

**25 May - 30 June 2023**

**Opening reception for the artist: Thursday 25 May, 5-7pm**

**Julie W. Chang**

***Amulets***

In her newest body of work, Julie Chang wields a dictionary of talismans to investigate and celebrate the power of cultural symbols to shape and transform our lives.

In the wake of the 2020 pandemic, Chang began reconsidering how traditional amulets operate as protective energies as well as binding or guiding forces. Her deftly intricate paintings weave together fetishes from a wide range of cultures and eras, in a series of layers that form a three-dimensional matrix. Layered and interwoven in this way, these symbols of healing, wisdom, redemption, joy, enlightenment, interdependence, and peace combine to form a powerful global emblem of hope and renewal.

Chang has long been interested in the implied meanings and identifying markers inherent to the historical development of patterns in textiles and decorative objects. Chang manipulates this tradition of abstract patterning through collisions of familiar forms, like the Chinese symbol for happiness, the Sanskrit character for namaste, the peace sign, or the lucky cricket. Through layering and repetition, these symbols morph, migrate and cross boundaries, transformed by encounters with other forms. Arrivals, foreignness, dislocation, struggle, and integration are some of the references implied in these confrontations.

This exhibition will also debut Chang's first free-standing sculptures, in which the amulets and symbols are stacked and interlocked as building blocks. These forms arise vertically or expand outward in a cooperative gesture of interdependence, giving physical shape to the metaphor of peace as an act of co-creation.

Julie Chang was born in Parkridge, Illinois and raised in Orange County, California. She received her MFA from Stanford University in 2007. Recent Bay Area public commissions include the 20,000 square foot terrazzo floor in the Salesforce Transit Center, a mural at the Willie Woo Woo Wong playground in San Francisco, and two large-scale architectural exteriors in downtown Oakland: a glass installation at the Lydian Building and a printed ceramic tile facade at the Alice House.