

# HESSE FLATOW



Xi Li, *Screen (As It Floats)*, 2026 (detail). Screenprint on organza, mixed media on wood, artist frame, 41.75 x 32.75 x 1.75 inches (106 x 83 x 4 cm). Courtesy of the artist and HESSE FLATOW. Photo: Xi Li.

## **Xi Li: *Cocoons of silk ready to be wound***

April 24 - May 30, 2026

HESSE FLATOW is pleased to announce the opening of ***Cocoons of silk ready to be wound***, an exhibition by New York-based artist Xi Li, marking her first solo presentation with the gallery.

Decorative arts encyclopedias, architecture surveys, craft manuals, and other circulated printed matter serve as the starting point within Li's image-based practice, chosen specifically for their archival and instructional nature. Scanned, printed, photographed, and collaged, they undergo degrees of removal and transformation, revealing subtle ways in which meaning can persist, accumulate, and shift across material and time.

Li's latest body of semi-translucent, printed fabric works that are stretched and set against a wooden box frame expand upon the metaphor of image as container. The spatial separation between the diaphanous scrim in the foreground and silkscreened backing in the anterior create opportunities for layering that defy a linear reception.

Describing her relationship with image-making as fluid, Li moves beyond the representational and into the granular unit of the dot or pixel. Samples from her source materials are deployed for their formal qualities of line, shape, and color, yielding compositions that lean toward open-ended abstraction. Inserting her own mark-making by directly painting onto reproductions of collected catalogs and books, Li complicates the objective framework underscoring the mechanical processes that largely define her practice.

Filtered through a silk membrane, her compositions become tinged with the fabric's inherently warm tones, assuming a hazy ephemerality akin to that of fragmented memory. Its interaction with light at times heightens and obliterates certain details as her imagery floats into and out of focus. Like the physical properties of paper, silk also has the capacity to record and remember, coded into its fibers the oval structure of cocoons from which they emerge. This unraveling into threads allegorizes Li's practice of extracting motifs, only to be rewound and rearranged again with infinite possibilities.

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**Xi Li** (b. 1995, Suzhou, China) is an New York-based artist who works with printmaking, mixed media, photography, and installation to explore image-making processes and the construction of alternative narratives in contemporary culture. Her work investigates how images shape, circulate, reconstruct, and eventually shift layers of meaning through media, history, and collective memory. Li has exhibited internationally at François Ghebaly (Los Angeles), AMANITA, SARA's, and LATITUDE Gallery (New York), as well as Madeln Gallery (Shanghai), among others. She was awarded the Aperture 2023 Creator Labs Photo Fund and was an Artist-in-Residence at Silver Art Projects in 2024. She holds a Bachelor degree in design from Pratt Institute and an MFA from Yale School of Art. Li currently lives and works in New York.

## **SALES**

[sales@hesseflatow.com](mailto:sales@hesseflatow.com)

## **GENERAL**

[info@hesseflatow.com](mailto:info@hesseflatow.com)

## **PRESS**

[press@hesseflatow.com](mailto:press@hesseflatow.com)

**HESSE FLATOW** is a gallery and curatorial platform founded by artist Karen Hesse Flatow in 2019. It had its start as "Crush Curatorial", where many artists we work with today had their debut solo show. Hesse Flatow has an MBA and an MFA from Columbia University and attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture. The program focuses on emerging and mid-career artists with diverse voices, presenting debut solo shows and focused presentations. We are located in an accessible ground floor space in Tribeca, New York City.