

***NEW/NOW***  
***Jennifer Wen Ma: An Inward Sea***  
New Britain Museum of American Art  
May 6 – October 24, 2021



**As part of the New Britain Museum of American Art’s *NEW/NOW* series featuring contemporary artists, the Museum will present *Jennifer Wen Ma: An Inward Sea* from May 6 to October 24, 2021, and invites local residents and workers to participate by sharing their voices in the exhibition.**

We invite you to participate in this exhibition by sharing your experience of the past year, of the COVID-19 pandemic, extensive lockdowns and periods of isolation, economic hardship, social unrest or anything else that has made an impact on your life. With this project we are asking, “*What should we remember, and what would it be dangerous to forget—as a community, as families, as individuals—about the past year?*” We invite you to share what you’ve experienced, what you now know that you didn’t before, and what you would like to keep from this year going forward. We invite you to join us in building this important record of our shared and unique experiences.

**The Exhibition:**

Presented in the NBMAA’s William L. and Bette Batchelor Gallery, *An Inward Sea* transforms the entire gallery into a reflective space, with a luminous moon projected above a vast glistening sea. Made of black cut-paper waves tipped in gold, the sea evokes traditional Chinese landscape painting; and the undulating wave formation, that audiences are invited to walk through, serves as metaphor for the difficult terrain we are navigating. Two glass pendulums swing freely over the sea, in and out of rhythm; their kinetic motions create a release and tension, psychologically activating the space with a sense of potential collision and danger.

The moon, like a theatrical spotlight, sets a poetic stage upon which portraits of local residents are projected. The black and white profiles resemble 19th century silhouette portraits, capturing the speakers' likeness while preserving privacy and identity. The stories are of isolation and otherness, community and togetherness, and personal experiences of the pandemic and beyond that reveal the human condition. The recordings will also live on an archived database, creating an individual and collective history for the city of New Britain and the New Britain Museum of American Art, and a portrait of an American city during this challenging and unprecedented time.