

Art | Basel

# Miami Beach

Exhibition Preview

Larry Li // *Migration Amnesia*

Miami Beach Convention Center, Booth P-11

December 1<sup>st</sup> – December 3<sup>rd</sup>

Residency



## Larry Li

Larry is a Chinese American artist born and raised in the bay area, California. He currently lives and works in Los Angeles, California.

His practice operates in a space of cultural and material contrast. He combines the visual language of Chinese culture along with his experiences as a child of immigrants in the United States. Painting, drawing, collage, and found photography find their way into the work to visualize his personal narrative to the Chinese American experience. He draws from family and historical photographs to delve into the intersections of familial and political histories. Casting a critical lens on both the east and west, and exploring the complexities of that hybridity. The works at times shift between where the photograph ends and where the painting begins. Li questions these modes of representations, and their validity to depict memory from the perspective of a culturally detached individual. His figurative paintings layer drawings on top of paint, paint on top of photo transfers, with cultural symbols embedded throughout. The layered materials illustrate a mental and physical grappling and confrontation of his own cultural amnesia.

## ABOUT THE PRESENTATION *MIGRATION AMNESIA*

Larry Li was born in the bay area California, to a family of immigrants that moved from China in the mid 90's. Li's fascination with the story of his family's migration has always been present in his practice, walking through life culturally conflicted with his position in the larger diaspora. His practice hopes to act as a return to a culture and history that is lost through migration and assimilation. The process of recontextualizing historical and familial photographs through photo transfers and painting techniques have become a vital aspect to the process of reactivating these lost memories.

The Student led pro-democracy movement of 1989 that led to the Tiananmen Square Massacre has long been seen as a symbol of civil disobedience and the atrocities of what oppression of democracy can become. It has produced one of the most iconic photographs of the 20th century and has forever been embedded into the fabric of our culture. However at the same time it is also an event that is lost in history, perpetually in a state of existence and non existence, circulation and censorship. There is almost a cultural and generational amnesia attached to the spirit of this time in history. Li has always had a deep connection to this moment in modern Chinese history, especially in recent years as he is reaching the age his parents were when they experienced the Tiananmen Square Massacre first hand.



## ABOUT THE PRESENTATION *MIGRATION AMNESIA*

Li has continued to reference this specific event in his practice throughout his career. However it has seemed to take on new and greater significance in recent years as his experiences seem to recall the past in rhythmic ways. Civil disobedience and the yearning for change fronted by the young people of society has taken the world's attention. He feels an indescribable connection to what is happening in this moment in time, to what was happening during the late 80's. The Tiananmen Square Massacre suddenly becomes an anchor point in time where Li is able to go back to, where generations meet to experience and share trauma and prepare for great change. Li questions if the atrocities that his parents witnessed as students during the Massacre became a moment where the way they see the world has suddenly shifted. However, to his parents It is not a topic they are willing to discuss so openly. Li is left to fill in the gaps of his family's story through his own research. The cultural distance Li feels is directly correlated to his familial relationships. Much of his work is so focused around family because of that very reason. The struggle of cultural and familial detachment is a theme that all individuals existing in a diaspora relate to.

In this body of work Li uses photographs from Tiananmen Square and old family photos to piece together a story of migration lost to him. The recreation of these photographs are not rendered with clarity. The images are fragmented, abstracted, deteriorating, drawn over, and painted over. His process re-circulates these lost images yet at the same time the lack of clarity calls upon the censorship the original images had to endure through time. The duality of tenderness and trauma is embedded throughout the history of these works.



*Got some tattoos this year,  
my momma won't like them*

2022

Acrylic, Oil Pastel  
and Oil Sticks on Canvas  
108x144in



*Red Parade (Part I)*

2022

Oil Paint and Oil Stick on Canvas

56x48in



*Red Parade (Part II)*

2022

Oil Paint and Oil Stick on Canvas

56x48in



*Red Parade (Part III)*

2022

Oil Paint and Oil Stick on Canvas

56x48in



*Familial Archive 11*

2022

Oil, Gel Transfer, Ink and Oil Stick on Wood Panel

36x24in



*Familial Archive 12*  
2022  
Oil, Gel Transfer, Ink and Oil Stick on Wood Panel  
36x24in



*Familial Archive 13*

2022

Oil, Ink, Gel Transfer and  
Oil Stick on Wood Panel

32x48in



More Works Available By  
Larry Li

—Residency



*Familial Archive 14*

2022

Gel Transfer, Oil, Oil Pastel and Ink on Canvas

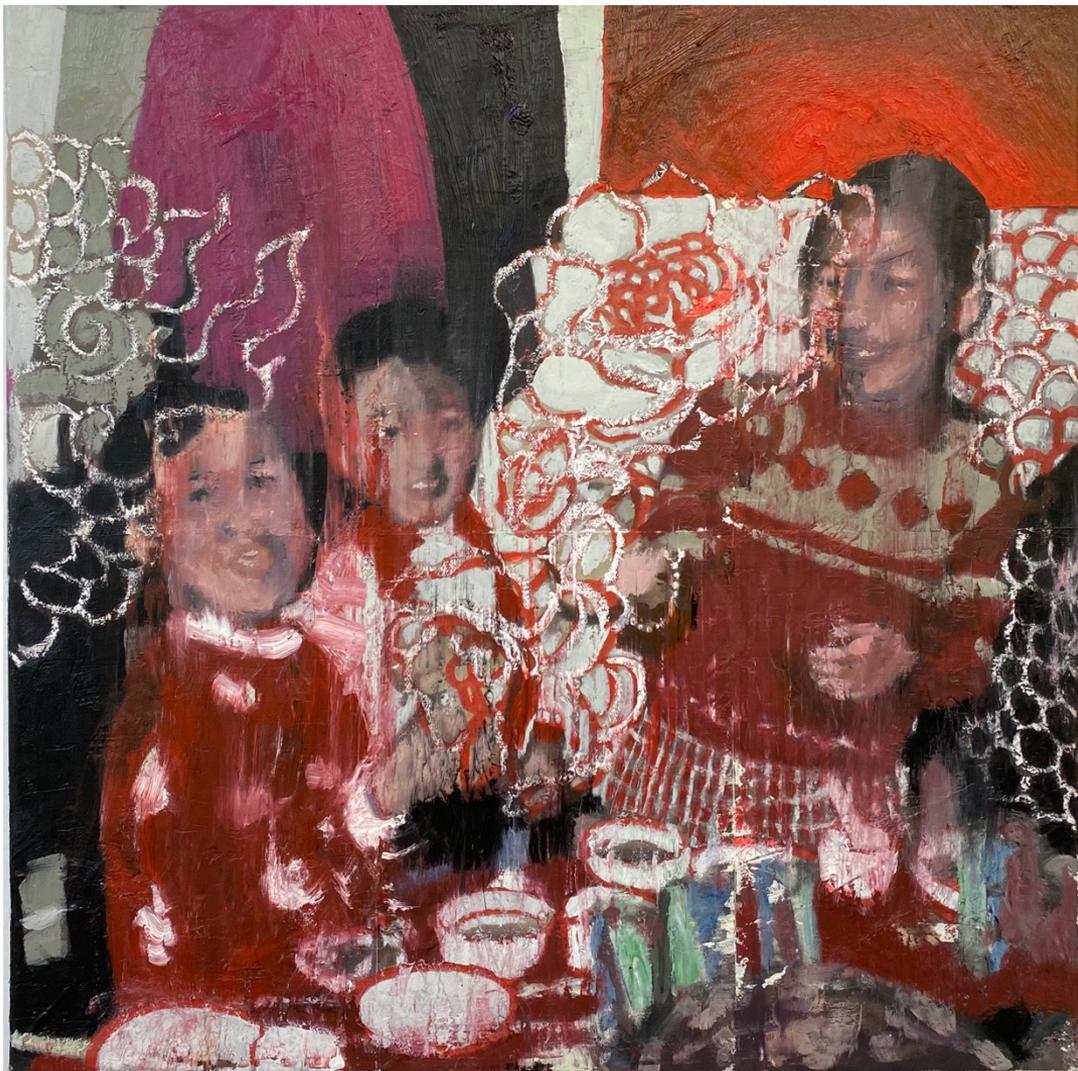
24x24in

*Familial Archive 15*

2022

Gel Transfer, Oil, Oil Pastel and Ink on Canvas

24x24in



*Familial Archive 16*

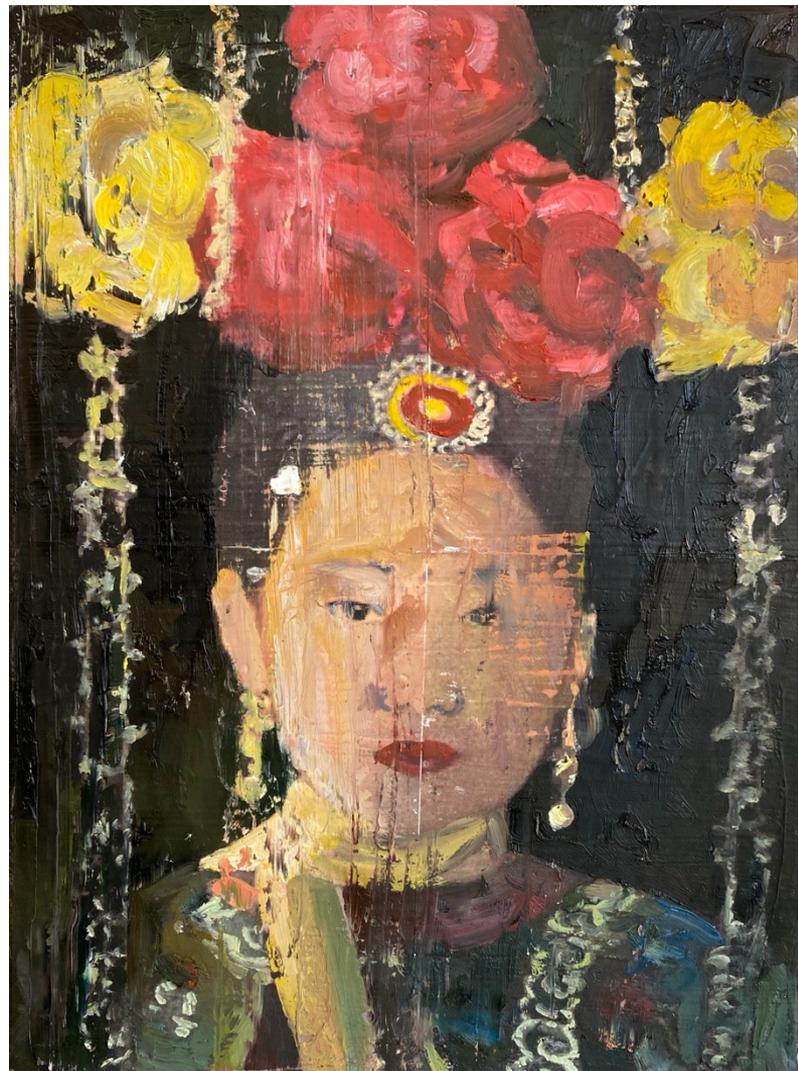
2022

Gel Transfer, Oil, Oil Pastel and Ink on Canvas

24x18in



*Xiao Fei*  
2022  
Gel Transfer and Oil on Canvas  
16x12in

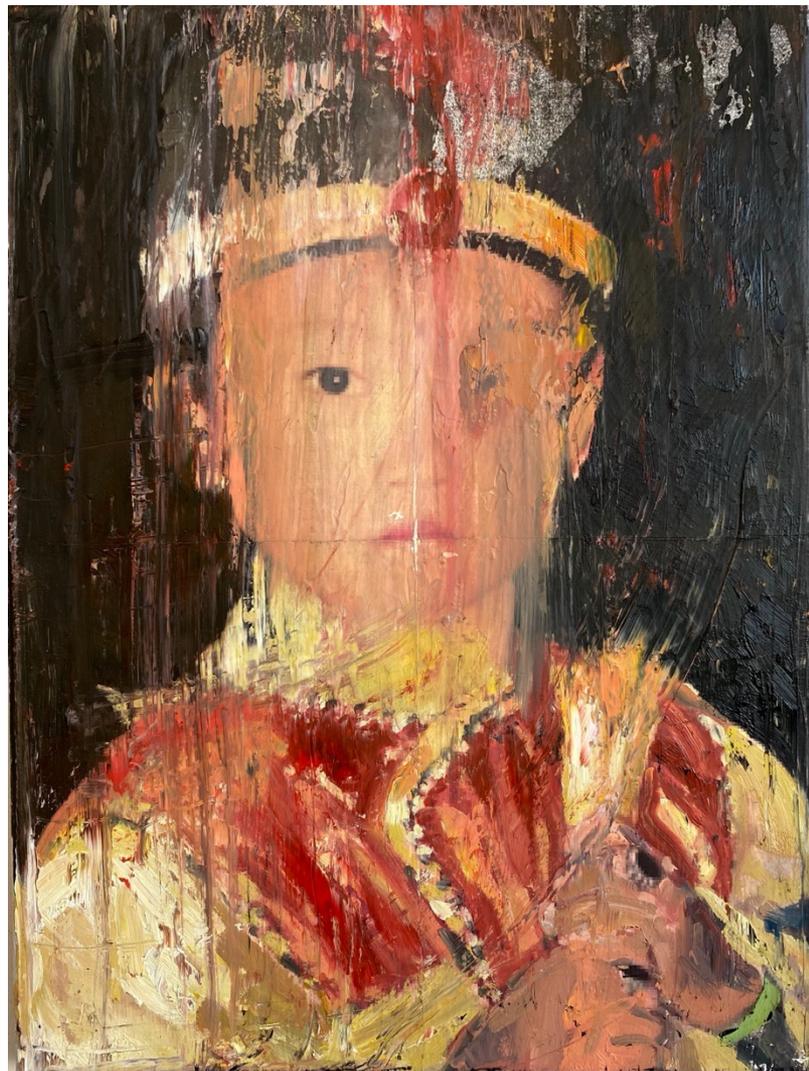


*Cheng Cheng*

2022

Gel Transfer and Oil on Canvas

16x12in



*Tiger Hunt 1*

2022

Image Transfer, Pastel, And Oil Stick On Canvas

18x18in



*Tiger Hunt 2*

2022

Image Transfer, Pastel, And Oil Stick On Canvas

18x18in



*Tiger Hunt 3*

2022

Image Transfer, Pastel, And Oil Stick On Canvas

18x18in



*This is it, should i tell him to go fuck himself 1*  
2022  
Image transfer and Oil on Canvas  
18x18in



*This is it, should i tell him to go fuck himself 2*

2022

Image transfer and Oil on Canvas

18x18in

