

i get up in the evening and i aint got nothing to say i come  
 home in the morning go to bed feeling the same way girl i aint  
 nothing but tired and sick of my self. hey there baby i could we just  
 a lil help u cant start a fire without a spark i check my look in the  
 mirror wanna change my clothes my hair my face girl i aint getting nowhere  
 im just living in a body like this theres something happening somewhere baby i  
 just know there is u cant start a fire without a spark even if were just  
 dancing in the dark. i sit around getting older theres a joke somewhere  
 its on me. ill shake this world off my shoulders come on baby the laughs on me  
 im dying for some change im sick of sitting round here come on baby  
 give me just one look. u cant start a fire without sitting round  
 cryin over ur broken self worryin bout ur little world falling part  
 this guns for hire even if were just dancing in the dark

dance girl in the dark  
 that's how it starts

# Jessamine

Ren Light Pan

DANCING IN THE DARK, THAT'S HOW IT STARTS

April 19 – May 15, 2023

Ren Light Pan is a Chinese-American transgender artist living and working in New York, New York. Her work engages with biographical issues dealing with hybridized and transgressive cultural and gender identities. Working between Eastern and Western art history, her strategic use of traditional Chinese ink against modes of contemporary painting—namely readymade and anti-gestures, deconstruction as well as techniques influenced by photographic, filmic and printmaking processes—opened a space for contentious harmony.

Born in an immigrant family, she grew up speaking Mandarin with a strong Chinese identity. Her early interests included oil painting, photography and filmmaking. After receiving her B.A. in New Media – Film/video at the University of California San Diego in 2012, the artist fell into a multi-year depression where she turned to ink painting for solace. The work came from a deep desire for divorce: from the hand, the body, the self. To the artist, her repositioning of artistic agency and authorship was the first step of many toward her eventual reconciliation with her gender identity.

In 2016, Ren Light Pan transitioned, moved to Los Angeles, and discontinued painting for 7 years. In 2022 the artist reengaged with her past work, reexploring the possibilities of ink as a process-based dialogue with her posthumous practice.

2022 marks the first time the artist's works have been shown. She had her first solo and group shows at Queer Thoughts, New York. She has been included in a group show with Asia Society Texas, Houston; Martos Gallery, New York; Dairy Arts Center, Boulder, Colorado; Alisan Fine Arts, Art Basel, Hong Kong; and Shoot the Lobster, NADA Miami, Florida. Forthcoming shows this year include a solo show at Jessamine, Dallas, Texas; and a group show at Green Family Art Foundation, Dallas, Texas.