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Warren Chang: Voice of the Fields

*NUMU presents a stunning selection of the Monterey artist's
arresting narrative paintings of farmworkers*



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Warren Chang: Voice of the Fields: February 22 – June 16, 2019
Warren Chang: In the Artist's Studio: January 31 – April 14, 2019

LOS GATOS, CA – December 2018 – New Museum Los Gatos (NUMU) is pleased to present an exhibition of paintings by Monterey artist, Warren Chang. *Voice of the Fields* showcases Chang's large scale luminous paintings of the community who labor in the farms around the Salinas Valley. Chang was born and raised in Monterey and California's agricultural environment is part of his daily life. Influenced by the John Steinbeck tales of his youth, Warren was drawn to field workers as subjects for his recent series of paintings. *Voices of the Fields* will be on view in NUMU's Spotlight Gallery from February 22 through June 16, 2019. An Opening Reception for the exhibition will be held on Saturday, February 23rd from 2-4pm.

A contemporary realist whose primary focus is figurative, Warren's striking series of paintings of farmworkers provides a revelatory glimpse into the communal experience and hard physical labor of producing our food. The lives and experiences of farmworker families often tend to be invisible, even though their labor supports some of the most productive agricultural land in the country. Chang skillfully depicts the old and young, men and women, hoeing, pruning, harvesting, at break time, and leaving the fields at day's end. Deeply personal yet forthright, these beautifully realized paintings compel our attention and empathy to tell an important story that has been too long overlooked.

Chang will also be the featured artist in NUMU's *In the Artist's Studio* exhibition series from January 31 through April 14, 2019 in the Mike and Alyce Parsons Reception Area. The exhibition presents an introduction to Chang's work, and creative process. Visitors will see the Artist's sketchbooks, art making tools, personal items, and photographs of his private studio space, which is rarely open to the public. Chang will also conduct an informal presentation and demonstration of his artmaking process at NUMU on Saturday, April 13, from 2-3pm.

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Monterey Bay Area artist Warren Chang's arresting narrative paintings of farmworkers are deeply rooted in ordinary life and in the specific observations of his surroundings. This approach may rest uneasily within contemporary art trends, yet it confirms Chang's work as authentic to the scope of life in the Salinas Valley and on the Monterey Peninsula where he was born, works, and lives. Chang embraced the daily lives of farmworkers as his theme long before the current political environment generated a renewed awareness of such issues. In this, he is both a descendent and comrade of a line of nineteenth and early twentieth century artists who joined social concerns to their creative endeavors, and so doing, redirected the trajectory of Western art. The clear-eyed, unsentimental honesty and elemental regard Chang imparts to his subjects reflects this lineage, and is both rare and newly relevant. He draws attention to these all too often overlooked lives, and reveals their heroism and value with understanding and grace.

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Warren Chang was born and raised in Monterey, California. He graduated from the Art Center College of Design in Pasadena in 1981, where he earned a B. F. A. with honors in Illustration. He went on to a successful twenty-year career as an illustrator in both New York and California, and taught at the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, and the Academy of Art University in San Francisco. He continues to be an in-demand and popular teacher for museums, universities, and art guilds throughout California.

Almost twenty years ago Warren transitioned away from illustration to fine art painting, studying in New York with Max Ginsburg. He belongs to the Oil Painters of America—the largest organization of its kind in the U.S.—and was one of only fifty to receive the honor of a Master Signature membership. He has been both the subject and writer of articles in numerous magazines, including *International Artist*, *American Art Collector*, *Communication Arts Illustration Annual* and *Fine Art Connoisseur*. His work has appeared in multiple exhibition catalogs including *Exhibition of American Realism*, Butler Institute of American Art, *Painting California Seascapes and Beach Towns: Paintings of the California Art Club*, *Contemporary American Realism*, *Beijing World Art Museum*, and solo exhibition catalog *Monterey Now: Warren Chang*, *Monterey Museum of Art*.

Image 1: Warren Chang, *Lunch Break*, Oil on canvas, 40” by 24”, Courtesy of Monterey Museum of Art

Image 2: Warren Chang’s studio (detail), Courtesy of the artist

Warren Chang: Voice of the Fields is generously supported by Winfield Gallery.

NUMU’s *In the Artist’s Studio* exhibition series supports NUMU’s mission to share stories in new ways. Most people do not have the opportunity to visit an artist’s studio and learn firsthand how artwork is made, and more importantly why it is made. Through this series NUMU offers insight into the practice of artmaking and shares with the community the

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Warren Chang: In the Artist’s Studio: January 31 – April 14, 2019

ingenuity, intelligence and empathy that goes into the creative process.

In the Artist's Studio exhibition series is generously supported by the Borgenicht Foundation that works to promote the understanding of secularism as the way and hope for establishing peace in the world. In addition, the Foundation supports social justice, conservation and historic preservation, the arts, health, and education.

About New Museum Los Gatos

New Museum Los Gatos (NUMU), formerly The Museums of Los Gatos founded in 1965, is a public non-profit art and history museum located in the Civic Center Plaza in downtown Los Gatos. NUMU's mission is to engage the community at the intersection of art, history and education through innovative, locally connected and globally relevant exhibitions, programs and experiences. Visit: numulosgatos.org

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