

THE MOST GENTLE REBELLION

Artist: Catalina Cheng



[Spanish Version](#) / [English version](#)

Being young, whatever that means for each individual, is exhausting. The cruelty of the world is normalized, seniority has an apparent privilege, and the solution to anxiety is nothing but apathy. The younger generations have inherited a world that is transparently murky, socially lonely, economically poor, and humanly inhumane. Every day we hear reasons to be bitter, the endless violence of the news that we cannot escape; whether on television, radio or the internet, it ends up overwhelming us.

Catalina Cheng's works are fantastic, because they are visually gentle, but with that hint of smouldering irony that gives them an importance that goes beyond decoration. They recall that ancient kitsch heritage shared by our Latin cultures, of those houses of our aunts or grandparents, full of strange ceramic creatures, and objects that are the antithesis of modern design, being visual before useful and being interesting before beautiful. Fortunately,

One day you're happy, and then you remember that the bees are going extinct, the poles are melting, the antibiotics will soon stop working and that a murderer was arrested three blocks from where you buy tortillas. Here you have two options; You can cover yourself with Batman blankets for three days, fill yourself deeply with hatred and resentment, and emerge as a new you, ready to fight tooth and nail in the comments of your preferred social network. Maybe you buy those ripped pants that always caught your eye but that your old self was not rebellious enough to wear. Maybe you dye your hair, grow a mustache, or stop wearing a bra. If you already did any of these things, congratulations, the insurrection was always within you. Or, you can buy yourself a ceramic cat online.

Catalina's pieces are interesting and at the same time attractive, but what they convey to me the most is a tranquility that I often need in my life. They make fun of industrial design, minimalism, seriousness, and they do it at the same time that they excite my neurons, and they tell me that almost anything everything is going to be fine. Their art intelligently uses that iconic webcomic language in a physical format, it's an art that hugs you while making fun of your ripped pants because your legs and your face are a different color. This year you go to the beach.



We need that gentle revolution, the uprising for ordinary people, who cannot become activists because they are introverts, they have depression and they get puffy when they eat bread; for those who pay Netflix just to watch the same series as always, and are getting married thanks to Tinder; for those who would fight against the oligarchy, if they did not live from paycheck to paycheck. Our society is cruel, our personal context doesn't have to be. Our rebellion becomes personal, but above all gentle with others and with us, and mocking towards the established structure.

I long to surround myself with mocking and soft art, of that elevated Kitsch, which is carefully gifted with identity, which makes me miss things that I have not experienced and makes me feel that I am not alone. Of that Kitsch that doesn't come from the cultural stereotype created by the globalized world, I desire personal Kitsch, which comes from someone processing her identity, and helps me reflect mine. I want an art that does not judge me, but tries to understand itself, and for the same reason encourages me to try to understand myself, I want an art that makes me feel that it was made by a friend. In a world that punishes empathy

and individuality while rewarding individualism, ceramic cats are the weapons of the middle class, irony is the cry of freedom. The Che of our generation drinks lemon tea with honey because the peppermint tea irritates his throat.

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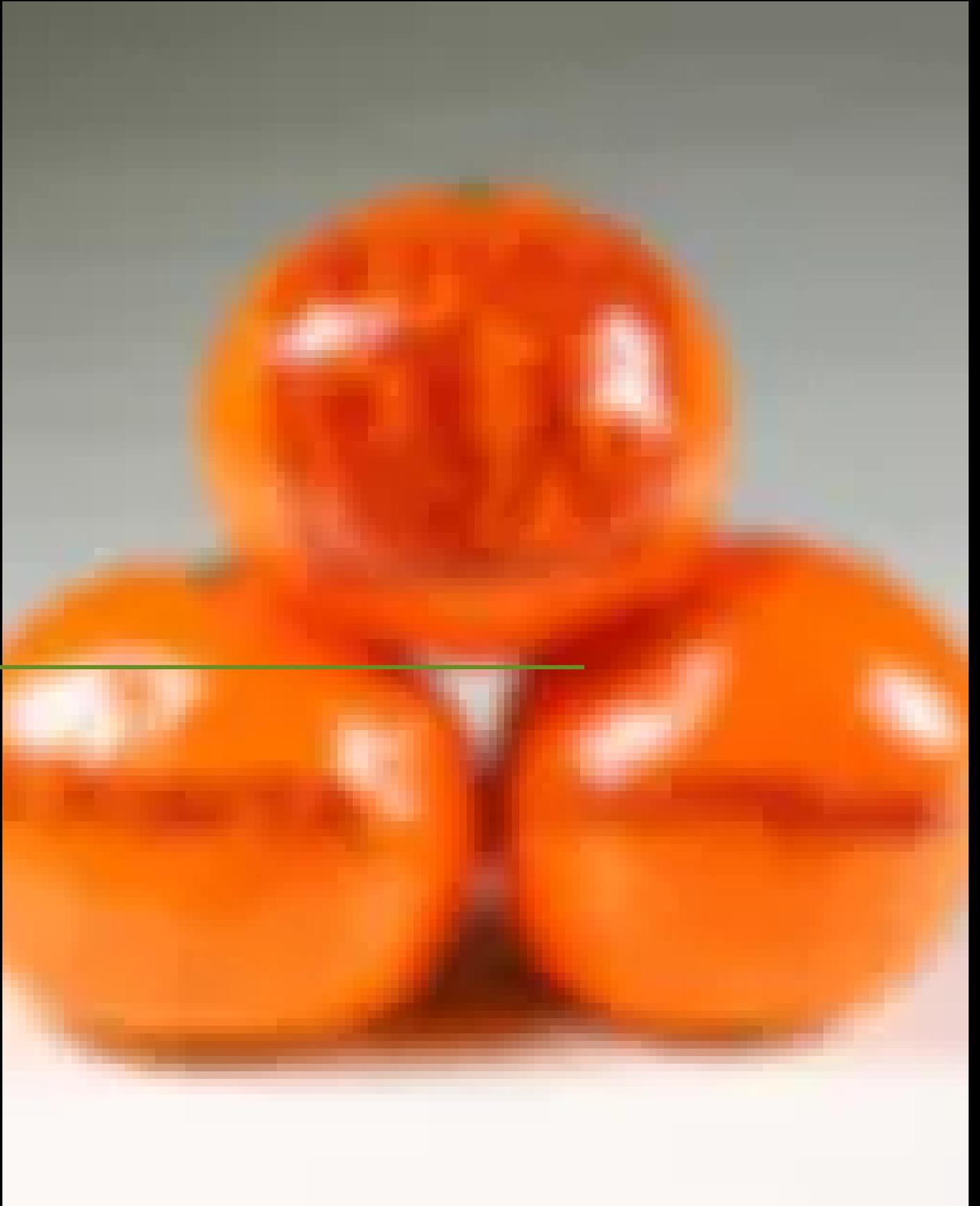
The rebellion of today is to get up and continue living, despite everything, of intimate or social problems, the rebellion is to stubbornly seek happiness, although it never arrives, and plague everything that surrounds us of our individuality. Enough with the corny talk, the point is that this is a visually pleasing, ironic, approachable and mostly sincere art. If you've already looked in your closet and you only have Spiderman blankets, I open this other option, look for your own gentle insurrection, that which calms you, makes you human, makes you laugh. If you still want to paint your hair, no one is going to judge you, I swear you look good. Reveal yourself against your own prejudices, dare to wear that crop top that has been in your closet for three years; That sweatshirt will be pink, but of course it looks beautiful.

The solution to this anxiety that affects everybody is to find a way to deal with reality. The menocore, for example, is a trend where young women model their lifestyle and wardrobe to the one of high class women. Wide clothing in shades of white to beige, big belts and huge hats, they play to possess what is not within their reach, the economic and social stability of past generations through the aesthetic that characterizes them. That is not only a very valid solution but it has also proven results, in the art world that solution would be to find a decent imitation of a Rothko, hang it in your living room and pretend that you have all your credit cards paid. Catalina Cheng's art is on the other side of the spectrum; is to assume your youth, insolence and inexperience as something positive, unique and valid, something innovative. It's honestly refreshing, self-seeking and acceptance is the biggest insurrection.



By: Ernesto Ocaña

Translated by: Pao Berdeja





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contacte con nosotros

[contáctenos](#)

ciudad de méxico. méxico
muda@museodeartes.org

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