



**WILD
FRAGMENTS**

VALERIE NG

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July 2 – 30, 2022
Maya Gallery

Maya
GALLERY



In the artist's studio

cover

STITCHED FRAGMENTS

Mixed media on canvas

118 x 160 cm, 2022

FOREWORD

Maya Gallery is delighted to present **Wild Fragments**, a solo exhibition by Valerie Ng. Being her ninth solo show, Valerie's work is a continuation of her studies and observations of nature and her surroundings.

Not many people would know that Valerie had a degree in computing before she pursued her art education at The Slade School of Fine Art, University College of London, kicking off an amazing career as an artist for close to 20 years now. Her impressive credentials include exhibitions at the Singapore Art Museum, National Art Gallery, Malaysia, UOB Art Gallery, Substation, Maya Gallery, Mulan Gallery, instinc, One East Asia and Jendela Gallery at the Esplanade. Her works have also been exhibited in art fairs across the region and auctioned by Larasati Auctioneers.

She holds several art prizes—Bronze Award at the 2018 United Overseas Bank (UOB) Painting of the Year Singapore, and First Prize (Abstract) in the 2004 UOB POY Singapore. In 2021 and 2019, she was a finalist in the Sovereign Asian Art Prize in Hong Kong, and in 2006, selected for the Young Contemporaries in Malaysia.

While her last solo exhibition, *Terra Incognita*, at Maya Gallery in 2014, showed work inspired by her experiences at artist residencies in Europe and the United States, and the concept of getting lost in foreign lands, *Wild Fragments* is a presentation of her responses to closer interactions with nature as a result of the pandemic. Apart from paintings in oil on canvas, the exhibition features works in papier-mache, a hanging installation of canvas scraps sewn together, as well as augmented reality art pieces with interactive elements. Valerie has also created a content-based website to create more awareness on eco issues in the community. We are grateful to the National Arts Council for their support of this project.

We hope that you will enjoy the exhibition. Do also join us for an Art Walkthrough & Conversation session, as well as an ARRRT workshop for children, where the artist hopes to instill a greater appreciation for nature, the ecosystem, and the connections to art, amongst the younger generation.

MASTURAH SHA'ARI
JEFFREY WANDLY
Co-founders, Maya Gallery

Rediscovering our wilder roots

VANESSA YEO

*"The sun grew hotter, the ice melted, the wind blew stronger, the forests burnt and dreadful plagues were spread across the land. People were trapped in their boxes like caged animals. But the artists remembered their wilder roots and knew what to do... It was time to re-learn how to share their dreams and revel again in the joyful feeling of the moment and the colourful pigment in their hands. It was time to weave a different kind of story."*¹

– Ann Blockley

Over the past two decades, Valerie Ng has established herself as an artist who derives inspiration from participative and sensorial encounters with nature. From sprawling landscapes to the smallest broken twig, she has constantly sought to capture the wild and captivating beauty of nature, drawing on its untamed forms and experimenting with various mediums and artistic methods. Her many overseas residencies in Europe and New Zealand gave her the opportunity to go for long walks through expansive countryside, woodlands and vast lakes, where she sketched and internalised the many weathered textures, hues and forms of the surrounding landscape. At her family home in Malaysia where she has access to a garden, she makes detailed observations of the growth cycles of plants, flowers and birds.

Even in her studio, she keeps a small and treasured collection of various stones, seashells and bark. This intimate relationship with nature and attention to detail echoes what philosopher Arnold Berleant describes as an 'aesthetic engagement' with nature—the innately human endeavour to indulge in a unity with nature and processes of the natural world, to find value in the "most intricate detail, subtle tone, endless variety".² Her "acute perceptive consciousness"³ gained from years of studying the natural elements, was already evident in earlier works such as the award winning work *Into the Ether* (2018), where she uses her signature visual language—intertwining tendril-like strokes and thin palette marks as expressive abstractions of the earth, air and water elements.

This ninth solo exhibition, **Wild Fragments**, is a curation of works which Valerie has created in the past two years while being "trapped in a box" just like many of us, during the global pandemic. While the restricted social interactions have caused emotional disconnects and fragmented concepts of time and distance, leaving many of us feeling bewildered and stressed, she has seized this quiet time as fallow ground to revisit her relationship with nature. On lockdown in Singapore, she observed patches of wilderness started to reclaim the city, with grass overgrowing onto concrete sidewalks, and wild animals such as otters roaming the empty streets. She also noticed more people seek out nature—visiting park connectors and nature reserves, and taking up urban farming or home gardening. This has inspired her to explore concepts of climate change resilience and eco-friendly art making in her practice, in order to give back and preserve what has been her source of inspiration.

In *Rewilding Blues* (2021), she contemplates our place in this world, and how the pandemic has caused a "re-wilding" of urban areas that are usually neat and well maintained. The painting has an



Into the Ether (2018)



Rewilding Blues (2021)

¹ Ann Blockley, *Creativity Through Nature: Foraged, Recycled and Natural Mixed-Media Art* (London: Batsford, 2021).

² Arnold Berleant, "The aesthetics of art and nature," in *Landscape, natural beauty and the arts*, ed. Salim Kemal and Ivan Gaskell (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 238-240.

³ Berleant, "The aesthetics of art and nature," 237.



Flow Freely (2021)



Logmarks (2016)

intensity that surpasses her previous works, layers of intertwining tendrils seem to emerge from a central locus and sprawl across the canvas. In contrast to the vivid brushstrokes, Valerie has poured water-soluble oil paints to create a dream-like and ethereal backdrop. This is one in a series of four large works in which she extends the same visual language, translating what she interprets as the “flowy” elements of air and water, and the “compact” element of earth,⁴ into elaborate and vivid compositions.

The past two years have also highlighted the increasingly drastic impact of climate change, manifesting in extreme weather patterns and natural disasters that exacerbate other socio-political issues such as famine, poverty and discrimination. Art historian TJ Demos has argued that this necessitates a “rethinking of art’s relation to the biosphere and of nature’s inextricable links to the human world of economics, technology, culture and law”.⁵ While she wouldn’t claim the label of activist or environmentalist, these environmental concerns gave Valerie impetus to move towards a more sustainable and eco-friendly practice through small actions—repurposing scrap or waste material, incorporating digital formats, and how these can be interwoven to spread awareness.

Flow Freely (2021) is an expression of this philosophy. Unlike the paintings, this papier mâché work made of scrap paper has a sculptural and tactile quality that emphasises the organic origins of the paper pulp. Various tones of blue and white applied with energetic brushstrokes almost seem to gleam off the textured surface in an allusion to the glimmering surface of the sea. Closer inspection reveals areas of brown stains and stray threads that call to mind the pollution and ghost fishing nets that continue to be a constant threat to our marine ecology. In the other papier mâché sculpture, *Logmarks* (2016), the weathered marks and deep scars of the tree bark demonstrate Valerie’s ability to beautifully translate

the hues and textures of wood grain, but also allows an appreciation for natural phenomena of aging and erosion.

Stitched Fragments (2022) is one of the most critical works in her shift towards an eco-friendly art practice, one that she created over a few years. The work draws on the philosophy and aesthetics of the Japanese craft of *boro* and *sashiko*—where textiles are reworked and repaired through piecing, patching and stitching. Historically, this was a craft born out of necessity, a practical and utilitarian way of giving new life to old clothes but these complex and multi-layered garments ultimately lasted several generations. There is a poetic sensibility in how she has sewn together strips of leftover canvas, over time adding painterly strokes, splotches and stitched details, ultimately creating a brand new exquisitely patterned textile. This work is a poignant example of a new eco-aesthetic that creates beauty out of scrap materials.

Valerie’s works are an expression of hope and optimism. Confronted with the daunting prospects of the global pandemic and climate change, she has tapped on her affinity with nature—her “wilder roots”—to make small but critical adjustments in her practice. She eloquently summarises her approach, “Thinking about how small marks make a whole painting, we can all make little changes to collectively reduce our overall impact on the planet.” She conveys an encouraging and effective message for both artists and non-artists, to take steps towards mending our fragmented connections with nature.



Stitched Fragments (2022)

⁴ Conversation with the artist at her studio.

⁵ TJ Demos, “Contemporary Art and the Politics of Ecology,” *Third Text* 27, 1 (2013): 1-9, DOI: 10.1080/09528822.2013.753187.

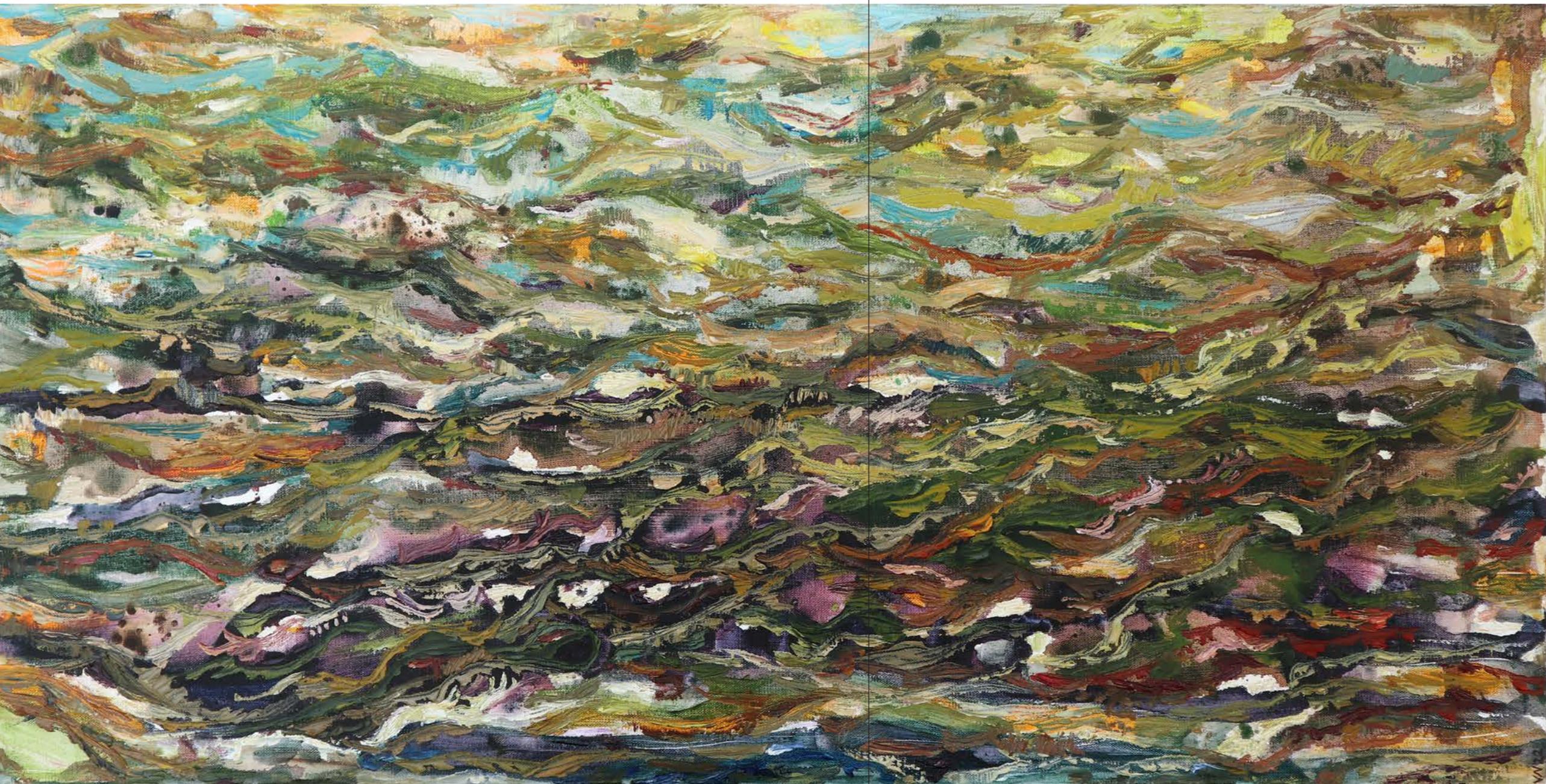




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COLOURED EARTH, oil on canvas, 158 X 122 cm, 2020

REWILDING BLUES, oil on canvas, 158 x 122 cm, 2021



IDLEWILD, oil on canvas, 91 x 46 cm, 2022

LOGMARKS, acrylic on papier mache, 75 x 175 cm, 2016





FLOW FREELY, acrylic on papier mache, 190 x 180 cm, 2021



WILD GREEN & SUN, oil on canvas, 61 x 61 cm, 2022



REWILDING ROOTS, oil on canvas, 61 x 61 cm, 2022



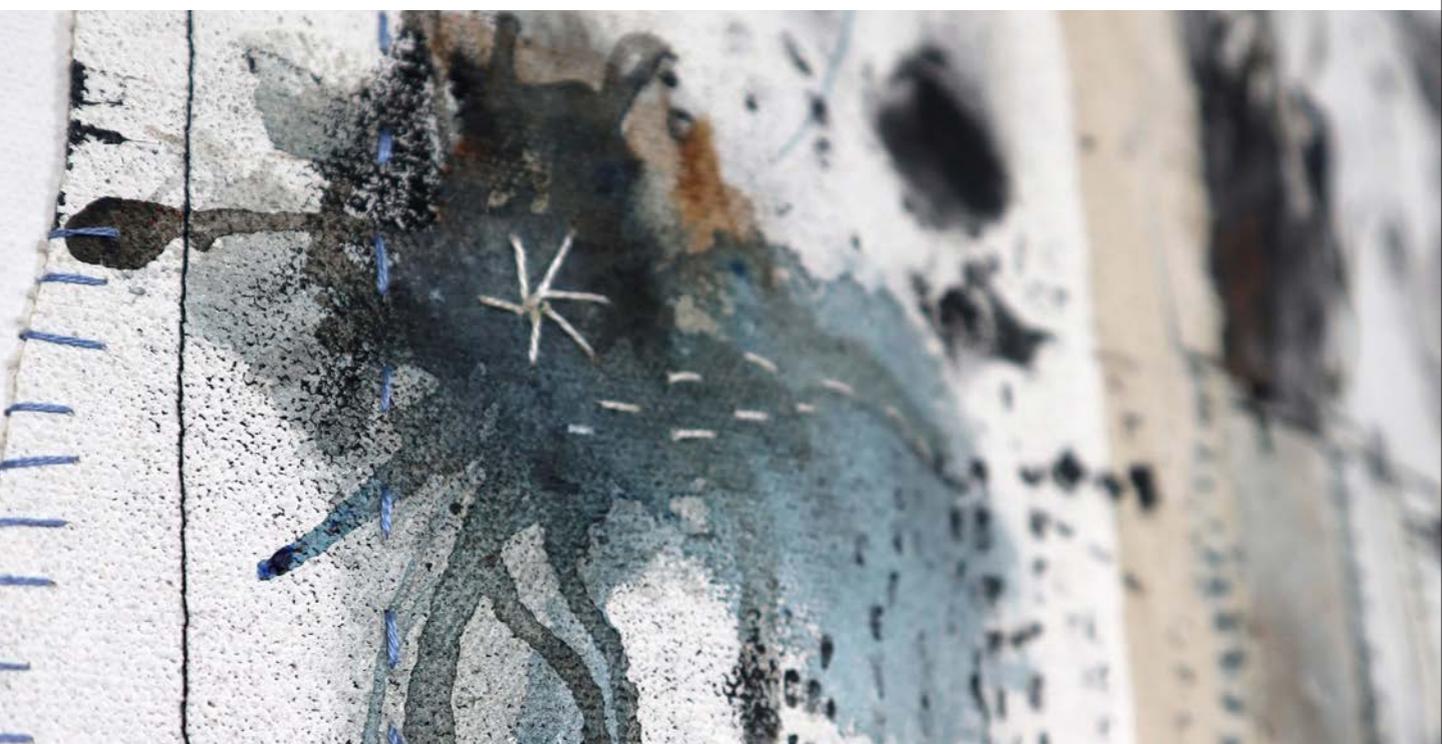
UP FOR AIR, oil on canvas, 122 x 158 cm, 2020



SHIFTING SANDS, oil on canvas, 120 x 158 cm, 2021



WILD NOTHING, oil on canvas, 102 x 102 cm, 2022



STITCHED FRAGMENTS, mixed media on canvas, 118 x 160 cm, 2022



ARTEFACT DISCOVERY TRAIL



An online art trail to discover paper crafted artefacts and watch them transform into augmented reality digital artworks, inspired by organic forms and textures

View online: www.valng.com/artefact-trail
*To be viewed on Digital Device/Display via the ARTIVIVE App

ECO ART WITH GREEN MESSAGES



WWW WORLD, acrylic on papier mache + AR*, 25 x 25 x 20 (d) cm, 2022

Notes on Eco-friendly artmaking: www.valng.com/eco-art/

*To be viewed digitally via the ARTIVIVE App
+ AR – Enhanced via Augmented Reality



GREEN SCROLL, acrylic on papier mache + AR*, 24 x 46 x 6 (d) cm, 2022

*To be viewed digitally via the ARTIVIVE App
+ AR – Enhanced via Augmented Reality



DRIFT BLUE, acrylic on papier mache + AR*, 45 x 16 cm, 2020 (top)

DRIFT YELLOW, acrylic on papier mache + AR*, 42 x 17 cm, 2020

*To be viewed digitally via the ARTIVIVE App
+ AR – Enhanced via Augmented Reality

VALERIE NG

(b. 1974, Malaysia)

Valerie Ng's abstract paintings are a gestural expression of mood and movement. Working mostly in oil on canvas or acrylic on paper, they are created as a result of her explorations in colour, light, depth, form and texture, as well as inspired by the natural elements, hues and shapes in the environment. She strives for a dynamic balance of energy and atmosphere through a unique transfer of marks in the action of painting.

Having a keen interest in paper, her art works include artists' books, papier-mâché, collage and assemblage. Her paintings have been exhibited at the Singapore Art Museum as well as the National Art Gallery, Malaysia. She has had solo exhibitions at the UOB Art Gallery Substation, Maya and Mulan Gallery, as well as group exhibitions at *instinc*, One East Asia and Jendela Gallery at the Esplanade. In addition, her works have been in art fairs across the region and auctioned by Larasati Auctioneers.

Valerie won the Bronze Award at the 2018 UOB Painting of the Year competition as well as First Prize (Abstract) in the 2004 UOB POY in Singapore. In 2021 and 2019, she was a finalist in the Sovereign Asian Art Prize in Hong Kong, and in 2006, selected for the Young Contemporaries in Malaysia.

A Singapore PR from Malaysia, she often seeks inspiration through travel thus has had artist residencies in Portugal, New Zealand, Italy, Vermont USA, Iceland and Finland. Her paintings can be found in corporate and private collections in Singapore, Malaysia, Australia, New Zealand, UK, USA, Mexico and Europe.

EDUCATION

- 2013 Painting Course, Ox-Bow, in affiliation with the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, USA
- 2002 Alternative Foundation in Fine Art at The Slade Summer School, The Slade School of Fine Art, University College of London
- 2001 Introduction to Graphic Design, Short Course Central Saint Martins College of Arts & Design, London
- 1995 Bachelor of Computing (Computer Science), Monash University, Melbourne, Australia

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2022 Wild Fragments, Maya Gallery, Singapore
- 2020 ARtifact Discovery Trail, Augmented Reality Exhibition Online
- 2019 Adrift in Colour, UOB Art Gallery, Singapore
- 2014 Terra Incognita, Maya Gallery, Singapore
- 2012 SurfaceScapes, Mulan Gallery, Singapore
- 2009 Elemental Shifts, The Substation, Singapore
- 2007 Veneer at Que Pasa & Reconstructions at Pitch Black, Singapore
- 2006 Chaos into Light, *instinc*, Singapore
- 2005 Moving Textures, Wetterling Teo Gallery, Singapore
- 2004 Distractions, 23 Emerald Hill, Singapore

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2022 Probably Nothing, NFT Exhibition, *instinc*, Singapore
Virtual Encounters, *mayaspace*, Online
Methods of Abstraction, One East Asia, Online
- 2021 Concretehouse.art. Ars Electronica, Virtual Exhibition
Sovereign Asian Art Prize Finalists Exhibition & Art Central, Hong Kong
Reflection, Group Show, Maya Gallery, Singapore
- 2019 2019 Sovereign Asian Art Prize Finalists, HART Hall, H Queen's, Hong Kong
New Wave, One East Asia, Singapore
S.E.A Focus Fair with UOB Art Space, Singapore

- 2018 Liquid Light, Group show, Maya Gallery, Singapore
Singapore Art Book Fair, with *instinc*, Sg
Drawn into Nature, Community Art Project @ Safra Mt Faber, Singapore
Second Bloom, *Instinc X Moyem*, Sg
- 2016 BIENNALE ARTE Dolomiti 2016, Italy
Liquid Textures & Lost in the Little Red Dot, Collab Exhibitions, *instinc*, Singapore
- 2015 Malaysian & SouthEast Asian Art Auction, Henry Butcher, Malaysia
Purple, One East Asia ARTSpace, Singapore
- 2014 Affordable Art Fair Singapore, with Maya Gallery
Artshow Busan, with Maya Gallery, Korea
Paper Square, 7Kickstart, Singapore
We Are Women, *artspace@222*, Singapore
- 2013 10 days of Fun, *artspace@222*, Singapore
Let's Go On a Merry Go Round, Mulan Gallery, Singapore
Ethereal Roots, Mulan Gallery, Singapore
Bank Art Fair, with Maya Gallery, Island Shangri-La Hotel, Hong Kong
éncore! (Maya Gallery's 1st Anniversary), Maya Gallery, Singapore
Asia Contemporary Art Fair, with Maya Gallery, Luxe Art Museum, Singapore
Cliftons Art Prize Finalist Exhibition, Singapore
Colourful Chaos, Maya Gallery, Singapore
- 2012 7Adam Gallery Restaurant, Singapore
- 2011 Can I have some too? Art Complete, Volvo Art Loft, Singapore
Glimpses, Singapore Embassy Berlin, Berlin, Germany
Is that a Temple?, Evil Empire, Singapore
- 2010 Seeing is Believing Art Auction, SCYA/SCB, Asian Civilizations Museum, Singapore
ARTSingapore, Asian Contemporary Art Fair, New Finds Gallery, Singapore
LARASATI Pictures of Asia Fine Art Auction, Singapore
Poetry in Action - Women in Arts Festival, SCWO Centre, Singapore
- 2009 Convergence, Telok Kurau Gallery & *instinc*, Singapore
LARASATI Pictures of Asia Fine Art Auction; Singapore
- 2008 Pameran Poskad '08, House at Dempsey, Singapore
Inspired Art Fair, Spitalfields Market, London
Random Starts, The Volvo Art Loft, Singapore
- 2007 The Young Contemporaries 2006, National Art Gallery, Malaysia
LARASATI Pictures of Asia Fine Art Auction, The Marriot Hotel, Singapore
Malaysian Art Competition, Johor Art Society, Malaysia
Text/Txt, Artisan Books, Australia
Singapore Art Exhibition, Singapore Art Museum, Singapore
LARASATI Fine Art Auction, Marriot Hotel, Singapore
- 2006 ART +- 1000, Valentine Willie Fine Art, KL, Malaysia
Macro-Micro:153, *instinc* Gallery, Singapore
LARASATI Fine Art Auction, Marriot Hotel, Singapore
25th UOB Painting of the Year Exhibition, Jendela Gallery, Singapore
RED/READ @ Artisan Books, Melbourne, Australia
Johor Artist's Exhibition, Balai Seni / National Art Gallery, Malaysia
Parallel Journeys, Art Space, Pan Pacific Hotel, Singapore
Mono-chromatic, *instinc*, Singapore
Art Singapore, Suntec City, Singapore
- 2005 Unspoken Words, *instinc*, Singapore
Bottomline. Chinese, Jendela Gallery, Singapore
- 2004 23rd UOB Painting of the Year Exhibition, Jendela Gallery, Singapore
- 2003 Anthropology Gallery, Holland Village, Singapore
National Libraries in Seng Kang and Marine Parade, Singapore
- 2002 The Summer Foundation Group Show at The Slade, London
- 1995 Melbourne Fringe Festival, Australia

AWARDS

- 2018 Bronze Award, 37th UOB Painting of the Year (Singapore)
- 2007 Distinction, Malaysian Art Competition 2007
- 2006 2 Highly-Commended Certificates, 25th UOB Painting of the Year (Singapore)
- 2004 First Prize - Abstract Medium, 23rd UOB Painting of the Year (Singapore)

ART EXPERIENCE / RESIDENCIES

- 2019 Cortex Frontal Residency, Arraiolos, Portugal
- 2015 New Zealand Pacific Studios, Masterton, New Zealand
- 2014 Mountain Residency, Cibiana di Cadore, Italy
- 2012 Arteles Creative Center, Finland
- 2010 Nes Artist Residency, Skagastrond, Iceland
- 2009 Vermont Studio Center, United States
- 2014-2006 Art Workshops
Singapore Contemporary Young Artists (Artist Talk/Workshop at Raffles Institute), PA,
UNDP Malaysia, Papier, Lescalier, *instinc*, NLB, Schools

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WILD FRAGMENTS

Valerie Ng

Maya Gallery
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curator
Vanessa Yeo

design direction
Masturah Sha'ari

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Maya Gallery is a leading artist-run art gallery with a focus on heritage, culture, Singapore and Southeast Asian art. Since its opening in 2012, the gallery has liaised with curators, organisations and institutions to introduce international artists to Singapore, and Singapore artists to the world. It has held numerous exhibitions locally and regionally, and continues to support emerging and established artists. Voted Top 10 Art Galleries in Singapore (tallypress.com, 2018), awarded the Recommended Art Gallery (Expat Living Reader Awards, 2015), and described as a gallery that has “won the hearts of art enthusiasts with its locally flavoured exhibitions” (mydestination.com), Maya Gallery has contributed strongly to Singapore’s art scene.

MAYA GALLERY
57 Genting Lane #05-00
Singapore 349564
T +65 6241 2455
art@mayagallery.com.sg
www.mayagallery.com.sg

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Closed on Mon & public holidays

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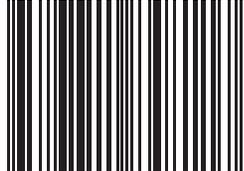
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