

DOUBLE CONSCIOUSNESS, DOUBLE HAPPINESS 囍 Anika Schneider



October 28 - December 7, 2024

**Benedict and Dorothy Gorecki Gallery Lounge
Benedicta Arts Center**

Double consciousness is a social philosophy originally describing the experience of black Americans post slavery. It has since become a framework of understanding oppressed peoples in an oppressive world, in which Black Americans must look at themselves through the eyes of a racist white society. Here I am using double consciousness to literally double myself, in this self-portrait. In making this exhibition, I reflect upon how my understanding of my own Chinese identity is often shaped through others' perception of me.

In my work I often double myself in various ways, to visually double my gaze of looking within myself and back at myself through another's gaze. Double happiness, 囍, visually resembles 88 making it particularly auspicious for Chinese people. While there is loss and cultural nostalgia in this work there are also moments of humor for the joy of growing up in a messy mixed immigrant family. This exhibition uses botanical and animal elements in a way that subverts, reclaims, and mirrors Europeans' invention of chinoiserie, something that is not all Chinese but is based upon Chineseness as a metaphor for my own understanding of self.

CONNECT

TOPICS AND THEMES THIS EXHIBITION ENGAGES WITH:

- Cultural connection
- Family history
- Chinoiserie
- Memories
- Mixed identity
- Visual storytelling

ONLINE RESOURCES

<https://www.csbsju.edu/fine-arts/visual-arts/>

<https://www.anikahsiungschneider.com/>

ENGAGE

Racial identity, heritage and families, whether they are blood or chosen form a huge part of who we are. The artist, Anika Schneider, identifies as Asian Mixed female, her work in this exhibition reflects on her mixed heritage and family culture. The artist uses the aesthetic of Chinoiserie, to examine her Chineseness through her American identity.

- Chinoiserie is an 18th century European aesthetic that imitated Chinese motifs for decorative use on art, furniture and architecture. How do you see this idea played out in the exhibition?
- What is the line between cultural appropriation and cultural appreciation and how has Schneider used this in the work?
- How has Schneider used color and medium in the exhibition?

Food is a language in itself; you don't have to speak the dialect of a place to enjoy the local foods. Naturally bringing people together, food and food smells unlock memories we had forgotten. Serving as icebreakers, conversation starters and the groundwork for building relationships and connecting generations.

- What food or smells take you back to your childhood? Bring you comfort or makes you feel home?
- Do you have any cultural traditions that have been passed down in your family?
- What can be shared through looking at the food of a place?

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Photo credit: Seth Dahlseid

