

# Kiang Malingue *Wake, mayfly...*

馬凌畫廊  
kiangmalingue.com

10 Sik On Street, Wanchai, Hong Kong  
50 Eldridge St., New York, NY 10002

(Artist) Trương Công Tùng

(Opening)  
Fri, 24 April, 6 – 8 PM

(Date)  
25 April – 6 June 2026

(Gallery Hours)  
Tue to Sat, 10 AM – 6 PM

(Location)  
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*Wake, mayfly...*

Time crumbles within our hand

Signals ebb and flow, everything in constant motion, everything  
impermanent, as one contracts and another expands...  
It arises, exists momentarily before vanishing...

In... Out  
Traversing many lives

Within one cycle of life and death

Light, dark  
Thesis, antithesis  
Enlarge, condense  
Exhale, inhale  
Evolve, devolve  
Assimilate, dissolve  
Establish, disband

Born, lit up, broken

If a dream  
Vibrates

Above the sky, beneath the ocean

A mayfly shell  
A caterpillar  
A sunken star

Everything shapeshifts with the wind  
In a fistful of dust  
Life laid upon life  
Death piled upon death  
We think and consider, to forget.  
We think and see, when it is almost forgotten.

Day wanes, Night waxes.

Might a rose need to do something?  
Do you truly see the stars?  
Golden earth or a superstition?

Over there a mountain  
Over here a river

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Ashes to ashes, dust to dust  
Two sides of the same hand

Chaos...  
Alive in each layer  
Transference, reincarnation  
A scattering of souls  
Borrow this veil of dust  
In search of the present...

Confluence

Mountain atop Mountain. River atop River. Earth atop Earth. Water atop  
Water. Humans atop Humans

O Me, O Life...  
It is late, together we still have to travel miles ahead

-Trương Công Tùng

Kiang Malingue is pleased to present in its New York space *Wake, mayfly...* [Thức dậy, phù du...], a solo exhibition by Trương Công Tùng (b. 1986, based in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam), comprising lacquer paintings, drawings, and *When Nothingness Becomes an Echo of Something and Something is an Echo of Nothing*, a sculptural installation commissioned for the 36th Bienal de São Paulo (2025).

Trương Công Tùng begins each exhibition with an invocation on vision and memory: “please look at things here as if it were your first time seeing right after birth, and as if it were your last chance of seeing. Blessed be.” Emanating from this acknowledgment of sentience and consciousness, *Wake, mayfly...* is a commingling of four bodies of work as living entities that cohabit a shared ecosystem, situating interrelation as a compass and measure of phenomena in forms of life. Conceived as a breath and a dream, and an oneiric and numinous landscape, *Wake, mayfly...* evokes the four seasons, the four elements and their divinatory powers (as deployed in Tarot), phases of human life (from the four stages of the cardiac cycle to DNA’s four nucleic acids), spirituality and philosophical systems (Buddhist concepts of birth, growth, decay, and void), and energy conversion (the four-stroke cycle of an internal combustion engine’s processes of intake, compression, power, and exhaust).

Attuning to the ecology of the garden, the growth cycle of the seed, and the timescale of natural and geological rhythms, Trương grounds his interdisciplinary practice as akin to gardening, tending as “an act of care for life and its spiritual values.” Seen as a metaphor for the nature of existence, the garden is a “vast library, where the voices of men and women, or the whisper of worms, insects, and ghosts, are perpetually recorded. Any seed carries in itself qualities from individuals, communities, history, geopolitics, ecology, and cosmology. It embodies the values of life and death, of hybridity born from interrelations. Seeds constantly collide, creating tension between yin and yang, between expansion and constriction, between evolution and devolution, between confluence and disintegration, between formation and dissolution.”

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In mythological folktales from the Central Highlands of Vietnam, deities escape civilization and take refuge in inanimate objects, and can only be communicated with through subtle sounds. Hissing, the almost imperceptible sounds of circulation, of life force, animate the installation *When Nothingness Becomes an Echo of Something and Something is an Echo of Nothing* (2025-ongoing). All of Truong's artworks are dated to include time as part of their ongoing existence and potential transformation. The materials form an orbit of composing and decomposing matters, including "a dried gourd, a defective hand, a skin, a broken horn, an animal's tail, a swarm of termites, soil, soul, salt, honey, water, air, light, machine." Arrayed as seven sculptural fragments, corresponding to the intervals between eight major musical notes, objects equipped with sound-emitting sensors responsive to contact and proximity are awakened to bring into a rhythm of susurrations. Fostering a kinship between ancient beings, human, and nature, this symphony activates a timestream, carrying out what Truong calls, "the past while capturing the future embedded in the present moment." Through this sonic intimacy, Truong beseeches us to also listen to the silence, in the breaks, interludes, and gaps, between sounds and between breaths. Recalibrated, we might then be able to tune in to nature's miraculous score, of the earth, sky, wind, plants, insects, rocks, and between nothing and something, between the here and the beyond.

Suspending in the midst are three round lacquer paintings from *In the Wind... (Trail Dust)* (2023-ongoing), a 24-work series that is never presented in its entirety, insisting on fragmentation. Known for his inventive Vietnamese lacquer painting techniques that plumb the depths and surfaces of its material capacity to both reveal and hide, Truong describes his process as "tracing an absent movement of a forlorn being that simultaneously reveals and conceals itself," that is structured like life, in a sequence of remembering and forgetting. "Trail Dust" is the codename for the aerial herbicide spraying program carried out by the United States military during the American War in Vietnam, that devastated the country's mangrove forests, upland forests, and cultivated land. Each painting contains on one side lacquer, and the other side a sheet of dark mirror-like mica, thus holding within it coexistence of light and dark, expansion and contraction, possibility and negation, and as they spin with air current, like a breath, inhale and exhale. On fragmentation, Truong reflects: "Vietnam's history is told through war. Wars leave behind fragments, drifting in the wind. This body of paintings takes those fragments as starting points. Like fine dust, they float in the air and travel with the wind, while still attempting to merge and heal."

Spanning the entire length of a gallery wall, *A Breath... A Dream...* (2021-ongoing) comprises 120 paintings of lacquer, chalk, and pigment on mylar. This constellation approximates the form of a memory, an almanac or a diary, that connects the human and tangible world with interspecies and invisible realms. In this cosmological timestream, human anatomy, scenes of collectivity and war, flow alongside flora, insects, animals, and planets. "All of them appear to emerge out of nowhere and try to go somewhere," transcending human time, towards the geologic and planetary, as well as the circadian rhythm and the slow-motion sense of time experienced by insects.

*In Search of the Present...* (2025-ongoing) is a series of variously shaped paintings of Vietnamese lacquer resin (sơn ta) on wooden board (vóc) composed with soil and fabric. Truong transforms lacquer as a data center of organic materials, embedding with it eggshells, silver and gold leaf, crimson powder, alluvial soil, as well as specific temperature and humidity required for lacquer to dry. sơn ta is translucent and extracted from the sơn tree, endemic to Phú Thọ Province in North Vietnam, and turns to shades of

black upon contact with heat and metal. Symbolic across cultures, egg as the origin of the universe, broken to form sky, the Earth, and worldly creatures. Atop several works are sculptural reliefs that recall SIM cards or motherboards. Like seeds cast to map an inner world, bodies, organs, and mountains commune as a signal network, while the surfaces continue to absorb, interact, and breathe life.

Writer Hung Duong, frequent visitor to the artist's studio, writes:

With patience, when the layers congeal into a solemn block, Truong begins an opposite process to superimposition: erosion. Each sanding motion is perched precariously between precision and spontaneity. As the dried lacquer turns to fine dust, hidden images begin surfacing. There is an element of luck: by the time the lacquer layers completely dry, Truong might have forgotten where he previously placed the materials. Each hand swipe is simultaneously a gamble and a playful poke. His intuition guides the hands, eyes, and mind across a black ocean of resin in search of forlorn memories. Lacquer thus forces him to remain present. While Truong is a forager of found objects and frequently gathers materials from termite wings and dried calabashes to scrap metals and abandoned honeybee boxes, he is also a voracious seeker in the virtual realm. Experimenting with combinations of Internet keyword searches, Truong generates an infinite pool of visuals as raw data, such as in the work *In Search of the Present (F + ...)*, which draws from a string of keywords "Floods Formless Forever Function From Flesh Face Flows Forget Fullness Formation Farewell Form of life Follower." The digital harvest is transferred onto the wooden board as inlays to create surreal compositions that evoke the fragmentary nature of dreamscapes.

A swirling, all-encompassing chaos. A milky way of tectonic fractures and mnemonic membranes. Bones of the father, flesh of the son, the murmuring breath of irredeemable spirits. Ember of crimson ochre and forest fire, black of oil spill and silent night, green of vegetation or poisonous waste, yellow of viral decay and precious gold. Millions and millions of organisms teeming, jostling, and breeding beneath the somber veneer, a flatness that belies layers of materials and depth of soul. Circles that resemble eyes, orifices, and the core of the Earth pop out against the multichromatic canvas. Humans, if they happen to exist, appear as shadow figures, faceless, an ancestral prototype. Truong's paintings thus collectively form a basin where life and death are sown in tandem through constant movements of superimposition and erosion—a gesture, perhaps, toward the cyclical and elusive nature of our complex reality.

(About Trương Công Tùng)

Trương Công Tùng (b. 1986, based in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam) grew up in Đắk Lắk among diverse ethnic communities in Vietnam's Central Highlands. He graduated from the Ho Chi Minh Fine Arts University in 2010, majoring in lacquer painting. With a research focus spanning science, cosmology, philosophy, and environmental studies, he works across various media, including video, installation, painting, and found objects. His work reflects personal contemplations on the cultural and geopolitical transformations driven by modernization, as seen through the evolving ecology, beliefs, and mythology of his homeland. Truong is also a member of Art Labor (founded in 2012), a collective that bridges visual art and social/life sciences to produce alternative, informal knowledge through artistic and cultural activities in various public contexts and locales.

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Trương Công Tùng has exhibited extensively both in Vietnam and internationally, as a solo artist and as part of the Art Labor Collective. Selected solo exhibitions include: “Day Wanes... Night Waxes”, Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburger (2025); “Trail Dust”, Canal Projects, New York (2024); “The Disoriented Garden... A Breath of Dream” at Sàn Art, Ho Chi Minh City (2023); Sa Sa Art Project, Phnom Penh (2024); Jim Thompson Art Center, Bangkok (2024), and MUSEION, Bolzano (2024), supported by the Han Nefkens Foundation, where he won the Southeast Asian Video Art Production Grant 2023. In 2026, he was named the joint winner of the 8th edition of the Arnaldo Pomodoro Sculpture Prize.

His work has also been featured in group exhibitions including "Dancing at the Edge of theWorld | Arnaldo Pomodoro Sculpture Prize - 8th edition", ICA Milano, Milan, Italy (2026); The 11th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art, Brisbane, Australia (2024), “Cloud Chamber” Para Site, Hong Kong (2024); “The Spirits of Maritime Crossing”, organized by the Bangkok Art Biennale Foundation as a Collateral Event of the 60th Venice Biennale (2024). Other notable exhibitions include “Is it morning for you yet?” at the 58th Carnegie International, Pittsburgh, USA (2022); “State of Absence... Words out there. A collaborative installation by plants, insects, earth, water, ash, air... and Trương Công Tùng,” at Manzi Art Space, Hanoi (2021); “The Sap Still Runs” at Sàn Art, Ho Chi Minh City (2019); “Between Fragmentation and Wholeness” at Galerie Quynh, Ho Chi Minh City (2018); “A Beast, a God, and a Line” at Para Site, Hong Kong (2018), and at the Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw (2018); Dhaka Art Summit (2018); “Soil and Stones, Souls and Songs” at Para Site, Hong Kong (2017) and at Kadist, San Francisco (2016); “Across the Forest” for Project Skylines with Flying People 3 at Nhà Sàn Collective, Hanoi (2016); and “Gestures and Archives of the Present, Genealogies of the Future” at the Taipei Biennial, Taiwan (2016).

Trương’s work has been collected by Hamburger Kunsthalle, Germany; MUSEION, Italy; KADIST, Paris and San Francisco; Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw, Poland; The Nguyen Art Foundation, Vietnam; The Outpost Arts Organization, Vietnam; Post Vidai, Vietnam and Switzerland; Aura Contemporary Art Foundation, Japan, and others.