



Lily Honglei: The Unseen

November 29, 2024 – January 3, 2025

Chinese American Arts Council/Gallery 456 is pleased to present **Lily Honglei: *The Unseen***. The show is on view from November 29, 2024 through January 3, 2025.

Exhibition Statement

The Unseen presents some recent painting series and installation work by the Chinese immigrant artist collaborative, Lily Honglei.

Having spent significant portions of their life in China and the US, Lily Honglei's art practice focuses on Asian immigrant life and history, highlighting struggles, identity, and cultural memories of working-class immigrants, whose stories are often overlooked in contemporary art.

Lily Honglei's artistic visions interweave Western metropolitan landscapes with Chinese mythological characters recalling immigrants' cultural heritage. Their recent paintings juxtapose elegant decorative motifs with brutal realities resulting from racial exclusion and violence. Focusing on the "unseen," their work unfolds many real-life stories of working-class Asian immigrants struggling for survival or acceptance in their new country. Using a solid realistic style and visual forms inspired by Eastern traditions, Lily Honglei strives to capture the sadness and suffering in immigrant journeys.

Trained with Western painting techniques, Lily Honglei began to dive into Chinese traditional arts, including ink painting, opera costume, shadow puppetry, and decorative art, in recent years. They believe the beauty of their cultural heritage delivers much-needed comfort that helps heal the wounds of the Asian immigrant community and strengthen the bond with a wide range of audiences. Their research on Chinese American history allows them to deepen their understanding of many aspects of Asian immigrant life today. Lily Honglei states, "Our personal experience, research, and association with the working-class Asian immigrant community allow us to observe and portray life from a unique angle. Combining Eastern and Western visual languages, we hope our artistic expression can enrich contemporary art in the global society."

Opening Reception: November 29, 6-8pm

Please contact info@caacarts.org for more information.

Artist Bio

Lily and Honglei have been residents of Queens, New York, since 2000. They have presented their interdisciplinary artwork at important contemporary art venues in the US, Europe, and Asia. They are recipients of NYFA Fellowship in Painting (2024) and Interdisciplinary Work (2016), the Lillian Orlovsky and William Freed Grant for Painters (2024), The Adolph and Esther Gottlieb Foundation grant (2023), Queens Art Fund (2021), Creative Capital Award in Visual Arts (2015), the People's Choice Award at the Museum of Art & Design in New York (2009), among others. Since 2020, Lily Honglei has collaborated with the NYC Department of Parks, More Art, and Korea Art Forum to create public art projects for New York's Asian immigrant neighborhoods. Lily and Honglei received MFAs in Visual Design and Painting, respectively, from the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth.

Gallery 456

Hours: M-F, 1-5PM and by appointment

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