

HUMBER STREET GALLERY

EXHIBITION GUIDE

SHOW REAL

KARA CHIN

19 JANUARY – 27 MARCH 2022

SPACE 1

INTRODUCTION

Show Real explores our relationship to reality and simulations – which imitate or re-create real world situations in a controlled environment. As simulation technology becomes more accessible to the everyday user, unsuspected images of products around us are saturated with Computer Generated Imagery (CGI). For example, large amounts of products in retail catalogues, such as that of Ikea, are computer generated images, rather than photographs of the furniture and items themselves. Another example is how more advanced CGI programmes are making it more difficult to distinguish between 'real' objects or landscapes and digital versions within many Hollywood films.

The exhibition hopes to capture that slight confusion, and growing shift from reality that creeps in as simulated imagery silently becomes the majority. When it becomes more familiar than actual reality, and reality becomes uncanny. If computer generated imagery feels more 'real' than the objects that surround us, how do we define what is 'real' anymore?

Taking inspiration from the sets of Hollywood's live action feature films, Chin is interested in exploring the boundaries between the natural and the artificial worlds that we are increasingly moving between.

The gallery has been transformed into a space that appears to be a blue screen set; an environment that is often created by film companies to capture scenes which combine CGI imagery with real actors, such as Disney's live action adaptations of films such as "The Jungle Book".

As you move around the gallery space you will find a combination of curious sculptures, some of which perform awkward moves, such as banks of legs slowly moving up and down, as if trapped in an animatronic glitch, as well as a giant boom microphone which bobs above your head, intermittently moving in and out of your peripheral vision, referring to the rare moments when you spot microphones and recording equipment that subtly make their way into the final edits of films.

A rotating mobile sculpture titled "*Prefix for the Show*", hangs from the ceiling, which includes small models of space satellites and imitation fruit. Wrapped around the edge of the mobile reads the word 'serious' as a reference to a popular advertisement campaign by Wotsits, where they described their product as 'seriously cheesy'. In this instance, the word play suggests that the exhibition straddles the line between serious and playful, whilst using fake puffed crisps which are often used as perfect example of a product attempting to artificially mimic a very natural taste.

One sculpture, titled "*Wet Sandwich Drop*", sits in the centre of the gallery and refers to devices that are designed specifically for TV marketing, where food products are staged in a state of suspension prior to being combined with computer generated images to produce the final advertisement. In this case the sculpture resembles a particular device intended to hold the various layers of a Subway sandwich to showcase its contents, whilst a small drip of water falls from a network of pipes located above the artwork. Dripping or spraying a sugar and water solution over food is a common method to ensure the food remains looking fresh and appetising. This is further referenced within another work in the gallery, titled "*Fresh Fruit*", where an apple is lightly sprayed with a similar solution at intervals throughout the day whilst the sculpture titled 'Hot Beverages', sees modified home ware emitting water vapour to suggest an endlessly steaming cup of coffee.

The exhibition also features three new animations titled "*I Find Myself Looking at Them*", which make use of a commonly used video game development software called Unreal Engine. The software has been adapted with a plug-in feature called Meta Humans, which allows you to create simulated humans to a staggering level of detail. Chin is interested in observing the point at which simulated imagery becomes so real that they no longer seem simulated, and how that plays with our own perception of what seems 'real'. The animated humans on screen are reading from a script which combines conversations about the subject of simulation from the popular online message board Reddit, along with reviews taken from fake products on Amazon. This script has then been brought to life by another popular game development software made by Replica Studios, in which words can be read out loud through a wide variety of voices, emphasising particular emotions, such as fear, happiness and worry.

Show Real is an exhibition that invites you to question what we classify as 'real' and how the ever-increasing sophistication of the digital world may alter our very understanding of what surrounds us.

THANK YOUS

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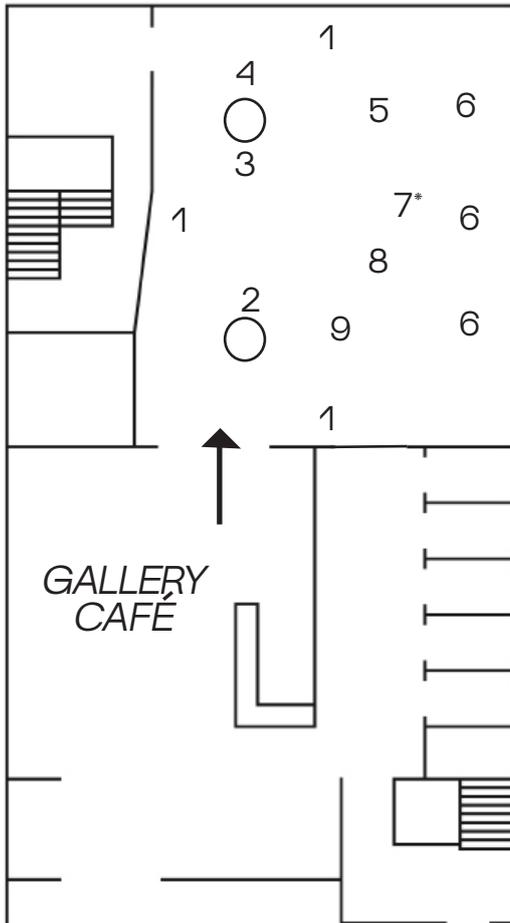
ABOUT THE ARTIST

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: The 8th International Triennial of Art and Ecology, Maribor, SI; 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; Quench, Margate, UK; VITRINE, London, UK VITRINE, Basel, UK; VITRINE, Digital; 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; Huxley Parlour, London, UK.

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.

WORK DETAILS, GROUND FLOOR



7. *Prefix for the Show*, metal, motor, packing material, plaster casts and mixed media, 2022 (*hanging from the ceiling)

8. *Fresh Fruit*, fake fruit, spray bottle, tripod, motor and mixed media, 2022

9. *Totem Pole Trench*, clothing, furniture and mixed media, 2022

SHOW REAL: SPACE 1

1. *Massive Stadium Crowd*, trousers, motor, metal and mixed media, 2022

2. *Wet Sandwich Drop*, wax, expanding foam, copper pipe, metal, water pump and mixed media, 2022

3. *Hot Beverages*, ceramic cups, water humidifier, plastic tubing, video camera, tripod and mixed media, 2022

4. *Overhead Piano*, metal, motor, textile and mixed media, 2022

5. *Quiet Table*, glasses, silicon, wooden table, lamp, motor and mixed media, 2022

6. *I Find Myself Looking at Them*, animation, 2022

RELATED ACTIVITY

Access our in person and online public programme to learn more about the artists and the exhibition. You can book access all of the related activity by following the links on the [exhibition page](#).

THURSDAY LATES: EMILY GRAY & JAMAL STERRETT THURSDAY 17 FEBRUARY, 7PM – 9PM SPACE 1, SPACE 2 & GALLERY CAFÉ BOOKING REQUIRED

A double bill will see new performance work by dancers Emily Gray and Jamal Sterrett. Both Emily and Jamal will develop unique performances in response to themes of identity, technology, reality, and history, as will be explored in new solo exhibitions on throughout Spring 2022 at Humber Street Gallery by Ashley Holmes and Kara Chin.

IN CONVERSATION: KARA CHIN WEDNESDAY 03 MARCH, 6 – 7PM SPACE 1 FREE BOOKING REQUIRED

Join artist Kara Chin as she discusses her latest body of work for Humber Street Gallery, *Show Real*.

HAUNTED MACHINES TALK WEDNESDAY 09 MARCH, 6 – 7:30PM ONLINE FREE BOOKING REQUIRED

Haunted Machines will take you on a guided tour of the world of computer graphics and simulation exploring various alternative worlds found in video games, films and interactive environments as well as being introduced to artists who seek to unpick and reveal the way that computer simulated imagery shapes our world.

This event has been programmed as a response to Kara Chin's new solo exhibition *Show Real* at Humber Street Gallery.

Haunted Machines is a global super brand, research and curatorial project from Natalie Kane and Tobias Revell initially exploring stories of myth, magic and monsters in technology and more recently the automated production and sharing of images. They organise events, festivals, panels and give talks around their interests and research.

ABOUT US

Humber Street Gallery is an Absolutely Cultured project. Originally established in 2017 as part of the City of Culture programme, it has developed into a vibrant, high-quality contemporary visual art space for Hull. It is now a significant contributor to the contemporary visual arts offer in the north.

Our ambition for Humber Street Gallery is to further develop the venue into a multi-artform and multi-functional creative centre, showcasing a wide range of art and activities providing something for everyone from visual art, dance, music to spoken word. Increasingly the space will be used to showcase more work by local as well as national and international practitioners.

OPENING TIMES

GALLERY

WED – SUN: 10:00 – 17:00

GALLERY CAFÉ

Wed – Thu: 10:00 – 17:00

Fri – Sun: 10:00 – LATE

CONTACT US

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