

= Kacey Wong =

Dr. Kacey Wong (born 1970) is a Hong Kong visual artist and educator ? formerly Assistant Professor at the School of Design , Hong Kong Polytechnic University . Wong has received the Hong Kong Contemporary Arts Award by the Hong Kong Art Museum (2012) , Best Artist Award (2010) ; and Rising Artist Award and Outstanding Arts Education Award (2003) .

= = Early life and education = =

Wong Kwok @-@ choi was born in 1970 in Hong Kong . Due to concerns about the future of Hong Kong at the time , Wong was sent away at the age of 14 to Long Island in the United States as a secondary school pupil . His chosen name " Kacey " is derived from the initials of his Chinese name . Wong was admitted to Cornell University , from where he obtained a bachelor 's degree in Architecture . He has practiced internationally as an architect and artist . His sculptures explore philosophical ideas that engage the body of the viewer . He holds a master 's degree in Sculpture at Chelsea College of Arts . Wong also obtained his Doctorate in Fine Arts from the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology in 2003 .

= = Career = =

Upon graduation from university , Wong worked as an architect for nearly six years in New York , Japan , and Hong Kong , in the fields of graphic , interior and architectural design . He set up in independent practice . Finding that the professional world as an architect did not allow for the degree of freedom he desired , he gave up a well @-@ paid professional career and left for further studies in England . After finishing the masters programme in London in 1998 , Wong returned to Hong Kong and taught sculpture and art appreciation at the Chinese University of Hong Kong for two years . Wong later became Assistant professor in the school of design at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University , until 2015 .

In 2003 , Wong was bestowed the Rising Artist Award by the Hong Kong Arts Council and Outstanding Arts Education Award . The Hong Kong Museum of Art awarded Wong their Hong Kong Contemporary Arts Award in 2012 .

= = Works = =

Wong stated that most people take for granted what they possess , and may be without identity or culture . Wong says his self @-@ awareness , and what Hong Kong represents to him , stem from the years he spent abroad . He says that only by living amidst a second culture can one fully come to realise what one represents and where one belongs . A thread that runs through much of his work is therefore the notion of home , homelessness and wandering . Since 2011 , his repertoire has taken on a political dimension .

= = = Space = = =

Home (1999) , Personal Skyscraper (2000) , and City Space (2001) were exhibitions where Wong was both exhibitor and curator .

" 10 Boxes : Everything I 've Ever Thought About , I Put Inside a Box " in 2000 was Wong 's first solo exhibition . The series of ten sculptures , housed in wall @-@ mounted boxes , each having its own name , explores a different theme or spatial relationship . For example , Office Block symbolises the power structures within companies ; Only You is based on romantic relations ; Destroy Them treats subjects like education and childhood influences .

In 2008 , Wong created Wandering Home , an installation consisting of a mobile home conceptualised on city living and the homeless , which was shown at the Venice Biennale of Architecture . The small tin hut on the back of a tricycle is a comment on Hong Kong society , and

the plight of people who sleep on the streets and who are forced to move on periodically by government officials . Costing HK \$ 5 @, @ 000 to make , the house is not exactly a practical solution to the homeless , but the concept was tried out on street sleepers in Sham Shui Po . In 2008 , Wong created Tin Man No.11 , an essay in space in the form of a metallic robot that transforms into a bed . He extended the concept by creating Famiglia Grande , a series of transformable cases . In 2009 , Wong attended the Subvision Festival in Hamburg as a skyscraper .

His work Paddling Home , a 4 ft x 4 ft (1 @. @ 2 m x 1 @. @ 2 m) floating house , was set to sea in January 2010 . The work , symbolising the Hong Kong 's property market where the accommodation is high @-@ density , small and pricey , was selected at the Hong Kong & Shenzhen Bi City Biennale of Urbanism Architecture exhibition that year . The design includes tiled walls , wooden floorboards , bay windows , a television , air @-@ conditioning , roof space from which to drive a few golf balls and a 5 @-@ horsepower outboard motor . It was priced at a symbolical HK \$ 888 @, @ 888 (\$ 114 @, @ 000) . Wong said that , as the square foot price is [an astronomical] HK \$ 55 @, @ 555 , Paddling Home is an ironic statement comparing the perils of owning a glitzy- and glossily @-@ packaged high end residence to being on the high seas . When asked in 2012 , Wong said he considers Paddling Home his most challenging work to date .

He published a photographic book , Drift City 2000 ? 2010 , as the culmination of a ten @-@ year project where he travelled the world and superposed himself as a cardboard skyscraper (Skyscraper Man) in different surroundings as a critique of modernism . For the project , Wong collected images from over 20 locations around the world , including one at the Egyptian pyramids made when he and his wife were on honeymoon in 2002 . That image cost him a three @-@ hour art lecture to police who demanded a substantial " photography fee " .

= = = Environmentalism = = =

Wong became interested in environmentalism through visiting a waste reprocessing centre in Hong Kong , and realising just how little was recycled . His works re @-@ use or recycle materials obtained from rubbish tips . In 2010 , Wong curated " Memory of the Forest " , a collection of animal sculptures by himself and 13 students made using discarded wood , which symbolises the animals ' lost habitats . Wong contributed a similar " Mega Musical Art Piece " to the 2012 Hong Kong Cleanup campaign in the form of an octopus . Wong participated in a campaign of the Ocean Recovery Alliance in Hong Kong in April 2013 , contributing Death by Amputation ? a sculpture of a life @-@ sized finned shark ? to an exhibition in Stanley harbour in the hope that it will provoke thought on the source of food and the cruelty inflicted by humans on animals . In 2014 , as part of an animal @-@ themed exhibition with other artists , he unveiled Ball Ball , an imposing sculpture of his one @-@ eyed cat again made of discarded wood .

= = = Protest art = = =

Wong cites his political awakening being in 2011 , following the arrest of mainland artist Ai Weiwei . He responded by forming a group named Art Citizens (????) , and rallied some 2 @, @ 000 artists to march for Ai on 23 April . As curator for the group , he put together a month @-@ long exhibition that opened on 26 May named " Love the Future " (???) ? a pun on Ai 's name ? with works of over 50 artists . Wong 's own showpiece , a Caonima (alpaca) sculpture , was one of the stars of the show . Since then , Wong has become known for his eye @-@ catching displays at public demonstrations drawing attention to Hong Kong 's political situation .

Fond of quoting Ai , Wong believes that art and politics are indissociable , and that no art is completely without political connotation . Wong sees art as one of the organic elements in the mix of political movements , playing an indirect and auxiliary role . He has variously participated in the annual 1 July protest marches riding in a pink armoured personnel carrier , walking around with a facsimile washing machine on his head , and guiding a 10 @-@ foot red robot he created . For the march on 1 July 2014 , Wong created the ? Warning Squad " , where he and several people dressed as police officers holding parody banners inspired by those increasingly seen used by

police officers at protests . His signs included ? Love the Party ? ? echoing the CPC slogan ? Love the country , love the Party ? (????) ? ? Fake Commie ? ; ? Party @-@ State ? referring to the one @-@ party state within China ; ? Reddening ? referring to the gradual infiltration of the communist ethos into Hong Kong ; ? Land Grabbing ? referring to the land acquisition for development in the Northeast New Territories .

Wong was highly active during the Umbrella Revolution : he held a contest for the best logo to elevate awareness and generate more concern for the demand for " real universal suffrage " for Hong Kong . Using social media as a " safe platform " for universal participation , he generated considerable awareness and received entries from all over the world . Wong held sessions where he would draw a person 's portrait in one minute without looking at the paper ? the concept inspired by Nelson Mandela 's maxim " It always seems impossible until it 's done " . He also co @-@ founded Umbrella Movement Art Preservation , to make an inventory of works and their locations at protest sites , aiming to rescue key pieces before police clearances .

For his personal exhibition in March 2015 entitled " Resisting Against Absurdity " , Wong reunited pieces he created for previous protest marches and added new works : in particular the Black Cop Candle ? a set of wax statues of policemen in riot gear and raised batons . These symbolise the seven " black " (meaning corrupt) cops who beat up a protester and who were caught on film so doing during the 2014 protests ; lighting the candles would melt them and transform them into light .

At a march protesting at the disappearances of the staff of Causeway Bay Books in 2015 , Wong symbolically constructed a red gallows carrying the Chinese characters for " abduction " (??) , bound himself with red rope and gagged himself with red duct tape .

= = = Other roles = = =

Wong co @-@ founded Street Design Union to study and advance the role of artists and designers in the socio @-@ political sphere . Since 2001 , he has taken his " Personal Skyscraper Workshops " to primary schools to encourage children to admire the architecture . He does this by having pupils create wearable architectural clothing with foam boards and paper .

In 2016 , the M + in Hong Kong commissioned Wong to create the " M + Rover " ? a mobile gallery for their schools outreach programme . The Rover was created out of a hollowed @-@ out container in which was installed a wooden interior using disused pallets to create the feel of a whale .

= = Personal = =

Wong is an avid fan of war @-@ games ? an activity he partakes in every week which he says helps with mental agility . He also enjoys diving . Wong and his wife Margaret live with Ballball ? a cat which had lost an eye in an accident . Wong chose to adopt him over other cats because he was unique . Wong said : " Imagine you were to go to a pet shop and ask for a one @-@ eyed cat ... ' Sorry we don 't do those ' would be the response " .