

To Sleep and Wake Unafraid

Fallen Angels: Eve 2023 Chinese ink on canvas 80 x 60 cm	Fallen Angels: Adam 2023 Chinese ink on canvas 80 x 60 cm	Fallen Angels: Lucifer 2023 Chinese ink on canvas 200 x 100 cm	Fallen Angels: Gadreel 2023 Chinese ink on canvas 80 x 60 cm
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Fallen Angels:
Kasyade
2023
Chinese ink
on canvas
50 x 40 cm

Fallen Angels:
Samyaza
2023
Chinese ink
on canvas
50 x 40 cm

Fallen Angels:
Penemue
2023
Chinese ink
on canvas
50 x 40 cm

Fallen Angels:
Azazel
2023
Chinese ink
on canvas
50 x 40 cm

To Sleep and
Wake Unafraid
2025
Digital print
on flag fabric
Triptych
540 x 176cm each
Edition of 5

The Fight between
Dream and Nightmare
2025
Chinese ink
on paper
Triptych
44.5 x 14.5cm each
44.5 x 43.5 cm

The most
misplaced
worry 2
2025
mixed media
2.5 x 9 x 6 cm

Fallen Angels:
Yekun
2023
Chinese ink
on canvas
200 x 100 cm

Fallen Angels:
Abaddon
2023
Chinese ink
on canvas
200 x 100 cm

Fallen Angels:
Leviathan
2023
Chinese ink
on canvas
200 x 100 cm

Fallen Angels:
Kesabel
2023
Chinese ink
on canvas
80 x 60 cm

Oscar Chan Yik Long
Solo Exhibition
Curated by Angelika Li

Exhibition until 22 June
viewing by appointment
connect@pf25.org
+41 7678 1 7678

sinokultur
华瑞文化协会



To Sleep and Wake Unafraid

Oscar Chan Yik-long

Solo Exhibition

Curated by Angelika Li

PF25 cultural projects is delighted to present 'To Sleep and Wake Unafraid', Oscar Chan Yik-long's first solo presentation in Switzerland and the opening chapter of his two-part solo exhibition series, unfolding across Basel and Vilnius in 2025. Part of PF25's Spring Programme and the Art Basel VIP Programme, this site-specific presentation is staged in a 16th-century building in the heart of Basel's Old Town.

Known for his standalone ink paintings and large-scale ephemeral murals, Chan's practice weaves together East Asian philosophy, mythology, and spiritual traditions with Western classical and symbolist influences. Horror cinema and global pop culture further infuse his visual language, bridging ancestral memory with contemporary experience. In recent works, Chan has focused on holistic under-standings of the human body and mind in Chinese tradition – particularly the links between internal organs and core emotions: fear, anger, anxiety, sadness, and happiness.

Titled after a line from Ingmar Bergman's 1968 film 'Hour of the Wolf', the exhibition reflects on the liminal hours before dawn—moments that stir deep emotional currents in both the conscious and unconscious. For Chan, these early hours resonate with those navigating complexity and difference in their lived realities, while also evoking a universal longing—and right—for safe spaces of self-understanding, healing, and growth. The exhibition contemplates the relationship between action and identity: how daily gestures and routines shape body and mind, and how these elements transform and influence one another. Drawing on Traditional Chinese Medicine, it explores the interplay between physical and emotional states.

A new cycle of paintings and installation, bearing the same title as the exhibition, introduces phantasmagorical figures drawn from Chan's own mythology. At its centre stands 'the fight between dream and nightmare' (2025), in which two protagonists battle amidst a constellation of mythological beings, hybrid creatures, and wandering souls traversing cultures and time. One might wonder if these two figures channel Morpheus and Phobos of Greek legends – their forms transformed by the imagery of Eastern mythology. These elements unfold across canvases and culminate in the textile installation 'To sleep and wake unafraid' (2025), which unfurls across the ceiling.

This overhead piece evokes a sense of cosmological tension: Chronos holds a clock in the East corner; an army of skeletal figures gathers in the South; a mystical flower deity, embodying strength, stands in the West; and in the North, a hybrid bestiary emerges, echoing the spirit of the 'Classic of Mountains and Seas' (compiled between the 4th century BCE and the 1st century CE) – a foundational text of Chinese mythology and cosmography – accompanied by the Three Fates, whose vivid choreography of past, present, and future reverberates across the space. Together, they draw the gaze upward into a shifting realm of motion and metamorphosis – reshaping the spatial energy of the room and immersing the viewer in a celestial experience. Who wins in the end?

Also shown for the first time in Switzerland is 'A Horror to the Eyes of All Men Seeking Faith' (2023), its title adapted from a line in the script of the 1990 film 'The Exorcist III'. Presented as a prelude to the new works, this earlier cycle revolves around decadence and distortion, embodied by fallen angels. Chan links this degeneration to human greed and desire, often expressed through consumption, destruction, and disconnection from nature—driven by fear.

In 'Fallen Angels: Eve', a figure removes a creature from her body, silences her voice, and shields others – gestures of dominance and fear of losing power. Ambiguous boundaries in society often breed fear. In 'Fallen Angels: Adam', a blindfolded figure, throat disabled, holds an eyeball in the mouth – still seeing, but unable to speak, as fear resonates outward.

Referencing the film's ending, where evil is expelled by faith and will, Chan questions how faith can descend into horror when clouded by noise and illusion. The existential question 'Who am I?' becomes a compass against disorientation. Within this polarity of light and darkness, Chan invites reflection on faith, fear, and transformation – core to the exhibition's topics of vulnerability, ritual, and renewal. Reflecting on his own state of mind while painting the fallen angels, Chan explained that the glow surrounding them reflects the light he carried in his heart – a layered manifestation of protection, inner light, and conflicted grace, their presence poised between illumination and descent.

From these topics, Chan's latest work 'The most misplaced worry 2' (2025) continues this inward observation – from the symbolic and spectral to the tactile and personal. Here, Chan approaches worry not through spectacle but through repetition and ritual. The cigarette becomes a site for personal inscription, where anxiety is disarmed, defunctioned, and quietly transformed. This work evokes the collaboration between the curator and artist in 'Homeland in Transit: Carried by the Wind' (2022), in which Chan has created the series 'Smoking is the only way to resolve it' featuring smoking protagonists from his memory of various films by Wong Kar Wai. In this transparent cigarette box, it holds twenty paper cylinders, each carefully emptied of tobacco by the artist. On the surface of these cigarette rolls, Chan has painted microscopic universes populated by otherworldly creatures.

The exhibition continues in November with the second chapter, 'They Always Look from the Imagined Above', opening at the Radvila Palace Museum of Art in Vilnius, part of the Lithuanian National Museum of Art. The exhibition series, which will be accompanied by the artist's first monograph, is a collaboration between Kunsthalle Kohta (Helsinki), PF25 cultural projects (Basel), and the Lithuanian National Museum of Art (Vilnius). The Basel chapter is supported by sinokultur, Zurich, with the production of new works made possible by a grant from the Finnish Cultural Foundation (SKR).

About the Artist

Oscar Chan Yik-long graduated from the Academy of Visual Arts, Hong Kong Baptist University in 2011. He has participated in international residencies including PF25 cultural projects and Atelier Mondial in Basel, HIAP Suomenlinna Island in Helsinki, and The Loft-Servais Collection in Brussels.

He is a recipient of the 2025 working grant from the Finnish Cultural Foundation (SKR) in Helsinki. Chan's solo and duo exhibitions include 'In the Darkness of Bones' (St Chads, London, 2024), 'Certain parties were not pleased' (Cazul 101, Bucharest, 2023), 'Don't Leave the Dark Alone' (Gallery EXIT, Hong Kong, 2021), 'Soliquid' (Things That Can Happen, Hong Kong, 2017) and 'The Devil, Probably' (Observation Society, Guangzhou, 2015).

Selected group exhibitions: 'Random Diaries' (Zurich, 2023), 'Homeland in Transit: Carried by the Wind' (Basel/Münchenstein, 2022), 'Myth Makers – Spectrosynthesis III' (Tai Kwun Contemporary, Hong Kong, 2022), 'First International Festival of Manuports' (Kunsthalle Kohta, Helsinki, 2021), 'Contagious Cities: Far Away, Too Close' (Tai Kwun Contemporary, Hong Kong, 2019), 'Futur, ancien, fugitif – une scène française' (Palais de Tokyo, Paris, 2019), 'Divided We Stand' (9th Busan Biennale, Korea, 2018), 'A Tree Fell in the Forest and No One's There' (Power Station of Art, Shanghai, 2018), 'Crush' (ParaSite, Hong Kong, 2018), 'Mountain Sites: View of Laoshan' (Sifang Art Museum, Nanjing, 2016), 'A Journal of the Plague Year' (Kadist Art Foundation and The Lab, San Francisco, 2015).