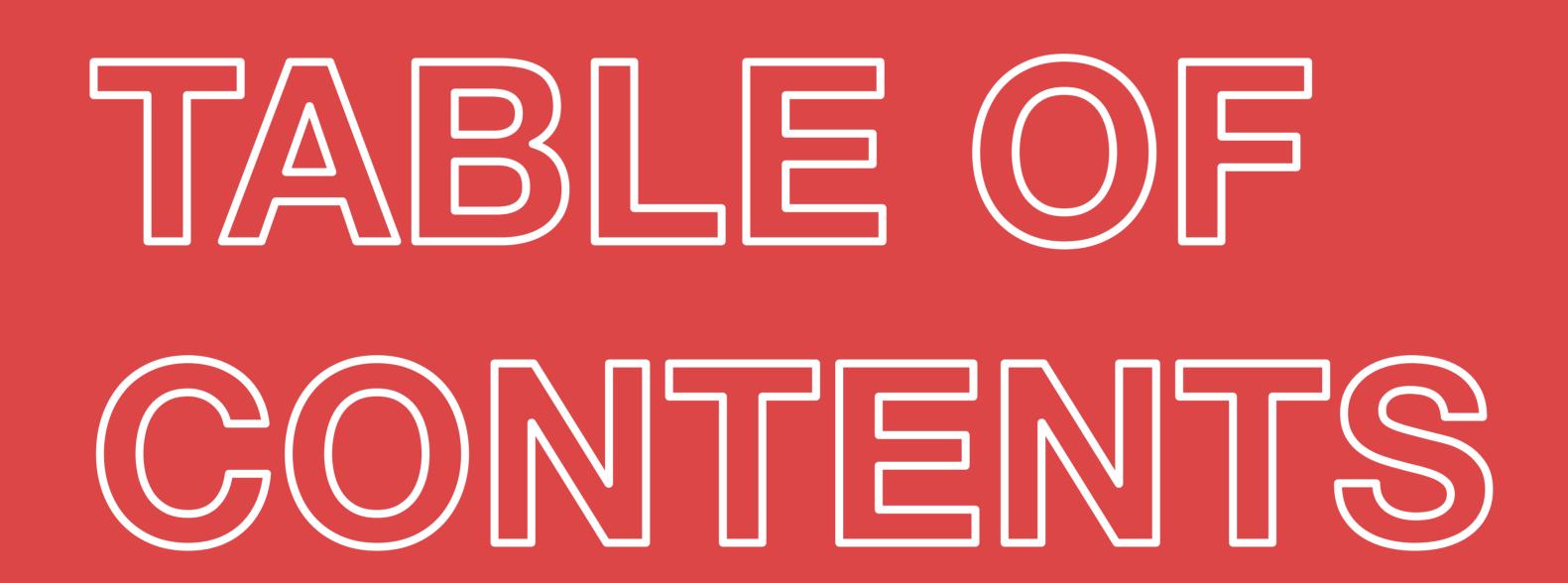
Hong Kong Art History Timeline Project

LEARNING FROM ARTISTS: MAPPING THE PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES OF FOUR ARTIST EDUCATORS IN HONG KONG

Crystal Li & Ruby Weatherall



PROJECT
STATEMENT

RESEARCH
JOURNEY

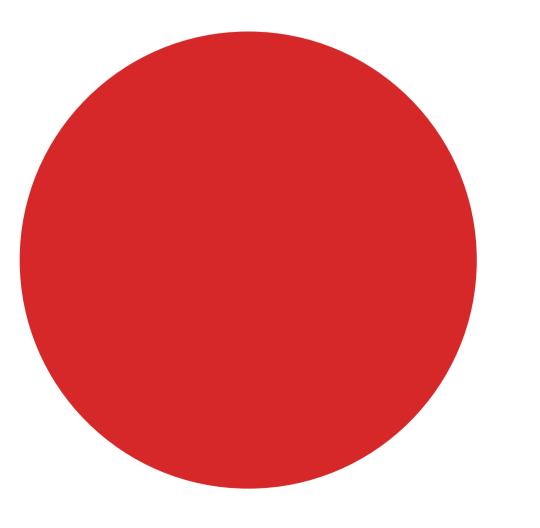
ARTIST EDUCATOR
PROFILES

PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES
OF THE FOUR ARTIST EDUCATORS

CONCLUSIONS

WORKS CITED

AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



Crystal Li and Ruby Weatherall February 2021





Working on this project has been a transformative experience for us—one that demanded a radical shift in our perspectives on the role of artist educators, arts learning and its value in Hong Kong. The project started off as an assignment for the Hong Kong Art History Workshop (co-led by Dr. Yee-wan Koon of The University of Hong Kong, Fine Arts Department, and Asia Art Archive researcher Michelle Wong), and has evolved considerably. Initially interested in learning about the overall development of visual arts education in Hong Kong, we created a linear timeline with the establishment of the Hong Kong Arts Development Council in 1995 as the starting point. It tracked major visual arts education programmes by schools, cultural institutions and independent arts spaces, as well as relevant arts education policies.

Our findings confirmed the dynamic nature of visual arts education in Hong Kong, and that its development is shaped by players of all levels, from government institutions to independent arts spaces. As colleagues at Asia Art Archive, a non-profit arts organisation, we were particularly interested in the role and contribution of independent arts spaces. We learned that they sought to respond to various gaps in the arts education system not only by offering focused and innovative programming, but also through collaborating with larger organisations to

bring their ideas to institutional spaces as well.

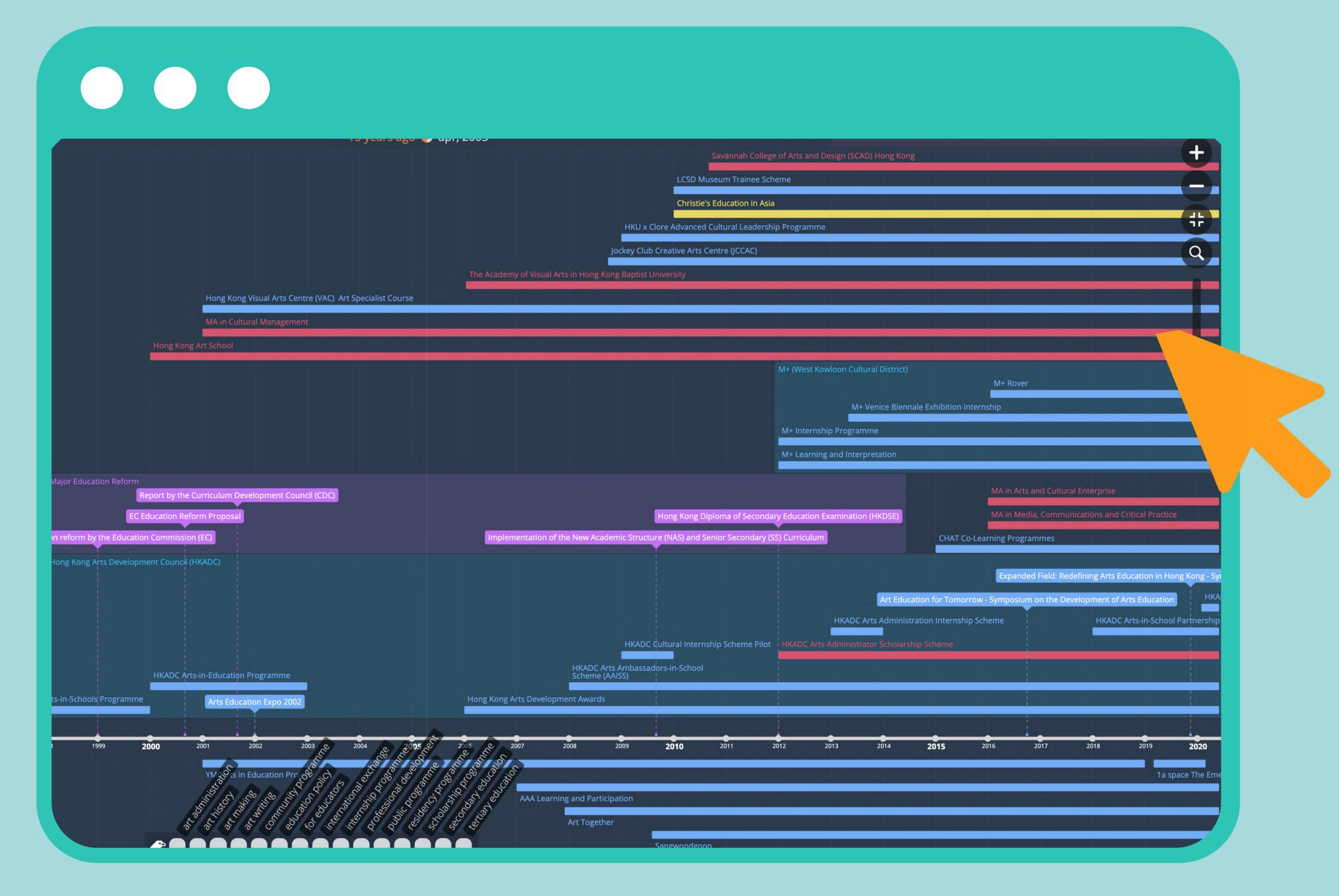
After completing the assignment, we wanted to learn more. The timeline felt like a starting point from which research could be built on, instead of a complete research project. Thus, with the encouragement of Dr. Koon and our supervisor at AAA, Alexandra Seno, we commenced the second phase of our project, this time looking at the actual learning that takes place in independent arts spaces. This was where we made our first shift in research focus: rather than study visual arts education as a formal system and subject for learning, we decided to examine arts learning as a pedagogical process. Instead of what, we are investigating how art is being taught.

As we interviewed the four artist educators to learn more about education programming in independent arts spaces, we realised that their work is determined more by individual pedagogical interests, beliefs and practices, rather than those of the organisations they work for and with. Since independent arts spaces act as informal sites of learning, the "curriculum" (for lack of a better term) is relatively flexible, giving artist educators more pedagogical freedom.

Furthermore, we learned that these artist educators—unlike regular teachers—move

between institutions and arts spaces to teach, research and create art. For instance, although Michael Leung teaches at Baptist University, he has also completed residencies in different arts spaces, such as Spring Workshop and Wooferten (both no longer running) (梁志剛- Michael Leung). Rather than existing as distinct entities, independent arts spaces appear more like a network in the context of arts learning, within which artists formulate, realise and exchange ideas. With this realisation, we made our second shift in research focus: instead of studying what programmes independent arts spaces are offering in order to learn about arts learning, we focused on the pedagogical practices of four individual artist educators.

Finally, we supplemented discussions from the interviews with research on different pedagogical frameworks in and outside visual arts education. In particular, we looked at artist-led pedagogy (Pringle 2009; Burnard and Swann 2010), transformative learning (Zibechi 2012), sustainable pedagogy (Tooth and Renshaw 2009; Burns 2015), place-based pedagogy (Tooth and Renshaw 2009; Semken and Brandt 2010), and spirituality in arts education (Gradle 2007; London 2007). The research by these scholars informed our understanding of what the artist educators are trying to accomplish, and the potential impacts of their pedagogical practices.



Click to explore our initial timeline

ARTIST EDUCATOR

Situated in Foo Tak Building in Wanchai, Rooftop Institute is the only independent arts organisation in Hong Kong dedicated to arts education. As cofounders of the space, artists Yim Sui Fong and Law Yuk Mui shape the development of its programmes, which are mostly workshops led by different artists. During the interview, key programmes were discussed including *Asia Seed* (2016-18), Hok Zaap (2018) and Hok Hok Zaap (HHZ): 15 Initiatives of Engaged Learning in Art (2019-20). For our research, we specifically focused on Hok Zaap workshops led by Zheng Bo and Luke Ching Chin Wai, and HHZ workshops led by Law Yuk Mui and Natalie Lo Lai Lai. Our findings are further informed by <u>The Situation of Learning-</u> Artist Talk, the transcript of a talk between Yim, Law and selected artist educators on HHZ's progress at the end of 2019.



Law Yuk Mui is a multimedia mainstream education.



Yim Sui Fong is a multiartist, working with image, disciplinary artist who works sound and installation. Her with video and installation art. art practice intervenes in She explores discrepancies the daily life of the city, and tensions in communication reusing and reactivating and memory in connection objects through art-making, with everyday life. She is also and capturing the physical a core member of the artist traces of history, psychology, collective <u>L sub</u>, who 'visit time and political power in various communities across relation to geographic space the globe, create artwork with ("About Law Yuk Mui"). Law local people and transform co-founded Rooftop Institute the ordinary into artwork' because she wanted to ("Artwork / L Sub - Still Life engage with her interests Objects - Autumn exhibition in arts education outside of at Hong Kong House"). Yim previously worked in educational institutions before co-founding Rooftop Institute.



Michael Leung is an artist/designer, researcher, and visiting lecturer for the MA course <u>Critically Engaged: Creative</u> Practices in Context at Hong Kong Baptist University. Since the course is his collectives including <u>Archive of the</u> only teaching engagement currently, it <u>People</u>, which incorporates archival became our main focus when studying practice as a form of art-making his pedagogical practices for this to challenge the homogeneity of project. Outside of teaching, Leung historical and political narratives, and experiences moments of learning in Floating Projects ("About Archive of different projects, collectives, and the People"). Lee previously taught at social causes, such as <u>Kai Fong Pai</u> a secondary school for ten years before Dong, Wanwu Practice Group, and land quitting to focus on her art. As an justice movements. He is a member of independent educator, she has worked the village patrol group in Wang Chau with M+ on several programmes. In our Village, which is facing eviction from interview, she specifically discussed a the government. These experiences pre-workshop for artist Ng Ka Chun's are reflective of his desire to integrate M+ Rover programme *Things Beyond* his creative and pedagogical practices in his everyday life.



Michelle Lee is a multimedia artist with an interest in conducting social research through creative practices. She is a member of different artist Things (2018), and the trial of an artistled in-gallery learning experience at M+ Pavilion for the exhibition *Five* Artists: Sites Encountered (2019). Both programmes targeted secondary school students.

