

Kiang Malingue These Things

馬凌畫廊

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(Artist) Chang Ya Chin

(Opening)
Sat, 20 Jan, 3 – 6 PM

(Date)
23 Jan – 09 Mar 2024

(Opening Hours)
Tue to Sat, 11 AM – 7 PM
Closed on public holidays

(Location)
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Kiang Malingue is pleased to present "These Things", an exhibition of recent paintings by Chang Ya Chin. This is the artist's first exhibition in her hometown Hong Kong, focusing on depicting a variety of local foods and delicacies in the manner of classical still life.

Having received rigorous training in academic and classical traditions in Florence, Paris, and New York since 2015, Chang makes modestly-sized, placid compositions in which contemporary objects are in contrast with traditional methods and techniques of still life. All of her paintings are painted from real life: be it a group of pears, a bugle, a bowl of rice or a game of Tetris, Chang closely studies the distinctly textured objects—effectively "casting" the objects as actors and performers—before rendering them tangible and verisimilar on canvas.

In "These Things", Chang presents more than a dozen small-scale paintings that feature various regionally specific cuisines, drinks, and sweets, telling microcosmic stories that are either unequivocally whimsical or self-referential in essence. *Teamwork: Har Gows Rowing* (2023) pictures three *har gows* rowing haphazardly in a tiny dragon boat atop a stand; the mild absurdity of the scene and the artist's emphasis on chiaroscuro and reflections give the painting its credibility—a miniature dragon boat being suspended in a water-less interior environment calls for undersized, non-human athletes. *Dive: Dumplings, Black Vinegar* (2024) also plays with the thrill and risk associated with heights, and the notion of sportsmanship: plump dumplings climb up a slim ladder in a row, preparing themselves on a platform before jumping into a bowl of black vinegar. In different scenarios and against similarly neutral, sober backgrounds, Chang's non-human subjects ponder the significance of gravity and depth, and the various possibilities of falling: the gracefully peeled *Lychee on a swing* (2023) has seemingly fallen unconscious; one of the sauce bottles in *Dai Pai Dong, Sauces, Good Friends* (2023) is drunkenly tipped over; the excessively shallow architecture in *Bridge: Tea Egg, Suitcase* (2023) barely has enough room for the eggs in three different stages, effectively boiling up a *vanitas* in which falling becomes the fragile yet bouncy subject's gesture par excellence.

On the other hand, the mirrored image in *Together: Instant Noodles, Sunny-Side-Up (Chicken) Egg, quail eggs* (2024) not only demonstrates once again Chang's interest in exploring textures and materialities, but also reveals her long-term fascination with self-referentiality in painting: effectively staging a self-portrait session that is distorted, warped and touched, it echos thematically with *Bubble Tea Self Portrait* (2023), the latest development from Chang's series of self-portraits, first started in 2019. Based upon two drawings made by Chang's niece and nephew, the impossible yet affectionate self-portrait means to inspire exchanges that are universal and indiscriminate in essence.

(About Chang Ya Chin)

Chang Ya Chin (b. 1985 Hong Kong) lives and works in her hometown Hong Kong, New York City and Austin, Texas. She was trained in the academic tradition at ateliers in Florence, Paris and New York City. Chang is inspired by everyday objects, moments and the mash of cultures around her. Her art can be intricate or simple, and attempts to lend an invisible hand of empathy through whimsy and a little nostalgia. In her oil paintings, through the contrast of modern day objects and 19th century painting technique and aesthetic, she explores facets of our shared human experience, hoping to discover moments of imagination, and perhaps, magic within reality.