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Ruben Pang's "Ataraxy" at Chan Hampe Galleries

BY DARRYL WEE | FEBRUARY 04, 2015



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End of the Road (After Rudyard Kipling, If: A Father's Advice to His Son) (2014), Oil, alkyd, acrylic and retouching varnish on aluminum composite panel, 122 x 150 cm
(Courtesy of the artist and Chan Hampe Galleries)

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SINGAPORE — **Ruben Pang**'s fifth solo show at Chan Hampe Galleries, "[Ataraxy](#)

(<http://www.chanhampegalleries.com/ataraxy/>)," comes from the Greek meaning "a state of maintaining tranquility, characterized by freedom from distress and anxiety."

Although seemingly chaotic and restless, Pang's brushstrokes writhe with something approaching controlled grace, electrifying the black surroundings like a phosphorus flash exposed to a sudden burst of vital oxygen.

Making judicious use of two pigments on aluminum panels — quick-drying acrylic to delineate rough contours, and oil to flesh out and leaven his compositions, as it were — Pang has created a compelling series that explores how a canvas bristling with tension and seeming disquiet can project a state of emotional detachment that instead suggests the undisturbed composure of these steely, resolute figures fighting to keep their psychic demons at bay.