

14 January 2020

Press Release

## CHAT's upcoming spring programme showcases the diverse possibilities of textile art, marking the first anniversary of its Grand Opening

*Unconstrained Textiles: Stitching Methods, Crossing Ideas* to anchor CHAT's Spring Programme 2020, proposing room for new ways of considering textile(s) and art through diverse works and practices.



Kawita Vatanajyankur, *Knit*, 2019 (video still). Courtesy of the artist, Nova Contemporary, Bangkok and Antidote Organisation, Australia

(Hong Kong, 14 January, 2020) CHAT (Centre for Heritage, Arts and Textile) announces its Spring Programme 2020 exhibition, *Unconstrained Textiles: Stitching Methods, Crossing Ideas*, featuring works by 7 prominent contemporary artists. Celebrating CHAT's first anniversary in March 2020, this Spring Programme unveils another ambitious and vibrant season of exhibition and co-learning programmes. Opening from 15 March until 14 June 2020, this exhibition aims to present contemporary art practices of these artists who have engaged and experimented with textile materials, concepts, subject matters and techniques, inviting visitors to reconsider their understanding and preconceptions of art and textile(s) by presenting works of wide-ranging methods and ideas.

Curated by CHAT's Co-Director, Takahashi Mizuki, the exhibited works will show myriad artistic adaptations of textile(s) to accomplish the artists' aesthetic, experimental and

political objectives, as an endeavour to broaden the discussion of textile's contribution to art in general by examining contemporary artworks through a textile lens. Featured artists include **Bi Rongrong** (Shanghai), **Kato Izumi** (Tokyo/ Hong Kong), **Byron Kim** (New York), **Ham Kyungah** (Seoul), **David Medalla** (Berlin), **Kawita Vatanajyankur** (Bangkok) and **Samson Young** (Hong Kong). Presenting the diverse entry points and adaptations of ideas side by side, the exhibition will propose an alternative way of learning about textile(s) and art in the form of an open-ended patchwork.

Artworks from **Kato Izumi** and **Byron Kim** (recently the recipient of the 2019 Robert De Niro Sr. Prize) will exhibit colours, forms and textual surfaces achieved with textile techniques such as dyeing and stitching. Embroidery featured in **Ham Kyungah's** work will highlight the socio-political situation of and counter-propose reinvented ways of communication between South and North Korea. **Bi Rongrong's** textile and audiovisual works explore the interplay between architectural features and textile patterns. **David Medalla's** hanging textile work will be a participatory platform, inviting visitors to contribute to not only the consideration but also the creation of art. Responding to labourers' situation in factories, **Kawita Vatanajyankur's** mimetic performances of textile(s) in its mechanical processes highlight the objectification of labourers and **Samson Young** utilises textile(s) creations conceived with CHAT's own textile team to illustrate his multidisciplinary artistic visions in his performances and installations.

Continuing in the mission to weave creative experiences for all, CHAT has invited **Kato Izumi** to conduct pre-opening workshops with local participants to create colourful customised costumes (capas and masks), which will be showcased at the high-energy and electrifying Opening Performance during the CHAT's Spring Programme Opening Reception, featuring Kato and the Japanese rock band THE TETORAPOTZ on 14 March, 2020 at The Hall of The Mills between 7:00-9:00pm. Throughout the season, **Kawita Vatanajyankur** will also conduct public performance workshops under the theme of labour in correspondence with her exhibited audiovisual works.

CHAT's Co-Directors, Takahashi Mizuki and Teoh Chin Chin, said, 'March 2020 marks the first anniversary of CHAT. Continuing to push the boundaries of contemporary art in this exhibition, we hope to introduce more intriguing questions than conclusive answers, more alternative proposals than final solutions to the topic of how textile as a medium and a mode of expression could illustrate the rethinking of traditional frameworks of artistic and social expression of CHAT's invited artists. We believe this season's programmes will ignite your curiosity about how the textile thread and thoughts continue to inspire new creations of contemporary artists in Asia.'

CHAT's permanent display *Welcome to the Spinning Factory!* will be showing together with *Unconstrained Textiles: Stitching Methods, Crossing Ideas* during this exhibition period.

**Exhibition Details:**

Date: 15 March – 14 June 2020 (Closed on Tuesdays)  
Opening Hours: 11:00am-7:00pm  
Venue: CHAT and The Hall, The Mills, 45 Pak Tin Par Street, Tsuen Wan, Hong Kong

**Media Preview and Reception:**

Date: 13 March 2020 (Friday)  
Time: 2:30-4:30pm (Registration at 2:15pm)  
Venue: CHAT, The Mills, 45 Pak Tin Par Street, Tsuen Wan, Hong Kong  
RSVP: Danny Cheng | [danny.cheng@mansumpr.com](mailto:danny.cheng@mansumpr.com)  
+852 3749 9878 | +852 9035 4994  
Christy Mo | [christy.mo@mansumpr.com](mailto:christy.mo@mansumpr.com)  
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**Opening Reception:**

Date: 14 March 2020 (Saturday)  
Time: 7:00-9:00pm  
Venue: CHAT, The Mills, 45 Pak Tin Par Street, Tsuen Wan, Hong Kong  
RSVP: Danny Cheng | [danny.cheng@mansumpr.com](mailto:danny.cheng@mansumpr.com)  
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*For detailed Spring 2020 programmes, please see Appendix 1.*

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**NOTE TO EDITORS:**

**About CHAT**

CHAT (Centre for Heritage, Arts and Textile) is a part of the heritage conservation project of The Mills, the former cotton-spinning mills of Nan Fung Textiles in Tsuen Wan. Through its multifaceted curated programmes, which include exhibitions and co-learning programmes, CHAT aims to be an art centre that weaves creative experiences for all, inviting visitors to experience the spirit of the innovative legacy of Hong Kong's textile industry and engage in new dialogues and inspirational journeys that interweave contemporary art, design, heritage and community.

**General Enquiries:**

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## **APPENDIX 1: CHAT Spring Programme 2020 Schedule**

### Exhibition

Title: Unconstrained Textiles: Stitching Methods, Crossing Ideas  
 Date: 15 March – 14 June 2020 (Closed on Tuesdays)  
 Opening Hours: 11:00am-7:00pm  
 Venue: CHAT, The Mills, 45 Pak Tin Par Street, Tsuen Wan, Hong Kong  
 RSVP and Ticketing: <https://www.mill6chat.org/visit>

### **EVENT DETAILS**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Event Details</b>
To be announced	To be announced	Event: Let's Rock 'n' Roll Cosplay! – Costume is your Canvas! Venue: The Hall, The Mills Artist(s): Kato Izumi Language: English, occasional Japanese with consecutive interpretation in Cantonese Admission: Free, RSVP via CHAT website Remark: Participants are required to be on stage for CHAT's Spring Programme Opening Reception on Saturday 14 March
14 March 2020 (Saturday)	7:00-9:00pm	Event: Opening Reception Venue: The Hall, The Mills Language: English and Cantonese Admission: Free, RSVP via CHAT website
		Event: Opening Performance Venue: The Hall, The Mills Artist(s): Kato Izumi and THE TETORAPOTZ Admission: Free, RSVP via CHAT website
15 March 2020 (Sunday)	3:30-4:00pm	Event: CHAT with Artist: Bi Rongrong Venue: CHAT Gallery 1 Artist(s): Bi Rongrong Language: Putonghua with simultaneous interpretation in English Admission: 15, Free, RSVP via CHAT website
19 March 2020 (Thursday)	11:30am- 12:30pm	Event: Kawita Vatanajyankur's Performance <i>Knit</i> Venue: The Hall, The Mills Admission: Free
5 April 2020	4:00-5:00pm	Event: CHAT with Artist: Samson Young Venue: CHAT Lounge Artist(s): Samson Young Guest: Eliza Li, Cantonese opera performer Language: Cantonese Admission: 40, Free, RSVP via CHAT website
To be announced	To be announced	Event: Body as Tools Workshop Venue: To be announced Artist(s): Kawita Vatanajyankur Language: English and Cantonese Admission: To be announced

## APPENDIX 2: About Artists

### **Bi Rongrong**

Born in 1982 in Ningbo and now living and working in Shanghai, Bi Rongrong has collected ornamental patterns of architectures in the cities where she visited and has applied them to textiles, paintings, animations and immersive installations. In her works, the applied patterns lose the original context and appear as pure abstract forms. In doing so, Bi transforms the space into pictorial landscape.

After completing an MA in Chinese Traditional Landscape Painting at Sichuan University, she studied for an MA at the Painting Department of the Frank Mohr Institute in the Netherlands. Her recent solo exhibitions include *Wave* at Shanghai Museum of Glass, China (2017); *Pattern XI-∞* at A Thousand Plateaus Art Space in Chengdu, China (2019) and she has also participated in public art projects in and outside China.

### **Ham Kyungah**

Born in 1966 and currently based in Seoul, Ham Kyungah has delved into the subject of power structure and its distorted, imbalanced aspects in reality through her embroidery paintings, installation, video and performance. Most of her works require a complex, lengthy process including research, seeking right collaborators, and gaining trust from them for taking risks to embody her idea. Whilst highlighting latent political manipulations and realities in mundane things around us, Ham's poignant observation is intricately interweaved with her examination of contemporary art's constantly evolving expressive means.

Her works have been exhibited in solo shows including Carlier Gebauer in Berlin, Germany (2017) and in Madrid, Spain (2019); Pace Gallery in Hong Kong (2019) and selected to international biennales and triennales such as the Singapore Biennale (2011); the Liverpool Biennial (2012); the Busan Biennale (2012); the Guangzhou Triennial (2015) and Taipei Biennial (2016). She was the recipient of art prizes, including Asia Pacific Breweries Signature Art Prize Exhibition in Singapore Art Museum, Singapore (2011) and Artists of the Year 2016 by National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Seoul.

### **Kato Izumi**

Born in 1969 in Shimane, Japan, Kato Izumi currently lives and works in Tokyo and Hong Kong. Known for his paintings of enigmatic creature-like figures, Kato has deployed diverse mediums such as wood, soft vinyl, stones and fabrics to push the limit of conventional pictorial form as well as to depict the boundary between human and nature. In 2018, he formed a rock band called THE TETORAPOTZ with 4 other Japanese artists and has performed and conducted workshops.

Kato's works have been invited in major art museums and international exhibitions, including A4 Contemporary Arts Center in Chengdu, China (2012); 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art in Kanazawa, Japan (2013); Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo, Japan (2014); Centre Pompidou-Metz, France (2017); Red Brick Art Museum in Beijing, China (2018) and the Venice Biennale (2017).

### **Byron Kim**

Born in La Jolla, California in 1961 and currently living and working in New York, Byron Kim has been known for his series of conceptual minimal paintings such as *Synecdoche* which consists of monochrome paintings of human skin colour and *Sunday Paintings*, a series of paintings of the sky executed every Sunday since 2001. Based on his observation of the details in everyday surroundings, his paintings are suspended in-between the figurative and the abstract.

He has participated in exhibitions hosted by the New Museum of Contemporary Art in New York, USA (2013); the Museum of Contemporary Art in San Diego, USA (2015); and the



Whitney Museum of American Art in New York, USA (2017) and invited by the Sharjah Biennial (2015) and the Gwangju Biennale (2018). His works are included in the collections of the Art Institute of Chicago, the Berkeley Art Museum, the Brooklyn Museum, the Hirshhorn Museum, the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, the National Gallery of Art, the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, and the Whitney Museum of American Art. He received the Robert De Niro Sr. Prize in 2019.

### **David Medalla**

Born in Manila in 1942, David Medalla moved to New York at the age of 14. After studying Greek philosophy and ancient Greek drama at Columbia University, he began to commit in art making. Throughout his life, Medalla constantly moved and worked from city to city including Berlin, Edinburgh, New York, London and Paris. His work ranges from poetry to sculpture, kinetic art, painting, installation and performance. In 1994 he founded the Mondrian Fan Club in New York with Adam Nankervis. Embracing unexpected changes and consequences, Medalla's works capture ephemeral states of things.

He was invited to numerous important exhibitions and biennales including *Live in Your Head: When Attitudes Become Forms* curated by Harald Szeemann at the Kunsthalle Bern in Switzerland (1969); DOCUMENTA 5 in Kassel, Germany (1972); the 2nd Johannesburg Biennale, with Adam Nankervis, the Mondrian Fan Club (1998); Performa 07 in New York, USA (2007); the 16th Sydney Biennial in Sydney, Australia (2008); the 9th Mercosul Biennial in Porto Alegre in Brazil (2013); the 8th Asian Pacific Triennale in Brisbane, Australia (2015) and The 57th Venice Biennale (2017). In 2016, he was shortlisted for the inaugural Hepworth Prize for Sculpture.

### **Kawita Vatanajyankur**

Born in 1987 and currently living in Bangkok, Kawita Vatanajyankur's works consist of performance and video works that represent her interest in the exploitation of labour in industries and consumerism. In her performance pieces, she uses her body as mechanical tools to evoke repetitive movements which rendered them machine-like. Her colourful video works which employ visual codes of commercial advertisement ironically present the covered realities of labourers' severe conditions which are invisible when their products are in store. Since her graduation of the BA, Fine Art from RMIT University in Melbourne, Australia, her performances and video works have been shown in multiple cities such as New York, Sydney, Taipei and Tokyo. In 2018, she participated the inaugural edition of Bangkok Art Biennale, Thailand. Her works are in collection of Singapore Art Museum; Dunedin Public Art Gallery in New Zealand; MAIIAM Contemporary Art Museum in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

### **Samson Young**

Born and living in Hong Kong, multi-disciplinary artist Samson Young was trained as a composer and graduated with a PhD in Music Composition from Princeton University in 2013. With an interest in the social, cultural and political dynamics of sound, Young investigates recurring topics related to identity, war and literature through cross-disciplinary works. He represented Hong Kong in a solo project at the Hong Kong Pavilion of the 57th Venice Biennale in 2017 and his works were presented in Performa 19, New York (2019); Talbot Rice Gallery, Edinburgh (2019); SMART Museum, Chicago (2019); De Appel, Amsterdam (2018/19); Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York in USA (2018); National Museum of Art in Osaka, Japan (2018); M+ Pavilion, Hong Kong (2018); Centre for Contemporary Chinese Art in Manchester (2017); National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Seoul, South Korea (2017); DOCUMENTA 14: documenta radio, Kassel (2017) and Kunsthalle Düsseldorf (2016/17) among others. His works are held in the collections of Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; M+ Museum, Hong Kong; Mori Art Museum, Japan and the Israel Museum, Jerusalem.