Drawn In: Caren King Choi
Curated by Caren King Choi & Candace Nicholson

Jan 29 - Apr 1, 2022
Gallery Aferro
Eleta J. Caldwell and Rodney M. Gilbert Memorial Gallery
73 Market Street, Newark

Opening Reception
February 5th, 2022
6pm - 10pm

Gallery Hours
Wednesday - Saturday
12pm - 6pm
and by appointment

Drawn In is an exhibition that presents two visually divergent bodies of work by one artist. Caren King Choi applies drastically different techniques from the meditative and studied Red Portraits to the quick and humorous Motherhood Doodles.

Red Portraits presents in absorbing detail the features of ordinary Chinese Americans, inviting viewers to pause and contemplate the kinds of faces that are typically skimmed over, caricatured, or excluded. Made by overlapping thousands of stickers, the portraits resolve into seemingly straightforward images, smooth and luminescent. Up close, they look chaotic, scaly, and jagged.

In stark contrast, Motherhood Doodles are specific to the artist’s life, but echo the universal and often invisible experience of parenting. Dispensing with backgrounds, colors, and most detail, Choi explores the expressive possibilities behind a quick and sometimes sloppy pen stroke. Both collections demand a closer look, engaging viewers with subjects they may otherwise fail to notice.
Caren King Choi is a Chinese-Taiwanese-American artist, illustrator, and writer born and raised in New Jersey. Her multimedia artistic practice has taken many forms: intricate portraits, personal essays, hand-sewn dolls, life-size drawings, poetry, flipbooks, and lots and lots of doodles. A sense of playfulness and wry observation often permeate her work, as do moments of stillness and reflection.

Choi's artwork has appeared in exhibitions at a variety of venues including the Pollak Gallery, Newark Arts Festival, Gallery at 14 Maple, William Paterson University Gallery, Express Newark, Gallery Aferro, Akwaaba Gallery, and the Newark Museum of Art.

After 10 years of working as an arts administrator, educator, and program director at the Paul Robeson Galleries in Newark, NJ, Choi started a new career in 2018 as a full-time mom and homemaker.

She is the author and illustrator of two self-published books: Every Day Something New: Doodles by a New Mom (2019) and Let It Happen: Doodles From A Parent's First Year (2021). Choi lives and works in Fair Lawn, NJ.