



RACHEL TONTHAT 15.10.22 - 23.10.22

UNHEWN

In the Chinese folktale of Ma Liang, the artist is given a magic paintbrush from which his depictions become real. Perhaps he paints on paper, perhaps on silk— it matters little. These things are to our human nature, or in the artist's conceit, that which must be used or consumed, a blank slate.

Yet is it the brush that holds the power, or the paper itself? What forms hover beneath its surface, and what dreams of possibility does it envision? Is there, as is in the Taoist concept of "Pu," another life in the simplicity of white canvas and unhewn wood?

Recall the texture of spun wool, the rough-velvet slubs in raw silk, the thin velvet hide of paper shuddering beneath your touch. Made to be shaped but not yet shaped, suspended in the moment before creation, it is infused with potentiality.

Here, in this room, paper gleams pallid under these lights, a paleness that renders the eye as uncertain as when sun hits snow. It rests against the wall, the weight of gravity revealing textures not unlike our own skin. Canvas, already touched by time, waits. For time is another way to be shaped.

Rachel TonThat is a Zurich based conceptual artist and writer working with narrative structures around the themes of climate change, memory, and space-time. She is part of the art book duo, Oreades Press, with Irene Lee, and was a founding member of the Zurich offspace, Egg. She was selected this year for an inaugural writing mentorship through the Diasporic Vietnamese Artists Network. Her climate storytelling project, Impermanent Earth, received funding from the 2022 International Project Fund of ZHdK, where she recently completed an MA in Fine Art.











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