

Soft Solidarity (SoS)

May 18 - August 28, 2022

425 Broadway, NYC, NY 10013

aricoco

Joyce Yu-Jean Lee

Natalia Nakazawa

Lu Zhang

In the face of recent violence against Asian Americans and persistent anti-Asian sentiment in the United States during the on-going pandemic, how can a community unite and respond? “This is the most economically divided group in the country, a tenuous alliance of people with roots from South Asia to East Asia to the Pacific Islands, from tech millionaires to service industry laborers. How do we speak honestly about the Asian American condition — if such a thing exists?” writes author Cathy Park Hong in her book, *Minor Feelings: An Asian American Reckoning*.

How do we celebrate Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month this year?

In response to these questions, the group exhibition *Soft Solidarity*, displays female Asian American artists who share a common love for contemporary art and traditional craft. This show explores the sociological concept of **soft solidarity** in urban environments: “a form of loose boundedness that does not necessitate formal institutions but rather is always and only informally negotiated in situ. ... ‘soft solidarity’ makes collective life amongst co-present strangers possible — and sometimes even pleasurable,” writes sociologist Mervyn Horgan in his essay “Interaction, Indifference, Injustice: Elements of a Narrative Theory of Urban Solidarity.”

Curator Joyce Yu-Jean Lee, independent artist and Assistant Professor of Art and Digital Media at Marist College, has selected a group of Asian American women artists who share the pleasures of making art — art about the female body, domestic women’s labor, calling out colonialism, global trade histories, and sharing individual experiences as daughters of immigrants from Asia. Their work empowers females by reviving colorful cultural crafts from mothers and grandmothers, honoring lost loved ones in reflective memoriam, and celebrating organic feminine forms and textures — simultaneously soft yet strong.

The title of the exhibition when abbreviated to “SoS” is also a cry for help, a public call for citizens of New York City to stand in solidarity with Asian Americans against discrimination and hate crimes, and to support their safety and ability to thrive as strangers in our collective community.

Soft Solidarity spans two sites: at Pearl River Mart gallery in SoHo and the corridors of Chelsea Market in Manhattan. The show is on view in the SoHo gallery from May 18th through August 28th in Chelsea Market from May 14th through June 6th.

About the Artists

aricoco is interested in how human communities might form and thrive without centralized leadership and power privilege. She hand-sews and weaves protective garments for the female body in imaginary eusocial matriarchal communities that are characterized by cooperative brood care and division of labor. Her costumes, gas masks, and family “crests” reference traditional Japanese kimono and samurai fashion, and are inspired by the biologically-coded, altruistic characteristics of social insects within female-dominated insect collectives like ants, where a fertile Queen is dependent on sterile Workers for her existence while the colony depends on her for its reproduction.

Joyce Yu-Jean Lee's three-channel video *What It's Like, What It Is* is made in homage to the original video installation by Adrian Piper, a famous black female performance artist. Each screen displays words of various racial slurs that Asian Americans have been called by strangers, accompanied by their own words to rebut and reclaim their identity. These charged words represent the intangible ideas, perspectives, and expressions that can both collectively hurt and heal the Asian American community.

Contributor credits: Joanna Chan, Leland Cheuk, Jodie Lyn-Kee-Chow, Melissa Joseph, Anjor Khadilkar, Melissa Lau, Christine Lee, Sophia Ma, Zavé Martohardjono, Natalia Nakazawa, Grace Chiang Nicolette, Caitlin Taylor So, Jed Tai, Tiffany Trinh, Alexa Vallejo, Tracy Vo, Seldon Yuan






Natalia Nakazawa weaves tapestries and paints the silhouettes of historic masks and vessels that incorporate public domain images from the online archives of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Her vessels serve as a metaphor for the human body, both historical and contemporary, layering imagery that questions national identities and reframes the global trade of prized porcelain and exotic silk from the East to the West.

Lu Zhang's intimate ceramic works depict female body parts: a pair of hands taking a pulse, a long black braid on the back of an anonymous head, a pair of fiery red breasts and a miniature person in an inverted frog yoga pose suspended from the ceiling. Her whimsical sculptures draw viewers in to examine how the female body is both characterized yet objectified and commodified in Asian American identity.


Price List

To inquire about purchasing pieces, please email angela@pearlriver.com

aricoco











	Sterile Worker	2020	Fabric, faux fur	Variable dimensions	Not for sale
	Error Maker	2022	Fabric, faux fur, plastic beads	Variable dimensions	Not for sale
	Forager	2021	Fabric, faux fur, vinyl, eggshell, aluminum sheet	Variable dimensions	Not for sale
	Crest for Powerless Queen	2018	Mixed media (faux fur, vinyl, fabric, chain)	19.5 inches in diameter	Not for sale
	Crest for Sterile Worker	2018	Mixed media (leather, vinyl, fabric, faux fur)	18 inches in diameter	\$100





Joyce Yu-Jean Lee

	What It's Like, What It Is	2022	2-channel video animation	18.75 x 12.75 x 1.25 inches each	Pricing: available upon request
---	----------------------------	------	---------------------------	----------------------------------	---------------------------------





Contributor credits: Joanna Chan, Leland Cheuk, Jodie Lyn-Kee-Chow, Melissa Joseph, Anjor Khadilkar, Melissa Lau, Christine Lee, Sophia Ma, Zavé Martohardjono, Natalia Nakazawa, Grace Chiang Nicolette, Caitlin Taylor So, Jed Tai, Tiffany Trinh, Alexa Vallejo, Tracy Vo, Seldon Yuan

Natalia Nakazawa

	Vessel 1	2021	Collage and watercolor on wood panel	12 x 9 inches	\$950
	Vessel 2	2021	Cotton fabric, watercolor, paper collage on wood panel	12 x 9 inches	\$950
	Vessel 3	2021	Linen, watercolor, paper collage on wood panel	12 x 9 inches	\$950
	Vessel 4	2021	Linen, watercolor, paper collage on wood panel	12 x 9 inches	\$950
	Vessel 5	2021	Watercolor and paper collage on wood panel	12 x 9 inches	\$950
	Vessel 6	2021	Watercolor and paper collage on wood panel	12 x 9 inches	\$950
	Vessel 7	2021	Collage and watercolor on wood panel	12 x 9 inches	\$950
	Vessel 8	2021	Linen, watercolor, paper collage on wood panel	12 x 9 inches	\$950
	Vessel 9	2021	Linen, watercolor, paper collage on wood panel	12 x 9 inches	\$950
	Vessel 10	2021	Collage and watercolor on wood panel	12 x 9 inches	\$950

	Vessel 11	2021	Collage and watercolor on wood panel	12 x 9 inches	\$950
	Vessel 12	2021	Acrylic and paper collage on wood panel	12 x 9 inches	\$950
	Vessel 13	2021	Cotton fabric, watercolor, paper collage on wood panel	12 x 9 inches	\$950
	Demons and Protectors: Say their names #GuiYingMa #ChristinaYunaLee #MichelleAlyssaGo	2022	Jacquard woven textile	53 x 71 inches	\$3,500

Lu Zhang

	Inverted Frog	2017	Ceramic, yarn	8 x 6 x 12 inches	\$1,800
	A Painter	2013	Ceramic, wire	15 x 18 x 36 inches	\$1,800
	Ba Mai	2017	Ceramic, Chinese medicine pillow	17 x 16 x 5 inches	\$1,280
	Fantasian (Flaming Boobs)	2017	Ceramic	10 x 6 x 6 inches	\$1,800