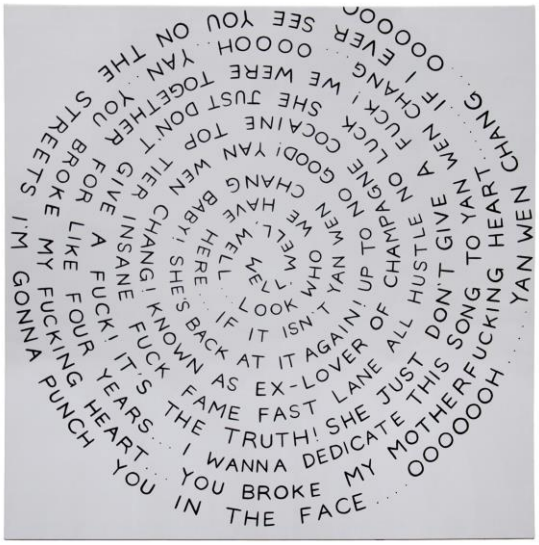
Susan Hobbs

Yan Wen Chang
Odile's Notorious Magnum Opus Of Thirty-Two Fouettés
January 19 to February 25, 2023



Yan Wen Chang's exhibition, *Odile's Notorious Magnum Opus Of Thirty-Two Fouettés*, investigates the relationship between a desire and a dream, their differences, and the lengths one takes to achieve them. The exhibition's title references a character in the classical ballet Swan Lake. Odile is the Black Swan and, through deceit and desire, successfully lures the Prince to commit his love dooming the White Swan to her death. The prima ballerina is tasked with the challenge of performing as both swans. This trope of heroes pitted against themselves is a defining feature of psychological tragedies and depicts the two dividing states of pursuing one's dream, reality and hope. This new body of paintings continue Chang's ongoing investigation and critique of the American Dream, referencing common symbolic tropes of psychological tragedies found in films like *Requiem for a Dream* and *Black Swan*, directed by Darren Aronofsky. Although the ongoing outcome is two-fold, defiant or desperate, the chance to cheat fate is ever-present in the making of these paintings. Referencing symbols like the Hollywood sign and five-pointed star, Chang finds purity in these symbols, turning them into echos of themselves and freeing them from any pre-existing functions. This enables them to relate and belong in ways neither predictable nor predetermined, creating new relationships out of what already exists as a reminder of what is still possible.

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