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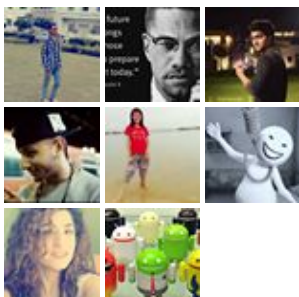
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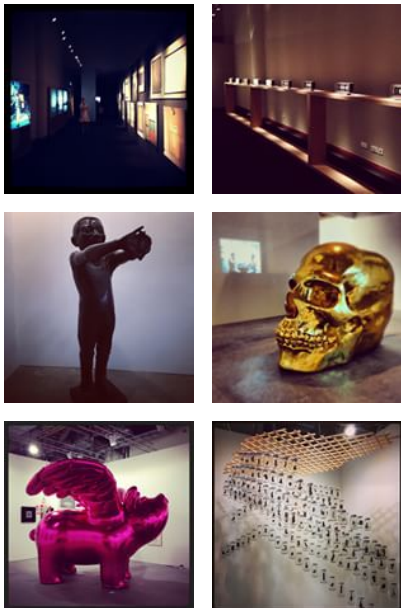
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Arriving at Ataraxy

Posted on 4 January, 2015

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Ataraxy refers to a state of tranquillity, freedom from emotional disturbance and anxiety. It also makes for one intriguing exhibition title. Ataraxy is Ruben Pang's 5th solo exhibition. After graduating from LaSalle College of the Arts

in 2010, Pang has received numerous awards and has exhibited both in Singapore and in various exhibitions across Europe. Pang's style of painting is distinctive in that he begins his work with no preconceived notion of how the painting should look like at its inception. In fact, his process of creation evolves with each mark added or removed from the painting surface.

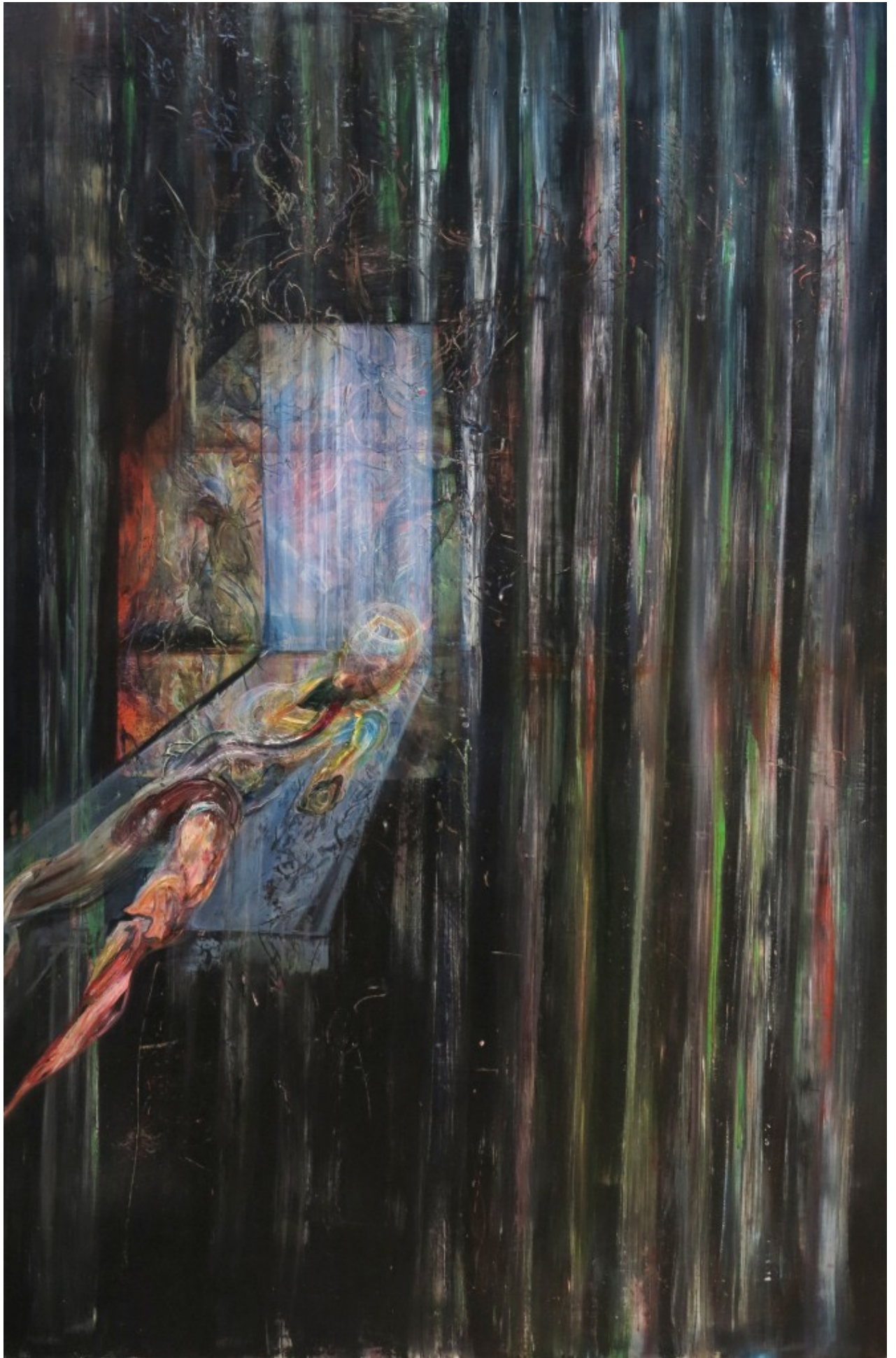


Holding it Together

The paintings in Ataraxy depict a series of artistic personalities caught in psychodramatic scenarios with their subconscious. In these paintings, Pang studies the impact of the introspective creative process. We can begin to better appreciate the contemplation, journey, sense of arrival and transformation that artists undergo as part of their

vocation. One of the paintings that really caught my eye was 'Holding it Together,' where we see a portrait of a compulsive method actor who is wrestling between various states of mind.

Another painting to look out for is 'Passenger.' Here Ruben Pang presents a listless figure in the heterotopic state found between sleep and waking. By using a combination of oil and acrylic on aluminium composite panel, Pang manages to project the Passengers dream scenario into the surrounding environment. Pang is clearly drawn to these subjects and while he expertly evokes the mental endurance that artistic work requires, the overall atmosphere he creates, suggests that this is where he too finds sanctuary.



Passenger

The Muse caught up with Ruben Pang to find out more about his intuitive style of painting and what we can expect

from Ataraxy.

Can you tell us about what inspired you to create the paintings in Ataraxy?

It began with the need to develop painting from being mostly a means of stimulation and escapism into something that could visually represent a narrative that the viewer can participate in, perhaps in the same way as a still from a film. They are also partly autobiographical and from philosophies I identify with. This approach keeps me grounded.



Birdwatcher

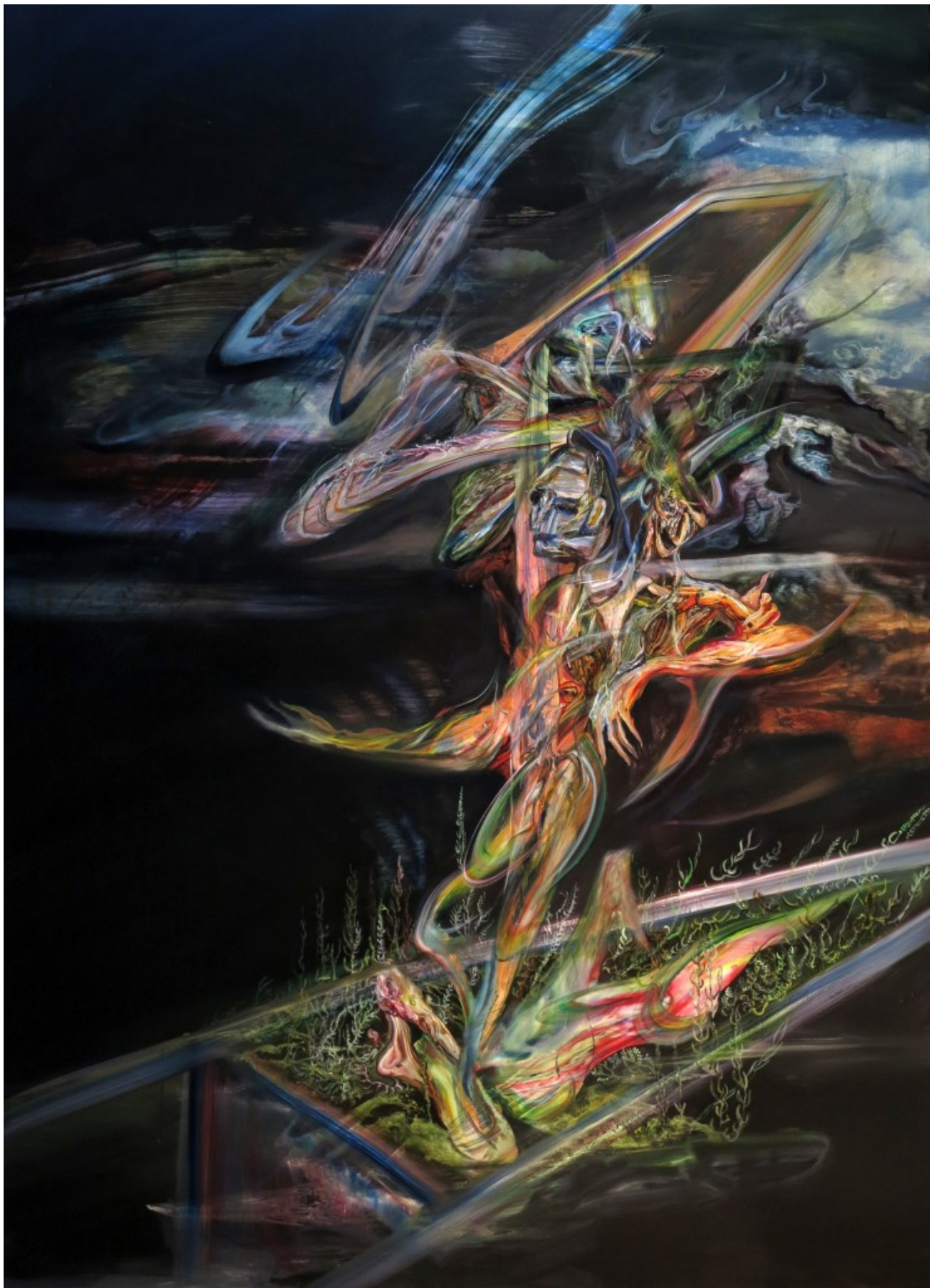
In this exhibition you use a number of different materials. Can you tell us why you selected these materials and about the creative process you used?

There are two different approaches within the works in this exhibition. One where I paint very deliberately and the other in a more intuitive open process, where very little is planned. Acrylic allows me to work on compositions quickly because of its quick dry time. Oils and alkyds force me to be decisive and also create depth, which no other commercially available medium can.

I was considering the notion that paintings could be games that end in predefined ways, that the artist is only a conduit. For example, layering and sanding paint down reveals ghosts that almost naturally come together. Painting can't ever be laborious. I do what I can to keep the process as engaging as possible. I feel connected and plugged-in, a sense of the infinite, especially when scenarios on these metal sheets straddle chaos and resolution.

What emotions do you hope to evoke among those who come to see Ataraxy?

The exaggeration and drama within a creative practitioner's mind. For example, Building the Triad is about the trials of a musician. It's a single figure split into four levels of consciousness trampling over each other in a clumsy attempt to align themselves with a tuning fork—they are chasing melody, finding music. I love music but don't have a natural flair for it, I almost feel like it's the equivalent of painting blind, in the sense that it's possible.



Building the Triad

Are there any special paintings in Ataraxy that we should look out for? Why are they special to you?

Nothing in particular. I personally see them as fragments of a bigger story that I'm still figuring out.

Ataraxy by Ruben Pang runs from 16 January 2015 until 8 February 2015

Chan Hampe Galleries, located at Raffles Hotel Arcade #01-21, 328 North Bridge Road.

Opening Night: Friday, 16 January 2015, 7-9pm

Artist Talk: Sunday, 25 January 2015, 2pm

The exhibition is open Tuesday through Sunday from 11am – 7pm.

Admission is free.

For enquiries please call +65 6338 1962.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF CHAN HAMPE GALLERIES

TEXT BY RUTH MANION

Category: Visual Art Tags: Arts Singapore, Ataraxy, Chan Hampe Galleries, Exhibition Singapore, Ruben Pang, RUTH MANION, the muse, The Muse Singapore

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