

Artist statement:

Sammy's Nail Salon

These portraits were taken before the pandemic hit, from the days when I went to Sammy's Nail Salon every three weeks. The store was Chinese-owned, and the nail technicians reminded me of the women chatting and laughing in my neighborhood back home. Once I told them I'm here for college, they would always ask how I am doing in school and if I need any help living by myself. They treated me like I was their family.

I once had an assignment to portray a specific profession, and I decided to focus on these Chinese women in the salon. It was the least I could do to give more credit to this forgotten occupation, which is actually so important in America. In the future, I will try my best to document more Asian-Americans that work jobs where they often encounter racism and always stand with my Asian community in America.