

ART + PRACTICE

TRANSCRIPTION OF ARTIST TALK: MILANO CHOW FROM JUNE 29, 2021

JOSHUA ODUGA: Hello everyone, thank you for joining us for this public program, Artist Talk, Milano Chow. My name is Joshua Oduga and I'm the Public Programs and Exhibitions manager at Art + Practice. I'm very excited to share this program, which is pre-recorded. Today I'm joined by Southern California based artist Milano Chow, Milano's practice engages the visual language of perceived architecture and framed narratives through graphite renderings and collage, employing ornamental and illusionistic elements, she recasts the confines of interior environs and exterior structures, accentuating the boundaries between intimacy and exclusion. Hi Milano.

MILANO CHOW: Hi Joshua, thank you for having me.

ODUGA: Yeah, no problem. Thank you for joining me today. This program started off from a studio visit that I had with Milano about a month and a half ago now. I encountered her work at an exhibition here in Los Angeles a few years ago and ever since then I was very struck by it, mainly because of its ties to architecture. And I think we'll talk a lot about that, but there's so many different elements to Milano's work. I think I mentioned this to you when I first met you, when I saw your work in a gallery setting I just stood in front of it for a really long time, really taking it all in. So for this conversation, I think we wanted to start off by looking at one of your works, talking about it a little bit and using that as a jumping off point.

So I'm going to share my screen, just give me one second. There we go, you can view this as well right?

CHOW: Yes, I can see it.

ODUGA: Okay, great. I'd love it if we can start off by just giving you the title of this work and then we can talk about it a little bit.

CHOW: Sure. This work is called Facade (Intimates). I don't know if it's visible at this scale, but if you look at the store front window, there's the word intimates written out as the store sign. Yeah, I guess it looks like a bunch of pixels from this size. And this work was one of three that I made for a group show that was at Standard Oslo Gallery in January of this year. And the other two works were similar where it was also these vertical facades with store front windows in the bottom corner. And I had been drawing these building facades for a long time and usually the windows are like what you see on the second and third floors where there'll be curtains that kind of reveal a background and there'll be a figure that's cropped by the architecture and then maybe a few domestic objects in the window panels. Like for instance here there's a vase and then you see a fragment of a ceiling lamp. And then for this series I wanted to put in these store fronts just to bring in something that was outside a home or domestic space. And I also just love storefront windows, the history of their design. I always stare at them whenever I'm driving around LA.

ODUGA: Yeah, definitely. I think when I was a kid I was always really taken aback by those, and I think there's some really amazing artists that work in that field that probably go unrecognized.

CHOW: Yeah, definitely.

ODUGA: I love what you mentioned about this work in kind of talking about the upper levels and it being more this domestic setting, because I think that first work that I saw from you was definitely not, there was definitely no store front element, you mentioned that you just recently started thinking about that and adding it into your work. So I'd love to talk about this idea just really briefly of bringing in all these different architectural references into the work, especially with this newer work that you're showing here. In thinking about LA as a city I'm seeing all of these multi use buildings that are coming up and it's like a residential building on top and then down underneath it's a Whole Foods or some boutiques or something like that. And this image really, really conjures that for me. So I'd love to talk a little bit more about that, and then we have a reference image that we'll jump into right after this as well.

CHOW: Yeah, I guess I should maybe emphasize that all the buildings are fictionalized, they're all pulled from different references, so it's slightly like the thing that differentiates it from a traditional architecture drawing is that it's not a replica of a building that exists in real life and it's not meant to be a proper diagram that would help an actual architect build the building, so it functions differently. Yeah, it's almost like drawing via collage where I'll pull a rooftop window from one source and then the molding is from another source and then some things I make up in my head and all the ornament is pulled from a different library of sources.

ODUGA: Yeah, that's really interesting to hear, especially because I do a little bit of SketchUp and stuff like that in my job or in practice and everything that it entails, and all of this stuff is still definitely to a scale and everything is definitely proportioned and all of that. To think that you're bringing in all of these other elements, that's a whole other conversation that we could have about how you technically work on these things and when your imagination, when you're thinking one thing how it translates into the work. But I think that's maybe a good point for us to jump into the first slide that we have that's a reference slide. Can you tell me about this image here?

CHOW: Yeah, this is from a Charles Jencks book, it's either from there's a book called Postmodern Architecture and then he also has one that's specifically about Los Angeles called Heteropolis. And in one of those books he had this series of line drawings that were elevations of different houses in Los Angeles and you can see there's the address that's written in the margins, so I guess technically you could look this up at Google maps and stuff. And he kind of wants to, his goal in these drawings is to dissect all of the elements in the buildings and explain what it communicates to you. And I think you can see it a lot in a lot of current LA developments especially because real estate is such a huge industry or such a big player in Los Angeles, they start to learn this local language. Like for instance, there's that cliché they call it the gentrification fence, that's the horizontal wood slate fencing that they do whenever a house is renovated and flipped on the market, or that's supposed to signify a new property or a recent sale.

ODUGA: Yeah, as I went down the rabbit hole exploring architecture and things like that, there's so many of those different things that it's such a huge part of all of our lives as we're walking around cities and the places we live and you don't necessarily think about them. I love this as an annotation to a blueprint or something like that, and I always wonder especially thinking about your work and the imagination that goes into it, there's probably so many things like that that go unheard or unseen in the work that you're doing, all the different references and where it comes from, that would be a really

interesting thing to talk about as well. And I can totally see how something like this would inspire the work that you're working on.

CHOW: This was just a snapshot a friend sent me, she's cleaning out her parent's house and found these cross sections, and I'm assuming these are real architectural drawings that were used for the design of a house, like maybe an interior designer came up with these to show his or her client a proposed house or something. But I just like very beautiful drawings. I really love diagrams and technical drawings because they have a really cool objectivity to them and that's something that I definitely try to carry over into my drawings.

ODUGA: Yeah, that's really interesting that you mention that as well because I think that is something that does come across in the work, and I can see how looking at something like this would really inspire you. And it's a good point of reference versus that other image to see something that is a little bit less structured, like definitely what was in that other image was a lot less structured than what we're seeing here, and I think that's important for people to know when they see your work is that you're pulling from these very diverse elements. Sometimes that may seem like they're related but sometimes they're not.

CHOW: And then this and the next drawing are by this artist/architect Jean-Jacques Lequeu. And he was a civil servant and then he aspired to be a great architect but never was, I guess back then they would have public commissions and he would never win them, so he pretty much worked in obscurity. And this is one of his more traditional drawings. There is this visual device in a lot of these old architectural drawings I like a lot where they completely black out the windows. And then there's been a revival of his work and he's more known for these really surreal fantastical drawings, which I think the next slide will be a better representation of that. Yeah, it'll just be nude women around and he's done a lot of self portraits where he's cross dressing. But I love the combination of this very traditional, very serious rendering. I think what he's using is ink wash and pen and pencil and then you have this very bizarre image. But the way it's treated or the technique helps you suspend your disbelief. I just like that combination of very bizarre imagery and his precision.

ODGUA: Yeah, I think that's a really interesting thing, and we talked a little bit about this on our first visit. I was thinking about it actually as I was seeing some work recently and I was thinking about this idea of mixing these two worlds together and how exciting or a prospect that is. And I think when I was younger I was always taken aback by images like this and I wouldn't understand why. There's something about it that seems really high definition in a sense.

CHOW: Yeah, there's some atmosphere, at first it's a very shallow space and everything's really highly defined. Kind of like in real life you'd have peripheral vision where you don't see everything in sharp focus.

ODUGA: Yeah, and to me that's really amazing and I'm always really taken aback by artists that have that sort of technique, even though I'm not a person that went to school and studied art history or anything like that. And kind of going back into why I was so into your work is that the technical level and the skill is so on point. And so it makes sense that something like this would be a huge influence on you. And then the surreal elements of it as well, which I think that there's another reference slide that may be next here that we'll get into that's a little bit more modern and I think it's doing something in a similar sense.

But let's talk about this one first.

CHOW: Yeah, this is by Martin Wong, he's one of my favorite artists. He I think was born in San Francisco but most of his best known work was made when he was living in New York. He does a lot of cityscapes and he also did a series of paintings of male prisons. And then he has a lot of recurring visual language or motifs in his work like the eight ball and the sign language, and I love the way that he incorporates text into his work. And he also did a lot of storefront paintings where the signage plays a huge role. But yeah, I just love his work.

ODUGA: Yeah definitely. I'd love to talk about this idea of motifs as well because I think that's another thing. I always think about an artist's work in the setting that it's in and the difference between seeing their work in a group show or a solo show or something like that. And I have the privilege of seeing your work in a solo show for the first time and I think it was so important to see other works from you together so that you could get a sense of that so that you could see a little bit of, this artist has some ideas that's going between works and these visual cues and things like that that are so important to pick up on. And also sometimes why I don't like seeing work only online because it's really hard to do that, even though it might be easier to put the puzzle pieces together, it's just seeing a work in person is so important. And I'm not familiar with Wong's work, but after you showed me this as we were preparing for this talk I was just so taken aback by all the different types of stuff that he was working on. And also it was so great, so I definitely have to talk more about his work. But I'd love to talk about this idea of motifs and potentially how you're putting that into your work as well.

CHOW: Yeah, it's kind of like now, my current style feels like it's had at least a few years to develop so I can kind of get a sense of whatever visual lexicon I'm developing. And I don't go into it predetermined like, "what is a perfect symbol that represents femininity?", or something. It's more an intuitive approach. Yeah, maybe the next time we have a slide of my work I can try to dissect things that I've used a lot.

ODUGA: Definitely, but I think as we were talking and working through this we were talking about that idea of motifs and then you showed this work as well. Who's the artist that created this one?

CHOW: This is Roger Brown, he was based in Chicago and was part of the imagist group. And yeah, I also love his work a lot. I guess it obviously resonates because it's little narratives in windows, but you as the viewer kind of complete the picture. And I like the mix where some of the figures are revealed and then some of them remain these silhouettes. And yeah, it's very visually punchy. I also just like the repetition of the composition, it makes you more aware of the differences between the pictures. And I don't know, it's very effective for me.

ODUGA: Yeah, I feel the same way. And it's that idea of the repetition, seeing it over and over again, that goes back to what I was saying about your work and seeing multiple different versions of it together being ideal in my eyes at least. And I really love how different this specific image is from all the other ones, I just see this and I think comic books.

CHOW: The panels, definitely.

ODUGA: The panels and things like that, and once again people don't realize the high level of skill that goes into those kinds of things and then also the technical elements of it, like thinking about scale and

thinking about all of these things while simultaneously bringing an element of storytelling as well. I think that's a really important aspect of the work that artists like yourself are doing.

CHOW: This is another one of his works, it's sculptural, and it is four sided, like you could walk around and it has the same composition on all four sides. But yeah, I love the use of the curtains, I use a lot of curtains in my work to refer to this performance or theatricality, or it adds this drama to the work. And then yeah, you can see there's a funny scene on the right. It looks like someone was caught cheating or something. But yeah, it's very funny.

ODUGA: Oh yeah, I didn't even notice that one. Yeah, I really love this. I feel like it's a piece that I would love to have at my home as a sculpture.

CHOW: Me too, yeah.

ODUGA: Just as a conversation piece with people because it's kind of combining all the things that we've been talking about. The architectural elements, it looks like a skyscraper or something like that in its form, and then walking all around it as well is one of the things that's really interesting. Because this artist Roger Brown, he's a storyteller at his core. So to think about how that explodes into the three dimensional. And you mentioned that you were doing that as well in your work, which I think is some more recent work that you're working on. I think that that's really interesting because the form that you're working in originally, the flat form, there's so much that you're already telling in those works that you're creating, thinking about what the three dimensional can bring into that is really interesting. So I can get us the next slide, maybe we can get into it.

CHOW: Oh yeah, that was the next slide to one of these 3-D works. I wonder what happened. But I can still talk about it. But yeah, if anyone needs a visual reference there's a couple on my website or on the gallery websites. First it started maybe a few years ago where I wanted to make a work that wasn't framed and hung on a wall. I got frustrated with the way that when it's framed there's the plexiglass and it really obstructs the drawing, you can't really see the surface or there's always reflections or you have to see it from a certain angle in order to not get any obstacles in the way. And yeah, I just wanted something off the wall because it just started feeling repetitive where I would just make the drawing, frame it, hang it on a wall.

So my first attempt was making these accordion books where they would be free standing and they would be on a table or a bench. And that was a way to sidestep requiring a frame. This is a good slide to coincide with this, I was looking at a lot of miniatures and dollhouses and because the drawings themselves were already this scaled down abstraction it made sense to just do a 3-D version. And then after the accordion books, I started making these miniature rooms and I call them corners. It'll be like two walls and then a floor and then it's constructed so that you can fold it into a flat book so you have this little intimate object you carry around and look at it. And then there's usually a free standing folding screen on it that'll have a figure somehow embedded into it. Either they'll be collaged onto a door frame or on the folding screen. And there's usually a very busy patterned floor. So, that's my best way of describing it verbally. But yeah, it was just a way to get it off the wall and to not have a frame, it's as simple and practical as that.

ODUGA: Yeah, that sounds really interesting.

CHOW: There it is, I don't know why it didn't show up. Yeah, there we go.

ODUGA: Technology.

CHOW: I know.

ODUGA: It was there, but it just didn't want to appear.

CHOW: So yeah, hopefully my description was accurate to this image, but yeah.

ODUGA: Yeah, I think that was a really great description. It's really great to be able to see it, because I think that the folding element is really important. I mentioned this to you as well, just to go back to when I first encountered your work, there was a huge sense of movement that was going on. All of the doorways and the things like that, and it did take me back to an element of it being theatrical. So to think about that and then to think that you're making something that's a pop up book or has that three dimensional element is so interesting. And I really love this one, I love the figure of how she's peeking out and it really does show the various different elements that you're bringing in, something like a privacy screen. You can have that in your work but it really is important for it to be in this three dimensional realm in a sense so you can get that.

CHOW: Yeah, I'm not sure what else to describe this work. Yeah, and you can see that the blacked out doorway was borrowed from traditional architecture drawings where they'll just leave a blank negative space behind a lot of doors and windows. And it's not an artistic gesture in those professional drawings, it's just a practical treatment of the space. But yeah, I just like that it adds mystique and is kind of bizarre visually.

ODUGA: Yeah, I think that you are doing something really interesting in co-opting all of these architectural ideas and elements and bringing them into the artistic realm and thinking about it in your way as well. I think sometimes it's good to share those things with the public, and I do a lot of that in my job in writing descriptions and doing things like that, but I think there's also an element, and we talked a little bit about this, when it comes to humor and things like that, sometimes it's better if things are just left unsaid.

CHOW: Yeah, you don't have to over explain everything.

ODUGA: Yeah, you don't have to over explain anything.

CHOW: It's more about the experience of the work, that for me, and the process of making it than having a perfectly formed meaning to it.

ODUGA: Yeah, definitely. So we should talk a little bit more, especially going off of that three dimensional work about some of the other references and elements that come into your work especially in terms of editorial type things. I noticed that you had some of those elements around your studio and we talked about that a little bit as well. So could you just tell me about this image?

CHOW: Yeah, I just liked it and it just made sense where it's like architecture and a female figure, wow that's just like my work. It's very striking. I look at a lot of editorial images both for inspiration but also for the collaging of the figures in the work. I don't know if it's clear to the viewer or somebody who's not familiar with the work, but all of the buildings and the architecture are hand drawn and then all of the figures are these photo transfers that are cut to shape and then collaged into the work at the end. So for instance, she's not hand drawn but I feel like the surface or the tone of the transfer blends in well with the drawing.

ODUGA: Yeah, that makes a lot of sense. And we were talking about these fashion images and we talked a little bit about the juxtaposition that happens in them sometimes and sometimes how it's a little bit humorous and surreal in a way, and I think this image definitely has elements of that. But then here as well. And I mentioned to you that sometimes when I see these things, I don't even think about the fashion or think about what's happening. And there's an element of that in your work as well, it's like the architecture is so amazing and your hand is so amazing, but then the storytelling and all the other elements that you drop in there, it brings it to another realm where you get sucked into the story as well. So I can see how something like this is influential to you.

CHOW: Yeah, the big component of it that I like is just the artifice of that posing and it's very different from the language of portraiture where you're trying to capture the true essence of a person or candid photography where people are unaware of the camera. And it kind of goes back to the theater.

ODUGA: Yeah, and I think this is combining all of those things. This is a super theatrical image.

CHOW: This was an old [inaudible 00:27:14] ad. It's just a really beautiful image, I love the picture in the picture where the TV is one artificial image and then it's within this other photo and this dramatic skyline in the background.

ODUGA: I notice that a lot of your references are from various different time periods, like a lot of times I talk to artists and they're like, "Here's a bunch of stuff that influences me," and it's all from the 1990s or something like that. But you have a really wide language of references that you're pulling from and I think that definitely comes across in your work as well, and I wonder is that something that started really early on in your artistic practice for you? Were you always pulling from all those different kinds of references?

CHOW: Yeah, I think most of the time periods have been '70s to '90s I think. There's a couple reasons, one I think the body types aren't so extreme, but that's also subjective, that's my perspective. And then there's also things you see in '70s fashion where there's a lot of revivalism, like they do the '70s version of art deco. Yeah, I like when you have revivalism, there's this ambiguity in the relationship between the style and the time period. So I try to leave that a little ambiguous, like I try to avoid fashion references that are too fixed to a big brand, like I wouldn't put someone with a Chanel logo into the work, it's just too branded or too loaded. Or I wouldn't do big '80s shoulder pads because that also feels too distracting for me. I like it when you can't really tell if it's a suit from the 1920s or the 1980s. Something where the silhouette isn't too specific.

ODUGA: Yeah, that's really interesting. [inaudible 00:29:27] this one, I think that kind of plays off of what you're saying a little bit.

CHOW: I think a little yeah. Yeah, this is a still from a Fassbinder film, Chinese Roulette, and I love his use of doorways, he had a background in theater and staging so you see that translate into the work where he'll do a lot of play between with foreshortening and framing people with windows and door frames and it creates this really tense psychological environment that's really good for all the drama in the movies. So yeah, I look at him a lot and also just enjoy his movies.

ODUGA: Yeah, the melodrama of it all.

CHOW: Yeah, definitely. And I just chose this where this was a good example of a figure being cropped by a doorway and you have this voyeuristic position as the viewer where only part of the interior is revealed to you.

ODUGA: Yeah, and once again it goes back to those motifs, like you were talking about the blacked out windows. I love the little circular blacked out window in this one, I think that's the first thing that captures my eye in this work, and it just takes me back to all of those other elements. And all the time I mention this to you, I always wonder what's happening in these scenes and it's kind of like with the Fassbinder things, I remember when Tumblr was a thing back in the day, there was a ton of images from his films being circulated all the time, and I think that was probably the first time that I encountered those images before seeing his films. And it's just really interesting to think about those kinds of things, to think about when you get just a snippet of something or you get a cross section of it, the story that it builds in your mind.

CHOW: Yeah, it's funny that before Instagram I think Tumblr definitely had a big influence on young people's sense of aesthetics or taste. And there was a really bizarre film still community where people would just take screen caps and share them. And I guess I was part of that too.

ODUGA: With no context. But I think it's such a great thing because then you start to do some of the things that you're doing in your work where you can build diverse references together and you can put some of these things together and no one's going to question that. That's the thing that Tumblr and that kind of scroll or using digital references in that sense, and I think even if it's a text or a book that you have, that's one of the things that I love about going to people's studios. And you were the first person that I had a studio visit with in over a year and a half too in person, so I love being able to see what magazines and what books that people are reading. And if you meet with someone digitally, it might be easier to even do that because you can email them or do all that stuff. [crosstalk 00:32:24] it just doesn't come up in conversation.

CHOW: And this is a still from Tsai Ming-liang's movie Rebels of the Neon God. I'm trying to remember the title correctly, that's the one. He's Taiwanese and he's part of first or second new wave directors from Taiwan. But he's also someone who has very amazing detail in his interiors and the way he sets them up to move the, not narrative, but storyline or drama or emotion or psychological feeling in his movies. And yeah, you already see them framed by this doorway and the composition is very nicely set up so that your eye leads that way.

ODUGA: Yeah, and we talked a little bit about this film maker and the idea of him being part of the film making genre of slow cinema. And I think there's a ton of filmmakers who I really enjoy who make movies in that sense, and one of the things about them is people see them and they call them visionaries

because they're thinking about all of the different elements that go into the work that they're doing and that takes time. You can't do that really quickly and you can't really do that in a way that some other forms of art ask you to do or that you need to do when you're doing any form of art I should say really, because inevitably if you're having a studio practice or something like that, it's a job and you have all these other elements that go into the work that you're doing.

I think it's really interesting when people are working at a high level of technical skill like yourself that they have these references that are in a different genre that are very adjacent to what they're doing. Because I don't think that there's any way that you can make the work that you're making very rapidly, like it takes [crosstalk 00:34:28] and it takes all of these research elements and things like that. And I think you're in the midst of preparing for a show right now that I think is taking a lot of your time and things like that, I imagine. And I just want to talk more about that, I wanted to talk more about this idea of when you're creating and you're bringing in all these various different elements, that that's a slow process and something that you have to put care into. Because I think that definitely comes across in your work, so I'd love to hear your thoughts about that just a little bit.

CHOW: Yeah, a question that comes up a lot, people always ask how long the work takes, which is very hard to measure because it's not like I clock in and out and keep a log. But yeah, the current show I'm working on is for a solo show at the Aldrich Museum in Connecticut that will open next January. And I'll have two rooms, which is very intimidating to me and I'm aiming to make like 11 to 12 new drawings and then like three to four of those sculptural pieces. And I also try to now talk too much about work that I'm in the process of making because I'm a very anxious person and then I start overthinking it and I feel paralyzed or I feel like I'm starting to set up too many expectations before the work is even made. So I try and keep it very simple, like I'm making this number of works, they're drawings, I don't know what they're going to be yet, and I try to keep it very vague. I don't know, should I describe materials or processes?

ODUGA: One of the things that I'm really interested in is when all of these various different elements and things that you're thinking of and then your own imagination which a lot of the things you're thinking of are not coming from a point of reference or something like that, when does it cross over into the point that you take pen or pencil to paper? I think the reason I wanted to ask you this question specifically is that I notice you're working on multiple different works at a time, which is something that any working artist at your stage that's being called for museum shows and things like that are doing. But once again I was just so impressed by that because your work is so technical and so amazing. So I think that's really interesting. So maybe it's more of a question about your studio practice more than intentions or things like that, especially because I think a lot of people who tune into these programs are themselves artists or people that are creating or even just someone who's called to do something in the work that they do. I wonder for you, what is the catalyst to actually begin the work?

CHOW: That's a great question because it's always this weird moment when you're in between bodies of work and you're just starting with a completely blank slate, that's always a big nerve wracking. So usually I'll start with the things that help me get into a working mode, like I'll always make scale models of the exhibition space, it just helps me feel less overwhelmed or it makes it more concrete. And then that helps me figure out the number of works that I feel like will work well in the space. It's always this magic number that's in between not overhanging or overstuffing the space but not making it so sparse where there's barely anything in there. And then from there, I'll start looking back at images that I've collected over the years or I'll try to search for new images. And usually it will just be something that strikes me.

Like for instance, this one I think I found an old baroque portal or entryway that had the top half in there. And I really liked the form and for me it's kind of like would it translate well into a drawing? Would it make sense visually? Is it something that I can even technically do?

And then I'll just save it and then I'll figure out roughly what dimensions it will be, which will either be based on past drawings. I try to keep a consistent number of dimensions in my so that I don't have this weird jigsaw puzzle of randomly sized drawings. And then I'll usually start with a line drawing and I don't do a lot of preparatory sketches, like some artists work where they'll make a miniature version of the work and then scale it up almost exactly. For me I do these little scribbly nonsensical drawings that are just a way for me to think. And yeah, then I'll just start directly onto the work where I'll start with line drawing and then halfway through, I should have included maybe snapshots of works in progress.

ODUGA: This is really great to hear directly from you, because what it sounds like is that there's definitely a high level of intention that goes into what you're doing, and it's all coming from your thought process and all of that. So I think that's really important and I actually kind of enjoy the fact that there isn't a lot of that stuff in here because I think if someone sees your work and then you're telling them I'm not scaling up and I'm not doing all of these things, they won't understand, especially from going back to all the stuff that we've just talked about. It's like how do you build all of these references? And I'm so glad that I asked you this question because the different references that you're building in and your skill level, it makes sense that you take a process where you think about it internally and that there's not a ton of pre-sketches and things like that that embody the work that you're doing. That also makes sense on what you were just saying back to talking about the show, why you can't talk about it a lot.

CHOW: Well I've always [crosstalk 00:40:54] myself before where I'll talk big about like, "Yeah, I'm going to do this big installation that I've never done before," and then something happens at the last minute where it falls through, so I've just learned to not hype it up before it's installed.

ODUGA: That's the nature of this work. Don't say anything about it until the hour before.

CHOW: Yeah, until it's shipped out I guess.

ODUGA: And I think this might be the final reference.

CHOW: Yeah, this is kind of mirroring back to the first image of the artwork. I was just looking at storefront windows. I like that it's a surreal abstract space, it's literally a very shallow physical space. And then just the floating objects, so there's a very ambiguous ground. And I like that it's kind of accidentally artistic. This isn't high art, this is a lowbrow department store display.

ODUGA: This is a great way to end it, especially looking back at the first image. And I'll go back in a second and show that first image before we end because you mentioned it was a lingerie store at the bottom right in that image. And we talked about people who do set designing and things like this and I think it's really interesting because you're talking about these domestic spaces and you're talking about all of that, and by extension anywhere that anybody is tuning into this it's becoming increasingly harder to avoid those kind of things, it's like the city is everywhere kind of thing. And I think the work that you're doing is really important because it is this interesting archive that you're building of spaces, even

if they are imagined spaces, it's just really interesting. And I'll go all the way back to the beginning to show this image.

CHOW: Yeah, you can definitely see the relationship between that source image and this final work.

ODUGA: Yeah, definitely. And I think that's all the images that we wanted to share. I definitely wanted to say thank you for sharing so much about your work and the conversations that we've been having over the last few weeks. Is there anything else that you wanted to share or any note that we wanted to end it on?

CHOW: No, I think just talking about references. And yeah, I appreciate that you brought up the studio practice because that's never apparent when you see the final work. Yeah, I'm always curious whenever I listen to artist lectures on how other people work.

ODUGA: Yeah, and I'm excited to see in the future how you take that work because of all the things that we talked about. And I think just to wrap it up, the high level of intention that goes into the work that you're doing and how that comes across in also a playful manner as well in the work that you present. So I'm really excited, I'm a huge fan of your work, thank you.

CHOW: Yeah, thank you so much for inviting me. I don't really do a lot of public events, so this is a very good experience.

ODUGA: Well, I appreciate it. Is this the first time that you've done an artist talk and talked about your work in your own words?

CHOW: I've done talks to students, like maybe getting invited to a class once in a while, but nothing that would be archived or recorded, I don't think any of them are recording, so this is very different.

ODUGA: Well, I'm very excited that I was able to do this with you and it's the first opportunity for people to hear more about your work. Thanks again.

CHOW: Thank you so much.