



## Don't miss Storytime at JSMA at PSU with Latoya Lovely

By Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art at Portland State University

April 09, 2024 at 12:31 pm PDT



Charlene Liu, *China Palace*, 2023, prints, cardboard, paper, ink, and paint, dimensions variable, Courtesy of the artist and Elizabeth Leach Gallery, Portland Oregon (Charlene Liu)

Join the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art for Storytime with Latoya Lovely. Inspired by JSMA at PSU's current exhibition [\*Labor of Love\*](#), Lovely will read stories celebrating workers and exploring culture and community to children and their guardians.

This program is geared towards pre-K through early elementary students. Children must be accompanied by a guardian throughout the event. **This program is free and open to the public. ASL interpreting will be provided.\***

**RSVP HERE:** [forms.gle/cVpJpiwzPKbh6UYn9](https://forms.gle/cVpJpiwzPKbh6UYn9)

*Labor of Love* is curated by Alexandra Terry, Curator of Contemporary Art, New Mexico Museum of Art, Santa Fe. Support for this exhibition provided by The Ford Family Foundation, the Richard & Helen Phillips Charitable Fund and the Exhibition Circle.

\*Accessibility initiatives have been made possible by a grant from the Richard & Helen Phillips Charitable Fund.

The artists featured in *Labor of Love* produce work that aims to expose and highlight labor practices that have been historically and systematically concealed from the public sphere. Working across a wide variety of media and using a range of conceptual approaches, the eight artists exhibited here seek to explore that which is often hidden just under the surface or kept at arm's length: the physical, emotional, and intellectual labor that is vital to the smooth and ongoing function of innumerable aspects of our everyday lives.

Hidden, unseen or invisible labor is work that goes unnoticed, unacknowledged, and thus, unregulated, and that is too often unpaid or poorly paid. Invisible labor is often performed by people who belong to marginalized groups, including migrants and refugees, women, nonbinary and gender nonconforming individuals, people of color and people of lower socioeconomic status. Those who perform invisible labor are further marginalized by the sheer fact that their work isn't seen, properly compensated, or acknowledged. In its many forms, hidden labor has ripple effects: much of what we consume every day — the food we eat, the clothes we wear, the content we watch and read — is made available to us through the time, energy, and often backbreaking labor of unidentified individuals we will never meet.

The artists in *Labor of Love* strive to tell stories that have been purposefully hidden. In doing so, they reveal problematic aspects of our public narratives and confront issues of systemic racism, immigration, class inequality and gender discrimination. Collectively, they believe that to ameliorate the burdens of invisible labor, that labor must be made visible: only then can its inequities be addressed. Their actions endeavor to reveal what has been kept out of sight, and to celebrate, acknowledge and empower the individuals and groups whose stories they have chosen to tell.

Featured Artists: Tania Candiani, Tannaz Farsi, Jay Lynn Gomez, Midori Hirose,  
Charlene Liu, Alberto Lule, Narsiso Martinez and Patrick Martinez

## e-flux Criticism

# “Another Beautiful Country: Moving Images by Chinese American Artists”

Vanessa Holyoak



Charlene Liu, *Cina Place*, 2023. Wood, cardboard, objects from mother's restaurant, and mixed-media installation, dimensions variable. Image courtesy of USC Pacific Asia Museum, Pasadena. Photo by Capture Imaging, Inc./ Bryan Feinzimer.

February 29, 2024

**USC Pacific Asia Museum, Pasadena**  
January 26–April 21, 2024



The Chinese term *gūanxi* describes a web of relations between friends, family, lovers, co-workers, even corrupt politicians. It evokes a sense of community and belonging that can prove elusive for the diverse group of people commonly referred to as “Chinese American.” A moniker that points to allegiances, however fraught, to the two countries it references, “Chinese American” is a one-size-fits-all label that attempts to forge a singular identity out of a heterogeneous array of diasporic experiences shaped by displacement, immigration, and cross-cultural translation.

Curated by Dr. Jenny Lin, “Another Beautiful Country: Moving Images by Chinese American Artists” hinges on another transcultural exchange. Drawing connections between *gūanxi* and French-Martinican philosopher of opacity Édouard Glissant’s notion of a “poetics of relation,” the exhibition posits relationality over identity as an alternate cornerstone of contemporary Chinese Americanness.<sup>1</sup> Referenced in an introductory essay in the exhibition catalogue written by Dr. Lin, Glissant’s emphasis on diasporic relation is espoused throughout the show—which includes areas for repose and relation amongst exhibition-goers—and enacted through real and speculative social encounters between family, friends, and strangers staged within the works themselves. Drawing its title from the Chinese word for America, 美國/*měiguó*, which translates literally to “beautiful country,” along with the popular shorthand for “American-born Chinese” (ABC), it offers a collective reflection on the slippery mutability of Chinese American identity and the relations that come to define it.

Working across video, installation, photography, language, and performance, the artists in “ABC” produce images that “move” both literally and affectively. Diasporic familial relations are foregrounded throughout. Taiwan-born, US-based Charlene Liu’s *qípáo* prints, *Red Dress*, *Petals Undone*, and *Perfect Brightness* (2015), for example, feature digitally manipulated photographs of *qípáos* hailing from both the artist’s and curator’s families. These adorn a wall of her large-scale installation *China Palace* (2023), an in-situ recreation of the artist’s mother’s now-shuttered Chinese restaurant, formerly located in a Wisconsin strip mall. In Patty Chang’s video performance, *Que Sera Sera* (2013), the artist is seen singing the titular song to her father on his deathbed, while rocking her newborn son to sleep, in an ephemeral intergenerational encounter. Ken Lum’s photograph, *Coming Soon*, 2009 (presented as a public billboard in Munich, Beijing, and Vienna), presents a staged interracial Chinese-Causasian couple and their mixed-race progeny, bearing the foreboding announcement, “coming soon,” in Chinese and English.

The early twentieth-century archival prints of Qing Dynasty family members that make up Hong Kong-born, US-based Simon Leung’s *Family / Archive* (2023) were in fact taken in St. Louis, Missouri, where his great-great-grandfather served as Vice-Commissioner of the Chinese Pavilion of the 1904 World’s Fair, in a rare exception to the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. Richard Fung was born in Trinidad to Chinese parents; his video *The Way to My*

*Father's Village* (1988) narrates an ambivalent return to the artist's father's hometown in China, where Fung feels like a perpetual outsider, locked out of both language and culture—countering grand narratives of a diasporic “homeland” that would, despite distance and difference, actually feel like home.

Rania Ho also cultivates looser forms of “relationality” in performance works that document karaoke encounters between strangers and an intervention into a former site of artistic gathering, respectively. *You Kinda Had To Be There (Motel Cali)* (both works 2023) is a video documenting a 24-hour performance in Beijing in the mid-aughts. In *Roundabout*, the artist sprays water on the ground while walking in concentric circles to “decontaminate” the site of recently demolished artist studios in Beijing—a reference to Covid-19 sanitation practices and the city's disappearing artist communities. Other pieces perform subversive odes to pleasure. Candice Lin's included kinetic installation, *Lithium Sex Demon Workstation* (2023), for instance, highlights the speculative relationships between imaginary migrant workers in a Chinese lithium battery factory who rebel and become “sex demons,” while Jennifer Ling Datchuk showcases a neon wall sculpture and doormat that read “Love Yourself Longtime.” The latter puts in a self-care twist on the racist, subjugating line from Stanley Kubrick's *Full Metal Jacket* (1987).

While references to Glissant and his poetics of relation have become familiar within the context of contemporary art, they are perhaps less so to the kind of audience that the USC Pacific Asia Museum seeks most ardently to address: the local, intergenerational Asian American community. Indeed, PAM is one of the few art museums in the Greater Los Angeles area to cater specifically to this community (despite its architectural embodiment of staid Orientalist fantasies). The transposition of a Franco-Caribbean poetics of relation to a Chinese American context via the evocation of *gūanxi* constitutes a significant intervention into an oft-theorized terrain. This relationality/*gūanxi* framework constitutes the organizing force of an exhibition that highlights an elusive sense of a collective Chinese American identity—one that, in a challenge to its own representation, is forever shifting and in flux, defined through relation rather than ontology.

Without explicitly reflecting on US-China relations, or indeed either country's current political agendas, “Another Beautiful Country” situates itself firmly on the level of the diasporic individual/community rather than that of the nation-state, reminding us of the “diasporic subject[s] inability to fully identify with a single nationality.”<sup>2</sup> This shift in focus away from the “motherland” overcomes the always illusory origin stories that would trace us back to China, or a sense of national belonging that would situate us firmly as American. What emerges instead is a kind of grassroots collectivity, a hybrid child mapping out an emancipatory, if unsteady, new terrain—one grounded not in isolated quests for elusive origin myths or national identification, but in a speculative poetics of Chinese American *gūanxi*.

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> See Édouard Glissant, *Poétique de la relation* (Paris: Gallimard, 1990).

<sup>2</sup> Exhibition catalogue.

## ‘Another Beautiful Country’: USC Pacific Asia Museum exhibit explores work from the Chinese American artists

By Leah Schwartz, Pasadena Weekly Staff Writer 9 hrs ago



Candice Lin's artwork "Lithium Sex Demon Workstation" is featured in "Another Beautiful Country" at the USC Pacific Asia Museum. (Chris Mortenson/Staff)

USC Pacific Asia Museum's latest exhibition, "Another Beautiful Country: Moving Images by Chinese American Artists," welcomes visitors with a simple red doormat, just like one would see crossing into the threshold of a home or a Chinese business or restaurant, adorned with the phrase "love yourself long time."

Fashioned by Jennifer Ling Datchuk, the piece references the famous phrase originating from Stanley Kubrick's 1987 movie "Full Metal Jacket," in which a Vietnamese sex worker approaches a United States military serviceman saying, "Me love you long time." Datchuk takes this racist, exploitative phrase and turns it to encourage self-love and agency. The piece sets the tone for the ensuing artworks, which

challenge assumptions and stereotypes, creating dialogue around themes of identity, belonging, representation, and conventional notions of nationhood.

The exhibition features the work of Chinese American diasporic artists, including Patty Chang, Jennifer Ling Datchuk, Richard Fung, Rania Ho, Andrew Thomas Huang, Simon Leung, Candice Lin, Vivian Wenli Lin, Charlene Liu and Ken Lum. The artists represent various American backgrounds, including the United States, Trinidad and Canada.

“Another Beautiful Country” is curated by art historian Dr. Jenny Lin, an associate professor of critical studies in art and design and graduate director of curatorial practices at the University of Southern California. Lin’s extensive research on Chinese diasporic relations, her connection to Shanghai’s art scene and her multi-cultural background laid the groundwork for the project. Growing up half-Chinese in a cross-cultural household, the idea for the exhibit has “been brewing ever since I was a child, really,” she said.

The exhibition’s title is lifted from the Chinese translation of America, which means “beautiful country.” The title also has the same abbreviation as American-born Chinese, a term used colloquially in the United States.

“It’s this idea of thinking about either the artists themselves as immigrants or their parents or their grandparents who migrated to America and thought about this as a new start, a place of potential prosperity and opportunity for them and their families,” Lin said.

The second half of the title, “Moving Images by Chinese American,” refers to the cinematic focus of the exhibition. Many included works are video art pieces, films or “cinematic installations,” which Lin calls the large-scale movie-like sets in the exhibit. For example, artist Charlene Liu’s piece “China Palace” is a loose replica of her mother’s Chinese restaurant in a small Wisconsin town. The set includes Liu’s mother’s Chinese-style vases and Germanic folk art.

Similarly, artist Patty Chang’s three-minute two-channel video “Que Sera Sera” depicts Chang as she sings to her baby alongside her father’s deathbed, reflecting on the harsh reality but also the beauty of life’s ephemerality. The song “Que Sera Sera” was popularized in Alfred Hitchcock’s film “The Man Who Knew Too Much.” In the exhibit’s context, the song incorporates Spanish and Italian but is not grammatically correct in either case.

“The exhibition is very much about the mistranslations that can also occur across cultures and between languages, and the idea that even if we don’t get things perfect or pure, we should carry on to learn about each other’s cultures and share across cultures.”



More metaphorically, the title refers to the transnational movement of the artists themselves and the stories they have gathered about their families, passed down through generations.

“Many of the works are very moving, emotionally evocative and help foster empathy in the people who watch these stories,” Lin said. “The overall goal of the exhibition is to defy the stereotypes of Chinese Americans as one particular containable knowable entity and rather to show the richness, the diversity and the intersectionality of Chinese American artists and their works, and also to show a kind of shared humanity that’s shared across borders.”

The exhibit holds space for a wide swath of experiences and perspectives from artists “that have not necessarily had ample platforms for their works to be shown,” Lin said. “I am excited to celebrate their works and look at how contemporary Chinese American artists think about and bring in Chinese traditions into their work, address issues of family relations and immigrant stories of their parents, grandparents or, in some cases, themselves.”

**“Another Beautiful Country”**

**WHEN:** 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Wednesday to Sunday, through Sunday, April 21

**WHERE:** USC Pacific Asia Museum, 46 N. Los Robles Avenue, Pasadena

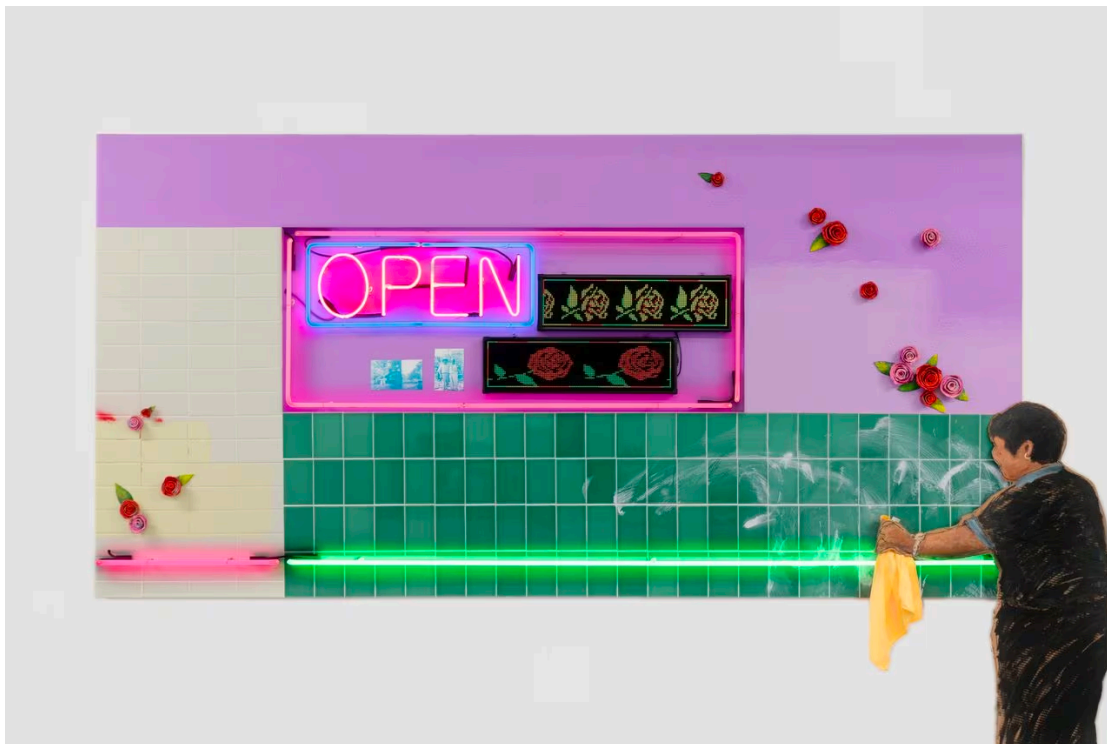
**COST:** \$15

**INFO:** [www.pacificasiamuseum.usc.edu](http://www.pacificasiamuseum.usc.edu)

## LIFE & CULTURE

# ‘Labor of Love’: 5 things to know about art show devoted to workers

Updated: Feb. 12, 2024, 9:47 a.m. | Published: Feb. 12, 2024, 7:00 a.m.



“Labor of Love” (2022) by Patrick Martinez and Jay Lynn Gomez. Stucco, neon, ceramic, acrylic paint, spray paint, latex house paint, family archive photos, ceramic tile and LED signs on panel; acrylic on cardboard, fabric; 60 x 120 inches. Courtesy of the artists and Charlie James Gallery, Los Angeles

**By Amy Wang | For The Oregonian/OregonLive**

We see the work but don’t always see the workers.

Landscaping. Clean homes and buildings. Farm produce and restaurant meals. Clothes and uniforms. Articles and artworks and governance and activism.

Hidden labor is the subject of “[Labor of Love](#),” a group exhibit that runs through April 27 at the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art at Portland State University. Eight artists, including three from Oregon, “seek to explore that which is often hidden just under the surface or kept at arm’s length: the physical, emotional, and intellectual labor that is vital to the smooth and ongoing function of innumerable aspects of our everyday lives,” curator Alexandra Terry wrote in her overview of the show.

Terry, curator of contemporary art at the New Mexico Museum of Art, will be in Portland March 7 for a panel discussion with several of the artists. Here are five things to know about “Labor of Love.”

## **1. The exhibit was inspired by [Jay Lynn Gomez](#)’s Hockney Series.**

In 2022, Maryanna Ramirez, director of the Schnitzer Museum at PSU, contacted Terry with an idea for an exhibit. Ramirez had seen Gomez’s 2013-14 paintings riffing on British artist [David Hockney](#)’s 1960s California Dreaming series. His “Beverly Hills Housewife” depicts an art collector gazing out from her home; Gomez’s “Beverly Hills Housekeeper” replaces the woman with a worker sweeping the floor. Hockney’s “A Bigger Splash” shows an empty outdoor pool; Gomez’s “No Splash” inserts a worker cleaning the pool.

Gomez's pieces prompted Ramirez to ponder hidden labor, according to Terry. For her part, Terry knew Gomez's work. She'd also recently seen a large piece that Gomez did with fellow California artist Patrick Martinez called "Labor of Love," showing a woman scrubbing a building wall. After a couple of conversations, the exhibit idea took off.



"The Names - State II" (2018) by Tannaz Farsi. Steel and powder coat, 60 x 240 x 2 inches. Mario Gallucci, courtesy of the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art at Portland State University

## 2. The exhibit embraces many kinds of labor.

"I felt like this was a really great opportunity to look at a broad scope of labor," Terry said.



Pieces by University of Oregon art professor [Tannaz Farsi](#) address cultural and intellectual labor. Her sculptural installation “The Names – State II” features the names of 88 Iranian women whose work in art, culture, writing and politics has often been stifled.

California artist [Alberto Lule](#) draws from his 13 years in prison to look at prison labor. Mexican artist [Tania Candiani](#)’s pieces focus on labor in the Caribbean. Oregon artist [Midori Hirose](#) presents a piece made of plastic waste, a byproduct of the global labor underlying our consumerism.

Other pieces represent landscaping and agricultural, domestic and restaurant work.



“Sunday Morning II” (2019) by Narsiso Martinez. Ink, gouache, and charcoal on produce box; 33 x 44 inches. Gerard Vuilleumier, courtesy of the Crocker Art Museum, gift of Anonymous, 2019.82

### 3. Compassion is a key part of the show's narrative.

Noting that the title piece is dedicated to Martinez's mother, who worked as a cleaner, Terry said she found it touching in its generosity, vulnerability and tenderness.

"I really wanted to work with artists who were making invisible issues visible, but also who do it with a sense of dedication and compassion for their subjects," she said.

With that in mind, she chose artists who were approaching their work either through the experience of people close to them or their own experience, like Mexican American artist [Narsiso Martinez](#), who put himself through art school with farm labor. "He has a real compassion for the folks that he's worked with," she said.

The show's title reflects "this sense of love and care for these people," she said.



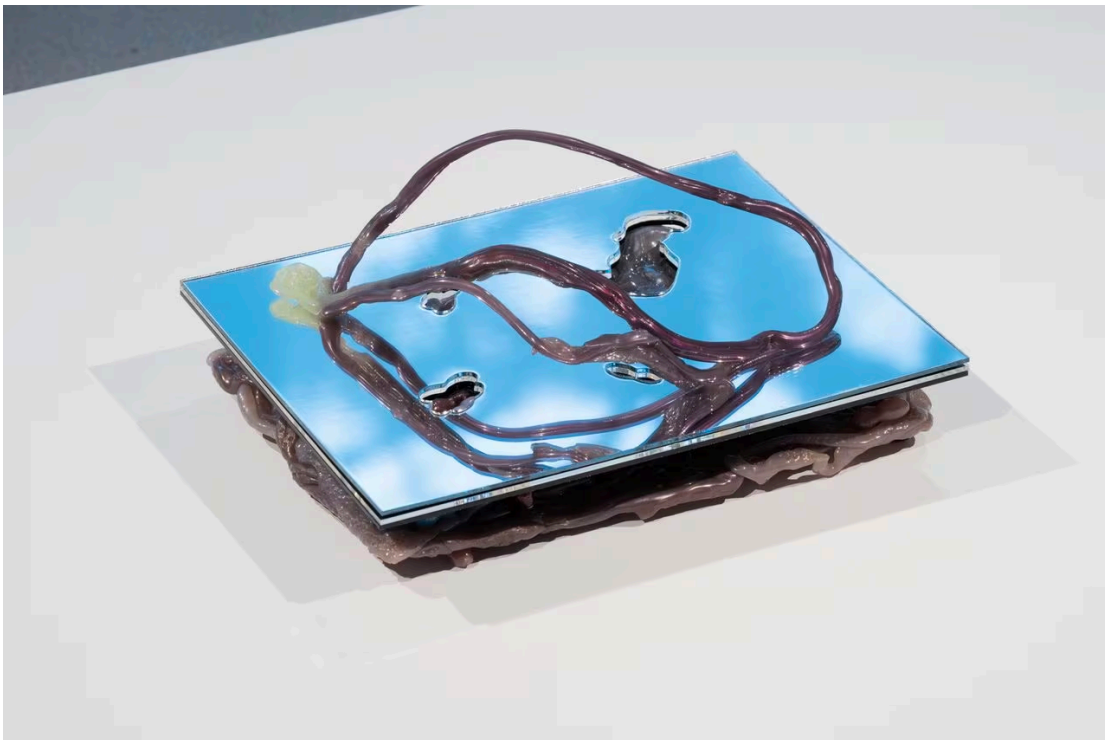
"China Palace" (2023) by Charlene Liu. Prints, cardboard, paper, ink, and paint; dimensions variable. Courtesy of the artist and Elizabeth Leach Gallery



#### 4. The placement of the pieces is as important as their content.

On the show's lower level, visitors will find Narsiso Martinez's farmworker pieces, done on produce boxes, alongside University of Oregon art professor [Charlene Liu](#)'s mixed-media piece "China Palace," an ode to the restaurant her family ran in Wisconsin.

"We often don't think about the steps that go into, all of the people who are involved in all of the incredibly physical labor that goes into making it possible for us to eat the food that we have," Terry said. Together, the Martinez and Liu pieces connect agricultural workers to kitchens and restaurants and grocery stores to the people who eat the food and often build a community around it, she said.



"Nut Here Rock Mirror 2" (2021) by Midori Hirose. Reconstituted refuse plastic; 17 x 12 x 6 inches. Mario Gallucci, courtesy of the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art at Portland State University

## **5. You don't need to bring any knowledge to the show beyond your own experience.**

Try to approach it as if you're having a conversation with the artists, Terry suggested. "What experiences are they presenting? Is there anything that you can relate to – have you had experience as a domestic worker, have you worked in the service industry? Do you know someone who is incarcerated?"

Terry said part of her goal in representing many types of labor was to make the show more accessible and relatable.

"I think that there's something in the show for everyone who has a concern about humanity and has a concern about how humans are being treated in different systemic complexes," she said.

## **If you go**

**What:** "Labor of Love"

**Where:** Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art at Portland State University, 1855 S.W. Broadway, Portland.

**When:** 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Tuesday-Wednesday and Friday-Saturday, 11 a.m.-7 p.m. Thursday, through April 27.



## Events:

- Gallery conversation with Jay Lynn Gomez: 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 20. Students from Portland State's [La Casa Latina Student Center](#) moderate a conversation with the artist.
- Guided tour: 1 p.m. Saturday, March 2 and April 6.
- Panel discussion: 5:30 p.m. Thursday, March 7. Curator Alexandra Terry moderates a conversation with artists Tannaz Farsi, Midori Hirose and Charlene Liu.
- Storytime: 11 a.m. Saturday, March 9 and April 13. Portland artist [Latoya Lovely](#) reads stories celebrating workers. For preschool through early elementary students with an adult.

**Admission:** Free

## New art museum exhibition delves into ‘Feminist Futures’



January 19, 2024 - 1:30pm

A new exhibition at the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art explores critical questions about artmaking, history, the future and feminist models of inquiry using works from the museum’s collection and UO faculty members.

“Artists, Constellations and Connections: Feminist Futures,” on view from Jan. 27 to June 17, features current work by University of Oregon studio art faculty members installed alongside and in conversation with works they have selected from the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art’s permanent collection.

“Feminist Futures” was organized by the art museum and seven members of the UO Department of Art as part of the 50th anniversary of the Center for the Study of Women in Society.

The participating women faculty members approached the exhibition as a collaborative and collective project. The works in the exhibition are conceived as a constellation of connections between peer artists responding in diverse ways to the moment and to relevant artists and artworks of the past.

“Selecting pieces from the JSMA collection enabled us to think about our work and feminism in relation to both the institution and a deeper history of artmaking,” said Laura Vandenburg, an art professor and director of the School of Art + Design in the UO’s College of Design.

Vandenburg said faculty members approached the search in individual ways.

“Some took it as an opportunity to explore and discover women artists represented in the JSMA collection, finding connections to our own practice,” she said. “For others, the selections provide an expanded context for the artist’s own work, engaging the past and complex cultural histories. Mixing the current work of art faculty and selections from the collection, we hope, allows for a richer constellation of resonances to emerge for viewers.”

The exhibition introduces an installation by art professor Tannaz Farsi that elaborates on the idea of historical artifacts beyond the status of a commodity; a self-portrait photography series by art professor Tarah Krajnak that sheds light on the censorship of multicultural women in photography; a collection of ornate brooches by jewelry designer and professor Anyia Kivarkis that replicates jewelry from representations in archived historical texts; and a large-scale installation by Vandenburg that grapples with themes of biological contingency.

Additional highlights include imaginative acrylic paintings of professor Charlene Liu’s culinary heritage, a ceramic sculpture inspired by an Otagaki Rengetsu poem and a 6-foot-tall cutout installation by professor Amanda Wojick.

Some of the artworks chosen from the museum’s collection, such as the Otagaki Rengetsu bowl, represent echoes and affinities with the faculty work and speak to the power of art to collapse time and space. Other selected artworks, such as the Edward Weston photograph, function as antagonists, as a catalyst to interrogate more inclusive and complex experiences.

“Artists, Constellations and Connections: Feminist Futures” is curated by Wojick, Liu, Stacy Jo Scott, Vandenburg, Krajnak, Farsi and Kivarkis from the UO Department of Art in consultation with museum curators Adriana Miramontes Olivas and Danielle Knapp.

[Events](#)

## 5 things to do this week: Lillian Pitt art show, ‘Lady Sings the Blues,’ and Fear No Music

Updated Apr 01, 2021; Posted Mar 31, 2021

By [Rosemarie Stein | The Oregonian/OregonLive](#)

Spring is a great time for art shows. Our list includes two that open this week, both of which can be seen in person. We’ve also found a jazz tribute night, a mini concert featuring Black composers, and the broadcast of Oregon Children’s Theater’s “The Journal of Ben Uchida: Citizen 13559” from March 2020.



Lattice by Charlene Liu. Photo courtesy of Elizabeth Leach Gallery

### Lattice

Charlene Liu explores mark-making and image-making in an exhibition of new work in watercolor and woodcut prints. The show focuses on floral imagery of wild gardens highlighted with jewel-toned graphic patterns. Liu is an associate professor and printmaking coordinator at the University of Oregon.

*Opens Thursday, April 1, continues 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Monday-Saturday (by appointment) through May 27, Elizabeth Leach Gallery, 417 N.W. Ninth Ave.; 503-224-0521; [www.elizabethleach.com](http://www.elizabethleach.com); free.*



Tacoma Art Museum

Home / TAM Blog / Curatorial / Object of the Week – “Swoops and Cyclone”

[Curatorial](#)

## Object of the Week – “Swoops and Cyclone”

[May 8, 2020 Michelle Reynolds](#)

Inspired by the natural landscape, diverse visual histories, and everyday surroundings, **Charlene Liu** creates mixed media works through an amalgam of printmaking, painting, and papermaking processes, alongside multimedia projects in video and installation.

By combining imagery drawn from cultural and natural references and deliberate choices in color and artistic technique, Liu creates work that pulses with energy as it explore themes of hybrid identities, translation, fragility, and heritage.



Charlene Liu. “Swoops and Cyclone,” 2012.  
Watercolor, handmade paper, and pigmented pulp.  
5 1/2 x 40 1/2 in. (130.8 x 102.9 cm). Tacoma Art  
Museum. Gift of Collect 21 NW.

Born in Taiwan and raised in the American Midwest, Charlene Liu currently lives and works out in Oregon. Liu has exhibited at Taylor de Cordoba Gallery (Los Angeles), Elizabeth Leach Gallery (Portland, OR), Shaheen Modern & Contemporary (Cleveland, OH), Galeria Il Capricorno (Venice, Italy), and Andrea Rosen Gallery 2 (New York). Her work has been reviewed in The Los Angeles Times, The Huffington Post, New American Paintings, The New York Times, and FlashArt International and is included in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art (New York), the New Museum (New York), and the Progressive Art Collection. Liu received her MFA from Columbia University in 2003 and a BA from Brandeis University in 1997. Charlene Liu is an Associate Professor of Art and the Printmaking Coordinator at the University of Oregon, Eugene.





## Charlene Liu

### Artist

#### PROFILE LOCATION

Eugene , OR

#### BIOGRAPHY

Born in Taiwan and raised in the American Midwest, Charlene Liu is an artist based in Oregon. Liu creates mixed media works and multiples on paper using printmaking, drawing, and papermaking processes, alongside multimedia projects in video and installation. She combines imagery

drawn from cultural references and the natural landscape to explore themes of hybridized identities, translation, and heritage. Her work has been exhibited widely and is included in private and public collections including the Museum of Modern Art, the New Museum, and the Tacoma Art Museum. Liu is an art professor and coordinator of the printmaking program at the University of Oregon, Eugene. She received a MFA in Visual Arts from Columbia University in New York and a BA from Brandeis University in Waltham, MA.

#### ARTIST STATEMENT

I design woodblock matrices that are modular and multiple, which are output via the CNC router and laser cutter. My approach to printing is a generative process, a series of unfolding steps through which meaning and form multiply, fragment, and reconfigure through the improvisational layering of iterative, offset and ghost impressions. My imagery combines visual motifs drawn from East Asian decorative objects, familial histories, and the landscapes of my surroundings. The blocks and resulting prints become a series of abstract and reductive visual codes that compress and elide diverse cultural and personal allusions. I explore cultural transmission, translation and hybrid subjectivities through multiplicity, abstraction, and color.

#### MEDIUM

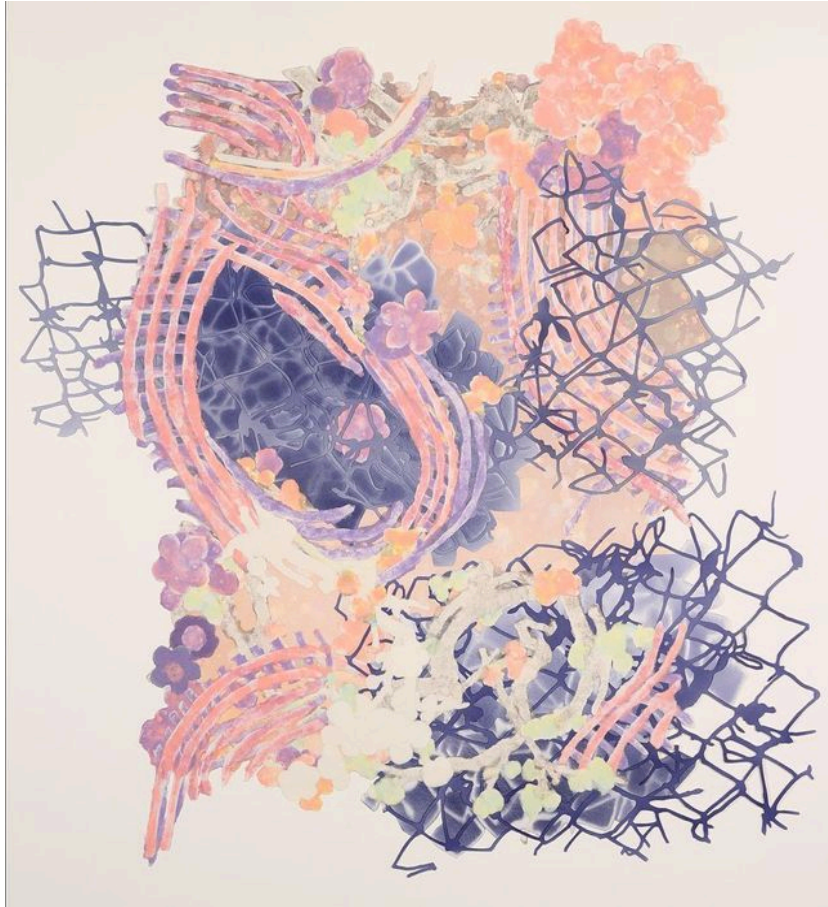
Mixed Media, Print / Paper

<https://www.luxcenter.org/artist/charlene-liu>

## CULTURE & ARTS

### Haiku Reviews

06/30/2012 10:20 am ET



CHARLENE LIU, *Comings and Goings*, 2012, Handmade paper, pigmented pulp, acrylic, 37 x 35 inches

**Charlene Liu** works with handmade paper, frequently lacing it with pigmented pulp. She fashions her deliciously textured material into interwoven arabesques, quavering grids, and, often enough, stylized flowers and other referential motifs. The motifs are as referential to decorative tropes - not least those of Liu's native Taiwan - as they are to actual flora. Liu's approach, in fact, collapses several art-historical phenomena, from Art Nouveau to the handmade-paper and handmade-book movements of the 1970s. Rather than seeming coy and dated, however, these buoyant, cleverly composed and sweetly hued confabulations generate a refreshing busyness, a summery kind of energy. (Taylor de Cordoba, 2660 S. La Cienega Blvd., LA; closed. [www.taylordecordoba.com](http://www.taylordecordoba.com)) - Peter Frank



CHARLENE LIU  
FORMING  
AND FORMLESS





I print, cut, paste, and refashion, combining the traditions and processes of printmaking, paper-making, and painting. In this past body of work, the landscape of the Pacific Northwest has been a strong influence; the hazy light and lush undergrowth create an environment that appears to be both forming and formless. In response, I explore those moments that elude definition and focus, abstracting directly from diminutive moments of growth or decay. This exterior landscape is merged with an interior reverie on the biographical and cultural, often through strategies of pattern, repetition, and appropriation of historical tropes and motifs. This continues my exploration of an ambivalent visual pastiche that speaks to an experience of acculturation and assimilation.

---

MFA, Columbia University, New York, New York, 2003  
Postbaccalaureate in painting, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts, 1998  
BA, summa cum laude with honors, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts, 1997

Associate head, Department of Art, and associate professor, printmaking coordinator, University of Oregon

2007–13: Assistant professor, printmaking coordinator, University of Oregon

Elizabeth Leach Gallery, Portland, Oregon, Shaheen Modern and Contemporary Art, Cleveland, Ohio, Galleria Il Capricorno, Venice Italy, Andrea Rosen Gallery 2, New York City, New York

*Ink This! Contemporary Print Arts in the Northwest*, Tacoma Art Museum, Washington

Reviewed in the *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Flash Art International*, *Huffington Post*, and *New American Paintings*

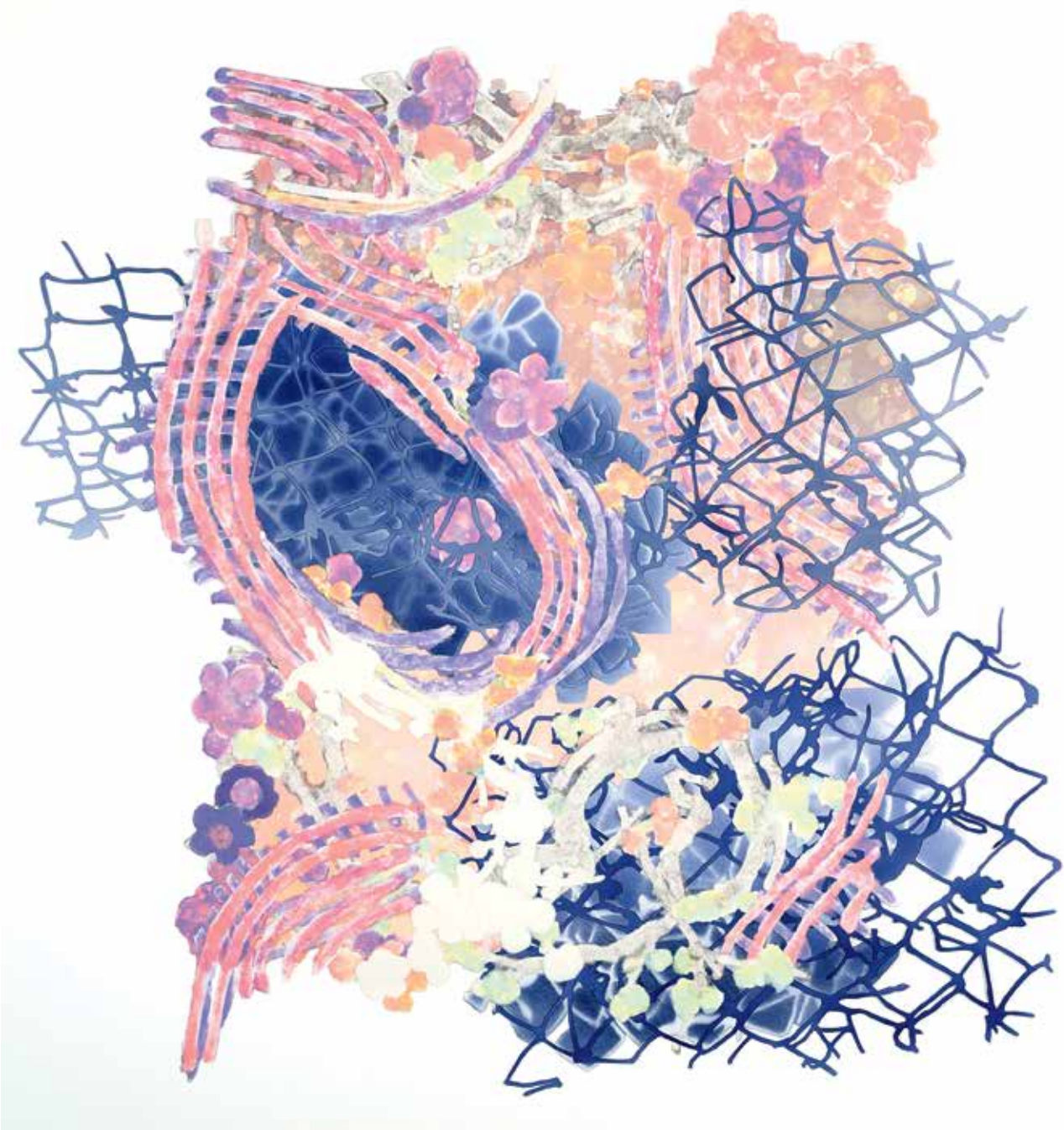
Work included in the New Museum (New York), Museum of Modern Art (New York), and Progressive Art Collection (Ohio)



**TITLE:** *Mother and Child*  
**MEDIA:** Screenprint, woodcut, acrylic collage on paper



TITLE: *Comings and Goings*  
MEDIA: Handmade paper, pigmented pulp, acrylic  
DIMENSIONS: 37" x 35"  
YEAR: 2012



■ [charlene-liu.com](http://charlene-liu.com)



## CHARLENE LIU'S TRIPLE THREAT AT TAYLOR DE CORDOBA

In her third solo show "Everywhere Close to Me" at [Taylor De Cordoba](#), [Charlene Liu](#) creates and mediates really special moments with her works on paper. Using delicate cutouts, overlapping and woven papers, and sculptural pigmented pulpy constructs, Liu creates a world that is both delicate and daring.

Continuing to experiment with and expand upon her works on paper, Liu mixes, introduces, and pits her soft, organic, handmade, pigmented pulp paper against sharp acrylic lacquered cutouts and flattened painted paper surfaces. Here, bold colors and hard edges interplay and mix with soft shapes and fluid lines.

(2012, May 9) - *Ellen C. Caldwell, Los Angeles Contributor*

# *The Asian Reporter*

June 21, 2010

## **Charlene Liu**

July 1-31, 10:30am-5:30pm (Tue-Sat); July 1, 6-9pm (reception); Elizabeth Leach Gallery (417 NW Ninth Ave, Portland). View "Fugue," an exhibit of mixed-media works on paper by Taiwan-born artist and University of Oregon assistant professor Charlene Liu featuring nature motifs explored through repetition and counterpoint. For info, call (503) 224-0521 or visit <[www.elizabethleach.com](http://www.elizabethleach.com)>.

## Shaheen gallery features Charlene Liu paintings

Published: Thursday, March 13, 2008, 11:00 AM Updated: Thursday, March 13, 2008, 11:58 AM



**John Kappes**

Local galleries are bustling with new shows. Among the highlights, **Shaheen Modern and Contemporary Art** is hosting a solo exhibition of exquisite works on paper by Taiwanese-born artist **Charlene Liu**.

Using a variety of media and processes -- including watercolor, ink and woodblock printing -- Liu paints exceptionally detailed works that sometimes resemble landscapes and other times become abstract and highly decorative.

Merging Eastern and Western traditional painting techniques, she uses plants and floral imagery to create organic compositions that pulsate with energy.

Liu has exhibited widely in the United States and Europe since earning a master of fine arts degree from Columbia University in 2003. This is her first show in the Midwest.

Shaheen Modern and Contemporary Art is at 740 W. Superior Ave. in Cleveland. The show is up through Friday, April 11. Call 216-830-8888 or go to **[www.shaheengallery.com](http://www.shaheengallery.com)**.

Over in Cleveland's Tremont neighborhood, a new two-person show, "Ivelisse Jimenez and Lorri Ott: Description Without a Place," was set to open during the blizzard last week but will now kick off from 6 to 9 p.m. Friday at **Exit (a gallery space)**. The show is up through Saturday, April 26.

Both artists explore the idea of applying painterly sensibilities to three-dimensional constructions using a



Shaheen Modern and  
Contemporary Art

### ART MATTERS

Energy source: New mixed-media works on paper by Taiwanese-born artist Charlene Liu, who lives and works in Eugene, Ore., are featured in the exhibition "Charlene Liu: Recent Paintings" at Shaheen Modern and Contemporary Art in downtown Cleveland.



# Cleveland Scene

April 02, 2008 [Arts](#) » [Visual Art](#)

## Capsule reviews of current area art exhibitions.

NEW

**Exurbs: A Collected Environment** — In this three-artist show, Laura Sanders, Dana Oldfather, and Susan Danko exhibit stylistically varied paintings loosely united by themes and settings exploring mindscapes as well as landscapes. In her "Heads Above Water" series, Columbus artist Sanders paints realistic pictures of children and adolescents swimming outdoors. This subject matter may sound suspiciously precious, but her paintings express a sense of isolation rarely found in images of youngsters. The children fight to stay afloat, gasping for breath as their faces break through the water's surface. In her larger works, Sanders groups boys and girls wading together, but the children aren't playing with one another. Instead, they gaze off into the distance or rub the water out of their eyes. Curiously, in some paintings Sanders includes muskrats swimming alongside the children. These semiaquatic creatures are at home in wetlands; positioning the effortlessly swimming animals next to the struggling children serves as a reminder that these humans don't belong in the water. Self-taught Cleveland painter Oldfather presents a series of prints and paintings starring a sketchily outlined female figure navigating an imagined world of miasmic, abstracted backgrounds. Titles such as "We're Going," "The Long Commute," and "Glide" reinforce her works' sense of journey. Cleveland Institute of Art graduate Susan Danko's flatly painted acrylic works resemble backgrounds from animated fairy tales. The highly patterned forest scenes forgo atmospheric perspective; the layered shapes representing trees, rocks, and shrubbery recede as they go higher up the canvas. *Through April 26 at The Bonfoey Gallery, 1710 Euclid Ave., Cleveland, 216-621-0178, [www.bonfoey.com](http://www.bonfoey.com).* — Theresa Bembnister

ONGOING

**Charlene Liu: Recent Paintings** — It's difficult to tell by looking, but Charlene Liu's works on paper are an amalgamation of drawing, painting, and printmaking. She uses a process called "chin colle," which involves attaching two pieces of paper together through the pressure of the printing press. Highly detailed and fantastical, Liu's depictions of plant life appear to be drawn from a mishmash of sources — a saltwater fish tank, a desert landscape, a forest floor — and assembled into a single organic entity. Although strikingly beautiful, Liu's work is infused with a sense of putrefaction and spoil. The wet-on-wet painting effect she employs produces circular forms that are surrounded by darker rings of color and resemble spores of fungi or bacteria. Her palette is that of organic matter in decay — mossy greens, bruise-hued purples and blues, and the golden and brassy hues of autumn leaves. Liu's mixed-media work serves as a reminder that things are most precious to us when they are almost gone or in the process of fading away. Unfortunately, there's a little too much white wall left between the separate pieces in this exhibition. Artwork that encourages such intense study and close observation could make room for the addition of another piece or two. But what is on the walls is spectacular and quietly explosive. *Through April 11 at Shaheen Modern and Contemporary Art, 740 W. Superior Ave., Ste. 101, Cleveland, 216-830-8888.* — Bembnister

**Let All God's People Say Amen** — For five years, Cleveland State University Urban Studies Professor Helen Liggett photographed the faithful members of Morning Star Baptist Church on Shaker Boulevard. The resulting series of more than 100 black-and-white photographs has none of the academic distance or analytical coolness you might expect from a scholar whose expertise includes urban planning and theory. Liggett's unposed photos are like snapshots from the congregation's scrapbook, tenderly capturing the commitment these churchgoers have to their faith and to each other, and — judging from the subjects' lack of consciousness of the camera — their trust in the photographer. Although the installation is at times distracting — the pictures without a foam-core backing are beginning to warp — this exhibition provides an intimate look at the worship and ministries of Morning Star. Liggett organizes the photos loosely by theme — singing women on one wall, young-adult mentoring on another — and artfully arranges them in patterns often reminiscent of a cross. The most successful grouping is displayed near the gallery entrance, where Liggett focuses on the parishioners' hands: calmly folded, clutched one in another, waving a fan, held high in worship, clapping. The emotion expressed in these photographs disputes the old adage that the eyes are the windows to the soul. *Through April 5 at Heights Arts Studio, 2340 Lee Rd., Cleveland Hts., 216-371-3344.* — Bembnister

**Sam Taylor-Wood** — If there's one point British artist Sam Taylor-Wood makes in this bold, searingly honest photo-and-video show, it's that everything is always in flux. And that includes people, a message Taylor-Wood proclaims with large photo-portraits of crying Hollywood alpha males. Onscreen, all are men of steel, but here we see tender sides, and the contrasts are both surprising and touching. Doubly fascinating: No two sadnesses are alike. Laurence Fishburne stares stoically, ignoring the tears dripping down his face. Daniel Craig, meanwhile, seems disturbed, as if witnessing something painful, while Hayden Christensen, aka Darth Vader, appears bitterly remorseful. Taylor-Wood herself is the principal character in several more pieces. In five photos called "Bram Stoker's Chair," the artist is seen balancing impossibly atop a wooden chair, gracefully defying gravity. They're haunting, balletic images, with her shadows dancing on the wall behind her. The truth in each is the same: She's flying now, but pain is just ahead. But nothing conveys flux more neatly than Taylor-Wood's "Still Life." In this time-lapse video, a bowl



# Los Angeles Times

Los Angeles Times  
Friday September 21, 2007

AROUND THE GALLERIES  
by Leah Ollman



## Venturing to the edge of chaos

Charlene Liu's beautiful new works at Taylor De Cordoba are shot through with unease, ambiguity and the faintest whisper of danger. The show is the first in L.A. for the artist, who divides her time between New York and Eugene, Ore., but aspects of her style bring to mind others more familiar locally: Violet Hopkins and her camouflage watercolors and especially Kelly McLane and her mix of the bucolic and apocalyptic.

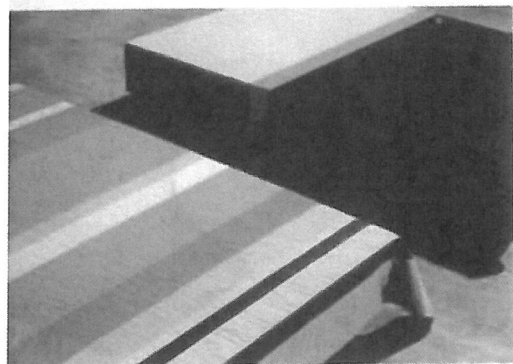
Liu revels in fluidity and flux. Her technique incorporates painterly washes and finely drawn line, collaged marbled papers and oil paint that appears to be printed rather than brushed on the page. Her imagery oscillates between recognizable (plants, rocks, animals, human limbs) and a dreamlike tempest of color, motion and change. Lyricism borders on chaos but never quite crosses over.

The most compelling pieces are those in which Liu flirts most daringly with that edge. In "Bramble Drift," soft, spiny, spore-like forms tumble across a vaguely aquatic teal and pale mint landscape. In the background, like a faded but troubling memory, stand posts askew and a structure in ruins.

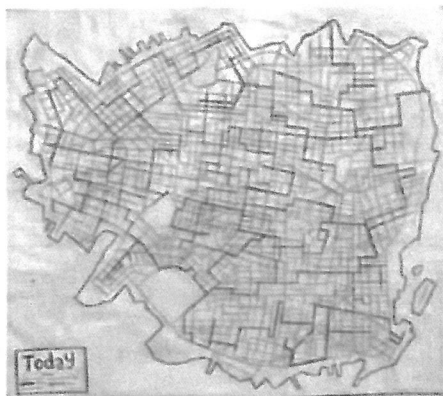
The gorgeous "Flying Guillotine" has nearly manic ebullience, all the more impressive because the image features no blades, no weapons, merely a pomegranate branch laden with fruit. In a centrifugal burst of gold, brick, blood and charcoal, the pomegranates spill their seeds and Liu demonstrates how much energy can be pumped from the simplest subjects and the vaguest suggestions.

Taylor De Cordoba, 2660 S. La Cienega Blvd., (310) 559-9156, through Oct. 13. Closed Sundays and Mondays. [www.taylordecordoba.com](http://www.taylordecordoba.com)

## REVIEWS



ANNA VON MERTENS, *West and East* (detail), 2003. Hand-dyed, hand-stitched cotton, mattress frame, plywood, and laminate, 43 x 152 x 203 cm. Photo: Jean-Michelle Addor.



SIMON EVANS, *Today*, 2002. Mixed media on paper, 96 x 89 cm.

victed of violent crimes and later exonerated by DNA evidence. Fifteen of the resulting forty-five portraits were exhibited at P.S.1, accompanied by an absorbing catalogue and a video of interview footage.

Most of the subjects stand still, looking steadily at the camera with a mix of anger and wariness as they pose in locations related to their crimes or alibis. One man lies under a filthy mattress in a seedy motel where the police found him; others appear in front of the rundown stores where they were arrested. Beauty competes with tragedy in photos of a man seated in a field of what look like brilliant red and orange flowers, but which are actually broken targets at a skeet range. The more chilling scenes are those where crimes took place, like the shrubby riverbank illuminated solely by truck headlights or the flooded wood behind some houses.

By photographing her subjects in a quiet setting, usually alone or with a person related to their case, Simon extends the isolation of prison into the men's free lives. The men, with their similar poses and expressions, become icons of injustice who are only really understood as individuals in the videotaped footage. Here, emotions rush to the surface as they struggle to comprehend what has happened to them and the difficulty of finding a way forward. When he was in prison, Marvin Anderson explains, "I used to make myself look at the world as being total darkness and me being the only person in it." Anderson and the others fought for and won their freedom, but in the eye of Simon's camera and a mistrustful society, many are still pretty much on their own.

Merrily Kerr

## NEW YORK

CHARLENE LIU

ANDREA ROSEN

Recent Columbia art school graduate Charlene Liu's first solo exhibition consisted of six unframed watercolor and mixed-media works on paper. The first thing I noticed were two neatly painted motorcycles on the piece facing the doorway. Their riders steer up a scantily rendered beach, away from the water and towards a dirt road through summery underbrush. Dreamy flowers rise above the water and are reflected in the gentle waves. An over-scale bust of a young Asian woman contemplates the scene. Sketchy mountains and buildings comprise a pleasing background, but there are some explosions to the back left on the horizon. Similar explosions appear on most of the other works as well. Several of them include bursts of kaleidoscopic flowers, and the sulking young woman, presumably Ms. Liu, is present throughout.

The largest work in the show, *Dawn breaks silent, she takes her leave*, 4 by 18 feet, engages the same vocabulary as well as a few carefully executed emblematic floral designs, which are somewhat incongruous with the other elements, but which add to the overall pastiche of images and motifs collaged together to create a wistful narrative landscape with an unreal feeling of time and place — like a dream or memory. The artist describes a journey through a paradise lost, or in

grave peril anyway. The unexplained explosions disrupt her reverie with understated foreboding, acting merely as pretty abstract patterns encroaching on our senses from far away. Her brushwork meanders from casually delicate to graphically ornate over expanses of untouched vellum. Ms. Liu's methodology borrows from illustrational devices that in most cases rely on skillful draftsmanship. She is more concerned with communicating a candy coated environmental warning, or perhaps it's an intrapersonal metaphor advising us that our sunny day is about to end.

Christopher Chambers

## LOS ANGELES

CATHERINE GFELLER

RUTH BACHOFNER

Urban environments can be beautiful even as they structure public life. Many cities have common areas planned with that in mind: pedestrian-filled open plazas, wide streets lined with stately buildings, grand bridges spanning rivers. Even if one has never been to big cities like Paris or New York, such scenes feel familiar.

Swiss artist Catherine Gfeller's photographic snippets of New York and Paris capture that sense of the awe-inspiring yet commonplace. Gfeller collages multiple images to create panoramas that are both seamless and disjointed. Implied lines from careful juxtapositions and the overlapping of translucent layers unite them. The effect is like looking through a kaleidoscope. Some panoramas, like *Est-Oest* — a sequence of close-ups of an ornate building's exterior — are filmic in their horizontal arrangement. Others are grid-like and tall. Gfeller's complex process involves etching photographs onto a single sheet of watercolor paper. Her aim is "to obtain subtle colors, as if the paper could absorb the noise and chaos of the city."

In *Est-Oest* in particular, the result is stunning. From left to right across a roughly one-foot by six-foot panel, colors shift from cool to warm. The building glows against a dusk-blue sky as golden light spills from its windows onto the reflective street below. Although one can pick out details like statues and street lamps, the effect is more abstract than literal. Other assemblages, like *Multi-Voices* or *Cultes*, offer similarly shifting perspectives but present distinctly different moods — in part because they vary from vibrant to almost monochromatic. *Multi-Voices* captures the excitement of wandering around a foreign metropolis crowded with people and colorful signage. *Cultes*, on the other hand, is stark: stairs climb a building's façade, with people forming dark clusters against white marble.

Public spaces in the best sense create harmony while offering privacy in anonymity. Gfeller's metropolis isn't formed by gritty reality, but rather an ideal of what exists. Ultimately, this defines the city both in what we see, and what we dream it can be.

Anne Martens