

Kelly Wu
Selected Press and Publications

Annie's girlhood is in some ways a paralysis. She dreams of the future and wallows in the past.

I stand on the threshold of the MEZZANINE space, precisely under its roller garage door, without fully entering just yet. The gallery feels airy and breezy, still holding onto the chill of an early April evening. The voluminous tulle skirt of a baby blue ballroom dress hangs suspended mid-air, weightless - the brightest interruption in an otherwise sparse layout, immediately pulling the eye. As I walk closer towards it, a little white cup, turned upside down in the middle of the floor, emits sounds from within; black and white confetti is scattered next to the wall, which faintly reads in cursive *je ne taperai plus les garçons* (I shamefully admit I wait for someone else to translate). Opposite - a small staircase leading - nowhere? somewhere secret perhaps? - its base marked by a nearly hidden treble clef.

The longer I look, the more details begin to reveal themselves, bulging out from a space that at first seemed half-empty. The minimalist exhibition unfolds less as a display than as a process of deciphering - assembling Annie, a *blonde, French girl who is in her teenage years, or perhaps just stuck there mentally, in her prom dress, dancing around, singing her lonely songs* (Kelly), from fragments that never quite resolve. *They pull her apart like magnets. Her girlhood is a caricature of another's, perhaps one she saw on TV or heard in a 'love' song written by a man, one she is conditioned to believe is ideal. She lives to play her part. She lives inside a comic-strip* (Jo). Perhaps she didn't know that an audience was actually there? She might live in that dimension below, or just beyond the thin veil - this would certainly explain her ghostliness.

I approach Jo and Kelly and ask if that's Annie's debut exhibition?

Turns out, it is! Annie Versailles is her own debut - and yet not quite her own. She is the nom de plume under which Jo Ackerley and Kelly Wu's art practices meet, finding an outlet to overlap and intertwine. Working together since 2022, their lives have now become what

'An Event of Extreme Imagination and Desire': In Conversation with Kelly Wu



GRASS Magazine

12 May 2026 — 6 min read

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[GRASS](#), 12 May 2026

Annie Versailles

12/04/26 ZM

The gallery at MEZZANINE is slap bang in the middle of an industrial estate. I am on the edge looking in, past the rolling metal shutter, at the scene spread out before me.

The glossy pink dust cover of a book called *La Vie Parisienne* is stapled to the wall. The title is in dainty curly cursive and there's an illustration of a girl caught in a gust of wind — the wind whirls around her blowing blossom petals and leaves, tousling her hair, she holds down her skirt but, oh! The wind has sexily undressed her and her perky little tits are squishing together as she reaches for her skirt — ooh la la! There is a glass pebble blobbed over the windy girl's face, obscuring and magnifying her coy expression.





plastermagazine and kellywustudio ...



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Episode three of 'Teabreak': Dora meets artist Kelly Wu in a North London café. From hoarding sanitary towels to method-acting as a Cath Kidston suburban mum, their work turns the mundane into something far stranger.

[@kellywustudio](#)
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Such a great interview! Can I ask what kind of camera this series is shot on?

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8 April

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A coffee with artist Kelly Wu

We met performance and installation artist Kelly Wu in L'Angelo Cafe in London for a quick chat over eggs and coffee about their art practice before Kelly went off to work.

Film and text by Alex Schuchmann

Born in Essex to immigrant parents from Beijing, Kelly Wu works across sculpture, installation, and performance. Their practice explores memory and culture through found objects and personal archives, often touching on race, gender, and class—though these themes are deliberately withheld or obscured. Writing and life-art performances extend and complicate these ideas, blurring the lines between art and everyday life.

[Hometown Journal](#), 17 November 2025

WORKING CLASS CREATIVES DATABASE PRESENTS GLORY BOX: AN EXHIBITION ON THE CLASSSED EXPERIENCES OF CARRYING, KEEPING, AND MAKING DO

BRICKS speaks with curator Seren Metcalfe and artists Grace Clifford, Harley Roberts, and Kelly Wu about class, inheritance, and the unspoken labour of keeping things that were never meant to be passed down

HANNAH KITTY BROWN · 25TH JULY 2025

HEADER IMAGE Kelly Wu 'The State in Which We Are', 2023 courtesy of Working Class Creatives Database

After visiting *GLORY BOX*, the first central London exhibition from the Working Class Creatives Database (WCCD), I kept thinking about the words 'inherited' and 'collection', and how off they can feel when applied to working-class lives. In art, those terms usually signal value – *inherited* wealth, *inherited* taste, *inherited* networks – or neat boxes of things, displayed under clean lighting, far removed from the mess that made them. But for the artists in *GLORY BOX*; Grace Clifford, Harley Roberts, and Kelly Wu, inheritance is something more physical. It's grief, habits, and leftovers; it's materials gathered because that's what's available.

Presented by the WCCD and hosted at Sadie Coles HQ, the show exists on the edge of the commercial art world. There's no grand entrance, no dealer buzz. Instead, *GLORY BOX* builds something slower and more persistent, shaped by repetition and memory. The title nods to the 1994 Portishead track, but also to the box bedroom, the storeroom, the cupboard where things are packed away and returned to later.

[BRICKS](#), 25 July 2025

Review of Kelly Wu's 'Missing Angel'

"I quit smoking, but this is a special occasion" giggles Wu as we begin to chat about her life and work. It certainly is a special occasion — 'Missing Angel' marks Wu's debut solo show after a string of successful group shows around London in the past years. Fizzing with enthusiasm and potential, Wu tells me that she's embarking on a master's degree at the prestigious Slade School of Art come September, though she has many more shows on the cards before then. An emerging talent in London's ever-fertile art scene, Wu is clearly very taken with the city. "London is popping. It's a really great place to be making work." I ask her why? "Because, unlike Essex, no one thinks I'm fucking strange!"

Acceptance and inclusivity are cornerstones of the Small-Time Project- the curatorial group playing host to 'Missing Angel.' Founded by friends Bowen Zhang and Jack Kinsman, they work with emerging artists to provide access to project spaces. Wu emphasises the importance of the group being a queer space. There is room for all sexualities, races, genders and identities.

'Missing Angel' is set in a building site. The venue at 8 Aylesbury Street is in the midst of conversion from an artists' space to corporate offices (yet another blow to the city's young creatives seeking spaces to call their own.) The exhibition space is truly mesmerising. It is a surprisingly huge open space playing host to three exhibitions, Wu's being at the end. The building has been stripped to its bones becoming an industrial mix of raw concrete, exposed bricks, pipes, and a literal hole in the floor in Wu's space (which she shows me with amusement.) It is the antithesis of the usual, white-walled art gallery.

Kelly Wu

Missing Angel

Small-Time Project

Solo Exhibition of New Works

1 June - 14 June 2025

Small-Time Project
8 - 15 Aylesbury Street
London
EC1R 0DR

[Small-Time Project, 2025](#)



Arina Baburskova · Sep 12, 2024



WHAT IS AND WHAT IS NOT: CONCERNING THE SPIRITUAL (AND PHYSICAL) IN ART

Just as Kandinsky's abstract compositions sought to translate the audible to the material, Alina's soundscape at *what is and what is not* at **Mandy Zhang Art** transformed the gallery into a living, breathing canvas entering a dialogue beyond the traditional boundaries of the senses. *writes Arina Baburskova*

SHOW PONY

14/04/24 ZM

I think horses must be magic. Either that or spiritually jacked. Half beast half machine, all muscle and power. I think horses are a metaphor for animal freedom. I think horses are a metaphor for the capitalist machine, the march of civilisation, work and war and labour and — Men! Horses are man extenders, horse as phallus. I think horses are so big and strange, with their weird long alien heads. What do they think about? Do they understand music and sarcasm, do they have dreams, do they experience a feeling of pride or satisfaction when they cross that finish line first?

Lucky horse, trotting happy through the forest on the way to pasture. Sad horse, towing a cart behind it, a beast of burden. Fast horse, galloping along the dirt track. Wild horse, swivel-eyed and frantic in the scramble across the lightning struck expanse of the Great Plains. Rocky Mountains, blue sky and horse hooves on stone. Iron on iron, blacksmith's arms flexing and slick with sweat. You can take a horse to water, on your high horse, gift-horse, dark horse, straight from the horse's mouth, flogging a dead horse, pissing like a carhorse, hold your horses!



Kelly Wu

Kelly Wu is a queer Chinese-British artist and poet who was born in Chelmsford, Essex. Her parents are from Beijing, China. She has lived in Clacton-on-Sea, Braintree, Colchester, and Paris but today she lives and works in London. Her practice combines sculpture, performance, and installation. She fixates on objects: the small, the found, the stolen, and the gifted, and with them she thinks about her past and her parents, arranging her misfortunes in neat order. She gives in to her sorrow and traverses the ether between head and heart, near and far. Her work engages themes of family, memory, theft, yearning, love, catharsis and ephemerality.

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#004/2

Kelly Wu

FOR AUGUSTA

a room bathed in light and
a phrase used a thousand times,
the hamptons-style mothers
and their manufactured magic
prowl,
fly eight knots,

so take note,
of how fast you can go on these roads,
before you become
a little bit rude,
a little bit mad,

drive the Mercedes in circles,
and crunch down on your foot,

then it will rain.

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DAZED

In 2021, the pioneering creative network was a recipient of a [SET](#) initiative to provide free space for community groups, and has since hosted eight residencies for working-class artists from a variety of backgrounds. Now, WCCD is taking over Woolwich's SET Studios for its latest exhibition, which features 28 artists working with installation art, sculpture, photography, video and text.

Titled *Gatherings*, the show represents “diversities, histories, places and identities within the working-class experience,” the curators tell Dazed. Featured works weave together multigenerational stories from a range of perspectives, but are tied together by their “gentle nature... one that is rich in being heavily personal and delicately political”.

Among the featured artists are [Hannah Hill](#), a photographer whose series *I've gave me whole life to em* traces her father's precarious role as a steel worker, [Chloë Louise Lawrence](#), whose installation references Vicky Spratt's [Tenants](#), and Billy Axe, who writes about coming to resemble his alcoholic father since starting to take testosterone. Elsewhere, [MedB](#) documents her brother's relationship with his children on a 70s estate outside Belfast in *My Brother, The Father*, and Kelly Wu shines a light on “housing instability, hoarding, immigration” via objects from their parents' council flat.

“When choosing the works it felt like we were crows selecting gifts to bring back to our nest,” say the curators. “The curation style feels like a gathering of objects, of histories, memories and moments in body, place and time.”

Story

Dreams of a New Moon: Lunar New Year exhibition celebration at Central Saint Martins

Written by
Duong Thuy Nguyen

Published date
17 January 2023

Lunar New Year Eve – falling this year on Saturday 21 January – is a key event in most Asian countries' cultural calendars, and marks the point at which loved ones gather for communal feasts. Celebrating this fundamental festival, the *Dreams of a New Moon* exhibition features an energetic roster of 12 East and Southeast Asian (ESEA) Central Saint Martins' students and alumni.

Presenting works from paintings to performances, the exhibition weaves a mycelial web of diverse narratives, helping the audiences to consider the rich historical, cultural and societal significance of the East and Southeast Asia region.

Through this acknowledgement, a sense of collective responsibility emerges. The artists reimagine the spiritual aspects of a Lunar New Year, questioning the body, community, ideologies, and spirituality. Unfolding the dynamics of the exhibition's messages, the artists offer immersive and experiential works that extend a metaphorical reading of politics and sociology.

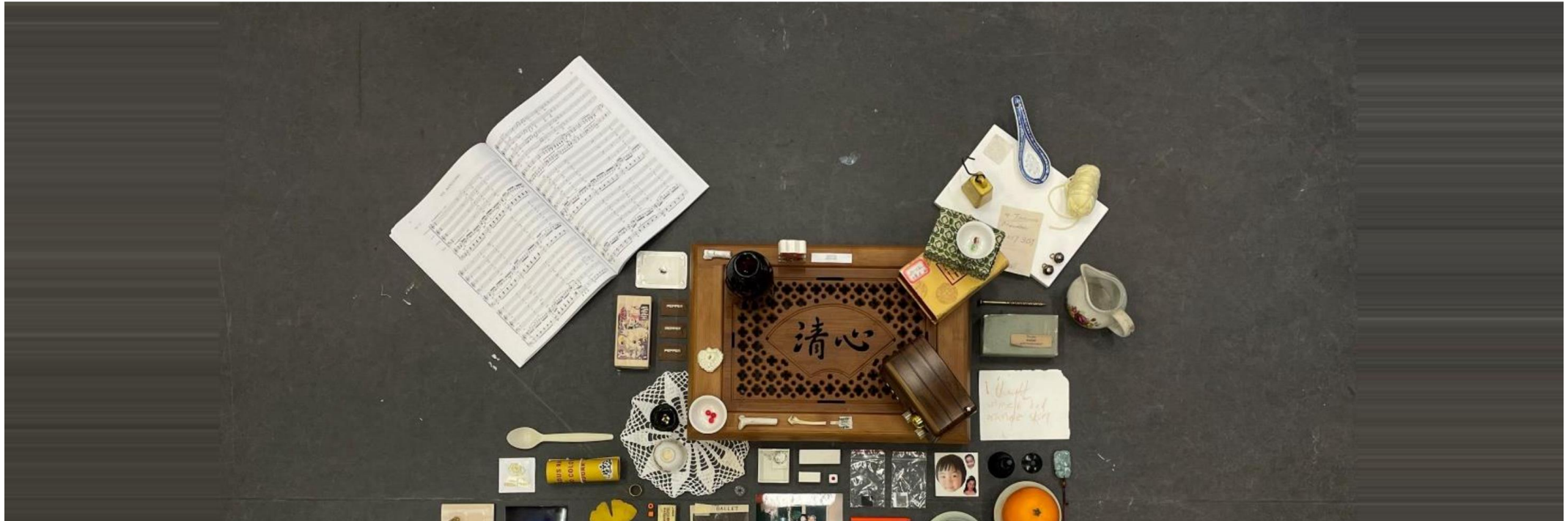
Taking place at Central Saint Martins' The Street and the Lethaby Gallery, each work presented in the *Dreams of a New Moon* exhibition reflects the countries' cultural mélange, encompassing both the ordinary and the vibrant.

Affording an impactful metaphor for ESEA artists' voices in a contemporary context, *Dreams of a New Moon* foregrounds a rich trove of vibrancy and diversity of customs, reflecting the concerns of the future generation of artists and their insights in challenging times.



Story

Our first Lunar New Year exhibition at Central Saint Martins



UAL Stories, 13 January 2023