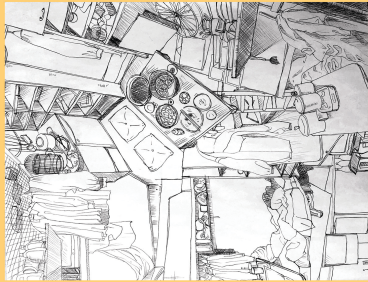




History:

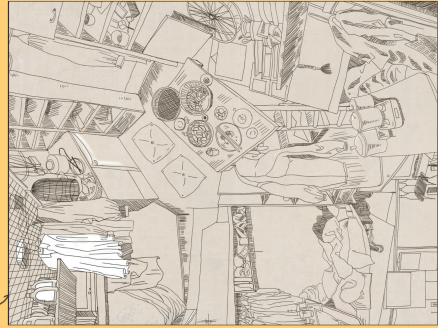
The issue has been existing for at least three generations of Chinese immigrants. Immigrants from southern parts of China, especially from Fujian province, flock into cities like NYC, looking for opportunities since the late 19th century and early 20th century. This cycle is still continuing nowadays. However, with language and cultural barriers, these Chinese immigrants have not been able to step out the cubicle homes, preventing them from being hired. Thus the poverty cycle continues.

I did a sketch of sketchbook, then traced it on photoshop, then added a layer of watercolor silk.



Impact:

As my monument portrays the living conditions in side the cubicles these Chinese immigrants are living in, hopefully, this monument can raise awareness of the poverty issue in Chinatown. People will be able to have an insight into the lives and living conditions of Chinese immigrants living in New York City and be able to help them. Help them with welfare, providing more training, job opportunities and better treatment in general. Hopefully, this monument will be able to raise more government attention to the issue and find solutions for them to walk out from the poverty cycle.



Purpose of the Project:

As a girl who has lived her life in Hong Kong for a long period of time, I have realized myself being drawn by the feeling of home in Chinatown after moving to Manhattan. Walking along the streets in Chinatown, everything feels so familiar.

Back at home, I did a school project about the cage homes in Hong Kong. Due to the extremely high housing prices, lack of lands, and the huge income gap exist in Hong Kong, many less wealthy residences on this island have to wait years and years for public housing. However, the majority of these residences are not so lucky to be able to make it on the list. Therefore, cage-like homes exist in large areas in older parts of Hong Kong. These cages are less than 15 square feet and are stacked up together one by one. This situation is very serious, and these people need to be helped immediately, and yet the government is not doing enough.

When I heard about the cubicles in Chinatown, it immediately made me think of the cage homes in Hong Kong. Poverty drove these Chinese immigrants to live in small office cubicles. The problem has been addressed in the past, however unsuccessfully. The media coverage is not as strong as it should be. Therefore, this project is a way to help readdress this issue, to make people aware of the poverty that's happening in this community, and work as a platform for them to reach out and be helped.

Description of the materials:

In this monument, I will be using some very traditional Chinese techniques to resonate with the community. The monument will be a silk scroll style painting that is very large and noticeable.

In order to show the history of China and Chinatown, I will be using worn out silk as my canvases, which has a yellowish color and a rougher texture.

On top of the silk, I will be illustrating the living conditions in the cubicles, merging a number of different homes together from different perspectives, thus, demonstrating a throughout impression of the poverty situation in Chinatown. The material I will be using to paint this scroll painting is stone colors, which is a traditional Chinese method used in cave murals and other traditional Chinese silk paintings centuries ago. The paints are made out of stone of different colors, crush them into powder and mix with water until it becomes a paste. Then use these paints to create paintings. The colors can be very flexible, depending on the consistency of the paste and the quality of the stone. This material can vividly illustrate the painting, it is decorative, realistic and cultural.

Description of onsite research:

I have thought about various different locations in Chinatown for the placement of this monument. Mainly focusing on the tourist attractions, where the heaviest flows of people are. I was originally battling between three different locations in Chinatown, one right at the crossing in front of the Hong Kong Supermarket, since that's where people go for grocery shopping, and it's one of the biggest supermarkets in Chinatown. The other location I was also considering was in front of one of the entrances of Columbus Park. Also taken into consideration the people coming in and out of the park for walks throughout the day. Then I expanded my walk to the outer rink of Chinatown, where I can still see many Chinese stores, some of the entrance to the center of Chinatown, along Canal's street, then I realized a huge space on the side of a building next to Sheraton Hotel. It's at one of the busiest locations and a very obvious location. It will be unavoidable to notice, which seems like the perfect place to put this monument.

Original location of the drawing. Shows the dimensions for 100' palette and the area where might want the monument.



Why is this needed now:

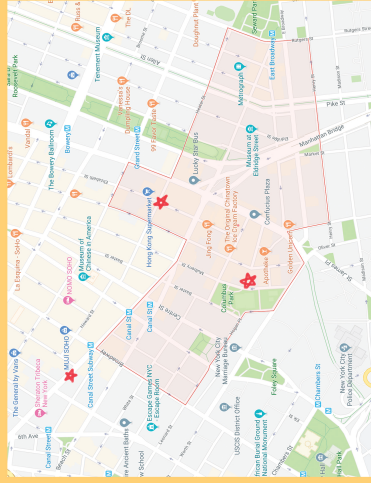
This monument is needed to reveal the hidden side of Chinatown. Poverty has been a recurring issue in this community, however, the issue of housing is especially severe and seldom discussed. Most of the people I have talked to did not even know cubicles existed. To me, it is not a foreign concept since Hong Kong has been having similar issues for decades. Instead of the cubicles, Hong Kong's over flooding number of people has skyrocketed the housing prices and forced many of its residences to live in cage homes, even smaller than the cubicles in Chinatown here in New York.

This issue has been with Chinatown for a very long time, however, while I was researching, I have realized the lack of media coverage on the topic. In my opinion, issues with immigrants like this should be covered more and be recognized. Therefore, monuments like this are needed now.

This monument can work as a reminder that there are these immigrants out there that need help, it helps people to realize the devastating reality of some of the poorest residents in this community. People can come to this monument to learn about the stories of these Chinese immigrants who have lived in cubicles that are 64 square feet in average for generations. The monument can also help to spread awareness of this dire situation.

Location:

I have walked all around Chinatown and even the outer rink of Chinatown, after careful consideration, instead of locating my monument at the center of Chinatown, I have decided to put it at one of the busiest streets and entrance to Chinatown. Even though the location is not in Chinatown, it's closely attached to Chinatown. People from all over the city and world visiting Chinatown come through this street, Canal's Street. While I was walking along to street into Chinatown, I found a perfect building, which has a blank side without windows. The location is very obvious and unavoidable. Therefore, it looks like the perfect place to hang my silk scroll painting. So that people everywhere can see it, and notice the issue.



CIARA LIU

CHINESE IMMIGRANTS MONUMENT - CHINATOWN