



Phoebe Little. *Like Salt on a Snail*, 2023. Oil on linen. 121.9 x 152.4 cm. Courtesy of the artist and Perrotin.

YALE MFA PAINTING & PRINTMAKING CLASS OF 2023

A SIGNAL URGENT BUT BREAKING

Emmanuel Amoakohene, Alexandria Couch, Stephano Espinoza Galarza, Hunter Foster, Daniela Gomez Paz, Nina Hartmann, Erick Alejandro Hernández, Jonathan Herrera Soto, Soren Hope, Christopher Paul Jordan, Fiza Khatri, Rina Lam Goldfield, Natia Lemay, Phoebe Little, Estelle Maisonett, Tura Oliveira, Maya Perry, Gabriela Rassi, Bryan Ali Sanchez, María Vargas Aguilar, Can Yağız, Ang Ziqi Zhang

June 15 - July 28, 2023

Perrotin is pleased to present a *signal urgent but breaking*, a group exhibition by the Yale MFA Painting and Printmaking Class of 2023, which will be supplemented by a series of programs envisioned and executed by the class.

Paint clinging to small, unexpected spaces; everyday stains—tobacco, soil, shellac—relocated to canvas; hints of language within visual fields; gestural trails of brushwork; tiny stitches and scratches; mere centimeters of disruption. . .these are the places of intimacy and incident in the work of the twenty-two artists who graduated from the Yale School of Art's graduate program in painting and printmaking in spring 2023. Emerging into a post-pandemic cultural landscape, the cohort reminds us of the profound lessons learned since 2020: to dig deep roots and hold as precious our immediate worlds; to value the exploration and expression of self, extracted from conventional routines and institutional systems; and to recognize the vital need to care intensely about those who navigate these precarious times with us.

The most minute of their highly considered gestures acknowledges the possibility of individual agency and the power to resist and change that might be wrought through the accumulation of micro-acts. Despite its association with a period when the studio walls of abstract expressionists were shields behind which some artists and critics claimed to transcend the world (a world, to note, also recovering from global trauma. . .that of World War II), perhaps it is best not to abandon the idea of painting as a field of action. Rather, through these recent graduates' work, we can prioritize activity embedded in the everyday, in identity, in family, and in history. This renewed sense of action is oriented to telling specific rather than universal stories, signaling a sense of urgency rather than timelessness.¹ In depicting labor that is generally unseen, postulating multi-species points of view, and addressing the complex experiences of post-colonialism, race, and gender, these artists produce strong frameworks for observation, articulation, and resolution with aspirations to impact outlooks alongside form.



Erick Alejandro Hernández. *Purple Room* (detail), 2023. Oil on canvas. 198.1 x 274.3 cm. Courtesy of the artist and Perrotin.



Rina Lam Goldfield. *Monarch* (detail), 2023. Oil, steel, graphite, and magnets on canvas. 121.9 x 91.4 cm. Courtesy of the artist and Perrotin.

But these small actions also encourage close looking—one of the purest and continuing pleasures of encountering art. The artists exhibited here invite us to stand back, walk nearer, then take another position to investigate the texture of their surfaces. They use the optical to catalyze physical perspective shifts, engaging the whole body in contemplation. As we receive their works, we imagine the touch of soft, skin-like fabric, the attractive tug of magnets, the candied stickiness of mediums, and the variable burn of light. We linger in sensual emanations of color and, in some instances, bathe in the rhythmic pulsing of sound. The deliberation with which each sensation is offered is an invitation to extend the slight intervals of sheer feeling that exist after contact with stimuli but before language begins to name, categorize, and tame. This exhibition is an

opportunity to attune our sensitivities to the primary perceptual gifts of being alive, as we calibrate ourselves to the strategies of artists inspired by the urgency of living now to create communications that might sustain us into the beyond.

— Kristen Hileman
Co-Teacher with Rachelle Dang, Yale Painting and Printmaking Thesis Seminar, 2023

[More information about the exhibition >>>](#)

¹ The cohort titled their exhibition *a signal urgent but breaking* after lyrics from “I Trawl the Megahertz,” track 1 on Paddy McAloon, *I Trawl the Megahertz*, Liberty EMI Records UK 724358391022, 2003, Album.