Junyi Lu: (cosset) 14 March - 26 April 2025

Junyi Lu

b.1996, Guangzhou, China lives and works in London, UK

THE SUNDAY PAINTER gallery is pleased to present "(cosset)," the first UK solo exhibition by artist Junyi Lu. Developed over the past year, Lu's new body of work transforms the gallery into an immersive, enveloping environment through paintings, installations, and sculpture. The exhibition's title, with its enclosing parentheses, reflects Lu's ongoing exploration of internal tensions shaped by both personal histories and wider global structures. In dialogue with Hanya Yanagihara's 2022 novel *To Paradise*, which portrays characters caught between societal turmoil and the desperate search for protection, Lu examines how both the human body and domestic spaces function as paradoxical vessels. Like Yanagihara's protagonists, Lu's work navigates the boundaries between these dualnatured environments—spaces that act as both sanctuary and barrier.

This duality materialises through architectural elements—exposed insulation, wooden beams, and a 6-meter cotton curtain that both cocoons and divides the space. Limewash paint gives the gallery walls a weathered appearance, evoking themes of reuse, memory, and time's passage. In *Liminal Comportment*, an old painting torn in half has been hand-stitched to a new canvas. Two ethereal, ambiguous figures appear—one cut off at the seam, the other floating against a loosely drawn cylinder pole within a minimal, airy landscape. This joining of canvases creates a contrast between a partially concealed, layered past and a present characterised by uncertainty.

Lu's material choices function simultaneously as conceptual framework and autobiographical index, drawing from her experiences of geographical and cultural displacement—from attending boarding kindergarten in China, to five years in the United States and her current life in London. Through the strategic placement of unexpected elements such as metallic wires, nails, and ceramic offcuts, she deliberately complicates familiar structures to reveal how systemic infrastructures have reshaped our most intimate relationships. In Youngest in the Family, the artist merges domestic objects like cotton pajamas and cheesecloth with construction materials such as copper pipes and wool insulation. In works like b. b. b. k. (blue) and G. radual, H. idden, M. assive, the body emerges as a recurring motif, exploring how physical discomfort signals broader societal dysfunction. Having survived multiple firings at temperatures reaching 1100°C, these works bear physical evidence of transformation. Made from highly porous earthenware, they absorb and retain marks from the artist's hands, chemicals, smoke, and other materials—becoming resilient bodies of ruins despite their broken, leaky forms.

Through a deft interplay of materiality and metaphor, Lu creates a liminal space where personal and collective experiences intertwine. Commenting on the multi-layered nature of contemporary existence, "(cosset)" offers not only a reflection on displacement and belonging but also invites a reconsideration of how we inhabit and navigate the constructed worlds around us.

Junyi Lu was born in 1996 in Guangzhou, China. She currently lives and works in London, UK. She received her BFA from the Maryland Institute College of Art in 2018, followed by her MFA from the Slade School of Fine Art in 2023. Recent solo exhibitions include: *Watch Out, Kiddo*, 2024, LINSEED, Shanghai. Her selected group exhibitions include: *Lattice structure of space-time*, Indigo+Matter, London, 2024; Onsen Confidential, XYZcollective, Tokyo, 2024; *Volatile Futures*, 2023, Unit 1 Gallery, London; *Slade MA/MFA/ PhD Degree Show*, Slade School of Fine Art, London, 2023; *Slide a Glance*, ASC Gallery, London, 2023; *SPIIIINELESS*, UCL Art Museum, London, 2022; *Era 2022*, Crypt Gallery, London, 2022; *In Our Image*, After Our Likeness, Gajah Gallery, Yogyakarta, 2021. Lu received the Elizabeth Greenshields Foundation Grant award in 2022.

Junyi Lu: (*cosset*) 14.03.25 — 26.04.25

(c&ss

The soft sound of the double 's' follows the hard bracket of the 'c,' itself contained within the echoing form of the parentheses. Hooked forwards, the curved spine of the punctuation mark is supple and shy. Sibilance flows outward from the central digraph of the word, cosset, which is a title, a location, and a limit. Cool and wet, the paintings leak, and meaning passes from image to object to text—the symbol in migration. Fabric applied to the top of a frame mops up the excesses of feeling, like a soggy sock on the bathroom floor.

o&e

As the artist works, the eye of the painted girl looks straight at her. The painter has to turn away. Even metaphorical vision is too penetrating. The subject looks back through the point of entry, and voiceless, she seems to say: 'Hide in me like I tried to hide in you, eye to eye—so no one else will see.' Eye and then you, followed by the 'o' and the 'e'—round and runny, like Bataille's egg and saucer. Two cursive 'a's stitched at the seams of a canvas. Hollow vowels that hold conjoining voids. Communication is muffled, and I and 'u' become an impossibility.

t

Broad-shouldered like a husband. The return of the consonant has a technical and finalising authority, vertical and upright, topped with a hat or a roof. It has to split in order to shelter and support. Seeding cruelty into the landscape of our cohabitation, from it blooms a brick wall. It's safer in the ditch, or the troth, where absent animals may come to feed. They have no time or language, no enclosure. None of this can be said out loud, in speech you lose access to the shape and the referent that give architecture its anatomy.

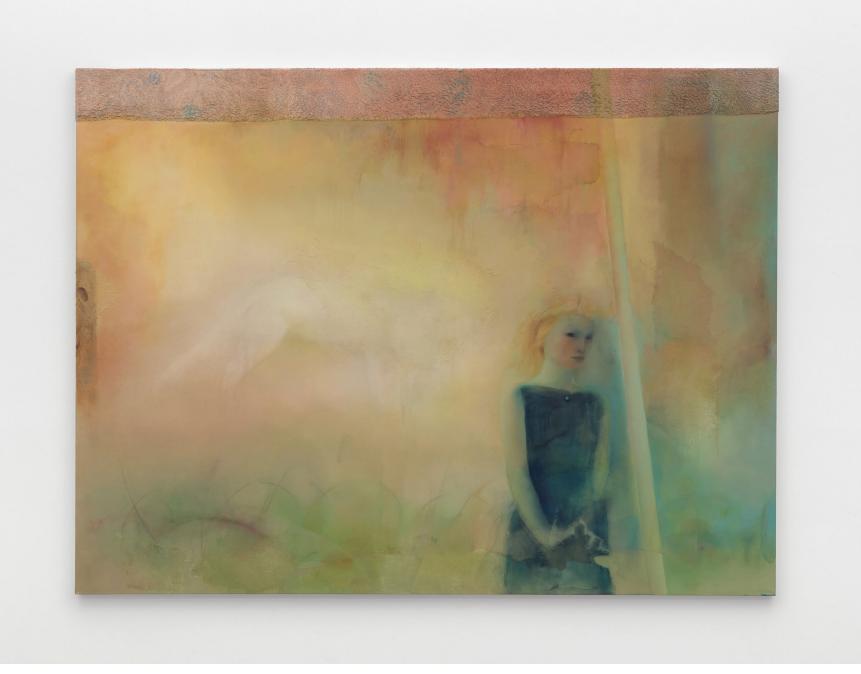
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The final bracket is bent backward, supine, yet faceless, expression scalped off. Sometimes a 'c' is sibilant as an 's.' All English laws are based on precedent; if you obey them, that's on you. All law is language in space, a zone of play if you can access it. Rules and relics, proof and trinkets; an association of object forms. Fear of abstraction forces us into thinglyness, but the symbol is not the article. Built of discrete elements, it stops—mediates, forms a barrier, a bough, somewhere finally to rest.

- Alexandra Symons-Sutcliffe

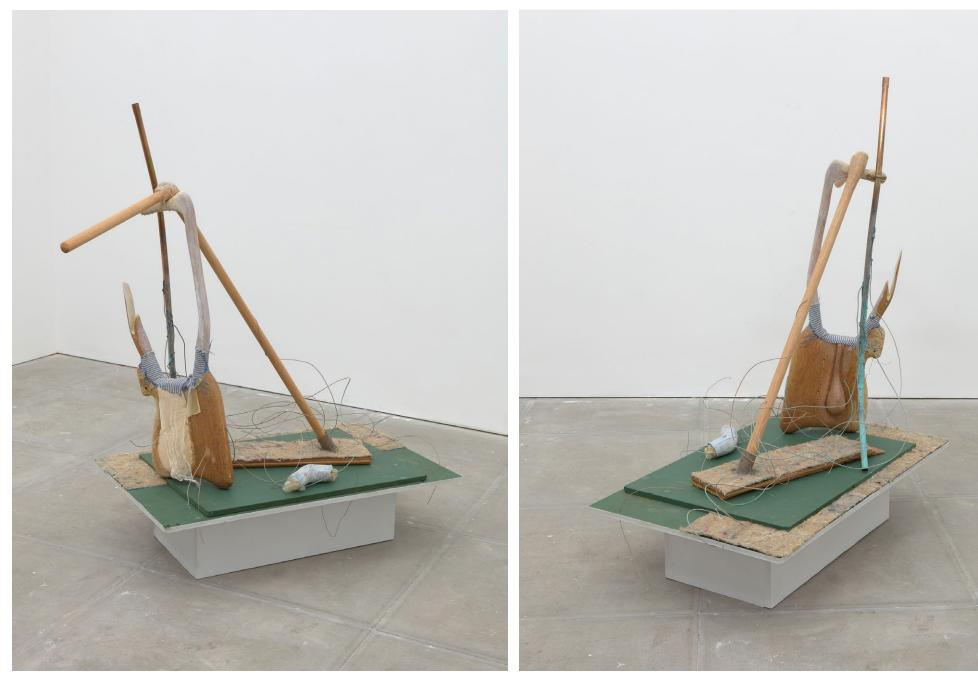






Cold Blow Lane, 2025 oil, acrylic, pencil, pastel, thread, towel, gauze, paper, and shell on canvas 150 x 200 x 4 cm





b. b. b. k. (blue), 2025 found wooden furniture, broom stick, copper pipes, water-based clay, wool, pipe insulation, thread, wax, ceramic, copper wires, and aluminium wires on MDF plinth 106 x 49 x 81 cm













Builders of an Endless Echo, 2025 oil, acrylic, pencil, thread, and wood on canvas 183 x 102 x 4 cm

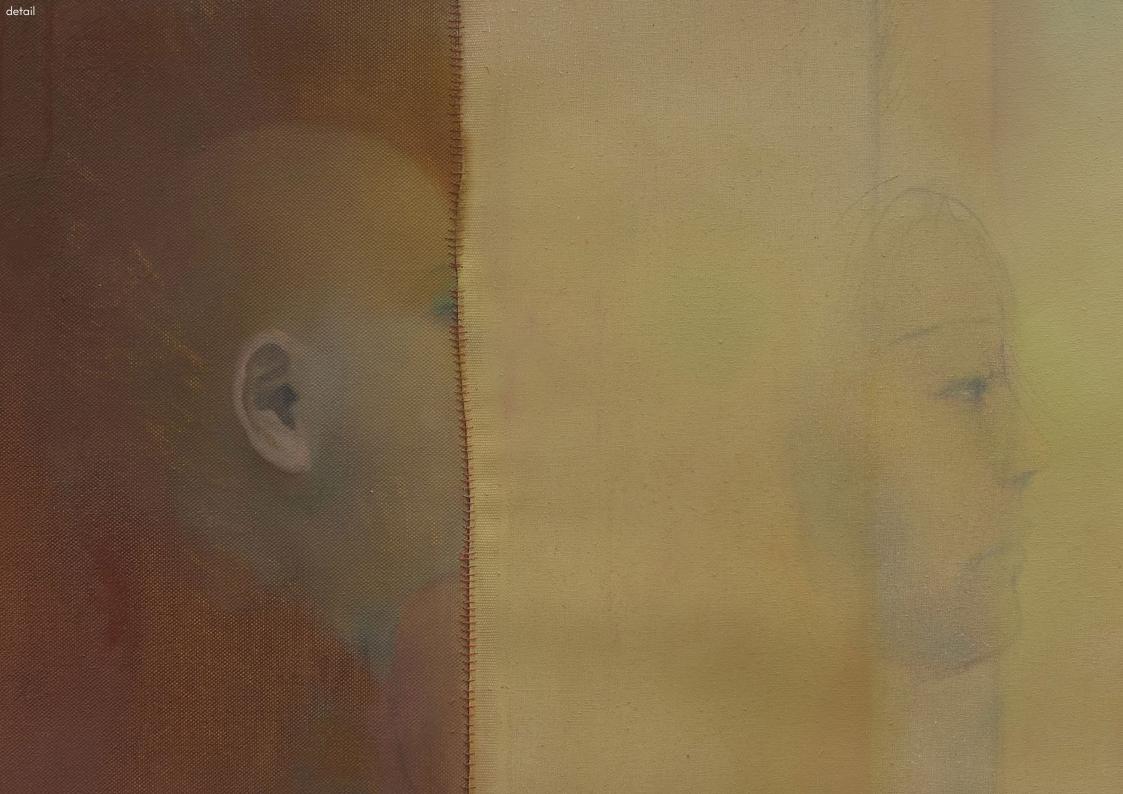








Liminal Comportment, 2025 oil, acrylic, pencil, and pastel on canvas in artist's frame 68 x 65 x 2 cm





G. radual, H. idden, M. assive, 2025 ceramic, copper pipes, wood, screws, and wooden floorings 118 x 53 x 27 cm

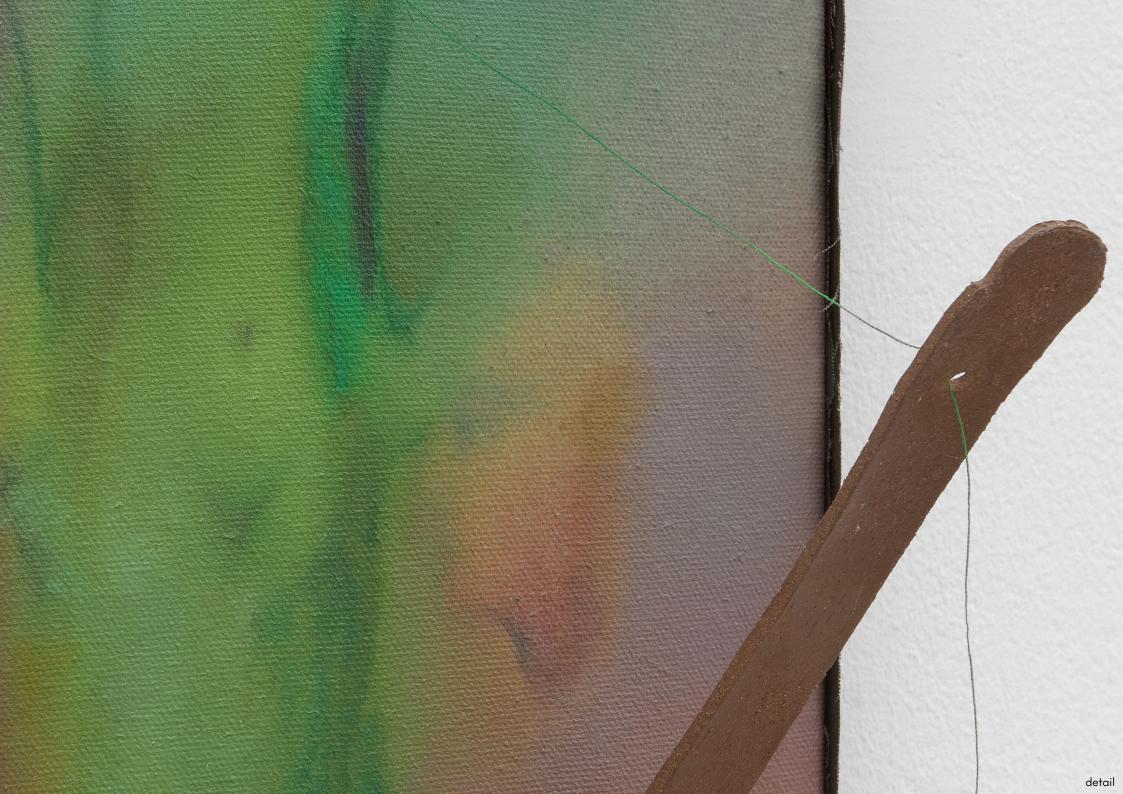








Murderer's Dream VIII, 2025 oil, acrylic, thread, and ceramic on canvas in artist's frame 26 x 20.5 x 14 cm







(f), 2025 oil, acrylic, and paper on canvas in artist's frame 28 x 24 x 6 cm









Between Two Times, 2024 oil on paper mounted on wood with thread and nails 20 x 25 x 3 cm



Installation view









Green Fence, 2025 oil, acrylic, pencil, and gauze on canvas 130 x 122 x 4 cm











20241222(sun), 2025 oil, acrylic and thread on canvas in artist's frame 23 x 30 x 6 cm





(g), 2025 oil and acrylic on fabric and canvas in artist's frame 28 x 24 x 6 cm







Murderer's Dream VII, 2025 oil, acrylic, pencil, and paper on canvas in artist's frame 20.5 x 26 x 2 cm



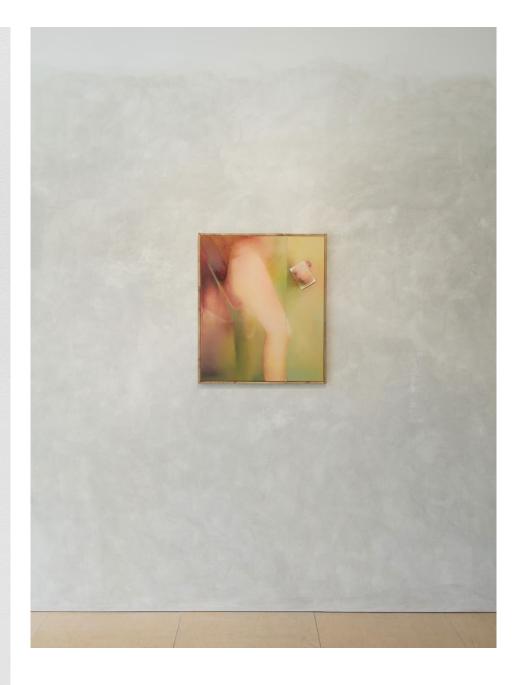




Mercury Way (b), 2025 oil, acrylic, pencil, thread, and aluminium wire on canvas 101 x 122 x 4 cm













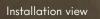
Of Poor B.B. (a), 2025 oil, acrylic, pencil, pastel, and thread on canvas in artist's frame 80 x 64 x 2 cm





Youngest in the Family, 2025 ceramic, foam, thread, wool, wax, gauze, cotton pajama, wooden buttons, and copper pipes on wooden stool 40 x 24 x 75 cm









Sweetly, By them who are facing doom, 2025 ceramic, candle, wood, aluminium wires, and screws 45 x 20 x 20 cm



Longing for Eternal Safety, 2025 oil, acrylic, pastel, and paper on canvas in artist's frame 28 x 22.5 x 2 cm



(please don't wait), 2025 oil, acrylic, pencil, thread, fabric, and paper on canvas 130 x 160 x 4 cm

