

# GIOVANNI'S ROOM

## Press Release

Giovanni's Room is pleased to announce the opening of "Attunement", a two person exhibition by Anders Hamilton and Yimaio Liu. The show features 5 recent sculptures by Hamilton and works on paper and silk by Liu. Attunement will run from February 25th through March 30th, 2024. Giovanni's Room is located at 850 South Broadway, Suite 600, Los Angeles, CA.

Certain things have a way of whispering their meaning into the world. Without making promises they simply extend the invitation to have a closer look, to go inward. Think of robin eggs laying in a nest, a patch of morning glories woven through a chain link fence, a spider web glistening in dew. These sorts of things do not demand attention, they attract it. Hamilton's Obelisk sculptures, which are in dialogue with the natural world, offer a similar type of invitation. The artist gathers twigs, leaves, and flowers from nearby his studio. The twigs are dried and coated in resin to preserve their structure. These familiar forms become foreign after meticulous applications of paint and pigment. The leaves and flowers are dipped in slip and burned away in a kiln firing, much like cremation. The ash of what once was alive, is sealed inside a ceramic shell of its former self. They are then glazed with recipes containing rare earth elements as a source of color. The dichroic properties of these elements produce a glaze that responds directly to its light source. For example, the fleshy orange glaze used in "Eternal Bloom" becomes a vibrant pink when shifting from natural to artificial light.

Yimaio Liu's delicate, intricate drawings present shapes and forms suspended in undefined spaces. Light and the interference of natural elements play a key role in her work, which uses soft, muted colors and gentle pencil strokes. The forms in Liu's drawings pull from the surreal, the nearly supernatural. Her drawings are raw, emotional, and highly symbolic, often referencing personal experiences and the artists' spirituality. Each work can be thought of as a journal entry, recording moments of change within the expansive internal landscape of the individual.

When something no longer changes it is dead. Knowing Hamilton's obelisks inhabit dead matter, yet retain the ability to change in response to light source makes them less of a static sculpture and more like a living tomb. The enshrined plant appears to be patiently awaiting transcendence, poised for rebirth, as if the cremated ash locked inside might produce new growth. Liu's work is a space where moments of change and the emotions that result are distilled and re-expressed as a visual composition. This act bears witness to a constantly evolving human spirit, and in doing so becomes a record of loss as well as a celebration of growth.



## Bio

Anders Hamilton (b. 1992, Everett, WA) was raised in Fargo, North Dakota and currently lives and works in Brooklyn, NY. His Obelisk sculptures are composed of a variety of materials including ceramic, glaze, rare earth oxide, and found twigs. The foliage on each twig undergoes a process of transformation akin to cremation. Each leaf is coated in several thin layers of porcelain slip and fired in a kiln. This turns the leaf to ash leaving only a paper thin ceramic shell, which is glazed shut to seal the remains inside. Each ceramic leaf therefore acts as a container for its own cremated ash, a ghost of its previous form. Hamilton then applies glaze containing rare earth oxide as a source of color. These oxides have the uncanny ability to change in response to their light source. Olive becomes pink, lavender becomes gray, green becomes yellow. Aside from the poetics of working with "rare earth" this color changing effect makes visible a transfer of energy through the absorption or refraction of light rays. It is also descriptive of the biological feeding process of plants. Glucose produced in the leaves is distributed throughout the plant to provide nourishment and stimulate growth.

Hamilton received his BFA from the University of Minnesota (Minneapolis, MN) in 2015. He is a studio director at BKLYN CLAY (Brooklyn, NY) and a designer for the BKLYN CLAY Made line. He has exhibited most recently at MOTHER (Manhattan, NY), MOTHER (Beacon, NY) and the Pratt Institute (Brooklyn, NY). In 2024 his work will be included in *A Garden of Promise and Dissent* at The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum.

Yimiao Liu (b. 1993, Hunan, China) is a Chinese artist who currently lives and works in New York, USA. Her work is a continuous dialogue between her psychological space and the experience of everyday reality. It appears as a non-linear narrative, and a monologue written in visual elements that are also inspired from poetry, film, and music.

Her work constantly asks questions such as "What is the subjectivity of the unworthy in a universal sense?", "Can self-destruction achieve self-preservation?", "Can things as light as a feather be as sharp as an arrow?", she does not intend to seek direct answers but to create repeated patterns, organic and flowing forms which lead her and the audience to further thoughts. Her work's aesthetic contradicts the discomfort evoked by some of her strangely fantastical art. Often involving the female form and anthropomorphized flora and fauna, these otherworldly scenes create emotionally rooted narrative vignettes. Yimiao Liu's drawings and paintings involve a long and meditative process, often by adding numerous thin and blended layers of color, altering elements as she progresses (which to her is similar to wording in writing). The technique is a very important part of her practice which could also sum up her idea of seeing the world: that the attempt at revealing takes laborious time.

Liu received an MFA from California State University (Long Beach, CA) in 2018. Recent group exhibitions include Giovanni's Room (Los Angeles, CA), Modern Art (London, UK), Harkawik (Manhattan, NY), Fortnight Institute (Manhattan, NY), Half Gallery (Los Angeles, CA). In 2024, Liu will be in residency at Palazzo Monti (Brescia, IT) followed by a solo exhibition at Coma Gallery (Sydney, AU).