

# PearlLam Galleries

Hong Kong SOHO

## HAS-BEEN-THERE

Featuring works by Max Chan Wang, Chilai Howard Cheng, Cheung Szelit, Phoebe Hui, Jess Lau Chingwa, and Tung Winghong

Exhibition Dates 11 Aug–15 Sept, 2017 Monday–Saturday, noon–7pm; Sunday, noon–5pm

Venue Pearl Lam Galleries Hong Kong SOHO  
No. 1, G/F & 1/F, SOHO 189, 189 Queen's Road West, Sheung Wan

Hong Kong—Pearl Lam Galleries is pleased to present *Has-been-there*, a group exhibition featuring six Hong Kong artists, including Max Chan Wang (b. 1991), Chilai Howard Cheng (b. 1986), Cheung Szelit (b. 1988), Phoebe Hui, Jess Lau Chingwa (b. 1991), and Tung Winghong (b. 1989). The exhibition showcases 12 works in various mediums, including painting, photography, video installation, kinetic installation, and interactive audio installation.

The title of the exhibition *Has-been-there* is derived from French philosopher Roland Barthes' concept "That-has-been", which posits that the essence of the unique medium of photography is its ability to capture a moment of existence and truth instantly. The exhibition extends the idea by looking at the artist as a lens that traces incidences, happenings, or emotions at a certain time and place. With an emphasis on "there", the exhibition explores authorship, personal emotion, diaspora, as well as urban and contemporary affairs experienced by local artists in the tumultuous city. As spectators, audiences are invited to look at a work's "studium"—its objective symbolic meaning—and to further delve into the piece through its "punctum"—the individually-dependent element that "pierces the viewer" personally (introduced by Roland Barthes in his book *Camera Lucida*).

Max Chan Wang (b. 1991) explores the philosophy of space, pattern, and perspectives in his photography. The exhibition showcases two of his works from his *Equivocation* (2014) series, which analyses the systematisation of randomness by deconstructing and reconstructing urban landscapes to discuss the existing ambiguity of the city we live in.

Jess Lau Chingwa (b. 1991) creates non-narrative animations and video installations. Her works examine the relationship between animation and contemporary art, focusing on time and motion via visual texture. *A Night to Walk Through* (2017) is a set of video installations that display lights lingering back and forth with shadows cast on building apartments. Lau visualises the sleepless nights of urban dwellers through an animated documentary of the city, recalling elapsed memories of audiences with an intimate touch of poetry.

This exhibition also includes two works from *The Divided Bodies* series by Tung Winghong (b. 1989). *Untitled (Head Piece)* (2014) enacts a continuous movement in-between wakefulness and sleep using a video of a resting human head on a TV screen that rocks back and forth. Inspired by *The Sleeping Muse* (1910), the bronze sculpture by Constantin Brancusi, which presents a state of perfection, Tung has created an imperfect yet realistic human head as the most perfect form of our existence. Tung's works investigate the invisible linkage between the human body and space, inviting audiences to engage in their imaginations through video and programmed kinetic installations.

Located on the ground floor is *Pendulum Piano* (2017), a recent interactive audio installation by Phoebe Hui. Hui is an interdisciplinary artist and researcher, focusing on the relationship between language, sound, and technology. The work consists of 84 vintage piano keys from the 1920s suspended from the ceiling. Audiences and performers are advised to play the instrument by moving their bodies slowly inside the matrix of keys in the deepest silence, allowing different body parts to introduce new perspectives to a music composition. The work explores the gestures of musical performances and the possibilities between stillness and movement.

Cheung Szelit (b. 1988) moved from Guangdong to Hong Kong when he was young. The culture shock and difference in values he encountered have facilitated his intimate observations of people and his surroundings. *Photoreceptor* (2015) is a painting based on a photograph taken by the artist during his visit to the Palace of Justice, the site of the Nuremberg trials in Germany. Cheung's recent paintings are based on historical or news photographs; he attempts to relocate the weight of historical happenings by the fragility and vulnerability of his brushstrokes.

Chilai Howard Cheng (b. 1986) works extensively in moving images and mixed media installation, focusing on speculative affairs and experiences in various artistic mediums. His work *see saw* (2014) is a video installation that depicts two side-by-side escalators moving up and down projected on the staircase wall of the gallery space. The continuously moving escalator and revolving individuals together constitute a visual meditative cycle, questioning people's individuality in an urban society.

## About the Artists

### MAX CHAN WANG

Max Chan Wang was born in Hong Kong in 1991. He graduated from the School of Creative Media, City University of Hong Kong with a Bachelor of Arts in Creative Media. His projects focus on photography and video production. His final year photographic project *Unfolded* (2012) was awarded the Hong Kong Contemporary Award in 2012 and was exhibited at the Hong Kong Museum of Art, becoming part of its permanent collection. His work *Equivocation* (2014) has been exhibited in Hong Kong, Macau, and Edinburgh. Chan's works concern spaces, experiences, and perspectives. His interests include architecture and landscape, as well as portraits and still lifes. Chan presents different experiences of spaces in the city and structures of patterns in his works.

### CHILAI HOWARD CHENG

Chilai Howard Cheng is a Hong Kong mixed-media artist, who graduated from the School of Creative Media, City University of Hong Kong (Intermedia Art) and Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (Creative Communication). Cheng explores speculative affairs and experiences in different artistic mediums.

Focusing on moving images and mixed media installation, Cheng has exhibited in various festivals and galleries internationally including *Both Sides Now*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Taipei (2015); *Video Art in Asia 02-12* (2013), ZKM | Media Museum, Karlsruhe, Germany; Experimental Film and Video Art Festival (2012), Nanjing, China; Cologne International Videoart Festival (2011), National Centre for Contemporary Art, Saint Petersburg, Russia and Arad Art Museum, Romania; *No Soul for Sale* (2010), Tate Modern, London, UK; and *Move on Asia* (2009), Casa Asia, Barcelona, Spain. His works have travelled to major cities including Barcelona, Berlin, Copenhagen, Hamburg, Hong Kong, London, Madrid, Saint Petersburg, São Paulo, Seoul, Taipei, and Vienna, etc. He is also passionate about two-dimensional and spatial exhibition design. Cheng currently works as a creative director at November Seventh (N7 Communication).

### CHEUNG SZELIT

Cheung Szelit is a Hong Kong based young artist, who works primarily in painting and drawing. His works depict feelings of fragility, helplessness, and vulnerability evoked by grief. These emotions are expressed in layers of paint and fine textures in his works.

After graduating from the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology University (RMIT) in 2012, he has worked solely as an artist and continues to pursue his passion for art. His work has been exhibited in numerous solo and group exhibitions including *Substance, Delicate, Something in Between* (2017), Yiri

Arts, Taipei, Taiwan; *Hong Kong Perspective* (2016), am space, Hong Kong; *Stand II* (2015), am space, Hong Kong; *Critical Point* (2015), Crane Gallery, Kaohsiung, Taiwan; and *Fabulous Romantic* (2012), Signature Fine Art, Beijing, China.

#### PHOEBE HUI

Phoebe Hui is an interdisciplinary artist and researcher who primarily works on exploring the relationship between language, sound, and technology. Hui received her MFA from the UCLA Design Media Arts program, MA in Fine Art from Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design, and her BA in Creative Media from City University of Hong Kong.

Hui is the recipient of a number of grants and awards including the HKETO Yale-China Art Fellowship, Hong Kong Art Development Council Young Artist Award (Media Art), Asian Cultural Council Altius Fellowship, Bloomberg Emerging Artist Award, Asian Cultural Council United States-Japan Arts Program Research Fellowship, Hong Kong Art Development Council Art Scholarship, Hong Kong Design Association Design Student Scholarship, among others. She has presented her research-based art practice and papers at ISEA, MIT Media Lab, Asian Contemporary Art Week, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, to name a few. Currently, she is teaching in the Visual Arts and Culture program at the Hong Kong Design Institute.

#### JESS LAU CHINGWA

Jess Lau Chingwa is a media artist, who was born in Hong Kong in 1991. Lau's works often contemplate the relationship between animation and contemporary arts with a focus on time and motion via visual texture. Such a combination endows a delightful touch of poetry in her art.

She graduated in 2014 from the School of Creative Media, City University of Hong Kong. In the same year, she received the Silver Award and the Best Local Work award at the 20th ifva Festival (Interactive Media Category). Her works have been exhibited worldwide, including in Zurich, Vienna, Stockholm, and Hong Kong. Lau currently lives and works in Hong Kong.

#### TUNG WINGHONG

Tung Winghong was born in 1989 and currently lives in Hong Kong. He graduated from the Chinese University of Hong Kong with an MFA and a BA in Fine Arts. His works investigate the relationship between the body and space, and they trigger the imagination through video and programmed kinetic installations.

Selected exhibitions include *X+Y: Duo Solo Exhibition of Phoebe Hui and Tung Wing Hong* (2016), Chi Art Space, K11 Art Foundation, Hong Kong; *Before · After* (2015), Oi!, Hong Kong; and *The Fragmented Body* (2014), Grotto Fine Art, Hong Kong.

#### 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.

The four branches of Pearl Lam Galleries in Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Singapore represent an increasingly influential roster of contemporary artists. 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, Leonardo Drew, Carlos Rolón/Dzine and Yinka Shonibare MBE, 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, culturally relevant work.

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## Press Enquiries

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