Chloe Wise is a Montreal-born, New York-based artist who works across the realms of sculpture, painting, drawing, video, and large-scale mixed media installations. She also maintains an active presence on social media, where her renown and notoriety have criss-crossed with her somewhat meteoric rise as a contemporary artist. Gallerist/curator Jeffrey Deitch describes Wise’s various projects and personas as communicating an “updated Pop Art aesthetic”: “She has leapfrogged the conventional system of freshman gallery shows and earnest reviews by creating her own ‘brand’ on YouTube and Instagram. She is part of the new generation who is using the latest communication technology to make the conventional art consensus system almost obsolete.”¹ There is some truth to Deitch’s observations in this regard, for the first work that brought international attention to Wise’s creation occurred not in the context of a gallery but rather a fashion show when, in 2014, actor and model India Menuez attended a Chanel event with Karl

¹ Jeffrey Deitch, “Concrete Comedy,” in Jeffrey Deitch, Loreta Lamargese, and Eric Wareheim, Chloe Wise (Montreal: Division Gallery and Galerie Sébastien Bertrand, 2016), 8-9.
Sculptures and paintings of food are a mainstay within the oeuvre of Chloe Wise who argues that by making her hyper-realistic renderings of pasta, or more specifically a stacked lasagna on slim marble in *Who Am I To Make You Stay?* (2016), for example, or two plates of modeled Greek salad connected by a metal chain in *Greeks on a Leash* (2016), she is doing no more than pursuing themes consistent throughout Western art history: “Food interests me for the same reason artists through history have focused on it,” she says. “Transience, mutability, rot, decay: because it will be eaten, it will become poop. It’s a morbid reminder of the state of our body.” As writer Kevin West suggests, “[Wise’s] sculptures check off the Old Masters’ shopping list of bourgeois prosperity: oysters, figs and melons, cheese, silver serving dishes. But something is off in her careful arrangements.”

Indeed, Wise’s artistic representations of food that she creates by hand in her Lower East Side studio, often in marathon working sessions of eight to twelve hours a day, present decadence on a register that exploits ideas of abundance, only to end in an abject mess. Her work explicitly references art historical traditions of the Dutch Still Life, *vanitas* and *memento mori*, updated in her case to an aesthetic open to the incongruities of an age of rampant consumer capitalism and the voracious marketing of sexuality and desire, where everything, including one’s always impending death, promises to be deferred. This realm is also one that is highly gendered, “Part of it is how women are addressed in the media, like, ‘You want to lose weight, you want to be healthy, you want to be the best you.’ For men it’s like, ‘Enjoy yourself’. For women it’s like, ‘Cut back’. And it truly affects us.” Finally, for Wise – upholding a mantle bequeathed by the Warhol of *Pop Life* – the trappings of present-day consumerism are inescapable and riddled with inevitable contradiction. As she explains, “I use food to explore issues that are not necessarily related to it, such as sexuality, identity, class and gender. So many of these topics can be unpacked through mundane aspects of our lives. The movement towards health-conscious eating is a hilarious point of departure for me, because I certainly subscribe to this, and I also love/hate the modes of advertising associated with it. I’m highly critical of the inconsistencies that can be found if you scratch the surface of the health food industry. For example, quinoa literally deforests South America – but is deemed a superfood, so it allows us a ‘moral, green life’. I think that we can examine social construction through these habits.”

Please cite in the following manner:

3. As quoted in, Pressler, “The Carb Artist of Her Generation.”
5. West, “Will Work With Food.”
6. As quoted in, Pressler, “The Carb Artist of Her Generation.”
7. The reference here is to the Tate Modern exhibition *Pop Life: Art in a Material World* that was on view at the NGC from 11 June – 19 September 2010 and re-evaluated the legacy of late Warhol, i.e. the period after he had fully embraced the realm of advertising, entertainment and his own celebrity status.
Jonathan Shaughnessy, Acquisition Proposal for Chloe Wise’s *Olive Garden of Eden* and *Farewell Sighed Echo Too*, accession #48505 and #48506, Curatorial File, National Gallery of Canada.