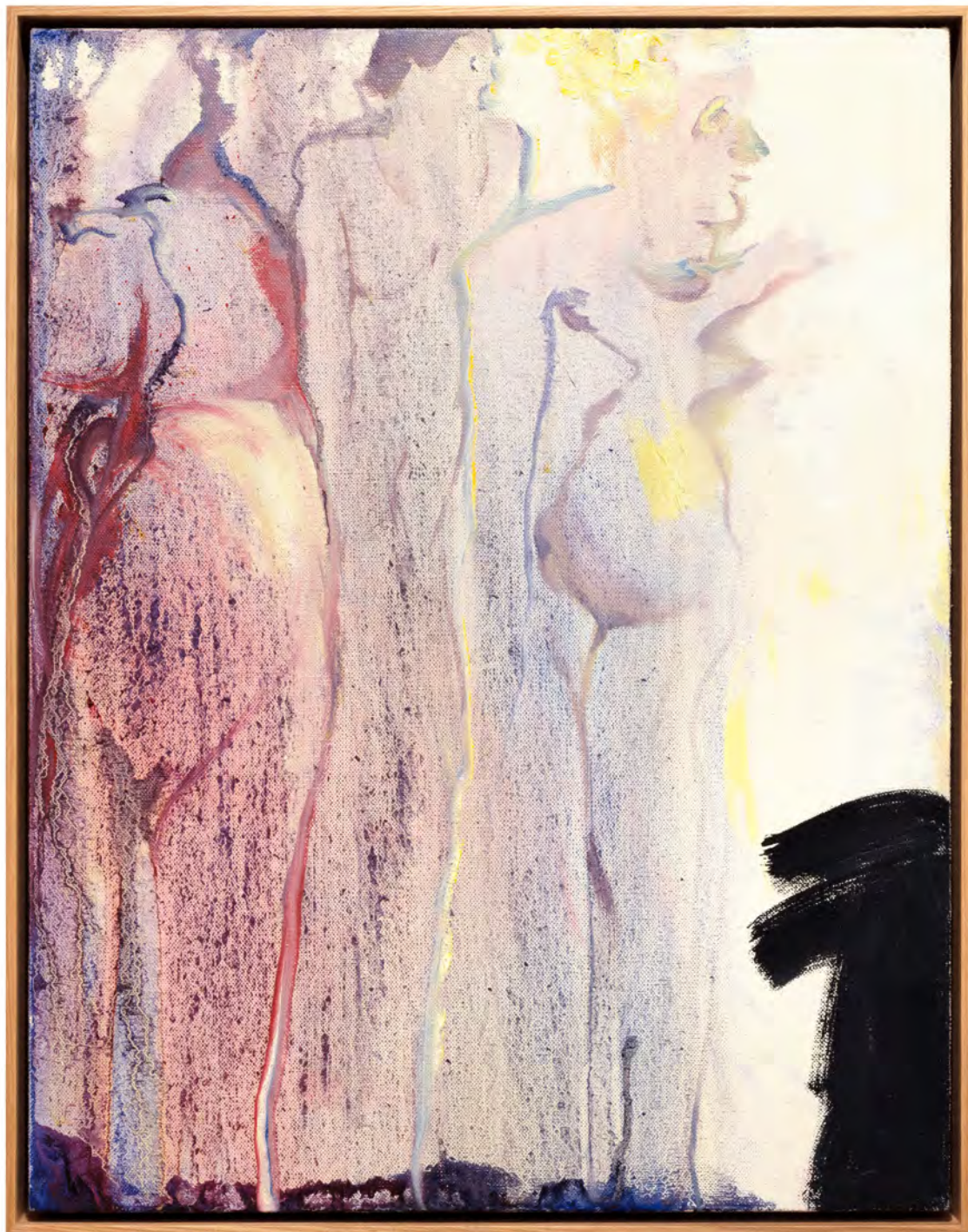
Youth No.5 《年轻人 之五》

2019

Oil on linen

Framed Size: 74.4 x 57.3 x 5.5 cm

JIANG ZHI 蒋志



Youth No.6 《年轻人 之六》

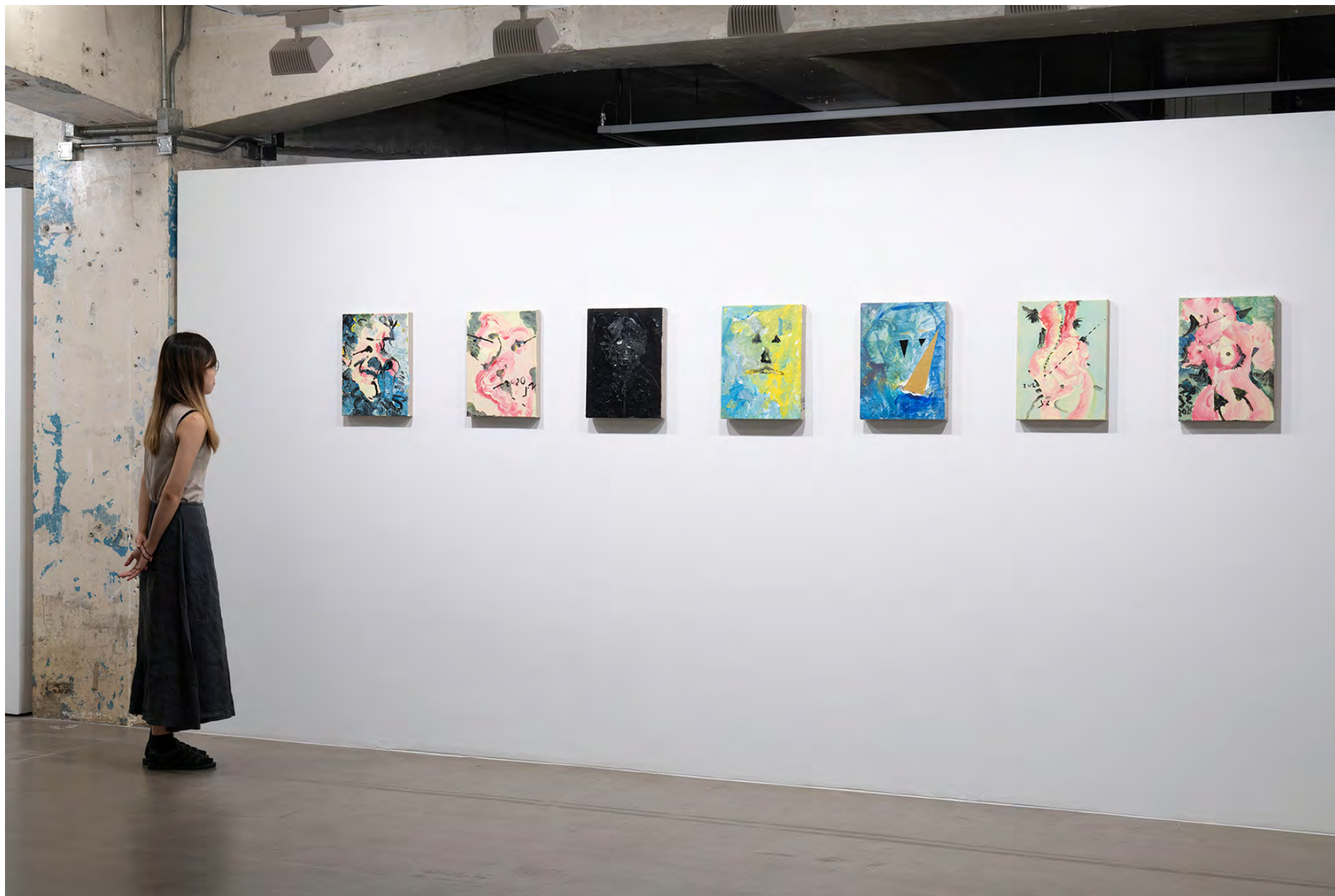
2019

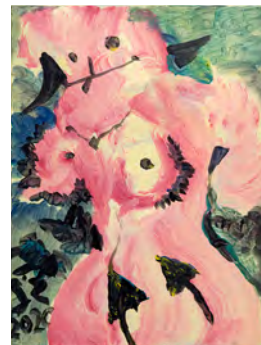
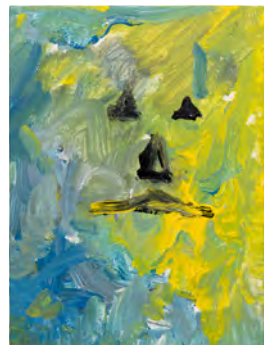
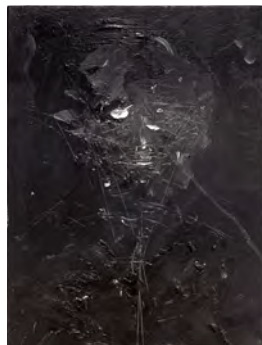
Oil on linen

Framed Size: 60.3 x 47.3 x 5.5 cm

Seven Blind People is a series of seven paintings that form a visual parable, negating the centrality of sight and thereby challenges the chasm between optical visuality and sensual imagination. Jiang believes that only by embracing Formlessness and liberating the Form from its representation, can the artist become one with chance encounters, polymorphous relationality, and sensual confrontations. How would a blind person (those who are in an unconventional system) paint? There shall be no limit, but unfettered and pure creation.

《七個盲人》系列包括七幅畫作，構成一部視覺寓言體，消除了視覺的中心性，並從而挑戰了光學視覺和感覺想像之間的差異。蔣認為只有擁抱「無形」，並將「形」從其表達形式中解放，藝術家才能成為一個能有偶遇、多態關係和感官對抗的人。「盲人」（非常規系統者）怎麼畫畫？這是沒有局限的、無拘無束的純粹創造。







JIANG ZHI 蒋志



Seven Blind People No.1 《七个盲人之一》

2020

Acrylic on linen

40 x 30 x 3.6 cm

JIANG ZHI 蒋志



Seven Blind People No.2 《七个盲人之二》

2020

Acrylic on linen

40 x 30 x 3.6 cm

JIANG ZHI 蒋志



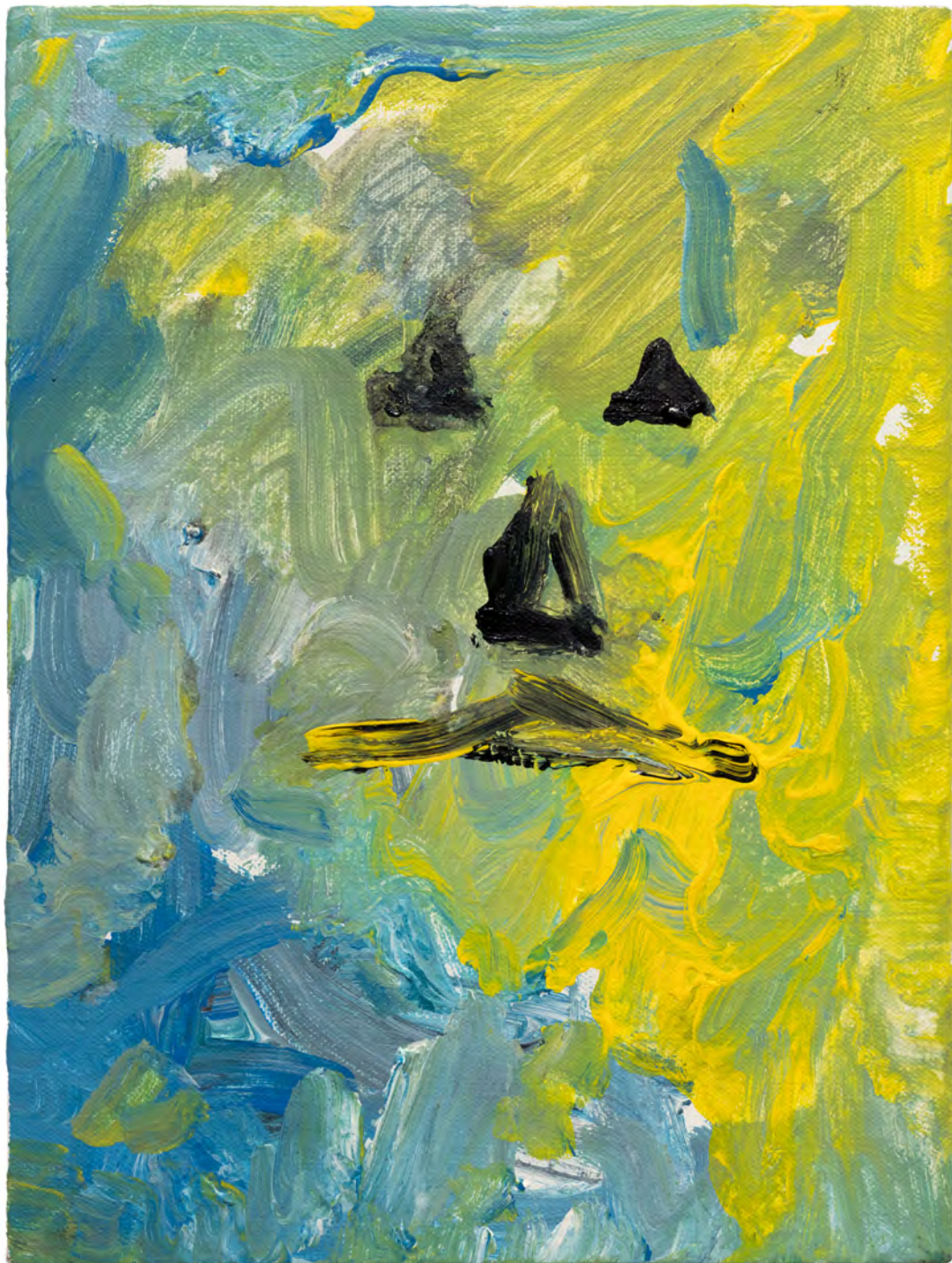
Seven Blind People No.3 《七个盲人-之三》

2020

Acrylic on linen

40 x 30 x 3.6 cm

JIANG ZHI 蒋志



Seven Blind People No.4 《七个盲人之四》

2020

Acrylic on linen

40 x 30 x 3.6 cm

JIANG ZHI 蒋志



Seven Blind People No.5 《七个盲人之五》

2020

Acrylic on linen

40 x 30 x 3.6 cm

JIANG ZHI 蒋志



Seven Blind People No.6 《七个盲人之六》

2020

Acrylic on linen

40 x 30 x 3.6 cm

JIANG ZHI 蒋志



Seven Blind People No.7 《七個盲人 之七》

2020

Acrylic on linen
40 x 30 x 3.6 cm

JIANG ZHI 蒋志



Queen's Practive No.1 《女王晋作之一》

2020

Chinese ink on wood

Framed size: 22.2 x 32.4 x 4.2 cm

JIANG ZHI 蒋志



Queen's Practice No.2 《女王習作 之二》

2020

Chinese ink on wood

Framed size: 22.2 x 32.4 x 4.2 cm

JIANG ZHI 蒋志



Queen's Practive No.3 《女王習作 之三》

2020

Chinese ink on wood

Framed size: 22.2 x 32.4 x 4.2 cm

JIANG ZHI 蒋志



Queen's Practice No.4 《女王習作 之四》

2020

Chinese ink on wood

Framed Size: 42.5 x 32.4 x 3.5 cm



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