

Chang Yuchen: Two fingers make a line

Assembly Room
191 Henry Street,
New York, NY 10002

February 1 - February 23, 2019
Reception February 1st, 6-9pm

From meticulous pencil drawings to loosely woven curls of fabric and drifts of silk, **Chang Yuchen** takes lines and transforms them across media and space. Bringing together the graphic and textile arts, Chang's practice pursues resonances between the shifting contexts in which to understand a line as an edge, a thread, or a mark unto itself.

Chang's conception of drawing emerges from the Chistyakov system which has been the declared pedagogical methodology of the Chinese Central Academy of Fine Art since the early 1950s. Drawing on an educational doctrine originally established in the 19th Century by Petrovich Chistyakov in Russia, the system fractures subjects into tonal shifts across correlated planes. Its institutionalization in China marked a turn towards the style of socialist realism, and away from the Chan Buddhism- influenced Literati painting that had been practiced since the Ming Dynasty.

It was under the Chistyakov system that Chang's father was educated, and the artist herself in turn. "There's no line in the real world, my father used to teach me. 'This line is created by two fingers.'" Responding to the influence of this notably Soviet style of socialist realism, Chang purposefully sidesteps its conventions, instead playing on its representational impulse by materializing line as installations of fabric or yarn. Chang's drawings erode the space between flat planes and dimensional world, sketching across bodies and textures, applying high realism in excerpts and amalgamated forms that turn abstract. Chang also turns graphic representation on its head when she uses detailed cross-hatching to render parts, instead of whole forms. Her etching, *Eyebrow*, 2015, becomes a crawling, unfamiliar streak when isolated from the contours of a face; similarly, *Day 5*, 2017, and *Day 6*, 2017, collect shadows removed from their dimensional counterparts. Her textile and threaded works are a further stage, extracting lines from the surface until they become like stretch marks: the meandering weft of *Weave No. 5*, 2018, the vertical lines of its warp, which come together and fall apart to create darker and lighter tones.

In this encounter between Chang's drawn and sculptural forms, *Assembly Room* becomes a surface that may hold lines, be they graphite or ink on paper, textile spreads, or bare coils of woven fiber. Through a focused investigation of the role of drawing in her practice, this body of work aims to challenge assumptions about the utility of line within or apart from an image. Carving into the spaces and behaviors of the everyday, Chang creates lines which reflect upon and expand the system of drawing in which she was trained as a site of political, social, and generational exchange.

Artist and Curator Bios

Chang Yuchen works in an interdisciplinary manner, perceiving embroidery as drawing, weaving as writing, clothing as portable theater, and installation as moving image.

Jane Cavalier is a Curatorial Assistant at The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Working in the Department of Drawings and Prints, she was recently on the curatorial team for the exhibition, *Making Space: Women Artists and Postwar Abstraction* (2017). She also independently curates shows, including *Object Intimacies* at NURTUREart, Brooklyn (2018-2019); *Re: Framed* at the Re: Art Show, Brooklyn (2018); and *Modern Melancholy* at the Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College (2013). Jane received a master's in art history from The Courtauld Institute in July 2016, and was a 2014–2015 Fulbright Research Scholar in Berlin. Currently based in Brooklyn, New York, her writing has been published by *The L.A. Review of Books*; *The Art Newspaper*; *The Brooklyn Rail*; *MOMUS*; *Hyperallergic*; *University of California, Los Angeles Graphite Interdisciplinary Journal of the Arts*; and *Northwestern University Art Review*.

Nicole Kaack is an independent curator and writer based in Queens, NY. She is the current Curatorial Fellow at The Kitchen, New York, as well as Assistant Director at the Photo Collections Preservation Project (PCPP). Kaack has been published by *Whitehot Magazine*, *artcritical*, *Art Viewer*, *SFAQ / NYAQ / AQ*, *Artforum*, and *The Brooklyn Rail*. She has also contributed texts to *I will set a stage for you*, published by HOLOHOLO Books and edited by Ana Iwataki and Marion Vasseur Raluy, as well as to a publication in association with Hauser & Wirth's *Recto / Verso* panel series. Exhibitions include *It All Trembles* at the NARS Foundation, Brooklyn (upcoming May 2019), *Object Intimacies* at NURTUREart, Brooklyn (2018-2019), *Science Fictions* at CRUSHCURATORIAL, New York (2018), *Re:Framed* at the Re: Art Show, Brooklyn (2018), *Wordless* at Small Editions, Brooklyn (2017), *Enveloped* at Small Editions, Brooklyn (2017), and *Paperless* at Small Editions, Brooklyn (2017). Kaack is the co-founder of the newsletter of missing out, co-director of the artist publication prompt, and co-founder of the press *Blind Carbon*.

Installation Images

































