

美術手帖

INTERVIEW

An interview with Eve Yang, a brilliant Asian female gallerist in New York

Yve YANG Gallery was established in Boston in 2016. The following year, the gallery moved from Boston to New York, where it is now dedicated to introducing emerging and mid-career artists from around the world. We interviewed Yve YANG, the gallery's founder and a notable Asian female gallerist active in New York, about how she came to establish the gallery, her activities in New York, and her interest in and support for international artists.

Interviewer and writer: Wang Chongqiao (Web Edition of Bijutsu Techo Editorial Department) Images courtesy of YveYANG Gallery

2024.8.17



In March this year, New York's YveYANG Gallery made its first appearance at Art Basel Hong Kong, garnering a lot of attention. It exhibited works by artist Huidi Xiang in a solo booth that sold out, and introduced a video work by Sam Ghantus in the film section. It also participated in the inaugural "Supper Club" satellite fair held at the same time in Hong Kong, showcasing works by three young artists: Chando Ao, Wang Ye, and Pauline Linshu.v



Exhibition view of Yve YANG Gallery's booth at Art Basel Hong Kong 2024

The gallery was founded in Boston's SoWa Art + Design district in 2016. The following year, it moved from Boston to New York and began showcasing a diverse range of artists from around the world. After a base in Midtown, it is now based in a historic space in a former sewing machine factory in SoHo, and serves as a venue to introduce emerging and mid-career artists in New York.

The gallery's founder, Eve Yang, is a notable figure as an Asian female gallerist active in New York. With a passion for art and an innovative vision, she is using her entrepreneurial spirit to bring a breath of fresh air to the art world.

Yang, who didn't have a role model when she first started her gallery, aims to be a "North Star" for the Asian community in New York. In this interview, we spoke with Yang about how she came to set up the gallery, her activities in New York, his interest in and support for international artists, and her outlook for the future.

An experimental space born in Boston

First, I would like to ask you about the background of the establishment of the YveYANG Gallery. Why did you decide to set up a gallery?

I didn't study art in college or grad school, I studied statistics in undergrad and tech entrepreneurship in grad school, so I try to find problems in life and I'm always thinking about solving them.

My first idea was to launch an e-commerce platform, which was popular at the time, to introduce and help sell the works of young artists and art school students who did not yet have galleries. After trying this out, I realized that there was a higher demand for buying and selling works offline than online, so in the early summer of 2016, I opened my first gallery space in Boston.



Installation view from the exhibition "Liao Fei: Perspective" (October 7 - November 18, 2016)

Please tell us about some of your notable exhibitions and projects in Boston.

For example, for its third exhibition, the gallery invited Chinese artist Liao Fei, interested in philosophy, mathematics and physics, to come and do a multi-month residency in Boston, taking him to local cutting-edge research institutes and interacting with scientists and philosophers.

At the end of the residency, I held an exhibition called "Perspective" (October 7th - November 18th, 2016), and for the related event, I invited opera directors and composers to create new music, stories and lyrics. It was a very impressive event, featuring professional opera singers and musicians performing in a space with no boundaries between them and the audience, with the male and female protagonists moving out of the gallery space and back again.

A fresh start in New York, the art capital

I'd like to ask you what prompted you to move to New York.

They felt that in order for the gallery to grow and gain more attention, it needed to move to an art hub like New York.

How did you proceed after coming to New York?

The first space I found was a former armory in Midtown with very high ceilings. The first exhibition there was a solo show by artist Sam Ghantus, which opened on April 28, 2017. It was followed by a group show called "Time Square," featuring almost all Asian artists.

In April 2018, we collaborated with MOS, an up-and-coming architecture firm in New York, to renovate the gallery space. This project, called "With a Mezzanine," can be considered an architectural work of its own. It took two years to complete, but due to the effects of COVID-19, we were unable to hold an exhibition in this space until December 2021.



An inside look at "With a Mezzanine"

How did you continue your activities between 2018 and 2021?

He had a solo exhibition with David O'Reilly in Shanghai and participated in art fairs in Shanghai, New York and San Francisco, mainly working in a pop-up format.

In 2022, they decided to work in New York after witnessing the development of the gallery scene in the TriBeCa and SoHo areas of New York and finding their current space, a former sewing machine factory built in 1884, which they initially renovated simply by removing walls while retaining origi-

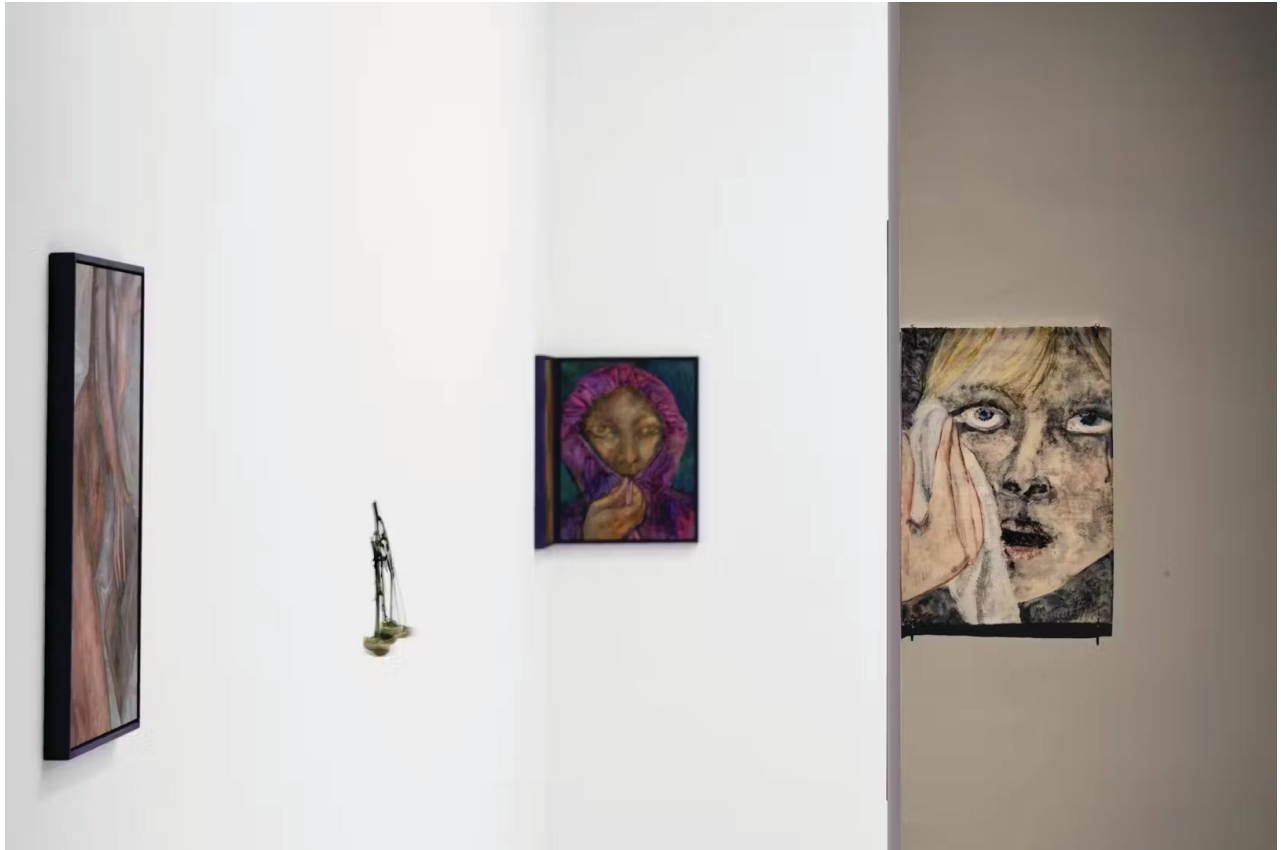


Exterior of the YveYANG Gallery in Soho, New York

When we first moved, there was only one gallery nearby, Jeffrey Deitch (who had been in the area for over 20 years), but a number of nonprofits and galleries, including Canal Project, Hauser & Wirth, and 47 Canal, have opened new spaces nearby.

And then, after completing a major renovation, we held a large-scale group exhibition, "Offworlds" (October 21 - December 2, 2023) at the end of October 2023, which represented a real new beginning for me: having a professional space in the central art district of New York, and being able to give voice to women and Asian artists.

For that exhibition, I invited Dani Shen, who was then a curatorial and public programs assistant at the Carpenter Center for Visual Arts at Harvard University, to be the curator. As both she and I are Asian women, we decided to put together a group exhibition focusing on 18 Asian women. The exhibition featured works in a wide variety of media, including technology-related works, sculpture, and painting, and the artists came from a wide range of career backgrounds.



Installation view from the exhibition "Pauline Rintsch: Pinch Me Hard and Soft" (June 28 - August 17, 2024)

Becoming a "North Star" for others

As an Asian female gallerist, what do you focus on when selecting and planning projects?

As an Asian gallery based in New York, we select artists based on our own background, but at the same time, we pay close attention to the European art scene and actively participate in art fairs around the world.

How do you usually choose your artists?

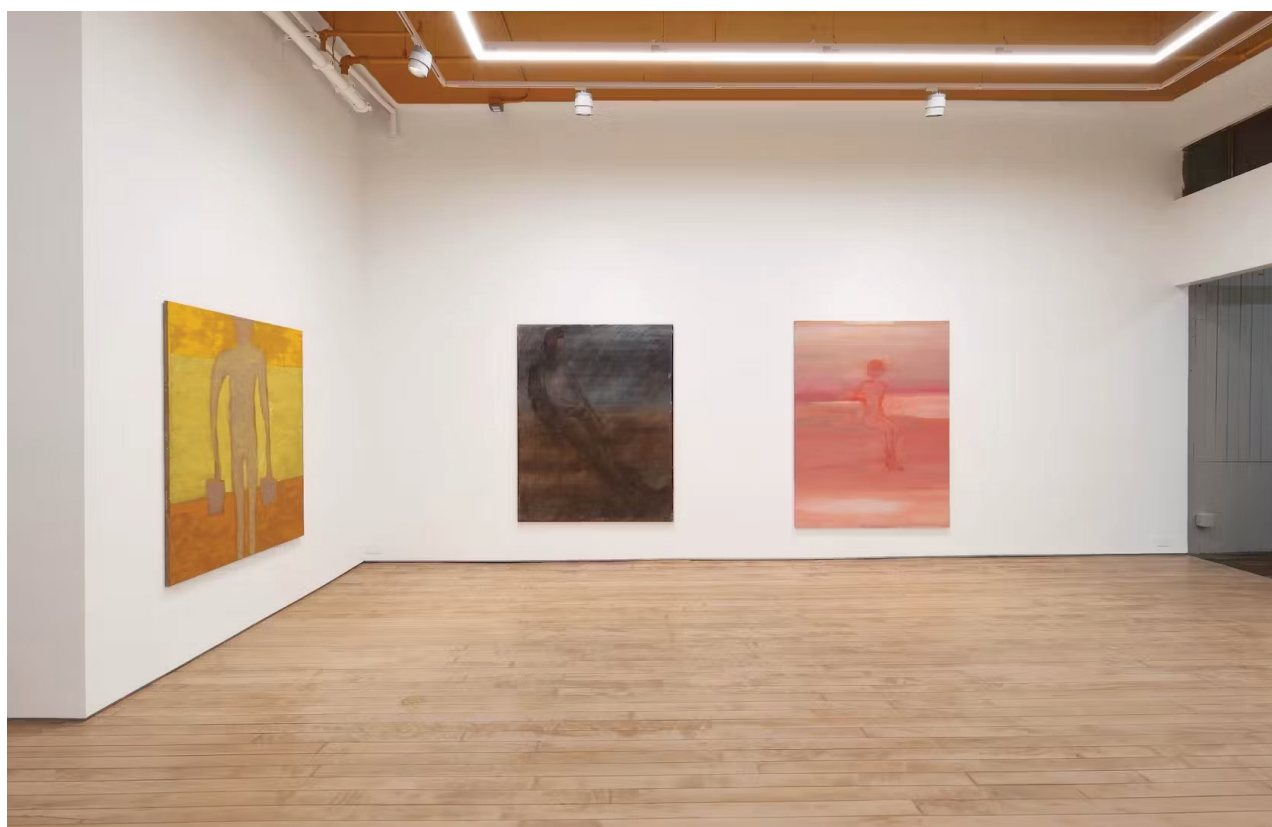
I mainly look for artists at graduation exhibitions and open studios at art schools around the U.S. For example, East Coast schools such as Columbia University, Hunter College, and Yale University, as well as art schools in California. I also travel to Europe four or five times a year to see graduation exhibitions at art schools in London, Dusseldorf, Frankfurt, and other cities.

□ I am attracted to artists whose work is honest and has a unique expression, and I also think it is important to discuss the artist's personality, career, and understanding of art.

Of course, we also receive introductions from artists and curators, such as Rafael Egil, whose work we have recently started to carry, and Anna Maria Sklova, who was a student of Peter Doig.



Installation view from "Raphael Egil: Ground Speed" (May 4 - June 22, 2024)



Exhibition view from the exhibition "Anna-Maria Škroba: Mana Anna" (December 9, 2023 - January 20, 2024)

In short, when choosing an artist, it is important to not be bound by nationality or identity, but to focus on the art itself above all else. Since I was young, I was convinced that entrepreneurship was my future, and I had a clear idea of what I liked and wanted. The same goes for choosing an artist, and through the experience of visiting many studios, I can make a decision in an instant without hesitation.

What advantages and challenges do you face as an Asian gallerist working in New York?

There are many Asian collectors living in New York, and they are more interested in what we do than other galleries, and it is easier to have conversations with them, but we still face challenges in getting non-Asian people interested in our projects, as well as how to engage with the local art community and raise the voice of Asians.



Installation view from the exhibition "Anastazie Anderson: Imitation of Life" (March 16 - April 27, 2024)

What impact do you hope to have on the Asian community in the New York art scene?

I've always had an entrepreneurial spirit and I want to establish my own foothold and be the leading Asian gallery in New York.

I also want to use my experience and resources to give back to the community, as many people don't have access to the same opportunities and resources.

I especially want to support women and minorities who want to start their own businesses. One of the problems and challenges I faced when I started my gallery was that I didn't have a role model. I didn't know who to learn from, I didn't have a "north star." So my goal is to fill that role