# where we come from, where we go next

hong kong ethnic minority art and migration 1933 - 2020

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# 88 years

# 5,671 exhibitions

137
non-ethnic
Chinese Hong
Kong artists

# Only 23 are people of color

### introduction

Recent literature on Hong Kong art history narrates it as the story of how post-war Chinese refugees and immigrants developed artistic practices that are spatially, vernacularly and sociopolitically specific to Hong Kong as they sought sanctuary and opportunity in a colonial city undergoing immense transformation. Hong Kong art is no longer framed as a mere junction where "East meets West" or a peripheral subsection of Chinese art, it is now acknowledged as its own entity rooted in the pursuit of local identity. It is a story of migration, migrants and mobility. The presence of British-born, non-ethnic Chinese artists such as Robert O'Brien, Douglas Bland and Jane Burrell as recognized Hong Kong artists underline the permeability of Hong Kong art to migrants even beyond Greater China. And yet, South Asian soldiers, Vietnamese refugees, Southeast Asian migrant workers and other non-ethnic Chinese Hong Kongers of color are still largely excluded in discussions of Hong Kong art history.

This timeline began as a speculative exploration in whether it is possible to use Hong Kong's migration history as a framework to write its art history inclusive of ethnic minorities. I had expected migration and exhibition histories to reveal many obscure ethnic minority artists or to unearth instances of cultural exchange beyond that of British colonizers and Chinese migrants, but what it did instead was to divulge the glaring absence of ethnic minorities of color in Hong Kong art. Like in Linda Nochlin's "Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?", I soon realized that ethnic minorities of color in Hong Kong art are scarce not because we have not been looking for them hard enough but because there are barriers forged by our institutions, policies and collective ideologies that prevent them from permeating the field. South Asian soldiers in the 19th and 20th centuries rarely interacted with the Chinese community, Vietnamese refugees in the 1970s were placed into detainment facilities, Domestic Workers who are mostly Filipino and Indonesian do not have the right of abode in Hong Kong, first-generation Hong Kong-born minorities are burdened with language barriers and social exclusion, while recent refugees, most from Africa, do not have the privilege to earn their own livelihood in the city. So it is almost inevitable that the most active, most exhibited and most acknowledged non-ethnic Chinese Hong Kong artists have been and are white Europeans.

The timeline thus shifted its purpose towards visualizing the absence of minorities in Hong Kong art. This is an absence that lies in discourses on ethnicity, privilege, labor and mobility - discourses that I aspire this timeline and research could provoke. There is a discrepancy between who exists in this city and who is able to participate in its art world, evocative of the social, economic and political discrepancies that are experienced by minorities in Hong Kong every single day. This project is a recognition that minority histories are Hong Kong history and our understanding of Hong Kong would not be complete without them. It is an acknowledgment of the impermeability of the art world and the hierarchies we have imposed on different types of migrants. Above all, it is a reminder that we are all migrants to this city and we should all have a voice in its art, culture and history as Hong Kong people, regardless of where we come from and where we go next.

### methodology

The timeline shows Hong Kong's human migration trends from the First Opium War in 1839 to 2020 along with selected exhibitions of non-ethnic Chinese Hong Kong artists from 1933 to 2020. The exhibitions included in the timeline were selected based on whether their participating artist(s) scarcely exhibited and on the cultural significance of their organizer(s). Exhibitions with highly repeated participating artist(s) were excluded from the timeline for the sake of brevity but were still included in the research data and statistics. The complete list of exhibitions with non-ethnic Chinese Hong Kong artists can be found online, at the Hong Kong Art Timeline website (https://arthistory.hku.hk/hkarttimeline/index.php/satellites/).

Non-ethnic Chinese Hong Kong artists' exhibitions were collated by going through the list of participating artists of each exhibition at Asia Art Archive's online event database then checking the place of birth and ethnicities of the artists through various online and physical resources. The list of artists and this timeline is by no means exhaustive. All information presented is welcome to be discussed and disputed.

The definition of "ethnic minority" and the different kinds of ethnic minorities are all derived from the Population By-census conducted by the Hong Kong SAR Government. I acknowledge the limitations and problematic tendencies of isolating an artist's place of birth and ethnicity, especially when we live in a world of exchange and interconnectivity where identities are fluid. This timeline does not intend to simplify artists and their practices based on their ethnicities but instead seeks to survey ethnic minority representation across the field.

Data of migration trends were found from books and journals in the libraries of The University of Hong Kong and Asia Art Archive. Notable sources are *The Invisible Citizens of Hong Kong: Art and Stories of Vietnamese Boatpeople* (2014) by Sophia Law, *Return Migration and Identity: A Global Phenomenon, A Hong Kong Case* (2010) by Nan M. Sussman and *Understanding South Asian Minorities in Hong Kong* (2014) by John Nguyet Erni and Lisa Leung.

## **Ethnic minority** Hong Kong artists

**Andrew Guthrie (born USA)** 

Angeli Sowani (born 1960, India)

Ann Beatty (born Canada)

Ann de Brackinghe

**Anne Preiss** 

**Antoinette Rozan (born 1970, France)** 

Arthur Hacker (born 1932; died 2013, Hong Emil Adamec (born 1972, Czech Republic)

Kong)

Ayumi Adachi (born 1962, Japan)

**Bob Davis (born 1945, Australia)** 

Brian Tilbrook (born 1932, UK)

Carol Archer (born Australia)

Caroline Jones (born 1972, UK)

**Carsten Schael (born Germany)** 

Cedric Maridet (born 1973, France)

Charles LaBelle (born 1964, USA)

Chris Cook (born 1968, Hong Kong)

Christopher Doyle (born 1952, Australia)

**Christopher Rothermel (born USA)** 

Clive Keep (born UK)

**Cornelia Erdmann (born Germany)** 

**Daniel Blyth** 

Daniel C. Howe (born USA)

**David Anderson** 

**David Boyce (born New Zealand)** 

David Clarke (born 1954, UK)

**David Wiggs** 

**Dinshaw Balsara** 

**Dominique Harris (born 1965, USA)** 

**Doreen Etzler (born Germany)** 

Dorothy Kirkbride (1924-2010, UK)

Douglas Bland (born 1923, UK; died 1975,

Hong Kong)

**Edgar Francisko (born 1951, Colombia)** 

Edmund Emamooden (1928-2015, UK)

**Elisabeth Forsyth** 

Elise Parkin

Eric Otto Wear (born 1962, USA)

Erkka Nissinen (born 1975, Finland)

**Esmeraldo Subido** 

**Evangelo Costadimas (born Ethiopia)** 

**Evelyn Butt** 

Frank Vigneron (born 1965, Hong Kong)

Frederic Lichtenstein (born France)

Gerard Bookle (born UK)

Gladys Palmer (born 1947, Hungary)

H.G. Hollmann (born Germany)

Hans Langner (born 1964, Germany)

**Hector Rodriguez** 

Henry Steiner (born 1934, Austria)

Hiroshi Fukazawa (born 1973, Japan)

Hugh Moss (The Master of the Water, Pine

and Stone Retreat) (born UK)

Inti Guerrero (born 1983, Colombia)

Jacqueline Sutliff (born USA)

Jane Burrell (born UK)

Jane Casner Mothersill (born USA)

Janyce Braga

Jasmine Saintonge (born Canada)

Jean Tori (born 1940, UK)

Jean-Christophe Scolari (born 1958, France)

Jeffrey du Vallier d'Aragon Aranita (born

1954, French Polynesia)

Jim Campbell (born 1956, USA)

Joan Boivin (born USA)

Joan Lebold Cohen (born 1932, USA)

João Vasco Paiva (born 1979, Portugal)

**Joel Ferraris (born Philippines)** 

Johanna Keim (born Hong Kong)

John Aiken (born 1950, UK)

John Christopher Hadfield (born UK)

John Warner (born UK)
John Whiting (born UK)

Julia Baron

Junko Theresa Mikuriya (born Hong Kong)

Justo Cascante III (born 1965, Philippines)

Karen McKeon-Wilson

Karen Phillipps (1948-2020, UK)

Katherine Ann Mahoney (born UK)

Katie Graham (born South Africa)

Katrina Leigh M Raimann (born 1997,

Philippines)

Kiki Fleming (born 1942, Guangzhou)

Kitty Burns-McKeon

**Koidl Gerd (born Austria)** 

Konstantin Bessmertny (born 1964, USSR)

**Kumar Pereira (born Sri Lanka)** 

Laurent Gutierrez, MAP Office (born 1966,

Morocco)

Lie Fhung (born Indonesia)

**Lorette Roberts (born UK)** 

**Lorraine Naylor (born UK)** 

Manfred Schoeni (born 1956, Switzerland)

Marc Brulhart (born Switzerland)

Mariko Jesse (born Japan)

Martha Lesser (born USA)

Martie Gieger-Ho (born USA)

Maurice Benayoun (born 1957, Algeria)

Madeleine Marie Slavick (born USA)

Mee Ai Om (born Korea)

**Melissa Cate Christ** 

Memory Stather (born South Africa)

Meryln Chesterman (born UK)

Michael Griffith

Michael Wolf (born 1954, Germany; died

**2019**, Hong Kong)

Nicholas Hely Hutchinson (born 1955, UK)

Nicole Dufour (born 1957, Switzerland)

Nike Arrighi (born 1947, France)

Nina Hayuma Habulan Gelladuga (born

Philippines)

Nina Pryde (born 1945, Hong Kong)

Rosamond Brown (born 1937, UK)

Roz Forestal (born Hong Kong)

**Ruth Robertson (born New Zealand)** 

**Ruth Sulke (born UK)** 

Scott Hessels (born 1958, USA)

Sharu Sikdar (born 1994, Hong Kong)

Simon Birch (born UK)

Sonia Archer (born UK)

Tamas Waliczky (born 1959, Hungary)

Terry Batt (born 1949, UK)

**Tobias Gremmler (born Germany)** 

Ulf Langheinrich (born 1960, Germany)

Valerie Portefaix, MAP Office (born 1969,

France)

**Vicky Do (born Vietnam)** 

Vietnamese Refugees, Art in the Camps

(active 1988-91, Hong Kong)

Werner Hahn (born 1944, Germany)

Xyza Cruz Bacani (born 1987, Philippines)

Yutaka Yano (born Japan)

# Ethnic minority Hong Kong artists by ethnicity:

White 68.5% Non-Chinese Asian 13.1% Others 3.5%

# Ethnic minority Hong Kong artists by place of birth:

Asia	19%
Africa	3.6%
<b>North America</b>	13.9%
<b>South America</b>	1.5%
Europe	43%
Oceania	4.5%
Unconfirmed	14.5%

# Most exhibited ethnic minority Hong Kong artists:

MAP Office	<b>18</b> *
<b>Robert O'Brien</b>	14
<b>Douglas Bland</b>	<b>12</b>
Frank Vigneron	11
Jane Burrell	11

<sup>\*</sup>Number of exhibitions

# Most exhibited ethnic minority Hong Kong artists in the Hong Kong Museum of Art:

Douglas Bland 5\*
Jane Burrell 5
Kitt Burns-McKeon 5

Source: Asia Art Archive

<sup>\*</sup>Number of exhibitions

# Ethnic minority Hong Kong artists by ethnicity, 2020

<b>Asian (other than Chinese)</b>	18	13.1%
Filipino	7	5%
Indonesian	1	1%
Thai	0	0%
Japanese	5	3.5%
Korean	1	1%
South Asian		
Indian	1	1%
Nepalese	0	0%
Pakistani	0	0%
Other South Asian	0	0%
Other Asian	3	2%
White	94	68.5%
Others	5	3.5%
Unconfirmed	20	14.5%
<b>Total ethnic minority Hong</b>	137	100%
Kong artists		

表 3.1 2006年、2011年及2016年按種族劃分的少數族裔人士數目 Table 3.1 Ethnic minorities by ethnicity, 2006, 2011 and 2016

	2006		2011	2011		2016	
種族 Ethnicity	數目 Number	百分比 <b>%</b>	數目 Number	百分比 <b>%</b>	數目 Number	百分比 9/	
亞洲人 (非華人)	285 550	83.4	365 611	81.0	457 188	78.2	
Asian (other than Chinese) 菲律賓人	112 453	32.9	133 018	29.5	184 081	31.5	
Filipino 印尼人 Indonesian	87 840	25.7	133 377	29.6	153 299	26.2	
泰國人 Thai	11 900	3.5	11 213	2.5	10 215	1.7	
日本人 Japanese	13 189	3.9	12 580	2.8	9 976	1.3	
韓國人 Korean	4 812	1.4	5 209	1.2	6 309	1.1	
南亞裔人士 South Asian	49 507	14.5	65 521	14.5	84 875	14.5	
印度人 Indian	20 444	6.0	28 616	6.3	36 462	6.2	
尼泊爾人 Nepalese	15 950	4.7	16 518	3.7	25 472	4.	
巴基斯坦人 Pakistani	11 111 2 002	3.2	18 042	4.0	18 094 4 847	3 0.8	
<i>其他南亞裔人士<sup>(1)</sup></i> Other South Asian <sup>(1)</sup> 其他亞洲人	5 849	0.6 1.7	2 345 4 693	0.5 1.0	8 433	1.4	
Other Asian 白人	36 384	10.6	55 236	12.2	58 209	10.0	
White 混血兒	18 092	5.3	29 001	6.4	65 255	11.3	
Mixed 華人父或母	14 932	4.4	24 649	5.5	53 581	9.3	
With Chinese parent 其他混血兒	3 160	0.9	4 352	1.0	11 674	2.0	
Other Mixed 其他 <sup>(2)</sup> Others <sup>(2)</sup>	2 172	0.6	1 335	0.3	3 731	0.0	
Others <sup>(-)</sup> 所有少數族裔人士 <sup>(3)</sup> All ethnic minorities <sup>(3)</sup>	342 198 (5.0%)	100.0	451 183 (6.4%)	100.0	584 383 (8.0%)	100.0	
撇除外籍家庭傭工後的 所有少數族裔人士 <sup>(3)</sup> All ethnic minorities, excluding foreign domestic helpers <sup>(3)</sup>	155 147 (2.3%)		197 022 (2.8%)		263 593 (3.6%)		
全港人口 Whole population	6 864 346		7 071 576		7 336 585		

註釋: (1) 「其他南亞裔人士」包括「孟加拉人」及「斯里蘭卡人」。 (2) 數字包括「黑人」、「拉丁美洲人」等。 (3) 括數內的數字顯示在全港人口中所佔比例。

Notes: (1) "Other South Asian" include "Bangladeshi" and "Sri-Lankan".

(2) Figures include "Black", "Latin American", etc.

(3) Figures in brackets represent the percentages in respect of the whole population.

(28) Ethnicity(種族): The ethnicity of a person is determined by selfidentification. The classification of ethnicity is determined with reference to a combination of concepts such as cultural origins, nationality, colour and language. This practice is in line with the recommendations promulgated by the United Nations in 2008, and has taken into account the practices of other countries as well as local circumstances. In Hong Kong, a significant proportion of the population is Chinese, and among the non-Chinese, Asians account for the majority. Therefore, there are more Asian related ethnic groups in the classification. [92]

### timeline

### 1839

First Opium War (1839-42) begins on 4 September.

### 1841

British authorities bring voluntary and involuntary colonized migrants from the Indian subcontinent to work in Hong Kong. Indian and Gurkha recruits would work in the military and as police officers, prison wardens and security guards. Parsi merchants would also come in for trading opportunities.

### 1842

Treaty of Nanking ceedes Hong Kong Island to the British and marks the end of the First Opium War. Hong Kong begins to become an entrepôt to Chinese trade. Its borders with China would remain porous in the first century of British colonization. Some migrant male workers and merchants from Kwangtung would eventually settle in Hong Kong.

### 1850

Incorporated Trustees of the Islamic Community Fund, Hong Kong's first Islamic organisation, receives land for their religious needs on 23 September. This would become the Jamia Masjid Mosque at Shelley Street.

### **1850**

Taiping Rebellion (1850-64) prompt Chinese refugees into Hong Kong but most would not settle in the city.

### 1853

A Portuguese community takes root in Hong Kong.

### 1896

Kowloon Mosque is built in Tsim Sha Tsui under the request of Indian Muslims to the British Army.

### 1911

Revolution of 1911 (1911-1912) prompt Chinese refugees into Hong Kong but most would not settle in the city.

### 1911

Portuguese-built St. Teresa's Church at Prince Edward Road opens in September. It would become a gathering point for Hong Kong's Portuguese and Chinese Mexican community.

### 1937

Sino-Japanese War (1937-45) prompt Chinese refugees into Hong Kong but most would not settle in the city.

### 1937

Stanley Mosque opens on 1 January inside Stanley Prison.

### 1941

Battle of Hong Kong occurs from 8 to 25 December. Following Japan's declaration of war on Britain and the United States on December, Kai Tak Airport and other areas in Kowloon and Hong Kong Island are bombed by Japanese aircrafts. On 12 December, Kowloon and New Territories fall into Japanese hands. After several battles, Gov. Sir Aitchison Young surrenders to the Japanese on 25 December.

### 1945

Russian Orthodox Church opens in Kowloon Tong, primarily serving Hong Kong's Russian community.

### 1945

Chinese Civil War (1945-9) between the Nationalists and Communists begins.

### 1945

Korean immigrants settle in Hong Kong after WW2, either from Korea or China.

### 1945

Japanese occupation ends on 15 August. On 30 August, British forces return to Hong Kong. Hong Kong's population is at 600,000.

### 1947

India gains independence from Britain on 15 August, leading to the Partition of India and Pakistan. An exodus of Indians leave Hong Kong, while the British continue to recruit Pakistanis into the Hong Kong Police Force.

### 1948

UK passes the British Nationality Act 1948 and establishes Citizen of the United Kingdom and Colonies status. It defined the national citizenship of the United Kingdom and its colonies, with Hong Kong residents becoming Citizens of the United Kingdom and Colonies.

### 1949

PRC is established on 1 October. Following Communist victory in China, hundreds of thousands of Chinese flee to Hong Kong, resulting in the first wave of Chinese post-war mass (1945-51). migration British government advises the colonial authorities in Hong Kong to wire the border and forcibly turn back any refugees who tried to cross into British territory. According to Gov. Alexander Grantham, [G]overnment neither them nor housed them, for it did not want to encourage any more of China's 400 millions to come begging for free lodging and free food.



Jamia Masjid Mosque, 2017. Photo by Ceeseven. <u>Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0</u>.



 $Kowloon\ Mosque,\ 2009.\ Photo\ by\ Mstyslav\ Chernov,\ \underline{Creative\ Commons\ Attribution-Share\ Alike\ 3.0}.$ 

Border controls are imposed for the first time in May. It is largely ineffective with more than 700,000 Chinese refugees entering Hong Kong in the first half of the year alone. This movement would bring the manpower, skills and capital that helped establish the modern Hong Kong economy.

### 1951

Sikh policemen return to India.

### 1952

US Walter-McCarran Act removes all federal anti-Asian exclusion laws and allows naturalization for all Asians in America.

### 1953

Christmas Day fire in a Shek Kip Mei squatter settlement leaves 50,000 people homeless, provoking the British government to finally handle the refugee problem more seriously.

### 1954

Hong Kong's population reaches 2.25 million.

### 1957

Hong Kong transitions into an industrial economy, with industrial employment reaching 60% of total employment in the city.

### 1958

Second wave of post-war mass Chinese migration to Hong Kong (1958-76) begins. It consists mainly of young male workers who would provide a large pool of cheap labor for Hong Kong's manufacturing industry.

### **1958**

PRC's Great Leap Forward (1958-60) begins.

### 1959

Great Famine in China (1959-61) begins.

### 1960

Douglas Bland and Ruth Robertson exhibits in the 1st Hong Kong International Salon of Paintings by The Modern Literature and Art Organization (1958-64). The Association was founded by a group of writers and artists who sought to renew the cultural development in China.

### 1961

Chungking Mansions is built in Tsim Sha Tsui as a residential development for Canton immigrants. It would become a trading and cultural centre for South Asian, Southeast Asian and African business people and refugees.

### 1961

Many Russian immigrants in Hong Kong relocate, mostly to the United States or Australia.

### 1961

The last contingent of 46 men from Pakistan recruited for the Police Force arrives in Hong Kong.

### 1962

British colonial government establishes the City Museum and Art Gallery, the first government-backed art institution in Hong Kong. Apart from its programs, it would provide rental spaces for exhibitions and events. In July 1975, it would split into the Hong Kong Museum of History and the Hong Kong Museum of Art.

### 1962

Douglas Bland, Edmund Emamooden, H.G. Hollman, John-Christopher Hadfield, John Warner and Julia Baron exhibit in *Hong Kong Art Today* at the City Hall Art Gallery.

### 1963

Douglas Bland exhibits in **Paintings by Douglas Bland** at the City Museum and Art Gallery.

### 1966

Chinese Cultural Revolution (1966-76) begins.

### 1968

Brian Tilbrook exhibits in **Paintings and Murals by Brian Tilbrook** at the Hong Kong City Hall.

### 1970

Brian Tilbrook, Elise Parkin, Evelyn Butt, John-Christopher Hadfield, Michael Griffith and Patricia Stewart exhibit at the *Exhibition of Contemporary Hong Kong Art* at the City Museum and Art Gallery.

### 1971

Filipino migrant workers seek employment in Hong Kong, many as Foreign Domestic Workers, amidst growing tensions in the Philippines during Ferdinand Marcos's second Presidential term. Marcos would declare martial law in the Philippines on 23 September 1972. It would last until his exile from the country on 24 February 1986.

### 1972

Brian Tilbrook exhibits at the **Exhibition of Paintings by Brian Tilbrook** at the Hong Kong City Hall.

### 1972

Douglas Bland, Evelyn Butt and Michael Griffith exhibit in *Contemporary Hong Kong Art 1972* at the City Museum and Art Gallery.

### 1973

Australia lifts the Australian Immigration Restriction Act of 1901 ("White Australia Policy") which blocked people of "Asian descent" from entering Australia.

### **1974**

Touch-Base Policy (1974-80) is implemented in Hong Kong to curb illegal immigration. It allowed migrants from the Mainland to remain in Hong Kong only if they were able to reach Boundary Street in Kowloon without being intercepted by officials and meet their relatives to apply for a Hong Kong Identity Card.



Chungking Mansions entrance, 2008. Photo by Corekimern12. <u>Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike</u> 3.0. [Cropped]



Inside Chungking Mansions, 2013. Photo by Ralf Roletschek. <u>Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike</u> 3.0.

Douglas Bland, Martha Lesser and Rosamond Brown exhibit at the Hong Kong Arts Festival First Exhibition of Contemporary Hong Kong Art at Hotel Furama Kempinski in Mong Kok.

### 1974

Evelyn Butt exhibits at the *Exhibition of Painting by Evelyn Butt* at the Hong Kong Arts Centre. The Hong Kong Arts Centre is an independent non-profit founded in 1971. It hosts its own programs while providing rental space for art programs.

### 1975

First cohort of 3.743 "boatpeople" Vietnamese land on Hong Kong on 3 May, following the Fall of Saigon on 30 April. More than half of the first wave of Vietnamese refugees were resettled to other countries in the same year. But the initial supportive local response turn sour as more refugees arrive and locals who are experiencing mostly economic hardship saw the new refugees as threats to their livelihoods.

### 1975

Dinshaw Balsara exhibits at the **Photographic Exhibition by Dinshaw Balsara** at the newly opened Quorum Galleries.

### 1976

Canada Immigration Act of implemented, 1976 is establishing the main of Canada's objectives immigration policy for the first time and prioritizing "family reunion, diversity, and nondiscrimination." Ιt also recognized refugees and required the government to meet their obligations to This Act further enabled the mass migration of Hong Kong people to Canada in the 80s and 90s in the wake of The Handover.

### 1976

Brian Tilbrook and Rosamond Brown exhibit in Five Artists of Hong Kong at the Hong Kong City Hall.

### 1976

Douglas Bland exhibit in *The World of Douglas Bland* at the Hong Kong Museum of Art.

### 1977

Anne Preiss, Dorothy Kirkbride, Elisabeth Forsyth, Parkin, Jacqueline Elise Sutliff, Janyce Braga, Kitty Burns-McKeon, Koidl Gerd, Martha Lesser, Merlvn Chesterman, Nike Arrighi and Peter Chancellor exhibit in Contemporary Hong Kong Art 1977 at the Hong Kong Museum of Art.

### 1978

Kitty Burns-McKeon and Nike Arrighi exhibit at the **Exhibition of Works by Urban Council Art Winners 1978** at the Hong Kong Museum of Art.

### **1978**

China launches their economic reform and opening up on 18 December.

### **1978**

Martha Lesser exhibits in **Work-on-Paper by Martha Lesser** at the Hong Kong Arts Centre.

### 1979

Ann de Brackinghe, Dorothy Kirkbride, Gladys Palmer, Karen Phillipps, Kitty Burns-McKeon, Martha Lesser, Memory Stather, Merlyn Chesterman, Norman de Brackinghe, Peter Chancellor and Robert O'Brien exhibit in the *Contemporary Hong Kong Art Biennial Exhibition 1979* at the Hong Kong Museum of Art.

### 1979

Hong Kong receives the highest number of Vietnamese refugees at more than 60,000.

### 1980

Supply and demand for Foreign Domestic Workers soar, most of them from the Philippines.

### 1980

One Way Permit (OWP) is established in Hong Kong to facilitate family reunion between Mainland Chinese and Hong Kong relatives. It grants Mainland Chinese residents the right to permanently reside in Hong Kong.

### 1980

Robert O'Brien exhibits in the **Contemporary Hong Kong Art Biennial Exhibition 1980** at the Hong Kong City Hall.

### 1981

Masjid Ammar Mosque at Oi Kwan Road is completed.

### 1981

UK passes the British Nationality Act 1981 which redefined the categories of nationality British and Crown renamed British colonies British to Territories. Dependent Hong Kong residents become British Dependent Territories Citizens.

### 1981

Dorothy Kirkbride, Douglas Bland, Kitty Burns-McKeon, Martha Lesser, Nike Arrighi and Rosamond Brown exhibit in *Hong Kong Art 1970-1980* at the Hong Kong Museum of Art.

### 1981

Dorothy Kirkbride, Kitty Burns-McKeon, Karen McKeon-Wilson, Martha Lesser, Merlyn Chesterman and Peter Chancellor exhibit in *First Choice* 1981 at the Hong Kong Arts Centre.



Vietnamese refugees wait to be taken aboard the amphibious command ship USS BLUE RIDGE (LCC-19), 15 May 1984. Photo from Phil Eggman, Wikimedia Commons.

A closed camp policy is implemented at the Vietnamese refugee camps in Hong Kong, effectively turning them into detainment facilities. It would also segregate Vietnamese refugees from the local community upon arrival.

### 1983

Dorothy Kirkbride exhibits in **Paintings and Drawings by Dorothy Kirkbride** at the Hong Kong Arts Centre.

### 1983

Katherine Ann Mahoney exhibits in *Clay* at the Hong Kong Arts Centre.

### 1984

Sino-British Joint Declaration is signed on 19 December, outlining Hong Kong's sovereign and administrative arrangement after 1 July 1997.

### 1984

As a response to Hong Kong's incoming Handover, approximately 600,000 residents leave Hong Kong between 1984 and 1997 to settle in countries such as Canada, Australia and the United States. The emigration would peak at 66,000 in 1992.

### 1984

Bob Davis exhibits in *Images* of *China by Hong Kong Photographers* at the Hong Kong Arts Centre.

### 1985

UK passes the Hong Kong Act of 1985 and establishes British Nationality (Overseas). This status was only available to Hong Kong British Dependent Territories Citizens through application on or before 30 June 1997.

### 1986

Dorothy Kirkbride, Nicole Dufour and Norman de Brackinghe exhibit in *First Choice* 1986 at the Hong Kong Arts Centre.

### 1987

Joan Leobold Cohen exhibits in China and Hong Kong — Dreams and Images: An Exhibition of Colour Photographs by Joan Lebold Cohen at Alisan Fine Arts Gallery in Aberdeen.

### 1987

Jane Burrell, Katherine Ann Mahoney, Peggy Phillips Oates and Ruth Sulke exhibit in the *Contemporary Hong Kong Art Biennial Exhibition 1987* at the Hong Kong Museum of Art.

### 1987

David Clarke exhibits in *Mobile Art Show* by the Hong Kong Arts Centre.

### 1987

Brian Tilbrook, David Wiggs, Dorothy Kirkbride, Martha Lesser, Peter Chancellor, Rosamond Brown and Sonia Archer exhibit in *Ten Years of Hong Kong Painting: An Exhibition to Mark the 10th Anniversary of the Hong Kong Arts Centre* at the Hong Kong Arts Centre.

### 1988

Henry Steiner and Kumar Periera exhibit in *Four Hong Kong Designers* at the Hong Kong Arts Centre.

### 1988

Garden Streams — Hong Kong Fellowship of Christian Artists holds *Art in the Camps* (1988-91), a project that would provide creative workshops to Vietnamese refugees, most of whom are at Whitehead Detention Camp in Sha Tin. It was organized by Evelyna Liang Yee Woo and funded by the United Nations. The refugees would produce around 600 to 800 pieces of artwork and writings. Most of the refugees would be relocated and very few would become Hong Kong residents.

### 1989

UK passes British Nationality (Hong Kong) Act 1990 and grants 50,000 families in Hong Kong British citizenship.

### 1989

Beijing Democracy Movement and June Fourth take place.

### 1989

Edgar Francisko exhibit in the **Contemporary Hong Kong Art Biennial Exhibition 1989** at the Hong Kong Museum of Art.

### 1990

Still Lives: Art by Vietnamese Boat People in Hong Kong at Hong Kong Arts Centre exhibits works by Vietnamese refugees at Hong Kong Arts Centre. The exhibits were a part of the body of work produced from Art in the Camps (1988-91) by Garden Streams — Hong Kong Fellowship of Christian Artists.

### 1990

Hong Kong's Basic Law is promulgated by PRC's National People's Congress on 4 April.

### 1991

Jane Burrell exhibits in *Art Works of Hong Kong Women Artists '91* at the Hong Kong Institute for Promotion of Chinese Culture.

### 1992

Rosamond Brown exhibits in *City Vibrance: Recent Works in Western Media by Hong Kong Artists* at the Hong Kong Museum of Art.

### 1992

Esmeraldo Subido exhibits in *Art Works of Esmeraldo Subido* at the Hong Kong Institute for Promotion of Chinese Culture.

### 1992

Hong Kong becomes a signatory to the United Nations Conventions Against Torture (UNCAT), making it mandatory for the city to house asylumseekers and process their asylum application until the assessment is complete.

38,000 Hong Kong residents emigrate to Canada, accounting for 15.4% of the country's annual intake.

### 1992

Brian Tilbrook, Esmeraldo Subido, Karen McKeon-Wilson, Kiki Fleming, Ruth Sulke and Renee Melchert Thorpe exhibit in the *Contemporary Hong Kong Art Biennial Exhibition* at the Hong Kong Museum of Art

### 1993

Renee Melchert Thorpe exhibits in *Bow-Wow!* at the Fringe Club. The Fringe Club is an arts and culture organization that opened in Central in 1983.

### 1993

Kitty Burns-McKeon, Karen McKeon-Wilson and Nicholas Hely Hutchinson exhibit in *Five Years on Hollywood Road* at Wattis Fine Art Gallery in Central.

### 1993

Carsten Schael and Joan Boivin exhibit in *Anatomy of a Sandwich* by the Hong Kong Arts Festival and the Hong Kong Institute of Professional Photographers.

### 1994

Peter Suart exhibits in *In the Attic* at the Fringe Club.

### 1995

Daniel Blyth, Esmeraldo Subido, Jane Burrell, Jane Crasner Mothersill and Katherine Ann Mahoney exhibit in *Contemporary Hong Kong Art 1995* at the Hong Kong Museum of Art.

### 1995

Werner Hahn exhibits in *Witness Hong Kong (Part 2)* at the Hong Kong Museum of Art.

### 1995

Christopher Doyle exhibits in *Cultural Chop Shui 1* at the Fringe Club.

### 1996

UK passes the Hong Kong (War Wives and Widows) Act, allowing Hong Kong residents to register as British citizens on the basis of their husbands' war service in defense of Hong Kong.

### 1996

Frank Vigneron exhibits in the **Contemporary Hong Kong Art Biennial Exhibition 1996** at the Hong Kong Museum of Art.

### 1996

Jane Burrell, Katherine Ann Mahoney and Ruth Sulke exhibit in *Hong Kong Ceramics* 1985-1995 by the Hong Kong Museum of Art and Contemporary Ceramics Society.

### 1996

Jane Burrell exhibits in *Hong Kong Artists Series: Jane Burrell* by the Hong Kong Museum of Art. The series is initiated as a program to promote local artists during a time of cultural uncertainty with the upcoming Handover. It featured numerous artists such as Ha Bik-chuen (1992) and Ou Da-wei (1996).

### 1996

Martie Gieger-Ho exhibits in **Drawing on Inspiration: Kong Ho & Martie Geiger-Ho Mixed Media Work Exhibition** at the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

### **1996**

Eric Otto Wear exhibits in the **6.30** Exhibition at HanartTZ Gallery in Kwai Chung.

### 1996

Clive Keep, Lorraine Naylor and Roz Forestal exhibit in *Hong Kong Art* on Lamma - 'Celebration'.

### 1996

Hiroshi Fukuzawa exhibits in the *Hong Kong Independent Short Film and Video Awards 1996* at the Hong Kong Arts Centre.

### 1996

Caroline Jones exhibits in **Beauty Defies Tyranny**, **The Face of Peking Opera** at LKF the Gallery.

### 1997

UK passes the British Nationality (Hong Kong) Act 1997. Under the policy, Hong Kong residents without Chinese ancestry are entitled to full British citizenship upon application after 1 July 1997. This comes after realizing that there are non-ethnic Chinese Hong Kong residents who would become stateless upon the Handover.

### 1997

**Minorities** Being Contemporary Asian Art, organized by Oscar Ho of the Hong Kong Arts Centre, takes place in February. lt aims discuss the marginalization of Asian visual arts within the global art world, the dislocation of minorities in Hong Kong and Hong Kong's peripheral status to China. Hong Kong artists exhibited were Konstantin Bessmertny and Robert O'Brien.

### **1997**

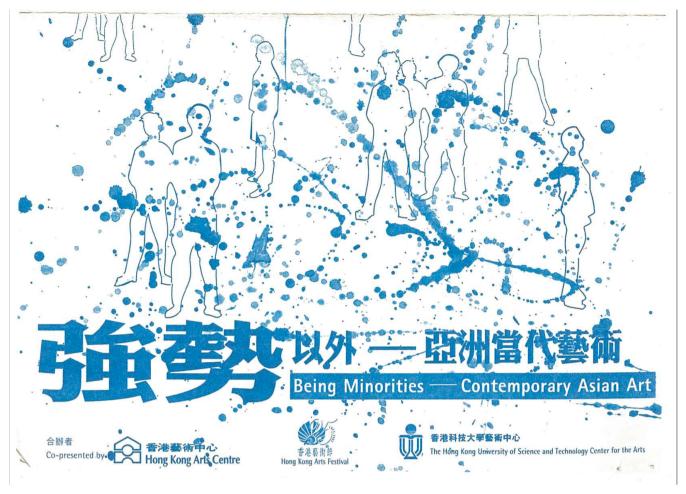
The Handover of Hong Kong on 1 July.

### 1997

Asian Financial Crisis begins in July, largely affecting East and Southeast Asia.

### 1997

Ann Beatty exhibits in **Watercolour Paintings by Ann Beatty** at the Fringe Club.



Cover of the exhibition invitation for Being Minorities — Contemporary Asian Art at Hong Kong Arts Centre, 1997. Courtesy of the Ha Bik Chuen Archive and Asia Art Archive.



Installation view of Vivan Sundaram, *A Scroll/Map and flag for Hong Kong* (1997) in *Being Minorities*. Courtesy of the Ha Bik Chuen Archive and Asia Art Archive.

### 前言 Introduction

對香港藝術中心來說,籌劃「強勢以外—— 亞灣當代藝術」展覽可說是一次 新的嘗試和挑戰。以往,歐美、中國和台灣藝術皆是中心展覽的常客,今次,我們把 焦點放在東南亞。從認識到深入了解,更激發起我把當代亞洲地區這些富有活力及豐 富多元的藝術帶到香港。

九七將至,民族主義熱潮方興永艾。而香港則是一個華洋雜處的地方,對於那些幾代以來在香港扎根、貢獻良多的外籍族裔來說、政權上的移交會有什麼文化及社會上的影響?他/她們會不會漸漸成為被遺忘的一群,分化為一個又一個的「少數部族」?《強勢以外》展覽並沒有意圖去解答這些問題。我們只希望能透過藝術創作,引起大眾對問題的注意和關心。展覽探討的問題主要有兩個層次;一乃討論至測當代藝術於吳為主導的藝術世界裡生存、立足及身份認同問題。此外將會探討香港「少數部族」(如參展藝術家、居港的英國藝術家Robert O'Brien及居於澳門的俄羅斯藝術家 Konstantin Bessmertny)面對九七的身份去向問題。藝術家將留港二至三星期進行創作,對身為少數派的處境作出回應。

《強勢以外——亞洲當代藝術》乃首個以純亞洲當代藝術家為主的大型繪畫及裝置藝術展覽。参展藝術家東自亞洲七個地區,包括Chatchai Puipia 及 Montien Boonma (泰國) · Sid Gomez Hildawa and Imelda Cajipe (菲律賓) · Vu Dan Tan (越南) · Vivan Sundaram (印度) · Talha Rathore (巴基斯坦) · Konstantin Bessmertny (澳門) 與及香港的 Robert O'Brien。

For the Hong Kong Arts Centre, *Being Minorities* has opened up a new curatorial direction. Over the years, most of our non-local exhibitions are either from the European/North American countries, or from China. South East Asia has never been our area of focus. In the last couple years, I was fortunate to have the opportunity to get to know a bit more about the contemporary art scene in south East Asia, and was greatly impressed by its development. I felt a strong need to introduce them to the Hong Kong audience.

While providing an opportunity to see some of the finest contemporary art from South East Asia, this exhibition also has its specific focus. It tries to discuss the issues of minority and cultural dislocation. The nine artists from South East Asia, including the Hong Kong English artist Robert O'Brien and the Macau Russian artist Konstantin Bessmertny, are asked to make art in response to the topic of "Being Minorities". The idea of minority and dislocation can be interpreted at two levels. On the one hand, it refers to Asian art as a minority culture within the global art world dominated by the Western World. On the other hand, it is specifically about the minorities in Hong Kong, and their cultural dislocation within an increasingly Sino-centric culture.

With the rise of Chinese nationalism, what would happen socially and culturally to those who have been, for generations, an integrated part of our Hong Kong culture. In our recent patriotic zeal to rebuild our "Chineseness", have we forgotten the many people of different cultural backgrounds who have helped to build Hong Kong? What will happen to that cultural accommodativeness we have worked so hard to nurture? This exhibition does not intend to provide an answer. We only hope to bring out the issue, and generate some sensibility toward the "minority". For after the July 1, Hong Kong will also be a minority culture within that great culture called China.

香港藝術中心展覽總監何慶基 Oscar Ho Exhibition Director, Hong Kong Arts Centre

Oscar Ho's introduction statement on the exhibition invitation for *Being Minorities*. Courtesy of the Ha Bik Chuen Archive and Asia Art Archive.



Installation view of Robert O'Brien, Standing within the Circle (1997) at Being Minorities. Courtesy of the Ha Bik Chuen Archive and Asia Art Archive.



Installation view of Sid Gomez Hildawa, Sunday at Central Station, Hong Kong (1997) at Being Minorities. Courtesy of the Ha Bik Chuen Archive and Asia Art Archive.



Installation view of Montien Boonma, *Inscription of the Past* (1997) at *Being Minorities*. Courtesy of the Ha Bik Chuen Archive and Asia Art Archive.



Installation view of Imelda Cajipe Endaya, *Bagahe* sa Refugee House (Bag at the Refugee House) at Being Minorities. Courtesy of the Ha Bik Chuen Archive and Asia Art Archive.

Evangelo Costadimas exhibits in *Private Content, Public View, Hong Kong* at the Hong Kong Fringe Club Festival.

### 1998

David Clarke, Eric Otto Wear and Marc Brulhart exhibit in Art Supermarket: Fundraising Project by Para/Site. Para Site is an artist-run, exhibition-making institution founded in 1996 in Quarry Bay.

### 1998

Frank Vigneron exhibits in the *Contemporary Hong Kong Art Biennial Exhibition 1998* at the Hong Kong Museum of Art.

### 1998

Martie Gieger-Ho exhibits in *The Retelling of Drawing - by Twelve Hong Kong Woman Artists* by the Hong Kong Arts Development Council. The Council was established by the Hong Kong Government in 1995 to support the development of arts in the city.

### 1998

Frederic Lichtensten exhibits in *Microwave Festival 1998* by Videotage. Videotage began as an artist collective in 1986. It would become the first institution in Hong Kong to focus on the development of video art.

### 1999

Hong Kong Government makes the first population survey on minorities, which made it possible for the minority population to be included in the Hong Kong population census for the first time.

### 1999

Ann Beatty and Caroline Jones exhibit in *Hong Kong Visual Arts: Vibrant City* by the Hong Kong Museum of Arts and Confederation of Hong Kong Visual Artists.

### 1999

Robert O'Brien exhibits in *The Interaction of Ink Painting and Installation* by Artist Commune. Artist Commune is a non-profit art group founded in July 1997 at what used to be Oil Street in North Point.

### 1999

Marc Brulhart exhibits in **Script Tease** at Para Site.

### 1999

Riitta Kuisma exhibits in Alphabets of Life': Woodblock Prints and Paintings by Hong Kongbased Finnish Artist at the Fringe Club.

### 1999

Angeli Sowani exhibits in Anne Leveque and Angeli Sowani: The Sculptor and The Painter by Hong Kong Land Limited.

### 2000

Ann Beatty and Caroline Jones exhibit in *Identities:* Art in Hong Kong SAR Government Collections Abroad.

### 2000

Pillar Point camp, which held the last remaining Vietnamese refugees, closed, marking the end of the Vietnamese exodus to Hong Kong.

### 2001

Rosamond Brown exhibits in *Rosamond Brown - A Retrospective* at the Hong Kong Club.

### 2001

Doreen Etzler exhibits in *Open Cities: HKG*><*ORD* at Para Site.

### 2001

Dominique Harris and Madeleine Marie Slavick exhibit in *Traversals* by the Fringe Club and Para Site.

### 2001

Joel Ferraris exhibits in CityPoetry 2001: Poetry, Documentation and Essays.

### 2002

SARS epidemic, first identified in Foshan on 16 November, would reach Hong Kong on 16 March 2003. There would be 1,755 cases and 298 reported deaths related to the virus in the city.

### 2002

Carol Archer, David Clarke, Hector Rodriguez, Junko Theresa Mikuriya and Madeleine Marie Slavick, with Laurent Gutierrez and Valerie Portefaix of MAP Office, exhibit in **Social Club** at Para Site.

### 2003

Noel de Guzman exhibits in Human Touch 2: A Solo Exhibition of Finger Paintings by Noel de Guzman at Karin Weber Gallery in Central.

### 2003

Dominique Harris exhibits in **Sense. Non Sense** at Videotage.

### 2003

David Clarke, Evangelo Costadimas and Jeffrey du Vallier d'Aragon Aranita, with Laurent Gutierrez and Valerie Portefaix of MAP Office, exhibit in *Mart 03: Made in Hong Kong for Hong Kong* at Para Site.

### 2003

Michael Wolf exhibits in *Michael Wolf: Portraits* of *Chinese People* at John Batten Gallery.

### 2003

Frank Vigneron, Hector Rodriguez and Junko Theresa Mikuriya exhibit in the **Hong Kong Art Biennial 2003** at the Hong Kong Museum of Art.

After the Philippines imposed a temporary ban on new Foreign Domestic Worker contracts between the Philippines and Hong Kong due to SARS, Filipino Domestic Workers in Hong Kong decline in number. It would lead to an influx of Indonesian Domestic Workers.

### 2004

Jeffrey du Vallier d'Aragon Aranita exhibits in **On Leaving the Shadow World** at Artist Commune.

### 2004

Simon Birch exhibits in **Artmart 2004 - Art is Life, Life is Art** at Para Site.

### 2004

Ayumi Adachi exhibits in **Feeling** at State Of The Arts Gallery.

### 2005

Gerard Bookle exhibits in **SuperNature - Exhibition by Gerard Bookle** at Sin Sin Fine Art Gallery. The Gallery was established in 2003 in Wong Chuk Hang.

### 2006

Noel de Guzman exhibits in **Noel de Guzman: Tactile Mind** at Karin Weber Gallery.

### 2006

Jean-Christophe Scolari and Patrick S Ford exhibit in the Hong Kong sCULpTURE: >1M: 1st Hong Kong, Guangzhou and Macau Modern Sculpture Exchange Exhibition at Artist Commune.

### 2006

Konstantin Bessmertny and Simon Birch exhibit in *The* **2006 Sovereign Asian Art Prize** by the Sovereign Art Foundation. The Foundation is a charitable organisation founded in 2003 to support contemporary art.

### 2006

Frank Vigneron exhibits in *Meditation and Narration:*Contemporary Ink
Exhibition at Artist
Commune

### 2006

Justo Cascante III exhibits in New Works by Justo 'tito' Cascante III at 4 Boxes.

### 2007

Norman de Brackinghe and Brian Tilbrook exhibit in the Hong Kong Graphic Art Fiesta 2007: Crossing Boundaries: An International Print Exchange Exhibition.

### 2007

Katherine Ann Mahoney exhibits in Living with the Locale – Exhibition by Members of the Contemporary Ceramic Society by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD). LCSD was founded in 2000 to support the provision of recreational and cultural programs.

### 2007

Cedric Maridet exhibits in *in midair:* sound works hong kong 2007 at habitus.

### 2007

Nina Hayuma Habulan Gelladuga performs in **Siren: New Media Art** at Osage Gallery in Kwun Tong.

### 2007

Cornelia Erdmann exhibits in **Art Responds to 14QK Exhibition** at Para Site.

### 2007

Mee Ai Om and Simon Birch exhibit in *The 2007 Sovereign Asian Art Prize* by the Sovereign Art Foundation.

### 2008

Andrew Guthrie and Cornelia Erdmann exhibit in Hong Kong Anarchitecture Bananas: Artists Who Reclaim Space at Artist Commune.

### 2008

C.A.R.E.: Local Vietnamese Community Art Reencountered exhibits works by Vietnamese refugees produced from Art in the Camps (1988-91) by Garden Streams — Hong Kong Fellowship of Christian Artists at Lingnan University.

### 2008

Hong Kong Government passes laws dealing with discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, national or social origin to supplement the gap in the 1996 Equal Opportunities Commission that only "works towards the elimination of discrimination on the grounds of sex, marital status, pregnancy, disability and famiy status."

### 2008

Terry Batt exhibits in **New Horizons** at 10 Chancery Lane Gallery.

### 2008

Mee Ai Om and Peter Steinhauer exhibit in *The 2008 Sovereign Asian Art Prize* by the Sovereign Art Foundation.

### 2008

Cedric Maridet and Christopher Rothermel exhibit in Hong Kong Arts Centre 30th Anniversary Award: Exhibition of Winning and Shortlisted Entries at the Hong Kong Arts Centre.

### 2008

Emil Adamec and Jean-Christophe Scolari exhibit in the *Hong Kong Sculpture Biennial 2008*.



Exhibition brochure for *C.A.R.E.: Local Vietnamese Community Art Re-encountered* at Lingnan University, 2008. Courtesy of Asia Art Archives.

João Vasco Paiva exhibits in Microwave International New Media Arts Festival 2009: Nature Transformer.

### 2009

Evangelo Costadimas exhibits in *Feigned Innocence: We All Look* at Para Site.

### 2010

Christopher Rothermel, Emil Adamec and Jean-Christophe Scolari exhibit in *Echo: Hong Kong Sculpture Biennial 2010*.

### 2010

Frank Vigneron, João Vasco Paive and Nina Pryde exhibit in the *Hong Kong Contemporary Art Biennial Awards 2009* at the Hong Kong Museum of Art.

### 2010

Carol Archer exhibit in *Time with the Sky* at Artist Commune.

### 2010

Erkka Nissinen, with Laurent Gutierrez and Valerie Portefaix of MAP Office, exhibit in *Fax* at Para Site.

### 2010

Evangelo Costadimas and Michael Wolf exhibit in *City Flâneur: Social Documentary Photography* at the Hong Kong Heritage Museum.

### 2011

Charles LaBelle exhibits in *Corpus* at Saamlung Hong Kong.

### 2011

Simon Birch exhibits in Laughing with a Mouth Full of Blood: New Paintings by Simon Birch at the Hong Kong Museum of Medical Sciences.

### 2011

Chris Cook exhibits in Primitive Contemporary 3 Series: Primitive Craftsmanship-Contemporary Sculpture at C&G Art Garden.

### 2012

Daniel C. Howe, Hector Rodriguez, Olli Tapio Leino, Robert Ellis-Geiger, Scott Hessels, Tamas Waliczky, Tobias Gremmler and Ulf Langheinrich exhibit in *The Burning Edge: Making Space, Activating Form* at the City University of Hong Kong.

### 2012

Erkka Nissinen participate in *Mobile M+: Yau Ma Tei* by M+. M+ is an upcoming museum of visual culture in Hong Kong scheduled to open in 2021.

### 2012

Laurent Gutierrez and Valerie Portefaix of MAP Office exhibit in *MAP Office: Atlas of Asia Art Archive* at Asia Art Archive. Asia Art Archive opened in Sheung Wan in 2000.

### 2013

David Boyce exhibit in **David Boyce: From the Shoulders of Giants** at Blindspot Gallery in Wong Chuk Hang.

### 2013

Cedric Maridet and Hector Rodriguez exhibit in *Hong Kong Contemporary Art Awards 2012* at the Hong Kong Museum of Art.

### 2013

David Clarke exhibits in From Photography to Music: A Creative Dialogue between David Clarke & Chan Hing-yan at the University Museum and Art Gallery, The University of Hong Kong.

### 2013

Yutaka Yano exhibits in Eco Habitat: Kai Tak River Green Corridor Community Education Project at the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

### 2013

Douglas Bland, Hector Rodriguez, Jaoa Vasco Paiva and Simon Birch, with Laurent Gutierrez and Valerie Portefaix of MAP Office, exhibit in Hong Kong Eye: Contemporary Hong Kong Art at Saatchi Gallery.

### 2014

Hugh Moss (The Master of the Water, Pine and Stone Retreat) exhibit in *Meditations in Nature: New Ink* at Ben Brown Fine Arts in Wong Chuk Hang.

### 2014

Jim Campbell exhibits in Fleeting Light: The 4th Large-scale Interactive Media Arts Exhibition at the City University of Hong Kong.

### 2014

Lie Fhung exhibits in **Exposure** at Sin Sin Fine Arts in Wong Chuk Hang.

### 2014

Cedric Maridet, with Laurent Gutierrez and Valerie Portefaix of MAP Office, exhibit in **Hong Kong Bestiary** at Platform China.

### 2015

João Vasco Paiva, with Laurent Gutierrez and Valerie Portefaix of MAP Office, exhibit in **Both Sides Now II** by Videotage.

### 2016

Inti Guerrero exhibits in *Inti Guerrero: Udlot-udlot* at Asia Art Archive.

### 2016

One Way Permit Scheme which allowed Mainland migrants to settle in Hong Kong has enabled around 950,000 Mainland Chinese migrants to settle in the city since its inception in 1980, the equivalent of 12.8% of Hong Kong population.

Xyza Cruz Bacani exhibits in *Afterwork* at Para Site. Afterwork is a major group exhibition that foregrounded migrant workers, especially Foreign Domestic Workers, in Hong Kong and across the globe.

### 2016

Maurice Benayoun and Tobias Gremmler exhibit in **POST PIXEL.: Animamix Biennale 2015-16** at the City University of Hong Kong.

### 2016

Hong Kong as a transit point has over 10,000 asylum-seekers, refugees and torture claimants (ASRs), with whom are approx. 10% from Africa. Non-Chinese residents accounted for 8% of the total population, not including Foreign Domestic Workers who are excluded from the right to abode.

### 2016

John Aiken exhibits in World & Heaven: Hong Kong Sculpture Biennial 2016 by the Hong Kong Sculpture Society.

### 2016

Doreen Etzler exhibits in No References: A Revisit of Hong Kong Video and Media Art from 1985 at Cattle Depot artist village in Kowloon.

### 2017

Johanna Keim and Melissa Cate Christ, with Laurent Gutierrez and Valerie Portefaix of MAP Office, exhibit in *Always at the Edge of Things and Between Places* at Connecting Space Hong Kong.

### 2017

A Collective Present, the final exhibition of Spring Workshop, takes place in November. It featured the ongoing research of Tiffany Chung for the Hong Kong Chapter of The Vietnam Project Exodus Vietnamese refugees. Workshop Spring founded in 2011 as a temporary experimental space.

### 2018

Cedric Maridet and Xyza Cruz Bacani, with Laurent Gutierrez and Valerie Portefaix of MAP Office, exhibit in Wan Chai Grammatica: Past, Present, Future Tense at the Hong Kong Arts Centre.

### 2018

Xyza Cruz Bacani exhibits in *We Are Like Air: A Moving Tale of Migrant Domestic Workers* at the Hong Kong Arts Centre.

### 2018

Guhit Kulay and Filipino Domestic Workers exhibit in **Beyond Myself** by Enrich and the University of London.

### 2019

Nina Pryde exhibits in *Hong Kong Modern Ink Painting Society Annual Exhibition 2019* at the Hong Kong City Hall

### 2019

Katie Graham exhibits in *Katie Graham: Boundless Energy* at Usagi Gallery in Central.

### 2020

First identified in Wuhan in December 2019, COVID-19 first reached Hong Kong on 23 January 2020. It would become the COVID-19 pandemic, affecting millions of people worldwide.

### 2020

Nàng Tự Do: The Archive of "Art In the Camps" exhibits works by Vietnamese refugees produced from Art in the Camps (1988-91) by Garden Streams — Hong Kong Fellowship of Christian Artists at the Chinese University of Hong Kong Main Library.

### 2020

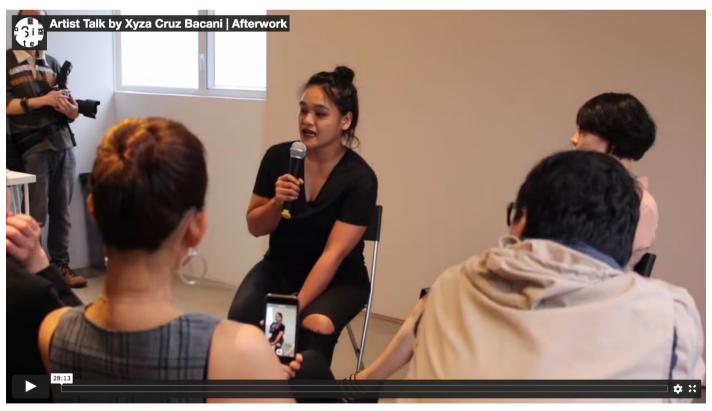
Katrina Leigh M Raimann exhibits in **HKFOREWORD20** at 10 Chancery Lane.

### 2020

Sharu Sikdar exhibits in #EW! NORMAL? at HART Haus on Hong Kong Island.



[Right] Installation view featuring works by Xyza Cruz Bacani in *Afterwork* at Para Site, 2016. Courtesy of Para Site, Hong Kong.



Screen capture of a video of artist Xyza Cruz Bacani giving a talk at Para Site in conjunction with the *Afterwork* exhibition, 2016. Courtesy of Para Site, Hong Kong.

### **SPRING**

### A COLLECTIVE PRESENT TIFFANY CHUNG KOKI TANAKA



Our final exhibition assembles the ongoing research of <u>Tiffany Chung</u> and <u>Koki Tanaka</u>, enabled by their residencies at Spring in the past year. The pair of works unpack recent events from the '60s to the present in order to reveal histories of forgotten/marginalized events and of disregarded communities in Hong Kong.

Date November 4 - December 10, 2017

ype Exhibition

Share 6 0 6

As an extension of her ongoing research for the Hong Kong chapter of The Vietnam Exodus Project, Chung will exhibit archival materials and notes from her academic research and ethnographic fieldwork that excavate personal/collective histories and remap the now-erased spatial/historical narratives of the local Vietnamese refugee community in Hong Kong. As part of the presentation, Chung hosts a discussion between human rights lawyers and former Vietnamese refugees on Hong Kong's asylum policies and the impact these continuously-shifting policies had upon their lives, in order to make visible the obliterated history and troubled domestic relationship with the displaced Vietnamese population from 1975 until now.

Screen capture of *A Collective Present* exhibition in the online archive of Spring Workshop, 2017. Courtesy of Spring Workshop.





Installation view of Xyza Cruz Bacani's solo exhibition, *We Are Like Air: A Moving Tale of Migrant Domestic Workers*, at the Hong Kong Arts Centre, 2018. Courtesy of Xyza Cruz Bacani.



Exhibition posters for Nàng Tự Do – The archive of Art In the Camps (Garden Streams) and the traces of Vietnamese boatpeople in Hong Kong at The Chinese University of Hong Kong Main Library, 2020. Courtesy of The Chinese University of Hong Kong Communications and Public Relations Office.



"The process of women weaving artworks inside the detention camp." At  $N\grave{a}ng\ T\psi\ Do$ . Courtesy of The Chinese University of Hong Kong Communications and Public Relations Office.

### conclusion

Between 1933 and 2020, there were eight non-profit local exhibitions on ethnic minorities of color: Still Lives: Art by Vietnamese Boat People in Hong Kong (1990), Being Minorities — Contemporary Asian Art (1997), C.A.R.E.: Local Vietnamese Community Art Re-encountered (2008), Afterwork (2016), A Collective Present (2017), Beyond Myself (2018), We Are Like Air (2018) and Nàng Tự Do: The Archive of "Art In the Camps" (2020). While Being Minorities was curated as a reflection on the further displacement of ethnic minorities during the Handover in 1997, the remaining seven exhibitions were either about Vietnamese refugees or foreign domestic workers.

Still Lives, C.A.R.E. and Nàng Tự Do were exhibitions of the same body of work created by Vietnamese refugees under the Art in the Camps program organized by Garden Streams — Hong Kong Fellowship of Christian Artists, which ran from 1988 to 1991 at Whitehead Detention Camp. This enduring reemergence of the art by Vietnamese refugees at Whitehead suggests the city's particular interest in this history and minority community but it could also reflect its tendency to forget them so quickly that it constantly needs their reiteration. Exhibitions about Art in the Camps are concentrated within one or two years before disappearing into invisibility until it reemerges yet again as a topic of interest in the next decade, effectively making Vietnamese refugee art history in Hong Kong circular and lacking in stable development due to its constant repetition.

The interest and research in foreign domestic workers, however, has a different trajectory. Exhibitions focused on domestic workers have steadily grown since the 2010s. One could identify Para Site's major group exhibition, *Afterwork*, as the landmark show which increased interest in the domestic migrant community. It sought to explore "issues of class, race, labor and migration in Hong Kong, its surrounding region and beyond" by showing artists whose work has been a part of, related to or driven by migrant labor. Yet, as ground-breaking as the exhibition was, it only showed one Hong Kong ethnic minority artist of color, the Filipino-born photographer Xyza Cruz Bacani, among thirty artists and art collectives exhibited. Bacani's singularity as an artist representing her own community in an exhibition of *Afterwork*'s scale illustrates the scarcity of minority makers in Hong Kong and further attests to the art world's impermeability to certain communities.

In an interview with Bacani conducted for this project, we discussed her experience as an ethnic minority maker in Hong Kong, from her background as a migrant worker to her emergence as a professional photographer after her discovery by *The New York Times* in 2014 and her solo exhibition *We Are Like Air*. While she cited socio-economic status and Cantonese proficiency as defining hurdles for minority communities to become makers in the city and shared the importance of meeting the right people in her success, we also talked about the language the media has used to talk about her accomplishments. Despite being a full-time photographer for years, articles have continuously stressed Bacani's previous employment as a domestic worker in their headlines. Bacani theorized that the emphasis on her background is partially due to the exoticizing and tokenistic allure of a "rags to riches" story, but it also reflects the writers', and perhaps the greater public's, need to apply repetition to convince themselves that a Southeast Asian woman and a former domestic worker, could attain success as a Hong Kong artist. It is almost as if that feat is impossible as the systems in place were not built to grant someone like Bacani such an accomplishment.

## interview: Xyza Cruz Bacani

**Edited Transcript** 

Interview with XYZA CRUZ BACANI Interviewer: Nicole Martin Nepomuceno

22 November 2020

**N**: Like most people in Hong Kong, you came here as a migrant. Do you consider yourself a Hong Konger and a Hong Kong artist?

X: I do think that as someone who came to Hong Kong with another purpose and [then] discovering my practice or my love for the art [of photography] in Hong Kong, I consider myself as a Hong Kong artist. And when I have an exhibition or when I do something [they're] always cited as [by] an artist from Hong Kong who's based in Hong Kong, so I got used to that. And because I spent so many years in Hong Kong, with my formative years and even my creative years being developed in Hong Kong, I consider myself a Hong Kong artist. But then that's the thing with identities, we don't have a singular identity anymore. Our identities can be layered. It's so difficult now to be identified as one person or one "this". We have so many identities.

**N**: Do you think there are certain criteria that you need to hit in order to say that you're a Hong Konger, you're a Hong Kong artist? Do you think there are certain boxes that you need to "check"?

X: I never really liked boxes. I think they're stupid or they're silly. But if there's a box I think for me it's that fact that I've developed half my work in Hong Kong. [In] the past 10 or 15 years my work [has been] about Hong Kong. So the fact that most of my work is about Hong Kong that's how I "check" myself as a Hong Kong artist. And because sometimes I feel like I understand Hong Kong more than I understand my own country, the Philippines — which is sad by the way, that's how I call myself a Hong Kong artist. I never thought about this labeling [...] I never really thought about it.

**N**: Hong Kong culture is very rooted in Cantonese and they're almost very difficult to separate from each other. How did you navigate this new language and culture?

X: I speak Cantonese fluently so I do think that opened Hong Kong a lot to me. To understand Hong Kong, you need to understand Cantonese. To understand Hong Kong people, you need to have a sense of the language [...] So I think one thing that makes me a Hong Kong artist is my [grasp of] the Cantonese language because if I don't speak the language, it will be very difficult for me to understand Hong Kong as who it is or the identity of Hong Kong itself. Speaking the language saved me from a lot of trouble.

**N**: In a sense, it is something that has enabled you to be where you are a bit easier. If you hadn't had that knowledge it would've been harder.

**X**: Yes, more difficult. It would've been more difficult to get where I need to be or be in a place where I can actually create something because I will not understand Hong Kong culture without the Cantonese language.

**N**: This research and your work parallel in many ways because it's about migration, labor and class and we're seeking to magnify the same voices and the same groups of people. Why was it important for you to focus on these stories?

X: First of all, it's important for me because it's something that is personal. Because it's something that I experience every day, something that is a part of me. [The] second part is [...] it took years before I even accepted the thought that I'm in a very unique position to actually do something to tell our stories. I'm not saying that I represent these people because I don't represent them, it's more [that] I was given a platform to actually tell the stories and to create art out of those stories for my people. Because if someone who doesn't live the experience tells our stories, they wouldn't do it in a way that they would understand it that well. Maybe some will understand it well but there's something about understanding the nuances of leaving, the experience of a minority, the hardships, the joy. They can't tell our story really well because they never experienced the little things that make life harder, the microaggressions. They've heard of it but they've never experienced it. [This is] something that's really personal for me and I'm given this really important platform [so] might as well use it to elevate our culture, who we are and celebrate it.

**N**: Let's talk about *We Are Like Air*. Could you tell me more about the process of organizing this show, from how WMA Commissioned your project to Hong Kong Arts Centre curating the exhibition and how the public reacted to it?

X: It was wonderful. There's a lot of processes when you do an exhibition. I like everything to be according to how I envision it but what I love about working with WMA Commission and Hong Kong Arts Centre is the support that they've given me. Sometimes I tend to go really big, crazy, and they just know when to talk to me and [say] we don't have to do all of that. [...] They supported me all the way. They're amazing people, they became my friends and the experience, all in all, was great. I'm still very much connected to these people. They became my friends, not just colleagues, not just someone I work with because we spent a lot of time together — way too much.

The public reaction is also good because the exhibition was extended. There were a lot of people who went there and checked the exhibition and the reviews were great so all in all *We Are Like Air* in Hong Kong for me was a success. A lot of people came, not just Filipinos, not just Chinese, not just white people, but it somehow connected people who you will never think of being seen in the same area experiencing the same thing, experiencing art at the same time, breathing the same air in that same space. I don't know if I'm explaining this well but it's like seeing an employer and a domestic worker enjoying a piece of work together, not because they're connected by a contract but because they're being connected by this piece of work.

I think for one moment when I was looking at people going in and out and checking the show I was like this is why Hong Kong is beautiful. I made sure that it's open for everybody and I can see how a person who's lived a different life with another person has been connected by a piece of something that I created and I love that. I think that's the beauty of exhibitions. You can see the first-hand experiences, there's electricity that pulls people together.

N: How did the WMA Commission commission you?

X: I applied for it, they do it every year. WMA is one of the few organizations in Hong Kong that actually support photography so it's a big commission. I applied for the commission and got lucky because Dr. Anthony [Ng] actually believed in the story so he thought this is a project that everyone needs to see. That's how it all started and also I'm one of their scholars, they're sending me to school so that's great.

**N**: There are very few exhibitions in Hong Kong that feature non-Euro-American ethnic minorities and two of those exhibitions feature you, including *We Are Like Air*. The other one is *Afterwork* by Para Site in 2016. *Afterwork* was different from *We Are Like Air* since it was a group show and that it featured works from outside Hong Kong. What are your thoughts about the exhibition and the way that our communities have been represented there?

X: Afterwork is a very powerful exhibition, have you seen it?

**N**: I only saw it online through the documentation.

**X**: It's a beautiful and very powerful exhibition, I think Cosmin [Costinas] and Freya [Chou] did a great job with it, but are there other ethnic minority artists there?

N: I think it was only you who was a Hong Kong ethnic minority shown in the exhibition.

X: It was a powerful exhibition. I think they did a great job. Para Site is one of the longest art institutions in Hong Kong so I think [Afterwork] introduced me to the art world a lot, because it's Para Site, you know? That opened a lot of gates or doors for me in the art world, especially [the] Hong Kong art world. Photography is still not considered as art by others but when Para Site did this massive exhibition and then they gave me an artist talk, an artist residency, it kind of opened a lot of doors. When it happened it was also during Art Basel so curators and art dealers and everyone who was coming to Hong Kong to see art went there to see the exhibition as well so it introduced me to a lot of people.

I always supported Para Site and I always donated my work to them, except in the last couple of years because I felt like I had nothing worthy to donate. Para Site did a great job in that exhibition. I still remember my talk, it was funny, it was a funny one. I love Cosmin. Cosmin is a friend, a personal friend too, so that's the thing about them.

**N**: Even though I wasn't able to see it in person, *Afterwork* was an exhibition that had something to say. But even though they were presenting our stories, there were still very few of us presented as makers so I began to think that instead of institutions not wanting to include ethnic minorities, maybe there simply aren't a lot of ethnic minority artists, but why do you think that is? Why do you think there are so few of us who are in this field or who want to pursue this field?

X: One biggest hurdle is financial, socio-economic. This is just something personal but when people say, "If you can make it in New York, you can make it anywhere," I always say, "No if you can make it in Hong Kong, you can make it anywhere," because there's a lot of hurdles you need to pass through. First, socio-economic, and then the second one is language, third is class. One of my curator friends said [to me], you have the golden ticket: an amazing story, fantastic talent, you're very charming. You have the ticket. But not everyone has it. There are a lot of things that make it difficult to be an artist.

[...]

There are a lot of art exhibitions in Hong Kong, there are a lot of artists but it's difficult to be an artist in this city. The rent itself would kill an artist. I've been in Hong Kong for 15 years and when people ask me "Do u have a studio?" I'm like what studio? I use a rooftop, I use my room but a studio? Are u kidding me? The rent itself will kill an artist. So there are a lot of layers to the difficulties and unfortunately for ethnic minorities, it's difficult to go through from one layer to another.

**N**: Yeah, because in a sense there are more layers, it's like a bigger onion.

X: Yeah, it's like a big onion. It's gonna make you cry when you think about it.

**N**: When publications talk about you and your work, they often highlight your previous occupation as a domestic worker, how do you feel about this? And where do you think their continuous interest in your background comes from?

**X**: Of course, at first I was like why do you keep talking about my background? What does it have to do with my work? Then as I grow older, I realize that my background is who I was and everything that I create centers [around] it so why not [highlight it], you know?

I know that talking about it can give people hope, even though sometimes it's [almost discouraging], because you're one in seven million. So of course people will keep talking about it, it's not even one in one million, it's one in seven million. It's a stroke of luck maybe, but for me when people talk about my background and talk about my work it's okay. I'm fine with it... as long as they talk about my work as well not just about my background.

N: Where do u think this interest comes from?

X: I do think that it makes the story sexier, so it's all about clickbait. But I do think that the interest is coming from the fact that in a city of seven million people - or maybe we have eight million now - a domestic worker actually made it. So there's a bit of tokenism, a little bit of exotifying. They put you in that very exotic place because they can't believe it themselves. I think that's where they're coming from, like why did this good luck happen to her? They can't believe it, that's why they have to write it again. And maybe when they read it they're trying to convince themselves that it's actually possible, it's actually happening, we're not dreaming.

I was reading a book [by] Trevor Noah. He said something about language [...] [and how] when people [who] have prejudice hear someone who doesn't look like them sound like them, their brain just cannot process those two together. Why is this person different [from me] but actually sounds like me? Their brain cannot put it together. That's why it fascinates them that a person who's brown, who doesn't look like [them], who comes from another culture, sounds like them, can create something like them. That's why they write it over and over again to convince themselves that... it's actually true, it's actually possible.

**N**: They need to keep saying it more to themselves than to us.

**X**: Yeah, it's not for us, it's for them, so that's why I've accepted it in a way that well, you do you, make your life easier.

[...]

X: It is tokenism. As I was saying, it was a struggle at first because why are you talking about my previous work? I'm more than my former job, [but] I realized they're doing it for themselves, they're not doing it for people like me. They're trying to explain it to themselves, they're writing it for themselves for them to be able to believe that this actually happened. Some media friends are now more educated. For me, when [I] see it over and over again, that's when [I] realize it's not for me, it's not for my people, it's for them.

**N**: It suggests the idea that it shouldn't have been possible, that this isn't supposed to happen. The way that our education and support systems, our economies, have been working isn't for this to happen and then it did.

X: Yeah, it did. That's why they can't believe it.

N: Given all that, have you ever thought that you would've made it this far?

X: I've been doing photography since 2009 and I only got discovered in 2014 so it's something that I [have been] doing for myself ever since. I never thought I'd be able to be where I am today. I never think about [that] because I just love the process of doing it. I work, I just work. I always believe that you build and they will come. I didn't think about this, it's something that really happened organically.

[...]

Luck needs to happen as well, you need to meet the right people. Good people, you need to have good people in your life and I have them so I got lucky.

**N**: What was the hardest part of this entire migratory experience? From growing up without your mother to migrating to Hong Kong to work yourself and until now that you are an acclaimed photographer.

X: The hardest part is growing up without a mother. I always say no child should be left behind by a mother or a parent, so that was the hardest part. Migration is cruel, it has always been cruel, especially forced migration. It's not only cruel to the children, it's cruel to the family. Separating families is a cruel, cruel thing to happen [...] so that's the hardest part for me. Even though I've grown up and I've been traveling myself, I've become mobile, there's still the residue of the cruelty of migration inside me that I need to work on all the time. And it's not just me who needs to work on that. What's sad about it is that it has now become [a] typical story of a Filipino child to have a parent or another person in their life who left [home]. If you ask a Filipino child nowadays if they know someone in their family who works abroad, they [will] always know someone.

N: It has been normalized in such a way that it's just something that happens.

**X**: It's not supposed to be normal but it's been normalized for a long time since the 70s.

**N**: There are so few of us in this position right now. There are very few ethnic minorities in Hong Kong who have permeated its art world, its visual culture, not just as artists but also as scholars, critics and curators. What could be done to have more ethnic minorities like being a part of making Hong Kong culture?

X: I think the biggest hurdle for artists in Hong Kong is the socio-economic part of it and I do think that what needs to be done is to provide living wages for artists. The cliché that artists are supposed to be fucking hungry and surviving all the time is just not acceptable anymore. Artists need to live as well for them to be able to create. Artists need to get paid decently and I do think if we take away the socio-economic factor, then there's going to be more of us [...] It shouldn't be about survival for art, it should be something about making beautiful things and things you want to create and not having to think about being hungry tomorrow. But with artists, you can't really switch that [need to create] off and that's the thing that's being abused over and over again. [...] If we take away the socio-economic hardship then I do think that there's gonna be more ethnic minorities in Hong Kong in this [field].

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