

LAUREL GITLEN

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PEGGY CHIANG

Wasted

January 11 – February 24, 2024

i. The metabolic churning: spent oolong tea leaves seep in the muck of decaying cardboard, dripped gasoline, apple core, stretched polyethylene. Collected waste water coalesces a homogenous swirl of liquids: used frying oil, expired skin serum, traces of effervescent drinks. An admixture of damp cigarette stubs swims in this pool of collective brine. The loading platform lifts. Crushed glass, pierced vinyl. Contents exceed their limits. Secretions propagate until the haul is released. Agitated steel thickens.

ii. Dermal core thick with oxidative metal, clinging bubble wrap tightens on your bodily enclosure approaching obstruction. A haunting of straddled steel adheres with obstinance, your skin chemistry speaking the vestiges of touch back to you with sharp responsiveness. Your skin animates its invisible odor, your pores expressing reek like galvanized citrus. Fingertips at the nostril until you touch again. Residual gritting. Bound. Vibratory.

iii. A humid breath lets in billowing smoke into the lungs. They expand in the choreography of gaseous exchange, composing a pulmonary air of ambient steam, inhaled gunpowder, smoldering resin. Internal smoke swirls with atmospheric pollutants. The sidewalk swells with acid rain, releasing its juices. Pigeons gather to drink it. The tar city enters the gut. Bitumen petrichor and septic debris infiltrating streets, membranes, cells. Excreting itself into you.

– agustine zegers

Peggy Chiang (b. San Francisco) has recently exhibited at Laurel Gitlen and Klaus von Nichtssagend, New York (2023); hatred2, Brooklyn (2023); Moss Arts Center, Blacksburg (2023); 80WSE, New York (2022); april april, Brooklyn (2022); and Prairie, Chicago (2022). She received an MFA in Visual Arts from Rutgers University and a BFA from the Maryland Institute College of Art. She is an Assistant Professor of Art at the City College of New York CUNY.