

실라스 풍
주요 작품

SILAS FONG
SELECTED WORKS

1985년 홍콩에서 출생하고 현재 현대미술 작가로 활동하고 있는 실라스 풍은 홍콩침례대학교에서 학사 학위(2008), 홍콩중문대학교에서 순수 미술 학사 및 석사 학위(2012)를 취득한 후 쾰른 미디어 예술대학에서 수학하였다. 2017년9월부터 중앙대학교 예술대학 사진전공 조교수로 재직하고 있다.

실라스 풍은 각 프로젝트 이면의 맥락을 평가하여 개념적 표현과 비평적 표현에 대한 각각의 개별적 시선과 접근 방식을 구축한다. 그의 작품 중에는 관찰자, 아티스트, 교육자로서 자신의 역할을 투영한 작품들이 많다.

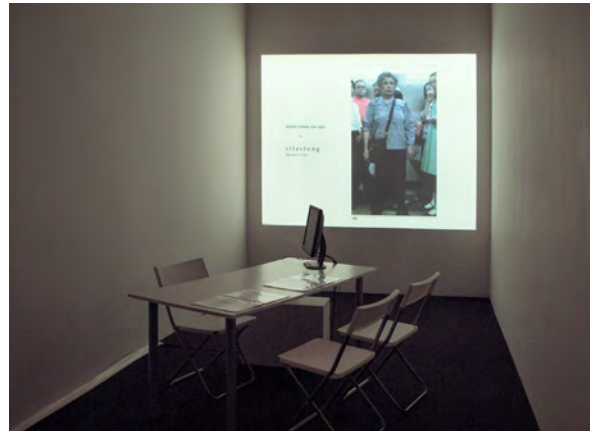
주요 개인전과 단체전으로는 리버풀 비엔날레 (2010), 홍콩 타이쿤 컨템포러리 미술관(2020), 홍콩 예술관(2009), 괴테 인스티튜트 홍콩(2016), 타이베이 소카 아트 센터(2012), 뉴질랜드 웰링턴 시티 미술관(2013), 독일ZKM(2013), 테이트 모던 런던(2010), 사치갤러리 런던(2012), 드레스덴 Cyne-tart(2013), 마이크로웨이브 인터내셔널 뉴미디어 페스티벌(2013)등이 있다.

Born in 1985 in Hong Kong, Silas Fong is a contemporary artist. He furthered his studies at the Academy of Fine Arts Cologne after earning his MFA from Chinese University of Hong Kong in 2012 and BA from Hong Kong Baptist University in 2008. Since September 2017, Fong is Assistant Professor at the Department of Photography, College of Arts in Chung-Ang University. Silas Fong evaluates the context behind each project to develop respective approaches for conceptual and critical expression. His work is often reflective of his role as an observer, artist and educator.

He has held solo and group exhibitions at Liverpool Biennial (2010), Tai Kwun Contemporary, Hong Kong (2020), Hong Kong Museum of Art (2009), Goethe-Institut Hongkong (2016), Taipei Soka Art Center (2012), City Gallery Wellington (2013), ZKM (2013), Tate Modern (2010), Saatchi Gallery London (2012), Dresden Cynetart (2013) and Microwave International New Media Festival (2013), etc.

Stolen Times for Sale | 2008 - 2010 | Video installation, performance | 4'06"

Documentation Video
https://youtu.be/h__efRtXJRg
 Full Video
<https://youtu.be/a97uKTXNfOc>



Pirated DVD Packaging

The artist steals time from strangers through pressing the buttons of the elevators during the rush hour. The stolen times are recorded as video and are being exhibited in gallery and museum. Visitors can purchase with money and take away these times. They are extracted into a DVD from the performer. According to the duration, number of people involved, their approximate age, appearance and response, prices for stolen times are different. The video sequences once sold are replaced by "SOLD - XX SECONDS FOR \$XXX", and are being shown together with the unsold ones.



Upon the Escalator | 2009 | Single channel video | 13' 50"

Part 1
<https://youtu.be/p9EJ4ZWVTrM>
Part 2
https://youtu.be/r5Z8_jJ-2v8



In the space with high pedestrian flow in the city, there is full of delicate communication between people. Artist reconstructs the relationship upon the escalators and the story of people by 3 video channels abreast.

Different numbers of people, movements, and ups and downs are strewn at random through time and space. Strangers that never met are arranged to stare at and pass by each other in the overlapping space. This highlights the artist and audience, staying aloof but being in the story at the same time.

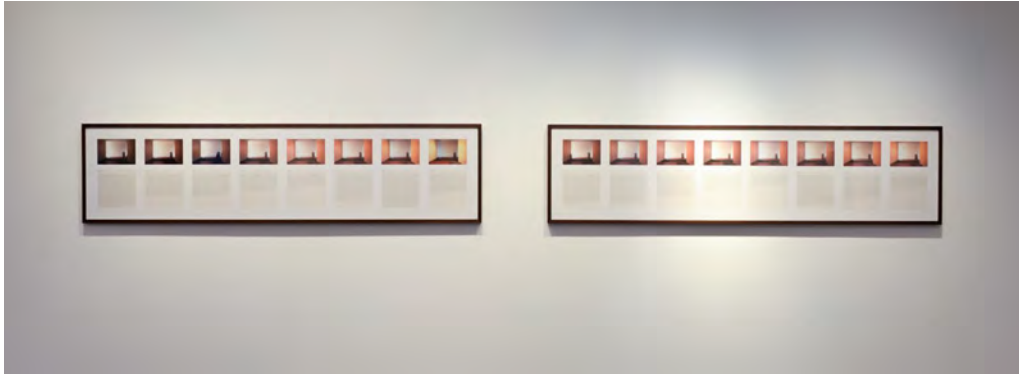
With a dramatic arrangement, the artist shows his imagination of the cityscape and reflection on interpersonal relationship in the public. In the space with high pedestrian flow in the city, there is full of delicate communication between people. Artist reconstructs the relationship upon the escalators and the story of people by 3 video channels abreast.

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With a dramatic arrangement, the artist shows his imagination of the cityscape and reflection on interpersonal relationship in the public.

Work Report for Museum Ludwig | 2014 | Photo & Text |
Lambda print on aluminium dibond | 156 cm x 38 cm (Two in a set)

Full Text of the work
<http://silasfong.com/news/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Full-Text.pdf>



In April 2014, I managed to get a part-time job. It was to work as a performer in Museum Ludwig. I had to dress formal and look decent. On the opening day, the artist guided three of us, the 'name announcers', by himself. We had to stand at an exact position at the exhibition entrance. We had to ask every visitor for their names and then announce them really loudly into the exhibition space. The job was in shift-based. Each shift lasted for 4 hours. I worked 4 shifts a week.

I thought 30 minutes passed, but when I look at my 40-year-old mechanical watch, the minute hand just turned by 30 degrees. In order to kill boredom, I counted how many spotlights are there on the ceiling; how large the space is by counting the number of tiles. I tried different strategies of taking breaks, every 5 minutes for 30 minutes or every 10 minutes per hour, to make things feel faster. I watched the daylight change on the wall. I imagine how the weather changed outside, and how the tourists took photos of Dom.



2014-06-22
13:00

Dusk comes without any greeting. I remember when I was in primary school. It often rained heavily around 5pm, just before I left school. The lights at the staircase were about the same like this. I was a boy scout, so sometimes I helped to keep things in order when the school kids leave. Now I really can't explain why I did all these. I was so obedient and fond of teamwork, Boy scout, prefect... Now I detest police and security. Even I have to be a part of them, I would only want to be an undercover. I like to be sneaky. This girl has two tattoos on her arm. But it is too far to know what they are. Oh, gone? Anna, Soklikov, they are Slavic. Two aged men visit the exhibition on Sunday. Mother and three daughters – Calra, Antonia, Angelika and... I forgot. Oh Theresa Teresa? This man is called Bürgler. Why does schnitzel come to my mind? If I go to Ulsan in Korea, how would I communicate with the people?

Flat D | 2015 | Durational Room Installation
300 cm x 220 cm x 250 cm | 10 minutes
Hong Kong Arts Centre, Hong Kong

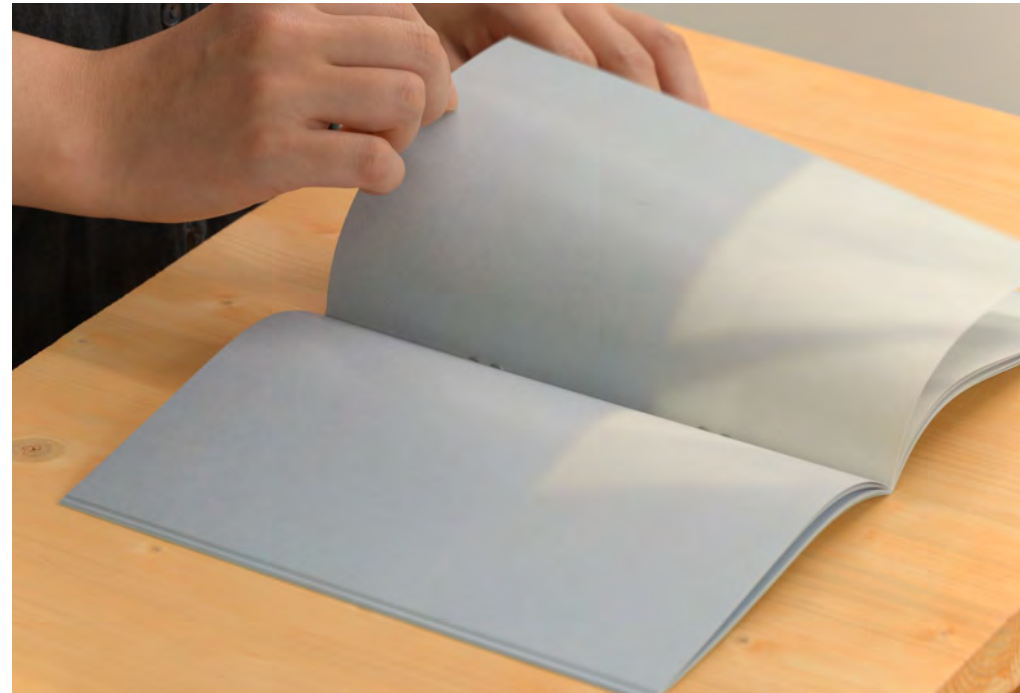
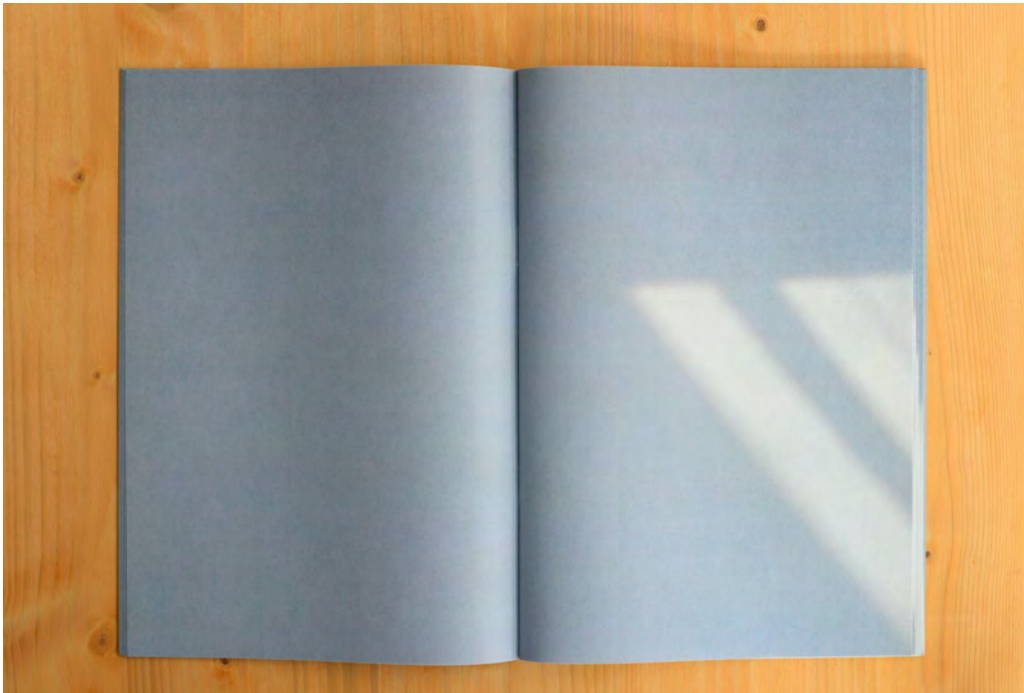
Demonstration Video
<https://youtu.be/vB48reXShus>



In front of a door, there is a person sitting on a chair. When you get close, this person greets you and asks if you want to enter. However, you are only allowed to enter individually, without your mobile phone, camera, electronic devices and books, etc. After you enter, the door would be locked, and it would only be unlock after 10 minutes. You would sign an agreement to confirm your decision at your own risk. Inquiries about what is behind the door would not be answered. Every visitor is only allowed to enter the door once for the whole exhibition period.

Afternoons | 2015 | Digital print on Neobond® synthetic fibre papers | 20 books in A5 format

Video Documentation
<https://youtu.be/chGusBhj3HE>



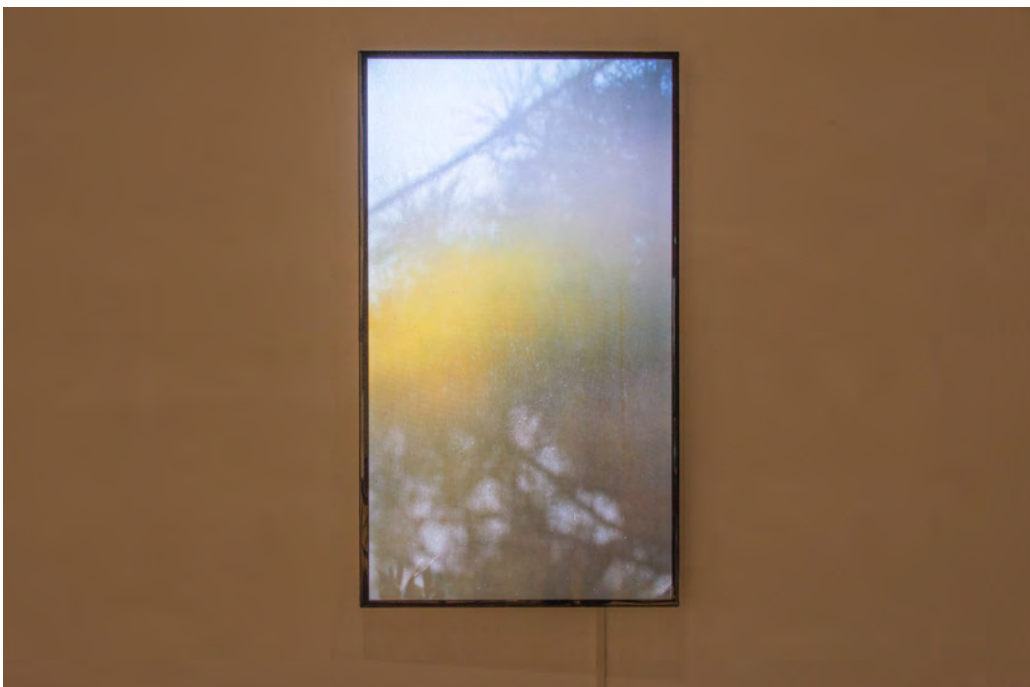
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There is No Time | 2016 | Solo Exhibition at Hong-ti Art Center

300 cm x 450 cm, 120 cm x 80 cm | Print on Banner, Poster, Stone, Table | 2016



Time is always not enough, but it is only true when we have things to do. Artist residency is an experience of time travel. Once you step into another culture, far away from your own. Suddenly you realize that you have to learn from the very beginning, from the basic understanding of daily life. It recalls memories of childhood, of youth and of future. Nothing is necessary to be done. Just stay in the studio, which is very spacious compared to that I had in Hong Kong, allows a lot of solitary thought to fill up until your back feel painful with the chair. The spacetime is open. 'Time is an illusion.'



Shadow on the Window | 123 cm x 80 cm, 15 minutes
| TimelapseVideo on LED TV | 2016



Installation View | Hong-ti Art Center, Busan | 2016

In-Attention | 2017

Bed, Colour Print, Digital Projection on Wall, Digital Videos on TVs,
Stool, Film Negatives, LED Light Panel, Microscope | Gallery Exit, Hong Kong

Focus Test

https://youtu.be/_YxVJqEwKo

Screen Time

<https://youtu.be/qh1G2Yxitz0>



Silas FONG is interested in our struggle to remain calm and focused in an urban environment flooded with information. He often explores this problem with the help of found objects drawn from the world of technology. The video “Focus Test”, for example, consists of a series of tests charts for cameras. Their geometrical patterns, designed to determine the focusing ability of optical lenses, are equally challenging to the human eye. FONG’s fascination with test patterns is also evident in “Nozzle Check/Head Alignment”, a printout whose original purpose was to verify the proper function of a printer. Its fragile array of colour fields and lines is a constant reminder of how little it takes to become misadjusted, for both machines and humans.

– Ashley Chan



Grain Focus, 2017, LED light panel, glass, film negatives, 10x base magnifier, 100x microscope, 50 cm x 77 cm x 13 cm



Photo Projection, 2017, digital projection on wall, dimension variable

Stopping By Woods On A Snowy Evening | 2018 | Videotage, Hong Kong

At the entrance, visitor picks up one of the catalogues and misses out the two others which look seemingly identical. In fact, each catalogue contains a different text that guides the visitor to an alternative experience of the same exhibition.

Installation Documentation
<https://youtu.be/C4tVlnhK1eA>
Catalogue
<https://issuu.com/verlagfong/docs/stopping-by-woods-on-a-snowy-evenin/14>



Visitor participates in the exhibition according to the instructions on the Exhibition Guide.



‘Through slow-moving videos, images, and objects that are oft missed, Fong creates an encounter with the everyday in a controlled environment to allow the visitor to be with the urban in a different way. Many of the images are personal to Fong, and he brings in three textual perspectives (including this one) to obscure this narrative of his memories, opening them up to be shared. Bringing in media art theory into more traditional image-making practices, *Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening* employs a light touch in a grand gesture toward a place where we can choose to be still.’

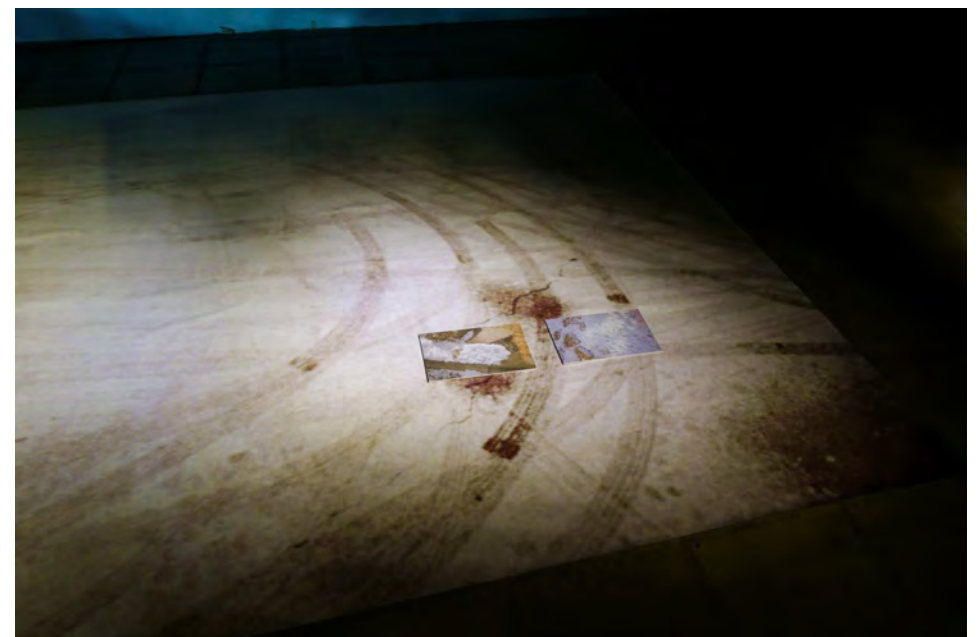
– Excerpt from Hera Chan’s text, *The Freedom To Be Still*



Mixed media tucked in You Come Too, 21.1 cm x 14.5 cm x 1.8 cm, 2018



Digital photo projection on screen; Video on TV, HDV, colour, 16 minutes, 2018



Digital printed vinyl on plexiglass, 30 cm x 20 cm, 2018

Small Talk: Sample Conversations for Your Perfect Date and Successful Meeting | 2018
Artist's book | Duddell's (Restaurant), Hong Kong

Book Preview
<https://rb.gy/lqjawv>



Small Talk is a handy coffee-table book that everyone, specifically the art professionals, can flip through while having a drink and chatting with their peers. Instead of beautiful and colourful pictures, this book collects pre-written dialogues offering for the readers to act out when they run out of words in various artistic occasions.

‘스몰토크’는 누구라도 - 특히 미술계 종사자라면 더욱 - 한잔할 때나 동료들과 잡담을 나눌 때 가볍게 훑어볼 수 있는 작고 부담 없는 책입니다. 화려하고 알록달록한 사진들 대신, 몇 가지 상황을 가정해서 그 대화를 실은 이 책자는 다양한 미술 관련 상황에서 할 말이 떨어졌을 때 대처할 수 있게 해 줍니다.

Enjoy Your Meal! | 2018 | Clothing, Dummy, Plastic Food Model
Duddell's (Restaurant), Hong Kong



In 1959, Mark Rothko accepted a commission from Four Seasons restaurant in New York City. “I hope to paint something that will ruin the appetite of every son of a bitch who ever eats in that room”. Sounds dramatic enough, but he failed and returned the money because he found that ‘people can stand anything these days’. I was curious about what I could do in a high-end restaurant, while contributing to the context of this exhibition.

Enjoy Your Meal! is a scene recreated to depict the McRefugee phenomenon and the problem of extreme shortage in affordable housing situation in Hong Kong.

Ulsan One Minute | 2018 | LED Display Panel, Metal Stand

250 cm x 100 cm x 20 cm, 12th Taehwa River International Eco Art Festival, Ulsan



Ulsan One Minute is an athletic competition. On contrary to a typical sports game, one does not win by being the fastest, the highest nor the strongest. The slowest wins. This simple game asks anyone being in Ulsan to count faithfully one minute in their mind without looking at any clock. The counted duration is measured by a timer – a stopwatch, a smartphone or a digital watch. The measured duration should be accurate to two decimal places. The data of each participant are collected and ranked from the slowest to the fastest before the start of the festival. It would be made up to maximum 1440 personal minutes thus a different length of a day. A public clock is installed in the Taehwa River Park and presents these personal times and paces belonging to the people in Ulsan. It also works as a reminder to pay attention and reconsider the value of time and success.

Art Recycle Bin | 2019 | Acrylic, stainless steel, vinyl

80 cm x 50 cm x 30 cm

Exhibited at H Queen's as an official satellite event's of Art Basel Hong Kong 2018



Art Recycle Bin, an acrylic box with a slit placed at the endpoint of the art experience on the 1st floor lobby. Visitors are invited to insert thin pieces of paper such as floor maps or exhibition leaflets, which many visitors will have in hand over the Arts Month in March. Fong sees this act as a means for visitors to clear their mind after an exhilarating experience and as a form of recuperation that injects new life to these sometimes overlooked materials.



REACH NEW HEIGHTS

Sad

sad school of artists development

19 - 31.07.2019

INFO DAYS

19.07.2019

5-7 pm Opening

6 pm

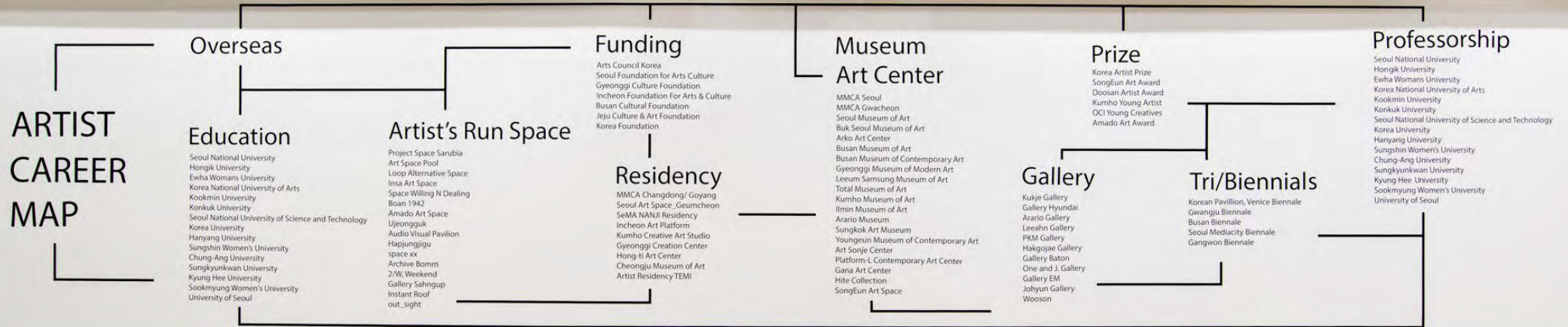
Curator Hong Leeji
in Conversation with
Prof. Silas Fong

29 - 30.07.2019

2-6 pm

Portfolio Review &
Career Consultation
for Young Artists
by Prof. Silas Fong

Artist Career Map | 2019 | Text Vinyl on Wall
1400 cm x 300 cm



SAD School of Artists Development presents the Artist Career Map, an insightful career path for emerging artists in South Korea. With this grand picture, young artists can easily set their destination and choose the fastest way to achieve. SAD arranges the sections such as education, overseas, artist's run space in hierarchical order. Higher position on the map indicates a higher status. SAD systematically ranks lists of institutions from the best to the worst. Artist Career Map is not a comprehensive map but apparent pathways through important organizations

ARTIST CAREER MAP

- Overseas**
- Funding**
 - Arts Council Korea
 - Seoul Foundation for Arts Culture
 - Gyeonggi Culture Foundation
 - Incheon Foundation For Arts & Culture
 - Busan Cultural Foundation
 - Jeju Culture & Art Foundation
 - Korea Foundation
- Museum Art Center**
 - MMCA Seoul
 - MMCA Gwacheon
 - Seoul Museum of Art
 - Buk Seoul Museum of Art
 - Arko Art Center
 - Busan Museum of Art
 - Busan Museum of Contemporary Art
 - Gyeonggi Museum of Modern Art
 - Leeum Samsung Museum of Art
 - Total Museum of Art
 - Kumho Museum of Art
 - Imin Museum of Art
 - Araio Museum
 - Sungkok Art Museum
 - Youngeun Museum of Contemporary Art
 - Art Sonje Center
 - Platform-L Contemporary Art Center
 - Gana Art Center
 - Hite Collection
 - Eun Art Space
- Education**
 - Seoul National University
 - Hongik University
 - Ewha Womans University
 - Korea National University of Arts
 - Kookmin University
 - Konkuk University
 - Seoul National University of Science and Technology
 - Korea University
 - Hanyang University
 - Sungshin Women's University
 - Chung-Ang University
 - Sungkyunkwan University
 - Kyung Hee University
 - Sookmyung Women's University
 - University of Seoul
- Artist's Run Space**
 - Project Space Sarubia
 - Art Space Pool
 - Loop Alternative Space
 - Insa Art Space
 - Space Willing N Dealing
 - Boan 1942
 - Amado Art Space
 - Angguk
 - Visual Pavilion
 - Giggu
 - 3omm
 - Weekend
 - Sahngup
 - Art Roof
 - sight
- Residency**
 - MMCA Changdong / Goyang
 - Seoul Art Space, Geumcheon
 - SeMA NANJ Residency
 - Incheon Art Platform
 - Kumho Creative Art Studio
 - Gyeonggi Creation Center
 - Dong-ti Art Center
 - Gyeongju Museum of Art
 - Art Residency TEMI

In education, a teacher often shows students the best way or the right knowledge in understanding and doing things. In art-making, the artist questions and gives sarcastic or no answers. What happens when an artist became a teacher? What if teaching became an artistic media? As a teacher, can I teach the wrong things? On this occasion, I would like to make learning materials and instructions showing students the wrong way. I doubt if it would be a more effective and critical way for students to learn.

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Vocabulary: Understanding Your Art Professor And Make Life Easier | 2019 |
Artist's zine | A6, 48 pages, black & white, softcover

Book Preview
<https://rb.gy/kyacrs>



For the first time, with this pocketbook, you can explore the vocabulary and phrases that your professors often use. You will acquire the technique to understand your professor, better and faster. Hopefully, you will understand what your art professor means in the end.

전대미문의 이 작은 책자 덕분에 여러분은 교수가 자주 사용하는 어휘들과 문장들의 속뜻을 들여다보게 됩니다. 여러분은 교수의 말을 더 잘, 더 빨리 이해할 수 있게 되는 기술을 터득하게 될 것입니다. 바라건대, 여러분의 미대 교수가 결국 하고 싶은 말이 뭔지 여러분은 이해할 수 있게 될 것입니다.

Introduction to International Art English (IAE) | 2019 | LED display panel, art magazines
250 x 100 x 10 cm



Artists, curators and critics used popular art jargons to decorate their writings and artworks. It might sound more professional, contextualized, more important than it is but difficult to be understood. These jargons pop up on the LED display like an attractive billboard. One keeps looking without reading a word from it. The LED panel is supported by piles of important art magazines borrowed from the archive of Seoul Art Space Geumcheon. Visitors could pick up the magazine but they would bear the risk to make the panel fall.

Artist Portrait Basics | 2019 | Digital print on polyester, studio flash, camera, backdrop Stand
480 cm x 370 cm (size of the print)



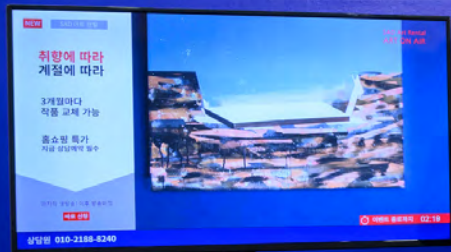
For a successful career as an artist, you need a good portrait. For a successful artist's portrait, you need a perfect studio. What if you do not have a high ceiling and tall windows at your studio? What if you do not even have a studio? Artist Portrait Basics offers you a chance to get familiar with the essential ways to show off your potential, productivity and professionalism in a single photo backdrop. You will also learn several hands-on skills to project your ego and charisma through your posture. For better opportunities in your future career as an artist, take this course by SAD School of Artist Development, regardless of your discipline.

Sad

school of artists development

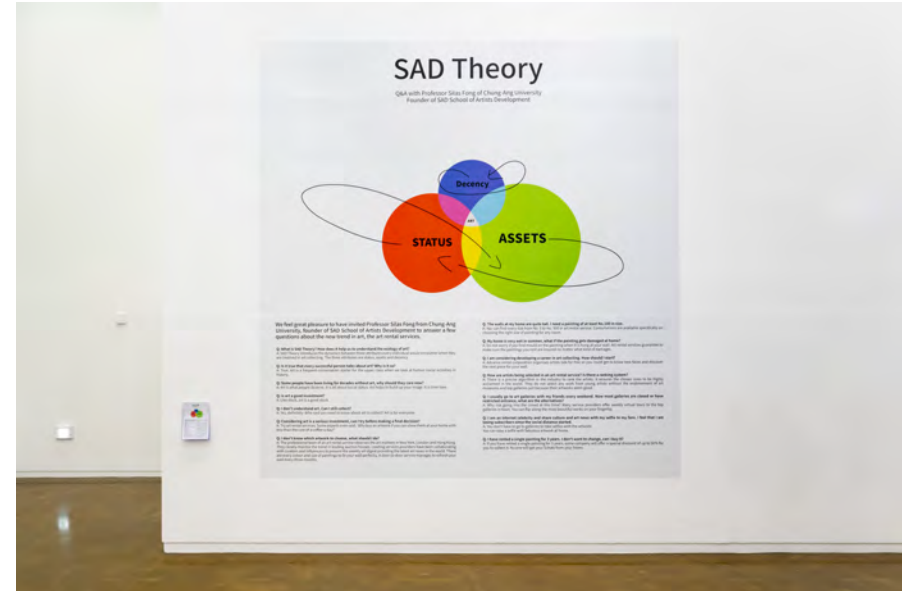
SAD Art Rental

ART ON AIR



Development and Application of Art Home Shopping 아트 홈쇼핑개발 및 적용 | 2020
Furnitures, vinyl on wall, UHD Video, Sound | 900 cm x 400 cm x 500 cm

Trailer Video
<https://vimeo.com/492064206>



In the recent trend of the art world, Silas Fong analyses the mechanism of ecology in the world of artists, artwork and collectors. He discovered the growing potential in art rental services. He offers solid training for the students in SAD School of Artist Development to practice and master the skills in promoting art rental service through home shopping TV channels.

미술계의 최근 동향 속에서 실라스 풍은 작가, 작품, 수집가 세계의 생태학이 어떻게 작동하고 있는가를 분석하고, 미술품 대여 서비스의 잠재성이 점점 커지고 있다는 것을 발견했습니다. 예술가직업훈련학교 SAD의 학생들이 홈쇼핑 TV 채널을 통한 미술품 대여 서비스를 홍보하는 기술을 연습하고 숙달할 수 있도록 풍 교수는 확실한 훈련 과정을 제공합니다.

Greetings for Artists 작가를 위한 인사말 | 2020

Text vinyl on wall, speakers, interactive device | 1600 cm x 140 cm

추운데 고생하셨습니다.
You did a great job in this cold weather.
더운데 고생하셨습니다.
You did a great job in this hot weather.

이거 잘 팔리겠다.
This is going to sell well.
이 작품 갖고싶다.
I want to buy it.
와 이거 갖고싶다!
Wow I want this!

와 정말 아방가르드 하네요!
Wow, it is really avant garde!
역시 앞서나간다!
It is way ahead as expected.
*난해할때
*when you cannot comprehend

잘 그렸다.
Well painted.
와 사진같이 잘 그렸어요.
Well painted like a photo.
이거 진짜인줄 알았어요.
I thought it was real.

작품 엄청 좋은데요!
This is a great work!
와 작품 너무 좋다.
The work is so nice.
역시.
I knew it.

축하합니다.
○○작가님 축하합니다.
Congratulations

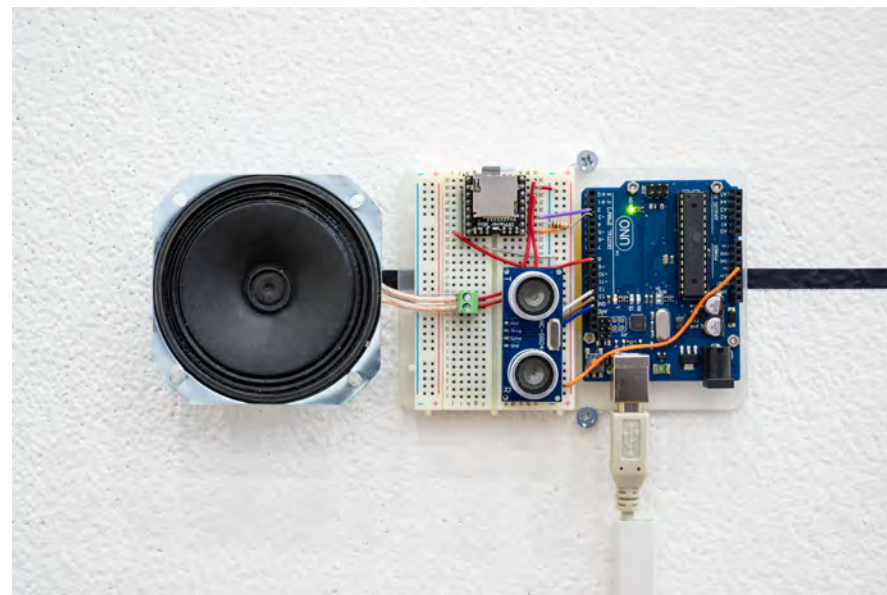
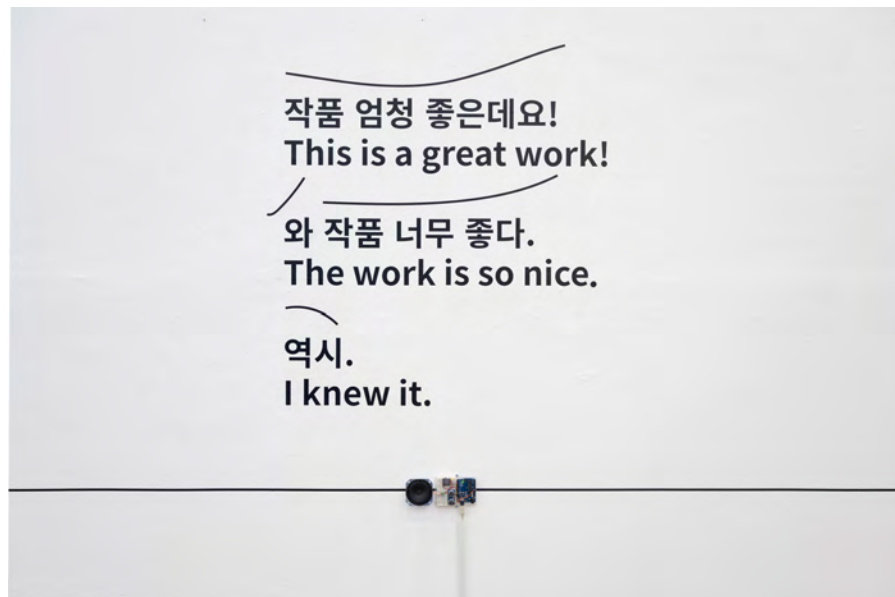
다음 발음을 잘 듣고 따라 하세요.
Listen carefully and repeat the sentence.

Greetings for Artists 작가를 위한 인사말 | 2020

Text vinyl on wall, speakers, interactive device | 1600 cm x 140 cm

Video documentation

<https://vimeo.com/491974225>



Beginners in the art world often get frustrated in the way they should start a conversation in exhibition openings. There are thousands of ways to greet an artist. How should one choose? In *Artists greet*, you will listen to the pronunciation of selected expressions and follow to practice. It is suitable for native Korean speakers who just started their career in art and foreigners who have basic knowledge in Korean culture and etiquettes.

미술계에 처음 발을 디딘 사람들은 전시회 오프닝에 가면 어떻게 대화를 시작해야 할지 몰라 좌절감을 맛보곤 합니다. 작가와 인사를 나누는 방법은 수천 가지가 있습니다. 어떤 것을 고르면 좋을까요? ‘작가를 위한 인사말’에서 여러분은 엄선된 인사 표현의 발음을 듣고 따라 하는 연습을 할 것입니다. 이 방법은 막 미술계에서 작가로서의 커리어를 시작한 사람으로서, 한국 문화와 예절에 대해 기본적인 지식을 가지고 있고 한국어를 모국어로 구사하는 작가들에게 적합합니다.

The Artist's Plant 작가의 화분 | 2020
Plants | Size variable



When preparing an exhibition, an artist has a constant dilemma. ‘Should I fill up this space or should I leave it empty?’ ‘Am I going to put another work here, or a decorative display? Now, with this gadget, you will not waste any more time. Try our organic solution. The Artist’s Plant eliminates any unnecessary empty space. It provides a moral reason that is hard to criticize. There are different sizes, colours and types of Artist’s Plant to fit all kinds of exhibition spaces.

전시를 준비할 때 작가는 끊임없는 딜레마에 빠지게 됩니다. ‘이 공간을 채워야 할까 아니면 빈 채로 두어야 할까?’ ‘여기에 다른 작품을 하나 더 둘까, 아니면 장식물을 놓을까?’ 이제 이것만 있으면 그런 고민에 더 이상 시간을 낭비할 필요가 없습니다. 저희가 제안하는 살아있는 솔루션을 사용해 보세요. ‘작가의 화분’은 불필요한 빈 공간을 모두 책임져 줍니다. 게다가 식물을 둔다는 것은 도덕적으로 비난하기 힘들다는 특징도 있습니다. 모든 종류의 전시 공간에 맞춰 고를 수 있는 다양한 크기, 색상, 유형의 ‘작가의 화분’이 있습니다.

Media Artist Starter Kit 미디어 아티스트 시작 키트 | 2020

Laboratory gown, glass specimen jar, petri dish, funnel, funnel stand | Size variable



Have you wondered how to become a media artist immediately? Buy our Media Artist Starter Kit. Curator, critic, art magazines editors, exhibition audience, and even your friend will recognize you as a media artist in no time. The starter kit includes a laboratory gown, a glass specimen jar, petri dish of different chosen sizes, a funnel and a funnel stand. You don't have to worry about the content to put into the specimen jar. Everything you put in it will become a genesis of science and art. You will enjoy a lot of opportunities to pitch projects, funding, competition as a media artist.

즉시 미디어 아티스트가 되는 방법은 뭘까 생각해 보신 적이 있나요? 저희 미디어 아티스트 시작 키트를 장만하세요! 큐레이터, 비평가, 미술 잡지 편집자, 전시 관객, 심지어 여러분의 친구까지도 여러분이 미디어 아티스트라는 걸 한눈에 알아볼 것입니다. 이 시작 키트는 실험실 가운, 유리 표본 병, 다양한 크기의 페트리 접시, 깔때기와 깔때기 홀더로 구성되어 있습니다. 여러분은 표본 병에 무엇을 넣을지 고민할 필요가 없습니다. 그 안에 무엇을 넣든, 거기서 과학과 예술이 탄생할 테니까요. 여러분은 미디어 아티스트로서 프로젝트를 선보이고, 각종 펀딩, 경쟁 등 많은 기회를 누리게 될 것입니다.

Greeting Tote 인사하는 토트백 | 2020
Screenprint on cotton bag | 35 cm x 39 cm



This tote brings you the most accurate way to pronounce important greeting expressions in Korean. Be it at an exhibition opening, in an artist's gathering or any other social situation in the art scene. Are you ready to greet?

이 토트백은 한국어로 건네야 할 중요한 인사들을 가장 정확하게 발음하게 해주는 휴대성 좋은 솔루션을 제공합니다. 전시회 오프닝, 작가들 모임, 혹은 미술계의 다른 모임 장소에서 사용해 보세요. 인사 건넬 준비 되셨나요?

TEXT

EXPANDED TIME (2009)

Alvaro Rodriguez Fominaya

When American photographer Walker Evans trawled the New York subway taking his “subway portraits” at the end of the 30s and early 40s, he anticipated the collective anguish and alienation of the metropolis. With a hidden camera, Walker Evans would take the portraits of his unsuspected sitters, bringing the art of portraiture into the realms of life in the 20th century. In similar ways, Silas Fong adopts strategies that continue this research well into the 21st century. But as times have changed, the camera is shown in full flare, challenging the sitter to react, or to model suitably. Many things have been transformed after Warhol’s 5 minutes of fame or Guy Debord’s Culture of Spectacle, resulting in new behavioral patterns. On the other hand, life in the Big City – New York or Hong Kong – still is a fertile terrain for solitude, and as the artist puts it well: anonymity.

The place of the human being in the metropolis and the multiple possibilities of socialization have been major preoccupations for philosophers and artists akin, as 20th century meant society moved deeper into the urban landscape. Recognition of the Other and its nature has most intrigued us. Translating ourselves into the public space, where fortuitous encounters are fostered, has provided us with an ephemeral knowledge of the Other. These issues have informed Silas Fong most recent production: “Stolen times for sale”, “When the door opens” and “Surveil the strangers” are good examples of this research within his work. Digital technology, including video, web access and mobile phone, update this sociological quest. A definition of each project explains the procedures and rules that the artist has established. For “Stolen times for sale”, the artist writes: “The performer steals time from strangers through pressing the buttons of the elevators”.

In his works there is a reflection on the notion of time. The video “When the door opens” shows footage of the brief instant when the doors open at a MTR train, at the same time the artist sets the footage into slow motion, effectively “freezing” time, providing us with a contradicting measure of the rhythm of the urban web. The accelerated path in this interstitial “locus” suddenly becomes a choreographed series of beautiful movements that capture our imagination. It is in the idea of the expansion of time, where we revel, and where he delves into the nature of this time based media. As we always want to be supersized, this concept of expanded time suitably fits into our 21st century essence.

“Stolen times for sale” is another of his recent projects that deal with related issues. On this occasion there is a performative edge to the video. Although the performer is hidden behind the camera and we only witness the consequence of his action. His simple action – pressing the

elevator call button – generates a sequence of reactions. We suddenly view the occupiers of the elevator peer through the open door. It also connects with this notion of relayed or expanded time, his actions originating a relational performance. In a second stage of the project, during the public showing of the video, the gallery visitors get the chance to purchase these “stolen times”. As Silas Fongs describes: “The video sequences once sold are replaced by “SOLD – XX SECONDS FOR \$ XXX”. This results in the video becoming a work in progress, subject to continuous transformation, where the end would only come when all the sequences have been allocated with new “owners” of this time.

It was only natural that Silas Fong turned his eyes into the public bus system, having already explored the MTR as a ground for his work. Bus transportation invested him with a higher number of possibilities related, not only to the subjects of his videoperformances, but also to the surrounding urban landscape. His latest work, takes us into the realm of experience. The artist is not just preoccupied with the production of the images, but this time he applies the idea of circulation to his videoinstallation. Armed with a video camera inside a bus, he shot from the left side of the bus, thus filming a footage that shows us the life on the other side of the window. Passersby are invited to react to this filming as the artist reuses some of his tactics. The resulting video is exhibited in a real life size two channel projection; the visitor being sandwiched in between the two screens showing mirror like images. This idea of spatialization of video connects with the development of the genre of the installation. Sculptural qualities are linked to the moving images, enhancing the experience of the viewer, who at this stage is transformed into a visitor. Other issues, such as the representation of the real are also brought in through this strategy, adding complexity to what was originally a simple idea. Although the themes of Silas Fong’s work go back to the origins of video and its relation to experimental cinema, the way he resolves these dilemmas are only possible with the current technological and conceptual development. This is because of the way he uses space, but most importantly because of the use of a 16:9 panoramic ratio, which enhances the cinematic aspect of the work and points towards a departure from 70’s videoart.

Time, Furtive Glances and Banality: a discussion of Silas Fong's early works

Anthony T. K. Yung

2010

"Stolen Times for Sale"

"Stolen Times for Sale" is a game of conceptual switcheroo. During the morning rush, Silas Fong pushed the hold button in the elevator of a Hong Kong high-rise apartment building. He filmed the fleeting six or seven seconds between the opening and closing of the doors. He then sold these dozens of six and seven second segments at a price determined by the number of people in the elevator, their expressions and their responses. Each segment is sold only once. The sold segment of video is replaced with a text on screen [Sold – XX Seconds for \$XX]. When sales are good, and "time" is sold out, all that remains of the work is a textual record of the length and sale price of each segment.

This work has attracted attention in so far as it purports to not only steal a fleeting moment, but then sell it. It asserts the power to challenge the absolutism of time. However, what the artist is selling is not to time, but images. On that morning, seconds of time are stolen from the elevator passengers (the artist's put-upon neighbors), time that should not have been lost in this way and which can never be wrested back. What has been sold is simply the image of the process of that theft, and not the time itself. The result is that those blameless few seconds now belong to no one: neither to the artist, nor to the buyer.

At this point we have already perceived that the conceptual switcheroo involves the concepts of "time" and "image."

"Sale" is the work's other central concept. Because images are reproducible, buyers and collectors of video art have been hesitant to enter the market. But in "Stolen Times for Sale," the videos are only being sold in the name of "time." The sale of the video makes effective use of the sense of absolute singularity that is associated with time, and is, in this way, seemingly effective at taking the measure and establishing the value of video art.

Thus, the structure of the work is established in the following way: wildly pushing elevator buttons is a favorite mischief of children in Hong Kong, and dull moments spent waiting for and riding in elevators—time spent in impatience—are also an unavoidable experience of Hong Kong life. Silas Fong turns these authentic experiences into an artistic subject, a game of logic, and uses the conceptual obfuscation of the artwork to package apparently reasonable products.

"Following strangers"

People continue to advocate for privacy, and privacy protections have been enshrined into law. At the same time, we can not wait to engage in performances of the self and to violate each other's privacy. Facebook has easily surpassed Google as the world's most popular website. Compared to Facebook, Google is but a serious, just and trustworthy librarian! When people log into Facebook, do they sense that they have now been placed beneath an

infinite series of eyes? "Friends" on Facebook are uninterruptedly connected. Friends always have friends, and these "friends of friends" fall far outside the limits of our imaginations. They can be someone who you will never meet in your life, or they can be someone who is greatly offensive to you. The eyes of "friends of friends" are the eyes of the big other, the eyes of the world. Deeds and images that you might rather not have made public can be posted at any time to Facebook by people who know you (not "friends," but people who merely "know" you). The degree to which your precious privacy has been unveiled to the world will be unknown to you, let alone within your power to stop.

What is frightening about Facebook is that even if you do not participate, you can not avoid it. Its primary driver is something that everyone shares in common: an objectless curiosity, a kind of voyeuristic tendency, a continually growing and insatiable desire, one that exists, in particular, in the virtual world of the internet.

Silas Fong's work "Following Strangers" is a self-made, web-based platform, where he gathers account information of interest to him from users of Facebook and other social media platforms, and where he cites his reason for his interest in this person, his impressions of him/her and his reason and motivation for wanting to add them. Here, the artist is taking on the role of voyeur and surveiler/follower, and, at the same time, attempts to explore the background motivations for surveilling/pursuing/following these people. In this inverted social media platform, the focus is not on whether the photos and information from these strangers is truly interesting, but rather the disclosure of the psychic motivation of surveilling/pursuing/following strangers. For the most part, these so-called "motivations" are dull and banal, and reveal, to a greater or lesser extent, that in social media space, forming "real" relationships with strangers is beside the point, and what is most important is that when taking a furtive glance into the world of strangers, our curiosity is being continually nurtured.

Staring, being stared at, and the disappeared starrer

The work "In some seconds" is the artist's documentation of the roadside scenery that passes over the course of a bus route. Throughout the recording, passersby cast their curious glances towards the lens. While in "Waiting," the artist takes surreptitious pictures of the expressions of people waiting in Times Square. The installation of "In some seconds" is highly designed: it reproduces the visual experience of riding on a bus, which has no difficulty in attracting the viewer's formalistic interest. The latter, we can easily place the latter within the urban documentary photography tradition of Walker Evans and Helen Levitt.

In fact, both works have developed around a topic of continuous interest for the artist. Everyday strangers appear in "In some seconds." Their visages, expressions and gazes are videographic documentation of a transient moment in the rush of daily life. "Stolen Times for Sale" is concerned with fundamentally the same topic. "Stolen Times for Sale" forcibly interrupts people's elevator journey to attract their gaze. When viewing, "In some seconds," we can not be sure what it is exactly that is attracting the bystander's gaze. Fascinatingly, when we view the work, we substitute ourselves for the subject of the staring, and imagine the self through the gazes and expressions of those strangers. In other words, other people are mirrors.

When compared to “In some seconds,” “Waiting” is far less grand in terms of subject and skill. The people waiting at Times Square in Causeway Bay are everyday people, strangers. They are unoccupied. Because their pictures have no particular significance as social documentary, these people can function as pure aesthetic objects. And because these were taken surreptitiously, the gazer disappears, and again we walk into this paradox: is the focus of this work on the aesthetics of the object or is it the subjective feeling of pleasure produced from voyeurism? Here, Silas Fong is in the process of simplifying the form and conceptual structure of his work, attempting to utilize an exceedingly banal attitude to represent the banality of people.

[Translated from Chinese by Jesse Robert Coffino.]

FLAT D, 6/F, ALDRICH GARDEN (2015)

Anthony Yung

Flat D, 6/F, Aldrich Garden' is the title of this exhibition but also the artist's home address. This implies a doubleness: an address is functional and indicative – as a concept, it is most commonly understandable – but at the same time it is also meaningless because it is not meant to help you to find the place, as for the audience of this exhibition it refers to a place so far away that it may as well not exist. Such a conceptual doubleness epitomizes Silas Fong's artistic project in temporal experiences and psychological activities – things that are utterly personal, yet also entirely common.

The address is also giving us hints with which to understand the exhibition: first of all, it brings us to Hong Kong. A global financial center built first by manufacturing industries (the predecessor of 'the world's factory'), then by financial-trading freedoms, the city likes to evaluate its business and its people in terms of productivity and efficiency. In this society of pragmatism, wasting time is no different to burning billnotes. Growing up here, people pick up an almost ethical obligation to spend time in the 'correct way', and for the younger generation to not do so is a major rebellion. With this context in mind, Fong's works are actually a research on sheer unproductivity, on the moments that we learn to feel guilty and negative about. He questions if these moments really are worthless and whether our personal histories are not in fact constituted within all these 'ahistorical times'.

The address also brings us to Flat D, a piece that was first shown in the Hong Kong Art Centre in 2015. There, Fong had taken corner of the exhibition space and reconstructed it into his bedroom at home. He then invited visitors to spend ten minutes in this room. With the time set to precisely 10 minutes, and the fact that there was not anything at all in the room to look at or contemplate, visitors could do nothing but go with whatever came up their minds. Coming inside Flat D, their plans, their experiences of the day were interrupted, though voluntarily, and now they had to stop and think about the interrupted. Eventually, the piece provided an experience and a question: what does this interruption, these ten minutes that are cut out of our life, mean to us?

Three other pieces within the exhibition (Work Report for Museum Ludwig, Attendance Report for Academy of Media Arts Cologne and Passenger Report for Meinfernbus) can be seen as elements of 'fieldworks' relating to such research – with pictures and texts, he documents the activities of his mind during long hours undertaking internship duties in a museum, attending classes and taking long bus rides. These records may remind us of the typical texts of 'stream of consciousness', in particular Camus's Outsider, but literariness is not Fong's main concern here. What he tries to explore is the common rather than the unique – he wants these records to

remind us of our own experiences. Think about it, we all talk to ourselves during moments of boredom and distraction, when in our minds words start to flow randomly, unbounded from social norms (manners, ethics, and so on) and a chain of memories appears, no matter how irrelevant they are to the things immediately surrounding us. Using the artist's own experiences as case studies, these pieces ask us to pay attention to these conversations we have with ourselves.

Even two years ago, Fong was already a considerably experienced artist. Coming to 'study' in Germany, what is the most precious to him is perhaps not the new information to even methodologies, but the unfamiliar environment, a sense of distance and indifference that provokes thoughts and experiences. For as we can tell from these works, the core theme of Fong's practice is an inevitable loneliness, and art is a tool to process and transcend it and make us understand ourselves better. In this sense, we may see the last work in this exhibition as a beautiful metaphor – Afternoons (2015) is a series of books, but books with no words, no knowledge, no 'history' – just the sunlight that changes as time goes by. It symbolizes what Fong attempts to create with art: a sensitivity to the subtleties of our time and our mind.

'Flat D, 6/F, Aldrich Garden' is a text written for [the exhibition](#) with the same title.

CASE #22 — FLAT D, 6/F, ALDRICH GARDEN
Prof. Beate Gütschow
2016

Silas Fong zeigt in seiner Ausstellung fünf Arbeiten, die sich mit Ineffektivität, Langeweile und Isolation beschäftigen. In einer Fotoinstallation ist ein lebensgroßes Modell von Fongs eigenem leeren Schlafzimmer zu sehen, Besucher müssen in dem kahlen Zimmer 10 Minuten verweilen. In einer fotografischen Arbeit zeichnet Silas Fong das Licht auf, das sich auf einer leeren Wand im Laufe eines Tages suggestiv verändert. In drei weiteren Arbeiten dokumentiert der Künstler Situationen, in denen er sich selber sehr langweilt: eine Busfahrt, ein Seminar an der KHM und seine Tätigkeit als Aufsicht im Museum Ludwig. Silas Fong macht in diesen Situationen lapidare Fotos mit einer Kompaktkamera und schreibt seine Gedanken akribisch auf, ebenso die Handlungen seiner Mitmenschen. Ein Aspekt dieser Arbeiten mag ein institutionskritischer sein, denn es wird durchaus ironisch aus dem Betrieb einer Kunsthochschule oder eines Museums erzählt. Jedoch reicht Silas Fongs Anliegen über das Reflektieren dieser Gegebenheiten hinaus. Es ist ein Blick eines Fremden, der in alltäglichen Handlungen der anderen eine versteckte Ablehnung vermutet, der gewünschte Dialog findet nicht statt oder endet im Nichts. [BG]

In his exhibition, Silas Fong shows five works dealing with inefficiency, boredom and isolation. A life-size model of Fong's own empty bedroom can be seen in a photo installation, and visitors must spend 10 minutes in the bare room. In a photographic work, Silas Fong records the light that changes suggestively on an empty wall in the course of a day. In three further works, the artist documents situations in which he is very bored: a bus ride, a seminar at the KHM and his activity as a supervisor in the Museum Ludwig. In these situations, Silas Fong makes succinct photos with a compact camera and painstakingly writes down his thoughts, as well as the actions of his fellows. One aspect of this work may be more institution critical because it is quite ironically told from the operation of an art school or a museum. However, Silas Fong's concerns extend beyond reflecting on these realities. It is a look of a stranger who suspects a hidden rejection in the everyday actions of others, the desired dialogue does not take place or ends in nothingness. [BG]

[English version translated by Google Translate.]

Text written on the exhibition Flat D, 6/F, Aldrich Garden

The Subject Matter

Silas Fong

2016

The subject matter of my work is the concept, perception and the value relating to time in different situations that affect my daily life priorities. "Spending time where it's worth more; don't waste your time on unimportant things" are the most common lines heard in Hong Kong. But what is worth more? What is unimportant? Who has the right to judge for you? By raising such questions, I can re-evaluate my own world view. I try to retain my own time and pace, and demonstrate it to others.

The idea is to observe and notice the overlooked details in daily life and transform them into temporal, spatial and psychological experiences. These artistic experiences may provoke audiences to understand and reflect on their values and modes of life. It particularly deals with the value in my home town Hong Kong.

To document everyday life is to look at the mundane and the repetitive. This allows me to grasp the slowness of time and more importantly to look at myself. These documents are in-depth self-portraits and personal accounts. By slowing down my pace and reviewing these documents, which are most common to everyone, I can understand myself better and be more connected to other people.

The speed of urban daily life blows away our ability to deliberate and almost forces us to live in the same way. We do not own our time anymore, but are convinced to spend all on unnecessary and unwanted activities. However, if we can retrieve a sensitivity to our *trivial* personal feelings, beware of the choices we actually have, we can choose different ways of living. Ways which are more humane than mass produced. A better life.

From Current Issue

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Installation view of **TAP CHAN's** *Entanglement* (detail), 2018, wood, sponge sheet, fabric, nylon fiber, dimensions variable, at "The Day the Gods Stop Laughing," Duddell's, Hong Kong, 2018. All images courtesy the artist and Duddell's, Hong Kong.

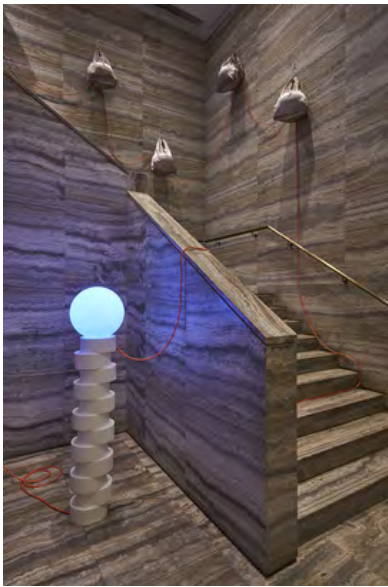
THE DAY THE GODS STOP LAUGHING

[WEB REVIEW](#) BY PAMELA WONG
DUDELL'S

[HONG KONG](#) [CHINA](#)

A fluorescent blue spherical lamp is supported by a stack of toilet paper rolls, standing stubbornly by the stairs leading up to the Duddell's restaurant—a bizarre but intriguing contrast to the venue's sleekly designed interiors. An orange wire connects the lamp to a set of gold-colored reusable shopping bags hung along the walls by the stairs. These common household objects disrupt the site's deliberate sophistication with their ordinariness, symbolizing the repetitive, mundane and unglamorous aspects of life.

This strange arrangement comprises Doreen Chan's installation *He Is Alright* (all works 2018), part of Duddell's latest exhibition, "The Day the Gods Stop Laughing." Curated by Yuan Fuca, the show invited four Chinese artists to create "independent yet intertwined narratives and situations within the subliminal states of the site," employing visual and audio elements to situate the audience within various imagined scenarios. According to the



Installation view of **DOREEN CHAN's** *He Is Alright* (detail), 2018, ball lamps, toilet paper, reusable bags, electric cable, dimensions variable, at "The Day the Gods Stop Laughing," Duddell's, Hong Kong, 2018.

curatorial statement, the show's grouping of unconnected narratives embodied Carl Jung's concept of "synchronicity"—a series of meaningful but causally unconnected coincidences.

The idea of recreating a scene most palpably materialized in Silas Fong's *Enjoy Your Meal!* Entering the members-only library, one may be shocked at the sight of a homeless man in a black hoodie bent over a table in the corner, a partly eaten McDonald's meal left on a tray in front of him. This hyperreal sculpture comments on a pressing social issue in Hong Kong, colloquially known as the "McRefugee" phenomenon—homeless people seeking shelter at McDonald's. Fong's recreation of this scenario in a high-end establishment like Duddell's is reminiscent of Mark Rothko's aim to "ruin the appetite" of diners with his Seagram Murals, originally commissioned in 1959 for the Four Seasons' restaurant in New York. *Enjoy Your Meal!* is a poignant reminder of the deep socio-economic disparity in Hong Kong aimed directly at Duddell's VIPs, forcing them to reflect on their social responsibilities.



Installation view of **SILAS FONG's** *Enjoy Your Meal!* (detail), 2018, clothing, dummy, plastic food model, dimensions variable, at "The Day the Gods Stop Laughing," Duddell's, Hong Kong, 2018.

In an alcove in the dining area outside the library, Tap Chan's *Entanglement* presents subtler social critique. Affixed to the back wall of the alcove are two rectangular, symmetrically aligned cushions in aqua velvet fabric recalling an old-fashioned sofa, with hair-like, silver nylon fiber sprouting out of them. Holographic, semi-transparent screens are pasted onto the glass panes adjacent to the wall, while rainbows are projected onto the two blue cushions—shaped like windows with faux-stone frames—hung on the two walls at the entrance to the alcove. The rainbow motif is a reference to Stanley Kubrick's 1999 thriller *Eyes Wide Shut*, in which "where the rainbow ends" is a euphemism for the debauched underground gatherings attended by the rich and powerful. Chan's work implies that Duddell's is similarly a place "where the rainbow ends," only available to the upper class and hidden from the outside world.

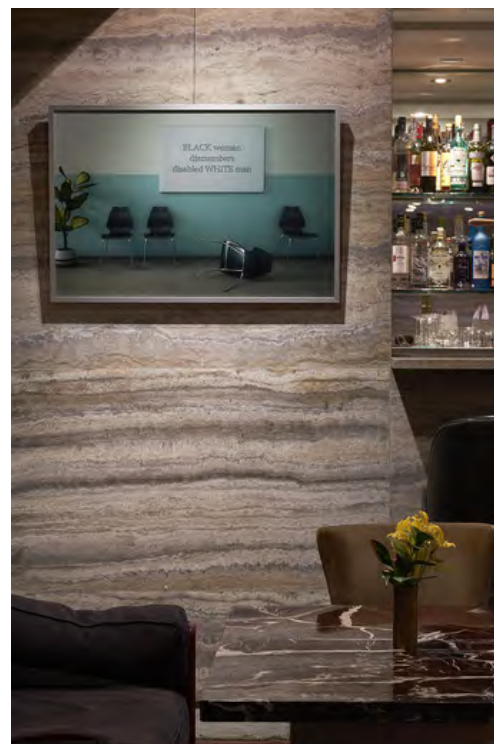
Among the chatter of diners, in a corner of the restaurant, one may pick up the intermittent whispers of three women recounting their misfortunes. Guangzhou artist Ye Hui's audio installation *The Waiting Room* presents the stories of three characters of different races and time periods, each having murdered her partner. On the wall, a color-print photo depicts the room where the women had possibly sat and talked, furnished with a potted plant and four chairs, one of which is lying awkwardly on the floor. Above the chairs is a board that reads, "BLACK woman dismembers disabled WHITE man." Alternating between miserable sighs about their experiences of domestic abuse to unremorseful accounts of their crimes, the dialogue between the women reflects the media's (and the public's) polarized and gendered perceptions of violent female criminals as victims and attackers, and highlights a marginalized group that would have no place in an establishment like Duddell's.

"The Day the Gods Stop Laughing" presented a group of site-specific works that all seemed to incorporate some form of commentary on social inequality, the impact of which was heightened by the prestigious venue itself. Ironically but unsurprisingly, the curatorial statement refrains from making any explicit comment on class. In leaving the socio-political themes of these works a "coincidence," it was doubtful that the show would register as meaningful for Duddell's high-end clientele, its message lost among the dishes and wine.

Pamela Wong is an editorial intern of ArtAsiaPacific.

"The Day the Gods Stop Laughing" is on view at Duddell's, Hong Kong, until September 23, 2018.

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Installation view of **YE HUI**'s *The Waiting Room* (detail), 2018, site-specific audio drama installation, six Bluetooth mini-speakers, C-print, installation: dimensions variable, C-print: 90 x 60 cm, at "The Day the Gods Stop Laughing," Duddell's, Hong Kong, 2018.

Tools

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SAD School of Artists Development: 실라스 풍

예술을 예술이게 만드는 것은 무엇인가?

홍이지 (국립현대미술관 큐레이터)

2020

한국인들이 즐겨 쓰는 표현 중에 ‘눈치(Nunchi)’라는 것이 있다. 비슷한 표현으로 일본에는 ‘공기를 읽는다’라는 표현이 있다. 주위의 분위기를 파악하고 어색하지 않게 상대방의 마음이나 태도를 살피는 것을 의미한다. 예술의 범주 안에서도 우리는 타인의 눈치를 살핀다. 성공을 위한 눈치, 관계를 위한 눈치, 예술의 이름으로 용인되고 암묵적으로 동의하는 맥락들에 대해 실라스 풍은 지속적인 관심을 가져왔다. 이러한 관심은 광둥어가 모국어인 그가 한국 예술학교에서 영어로 학생들을 가르치고, 집에서는 독일어를 사용하는 다국어 사용자이기 때문일지도 모르겠다. 언어와 문화 그리고 정서를 이해하는 것은 흡사 공기를 읽으며 예민하게 눈치를 봐야 하는 고도의 집중력과 경험을 요구한다. 이는 예술의 습성과도 비슷하다. 문자나 말로 설명하기 힘든 특유의 분위기와 맥락은 단번에 파악하기 쉽지 않으며 총체적인 이해와 정보를 전제로 한다. 풍은 예술의 표상적 사유와 주관적인 가치판단에서 한 발자국 떨어져 예술에 대한 지극히 현실적이고 이성적인 판단에 기인한 객관적 지표를 제시하고 예술의 의미와 가치를 분석하는 과정을 객관화 시켜 보고자 했다. 그는 다년간 상황에 맞는 표현과 사회생활을 위한 관계 설정을 위한 대화의 방식에 관심을 가지고 작은 출판물을 제작하기도 하였다. <Small Talk>(2018)와 <Vocabulary>(2019)는 각각의 상황에 맞는, 어색하지 않도록 분위기를 이끌어가는 표현을 담고 있다. 이 작업을 통해 작가는 관계를 설정하기 위해 사람들이 통상적이고 관성적으로 쓰는 표현을 살피고, 어색하지 않게 상황에 적응하기 위한 일종의 가이드라인을 제시했다. 이러한 풍의 언어와 태도에 대한 관심은 그가 2017년 한국에서 예술대학의 교수로 지내면서 느꼈던 교육과 예술의 본질적인 속성과 의미에 대한 형식적 표현 방법과 재현에 대한 고민으로 이어졌다.

예술가직업훈련학교 SAD

실라스 풍의 예술가직업훈련학교 SAD(School of Artists Development, 이하 SAD)는 풍이 2019년 금천예술공장에서 선보인 <SAD Info Days>를 통해 처음 선보였다. <SAD Info Day, 이하 인포 데이>는 실라스 풍이 SAD 프로젝트의 시작을 알리고 이를 통해 예술가의 역할과 예술이 가진 이중적 측면을 다뤄보고자 하였다. 2019년 7월 19일부터 31일까지 진행된 ‘인포 데이’는 예술가직업훈련학교를

통해 예술가의 초상화 기초, 지원서 작성 방법, 국제 예술 영어 수업 그리고 SAD 경력 향상을 위한 전문 과정을 제공하고, 해당 기간 신진 작가와 작가를 지망하는 학생들을 대상으로 포트폴리오 리뷰 세션을 마련하기도 했다. 풍은 '시각예술 작가'를 대상화하여 분석하고 해당 역할을 수행하기 위해 스스로를 교육자, 관찰자, 행위자로 역할을 구분하여 예술의 본질적인 의미를 재고해보고자 했다. 풍은 '더 나은 성공을 위해'라는 부제가 달린 예술가직업훈련학교의 '인포 데이'를 통해 과연 예술과 예술가는 교육과 학습을 통해 발전 가능한 것인가?라는 질문을 던지며, 예술의 본질과 그 이면을 함께 살펴보고자 했다. 작가는 전시장을 '성공하는 예술가가 되는 방법'을 수행하는 플랫폼으로 제안하고, 프로젝트의 이면에 담긴 본질과 비평적 판단을 관람객이자 참여자들에게 되묻는다. 그뿐만 아니라 타인의 눈에 비친 '작가다운' 작가의 모습, 작가로 성공하기 위한 단계들, 한국 미술계의 생태에 적응하기 위한 기본적인 생존 기술들을 제공하고 과연 이러한 것들이 교육과 정보를 통해 가능한 것인가에 대해 다시금 질문한다.

실라스 풍은 2020년도 청주미술창작스튜디오 입주 기간 동안 SAD의 새로운 커리큘럼과 프로그램을 소개했다. 두 번째로 진행된 SAD에서 풍은 예술가가 되는 법, 예술가가 갖춰야 할 기본적인 여건에서 조금 더 나아가 작품과 수집, 예술의 재화 가치 생산까지 관심사를 확장했다. 풍은 세 개의 작품과 그에 따른 공간을 구성하여 SAD 참여 학생들이 홈쇼핑 TV 채널을 통해 미술품 대여 서비스를 홍보하고 판매하는 기술을 연습하도록 스튜디오를 마련했다. 2019년부터 지속적으로 예술의 생태와 예술이 가진 속성에 대해서 때로는 직접적이면서도 예민하게 다뤄온 SAD의 설립자인 실라스 풍은 <SAD 이론>을 제안하고, 미술 수집을 예로 들며 예술의 세속적인 속성과 이를 둘러싼 사회적인 통념을 비틀어서 현상을 드러내는 방식을 선보였다. 그는 유머러스하지만, 간접적인 형식과 태도를 빌려, 예술가로 성공하기 위해 과도하게 표준화된 현상을 지적하고 이제는 너무나 익숙하고 길들여진 일련의 과정들을 수행하는 것에 대해 재고해야 함을 역설적으로 드러낸다. 두 번째 작품 <작가를 위한 인사말>은 풍이 미술계에서 통용되는 상식을 배워보기 위해 마련된 사운드 설치 작업으로 한국어의 뉘앙스와 '인사'라는 문화에 대해 재고해보고자 한다. 풍은 SAD 작품을 통해 2017년부터 한국에 거주하면서 자신의 모국어가 아닌 영어를 통해 학생들에게 예술을 가르치는 교수인 동시에 자신의 작업을 한국 미술계에 소개하고 설득해야 하는 외국인 작가의 신분을 통해 경험한 미묘한 뉘앙스와 문화에 대해 우리에게 익숙하지만 그렇기에 말하지 않았던 부분을 드러낸다. 마지막으로 윈도우 전시장이자 다양한 작품을 구매할 수 있는 <SAD Shop>을 선보였다. <작가의 화분>, <작가의 커리어

맵>, <미디어 아티스트 시작 키트>와 <인사하는 토트백> 등으로 구성된 솜은 실제로 관람객들이 작가가 제안한 굿즈들을 구매할 수도 있고 솜 자체가 하나의 작업이기도 하다. 이는 상업과 비상업을 구분하고, 겉치레와 진정성이 모호한 동시대 예술에서 종종 발견되는 이중적이고 역설적인 면모와 편견에 대한 내용을 함의하고 있다. 작가는 이러한 실험을 통해 전시장의 헤게모니는 어떻게 만들어지는 것인지에 대해서 재고해볼 것을 촉구한다. 전시라는 것은 예술가의 행위와 작업 공간을 떠난 예술 작품을 사후적으로 평가하는 장소이자 무수한 이데올로기와 정치적 담론이 내재된 곳이다.

예술을 예술이게 하는 것은 무엇인가?

결국 실라스 풍은 예술가의 자리와 예술이 머무는 장소에 대해 은유적이고 관성적으로 받아들이기보다 이념적 충돌과 아이러니를 예술의 맥락 안에서 일시적으로 유지함으로써 브라이언 오 도허티가 ‘하얀 입방체 안에서’를 통해 제시한 것처럼 화이트 큐브 공간을 통해 속물근성을 드러내고 자기규정의 끊임없는 습관을 재점검하도록 촉구한다. 작가는 전시 설명에서 “SAD는 예술계에서 예술가를 지속해서 관찰한 결과이자 자아 인식과 비평의 결과”라고 밝힌 바 있다. 그의 이러한 실험과 시도는 미술을 미술이게 하는 것은 눈으로 구분할 수 없는 미술적 이론의 분위기, 즉 미술계에 대한 지식의 여부라고 언급한 아서 단토의 말을 떠올리게 한다. 21세기를 겪으며 우리가 경험한 가장 중요한 교훈이 있다면 아무것도 하지 않으면 변화는 없다는 것이다. 작가는 너무나 당연하게 생각했던 것들이 한순간에 사라지고 무너지는 것을 목격하며 창작 역시 의심 없이 관성적으로 행위하고 사유한다면 우리가 굳게 믿었던 예술의 자리 또한 쉽게 퇴색할 것이며 그렇기에 우리의 선택은 중요하다고 얘기하는 것은 아닐까?

CV

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Education

2013-2015 Media and Fine Art, Academy of Media Arts Cologne, Germany
2010-2012 Master of Fine Arts, Department of Fine Arts, Chinese University of Hong Kong
2007-2008 Student Exchange Programme, Universiteit van Amsterdam, Netherlands
2005-2008 Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Visual Arts, Academy of Visual Arts, Hong Kong Baptist University

Solo Exhibitions

2020 SAD School of Artists Development | Cheongju Art Studio, Cheongju, Korea (*Forthcoming*)
2019 SAD Info Days | PS333, Seoul Art Space Geumcheon, Seoul
2018 Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening | Videotage, Hong Kong
2016 There is No Time | Hong-ti Art Center, Busan, Korea
2016 Piccoloministr. 316 | Goethe-Gallery and Black Box Studio, Goethe-Institut Hongkong, Hong Kong
2015 Flat D, 6/F, Aldrich Garden | Case – Project Room of Photography, Academy of Media Arts Cologne, Germany
2012 Sitcom | Observation Society, Guangzhou
2011 Memory Disorder | Gallery Exit, Hong Kong
2008 Anonymity – The Debut Solo Exhibition of Silas Fong | Artist Commune, Cattle Depot Artists Village, Hong Kong

Selected Group Exhibitions

2020 Yeosu International Art Festival | Yeosu EXPO Exhibition Hall, Yeosu City, Korea
2020 20th Seoul International Alt Cinema & Media Festival | Post Territory Ujeongguk, Seoul, Korea
2020 Turbulent Area | Korean Cultural Center, Hong Kong
2020 Castles in the Air | Karin Weber Gallery, Hong Kong
2020, 2019 Booked: Tai Kwun Contemporary's Hong Kong Art Book Fair | Tai Kwun Contemporary, Hong Kong
2019 King Sejong and Music: Chihwapyeong | Presidential Archives, Sejong City, Korea

2019 Make: Experiments in Art Making | Platform-L Contemporary Art Center, Seoul

2019 Exit Strategies | H Queen's, Hong Kong

2018 Once A God: The Myth of Future Refugees: Taehwa Eco-River Art Festival | Taehwa River Park, Ulsan

2018 The Day the Gods Stop Laughing | Duddell's Hong Kong

2018 Housewarming | Better Than Company, Seoul

2017 Up Close Yet Unfamiliar | AMC Lab, Seoul

2017 Mark CHUNG, Silas FONG, Nicole WONG | Gallery Exit, Hong Kong

2017 Me: Millennials | K11, Hong Kong

2017 Simultaneity - Reframing Hong Kong II | Redtory Museum of Contemporary Art, Guangzhou, China

2016 Time Test: International Video Art Research Exhibition | CAFA Art Museum, Beijing, China

2016 POST PiXEL.: Animamix Biennale 2016 | Run Run Shaw Creative Media Centre, Hong Kong

2016 Black Bile | 100 ft. PARK, Hong Kong

2016 Hazy Winter | Canton Gallery, Guangzhou, China

2015 Both Sides Now 2 – It was the Best of Times, it was the Worst of Times? | chi K11 art space, Hong Kong; Ray Art Center, Shanghai, China

2015 15 Invitations: a short history of the art book bag (and the things that go in them) | Asia Art Archive, Hong Kong

2015 after/image | Pure Art Foundation, Hong Kong

2014 DIY Future - New Media Arts Exhibition | Hong Kong City Hall

2014 alle berichten darüber - documentary photography | Academy of Media Arts Cologne, Germany

2014 Looking at the Big Sky | National Gallery of Iceland, Reykjavík, Iceland

2013 Cynetart International Festival for Computer Based Art | Festspielhaus Hellerau, Dresden, Germany

2013 Microwave International New Media Arts Festival 2013 | Hong Kong Film Archive, Hong Kong

2013 inToAsia: Time-based Art Festival 2013 – “MicroCities” | The NARS Foundation, New York, United States

2013 Moving on Asia: Towards a New Art Network 2004–2013 | City Gallery Wellington, Wellington, New Zealand

2013 Move on Asia Video Art in Asia 2002 to 2012 | Media Museum, ZKM, Karlsruhe, Germany

2012 Hong Kong Eye - Contemporary Hong Kong Art | Saatchi Gallery, London

2012 Move on Asia | Alternative Space Loop, Seoul, Korea

2012 Running on the Sidelines - Hong Kong New Media Art Exhibition | Soka Art Center, Taipei, Taiwan

2010 Liverpool Biennial 2010: Media Landscape, Zone East | Contemporary Urban Centre, Liverpool, UK; Korean Cultural Centre UK, London, UK

2010 Work in Spreading: Images of Circulation and Retranslation | Iberia Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing, China

2010 Move On Asia 2010 Single Channel Video Art Festival (Touring Exhibition) | Para/Site Art Space, Hong Kong; Tate Modern, London; Alternative Space LOOP, Seoul, Korea

2010 Art Taipei 2010 | Taipei World Trade Center, Taipei, Taiwan

2010 Hong Kong Contemporary Art Biennial Award 2009 | Hong Kong Museum of Art, Hong Kong

2009 Mirror Stage | Hong Kong Visual Arts Centre, Hong Kong

2009 This is Hong Kong (Touring Exhibition) | Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna, Austria; Kuandu Museum of Fine Arts, Taipei, Taiwan; Map Office, Hong Kong; Casa Asia, Madrid, Spain; IFA Gallery, Berlin, Germany; East Side Projects Birmingham, England; subvision. art. festival. off., subvision, Hamburg, Germany; Alternative Space Loop, Seoul, Korea; LOOP Festival, Casa Asia, Barcelona, Spain

2009 Some rooms | Osage Kwun Tong, Hong Kong

Residency

2020 Cheongju Art Studio, Cheongju

2019 Seoul Art Space GEUMCHEON, Seoul

2018 Ulsan Art Stay, Ulsan

2018 FUSE Residency, Videotage, Hong Kong

2016 Hong-ti Art Center, Busan

2016 Oil, Hong Kong

2013 GlogauAIR, Berlin

2011 Summercamp Electrified 2011, Timelab, Gent, Belgium

Award

2015 Finalist, Media Art Category, The 20th Hong Kong Independent Short Film and Video Awards

2010 40 under 40, Perspective Magazine

2009 Young Artist Award, Hong Kong Contemporary Art Biennial Awards, Hong Kong Museum of Art

2009 Gold Award, Interactive Media Category, The 14th Hong Kong Independent Short Film and Video Awards

Grants

2020 Cultural Exchange Grant, Hong Kong Arts Development Council

2016 Emerging Artist Scheme, Hong Kong Arts Development Council

2016 Arts Development Fund (Cultural Exchange Project), Home Affairs Bureau, Government of Hong Kong SAR

2016 HKADC Delegation in Gwangju Biennale 2016, Hong Kong Arts Development Council

2013 Grantee, Prof. Maiching Kao Fine Arts Fund