

## About the Artist:



**Tran Tran** (she/her/they/them) is an interdisciplinary artist based in Chicago. Tran was born in Saigon, Vietnam in 1995 and immigrated to San Jose, CA in 2004. After receiving her BFA in Pictorial Arts from San Jose State University in 2017, Tran moved to Chicago and turned her focus from painting and print-making to clay. Her experiments with ceramics were further advanced through the Hyde Park Art Center's Ceramic Apprenticeship from 2019 to 2021. Through her drawing, painting, ceramics, design, photography, to artificial intelligence and beyond, she explores nuances between the immaterial and the physical where the universal life force, or magic, seems palpable. The observation of mundane objects, meditation on everyday experiences, and intuition are the navigational tools of her practice.

Many of the artworks on view are available for purchase through the Hyde Park Art Center. Pricelists are available at the front desk. If interested, contact [macuna@hydeparkart.org](mailto:macuna@hydeparkart.org).

## Hyde Park **ARTCENTER**

5020 South Cornell Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60615 773.324.5520 [www.hydeparkart.org](http://www.hydeparkart.org). Hyde Park Art Center is a unique resource that advances contemporary visual art in Chicago by connecting artists and communities in unexpected ways. The Art Center is funded in part by the: Alphawood Foundation; Andy Warhol Foundation for Visual Arts; a City Arts III grant from the City of Chicago's Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events; Field Foundation of Illinois; Harpo Foundation; Harper Court Arts Council; Illinois Arts Council, a state agency; The Irving Harris Foundation; The Joyce Foundation; Leo S. Guthman Fund; Lloyd A. Fry Foundation; MacArthur Fund for Arts and Culture at Prince; Polk Bros. Foundation; Searle Funds at The Chicago Community Trust; and the generosity of people like you.

## *Tran Tran: Moments in Between*

Gallery 2 and Cleve Carney Gallery  
October 11 - November 24, 2021



Installation view of *Tran Tran: Moments in Between*, 2021. Photography by Tom van Eynde.

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Installation view of *Tran Tran: Moments in Between*, 2021. Photography by Tom van Eynde.

*Moments In Between* presents new work by interdisciplinary artist Tran Tran made during their year-long Ceramics Apprenticeship at the Art Center in 2020. The body of work exhibited exemplifies Tran's unique approach to ceramics which both informs and is informed by the artist's explorations of form across media. Distinct organic forms appear repeatedly in several works in the exhibition, sometimes as artificial-intelligence generated images, drawings, and sculptures.

**Mariela Acuna (MA):** [You have a background in printmaking and painting. Could you share about your shift to ceramics and to the interdisciplinary practice you have now?](#)

Tran Tran (TT): Through printmaking, painting, and photography, I was transfixed with capturing moments of immateriality. My obsession with ephemerality somehow felt unwhole until I started working with clay. Clay is such a physical medium. It guides me to meditate deeply about materiality and its relationship with the ephemeral. The expansion from two-dimensional media to involve ceramics steered my focus to the nuances between the physical and the immaterial. I used to think that magic lives only in the immaterial makeup of things, but now it feels like magic lives everywhere, in the immaterial and material aspects of things and beyond them.

**MA:** [What do you find so exciting about AI generated images? Is it the freedom to make/imagine/transform?](#)

TT: The AI world is fascinating to me because it represents endless possibilities. Generating AI images is daunting but also so alluring because of the ambiguous factors within the program and process. I gravitated towards Art Breeder (a free online platform for breeding AI visuals) because it is so

accessible. I became enthralled by it because the process intertwines with my work. The program transcends physical barriers and combines the essential characteristics of things together. The results sometimes carry a feeling that is weirdly spiritual. It is almost like a very literal way of conveying the idea that everything is essentially connected.

**MA:** [Is that where the title of the exhibition comes from? What are the \*Moments in Between\*?](#)

TT: *Moments in Between* refers to the moments when things are undergoing transformation. Things may exist in between states of duality like physical vs. immaterial, one versus multitudes, reality versus magic, order versus chaos. The title is an acknowledgement that those dualities help us simplify and describe things but also recognize that the nuances within all things are not so easily categorized. Maybe sometimes people, things, places, and moments should not be placed in categories and should be seen and recognized on a level beyond words or thoughts.

**MA:** [Sharing your work with the Art Center's community has been so rewarding because many students and staff have seen your practice develop over the years. Could you share a little about your experience as a Ceramics Apprentice?](#)

TT: I can't say enough good things about the apprenticeship. I learned a lot of technical skills, but what makes me feel most empowered is the people and the community. I couldn't have dreamt of a more supportive environment to nurture my love for clay. Both Joe and Angela have been encouraging at every step of the way. Now that my apprenticeship has ended, they are still my cheerleaders. They helped me set up my home studio and offer advice whenever I feel lost. I've also learned so much from community members and class takers. We are not shy about sharing our successes and failures in the studio, so it's very easy to learn something new there. Clay, glaze, kiln, and firing can be scary to tackle by yourself, but when it feels like you have a whole village supporting you it's so exciting.

*Moments In Between* was curated by Mariela Acuña, Exhibitions and Residency Coordinator, in collaboration with Tran Tran.



Installation view of *Tran Tran: Moments in Between*, 2021. Photography by Tran Tran.