

PRESS RELEASE

Berlin, Aug 25, 2022

Artistic Intervention 2022

CHRISTINE SUN KIM

Success Perm

C/O Berlin will present the **Artistic Intervention Success Perm** by **Christine Sun Kim** from **Sep 17, 2022**. The installation at the **C/O Berlin x Barkin'Kitchen** café can be seen for the first time at the **opening** of the new exhibition program on **Sep 16, 2022**, at **20:00** at C/O Berlin in the Amerika Haus at Hardenbergstraße 22-24, 10623 Berlin.

"Using a wavy up and down movement, move your hand, palm inward and thumb tucked, in front of your face from the left to the right. (If you are left handed, do a mirror image.)" – Description of how to sign the word "immigration" in American Sign Language (ASL)

For Asian Americans in the 1980s, a curly perm symbolized success and achievement, which is why artist Christine Sun Kim's family photo album is full of relatives with perms. Her family emigrated from North Korea to South Korea and later to the US before she was born, joining hundreds of thousands of Korean immigrants to the United States in the 1970s and 1980s. Crossing borders in search of prosperity has long marked her family story, and migration has remained a constant in her own life: Kim moved from the US to Berlin in 2013. *"I'm an immigrant in Germany, so I have thought a lot about immigration. I ask where my daughter will go next. Will she stay in Germany? Or will she move on?"*

In her *Artistic Intervention* for the *C/O Berlin x Barkin'Kitchen* café, Kim combines her artistic interpretation of the American Sign Language sign for immigration with her own diagrammatic rendering of a "success perm". The sign for "immigration" in ASL is a wave movement made with the hand in front of the face. Likewise, her installation includes waving lines evoking this sign, permed hair, and the curving lines stamped on international postage.

In this work, Kim uses repetitive, stacking forms, as these visualise well the cycles of people emigrating, immigrating, migrating. Like in her mural of immigration waves for C/O Berlin, an "emigrant" emigrates from their own country; an "immigrant" moves to another country to settle there; and a "migrant" moves from one place to another, perhaps for work, not unlike migratory birds who temporarily leave their nesting areas to their winter homes. The result is a reverberating series of cyclical waves on the wall which reflects the constantly repeating phenomenon of migration across human history. Even if a perm was symbolic of success, this was not necessarily the reality. In many cases it was only an appearance – only a façade, so to speak. All the more appropriate is her installation spelling out *SUCCESS PERM* on the window façade of the Amerika Haus, which allows the artist's work to be viewed in its full complexity.

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Christine Sun Kim (b. 1980) is an American artist based in Berlin. Working predominantly in drawing, performance, and video. Kim's practice considers how sound operates in society, deconstructing the politics of sound, and exploring oral languages as social currency. Musical notation, written language, American Sign Language (ASL), and the use of the body are all recurring elements in her work. She further uses sound to explore her own relationship to verbal languages and her environment. Kim has exhibited and performed internationally, including at the Queens Museum, New York (2022); the Drawing Center, New York (2022); the Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt (2021); Manchester International Festival, Manchester (2021); MIT List Visual Arts Center, Cambridge (2020); Whitney Biennial, New York (2019); Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo (2019); Art Institute of Chicago (2018); San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (2017); De Appel Arts Center, Amsterdam (2017); Berlin Biennale (2016); Shanghai Biennale (2016); MoMA PS1, New York (2015) and the Museum of Modern Art, New York (2013), among numerous others. Kim is an inaugural awardee of the Ford and Mellon Foundations' Disabilities Future Fellowship, a TED Senior Fellowship, and a MIT Media Lab Fellowship. She is represented by François Ghebaly Gallery in Los Angeles and White Space Beijing in Beijing.

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Location

Café C/O Berlin x Barkin'Kitchen

Opening Hours

Daily . 11:00–20:00

Admission

Free

Organizer

C/O Berlin Foundation

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