

Chia-Ying Chang

HA.HA

Acrylic on canvas, installation

Mixed media

Dimensions variable

2020

Value systems, philosophies, power structures, and moments of cultural evolution often occur in times of turbulence and disintegration. When order collapses, it will always be replaced by another way to achieve balance, and it often seems to be the fate of the human cycle that those who dominate resources, hold power, and rule by force will rise. We long for redemption, and redemption is like an antidote to the soul, but it is also an anesthetic, and an aphrodisiac for the powerful. Currently, more than 3,000 religious groups can be found in the world, each one claiming their faith is the only truth, yet they are full of ludicrous, bizarre theologies and power ploys. No matter how absurd they are, for their believers, each one holds the redemptive truth, and such absurdity pervades our yearning for redemption.

The artistic oeuvre of Chia-Ying Chang has always been replete with such absurd beliefs and mysticism, fables with no beginning or end, an admixture of classics and mutations, populated by weird, self-contradictory species that are half-human and half-beast, seemingly beautiful but with a sugar-coating under which cruelty lurks. Hers is a collage world that constantly disintegrates and reorganizes, in which all the stories expand infinitely like ripples in a pond, but eventually attain another kind of equilibrium, like an endlessly circulating Mobius strip.