

VITRINE

Introduction by Alessandro Vincentelli

'For Kara Chin's first solo presentation for VITRINE, London, the artist has been working to create a series of sculptures and installations to be installed in the long windows of the gallery in Bermondsey. For the new work the artist has been working with salt dough. She has created a series of sculptural dioramas. As an artist who regularly works in animation, sculpture and installation her works frequently cross diverse media combining digital animation with physical sculptures, incorporating ceramics, plastics and found items often using kinetic machine processes.

One of the underlying themes that links these group of works is the run-on bread flour experienced during lockdown. A suspended and strange time characterised by new activities, new rules on movement, by making activities, disrupted daily routines such as the surge in interest in baking and bread. Chin decides to describe a world where there is an abundance of flour, where the masses can make bread. Her sculptural dioramas concocting a scaled, pint-sized utopia where there is an excess of flour.

This peculiar scaled, condensed world is as much a response by Chin to the reorientation to screen- sizes, and of nearly everything going online, and mediated via the digital screen. Perhaps at its centre, beyond the initial themes there is an acute observation from Chin on the nature and perception of scale in our always 'on-line' world, and that scale is difficult to judge. This measuring effect comes up in different ways. New experiences of scale shifts are routine. The artist cites strange juxtapositions, and too much time spent on the internet looking at things For Scale and Sale on eBay.

The writer Will Self has written about the enduring fascination for shifts in scale, and miniaturisation in contemporary art. Back in 1994 Will Self penned a fantastical story titled Scale in which his protagonist descends through a nightmare series of model villages – a model village inside a model village, he used Bekonskot Model Village in his story. In one of the lines from the story Will Self writes 'Some people lose their sense of proportion; I've lost my sense of scale.'

Read the in-conversation between Kara Chin and Alessandro Vincentelli in My Art Guides [here](#)

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6 February 2021 ————— 11 April 2021

You Will Knead

Kara Chin

VITRINE, Digital and VITRINE, London

'You Will Knead' is British-Singaporean artist Kara Chin's first solo project with the gallery and is realised across two sites: VITRINE, London and VITRINE, Digital, viewable in-person and from computer screens at home. The artist presents a new body of work which reflects on coping mechanisms used over periods of lockdown in 2020 and into 2021, continuing her inquiry into technology's relationship to our everyday environments.

Working across animation, sculpture, and installation, Chin's work merges the online and digital with the physical world, observing our relationship to the devices we regularly use in humorous and fantastical ways. Chin considers the implications of widely used technologies and their resulting ethical conundrums, working with a variety of natural and synthetic materials to develop a unique combined style of mosaics and figurative elements. Her chaotic installations bring together these elements often combining kinetic and robotic components.

After reading the article 'Baking and The Sims helped Little Mix in Lockdown', and seeing those close to the artist participate in the same activities, Chin became interested in the resulting worlds they created for themselves. Within 'Sims 4', digital dream houses are created in which to regress and find comfort, offering a sense of control by living vicariously through screens in contrast to a precarious real-world. Bread baking is an historically significant activity, as a produced food at low cost, and is eaten by people in all levels of society. More recently it has been associated with a form of mindfulness and therapy as its process requires tenderness and care. The recent resurgence in home baking resulted in shortages of flour and yeast in the UK.

For her new work in 'You Will Knead', Chin uses salt dough as a durable and natural yet long-lasting material to make mosaics similar to her previous work in ceramics and perspex. Her removal of its edible function reconsiders the material as a precious object, therefore necessary to preserve.

In the centre of the mosaics are small dioramas of shops and houses full of supposed flour containers, which the artist considers as "little utopias with an abundance of flour", similar to creating "dream houses" in 'Sims 4'. Browsing online stores such as Ebay during 2020, Chin became interested in listed items being photographed next to mundane objects 'for scale', such as soap stone sculptures placed next to a can of coke. She also explored the many examples of peculiar scale being used in agricultural and craft practices, including giant vegetables and a knitted miniature version of the Nightingale hospital. Chin considers these juxtapositions an example of scale being lost online and, as our activities are increasingly moved online, our experiences are thus being scaled down to screen sizes. A diorama shifts scale in a strange and unsettling way, condensing our lived experience of the world.

At VITRINE, London, Chin creates an installation to combine these mixed-media works, playing with the notion of a vitrine as a place of retail and display, viewable 24/7 from the public square and neighbouring a Sainsbury's Local. Concurrently in the online space, at VITRINE, Digital, Chin creates digital dioramas and reproductions of sculptures from the physical installation combined with a new virtual sculpture in a confused animated map of a network of windows; continuing her investigations through 3-D digital renders. This is also viewable 24/7, from any computer screen.

In a period of much uncertainty and restrictive movement, the exhibition offers the viewer, locally and internationally, a look into Chin's haunting digital and physical world in miniature. A place where lived experiences are played out in isolated imagined scenarios.

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Kara Chin (b.1994, Singapore) lives and works in Newcastle, UK. She holds a BA in Fine Art from The Slade School of Fine Art (2018). She has been awarded the Woon Foundation Painting and Sculpture Prize (2018); The Duveen Travel Scholarship, UCL (2018); The Alfred W Rich Prize, Slade (2017); Max Werner Drawing Prize, Slade (2015).

Chin has exhibited in galleries and museums including: BALTIC39, Newcastle, UK; South London Gallery, London, UK; DKUK, London, UK; Gallery North, Newcastle, UK; CBS Gallery, Liverpool, UK; Science Museum, London, UK; APT Gallery, London, UK; Fieldworks, London, UK; The Embassy Tea Gallery, London, UK; Subsidiary Projects, London, UK; Pineapple Black, Middlesbrough, UK; The Milton Gallery, London, UK; UCL Art Museum, London, UK; San Mei Gallery, London, UK; IMT Gallery, London, UK; Fold, London, UK; The Pallent House Gallery, London, UK; Off Site Project, Online.

Chin has recently finished a year-long residency in the Woon Tai Jee Studio, hosted by BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Newcastle, UK and Northumbria University, Newcastle, UK.

Upcoming exhibitions include the group show 'The Sun and the Moon' at VITRINE, Basel (March 2021) and 'Letter to the Future', The 8th International Triennial of Art and Ecology, Maribor, SI (May 2021).

Website

Kara Chin, *You Will Knead*, 2021. Virtual installation. Containing 3-dimensional virtual sculptures, produced as GIFs, and digital dioramas, which can be navigated through online. Created in WIX website builder. Dimensions variable.

For a portfolio and sales inquiries, please contact:

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VITRINE is focused on artistic experimentation and emerging interdisciplinary practices. The gallery was founded in London in 2010, with a second space in Basel opened in 2016 and a third digital space launched in 2020. Over this decade, we have established a reputation as a selector and nurturer of new talent and our continued aim is to support artists' careers and the growth of their ideas.

Our programme is focused on interdisciplinary approaches in a variety of media, concentrating on artists working in installation, sculpture and performance.

Our spaces are transparent, which allows all exhibitions to be viewable 24/7 from the surrounding public squares. Both VITRINE London and Basel are wheelchair accessible. Our office and viewing spaces are hidden inside, allowing for an incredibly flexible contemporary exhibiting and working space.

Our business model is a hybrid. We operate an expanding commercial gallery; representing a core group of artists and advising international clients. Our work in the public realm and commitment to supporting artists with ambitious experimental exhibitions has allowed us access to public funding, which we carefully use for specific large-scale non-profit projects.

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You Will Knead | Kara Chin
Installation view. VITRINE, London.

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