



**CLAIRE OLIVER GALLERY PRESENTS  
TWO MAJOR EXHIBITIONS BY GALLERY ARTIST SAMI TSANG:**

**A SOLO BOOTH AT EXPO CHICAGO, APRIL 24 - 27  
AND THE FIRST SOLO GALLERY EXHIBITION IN THE UNITED STATES, OUR FAMILY PORTRAIT  
MAY 24 - JULY 26, 2025**



**March 2025, New York, NY – Claire Oliver Gallery announces two exhibitions by artist Sami Tsang premiering in spring 2025. The first, a solo presentation at EXPO Chicago, marks Tsang’s debut at the renowned fair on view April 24–27. This will be followed by *Our Family Portrait*, the artist’s first gallery solo exhibition in the US, on view May 24–July 26, 2025 at Claire Oliver Gallery in Harlem. Both exhibitions will showcase new large-scale and deeply layered figurative and allegorical ceramic sculpture, painting, and installation work. Tsang’s studio practice explores the complexities of mythology, identity, cultural inheritance, family dynamics, and personal liberation.**

Her ceramic figures exist in a liminal space between tradition and rebellion—bearing the weight of cultural history while simultaneously breaking free from its constraints. “My work and my studio practices are very empowering. I use my work as a way to have difficult conversations with myself,” Tsang says. “My studio

practice often explores feeling silenced or confined; by making the work and putting these feelings and memories into forms, I can assert a voice that wasn't always accessible to me.”

Laying claim to being raised in a traditional Chinese household as the youngest female child, Tsang navigates the tension between obedience, duty, and the pursuit of individuality, revealing the unspoken struggles of a bicultural identity. Her large-scale figures—bold, exaggerated, and emotionally charged—capture moments of repression, rebellion, and transformation. Through humor, distortion, and fantasy, her figures embody the negotiation between traditional Chinese values—rooted in filial piety, modesty, and family honor—and the desire for autonomy and self-expression.

## **EXPO CHICAGO 2025 - BOOTH 342**

At EXPO Chicago 2025, Tsang will transform Claire Oliver Gallery's booth into an immersive installation of large-scale sculpture and monumental drawings. The installation will be grounded by six large-scale ceramic sculptures showcasing Tsang's signature fusion of whimsy, emotional intensity, and personal symbolism. As a backdrop to these new works, Tsang will install a large-scale wall mural, which will be drawn onsite. The spontaneous work mirrors her artistic philosophy—her works function as an ongoing diary, negotiating the complexities of bicultural identity.

Her fantastical figures, infused with Chinese symbols and personal iconography, create a new visual language within the ceramic form. A recurring motif—the panda, a revered figure in both Chinese and Western cultures—explores themes of duality, adaptation, and camouflage. The mural will weave these symbolic elements into a visual narrative of cultural inheritance, autonomy, and the 'code-switching' required to navigate different identities.

At EXPO Chicago, Tsang's installation becomes a living site of meaning-making. Her personal mythology invites viewers to reflect on their own identities, struggles, and inherited cultural narratives, positioning her work as an act of resistance, reclamation, and dialogue.

## **OUR FAMILY PORTRAIT AT CLAIRE OLIVER GALLERY**

Opening May 24, Tsang's first solo exhibition in New York City, *Our Family Portrait*, further expands on her exploration of the domestic sphere as both a site of comfort and constraint. Through humor and symbolism, her sculptural works capture the psychological complexities of family life, reflecting on transformation, resilience, and adaptation. Drawing from childhood memories, Chinese proverbs, and cultural symbols, Tsang challenges traditional family roles and societal expectations, creating an intimate yet universally resonant narrative.

Drawing (change used twice in a row) inspiration from comics, an early influence, Tsang integrates humor and playfulness to examine serious themes. Her mural will feature exaggerated forms, expressive brushwork, and directional line art to convey movement, emotion, and psychological tension. Through ceramics, rice paper, and textiles, she reclaims space—both physically and conceptually—challenging ideas of domesticity, repression, and womanhood.

Sami Tsang's work has gained international recognition, solidifying her influence in contemporary ceramics and sculpture. She has participated in prestigious residencies, including the 7th International Artist Retreat and Residency in Anhui, China, and the Harbourfront Centre Residency in Toronto. Her work has been showcased at major art fairs such as Art Toronto and EXPO Chicago, cementing her presence in both North American and global art markets.

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## **IMAGE CREDITS (L-R)**

Sami Tsang, Rotten Roots, stoneware, glaze, acrylic, thread, fabric, resin, faux fur, 28 x 27 x 12 inches | 71 x 69 x 30cm

Sami Tsang, Dark Waters, Luminescent Dreams, stoneware, glaze, glass, lace, micro-beads, embellishment, acrylic, lights bulb, socket, chain, thread, resin, faux fur, 2025, 78 x 32 x 31 inches | 198 x 81 x 79cm

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## **ABOUT SAMI TSANG**

Sami Tsang is a Toronto-based ceramic artist whose work explores domestic encounters and private narratives born out of the flux amidst two cultures – Chinese and Western. Mediated through materials and self-reflection, Tsang’s work is a raw, truthful, and spontaneous response to the artist’s feelings in a given moment. Chinese proverbs from childhood memories inspire the artist’s initial sketches. As the piece evolves, the artist draws from the different stages of her childhood and adolescence, where she often felt repressed and silenced. Tsang’s large-scale works point to the importance of representation and taking up space in connection with others. Her figurative sculptures are created from ceramics, rice paper, and textiles, creating characters that weave together domestic and psychological narratives related to the conservatism of her youth. She often references Chinese proverbs while using humor, distortion, and whimsy. Her work is a complex fusion of autobiography as a first-generation Chinese Canadian woman and symbolic markers of a common experience of the trap of domesticity and subjugation of individuality in contrast with liberation and exaltation of self-expression.

Tsang studied traditional Chinese painting for seven years in Hong Kong, which profoundly affected her pursuit of an art career. She earned her BA in Craft & Design from Sheridan College (2019) and her MFA in Ceramic Art from Alfred University, NY (2021).

## **ABOUT CLAIRE OLIVER GALLERY**

Claire Oliver Gallery is located in Central Harlem in a four-story brownstone. For nearly 25 years, Claire Oliver Gallery has showcased and celebrated artwork, with a focus on work by women and people of color, which transcends and challenges the traditional art historical canon. The gallery’s forward-thinking program and exclusive commitment to the primary market allows for an intensive focus that has nurtured and grown the careers of our artists. Many of the gallery’s artists have been included in The Venice Biennale, The Whitney Biennial, and biennales in Sydney, Pittsburgh, and Lyon and have exhibited works in major international museums including the Smithsonian American Art Museum, The Art Institute of Chicago, Centre Georges Pompidou, The Philadelphia Museum of Art, and The Los Angeles County Museum of Art amongst others. Claire Oliver Gallery artists are included in the permanent collections of many important museums worldwide including The Smithsonian American Art Museum, The Art Institute of Chicago, The Tate Britain, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The State Hermitage Museum, MoMA, and the Museum of Arts and Design amongst many others. Claire Oliver Gallery held the first American

exhibition for the Russian collaborative AES+F, whose work went on to twice represent Russia in the Russian pavilion of the Venice Biennale. Gallery artists have received prestigious fellowships including Fulbright, Guggenheim, USArtist and National Endowment for the Arts.

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