

EVELYN TAOCHENG WANG

ARTFORUM

CARLOS/ISHIKAWA



View of "Evelyn Taocheng Wang," 2017.

LONDON

CRITICS' PICKS

Evelyn Taocheng Wang

CARLOS/ISHIKAWA
88 Mile End Road Unit 4
May 5–June 17

Having trained in China, the Netherlands, and Germany, Evelyn Taocheng Wang's first solo exhibition in London vacillates between the East and the West. Drawings and videos are placed on walls and display units painted a soothing shade of pastel green. The addition of a gray rug, along with various floor and table lamps, makes the room feel oddly domestic. Yet ideas surrounding sex and death run through this comfortably appointed show.

On the walls hang a number of new mixed-media drawings on rice paper that depict scenes from chapters of Cao Xueqin's *Dream of the Red Chamber* (1792), one of China's great novels of the early modern period. Each drawing is accompanied by a casually written version of the story, framed like an archival document. In *Who is going to burn my love-affair Mirror?!* (all works cited, 2017), you can read about a man who fucks himself to death—he appears face up with an erect dick, cum dripping from his belly. The work *Someone Mysteriously Hung Herself Up Among the Towers* features a woman in a blood-red dress suspended between two columns. The accompanying story tells us about a man who experiences his first orgasm while dreaming of sex with a female spirit guide.

In her video *The Interview*, Taocheng Wang compares traditional Chinese and European modes of painting. While flicking through and discussing Dutch masterworks from a museum's storage unit, a sculpted and tan male model in a black thong walks in and out of view, standing there like a Greek god from one of the more homoerotic pages of art history. In *Dusk*, the model appears again, this time with a female counterpart. Like Adam and Eve in their near nakedness, they sit on a boat in a Dutch river. The artist is in the middle of them: fully dressed, expressionless, and looking quite strange. Maybe it's a European fantasy, failing to arouse much of anything.

—Eliel Jones