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PLUS

YUANFANG

Weathering Light



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At Skarstedt, Yuan Fang's *Spaying* opens with paintings that carry the weight of their making: oil dragged back, gestures interrupted, surfaces left raw. Entering the gallery, the light itself feels charged, fragile yet forceful, engaging the viewer with both confrontation and care. The skylight sharpens this exchange, tracing scars of pigment and shifts of tone, revealing how each canvas resists stillness and remains in motion.



Fang's process is rooted in both layering and interruption. Oil is applied thickly, then dragged back with a palette knife; passages are obscured with new pigment, while others are left raw, exposing the canvas beneath. The surfaces bear the scars of this back-and-forth, scratches, ridges, translucent veils of color that suggest time compressed into matter. In places, a sudden streak of green cuts through burgundy like a wound reopening; elsewhere, violet drips trickle downward, slowing into pools at the base of the canvas. These interruptions prevent the paintings from becoming too resolved, keeping them in a state of tension, as though they are always in the act of becoming.

Curves dominate her compositions. They bend and swell into muscular arcs that evoke the body without depicting it directly, the twist of an organ, the curve of a shoulder, the pulse of tissue beneath skin. The palette intensifies this effect: deep burgundies throb against the cooler greens, while flashes of violet lend a bruised luminosity. Seen

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together, the canvases oscillate between violence and tenderness, contraction and release.

This corporeal resonance acquires further weight when considered against Fang's recent experience with breast cancer. The works are not illustrations of illness, nor do they announce biography overtly. Instead, they register the rhythms of survival, the push and pull of treatment and recovery, the interruptions of the body's own time. The scraping and layering, the ruptures and repairs, carry an undercurrent of resilience: painting here becomes both a method of expression and a way of holding together fragments, an insistence on presence amid uncertainty.

The exhibition also situates Fang within a larger conversation about contemporary abstraction. Her practice draws from both Eastern and Western traditions while resisting simple categorization, weaving together the gestural legacy of Abstract Expressionism with philosophical approaches to emptiness and space from Chinese art. This cross-cultural dialogue becomes visible in the oscillation between intensity and stillness, movement and pause. By inhabiting this in-between space, Fang carves out a language that feels deeply personal yet resonant across traditions, neither bound to heritage nor divorced from it.



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Perhaps most powerfully, *Spaying* demonstrates the potential of painting as a site of renewal. In an era where speed and spectacle dominate cultural production, Fang's canvases insist on slowness, on the durational process of looking and feeling. They do not yield their meanings all at once but invite repeated attention, unfolding like a body that heals not overnight but over time. In this, the exhibition suggests that abstraction is not an escape from reality but an entry point into its most profound registers, where pain, resilience, and transformation converge in luminous form.

The scale of the canvases allows these movements to breathe. Monumental works such as *Accumulating*, *Breaking Through the Defense Line* or *Bloody Meteorite Falling from the Sky* command attention through expansive swirls and depth, while smaller wood panel works condense her process into more intimate meditations. In these, oil intermingles with charcoal, and gesture feels immediate, yet they remain connected to the larger narrative. Weeks of pause in the studio are as integral to their making as the decisive moments of application. The rhythm of creation itself becomes visible in the balance between restraint and release.

Spaying reads as an autobiography written through gestures. These paintings confront pain with clarity and transform it into a visual form that insists on attention while offering space for reflection. In dialogue with the gallery's architecture, they expand and breathe, extending beyond the confines of the canvas. The exhibition becomes a site where technique and narrative converge, a meditation on survival and renewal, and an affirmation of painting's ability to hold both vulnerability and strength.

Yuan Fang's "[Spaying](#)" is on view at Skarstedt Gallery, 547 West 25th, New York, from September 4 to October 25, 2025.

Images:

Fang in her Studio. © Tatler Hong Kong. Photo: Christopher Smith.

Installation views © Yuan Fang. Courtesy of the artist and Skarstedt, New York.