



Over the Influence Presents

Cha Yuree

Safe Spaces

27 May to 30 June 2023



Cha Yuree, *Drizzle*, 2023, Acrylic on canvas, 101.6 by 101.6 cm, 40 by 40 in, Photo courtesy of the Artist and Over the Influence

Over the Influence is delighted to present LA-based artist Cha Yuree's second solo exhibition with the gallery and her first in Asia, *Safe Spaces*. The exhibition opens on 27 May and will remain on view through 30 June, 2023.

If Cha's last exhibition embraced an ecstatic movement out of the self toward connection and communion with nature, then this exhibition attends to the opposite, the process of going inward to cultivate presence and attention. The paintings presented here give physical form to cerebral or internal experiences, capturing moments of reflection, reverie, and rest. There's a sense of intimacy and serenity in the scenes that begets the impression of witnessing something private and profound, a rare glance into another's secret world.

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Soft pastels, seafoam green, petal pink, and lilac, replace Cha's signature super-saturated palette, lending the works a dreamy, chimeric quality. An effect further emphasized by her skillful approach to light and shade and her talent for imbuing objects with a luminescence that seemingly emanates from within. The snow glows, pearls glisten, morning dew flickers, and cheeks burn peach pink. Following light's correlation with epiphany, the possibility for emotional and intellectual illumination brought forth by attention abound, manifesting in forms as various as fireflies and fruit rinds.

While many of the characters have appeared elsewhere in Cha's oeuvre, here, the natural elements, beta fish, chamoe melons, and raindrops, are rendered mirror-like, catalysts for reflection and recognition rather than invitations to mingle and merge. In *Drip, dop* beads of water holding squirming salmon collect on a woman's forehead as if as new ideas themselves, and like the golden orbs that float through the silhouetted woman in *Lightning Bug*. In *Drizzle*, a woman contemplates the intricate veins of a felled leaf flat to her face, and in *Face to Face*, the figure considers her reflection in both the glassy eyes of the beta fish and its iridescent tank.

Doubling occurs throughout the exhibition as repetition, symmetry, and reflection, reiterating themes of introspection and imagination and throwing the illusion of perception into stark relief. Far from being the faithful reproductions we regard them as, surface appearances often distort and disorganize reality and always belie the depth of empirical experience. Not unlike the way the simplicity of preparing a meal or sitting among the flowers obscures the abundance of possibilities for meaning and sensation these acts can furnish. An apple stripped to its twin seeds, a pearl at the center of an oyster, and mushrooms sprouting from mold, gesture to what exists beneath the observable veneer. A juxtaposition both exposed and enacted by the tension between the artist's flat, graphic style and the complexity of her subject's interior worlds. To understand it as such, is to see how Cha's women are engaged in something far more robust than their static poses could possibly convey and perhaps more fluid than the rigidity demanded by the roles they're forced to perform.

When Cha reflects on the moments in her daily life that bring the greatest sense of fulfillment and peace, she references the times she's allowed herself to be captivated by what was around her and held space for it to have an impact. "Taking the time to watch the clouds change or to just lay in the grass. I always remember those moments afterward as something special or in some way important," explains Cha. Though a different landscape surrounds each figure, they appear suspended in a similar state of attention, enthralled by a seemingly ordinary occurrence.

Memorializing these commonplace moments in paint reconstitutes their value, granting permission and encouraging imitation. Calling others to, yes, sit amongst the trees! Stand before the ocean!



In this way, the paintings serve as a form of wish fulfillment. A reminder to the artist to spend more time with the grass and the clouds, but also as a wish for the women around her and the generations of women in her family who were unwilling or unable to pause and take pleasure in the act of slicing a melon or watching the wind play with the fall foliage. Nods to Cha's grandmother's career in a fish factory as a means of supporting her newly immigrated family and her mother's habit of leaving the dinner table early to prepare fruit for her children for dessert point to the difficulty of balancing obligation and worry with presence and sensation. And simultaneously incite questions about who can afford to indulge in such luxuries as rest and reverie.

To this end, contemplating any of the fifteen paintings in *Safe Spaces* offers a similarly meditative experience with rewards as rich as self-reflection and as revitalizing as revelation. Transforming the metaphorical wish into the offer of a gift for anyone willing to stop and take a look. —*Tara Anne Dalbow*

**Artist Bio**

Cha Yuree (b. 1991) is a Korean American artist based in Los Angeles. With her use of saturated colors and graphic shapes, she portrays moments influenced by the asian diaspora, as well as taking inspiration from the stories of her grandmothers. She paints predominantly with acrylic and digitally. Through her color stories, she shares the vividness of these moments.

Exhibition Dates

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Location

Over the Influence Hong Kong
52 Wyndham Street, Central
Hong Kong

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