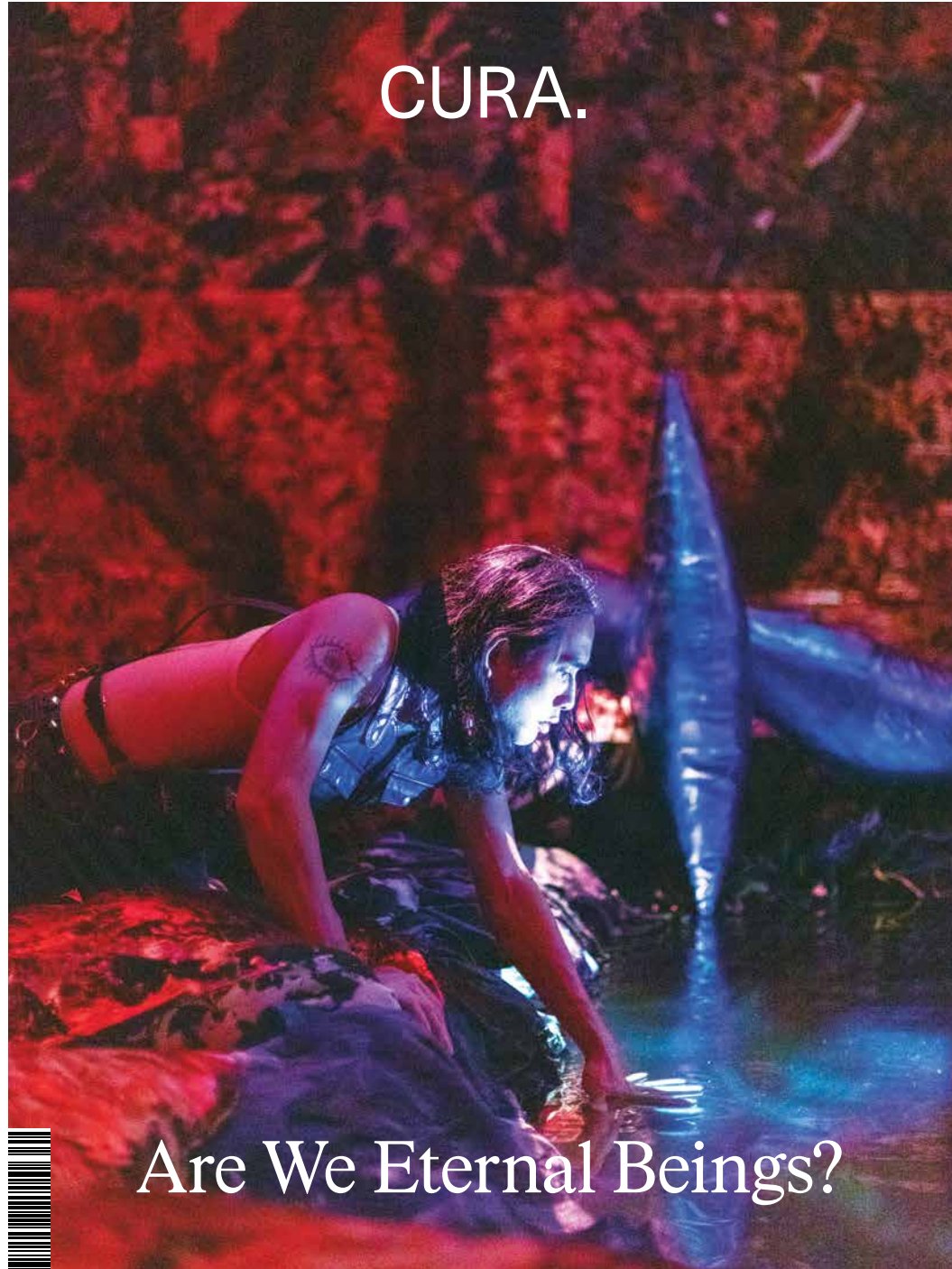


KORAKRIT ARUNANONDCHAI

CARLOS/ISHIKAWA

CURA.

Are We Eternal Beings?



INSIDE THE COVER

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Text by
X ZHU-NOWELL

Portrait by
HARIT SRIKHAO

KORAKRIT ARUNANONDCHAI

Some stories start at the end. If an ending loops, the story could be a song. *Songs for living* and *Songs for dying* tell a story about the same immortal protagonist, a living being who manages a highly sensitive feedback loop. Let's call them THE SOUL.

This essay is not about THE SOUL. It begins and ends with a painter. He paints not with brushes but symbols, meter, and light, so the objects he makes are typically paintings-still-in-progress. It's not easy to hang The Painter's work on a wall, but this style of painting has its advantages. One merit is analogical; paintings-still-in-progress are good for indirectly illustrating the narratives of complex characters, such as THE SOUL.

The Painter is fascinated with time, because this motion is a mythical narrative that provides a way to think about the experience of embodied life. With due diligence, he chops, rubs, and cools off time, and is highly skilled at tempo-layering.

This music is the inner architecture of *Songs for living* and *Songs for dying*, because it gives these stories a medium for MANIFESTING connections. *But do not be fooled, dear reader!* The Painter does not make what the New Materialists call "becoming." The song is an *agent* of Connexion; music is the vehicle. It is not Be-Ness Itself.

In *Songs for living*, the Sacred Fire™ is cast as a principal character. An essential qualitative property of fire is heat, which can be a challenging feature to illustrate in a painting. However, paintings-still-in-progress can depict change by way of analogy. Images of light propagation convey the action of hot-ness. By layering elements that feature sharpness, fineness, and velocity, The Painter creates fire or something like it in what is transparent.

The Painter also knows that the density of air is heavier than fire, yet thinner than water, so any portion of fire, before it turns into water, must first transform into air.

Fire and Air. *Earth, Wind, & Fire...* "the elements." The Painter turns to the myths in their various retellings. Mythological thought is complicated. Gods flirt with humans. Humans turn to sticks. Daemons get trapped in the material world (with material girls). Auric Eggs, golden eggs, and Easter eggs are different. There are competing historical Zodiacs. Men wear sandals.

Some myths belong to antiquity or late-antiquity because they are very old, and these stories are not the same as the songs of Modernity. Western progressivism, a looping echo chamber, built an *Ancient Wisdom-Religion* by fusing "Eastern" spiritual flair with bourgeois metaphysics. This idea wants to string every single myth ever created in human history upon the same golden thread.

The Painter spots the difference. He throws us deep in the water without a ladder of Divine ascent. Realms above and realms below are a mosh pit.

On the seafloor, with shards of coral, we are submerged. Our ancestors, you ask? Shit happens in the pit. Naga the snake lives here, in the muddy water, along with other conflicting mythical representations about the post-mortem existence of THE SOUL.



224 Korakrit Arunanondchai, Songs for dying, 2021 Co-commissioned by the 13th Gwangju Biennale, Han Nafkens Foundation, and Kunsthal Tordhem (pp. 224-225)

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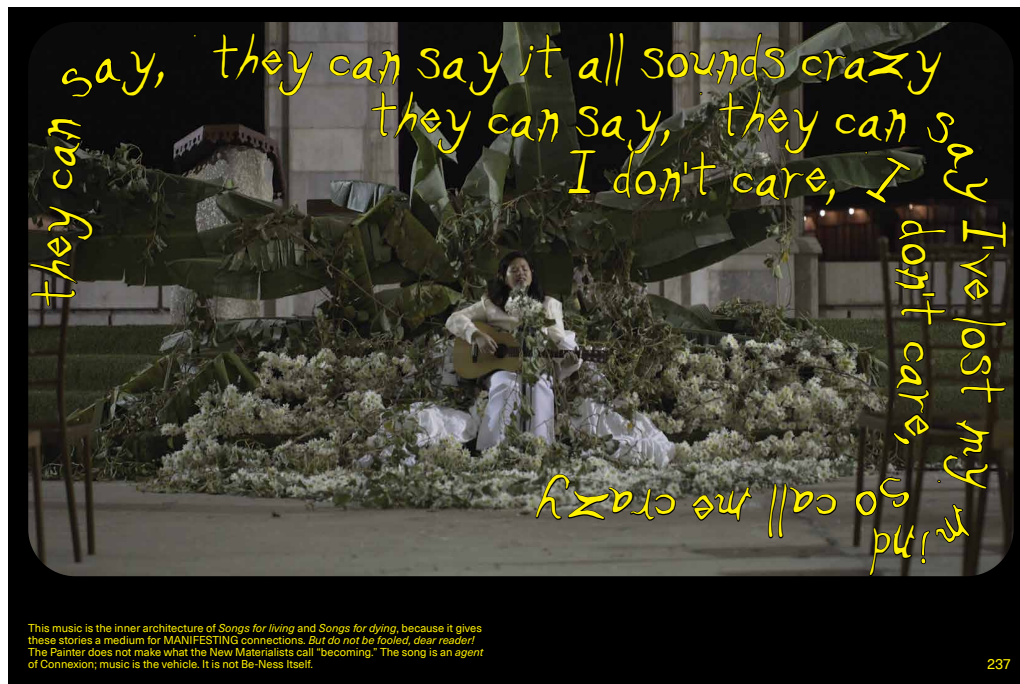
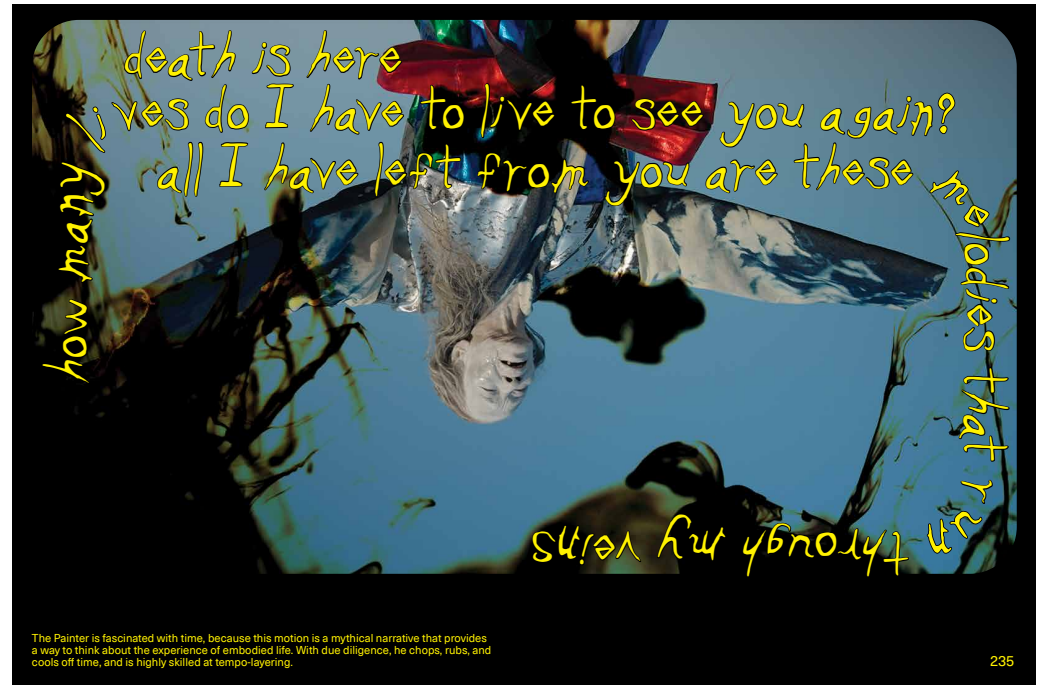
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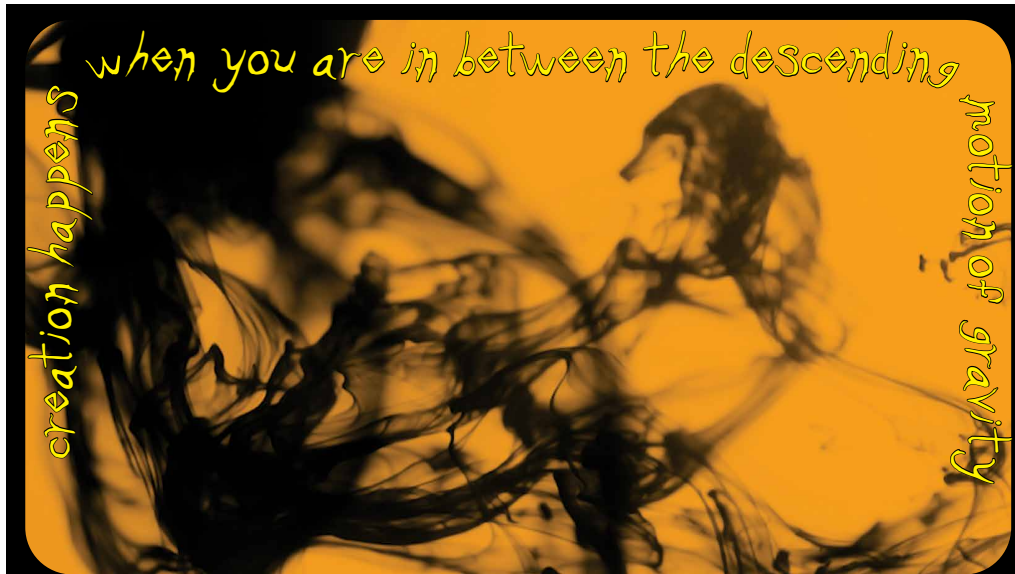


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Korakrit Arunanondchai and Alex Garcia, Songs for dying to being, 2022 Commissioned by Museum of Modern Art, New York with support from Sadie Gallery Seoul, Seoul (pp. 230-240)

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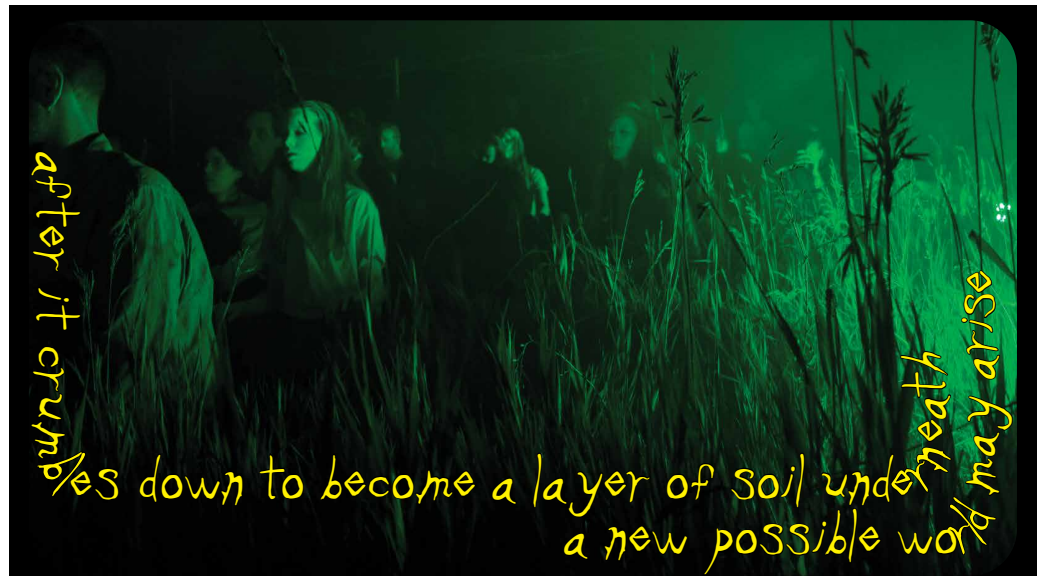
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