

ANDREA FESTA

“My practice is grounded in an emotional landscape shaped by fear, tenderness, and the desire for transcendence. I am often haunted by the impermanence of things — the inevitable loss, the passage of time, the fading of memory — and I paint to resist forgetting. Through image-making, I attempt to hold onto fragments of moments, emotions, and psychological states that would otherwise vanish. Painting becomes both a form of preservation and a quiet act of redemption.

I primarily depict imagined scenes where human figures — often women — inhabit environments suspended between reality and dream. These figures are not portraits, but vessels for emotional projection. I am drawn to youth, desire, vulnerability, ambiguity — not as fixed narratives but as fleeting states. The atmosphere is always crucial: a soft tension between innocence and knowingness, between surface and interiority. Often, I render these scenes using watercolor and fine brushwork, layering delicate strokes to capture the subtle transitions between presence and absence.

While my early inspirations came from classical Chinese and Japanese traditions — including court lady paintings and ukiyo-e — I was never content to remain within the confines of tradition. My work is equally shaped by Western academic training and the literature, cinema, and music I consume. I am deeply influenced by the emotional complexity of modern and postmodern writers, by films that reveal interior life through gesture and light, and by sounds that hold melancholy and memory.

Although female figures are central in my work, I do not approach them from a didactic feminist perspective. Rather, I see them as complex, strategic, emotionally intelligent — their sensuality not a weakness, but a mode of survival. In recent works, I’ve introduced male figures too, exploring the same depth of ambiguity and vulnerability.

Each painting is a constructed fiction — not autobiographical, yet always personal. The spaces they inhabit may be artificial or symbolic, but the feelings they carry are real. I hope my work becomes a mirror, where viewers encounter not only my vision, but fragments of their own hidden emotional histories.”