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**PEARL RIVER MART GALLERY PRESENTS  
'SPIRIT DREAMS: WHERE ANCESTORS COME TO SPEAK'**

*Stunning portraits from a Korean American artist  
explore Korean shamanism in the context of family and identity*



New York, NY — Sept. 18, 2023 — Recently, Korean American artist Julia Chon made an interesting discovery about her family. Her great-aunt — her grandfather's sister — practiced shamanism. "She wasn't a *mudang* — the actual shaman — but she would consult them," Ms. Chon said. "She held that belief system." The artist's solo show, "Spirit Dreams: Where Ancestors Come to Speak," explores the themes of Korean shamanism and how it relates to her own ancestors, family, and identity.

In Korea, shamanism has existed long before Buddhism and Christianity. The shaman, or *mudang*, acts as a bridge between the spirit and earthly worlds. Often deceased ancestors, the spirits are equally likely to bring mishap as they are good fortune. A *mudang* is brought in to determine who the spirit is and to calm it. Through a ceremony called *kut*, they try to create peace and balance between the spirit and the affected.

Through her portraits, Ms. Chon strives to do the same. Of a stunning piece of a figure surrounded by frightening-looking creatures, she writes:

Who exists between time and space  
Who comes to me in my dreams

"Julia Chon is an artist talented and accomplished beyond her years," said Joanne Kwong, president of Pearl River Mart. "Her work is stylishly contemporary yet warm and intimately personal. She elevates her subjects yet remains true to them. I love that she's delving into a topic that's not well known and interweaves spirituality, family, and art. Julia is an artist that I am excited to closely follow in the years ahead."

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SPIRIT DREAMS explores the interweaving of ancestry and diaspora, the past and the present, traditions and contemporary life. In the way that the *mudang* acts as a bridge between the spiritual and mundane so Ms. Chon's work connects generations across space and time.

“Spirit Dreams” is on view in the Pearl River Mart Gallery from Sept. 21, 2023 through Jan. 21, 2024. An [opening reception](#) will be held Sept. 21 from 6 to 8 PM. Free and open to the public during business hours.

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### About the Artist

**Julia Chon**, better known by her artist name Kimchi Juice, is a Washington DC-based artist and muralist. Chon’s work explores the relationship between cultural tradition and its effects on generational identity and the decisions Asian Americans make to form their identities. With a prominent Korean aesthetic in each piece, Chon merges her ancestry and traditions with the contemporary to convey the nuances of the Korean diaspora.

As Chon’s work makes its way from canvas to large-scale murals, these intimate portraits take center stage in an urban environment. Her murals can be found internationally and her work has been exhibited in solo and group shows in Washington DC, Los Angeles, CA and Miami, FL. Chon’s clients and collaborations include NASA, Apple, the Korean Cultural Center, and the Phillips Collection, among others. Chon was featured in the HBO docuseries “Take Out with Lisa Ling.”

### About Pearl River Mart

Celebrating its 52nd anniversary, **Pearl River Mart** was founded as a “friendship store” in 1971. The iconic Asian emporium has locations in New York City’s SoHo district and the popular Chelsea Market with both a retail outlet and Pearl River Mart Foods. From home furnishings to fashion to snacks and everything in between, the store features one-of-a-kind items imported from Asia, as well as innovative merchandise designed and created by Asian Americans. A beloved destination for people from all over the globe, Pearl River has become symbolic of the uniqueness, authenticity, and multiculturalism of New York City. Visit [www.PearlRiver.com](http://www.PearlRiver.com) and follow on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) or [Twitter](#).

### About the Pearl River Mart Gallery

The Pearl River Mart gallery features curated exhibitions with local artists from a variety of disciplines and backgrounds. Previous artists include: sculptor Warren King; *New Yorker* magazine cartoonists Amy Hwang, Jeremy Nguyen, Suerynn Lee, Evan Hahn, and more; photographers Louis Chan, Hiroyuki Ito, and Corky Lee; painters Arlan Huang and Kam Mak; illustrators Sammy Yuen, Nancy Pappas, Jerry Ma, Yumi Sakugawa, and Felicia Liang; and multimedia artists Wienna Lin, Ben Sloat, and Xin Song.

Recent exhibitions include “Just Between Us: From the Archives of Arlan Huang” curated by Danielle Wu and Howie Chen; “Our Roots Run Deep: Finding Home in Chinatown” by Warren King; “Drawn Together: Stories of Resilience

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and Renewal in NYC Chinatown” by Sammy Yuen; “Soft Solidarity (SoS): Uniting to Protect, Empower, and Heal,” a group show of AAPI women artists; “Heartmind: Portraits from the Bob Eng Lee and Asian American Arts Centre Collections,” presented in collaboration with nonprofit arts organization Think!Chinatown; “Corky Lee on My Mind: A Photographic Tribute,” dedicated to the legendary photographer and activist Corky Lee (1947–2021).