

## Ming Fay

Art in America

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By Jonathan Goodman

### Ming Fay and Chihung Yang at 2 x 13

Ming Fay and Chihung Yang are both transplanted artists—Fay is originally from Shanghai and Yang from Taiwan—who have lived for decades in the U.S. and currently work in New York. Fay's gardenlike mixed-medium installations often consist of oversize artificial fruits, blossoms and vegetables, their large dimensions giving his contemplations of nature a subtle humor. Yang's probing abstract canvases are linked to the New York School but also suggest Chinese calligraphy and ink painting. The dual show, titled "Silent Exile," was curated by Robert C. Morgan, an art historian and critic long familiar with the two artists' careers.

Fay's installation, *Monkey Pot Garden* (2006), consisted of multicolored foam spheres hanging from branches attached to the ceiling. The title refers to the South American monkey pot tree, whose rounded pods contain nuts that monkeys desire. Fay often visits Chinatown for his imagery, studying (and then eating) the produce he buys there as models for his large facsimiles. In this show, the scale of his objects was smaller than usual, but the brilliant colors of the monkey pots and silver-dollar-like circles communicated his faith in the innate extravagances of nature.

Yang's moderate-size to large acrylic paintings—consisting of splotches and scrawls, mostly in black and white but in some instances of color—invite comparison to the works of Kline and Twombly. In *White* (2005), large areas of white are punctuated by various dots, threads and drips of black. At the top of the painting there is a bit of red, its dangling filaments connecting some of the black elements. The visually pulsating *Past Present* (2006) features a maelstrom of black patches, accompanied in places by threadlike lines, giving viewers the sense of being adrift in a rolling sea.

Whatever its formal influences, Yang's art—like Fay's—is clearly the result of his own journey. Indeed, with so much Chinese material of questionable quality on the market today, it was a pleasure to see the works of these two dedicated artists, tenacious seekers of an authentic esthetic.



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