

# YONGQI TANG:

## *The Open Venus*

DATES: Oct 11th, 2024 - Nov 10, 2024

RECEPTION: Friday, Oct 10th, 6-8pm

LOCATION: 64A Bayard Street,  
New York, NY 10013



LATITUDE Gallery is proud to present *The Open Venus*, the New York debut solo exhibition by artist Yongqi Tang, opening this October. Known for her powerful exploration of identity, bodily transformation, and cultural narratives, Tang's latest series pushes the boundaries of contemporary art by confronting the complex tension between beauty and violence.

Drawing inspiration from George Didi-Huberman's analysis of Botticelli's depiction of Venus, *The Open Venus* reflects on the hidden violence beneath classical representations of beauty. According to Hesiod's myth, Venus was born from the severed genitals of Uranus, castrated by his son Saturn (Cronos), and cast into the sea, where she emerged from a foam of sperm and blood. Botticelli's iconic painting *The Birth of Venus* idealizes this moment, presenting a serene, marble-like figure. However, Tang's work seeks to uncover the concealed horror and violence that lie at the foundation of Venus's creation.

Tang's personal experience with scoliosis surgery, where her back was physically cut open and reconstructed, informs her connection to the themes of transformation and vulnerability. She explores how beauty is often intertwined with pain and how the human body, much like the mythological Venus, undergoes both physical and emotional trials. The tension between modesty and horror is central to her work, with each painting offering a study in the delicate balance between strength and fragility.

Her use of oil painting as the primary medium brings these themes to life through richly textured layers and varied brushstrokes that capture both the fragility and resilience of the human body. Tang's nuanced approach to color, from deep reds to muted earth tones, evokes the tension between life and death, creation and destruction. Soft, flowing lines are juxtaposed with sharp, fragmented edges, symbolizing the interplay between beauty and violence.

Tang's artistic process sometimes begins with large-scale charcoal sketches, which serve as foundational studies for her oil paintings. These preparatory works guide the structure and form of her larger compositions, providing a glimpse into the raw energy and thought that fuel her final pieces. Some of the smaller oil paintings included in the exhibition also act as studies for future larger works, highlighting Tang's evolving practice as she continues to experiment with form and composition.

In *The Open Venus*, Tang reimagines Venus not as a symbol of divine perfection but as a figure shaped by violence, transformation, and resilience. Her work challenges viewers to engage with the deeper forces that shape identity and the human body, encouraging a reflection on the complex realities of beauty, pain, and bodily existence.

This exhibition marks Tang's first solo show in New York, following her participation in group show *Cruel Spring* and *NADA Miami 2023* with LATITUDE. *The Open Venus* offers fresh perspectives on the intersection of personal narrative, cultural heritage, and the evolving depiction of the human body in art.

*The Open Venus* will be on view from Oct 11 to Nov 10, 2024. For more information or to schedule a private viewing, please contact [shihuizhou@latitudegallery.nyc](mailto:shihuizhou@latitudegallery.nyc)