

**Tube Booth** is pleased to present *Peony Pavilion*, the first solo exhibition by **Lin Hongjing** (2005, Shanghai) who lives and works in Venice, where she attends the Academy of Fine Arts.

## A sticky fragrant smell

*...I am inspired by the story of an envious Queen of the Han dynasty. As the emperor had admired it, the Queen cut off a maid's hand, put it in a box, and gave it to her husband. This painting makes me feel like a child in the embrace, who feels the sweet but tired taste of his mother's body. (Hongjing Lin, 2025).*

**Hongjing Lin** presents a cycle of very recent works, which deepen a series of extremely complex themes from different perspectives, embellishing their contents through the development of semantic modulation, often mysterious and almost inextricable, calibrated in the syntax of representation.

The very young artist reworks with surprising finesse the enchanted atmospheres suggested by the dramatic work, dating back to the Ming dynasty, which gives the exhibition its title. The result is 13 paintings all of different sizes, mostly oils or mixed techniques on canvas or small and medium-sized panel, which interpret different stories with multiform subjects, each of which is assigned a particular space. These precise figures - flowering plants, animals, human fragments, friezes and grotesques and snakes, inhabit placid concentric settings or variegated landscape tangles, progressively revealing the recognizable connotations of the protagonist, his singular character, the dreamlike and symbolic context that generated him.

Every single work is the result of a unitary and complex thought, which attracts the rhythms and handwriting of legendary myth or traditional apologue to the disenchantment of forensic psychology and the abstruse objectivity of Western fantastic literature. The artist's scrupulous curiosity sometimes extends to the fundamentals of criminology, horror cinema, bizarre and polychrome commercials, family anecdotes, the presentation of food in the kitchen.

The most marked accent that animates **Hongjing Lin's** painting, leading the result to a breath of coherent poetic intensity, is therefore placed, incessantly, on the border between reality and imagination: indeed, in this sense, on the thinning out of this limit, which configures the representation as if it sprang from a vision constantly immersed in a sort of fantastic half-sleep. Thus, if in the *Peony Pavilion* the fracture between everyday life and dreams melancholy melancholic the protagonist to the point of killing her, in the images created by the painter the signs of historical memory and personal experience coexist, set and happily confused with the most moving of sensations and memories, the most disturbing apparitions, the extravagant oddities, the old and recent things learned in study books or on the net.

Carlo di Raco

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