

Astrid Lakso

Ana Manso

Minh Ngọc Nguyễn

Jiawei Zheng

*It Takes Many Threads to Make a Carpet; in Fairy
Tales Carpets Can Fly*

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Press Release

There once lived a poor tailor, who had a son called Aladdin, a careless, idle boy who would do nothing but play all day long in the streets with little idle boys like himself. This so grieved the father that he died; yet, in spite of his mother's tears and prayers, Aladdin did not mend his ways. One day, when he was playing in the streets as usual, a stranger asked him his age, and if he was not the son of Mustapha the tailor. "I am, sir," replied Aladdin; "but he died a long while ago." On this the stranger, who was a famous African magician, fell on his neck and kissed him saying: "I am your uncle, and knew you from your likeness to my brother. Go to your mother and tell her I am coming." Aladdin ran home and told his mother of his newly found uncle. "Indeed, child," she said, "your father had a brother, but I always thought he was dead." However, she prepared supper, and bade Aladdin seek his uncle, who came laden with wine and fruit. He fell down and kissed the

place where Mustapha used to sit, bidding Aladdin's mother not to be surprised at not having seen him before, as he had been forty years out of the country. He then turned to Aladdin, and asked him his trade, at which the boy hung his head, while his mother burst into tears. On learning that Aladdin was idle and would learn no trade, he offered to take a shop for him and stock it with merchandise. Next day he bought Aladdin a fine suit of clothes and took him all over the city, showing him the sights, and brought him home at nightfall to his mother, who was overjoyed to see her son so fine.

[...]

The African magician had a younger brother, who was, if possible, more wicked and more cunning than himself. He travelled to China to avenge his brother's death, and went to visit a pious woman called Fatima, thinking she might be of use to him. He entered her cell and clapped a dagger to her breast, telling her to rise and do his bidding on pain of death. He changed clothes with her, coloured his face like hers, put on her veil, and murdered her, that she might tell no tales. Then he went towards the palace of Aladdin, and all the people, thinking he was the holy woman, gathered round him, kissing his hands and begging his blessing. When he got to the palace there was such a noise going on round him that the Princess bade her slave look out the window and ask what was the matter. The slave said it was the holy woman, curing people by her touch of their ailments, whereupon the Princess, who had long desired to see Fatima, sent for her. On coming to the

Princess the magician offered up a prayer for her health and prosperity. When he had done the Princess made him sit by her, and begged him to stay with her always. The false Fatima, who wished for nothing better, consented, but kept his veil down for fear of discovery. The princess showed him the hall, and asked him what he thought of it. "It is truly beautiful," said the false Fatima. "In my mind it wants but one thing." "And what is that?" said the Princess. "If only a roc's egg," replied he, "were hung up from the middle of this dome, it would be the wonder of the world."

After this the Princess could think of nothing but the roc's egg, and when Aladdin returned from hunting he found her in a very ill humour. He begged to know what was amiss, and she told him that all her pleasure in the hall was spoilt for want of a roc's egg hanging from the dome. "If that is all," replied Aladdin, "you shall soon be happy." He left her and rubbed the lamp, and when the genie appeared commanded him to bring a roc's egg. The genie gave such a loud and terrible shriek that the hall shook. "Wretch!" he cried, "is it not enough that I have done everything for you, but you must command me to bring my master and hang him up in the midst of this dome? You and your wife and your palace deserve to be burnt to ashes, but that this request does not come from you, but from the brother of the African magician, whom you destroyed. He is now in your palace disguised as the holy woman, whom he murdered. He it was who put that wish into your wife's head. Take care of yourself, for he means to kill you." So saying, the genie disappeared.

Aladdin went back to the Princess, saying his head ached, and requesting that the holy Fatima should be fetched to lay her hands on it. But when the magician came near, Aladdin, seizing his dagger, pierced him to the heart. “What have you done?” cried the Princess.

“You have killed the holy woman!” “Not so,” replied Aladdin, “but a wicked magician,” and told her of how she had been deceived.

After this Aladdin and his wife lived in peace. He succeeded the Sultan when he died, and reigned for many years, leaving behind him a long line of kings.

(1) Excerpts from *Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp*. The story, despite not being part of the original manuscripts, was written and added to the first edition of *A Thousand and One Nights* by the French translator Antoine Gallant in 1704-1717. More info at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Les_mille_et_une_nuits (Accessed 2025, November 19).

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The work by Astrid Lakso (b.2000, Luleå) featured in this exhibition is part of a deeply poignant series finding its origin in the traditional weaving techniques and patterns originally of Tornedalen. In this body of work, the artist delves into patterns previously prevalent in everyday woven objects, mathematically enlarges them and weaves them anew, hanging them from structures reminiscent of the looms originally used to weave them. These fascinating new presences powerfully bring to mind questions of tradition, and history in our contemporary world, and reminding of the way in which language and weaving often intertwines, as in the chilling story of abuse and imperialism by the Swedish state at the expense of the Tornedalen's people and their language: Meänkieli. Lakso is graduating summer 2026 with a BFA from Konstfack University of Art, Craft and Design in Stockholm and she has exhibited at Galleri Konstfack (Stockholm, 2025), Regionhuset (Luleå, 2025), Hägerstensåsens Medborgarhus (Hägersten, 2025), Kulturens hus (Luleå, 2024), Galleri Assessor (Stockholm, 2024), Gräsö Konstrunda (2024), and Östgöta Nation (Uppsala, 2023) among others. Lakso lives and works in Stockholm, Sweden.

Ana Manso's (b.1984, Lisbon) painterly practice savvily conjoins the mysterious and uncontrollable with knowledge and craft, both in her process, physically, and in her spiritual ideas, metaphysically. Manso's paintings are incredibly capable of capturing that illusory nature of reality and knowledge, pushing our boundaries by

trying to understand them, like she synesthetically does with the small abstract work part of this exhibition entitled the sound of cicadas. Manso holds a BA in Painting from the Faculty of Fine Arts at University of Lisbon (2007) and she has recently exhibited at Galleria Umberto Di Marino (Naples, 2025), Es Baluard Museum of Contemporary Art of Palma (Palma, 2025), NEVVEN (Göteborg, 2024), Pedro Cera (Lisbon, 2024), MAMOTH (London, 2023), Oliva Art Centre (São João da Madeira, 2022), Mudam The Contemporary Art Museum of Luxembourg (Luxembourg, 2020), Serralves Museum of Contemporary Art (Porto, 2017), and FUTURA Centre for Contemporary Art (Prague, 2016) among others. Her work is represented in public collections including Mudam Luxembourg, Serralves Museum, Lisbon City Council, Region Västergötland, António Cachola Collection, and Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation to name a few. Manso lives and works in Lisbon, Portugal.

The Danish-Vietnamese artist Minh Ngọc Nguyễn (b.1992, Copenhagen) is one of the most interesting new voices in Scandinavian contemporary photography. Merging and remixing stereotypes and pop imagery from South East Asia, in a visual language which is savvy and witty, personal and universal at once, he produces striking images, as simple as they are powerful, as hilarious as they are relevant. The work part of this show is no exception to that, using his signature commercially inspired, composition perfect style, he allows the viewers to encounter a peculiar Danish tradition: the

one of gifting stick-insects to injured children having to wear a cast. Nguyễn holds an MFA in Photography from HDK-Valand Academy of Art and Design in Gothenburg (2018) and a BA in Visual Communication from Danish School of Media and Journalism in Copenhagen (2016). He has recently exhibited at NEVVEN (Gothenburg, 2025 and Bologna, 2024), Minor Gallery (Copenhagen, 2025), MELK (Oslo, 2025), Andréhn-Schiptjenko (Stockholm, 2025), CHART Art Fair (Copenhagen, 2024), Oblong (Copenhagen, 2023), Fotografisk Center (Copenhagen, 2023), 3:e Våningen (Gothenburg, 2023), and Röda Sten Konsthall (Gothenburg, 2018) among others. His work is represented in public collections including the Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, The Danish Arts Foundation, Region Västra Götaland, City of Gothenburg, and Jönköping Municipality among others. Nguyễn lives and works in Copenhagen, Denmark.

From experimental film to collage video and installation, Jiawei Zheng's (b.1998, Zigong) inventively composed pieces are characterised by their compelling narratives, often reflecting her multifaceted exploration of collective experience, as much as personal memory. An experience that feels both personal, and at the same time experienced by so many young Chinese people is at the centre of the work part of this exhibition. Lived through the eyes of a solitary karaoke singer, in a story where language serves as a portal, she invites the viewers to embark on a journey of re-imagination, where the boundaries between past and present, reality and fiction,

seamlessly intertwine and dissolve. Zheng holds an MFA from The Royal Danish Academy of Art in Copenhagen (2024) and a BA in Spatial Design from the China Academy of Art in Hangzhou (2021). She was nominated for the NEW:VISION Award by CPH:DOX 2025 (Copenhagen International Documentary Film Festival) and her works have been exhibited and screened at Inside-Out Art Museum (Beijing, 2025), CPH:DOX (Copenhagen, 2025), Dutch Design Week (Eindhoven, 2024), Kunsthall Charlottenborg (Copenhagen, 2024), Tofu Space (Copenhagen, 2024), Goldsmiths Centre for Contemporary Art Residency Space (London, 2023), Staffordshire St. (London, 2023), 500ML Space (Bern, 2022), Brook Books (Huangshan, 2021), and A60 Contemporary Art Space (Florence, 2021) among others. Zheng lives and works in Copenhagen, Denmark.

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