USC Pacific Asia Museum

We Are Here: Contemporary Art and Asian Voices in Los Angeles

March 13 – June 14, 2020

About the Exhibition / *We Are Here: Contemporary Art and Asian Voices in Los Angeles* brings attention to the dynamic voices in our diverse metropolis that extend viewers' knowledge and understanding of the Asia Pacific region. The exhibition highlights seven female contemporary artists of diverse Asian Pacific heritages living and working in Los Angeles. These artists engage with and draw from their lives and family histories to create compelling works of art that invite visitors to think about their own experiences and heritage. Interwoven in their works are personal and universal narratives that give voice to the plural community we call home. This show seeks to inspire visitors to discover connections across boundaries and see that Asian art is expansive and complicated.

Exhibited Artworks / *We Are Here: Contemporary Art and Asian Voices in Los Angeles* places the art and voices of the exhibited artists as the central themes leading the visitor through the galleries. Organization of the exhibition will be by artist, with their words accompanying their images. A variety of media will be represented in the exhibition, including painting, photography, and video. Artists' videos will be projected onto walls in the gallery space. Throughout the galleries, small screens will present short mini documentaries about each artist and will be produced by the USC Pacific Asia Museum.

Exhibition Artists / Each of the exhibited artists is actively engaged with developing artworks that address complex themes in a variety of media:

- **Reanne Estrada** is an artist with a happily schizophrenic practice. She uses performance and object-making to examine the unstable nature of identity and the fragility of the body. Estrada often collaborates with other artists to create performance events that investigate cultural and gendered meaning in contemporary society.

- **Phung Huynh** draws from her heritage of survival and migration as a refugee from the Vietnam War. Her paintings investigate the shifting notions of cultural identity in an American setting. The work she is producing for We Are Here examines the experience of Cambodian and Vietnamese refugees in Southern California.

- **Ann Le** uses her work as a way to explore her family's history within the larger context of war. She excavates her lineage by revisiting her family's experiences. Using archived family photos and stories, Le's works are layers of images, building upon each other, often touching on emigration, history, family, and memory.

- **Ahree Lee** looks to the past and across distances to investigate what constitutes individual or collective identity in an increasingly diasporic, culturally alienated and fractured world. Her video and mixed media work reveals hidden narratives and patterns embedded in identity, gender expectations, community, family and culture.

- **Kaoru Mansour** grew up surrounded by nature and continues to look to the natural world in her paintings. She tinkers with materials and images to create compositions and surfaces that are both sensuous and irreverent, personal and universal.

- **Mei Xian Qiu** draws from her personal history to reconstruct the unknown, fantastical notions of culture, self-invented and revelatory and iconic. This type of flexible self-view and easy piercings of notions of the impermeable interior self, are in keeping with the new contemporary landscape of commonplace transience and a growing global monoculture.

- **Sichong Xie** utilizes performance, video, and installation to explore her identity and place in the world as an expatriate Chinese citizen. She investigates sculptural forms and movements within global communities to reconsider and re-envision shared spaces and performative practices.

https://pacificasiamuseum.usc.edu/exhibitions/upcoming/