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**PEARL RIVER MART GALLERY PRESENTS  
'REUNION: FOOD AS CULTURE, COMMUNITY, AND COMING HOME'**

*A food photography exhibit that goes beyond a pretty dish  
and tells the unique stories of six AAPI artists*

New York, NY — Jan. 18, 2024 — Which one of us hasn't drooled over a gorgeous food photo, whether on Instagram, a website, or in the glossy pages of a magazine? But what about the photographers behind the photos?

This exhibition celebrates that unsung hero, the food photographer, in particular those of AAPI descent. Curated by author and cook Christine Wong, **REUNION: Food as Culture, Community, and Coming Home**, features the stunning work of six prominent AAPI food photographers. Coming from variety of backgrounds — Korean, Chinese, Malaysian, and Indian — the artists' photos have appeared in Vogue, Cherry Bombe, Bon Appétit, The New York Times, Saveur, and more.

"The photographers I chose were based on how their images tell a story," says Christine. "The way they evoke a sense of beauty and nostalgia but also make people hungry."

"Christine is a woman of many talents," says Joanne Kwong, President of Pearl River Mart. "Chef, writer, photographer. She's also been part of the Pearl River family for many years and in a variety of roles. Product designer, creative manager, even fashion model! And now curator- and artist-in-residence. We love seeing her and the artists she's selected celebrate our community's deep obsession with food, including of course, taking pictures of food. Food, family, and homecoming are what Lunar New Year is about, and this show perfectly embodies those warm feelings. Plan what you're eating after because you're going to leave hungry!"

The exhibition explores the photographers' reasons for making it their life's mission to document that which brings sustenance, comfort, and connection to so many. It may be to capture the beauty of a perfectly served dish or the nostalgia of childhood favorite. To record festive occasions or everyday moments. To share a meal savored alone or enjoyed with many. To bring new knowledge or dispel old myths.

Photographing food may also be a way to discovery. Whether to a community of fellow shutterbugs, one's own culture and identity, or a place of pride and empowerment.

Both food and photographing it can lead to reunion — from gathering with loved ones over a Lunar New Year feast to returning to an estranged homeland to reconnecting with something that has been in you all along. Perhaps most of all it's about the future. Making sure these recipes, traditions, and sentiments persist beyond the present, for generations to come.

REUNION is on view from Feb. 1 through April 21, 2024. An [opening reception](#) will be held Feb. 1 from 6 to 8 PM. The event is free but [registration](#) is appreciated.

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### About the Artists

**Dan Ahn** — Dan is a partner and the director of operations for Kimbap Lab, a restaurant specializing in gluten-free Korean comfort foods. He is also a freelance food photographer and videographer who has worked with restaurants such as Atomix, Momofuku Ko, Jungsik, Jua, and more. His work has appeared in the Michelin Guide, World's 50 Best, Eater, The Infatuation, Vogue Magazine, Cherry Bombe Magazine, and other publications. (@danahn17)

**Ben Hon** — Ben is a Brooklyn-based food and travel photographer whose life revolves around two passions: food and people. Within the realm of gastronomy, he doesn't just capture the dish before him — he creates a visual narrative that celebrates both its artistic composition and the rich culinary tales that give it life. These narratives extend beyond ingredients to the creators of these dishes, be they chefs or restaurant proprietors.

While he initially embarked on his photographic journey in the realm of food, Ben's artistic lens has ventured far and wide, capturing behind-the-scenes moments and product stills for renowned culinary entities like The Food Network, Bon Appétit, and Beautiful Cuisines. His talents have also found synergy with prominent brands such as Google, Remy Martin, Ben & Jerry's, and many others. (@stuffbeneats)

**Lily Morello** — A Malaysian Chinese American food blogger and game writer based in San Francisco, California, Lily enjoys making carbs look pretty and exploring connection through food. Her work is the creation and capturing of dishes that represent learning pride and appreciation for the things that made her feel resentful and alone in childhood. (@lilybubbletea)

**Sheil Shukla** — A board certified internal medicine physician with Northwestern Medicine in Illinois, Sheil is the creator behind @plantbasedartist on Instagram and the author of the vegan cookbook *Plant-Based India* (published August 2022) which was named one of The New York Times best cookbooks of 2022 and nominated for a James Beard Award. (@plantbasedartist)

**Christine Wong (Curator)** — An author, plant-based cook, and advocate for eco-friendly choices, Christine blends cultural representation with culinary expertise. Her upcoming book, *The Vibrant Hong Kong Table* (Chronicle Books, available for pre-order) reimagines 88 iconic dishes, preserving the rich cultural tapestry of her hometown, Hong Kong.

Christine's impactful works include *Living Without Plastic* (Artisan, 2020), co-authored with Plastic Oceans International, and *The Plantiful Plate* (Countryman Press, 2019), showcasing versatile, plant-forward recipes.

Through NYC's Chinatown, she celebrates Asian American culture through food and community. Among numerous press features, Christine has been on New York Live and the South China Morning Post. Her food photography has been featured in The New York Times, Thrillist, Fodor's, and Time Out New York. Christine is also honored to be a part of Pearl River Mart as their Creative Manager. (@conscious\_cooking)

**Jessie YuChen** — Jessie (she/they) is a food and lifestyle photographer based in Brooklyn, New York. Hailing from Taiwan, they create images to process personal experiences as a queer immigrant and explore others' vibrant stories. Jessie first picked up the camera to document their culinary work as a chef, and has since been in the world of image making as a director, photographer, and food stylist.

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Their editorial work has been published in Bon Appétit, The Food Network, and Saveur. They have worked with brands like Rémy Martin, Samsung, Chobani, Shake Shack, and many others. Jessie was nominated for the James Beard Foundation Journalism Award for a story on hot pot in 2023. (@thelescook)

### **About Pearl River Mart**

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 Julia Chon, Arlan Huang, Kam Mak; illustrators Sammy Yuen, Nancy Pappas, Jerry Ma, Yumi Sakugawa, and Felicia Liang; and multimedia artists Wiena Lin, Ben Sloat, and Xin Song.

Recent exhibitions include “Spirit Dreams: Where Ancestors Come to Speak” by Julia Chon; “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 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).