

HERE AND THERE: RE-IMAGINING HONG KONG LANDSCAPES

極目足下

想・見香港風光



策展論述

CURATORIAL STATEMENT

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《極目足下：想・見香港風光》策展人

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Re-imagining Hong Kong Landscapes

風景，簡言之，不是你或任何其他人可以觀看的總體，它反而是我們身處其中，採取某一觀點環視我們周遭的世界。我們的關切注視牽動著風景生成的脈絡，而有關它的種種觀念亦由人類想像力而塑造成形。借用梅洛龐蒂的用語，風景與其說是客體，不如說是「我們思想的家園」。(Tim Ingold, *The Perception of the Environment*)

你、我、他的香港風光

生活於這座城市，我們走過大街小巷、步入高樓廣廈，也曾攀山涉水，在此間求學、浪蕩青春、工作、追逐夢想，然後徐徐老去。這是我們稱為「家」的地方，任何道路、樓房與植被盡皆刻印著我們生命歷程的經緯。如作家王良和記掛的華富邨瀑布可是他學游泳、與童年玩伴捉山坑魚的樂園；¹ 漫畫家楊學德筆下的藍田邨山邊落得一地破車殼、舊輪胎、偈油跡混雜著燒焊味的狼藉。² 朝夕相對的日常風景匯聚著個人回憶與社會經驗，也塑造出我們理解與想像此地的種種方式。

不過，香港是你、我的家園，也是無數漂流人——遊客、學生、專業菁英與商家各色人等——暫且停歇之處。在此地工作半生的氣象學者 Graham Heywood 鍾情於馬鞍山兩峰的優雅弧線，綠茸茸陡坡直插入海的險峻；³ 歷史學家遼耀東卻喜歡坐在渡輪上看著萬千盞燈火將冷漠小島點綴得活躍又溫暖。⁴ 顯然，我城風光有著本地人的故事，也同樣折射出異鄉人與此地的互動 **圖一**。不同人對本地景色的演繹，讓我們讀出城市的滄桑經歷，也探知到不同社群在此地留下的故事、甚至賦予不同景點於自身的意義。

大抵風景就像是一本立體書，勾連起不同年代的人與事，使得城市有著時間的厚度、多元文化背景的寬廣，並且將個體、社群與地方的命運扣連起來。翻開這部書，每一頁也蹦出時、地、人相遇的場景，同拋出連串問題：如何描述眼前所見的景致？誰又參與了這道風光的詮釋與書寫？景物講述了什麼人的生活點滴、當中又包含了多少條故事線？

風光流傳

回應上述提問，是次展覽邀請六位當代藝術家——梁嘉賢、黃進曦、黃麗貞、何遠良、管偉邦、林東鵬，藉由不同的創作方式與思考進路展現香港風景的多重閱讀，追溯人與地方千絲萬縷的牽繫。



圖一

過去不少明信片記錄了維港的萬家燈火，大抵異鄉客與本地人也同樣喜歡繁華夜色的活力。

藝術家各自選取不同的風景：太平山的水光山色、九龍群山下的石屎森林、薄扶林引水道、元朗米田、離島的浪濤與奇石以及港島北的城市浮華。當中，有些景點本就是長久以來旅遊業推舉的城市標記、有的只屬於某一社群的回憶與情感，也有的根本從不曾稱得上什麼好風光。然而，走過悠悠歲月，這些景點與香港人共同經歷了世事滄桑，時間改變了其地理面貌、更褶疊出多重意義 **圖二**。無論我們是否熟識這些景點，藝術家的創作旨在闡發風景的文化內涵及其於當下的意義，邀請觀眾追溯對此地的情感、記憶與想像。置身於不同景點，一切所見所感又緣何而成為「我們」的風光？

必須指出的是，策展團隊無意以藝術語言再現本地景色、又或重申「香港真係好靚」這類感性宣言。展覽所想見的香港風光並不僅僅是觀看的方式，存在於視野兩端之間，討喜的將此間遊走、生活、奮鬥的人視為佈景裝點。展覽標題選用風景的本義詞——「風光」，意指風所吹過處、光照所及之物，亦即人身處於自然環境所感知的色調氛圍。**5**「風光」一詞強調風景是動態的，關乎時間與空間如何促成了人與物的互動，也關乎個人與群體的記憶——什麼塑造了地方、此地經歷了什麼、將會發生什麼事情。

一如視覺文化研究學者 W. J. T. Mitchell 在《風景與權力》（*Landscape and Power*）的主張，風景可理解為「動詞」，意味著人探索周遭環境、開採自然資源、重新詮釋



圖二

1920、30 年代，獅子山一帶甚為荒僻，大抵只有少數尋幽探秘的遊人方才登山遠足。不同時代的人亦各自演繹不盡相同的「好風光」。

地方的積極行動。他說：「風景（不論都市或郊野、人工抑或自然）每每以其空間、環境迎接我們。身處其中，『我們』（又被視為「風景人物」）將發現、又或迷失自我。」**6** 著眼於人與地的互動，策展團隊不但將本地風光視為理解此地的行動，也將創作與展覽視為探究本土論述的行動——詰問我們如何將意義與價值賦予不同景貌、又如何置身其中尋找可資應用的文化資源。

極目今昔

就藝術家所選定的風光，策展團隊所看重的不是其於四時陰晴的氣候變化，亦非此時此刻的浮光掠影。展覽以「極目」標明策展團隊研究本地風光的時間維度：既近至當下所見所感，更遠及不同世代的觀點，以求考察景貌及其詮釋的演變脈絡。翻閱遊記詩文、旅遊指南、歷史圖片與寫生作品等文獻資料，策展團隊與藝術家檢視過去歐籍精英、南來文人與本地社群如何演繹不同版本的「本地好風光」，由此探究他們大相逕庭的本地經歷、以及其對土地應用的不同見解。儘管這些文獻資料的志趣有異——或向旅客介紹本地風情、或向本地人大談假日好去處、又或只求抒發寄情山水的情懷，卻同樣建構出屬於我城的風景論述，並且訴說不同社群如何想像此地的過去與未來。

舉例來說，1890 年代 William Legge、R. C. Hurley 等歐籍居民先後撰寫旅遊書，介紹香港的美景，也順帶推銷殖民宗主國如何施行種種政治社會實驗，將葛爾小島改造成國際貿易海港。其中 R. C. Hurley 的 *The Tourist's Guide*



圖三
薄扶林是早期本地遊的熱點，英語旅遊書介紹船塢大班所建的杜格拉斯堡，中文旅遊書鮮有提及。

to Hong Kong, with short trips to the Mainland of China (《香港與中國短線遊指南》) 仔細編排了12道旅遊路線，帶領遊客遊遍中環、半山區、薄扶林、跑馬地、赤柱、鯉魚涌、筲箕灣、紅磡、尖沙嘴等地。⁷ Hurley筆下的香港既有青山綠水林蔭蓊鬱，也配備水塘、街市、天文台、糖廠等現代建置。⁸ 有別於華人遊記，他特地推薦遊客留意市內的歐式建築，如德國會所、巴黎外方傳道會大樓、日字樓孤子院等，說明城市的多元文化色彩，包容歐洲人、華人、巴斯人在此安居樂業 **圖三**。研究香港旅遊史的學者阮志甚至認為這些旅遊指南顯示了歐籍精英對我城的歸屬感日深，樂於向他人分享此地值得一遊的景點。⁹

及至1920—30年代，香港本地旅遊蔚然成風，庸社、雄風旅行團、中華基督教青年會旅行隊等本地遊組織相繼成立，《華僑日報》更創辦《旅行生活》，圖文並茂介紹旅行路線及沿途風景。¹⁰ 1938年，首位投入香港考古發掘的學者陳公哲出版《香港指南》開宗明義提供旅遊出行的資訊，又兼記錄香港風土民情。書中旁徵博引將廟宇、歷史古蹟、自然風光又或漁家酬唱等列為值得發掘的旅遊風景，同時又記錄近年發展的殖民地建設，如西高嶺花塢、大潭篤水塘等，統攝不同視角而發展出香港風景，將香港的現代化發展歸功於「中西人士之合作，政治上軌道有以致之」。¹¹ 陳公哲的例子說明香港旅遊書不僅是介紹地方景點的平台，也是華人藉以思考地方民情的重要媒介。有關本地景點的論述見證著華人（不論南來定居或本地出生）對香港這一地方的關注，並且將之視為自己的家的重要憑證。



圖四
傳說宋帝昺南渡曾登臨九龍城近海山丘，該地因而名為「宋王臺」。戰前中文旅遊書將宋王臺視為香港少有的歷史古蹟，推薦讀者前往發思古之幽情。

投入本地風光的演繹，華人社群一方面認同現代文明促進了香港的發展，但另一方面卻又試圖扭轉以發展為單一導向的論述，將我城塑造為衣食住行自有特色、即使不一定盡如人意、卻又親切可人的地方。描述不同地點的風光名勝時，他們或援引遠古傳說與民間掌故以豐富其文化內涵¹²、或尋幽探秘力證此地景致殊勝¹³，甚或大談當地土產與康樂活動¹⁴，以求渲染出多元紛繁的「港式風味」 **圖四**。當中藝術家出於本職的呼喚，依循不同藝術媒介所衍生的符號系統，開拓社群對風景、對地方的想像。他們的作品——如黃般若以濃重的水墨描摹夜登鳳凰山的體驗、陳福善的塑膠彩作品畫出望夫石的奇幻想像、韓志勳又以油彩的斑斕塗抹出石硤尾寮屋的荒涼——往往傳達其個人秉性的薰陶、對藝術形式的探究，也與其人的文化教育、社會時代的價值觀息息相關。更重要的是，藝術家的演繹隱然流露對香港的認同，甚而投入本地歷史文化的建構。從此香港這不見經傳的荒島，其風土物候容或無足輕重，卻因本地人的歸屬感而貫注多重意義。

百多年來，香港這座移民城市一直由著五湖四海的人來來往往，他們時而旅居數載又離開、時而四處遊移卻又突然在此落地生根。不同年代有關香港風景的演繹往往由於作者對我城的認同深淺不一，字裡行間隱然流露出異鄉客與本地人、遊覽觀光與生活此間的矛盾與疑惑。此時此刻，與藝術家重讀過去的風景書寫，展覽邀請觀眾一同追溯：這座城市何以成為我們的家？我城風光又與我們有何關連？

足下所在

研究過去本地風景的詮釋，策展團隊與藝術家亦前往不同景點進行實地考察，檢視他人所演繹的風光於自身的意義；再藉由創作實踐思考如何認識自己的地方、如何以行動觸發對城市的新想像。展覽標舉「足下」，申明各成員的觀點乃由我們腳下所踏的土地出發的，思考藝術行動如何累積地方知識、如何發掘本土論述。

驟眼看來，認識自己所身處的城市可謂自然而然的。我們在此地生活多年，不知不覺早已練就出一套於狹小空間自在適意的身段；也對街坊老鋪舊樓房的故事瞭如指掌。可是，日常生活經驗難免磨蝕我們對身邊環境的感知，也局限我們對此地的認識。如何富有洞察力的認識我城，而非人云亦云的接受習以為常的說辭？當中的思考有多少來自歷來慣例的承襲、來自其他文化的參照、又有多少來自對社群不同聲音的反思？

反思多年田野考察的經驗，人類學家 Clifford Geertz 直指身在當地並不一定就能夠恰如其份的掌握有關於當地的知識。他認為文化就是一張意義之網，勾連起人生歷程所觸及的規訓慣例、日常活動或情感投注。¹⁵「地方知識」（如峇里島鬥雞、爪哇戲劇、摩洛哥宗親相處的方式）並不是靜待研究者逐一檢拾的「標本」。反之，地方知識的建構與積累乃來自特定的社會文化情態與生活境況。研究者必須深入理解當中的人與群體、人與身邊動植物、以至人與地方等多重關係網的互動，並且掌握某種知識如何應用於特定的生活境況，方能瞭解其於當地社群的意義。¹⁶圖五。探究地方知識不能只聚焦於其內容（即做什麼、如何做），更必須拆解其與當地群體的關係（亦即其意義體現了什麼社群需求，意義建構過程由誰來主導、誰曾參與其中、誰被排置於外，以至誰又將之一一保存）。¹⁷

看到人與地方以及不同地域的連繫，Geertz 認為地方知識並不一定拘限於某一地域，其建構過程或曾否滲雜其他文化的影響，再為當地人加以演繹而衍生出大異其趣的內涵或意義。研究者如何置身於這張意義之網，看到人、事、物的連結，正是掌握地方知識的關鍵所在。Geertz 甚至說：



圖五

工人所用的工具與鋸木造船的方法也可被視為「地方知識」，闡明人與社群以及周遭環境的關係。

「我們需要的不只是地方知識，我們更需要一種方式，可藉以將各式各樣的地方知識轉變為它們彼此間的相互評註——由一種地方知識燃亮另一種地方知識所隱翳的部分。」¹⁸

在全球化時代，Geertz 留意到地方知識難免被視為發揚地方特色而獲得尊崇；抑或遭貶斥為不符合現代文明通則而備受冷落。他並不認為全球與本土是截然二分的思考。置身於人類文明這張意義之網，地方知識每每透過不同參照點而得以突顯其意義，而其與不同文化的關係也往往影響另一地域的知識建構。換言之，任何對地方知識的探究必須將本土置於更廣潤的文化脈絡，也必須具備跨領域的視野容讓不同的論述與思考得以被呈現、理解以至互相啟發。

借鑑於人類學有關地方知識的思考，策展團隊與藝術家對本地風光的探究，就以歷史文獻、田野考察與坊里言談作不同的參照，檢視風景如何觸發種種身體實作、感官體會又或情感聯想，又如何點滴凝聚成風景的詮釋與地方的歸屬感。儘管展覽以本土視野為立足點，卻無意將我城的知識與論述侷限於地理疆域之內。藉由風景的不同詮釋，展覽試圖從地方看到世界施諸於一己自覺或不自覺的影響，再從世界回望其與地方千絲萬縷的關係。遊移於地方與世界之間，策展團隊認為本土視野不是只看到自身的獨特，而是不斷反思本地與其他文化的互動，繼而有意識的塑造自身的文化內涵，投射出未來的願景。



圖六
梁嘉賢作品《盧吉你好》聚焦於山頂四時開花的植物與遊人的互動。
圖片由梁嘉賢提供。

對於我城風景的詮釋、本地知識與論述的建構，策展團隊相信藝術創作之所見正在於將幽微隱沒的人、事、物相扣連，重新喚起人對地方的回憶、情感與想像。藝術創作所依據的，不是文化理論或哲學邏輯用以填塞作品的意義，更不是美學形式將現實抹上一層浪漫情調。透過風景研究與實地考察的經驗，藝術家將其無以名狀的情緒、敏銳又細膩的感知觸覺、以及知性的思考融匯成藝術作品，往往在吉光片羽間觸發看似不可理喻的想像與可能性。藝術家的創作將說不清的感受演繹為看得見、聽得清、摸得著、感受得到的「風景論述」，也向觀眾呈現訪尋自己熟悉不過、又或未曾細看的本地風光，進而細味此情此景於我們又意味著什麼。

藝術家的提問

展覽中，六位當代藝術家按其各自的經歷、視野與創作手法重新定義「本地好風光」，使得我城不再框限於國際金融中心、人情味濃小社區等刻板印象，而開放予各種瑣細又富想像力的微觀敘述。藝術家的作品訴說著人與地相依相存的種種方式，也向自己、向觀眾拋出提問：身處於此我們如何看出地方不一樣的可能性？

畫家梁嘉賢曾感嘆：「美景彷如你的臉，看一萬年也不厭。海枯石爛早十年，原來地球有污染。」在她的筆下，小女子的三千丈黑髮盤結挽髻就攏束成崇山峻嶺；纖瘦的身軀俯臥斜靠也就變出萬物欣欣向榮的天地；張口輕煙一吐又化成揮之不去的迷霧。細看這異色世界，三數小小女子踩在腰背似的平原閒蕩、爬上肩膊登臨眺望遠山白雲，又或跳入髮絲飛瀑一探潭底奧妙。在這擬人化的荒誕山河，



圖七
黃進曦的創作結合歷史圖片與戶外寫生，試圖將過去的九龍群山重現觀眾目前。

小女子一手一腳勉力維持著日常諸般雜務的平衡與斡旋，但小小女子卻懶理身外身的光景、只求一圓打扮修身釣金龜的浮華夢。冷不防梁嘉賢的打油詩撲滅一切幻想。原來良辰美景經不起污染，只是一眾女子佯裝夢未醒而已。沿襲連環畫傳統，畫家呈現的原是此間風光的眾生相，眾女的妙曼體態與洞悉世情的心機往往讓人身同感受而不自覺，但打油詩的機鋒卻點破了城市價值的虛幻。在這展覽中，梁嘉賢再次率領一眾小女子佔據我們熟悉不過的太平山，重寫這座山頭與香港人的故事 **圖六**。這些世故小女子偷聽著遊人的悄悄話、打量著幻彩詠歌的歡快，嬌聲的問：我們如何看穿眼前燦爛、創造屬於自己的風景？

「戶外寫生如何描畫眼前風光，也追憶過去的景物？」這是畫家黃進曦給自己的提問。他的寫生作品是想像與現實交融的郊野風光，將畫家踏過大小山頭的身體經驗轉譯成白雲山徑、重巒疊谷、又見綠水繞過的鳥瞰圖。作為行山客兼打機友，黃進曦所呈現的可謂繪畫的虛擬實境，將行山所見時大而小的叢林植坡、或遠或近的山光水色剪裁、切割，壓縮於多視點的平面畫布，讓觀眾既似走入風景之內、又彷彿置身其外。畫作是想像的虛擬實境，栩栩如生的地標景致鑲嵌於超脫現實的山水印象之間，觀眾似乎從亮麗的色彩、開闊的構圖、清晰可辨的輪廓線，感受到行行重行行的氣呼呼、陽光與露水沾衣的舒爽，以至天大地大的無窮想像。這是數碼世代的風景畫，每一剎那的風光也可以被放大縮小、裁切拼合、再重構組裝而創造出新體驗、新視野。是次展覽，畫家就將歷史圖像、行山經歷與遠眺所見的九龍群山接合又拆解，重構成消亡重現又再演化的時間風景 **圖七**。榮枯盛衰的變幻中，黃進曦問：不斷擴充的城市發展，於我們的生活而言，帶來了什麼？

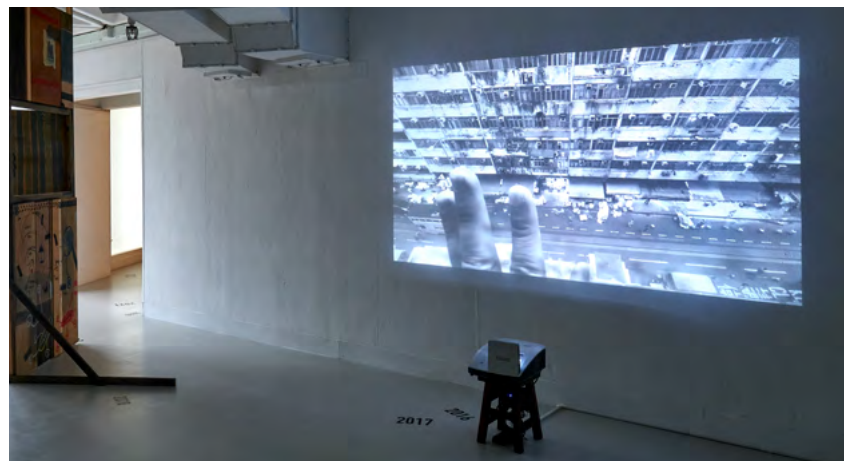


圖十
何遠良的木雕植物訴說出此地生存空間之狹小，繪形繪聲刻畫出鄉痛。

木雕植物是生活的隱喻、也是鄉痛的形相 **圖十**。草木如此，人何以堪？直視鄉痛，觀眾又如何重覓我們回鄉之途？

跨媒介藝術家林東鵬的創作以繪畫、裝置、聲音和影像，將生活所見所感、回憶忘不了的印象與想像所渴求的風景，建構成往昔與當下、現實與夢想交錯疊疊的異空間。在這異空間，不同媒介混合成一套立體的夢的方言，以幻想奇想狂想重構人與我城的關係。2015 年，藝術家又忽發奇想，下榻於灣仔鬧市的時鐘酒店，每天在街上閒逛、不問緣由就跳上巴士探索曾經到訪、又或未曾留意的家鄉勝地。這項名為《作客家鄉》的計劃開展了一趟莫名其妙的旅程，藝術家將酒店房間佈置成想像力馳騁的旅遊風光，以街上檢拾的物品與現成影像鋪陳出超脫日常生活規律的遊歷。其實，家中客以藝術安排人與地、人與人的邂逅，全因戀地情結作祟，愛得焦灼不得不重新調整視野。意想不到的，2021 年回港隔離政策卻讓藝術家再次經歷作客家鄉的體驗。從機場到隔離酒店客房，林東鵬身在家鄉，卻看不清城市風景、更幾乎嗅不到香港的味道。隔著玻璃窗接觸熟悉又陌生的地方，他明明靠得近、但卻與四周環境的人與事毫不相干。展覽中，藝術家以其夢的方言比照兩次作客家鄉的經歷，向觀眾問道：我們於此地終究是城中客、抑或夢裡人？兩種目光又帶出什麼樣的風光？ **圖十一**

策展團隊相信展覽是思想交流的平台，也是公眾與藝術一同創造意義的場域。六位藝術家將風景視為理解、回憶與想像地方的媒介，並以創作回應不同世代有關本地風光的詮釋。展覽向觀眾呈現的，是藝術家與策展團隊的想



圖十一
林東鵬的作品邀請觀眾進入時空交錯的想像空間，訴說作客家鄉的感懷。

像與期盼，其意義不僅在於創作形式本身，更在於連結公眾以凝聚有關景致的共同記憶。

想見未來

本地風光關乎我們對家的情感、記憶與想像。「家」是我們棲身之所，賴以安身立命之處，俾人從生活的常與非常、家族延綿的經歷、以至環境地貌的變與不變，認識自我、表現自我、正視自身的糾結。透過研究與創作，展覽期望「極目足下」可轉化成一種肯定，肯定自身混雜多元的位置，絕不依賴別人之口寫自己的故事，務求理解本地文化的來龍去脈。這種肯定並非一味懷舊感傷，反而從一時一地的需要，看到我們如何走在一起、如何想像此地的未來？

我們想見的本地風光，既在於此時此刻所擁有的，也在乎未來的願景。

“The landscape, in short, is not a totality that you or anyone else can look at, it is rather the world in which we stand in taking up a point of view on our surroundings. And it is within the context of this attentive involvement in the landscape that the human imagination gets to work in fashioning ideas about it. For the landscape, to recall the words of Merleau-Ponty, is not so much the object as “the *homeland* of our thoughts”. (Tim Ingold, *The Perception of the Environment*)

HONG KONG IN OUR OWN EYES

As residents of the city, we have walked through the streets, visited the skyscrapers, climbed the mountains, and crossed the seas. We have pursued our studies, started new jobs, and gone after our dreams. Time flies, and we age slowly. We call this land our home, and every road, building, and vegetation plot has built our biographies, representing our life journeys. The waterfall in Wah Fu Estate in Pok Fu Lam was the place where young Wong Leung Wo, a writer in Hong Kong, caught mosquitofish with his playmates and learnt to swim. **1** The hillside of Lam Tin Estate, as illustrated by Yeung Hok Tak, was a mess of broken cars and discarded tires, covered with pools of old motor oil and reeking of the smell of welding. **2** The day-to-day scenery reminds us of our personal memories and social experiences, shaping our recollections of the place.

While Hong Kong is our homeland, it is also the stepping stone for many travellers, tourists, international students, professional elites, and businesspeople. Meteorologist Graham Heywood, who worked here for half his life, reminisced about the elegant curve of the skyline between the two green mountain peaks of Ma On Shan and its slopes look like a giant slide to the sea. **3** At the same time, historian Lu Yao Dong enjoyed travelling on the ferry, and seeing the countless lights that seemed to vibrate and warm the otherwise cold-hearted city. **4** The city’s scenery not only holds local stories but also reveals the interactions between foreigners and the land **fig 1**. Our different interpretations of the scenery allow us to dig deeper into the city’s vicissitude, discover the communities’ hidden stories and assign individual meanings to the place.

Perhaps, landscape can be read like a pop-up book that connects the people and events in different eras, and weaves together our individual destinies. It enables the city to show the depth of time and the breadth of multicultural influences, as the individuals, communities, and places come

together. Every page describes the when, where, and who of each place and raises questions like: How can we describe what we see? Who has tried to interpret and write about this landscape? Whose stories the scenery is trying to tell us? How many different storylines are woven together?

PASS TO THE LANDSCAPES

To answer these questions, six contemporary artists, Leung Ka Yi Joey, Wong Chun Hei Stephen, Wong Lai Ching Fiona, Ho Yuen Leung, Koon Wai Bong, and Lam Tung Pang, have been invited to this exhibition. Their creative practices and ideas help to demonstrate the different interpretations of the Hong Kong landscape and show the links between people and place.

The six artists chose to depict different landscapes, including the Victoria Peak, the Kowloon Ranges, Pok Fu Lam conduit, Yuen Long farmlands, Outlying Islands, and the cityscape of Hong Kong Island. Some of these are long-standing landmarks that have been promoted by the tourism industry; some belong to only a specific community garnering their own memories and emotions; and some are of views that are less than charming. Time seems to have flown by without us even noticing these landscapes, and while we have gone through the vicissitudes of life, our geography has continued to create new and varied meanings **fig 2**. Although we may already have some familiarity with the scenes for contemporary society. The audience is invited to look back in history and experience the emotions, memories, and ideas that are embodied in the places. How do we perceive the scenes and consider them as our own landscapes?



fig 1 Many foreigners and locals have been fascinated by the night view of Victoria harbour. Postcards tend to capture the dazzling lights of the city at night.

The curatorial team has no intention of presenting the local landscapes with artistic language or using trite statements like “Hong Kong is so beautiful”. The exhibition argues that landscape is not a visual phenomenon that mindlessly considers those involved in the landscapes as part of the background. The exhibition title, for example, in Chinese, uses the phrase 風光 (pronounced *fungkwong*), which is a synonym of 風景 (pronounced *fungking*, meaning “landscape”). In the former phrase, 風光 (meaning “wind” and “light”) points to places where the wind blows and the sun gives light, which also refers to the colourful atmosphere of the natural environment. ⁵ The phrase *fungkwong* emphasises the dynamics of landscape, and more specifically, how time and space contribute to the interactions between people and objects. The focus is on the memories of individuals and groups — What has shaped the places? What has happened and what will happen here?

W. J. T. Mitchell, a contemporary visual culture scholar, advocates in his book *Landscape and Power*, the word “landscape” can be interpreted as a verb, highlighting the active action taken by humans to explore the surroundings, exploit natural resources, and reinterpret places. According to Mitchell, ‘...landscape (whether urban or rural, artificial or natural) always greets us as space, as environment, as that within which “we” (also referred to as “the figures”) in the landscape find — or lose — ourselves.’ ⁶ The curatorial team has paid close attention to the interaction between humans and land, seeing local landscape as a way to understand the place while taking art-making and exhibition as an act of exploring the local discourse — how can

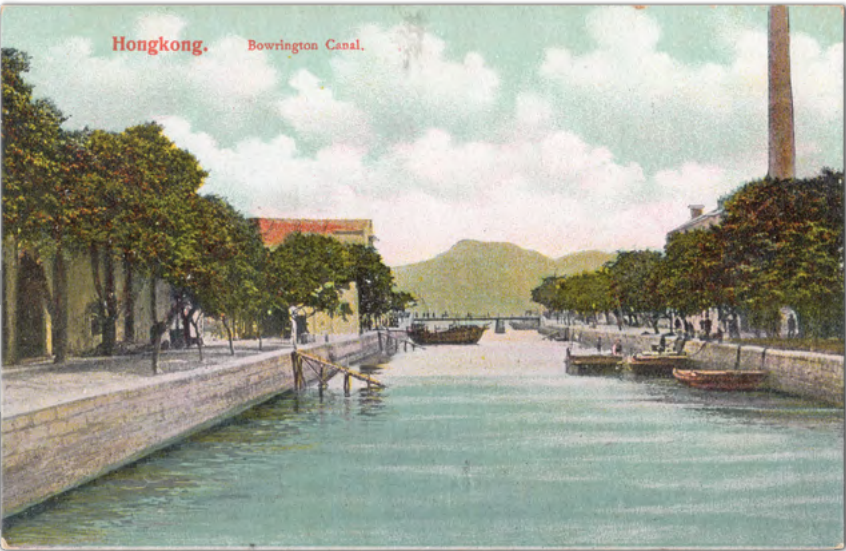


fig 2 Over time, communities would have different interpretations of “scenic spots”. For instance, the picturesque Bowrington Canal was referred to as one of the Eight Fabulous Scenes of Hong Kong; the area is now one of the heaviest traffic zones in the city.

we ascribe meaning and value to different landscapes? How can we find usable cultural resources within them?

THERE, WE SEE

For the landscapes selected by the artists, the curatorial team is neither interested in the seasonal changes, nor the fleeting glimpses of the present moment. As suggested by the exhibition title, the curatorial team aims to study the temporality of local landscapes and examine the evolution of the landscape and its interpretations. These purposes are achieved by reflecting on what we see and feel in the present, and drawing references from the perspectives of different generations. By analysing historical documents, such as travelogues, nature writing, guidebooks, old photographs, and sketches, the curatorial team and artists have explored how the European elite, southern literati, and local communities present different versions of “local scenery”, summarising their local experiences and opinions on the use of land. Although the documents serve different purposes, such as introducing tourists to the local scene, talking to locals about places to go on holiday, or simply expressing their love for the landscape. They all help to construct narratives of our city’s landscape and tell us how different communities have imagined the past and future of this place.

In the 1890s, European residents, such as William Legge and R. C. Hurley, wrote travel books introducing the beautiful landscapes of Hong Kong while arguing how colonial powers had carried out various political and social experiments, transforming this tiny island into an international trading port. R. C. Hurley carefully organises 12 scenic routes in his book *The Tourist’s Guide to Hong Kong, with short trips to the Mainland of China*, taking readers and visitors to places like Central and Mid-Level areas, Pok Fu Lam, Happy Valley, Stanley, Quarry Bay, Shau Kei Wan, Hung Hum, and Tsim Sha Tsui. In Hurley’s book, Hong Kong is a city with green hills and lush forests and modern facilities including reservoirs, markets, observatories, and sugar factories. ⁷ Unlike many travelogues written by the Chinese, Hurley recommends for visitors to pay attention to European-style buildings in the city, such as Club Germania, the French Mission Building, and Diocesan Home and Orphanage. ⁸ These illustrate Hong Kong’s multiculturalism and demonstrate its tolerance of Europeans, Chinese, and Basques who lived and worked here ^{fig 3} . Yuen Chi, a scholar who studies Hong Kong’s tourism history, says that the guidebooks show that the European elites had a more profound sense of belonging to the city and were willing to share with others the many attractions. ⁹

During the 1920s and 1930s, local tourism became a fad, and local travel organisations, such as the Yung Sheh Hiking Club, Hung Fung Tour Group, and Chinese YMCA Tour Team, were established. *Wah Kiu Yat Po* (i.e., *Wah Kiu Morning Daily*) also started a bi-weekly section named “Travel Life”, introducing local itineraries and sharing the scenery with vivid textual descriptions and photographs. ¹⁰ In 1938, Chen Gong Zhe, the first scholar who devoted himself to archaeological research in Hong Kong, published *A Guide to Hong Kong*, a book that provided information for people who wanted to travel to the city. It also detailed local costumes and social practices, citing references from a wide range of documentation. Chen noted that temples, historical monuments, natural scenery and fishermen’s songs were worth exploring. He also recorded the colonial developments that were happening at the time, including the flowerbed at West Height and the Tai Tam Tuk Reservoir. Thus, Hong Kong landscapes were being depicted from different perspectives. Chen attributed the modernisation of Hong Kong to “the cooperation of Chinese and Westerners and that the political system was steadily led onto the correct path”. ¹¹ The book exemplified that Hong Kong travel guidebooks were not only a platform to introduce people to local attractions but also served as a medium to allow Chinese-speaking communities to reflect on local customs and social practices. Everything that was written about the attractions was a testimony of the Chinese people’s (whether southern-born or native-born) concerns about Hong Kong and the view of Hong Kong as their collective home.



fig 3 In the early days, Pok Fu Lam was a popular scenic site for the locals. The English guide books introduced the Béthanie built by the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris, but the Chinese travel books seldom mentioned it.

Writing about local landscapes, the Chinese community, on one hand, recognised that modern civilisation had contributed to the development of Hong Kong, but on the other hand, they also attempted to subvert the monolithic narrative of economic development. They portrayed Hong Kong as a city with many distinguishing features, suggesting that though it might not be the ideal city that we had dreamt of, it was still a friendly and lovely place. The communities might also cite ancient legends and folk tales to enrich the cultural connotations of the different attractions, ¹² explore secret sites to reveal Hong Kong’s extraordinary sceneries, ¹³ and discuss local products and recreational activities. ¹⁴ These are all intended to amplify the diversified “Hong Kong style” fig 4 .

Driven by their professional intuitions, many local artists stimulated our imagination of the landscapes and places using symbolic systems derived from different media. Huang Bore, in his ink painting, describes his experience hiking up to Lantau Peak at night; Luis Chan Fok Sin’s acrylic painting expresses his wild imagination of Amah Rock; and Hon Chi-fun, in his oil painting, illustrates the desolate sensations surrounding the squatter in Shek Kip Mei. Not only do the artworks exemplify their sentiments while actively exploring different art forms, but they are also closely bound up with the cultural education and values of the time. More importantly, the artworks and their interpretations subtly reveal their place identity and contribute to the construction of local history and culture. Undoubtedly, Hong Kong was



fig 4 It is said that emperor Zhao Bing from the Southern Song dynasty took refuge on a hill near Kowloon City, so the place was named “Song Wong Toi”. The pre-war Chinese travel books regard it as a rare heritage site in Hong Kong, encouraging readers to reconnect with the Chinese tradition.

an obscure island before, with customs that may have been insignificant to the world, but its culture was made richer by the contributions of locals who identified themselves as a part of the city.

For more than a century, Hong Kong has been a city of immigrants, with people coming from around the world. They may have lived in the city for a few years, staying briefly before travelling again, or deciding to settle down permanently. Throughout history, different interpretations of the Hong Kong landscape were constructed by how the people identified with the place. The tensions that developed between the perspectives of foreigners and locals, between those who were sightseeing or living here, were revealed in the artworks. The curatorial team, in describing the local landscapes by the participating artists, is inviting the audience to reflect on: What makes this city our home, and what is our relationship to the landscapes in Hong Kong?

HERE, WE STAND

To assess how people might interpret the old Hong Kong landscape, the curatorial team and the artists went on field trips to different scenic spots to see how others have interpreted the local scenery for themselves. The exhibition title suggests that our opinions originated from the place at which we stood, encouraging us to think about questions like: How can we accumulate local knowledge, and how can we explore local discourses?

Understanding the place where we live is as natural as breathing. After living here for decades, we can live comfortably in small spaces and know the stories of our neighbourhood like the backs of our hands. Yet, our daily experiences could erode our ability to perceive our surroundings or explore new places. How can we gain new insights about our city without relying on the words of outsiders? How much of our knowledge of history depends on other cultures and the attitudes of different people?

Anthropologist Clifford Geertz points out that a person staying in one place cannot master everything about the region. He describes culture as a “web of significance” that connects social norms and conventions, daily activities or emotions invested in our life experiences. ¹⁵ “Local knowledge” (e.g., cockfights in Bali, Java’s drama, or the way in which Moroccan clans treat each other) is not a specimen that waits passively for researchers to pick up. The construction of local knowledge is rooted in the matrix of local cultures and the environment. Researchers must consider the various relationships,

such as the interactions between people and community, people, animals and plants, and people and the place, and be able to apply the knowledge to specific situations, before they can properly evaluate the significance of local knowledge ^{fig 5} . ¹⁶ By exploring local knowledge, we can focus on its content and sort out its relationship to the local community, determining the community’s response and the knowledge construction process. Who has participated and who has been excluded from the process, and who is helping to preserve the knowledge? ¹⁷

In noticing the connections between people and place, Geertz argues that local knowledge does not have to be confined to a specific area since its construction may be infiltrated and influenced by other cultures. Local people can also have different connotations and meanings for the knowledge. The key to mastering local knowledge is how researchers place themselves in the web of significance and discover connections between the people, events, and things. According to Geertz:

“We need, in the end, something rather more than local knowledge. We need a way of turning its varieties into commentaries one upon another, the one lighting what the other darkens.” ¹⁸

Geertz noticed that, in this era of globalisation, local knowledge is inevitably either revered because of its manifestation of locality, or denigrated for being incompatible with “universal principles” of modern civilisation.



^{fig 5} The tools and methods used by the fishermen’s communities can also be considered “local knowledge”, illuminating the relationship between people and their communities and their surroundings.

Nevertheless, he does not see global and local as dichotomous realms. Within the web of significance, local knowledge is constructed through its relationship with local and other cultures and the reference points can help illuminate its significance. In other words, to explore any local knowledge, we must investigate it under a broader cultural context. We must also use a cross-disciplinary perspective to understand the different narratives and ideas, which can allow the different forms of local knowledge to inspire each other.

The curatorial team and the artists have drawn on anthropological ideas about local knowledge and referred to historical documents, fieldwork and the conversations of local communities, to study how the local landscapes can trigger physical actions, sensory experiences, and emotional associations. The exhibition adopts local perspectives without attempting to confine itself to just local knowledge and narratives within the geography. The landscapes are explored and interpreted as connections to the people's sense of belonging. Using different interpretations of the local landscapes, the exhibition considers the interactions between global influences and local cultures that may have been accomplished consciously or unconsciously. The curatorial team believes that the local perspectives help focus our individuality but still allow us to reflect on the interactions with other cultures. Ultimately, we need to consciously articulate our own cultural narratives to have a vision for the future.

From diverse interpretations of Hong Kong landscapes and the construction of local knowledge, the curatorial team believes that the purpose of art is to connect with people, objects, and stories that might otherwise be forgotten. Art is also to revive people's memories, emotions, and imaginations of the place. Artistic creation neither coats cultural theories or philosophies as the meaning of the artworks, nor dampens the reality with romantic sentiments. By studying historical documents and conducting fieldwork, the participating artists have fused their emotions, perceptual sensitivities, and intellectual reflections into the works of art. The magic of the artworks lies in transforming the "landscape discourse" into something can be seen, heard, and felt, to elicit new ideas and possibilities of the place. By looking at the artists' reinterpretation of the "local scenery", audiences may see familiar sceneries in new ways. The artworks invite people to visit such sceneries and ponder about their deeper meanings.

THE ARTISTS' QUESTIONS

In this exhibition, six contemporary artists redefine "local scenery" according to their personal experience and creative practices. In doing so, our city is no longer limited to rigid images of an international financial centre or as close-knit communities, but is opened to imaginative micro-narratives of the people who live there. The artists' works describe how people connect with the place, while also posing questions for the audience — How can we discover new possibilities for our city?

Painter Joey Leung lamented, "Scenery, as stunning as you are, is worthy of gaze for millennia. A mere decade until the world ends, Earth is polluted beyond amends." In her paintings, the heroines' mile-long updos become grand mountain ranges, worlds thrive where their slender bodies lean, and the haze takes shape from their single breath. Up-close in this peculiar world, some miniature heroines roam over the body-like meadows. They scale the shoulders for a view of distant mountains and clouds, or dive into a waterfall of locks to explore the pool. In this bizarre, personified landscape, the ladies make every effort to hold onto the balance of daily life, yet pay no attention to the scenery that outside their dreams of glamour and courtship. Joey Leung's rhythms burst the bubbles — it turns out that the picturesque scenery cannot withstand pollution, and the heroines are only pretending. In keeping with the tradition of sequential art, the painter presents the human condition as being within the imaginative landscape where the elegant ladies pull us into their sophisticated readings of the world and the blunt rhyme exposes the fantasy of urban values. In the exhibition, Joey leads her ladies in occupying our familiar Victoria Peak, to rewrite the story between the Peak and its people [fig 6](#) . The worldly females listen to the secrets of visitors and use delightful songs to tenderly ask — How do we see beyond the glamour and create our own scenery?



[fig 6](#) Joey's work *Hi Lugard* focuses on the interactions between the seasonal plants and tourists who are visiting the peak. Courtesy of Leung Ka Yin Joey.

“How could life drawing depict existing scenery while reminiscing about the landscape of the past?” the painter Stephen Wong asks. His landscape works fuse imagination into reality, and translate the painter’s physical experience of hiking into snaking hill paths, overlapping valleys, and bird’s-eye views of mountain ranges and sea inlets. As a hiker and gamer, Stephen Wong presents a kind of virtual reality with his paintings. He trims, cuts, and compresses his hiking trips onto flat canvases with multiple perspectives, so that the audience can become immersed in the landscape, and kept at a distance. His paintings are virtual realities of imagined scenery, where lifelike landmarks are embedded in surreal landscapes. With their vivid colours, airy composition, and crisp outlines, the paintings give the audience a feeling of huffing and puffing from the hike, in the comfort of sunlight and dew, under the boundless skies. The landscape paintings are for a digital generation, where each moment can be resized, cropped, and reconstructed to create a new experience with a new perspective. For the exhibition, the painter deconstructs and combines historical images with his hiking experience of the Kowloon Ranges to reconstruct a temporal landscape **fig 7** . The landscapes are a way to evaluate the passage of time, and Stephen asks, what has the never-ending urban development brought us?

Ceramic artist Fiona Wong’s creative works emerge from the experiences of her hands. By processing the clay and getting to know its temperament, her thoughts fuse with those of the clay, to be transformed into a palpable yet fleeting dream of time. Her clay garments, porcelain folding screens, leaf installation, and historical documents transferred on clay tablets gently evoke feelings of nostalgia in the audience. Although the audience may not have had such memories, the artist’s works also produce a *déjà vu* and a sense of longing. In this exhibition, Fiona explores Pok Fu Lam, a tourist spot that is



fig 7 Stephen’s paintings recreate the Kowloon Ranges from the past by smearing and covering up a recent photo.

no longer serene. In her eyes, Pok Fu Lam prides itself on its view of the East Lamma Channel, where wild waves bring forth a memory of the waters. In 1816, during his diplomatic trip to discuss British–Chinese trade, Lord Amherst replenished the water in nearby Waterfall Bay, never expecting that in 1863, it would be Hong Kong’s first reservoir to supply fresh water to the people. The artist uses black clay to shape the flowing water, and deposits memories of the Pok Fu Lam waters, the refreshed Waterfall Bay, and the modern water supply system. Fiona’s work puts sea water, mountain spring water, and fresh water into a shape that enables us to recall the water flow and contemplate how we preserve memories to where our hearts belong and manage our lives **fig 8** .

Ink painter and artist Koon Wai Bong believes that our vision determines our interpretation of nature and the human world. In exploring traditions and contemporary changes, his works borrow from traditional imagery, and the brushwork and concepts of his predecessors. At the same time, his artworks show the tangible local scenery and intangible sentiments about the present. In recent years, Koon Wai Bong has focused on life drawing with the intention to transform perceptible changes in weather and travel into dark and light ink washes, swift and slow brushwork, and dynamic compositions. The pages are the unique character of local landscapes and sensations triggered by countryside excursions. In preparing for this exhibition, the ink painter ventured to local outlying islands with their desolate and eccentric scenery, and their cracks and caves that had been shaped by volcanic magma. He examined the collective experiences of the islands by generations of Hongkongers. The island tour in ink paintings on silk bring the faraway islands to the audience in rolling waves. In sudden turns, a rocky cliff towers over the connection between sea and sky, in a sight for eternity. The audience can journey to the islands plunged in the flow of time, and see the constantly changing scenery from a cosmic point



fig 8 Fiona’s work, *Undercurrent*, uses clay to document the development of Pok Fu Lam Aqueducts and the story of local water supply.

of view **fig 9** . How does such scenery endure the eons? What do the changes mean to our city?

Sculptor Ho Yuen Leung believes that homesickness grows with time. Where is “home”? Is it our place of birth, or where we grew up, or lived for years? Perhaps it is about ourselves — from the water we drank over the years, to the meals we consumed every day, the air we breathe, or from a perpetual “solastalgia”. This is a melancholy sentiment coined by environmental philosopher Glenn Albrecht, meaning ‘homesickness experienced at home’ — the state of having no home to return to despite being right there, due to the destruction of the surrounding environment. **19** Rooted in this close tie to nature, Ho Yuen Leung’s works seem to connect to the environment where our body and soul belong, to ease the solastalgia. In his studio in the remote farmlands of Yuen Long, the artist carves wooden sculptures from the discarded timber nearby, as a response to the natural environment. The sculptor enters the city’s recycling loop and with his artistic skills, transforms lumber into works of art that connect with people, to link our perception of the natural environment to a sentiment towards life, while kindling the public’s reflection of home. From Ho Yuen Leung’s point of view, the Yuen Long farmlands are more than just rural scenery, and they are pertinent to our relationship with the environment. In the exhibition, the artist shows wooden sculptures of eerie plants, some with crooked roots and some flattened to the point of suffocation. The plant sculptures are a metaphor for life — a tangible form of solastalgia **fig 10** . What do the plants tell us of the human condition? Confronted by solastalgia, how can the audience rediscover a way back home?

With paintings, installation, sound, and video from daily ideas that strike at our memory and imagined scenery, multi-media artist Lam Tung Pang constructed a parallel world that intersects with the present and past, part



fig 9 Koon Wai Bong’s works invite audiences to explore the outlying islands and look at Hong Kong from a geological perspective.

dream and part reality. In the parallel world, a range of media fuse together into a circle of dreams, as a fantasy to reconstruct the relationship between people and the city. In 2015, the artist had a curious idea to stay at an hourly hotel in the busy district of Wan Chai. Every day he wandered the streets, hopping on random buses to visit famous spots in his hometown that he may or may not have visited before. The project “Hometown Tourist” started his bemusing journey, as he decorated his hotel room with imaginative sceneries of travel, narrating the routine-breaking journey with objects found on the streets and in images. The hometown tourist also arranged encounters with places and other people out of his love for the place, which led him to adjust his viewpoint. Surprisingly, the artist again experienced being a hometown tourist due to quarantine measures in 2021. From the airport to his room at the quarantine hotel, Lam Tung Pang could no longer see Hong Kong clearly or breathe the city’s air. Looking at the familiar yet strange place behind glass, he was close to but detached from everyone and everything else around him **fig 11** . In the exhibition, the artist contrasts the two incidents with his dialect of dreams, asking the audience — Are we visitors to the city or residents of our dreams? What kind of scenery is visible from these two perspectives?



fig 10 Ho Yuen Leung’s wood-carved plants reveal what solastalgia would look like and arouse awareness of issues related to our living space.



fig 11 Lam Tung Pang’s installation work invites audiences to enter an imaginary space where time and space are intertwined and further explore the feelings of being a hometown tourist.

The curatorial team believes the exhibition to be a platform for the exchange of ideas, and a realm for the public and art to create meaning together. The six artists consider the scenery a medium to be understood and remembered, to imagine the place and respond to it with art, for an interpretation of local scenery by different generations. This exhibition presents is the artists' and the curatorial team's sense of imagination and hope to the audience. Its meaning lies beyond just the creative works, connecting the public to the shared memories of landscape.

ENVISIONING FUTURE

The local scenery is pertinent to our emotions, memories, and ideas about home, where we live and anchor our lives. From the expected and unexpected happenings in daily life, long-running family histories, and changes in the landscape around us, our home allows us to understand and express ourselves, and to confront any doubt. Through research and art-making, the curatorial team hopes that the exhibition can transform close observations into a form of affirmation. By affirming our complex, diversified perspectives, without relying on others to write our own story, we strive to understand the local culture. Such affirmation is not only wistful, but it reflects the necessity of the times to see how our ideas might converge to imagine the city's future.

The local scenery we want to see not only lies in what we have at this moment, but also in our vision for the future.

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丁穎茵博士

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丁穎茵畢業於香港中文大學歷史系，後於英國萊斯特大學取得博物館學博士學位，現為獨立策展人及研究員。其研究著眼於藝術詮釋理論及不同觀眾群的文化想像，從而思考藝術文化如何塑造社群的公共生活。多年來一直與大學及藝術機構合作進行策展項目，以創意形式發掘本土歷史文化的多元論述。曾參與的藝術項目，包括「《越後妻有大地藝術祭》——香港部屋駐留計劃」（2019）、《20/20 香港版畫圖像藝術展》（2020）及「《路過北角》公共藝術計劃社群觀感評估」（2020—2022）等。

Ting Wing Yan, Vivian graduated from the history department at the Chinese University of Hong Kong and obtained a PhD at the School of Museum Studies, University of Leicester. She is now an independent curator and researcher. Her research interest focuses on the cultural imaginations of diverse audience groups and their cultural consumption patterns in considering how public life can be shaped in Hong Kong. She has been working with universities and art organisations to develop curatorial projects that encourage multiple narratives of local history articulated through creative means. Vivian has participated in various art projects, such as “Hong Kong House Residency programme at *Echigo — Tsumari Art Triennale*” (2019), *20/20 Hong Kong Print Art Exhibition* (2020), and “*Via North Point*, Public Art Programme: Social Generic Outcomes Assessment” (2020—2022).

