

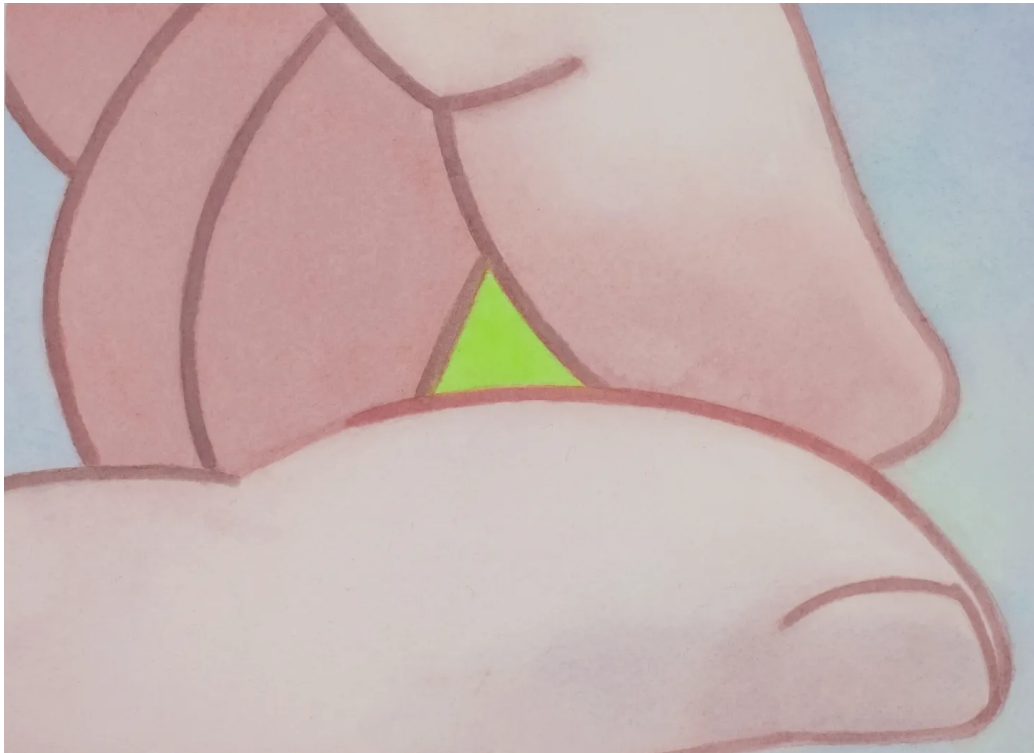


Love for Life and the Living, France-based Artist Lilou Oh Yeah

BY EDITORIAL TEAM | NOVEMBER 21, 2022

France-based artist and illustrator **Li Xia**, also known as **绿李 Lilou Oh Yeah** (b. 1991, Chongqing, China), works primarily in oil and watercolor. Her work explores ephemeral moments and commonplace objects in daily life, expressed through carefully composed planes of flat colors and nuanced strokes. Both representational and imaginary spaces come alive in Li's work, with her sensitive attention to the ordinary and the fleeting.

Lilou lives and works in Rouen, France. Lilou attended the Université de Paris 1 Panthéon – Sorbonne (MFA, 2021), l'École Supérieure d'Art et Design Le Havre-Rouen (ESADHaR) (MFA, 2020) and Sichuan Fine Arts Institute (BFA, 2014). She has exhibited internationally at venues such as the LONG Museum, Minsheng Art Museum, Bananafish Gallery in Shanghai, China, Yi Gallery in New York, USA, Kate MacGarry Gallery, London, UK, Villa des Arts in Paris, France and Rola Bola in Rouen, France.



May Green, 8.6×6.3in (21.9×16cm), Watercolor on Paper, 2022

Thank you for joining us Lilou. Can you tell us a little about yourself?

My name is Li Xia and I grew up in Chongqing, China. On Instagram, I share my work as [@lilou_oh_yeah](#), and on Chinese social media Weibo, I go by 绿李. After I graduated from Sichuan Fine Arts Institute with a BFA in Oil Painting in 2014, I came to France to continue my art study because I admire French cinema and literature. In 2020, I received an MFA from L'École Supérieure d'Art et Design Le Havre-Rouen, and in 2021 I received an additional MFA from L'Université de Paris 1 Panthéon – Sorbonne. Currently, I work and live in Rouen, France as a professional painter and illustrator.



Neufchâtel, 3.7×3.8in (9.5×9.8cm), Watercolor on Paper, 2022

What is your art about? What ideas are you exploring in your practice?

I work mainly in painting – oil on canvas and watercolor on paper. I also make sculptures. I always attempt to capture the intense and subtle feelings that are beyond what words can describe – scenes, atmospheres, experiences, memories – a mixture of lived experiences and imagination. The driving force of my creativity is a strong love for life and the living. I observe lamps in domestic settings and imagine scenes where light appears. [Some of the scenes are] capturing the color green in May by forming a small “pinhole” using my finger, a girl sleeping with an eye mask on, a close-up of a piece of heart-shaped cheese, and pillows of various forms... I think the ability to feel the world is very precious, and I am lucky to be able to reproduce these feelings in my images. The way I compose is deeply influenced by composition in cinema. The process of making the composition is also very interesting; I like to compose in close-ups. As for the viewers, they can enjoy seeing the objects being magnified through my framing, from a safe distance.

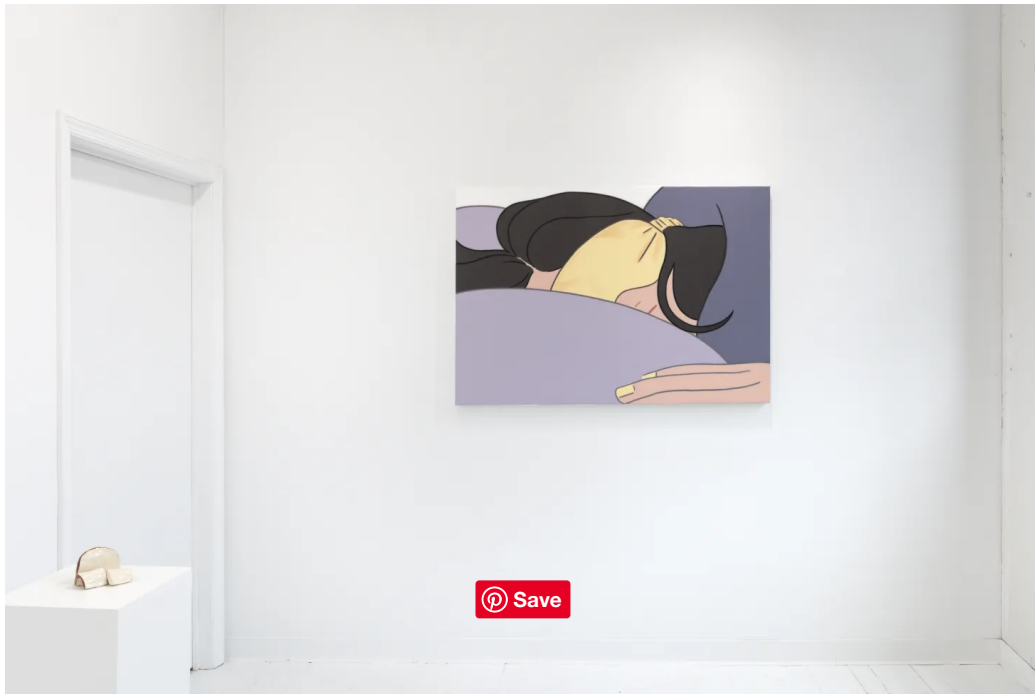
This year, I started making personified slices of bread out of ceramic, and different forms of blue cheese made of mixed materials. I find it quite interesting to transform ordinary things into different forms with a touch of imagination and place them in different spaces with other materials. A banal object suddenly takes on a sense of humor. This is a very interesting process.



Green Lamp, Watercolor on Paper, Mounted on Wood Panel, 19.5×27.5in (50 x 70 cm), 2022,
Courtesy of YI GALLERY

Do you have a mentor or piece of advice that influenced you during the past few years?

I am often touched by the sincerity, and it has resonated with me over the years. Important mentors and influences include: my grandmother, who told me not to rush and all I need to do is take my time, the pursuit of perfection and restrained tenderness in Ryuichi Sakamoto's music, the uninhibitedness and attention to detail in Kitano Takeshi, Vladimir Horowitz's tears when he played Schumann Kinderszenen Op. 15 in 1987 at an older age, the crisp and clear sparks in my Professor Chen Jiaying's eyes when he lectured philosophy, Oscar Wilde's tenderness, Zhong Shuhe when he reads poems, and the intense emotions in Luc Tuymans' paintings. Also the ordinary people and things I encounter in my daily life, the love I receive, and people pursuing "truth" whom I was honored to meet... All of this inspires me and infuses me with infinite strength and courage.



Installation view: Lilou Li Xia, Bread 3, Glazed Stoneware, 4x3x4in (10.2×7.6×10.2cm), 2022,
Courtesy of YI
GALLERY



Installation view: Lilou Li Xia, Solo Exhibition at YI GALLERY, Brooklyn, NY, 2022. Courtesy of YI GALLERY

What does “community” mean to you? Has your local community inspired you as an artist?

My understanding of “community” is a group of people who share a common physical locale or a common spiritual pursuit. In terms of creative inspiration, everything in my surroundings can stimulate me and inspire me to create. For example, where I live in France is where the new cheese Neufchâtel is being produced. It constantly inspires me. The city where I live has a lot of art exhibitions, big and small, and the interaction with different practicing artists and friends also makes me step out of my creative world from time to time. Such an artistic environment always keeps me in a state of artistic reflection, which I think is very important.

Do you have any advice that you would offer to others?

Everyone is incredibly unique. Instead of asking outwardly for advice, it's best to seek from within (oneself).



Installation view: Trooop Fort, Rola-bola, Rouen France, 2022. Courtesy of Rola-bola and Léo Rranco

text & photo courtesy of **Lilou Oh Yeah & YI Gallery**



- Website: <https://gallery-yi.com/artists>
- Instagram: [@lilou_oh_yeah](https://www.instagram.com/lilou_oh_yeah)

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