

Basic Detail Report

Title Interview with Irene Pham

Date 8 November 2024

Primary Maker Irene Pham

Medium born digital audio file

Description Audio file of interview with Irene Pham. They were interviewed by Lana Phan on 8 November 2024 over Zoom as part of the Connecticut Museum of Culture and History's Community History Project discussing moments of change in their life. Irene Pham recalls two moments of significant change in their life. First, they recall the time after the COVID-19 Pandemic lockdown, when they moved onto campus and met a diverse range of people. Second, they remember the times when they watched the movies, "Turning Red" and "Everything Everywhere All at Once." Irene states, "I felt that there was a connection between me and this other person behind the screen," this person being the creator of those movies. Additionally, Irene discusses how their upbringing as the eldest daughter in a conservative Asian household led to their constant people-pleasing, which negatively impacted their relationship with art. For instance, they explain that they spent a lot of time developing their technical art skills but lost themselves along the way because they were following this "fake idea of what an artist should be." Part of Irene's interest in visual narratives stems from their interest in anime and manga with not only main characters but also side characters that would encounter a problem and learn how to keep going despite it. For a long time, Irene did not know what story they wanted to

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tell. Initially, they thought they had “nothing” to tell because they did not think that their life could be its own story. Now, they know that their story can reflect their life. Specifically, Irene states that art is “making a statement about something that affects you or affects other people.” Thus, many of their visual narratives are about the relationship between them and their mother, how they look in their mother’s eyes, family, and society. To explore who they were as a person and an artist, they had to break free from the pressures in their life. One of their published comics is "Sore Waters," which won the Long River Review Award at UCONN. Irene admires their constant drive to ask questions about themselves and society. Question-asking is a large part of their process for creating art and telling their narrative.

Dimensions Duration: 58 Minutes, 14 Seconds