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*Gallery installation by DAI exhibitions curator Amy Varsek
Origami installation by Viann Nguyen-Feng and Mei Sun*

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like me, like you.



Duluth Art Institute
John Steffl Gallery
506 W Michigan St, 4th Floor, Duluth, MN 55802
December 16, 2021 – March 11, 2022

Cross the threshold, and be welcomed into the lives of Asian Pacific Islander Desi Americans (APIDA). We work quietly amongst you in government, education, business, the arts, medicine, and community activism.

Like Me, Like You gives us voice. Introducing ourselves, we build solidarity among us, awareness in the community around us, and equity for all of us. In doing so, together, we confront racism and resist anti-Asian hostility.

"Knowledge dissolves our arbitrary boundaries. Awareness dignifies our heritage. Come with an open heart. See us; get to know us."

—The Twin Ports APIDA Collective

Artist Biographies and Statements

Julia Cheng is on the leadership team of the Twin Ports APIDA Collective and is emeritus co-chair of Clayton Jackson McGhie Memorial Inc. She will graduate this year from the University of Minnesota Duluth's Labovitz School of Business and Economics with another bachelor's degree, in accounting. Before entering the financial services field, Julia worked as a photojournalist for 16 years in Massachusetts, California, and Minnesota. She directed greater Minnesota's largest Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program for eight years, training people from all walks of life to prepare tax returns for their neighbors and developing a passion for achieving social justice through economic empowerment. *Like Me, Like You* is the second state funded community arts project that Julia has organized in Duluth, after the Clayton Jackson McGhie centennial concert of March, 2020.



Father & Daughter, Laotian Dancers
Fitchburg, Mass.

Gicleé print from film negative
New England Press Association,
1st Place, portrait category, 2002

Kim Nordin was born in Seoul, adopted to Duluth as an infant, and now lives here with her son, Stone, and her partner. "I started Seoul and Stone, electroforming jewelry, in 2020. I love to search for agates, beach glass, and stones. I believe in the healing properties of stones and crystals and hope that my pieces bring their wearers energy to face the world. Reflecting on my identity as a Korean adoptee surviving a pandemic, I knew I needed to use a powerful stone [for TPAC's commission]. I chose labradorite for the ring and necklace. Often called a 'stone of transformation,' labradorite is said to heal from within, increase faith and trust, and protect against negativity and evil. The trauma I have experienced due to racism is something I'm working on healing, which takes faith in humankind and trust in my own ability to create change with my art, my words, and my actions."



Journey of the Seoul labradorite necklace
Release labradorite ring
Solace copper, keshi pearl, and fern leaf bracelet

Sharon Yung is a Minnesota-born Chinese American. "The podcast is a compilation of some amazing APIDA members in the Duluth community. They have stories that on a personal level are unique, but on a broader scale speak to all and help the listener discover that, like you, they are like me. I created these interviews to help the listener experience a variety of voices and find common ground with others—regardless of their race, gender, age or religion."



Stories from Within: A Common Voice
Interviews with Neil and Rajiv Vaidyanathan, Laura Judd, Eric Bohjanen, Julie Kim, and Romesh Lakhan (scan QR code at left)

The Gift of Great Fortune
Mother to daughter and daughter to mother
Beaded embroidery and framing design



Deu Ly is the mother of Pakou Ly, a founding member of TPAC and co-organizer of *Like Me, Like You*. A handcrafted outfit is part of the longstanding tradition that Hmong mothers gift to their daughters to wear for special occasions. Pakou wore this treasured outfit at the Hmong New Year celebration in St. Paul and was gifted it when she married in 2004. Below, Pakou arranges the outfit for the exhibit.



The outfit includes an ornate silver necklace and cross stitched sashes adorned with silver coins that jingle when you walk. These items are not included in this exhibit.

A Mother's Love

Cotton, organza, satin, polyester.
Personal collection of artist's daughter

Ribbon Tree

Branch and ribbons, with Laura Judd

Viann Nguyen-Feng [vee-anne win-fang] (she/her) identifies as Southeast Asian, born to Vietnam War refugees and a Navy Veteran. She grew up in Alexandria, Virginia, in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. Viann is a licensed psychologist and assistant professor in the Department of Psychology at the University of Minnesota, Duluth. She directs the Mind-Body Trauma Care Lab and serves as core faculty in the counseling/clinical masters program. Her contributions to the exhibition were conceptual in design and co-created with the Twin Ports APIDA community members and allies. Part II replicates TPAC's logo, which Viann also designed, in origami.



Like Me, Like You
Part I: photo collage
on canvases

Part II: color laser
prints of portraits,
folded into origami
canoes, frogs, cranes



Hospital Care I & II
Mayfield Heights, Ohio, 2004
Archival giclee prints, digital
photographs

"My father had a stroke in March of 2004. We knew then that our parents would never return to their homes in China."

Aya Kawaguchi received her BFA from Tokyo Zokei University in 1998 and MFA from Tokyo National University of Arts in 2000. She has exhibited in Honolulu, Minneapolis, Kansas City, Tokyo, Buenos Aires, San Francisco, Fukuoka, St. Petersburg, and Seoul. She received the 15th Holbein Scholarship Prize, the 2001 Art Fellowship by Junichi Shioda, and the Shiseido Co. Art Documents Support Program.

"I have concentrated on producing a number of series of paintings and drawings based on the idea of the relationship between the actual objective experience of looking at a scene and the subjective interpretation of the same scene. The simple definition of the word "scene" also includes both physical scenes as well as a psychological integration with 'harmonious nature.' This dualism became an important departing point for me to investigate and deconstruct my experience with specific scenes.

With my recent project, I have been using my photographs as an initial point of departure, to which I may add or subtract information. Through this repeated process of addition and subtraction, I try to transform an original photograph into a more personal and meaningful state.

Artwork for me has been my process of investigation to find my subjective experience with a landscape as well as my life as a whole."



Sugar Maple in Greenish Yellow (shown)
Birch Tree in Ruri Iro
Burr Oak in Kogecha
Mountain Ash in Shu, watercolors on paper
Untitled, acrylic on glass

Dahee Kim was born in Seoul, South Korea, and grew up in Minneapolis suburbs as a transnational/transracial adoptee into a white family. She is based in Duluth and Los Angeles. Her work deconstructs the narrative of international adoption through a personal lens. She explores ethnographic filmmaking practices that allow those represented on the screen to participate in shaping the way the frame is viewed. Her work has screened at the Austin Film Festival, Punto de Vista, Atlanta Film Festival, and more. Dahee is an MFA film/video candidate at the California Institute of the Arts.

Matthew Koshmrl is an award-winning filmmaker and cinematographer with an MFA from the University of Texas at Austin. His work has played at the Jeonju International Film Festival, International Documentary Festival Amsterdam, Full Frame Documentary Film Festival, DocumentaMadrid, and True/False Film Festival. Matthew personally engages cinema vérité techniques to explore the evolution of tradition, individual and national identity, and unseen processes.



Big Happiness
digital video and selected film stills

Laura Judd is a Chinese Lithuanian American TPAC member and exhibit co-organizer. She was first drawn to the Asian social group for the sense of community, familiarity, togetherness, family, and home. "While it's comforting to be among people with similarities, *Like Me, Like You* demonstrates that we ALL have something in common with one another. Getting to know one another is just one way to start finding those connecting points."



Laura is excited for the possibilities of visitors celebrating Asian cultures, having cross-cultural conversations, gaining new perspectives, and possibly forming new friendships in viewing the exhibit together.

Ribbon Tree, with Pakou Ly

Julie Kim is Korean adoptee and was raised in the Twin Cities. She completed her undergraduate and Master in Social Work at the University of Minnesota Duluth. She has lived in Duluth since 1991 and worked in the mental health field for over 30 years. She is currently a counselor at UMD Health Services.

"I worked with Julia Cheng on our photo project, which includes both my adoption picture and a current portrait of myself. The picture is worth a thousand words, as they say. I see a Korean child and feel the deep sorrow and loss of being stripped of that identity and recognize the continuous journey to find that again as a Korean adoptee living in the United States."

Julie's collaboration with Julia was the first piece committed to this exhibition.



The Long Journey,
digital enlargement of
silver gelatin print
(collection of Julie Kim)
and gicleé print of digital
photo by Julia Cheng

Sharon Kwong was born to Chinese parents and raised in Southern California, always within a short distance to the beach for surfing and mountains for skiing. Her exposure to many cultures and traditions was expressed through foods. Her husband's job brought her family to Duluth, where she enjoys Lake Superior along with their son and finds inspiration in the community for her poetry. "We all have more in common than we think. If we focus on collaborating together, perhaps it will bring peace."

What If...

What if the world we lived in
was without hate?
What if there was no inequality?
What if justice was served for ALL?

What If? poem