

PearlLam Galleries

Hong Kong

‘After Time’ Chung Seoyoung, Erica Lai, and Morgan Wong

Curated by David Ho Yeung Chan



Left: Erica Lai (b. 1981), **The Observatory Series No. 5** (2008-14), Archival pigment prints on Hahnemule William Turner paper, 101.6 x 81.3 cm (40 x 32 in.), Edition of 5

Centre: Morgan Wong (b. 1984), **Frustration of Having More than Two Choices to Make in Life** (2013), Video, 9'36"

Right: Chung Seoyoung (b. 1964), **East, West, South, North** (2007), Steel, wheels, Dimension variable.

Exhibition Dates

25 July–10 September, 2014

Monday–Saturday, 10am–7pm

Press Preview: Thursday, 24 July, 2014, 5–6pm

Opening reception: Thursday, 24 July, 2014, 6–8pm

Pearl Lam Galleries, 601–605, 6/F, Pedder Building, 12 Pedder Street, Central, Hong Kong

“While spatial escape may be possible, temporal escape is not.” —Paul Virilio

Hong Kong—Pearl Lam Galleries is proud to present *After Time*, a group exhibition curated by David Ho Yeung Chan, featuring works by Chung Seoyoung (Seoul), Erica Lai (Singapore), and Morgan Wong (Hong Kong). In this fast-paced world, we are often slaves to time—trying to keep up and in need of more, which can be a mind-numbing pursuit. But what if the constraint of time were no longer relevant? How would this alter our perception of an art object? This exhibition explores temporality in art by attempting to stage a temporal arrest with a series of art objects. A state of omnipresence will be simulated in the hope of provoking audiences to contemplate the link between materiality, time, and memory. Audiences are invited to negotiate between following their hearts and their minds when looking at artwork.

Chung's sculptures, Lai's photography, and Wong's performance art all approach time and objecthood from a formal perspective. In his seminal essay "Art and Objecthood", art historian Michael Fried defines objecthood as the supplementary conditions that entice the viewers to participate in a conscious situation in real time. As such, this show aims to create such an environment through three distinct spaces within the gallery: a theatrical space that questions our perception of time, a space for mapping the changes of a given place, and an artist studio.

Chung Seoyoung's sculpture, installation, and video works utilise manmade and found objects and relate them to the human body, questioning their effects on our psychology. The artist believes that sculpture is an intimate form of expression with its meaning in constant flux; viewers must confront the artwork's objective nature as it unfolds. Chung's works disturb the perceptual systems of representation by reinterpreting familiar objects and landscapes. Her large-scale sculpture *East West North South* amplifies the theatrical quality of the gallery space by demarcating a void territory for imposing spatial control using steel fences. Not corresponding to the exact orientation of the gallery, the artwork distorts our geographic bearings and holds our attention in a contained zone, which causes us to question our own relationship with time.

The flatness of Erica Lai's photographic prints from *The Gardens Series* and *The Observatory Series* conveys the collapse of geographic distance and our subsequent loss of visual memory. She deconstructs the audience's voyeuristic power with the photograph's surface becoming a controlled ground for mediating our psychological conflict intrinsic with visual perception. In *The Observatory Series*, Lai photographs the vantage points of various tourist attractions around the world, focusing on the area where one would typically stand for a good view instead of the actual scenic view, to investigate the extent to which our identification with a place has been predetermined. By stepping back to document the very spot that makes a tourist attraction a spectacle in the first place, Lai subverts the objective of armchair tourism, as the landmarks may not be immediately recognisable in her photos.

Focusing on durational performance, Morgan Wong's collection of past and new works addresses human survival and time, particularly as a reaction against conforming to a social or political norm. He will transform the gallery space into a temporary artist studio, which he will occupy periodically, to examine what is lost during the translation between performance, time, and materiality. The artist's 2013 video work *Frustration of Having More than Two Choices to Make in Life* documents his intensive meditative days of isolation, where all Wong did for two days was confine himself to an empty space with a steel bar and hand file with little activity. Initially intended as practice for a later public performance titled *Filing Down A Steel Bar Until A Needle Is Made*, a reference to a Chinese allegory revolving around one's will and determination, the experience became a performance video in and of itself.

Pearl Lam, Founder of Pearl Lam Galleries, says, "We are very excited to be presenting another strongly curated exhibition at Pearl Lam Galleries Hong Kong. Instead of restricting our understanding of these artists in relation to their cultural background or nationality, *After Time* is a group show that incorporates a formal and art historical approach to shed light on the richness and intellectual nuances of three dynamic artists from Asia."

About Chung Seoyoung

Born in Seoul, Korea in 1964, Chung Seoyoung is an artist who emphasises the arbitrariness and rootlessness of things that tend to be profound and absurd. She adapts clear and specific objects as material beings and combines this specificity with ambiguity in order to create a sense of tension. Chung was at the forefront of the artists whose work truly began to show the symptoms of change in South Korean contemporary art in the early 1990s, and she has been consistently working in varied genres including sculpture, installation, drawing, and performance. Chung has held several solo exhibitions in Seoul and Portikus, Frankfurt and her installations have been shown widely around the world in group exhibitions, as well as the 50th Venice Biennale and the 7th Gwangju Biennale.

About Erica Lai

Born in Singapore in 1981, Lai's photography practice revolves around her ambiguous inhabitation of a variety of categorical spaces. Lai wants to show audiences how visual art can

be linked and expanded with other art forms. She intends to bridge Singapore history with literature and visual art, as well as raise issues relating to urban landscape and spatial boundaries, while also depicting the struggle between man and nature. Lai has exhibited her photographic works in Singapore and the US. In 2010, she was the recipient of an artist residency at the Banff Centre in Calgary, Canada. Her latest body of work, *Old Man and the Sea*, was presented as part of the Singapore Biennale in 2013. Lai is currently the Course Leader of the Fine Art Photography and Degree programs at Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts.

About Morgan Wong

Morgan Wong (b. 1984, Hong Kong) focuses in durational performance and temporality with pieces ranging from performance, video, and installation to works on paper. He studied Creative Media at City University, Hong Kong, and received his MFA from Slade School of Fine Art, University College London. Previous solo shows include *Filing Down a Steel Bar Until a Needle Is Made* (2013), Tintype Gallery, London, UK; *One Hour* (2011), 2P Contemporary Art Gallery, Hong Kong; *Untitled—Agnosia Series I* (2011), Videotage, Hong Kong; *A Story of an Eel Chef* (2010), Oyoyo Art Center, Sapporo, Japan; and *Once You Were Here* (2009), Para Site Central, Hong Kong. He has exhibited in group exhibitions at ZKM Media Museum in Karlsruhe, Germany; Tate Modern, London, UK; and the Hong Kong Museum of Art, among other institutions.

About David Ho Yeung Chan

David Ho Yeung Chan is a curator based in Hong Kong and Shanghai. With Pearl Lam Galleries, Chan has curated *Lei Hong: Non-Geometric Study* (2012), *Tsang Kin-Wah: Ecce Homo Trilogy I* (2012), *Fictional Recoveries* (2012), *Su Xiaobai* (2013), and *Déjà Disparu* (2013). He holds an MA from the Center for Curatorial Studies at Bard College, New York, USA.

About Pearl Lam Galleries

Founded by Pearl Lam, Pearl Lam Galleries is a driving force within Asia's contemporary art scene. With over 20 years of experience exhibiting Asian and Western art and design, it is one of the leading and most established contemporary art galleries to be launched out of China.

Playing a vital role in stimulating international dialogue on Chinese and Asian contemporary art, the Galleries is dedicated to championing artists who re-evaluate and challenge perceptions of cultural practice from the region. The Galleries in Hong Kong, Shanghai and Singapore collaborate with renowned curators, each presenting distinct programming from major solo exhibitions, special projects and installations to conceptually rigorous group shows. Based on the philosophy of Chinese Literati where art forms have no hierarchy, Pearl Lam Galleries is dedicated to breaking down boundaries between different disciplines, with a unique gallery model committed to encouraging cross-cultural exchange.

Contemporary Chinese Abstract art is heavily represented in the Galleries roster. Influential Chinese artists Zhu Jinshi and Su Xiaobai, who synthesise Chinese sensibilities with an international visual language, are presented internationally with work now included in major private and public collections worldwide. The Galleries has also introduced leading international artists such as Jenny Holzer, Jim Lambie and Yinka Shonibare MBE (RA) to markets in the region, providing opportunities for new audiences in Asia to encounter their work. Pearl Lam Galleries encourages international artists to create new work which engages specifically with the region—collaborating to produce thought-provoking and culturally relevant work.

Pearl Lam Design shows works by established and emerging international designers, including Maarten Baas, Mattia Bonetti, André Dubreuil, and Studio Makkink & Bey, in exhibitions and design fairs around the world. They are invited to push the boundaries of traditional Chinese art and craft techniques and create new works that reflect their experiences in China. A fourth gallery and concept store devoted solely to design will open shortly in Shanghai.

Press Enquiries

Megan Leckie / Pearl Lam Galleries / megan@pearllamfineart.com / +8621 6323 1989
Rosanna Cator / Sutton PR Asia / rosanna@suttonprasia.com / +852 2528 0792

www.pearllam.com