

## Jiang ZHI

*Love Letters* comprises a collection of iconic photographs which started in the 2010, where Jiang Zhi adeptly captures the radiant beauty of blossoms embraced by flames.

*This collection challenges the subjectivity of imagery and explores how each viewer may perceive reality differently based on their individual memories. The artist ignited various types of flowers, freezing the precise moment when petals and flames harmonised in an elegant equilibrium.*

*What we witness is that “decisive moment” – a transient, audacious instance encapsulating the essence of mortality.*

*Drawing inspiration from 17th-century Dutch ‘Vanitas’ paintings, wherein wilting flowers symbolize the inescapable decay and mortality of all earthly life, Jiang employs his works as a contemporary memento mori. Typically immersing orchids, a nod to his wife’s name ‘Lan,’ meaning ‘Orchid,’ in alcohol, he ignites them, capturing the ephemeral spectacle through high-speed photography.*

*The azure blaze of methylated spirits radiates vibrantly, yet the awareness of its imminent consumption of the flower permeates our perception.*

*Jiang articulates this process as transformative, stating:*

*“The fire is as beautiful as the flower, and the flower is also completely without defect – but of course, this is only temporal beauty.”*

*Therefore, the artist has orchestrated a tangible means of grieving, envisioning hardship, and crafting a transient moment suspended amidst devastation and renewal, agony and bittersweet melancholy.*

*Throughout various cultures, fire and flowers symbolize diverse meanings: flames representing destruction, passion, punishment, and purification, while flowers represent the abundance of nature, juxtaposed with the fleeting nature of beauty and the material world. Jiang arranges single orchid stems or a few blossoms in ornate vases before subjecting them to alcohol-induced combustion.*

*Unlike Vanitas painters, who often used a snuffed-out candle as a symbol of earthly mortality, Jiang opts to showcase the flames themselves. Yet, instead of a forceful raging presence, the flames appear delicate and insubstantial.*

### *Biography*

*1971 Born in Yuanjiang, Hunan Province, China*

*1995 Graduated from China Academy of Fine Arts*

*Currently lives and works in Beijing, China*

*Museums & Public Collections*

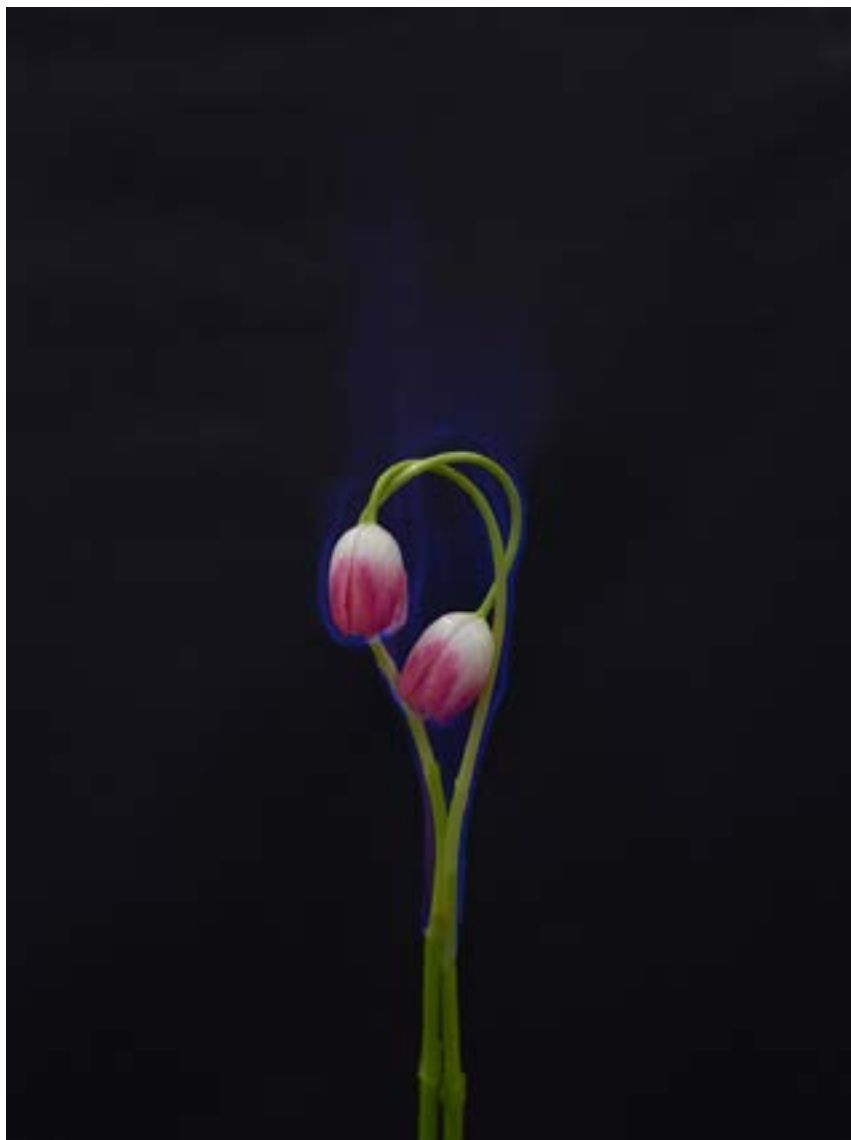
*BSI Art Collection (Switzerland)*

*DSL Collection (France)*

*Guangdong Museum of Art (China)*

*Times Museum (China)*

*Instituto Valenciano de Arte Moderno Centre Julio González (Spain)*



Jiang Zhi  
93x70 cm  
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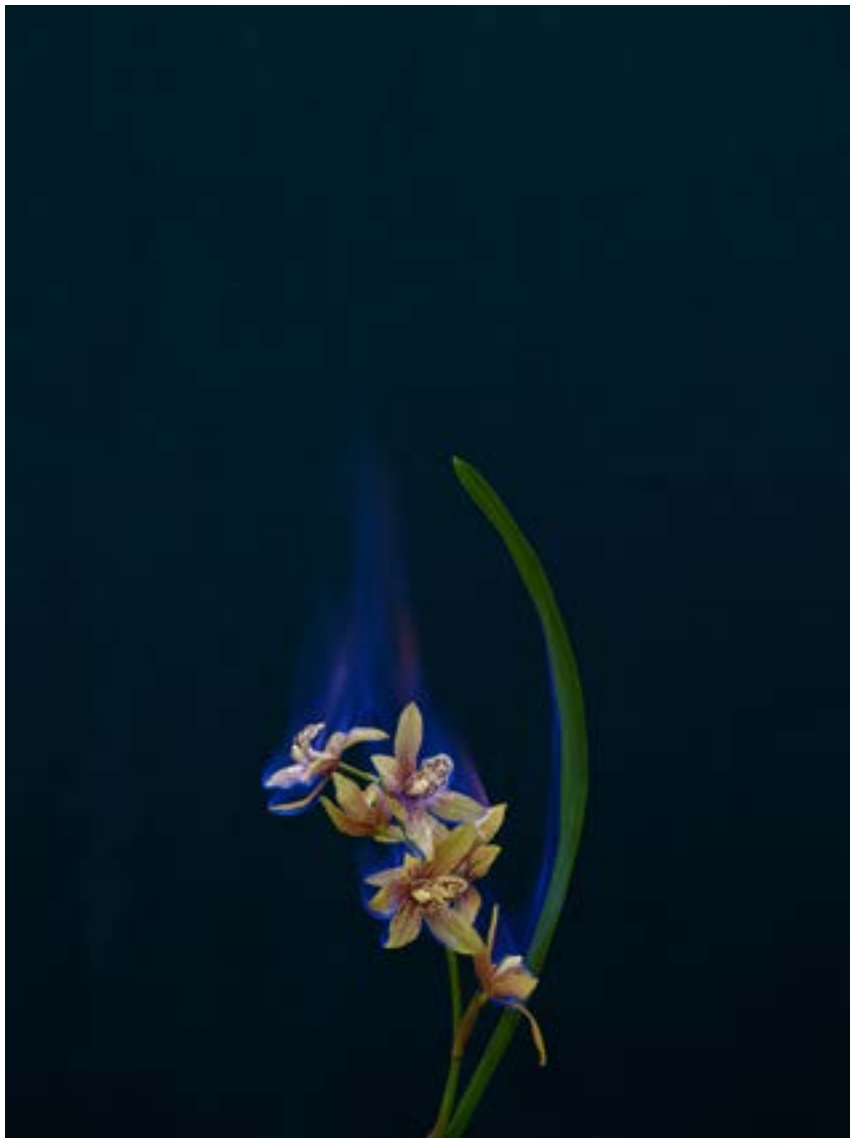
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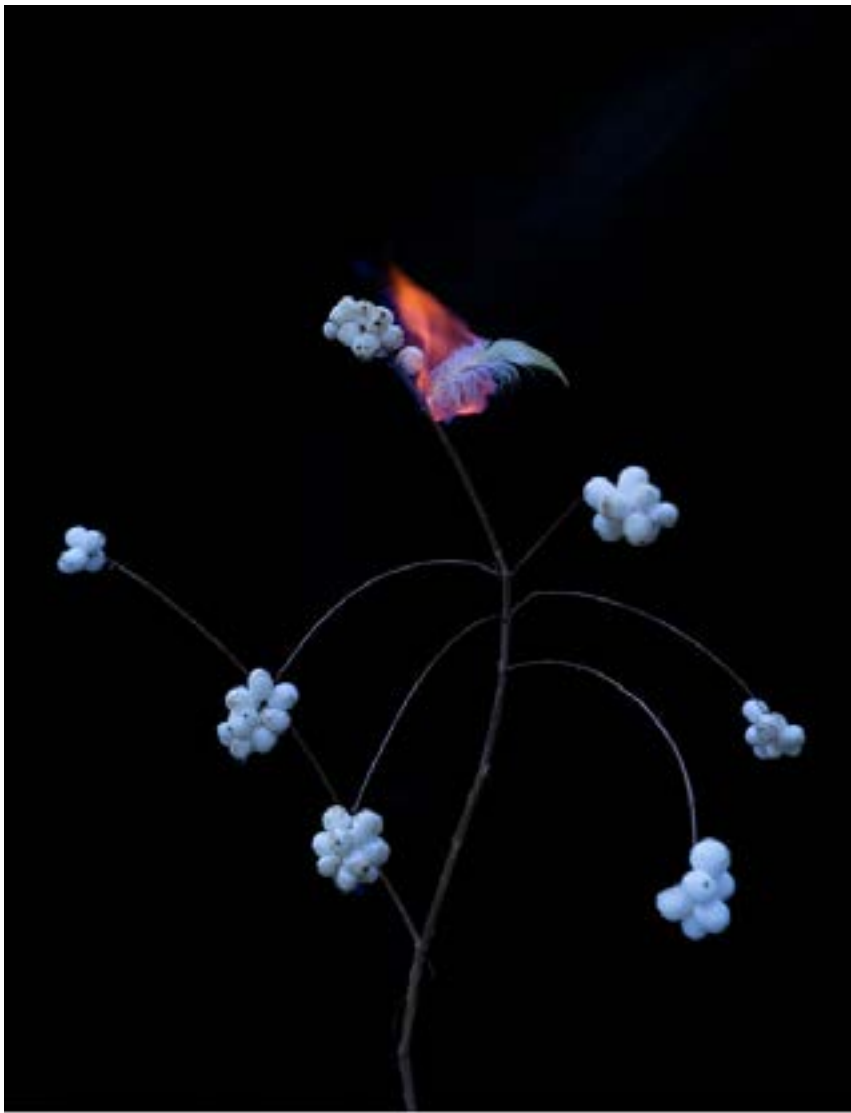
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