

TAO
XIAN

陶
显

DÉJÀ VU

I chanced upon Tao Xian's work in one of her group exhibitions a couple of years back in Beijing, it was love at first sight.

Deja vu was the word that came to mind, it was like some old memory that I've lived through, somewhere I've been or someone I've met.

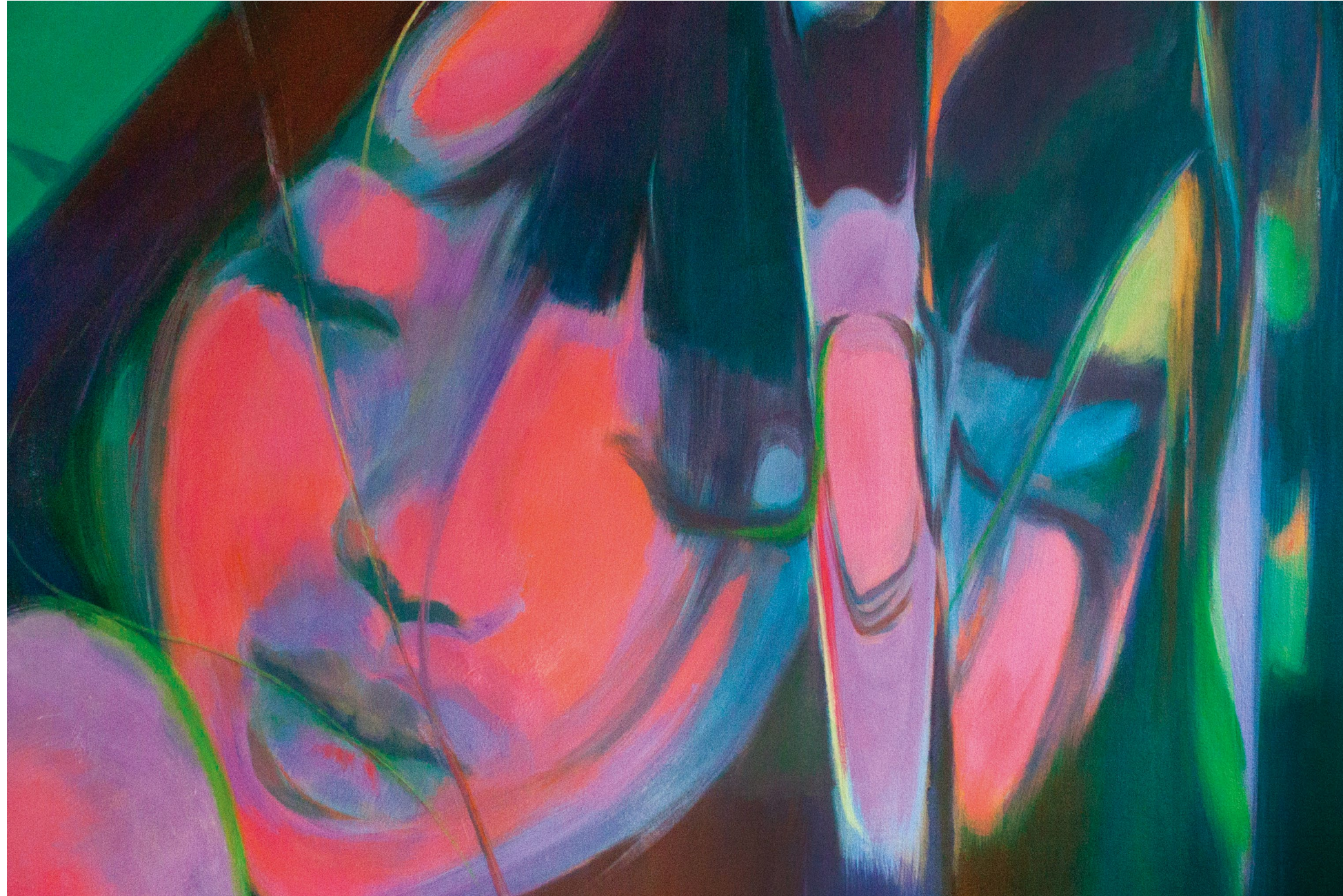
Her works feel like they are slowly fading away, yet stay clear in your memory. The charged emotions in her vigorous colours contrasting her euphemistic figures in a portamento style, which diffuses a sense of eastern beauty.

Her works are like an old TV set with the blink of a bad connection, she froze that distorted moment and made a disconnected experience mysterious. She generously leaves the wildest imagination to her audience.

- Alice Zou, Curator

Almost Midnight
Oil on linen
78.9 x 59 in.
2018





Perfect Pink
Oil on Cotton
42 x 64 in.
2018



Blue Waltz
Oil on cotton
40 x 60 in.
2018

Like liquid passages that transform themselves from the representational to the abstract. Images that start out as photographs and then, through digital technology, are bent, shaped, stretched, distorted, multiplied... Palettes are explored. The finished digital maquette is only the beginning, before the image transforms itself once again into something that I don't believe could be done digitally on the computer—the act of applying paint to a fibrous brush and the transportation of paint with a first stroke that connects to a second, and a third, and a fourth, and so on.

One color lying on top of another, like lovers, morphing shapes and changing hues. It's the process of painting, a process unlike any other; the perfect connection between the brain (or the heart) and the hand. It's a raw, basic process that has not changed for tens of thousands of years.

About two years ago, all of a sudden, I found myself to be a part of this project. I was talking to Tao Xian (or Peggy... I always call her by her Christian name) about photography and my long history as a fashion and beauty photographer.

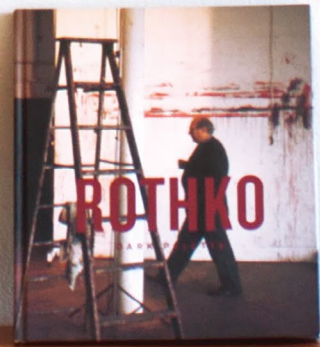
I mentioned that I had fallen out of love with technical perfection and had started shooting in a much more spontaneous manner. Peggy asked if she could see those photographs, so we looked at them together. She then asked if she could use some of these images as a reference or jumping off point to create her paintings. I said count me in.

What resulted from that conversation was a friendship and a collaboration where the photographs were completely changed, but the essence remained the same. I would look at one of the resulting paintings and have to ask Peggy: "were you referencing one of my photographs?" She would say yes, that was one of yours. It was almost impossible for me to see the connection, but yet it was there.

Over the last two years, I've enjoyed following the progress and the process. Peggy's paintings are like a perfect meal that has utilized the best of multiple ingredients.

- Frank Maresca, Director of Ricco Maresca Gallery (New York),
Photographer, Art collector





Mirrored Pool #4
Oil on cotton
40 x 30 in.
2017



Convex Mirror # 1
Oil on cotton
52 x 40 in.
2017



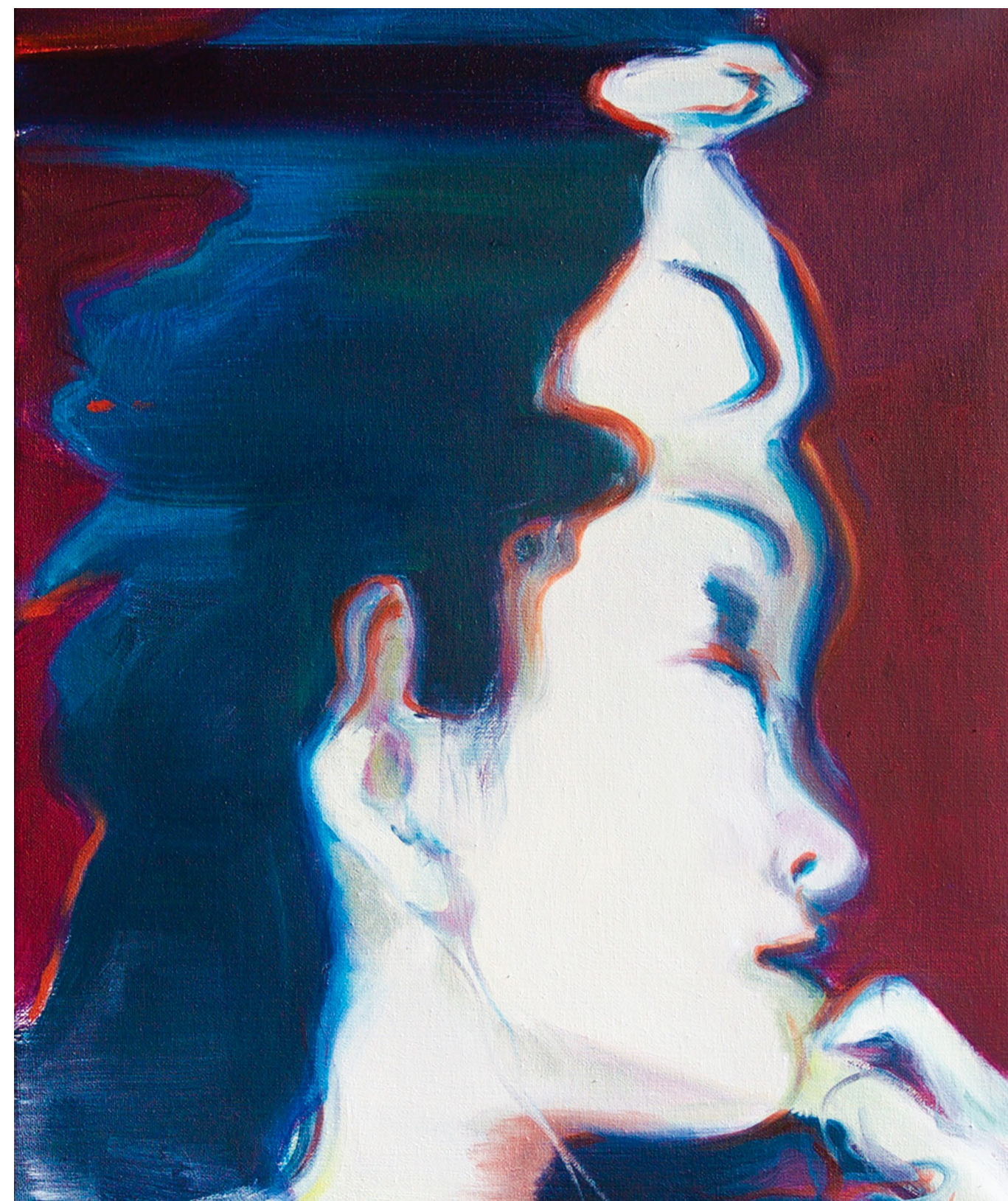
Mirrored Pool
Oil on linen
40 x 30 in.
2017
Private Collection



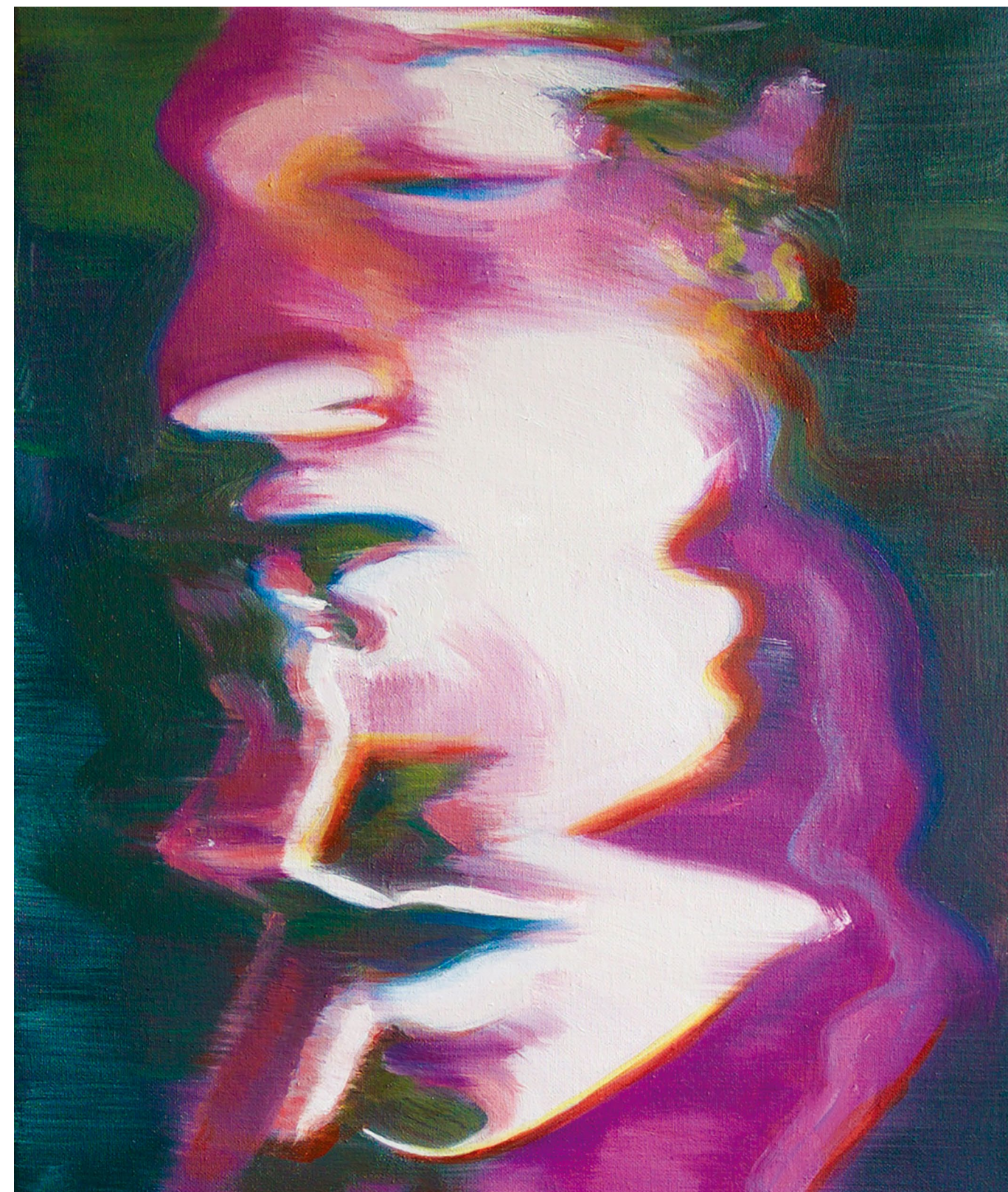
Convex Mirror #4
Oil on linen
52 x 40 in.
2017



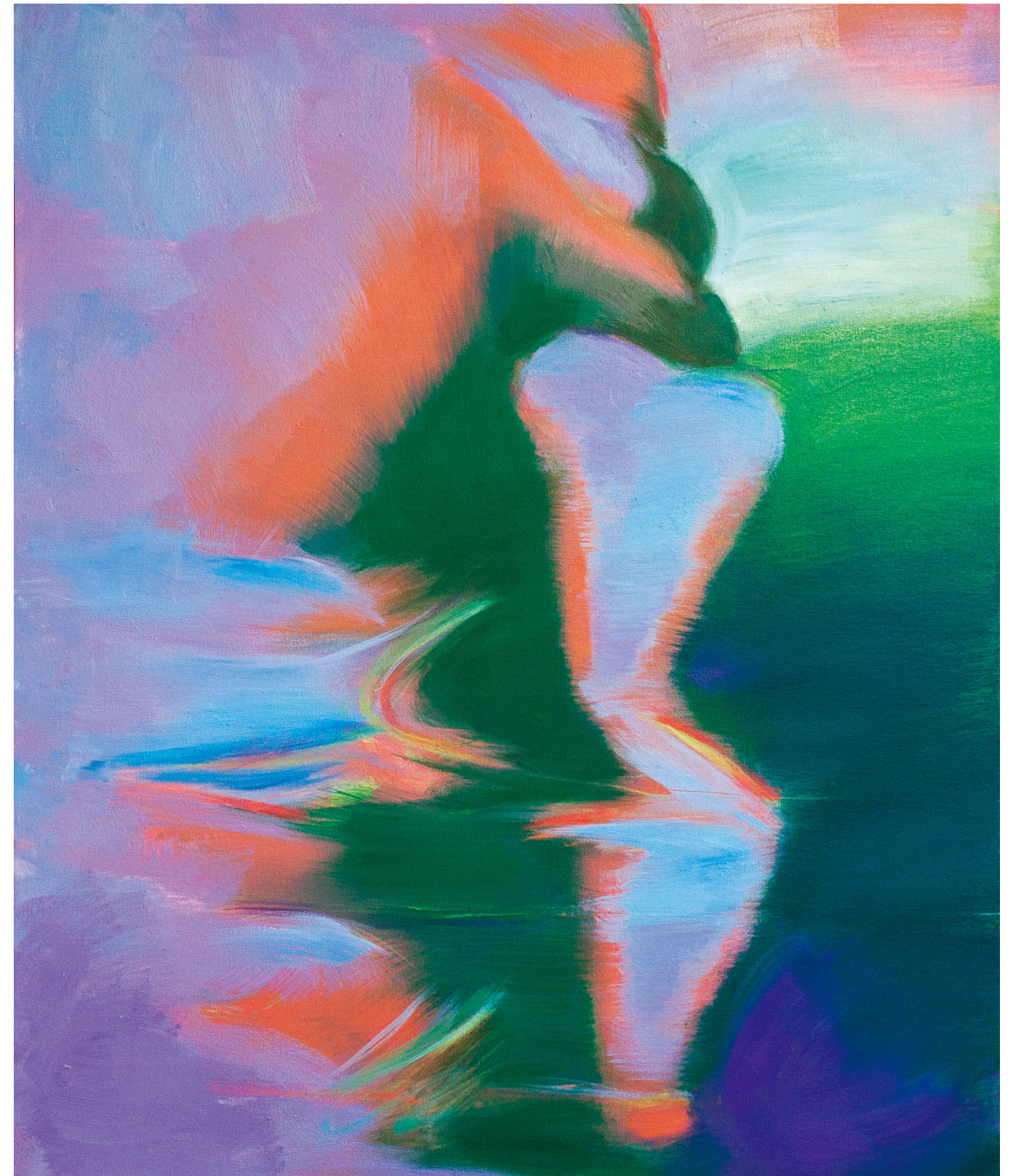
Convex Mirror # 3
Oil on cotton
20 x 16 in.
2017



Convex Mirror # 2
Oil on cotton
20 x 30 in.
2017



Angel
Oil on cotton
32 x 24 in.
2018



A Sip of Wine, A Cigarette
Oil on Cotton
52 x 68 in.
2018



“Between memory and reality
there are awkward discrepancies...”
- Eileen Chang



KABUKICHO

In the of summer 2017, I was invited to participate in a show at Fukiage Museum of Art (now known as Matsushimabunko Museum) in Okayama, Japan. I spent 3 days in Tokyo before I set off to Okayama. It was my first trip to Japan and I was all by myself. I decided to visit the famous Kabukicho the second night of my stay, mostly because it's the place that Daido Moriyama and Nobuyashi Araki were once obsessed with.

Soon after I exited from the subway station, I followed the crowds and arrived at the entrance. I slowly walked along the street, it had everything I had expected, yet much more illusory. I could smell a strong sense of desire and pleasure. Thousands of neon lights and billboards that unfold in this limited dark space are intersected, squeezed and folded. I felt like I was in a crossroad of heaven and hell, reality and illusion.

Out of all the glamorous appearances on the billboard, one particular image caught my eyes. In this backlit billboard, a girl turns her back to us and looks at us with a smile. There was a sense of innocence I felt from her despite her being naked.

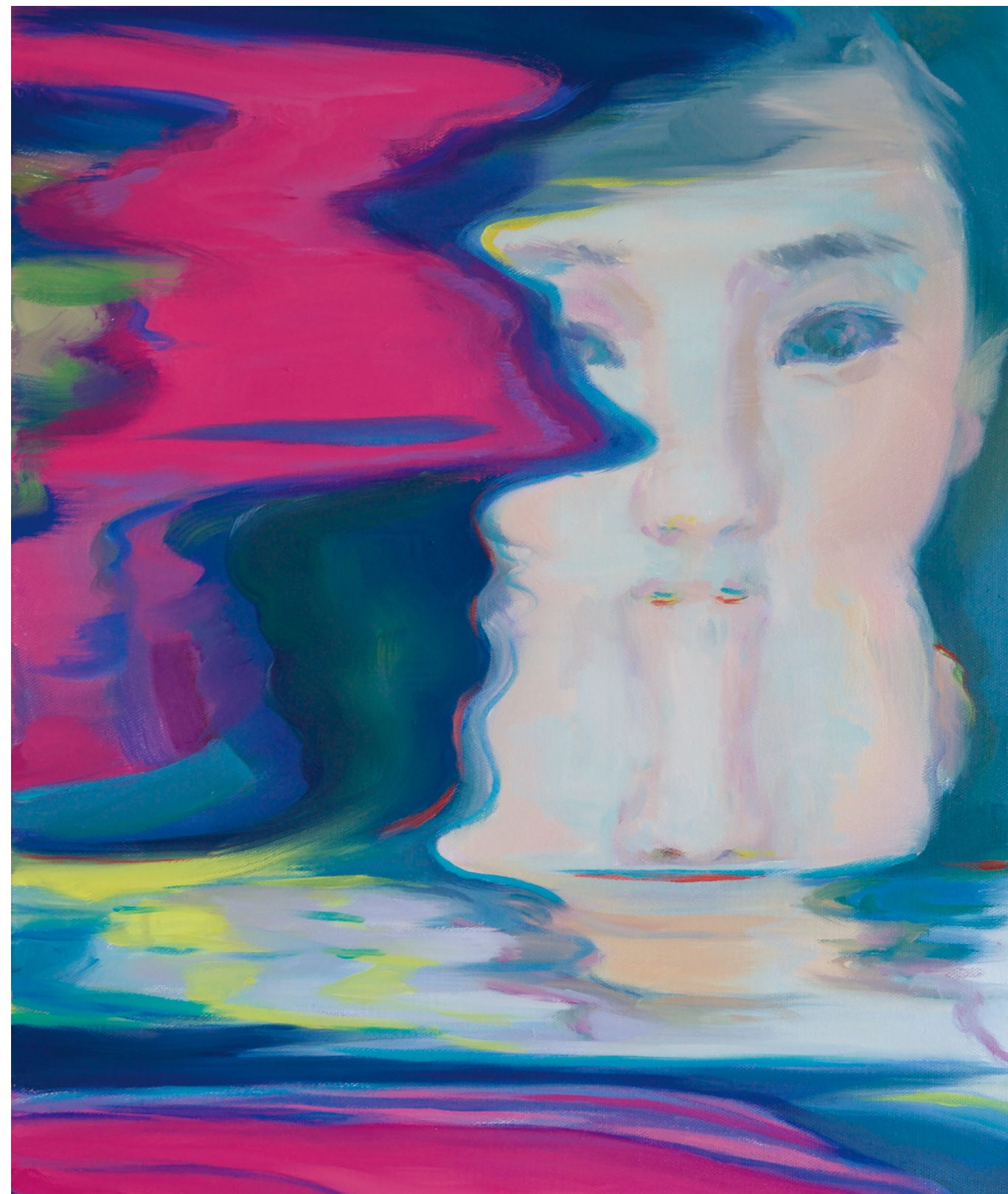
It felt like I had seen her before, maybe from an old photograph, or a movie. She reminded me of the barmaid Lau Piu-piu from the movie King of Comedy, whose smile reflected a woman's natural beauty, confidence and a strong determination.

- Tao Xian

Kabukicho
Oil on cotton
58 x 40 in.
2016



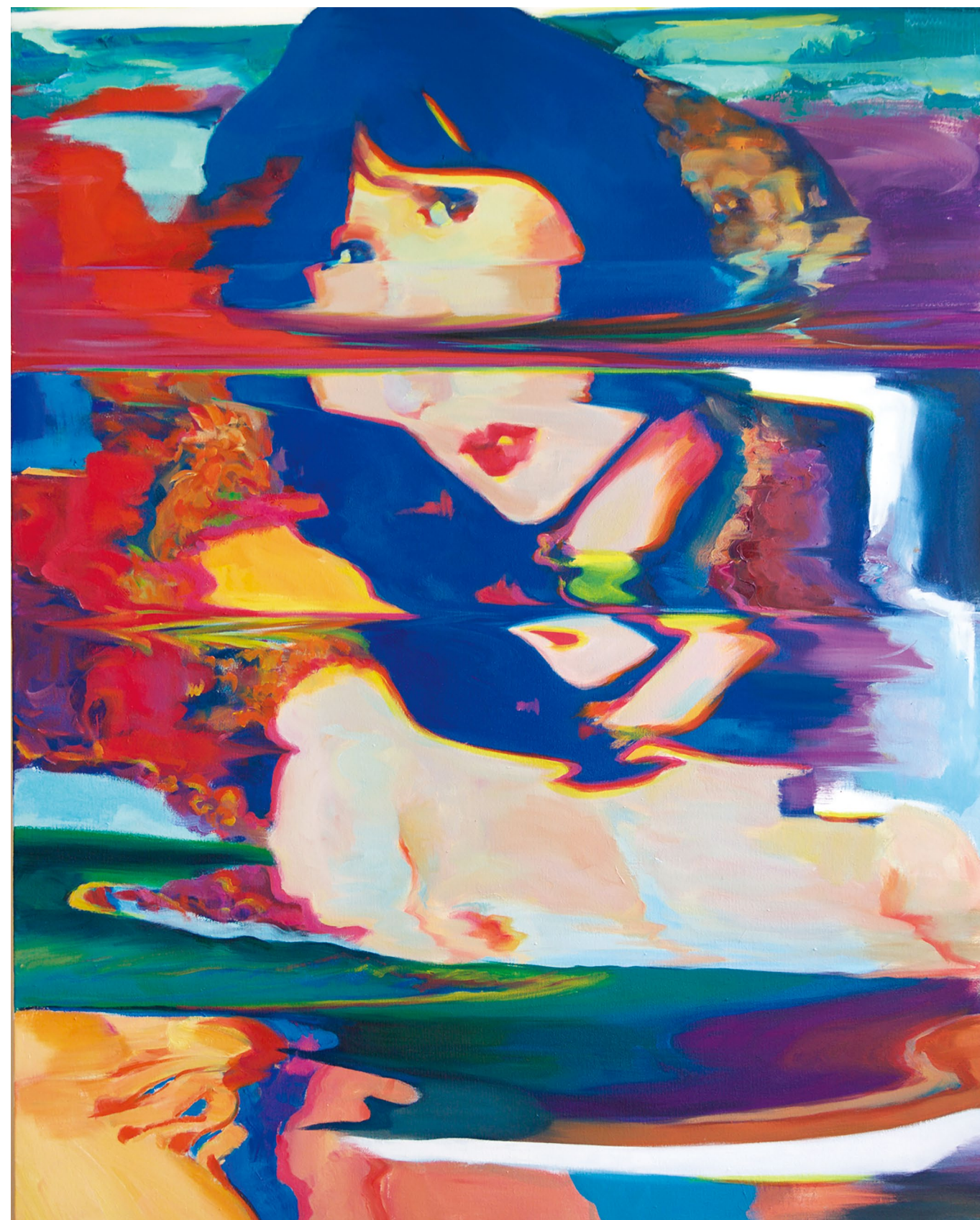
Loop
Oil on cotton
20 x 16 in.
2017



Deep Blue
Oil on cotton
40 x 30 in.
2017



Sarugakucho #1
Oil on cotton
52 x 40 in.
2017



Whisper
Oil on cotton
32 x 24 in.
2017





Photo Credit:
Sense Scratch
Fingerprint Gallery
Beijing, China

Negation #4
Oil on cotton
24 x 32 in.
2015



Negation #3
Oil on cotton
24 x 30 in.
2015



North Korea Train
Oil on Linen
52 x 72 in.
2016



Inverted Fiction #1
Oil on linen
40 x 60 in.
2016
Private Collection





Photo Credit
The unseen
Museum of
Osaka Japan



Tao Xian

Born in 1991, currently lives and works in New York.

Education

2016 Parsons School of Design, New York, US

2013 Central Academy of Fine Arts, Beijing, China

Solo and Two Person Exhibitions

2017 Sense Scratch, Fingerprint Gallery, Beijing, China

2017 Phantom Pains, Gallery 456, New York, US

2016 The Unseen, Fukiage Museum of Art, Okayama, Japan

Selected Group Exhibitions

2018 Constructing a Praxis of Artist/ Educator, The Smith Learning Theater, Columbia University, New York, US

2018 Signal Flo, The SL8 Gallery, Gainesville, FL, US

2018 Blurred Boundaries, The Metropolitan Pavilion, New York, US

2017 Progress Everyday, Zhuzhong Art Museum, Beijing, China

2017 The 13th CIGE, National Agricultural Exhibition Center, Beijing, China

2017 Unfolding Exit, DA + Space, Shanghai, China

2017 Cross-cultural Dialogue: China-America Young Artists Exhibition, The Metropolitan Pavilion, New York, US

2016 This is us, Fou Gallery, New York, US

2016 WAVELENGTH, UNTITLED SPACE, New York, US

2016 I Can Because You Do, PARTICIPANT INC, New York, US
US Pouring, Digging, Leaking, 25 East Gallery, New York, US

2015 Process Concept, Industry City, New York, US

2014 "Threshold" 25 East Gallery, New York, US

2013 Shanghai Youth Art Exhibition, China Arts Palace, Shanghai, China

2013 Thesis Exhibition, Central Academy of Fine Arts Exhibition Hall, Beijing, China

2012 College Students Art Fair (Guangzhou), Poly World Trade Center Exhibition Hall, Guangzhou, China

Awards

2016 CAAC Full Sponsorship

2014 Parsons Dean's Merit Scholarship

2012 CAFA Best Art Exploration Awards

2010 CAFA Second Scholarship

2010 CAFA Best Creation Awards

Déjà vu
Artist: Tao Xian
Curator: Alice Zou

Catalogue © 2019 Asian Art Platform

All works of art © 2019 Tao Xian
All texts © 2019 the authors

All rights reserved.



www.asianartplatform.com