

22 June 2021

Press Release

CHAT launches Summer Programme 2021

Yee I-Lann: Until We Hug Again

First solo exhibition of renowned Malaysia artist Yee I-Lann in Hong Kong



Yee I-Lann and collaborator Kak Roziah from Pulau Omdal; Courtesy of the artist

(Hong Kong 22 June, 2021) CHAT (Centre for Heritage, Arts and Textile) will host *Yee I-Lann: Until We Hug Again*, the first solo exhibition in Hong Kong by Yee I-Lann, an internationally acclaimed contemporary artist from Kota Kinabalu, the State of Sabah, Malaysia. Welcoming visitors from 1 September to 7 November, 2021, the exhibition showcases the resilient spirit of people in Sabah through new commissioned and existing works, and offers open stage performative experiences and a myriad of interactive and co-learning programmes. The exhibition also shows the common thread between Hong Kong and Malaysia in term of colonial impact over local culture and lifestyles.

Yee I-Lann's communal artistic practice engages history with the present

Born and currently lives and works in Kota Kinabalu, Yee creates works which respond to the modern history of the Malay Archipelago and its colonial past and postcolonial present. Yee established her artistic career through digitally manipulating images from found photographs and historical archives, and she has been

disentangling historical narratives from a single perspective, presenting complex cultural identities manifested throughout the geopolitical history of Southeast Asia.

A critical examiner of image production and material nature, Yee carefully chooses materials and techniques for her works. Echoing the history of CHAT's former site as a cotton-spinning mill, Yee's past and recent works emphasising the significance of textiles will be showcased, not only as a medium used in active response to the colonial history of the Malay Archipelago, but also as a methodology to collectively represent the region's complex multi-ethnic cultural identity and heritage.

More recently, her works and artistic practices turns to collaborations with indigenous Sabah communities including the Dusun/Murut land people and the Bajau Laut/Sama Dilaut sea people. Through the communal weaving of *tikar* (woven mat), a traditional, everyday object with diverse functions as well as cultural significance, Yee aims to reconnect herself with these communities, exploring alternative forms of circular economy to revitalise and sustain local skills and knowledge.

Newly commissioned work inspired by classic Cantopop

At CHAT's gallery, visitors will especially counter a newly commissioned work of woven mat with rows of text. Comprised of lyrics from iconic Cantonese popular songs, the new *tikar* work gestures at the transcultural influence between Hong Kong and Malaysia beyond their shared history of colonisation and its subsequent impact over local culture and lifestyles. The work further asks visitors to consider the issue of dominant homogenising culture compared with the shared experience between inhabitants of a common cultural space.

Open call to engage local talents to perform at installation at The Hall

Between 1 September to 17 October of this year, CHAT will also exhibit a large-scale installation at The Hall of The Mills, title Special Display: CHAT at The Mills. Two large handwoven *tikar* will suspend from the ceiling, another, titled *Tikar Emoji*, will be installed on the ground as a stage that encourages visitors' interaction. A colourful ribbon-like work extends between the two hanging *tikar*, connecting artworks in the air and on the ground. During the exhibition period, we will invite local art and cultural groups and individuals to perform on the work and organise open calls to celebrate the multifaceted talents in the city.

Takahashi Mizuki, Executive Director and Chief Curator of CHAT, and the curator of the exhibition, says: 'Balancing between the socio-political of grand historical narratives and the minute triumphs of the personal and communal, this exhibition aims to present the resilience of art through creating solidarity between people and communities through Yee's artistic journey.'

The permanent display *Welcome to the Spinning Factory!* remains open to the public during the exhibition period. From this season onwards, visitors are invited to take part in the various activities such as weaving and wearable-art-making at the workstations located in the gallery.

Exhibition Details:

Title: Yee I-Lann: Until We Hug Again
Date: 1 September – 7 November 2021
Opening Hours: 11:00am-7:00pm (Closed on Tuesdays)
Venue: CHAT, The Mills, 45 Pak Tin Par Street, Tsuen Wan, Hong Kong

Special Display: CHAT at The Mills Details:

Date: 1 September – 17 October 2021
Opening Hours: 11:00am-7:00pm
Venue: The Hall, The Mills, 45 Pak Tin Par Street, Tsuen Wan, Hong Kong

Media Preview Details:

Date: 31 August 2021 (Tuesday)
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
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Please visit [this link](#) to download high resolution photos.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:**About CHAT**

CHAT (Centre for Heritage, Arts and Textile) is an art centre located at 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 and heritage.

General Enquiries:

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APPENDIX 1: CHAT Summer Programme 2021 Schedule

EVENT DETAILS

Date	Time	Event Details
To be announced	To be announced	<p>Event: Opening Performance on Hong Kong Fisherfolk's Ballads on Land</p> <p>Venue: The Hall, The Mills</p> <p>Language: Cantonese</p> <p>Collaborator: Lai Tai Kam, South China Research Centre of HKUST</p> <p>Admission: Free, walk-in</p> <p>Description: Musical performance featuring local fisherfolk songs</p>
15 August – 26 September 2021	To be announced	<p>Event: Come Closer Open Stage @ <i>Tikar Emoji</i></p> <p>Venue: The Hall, The Mills</p> <p>Language: Cantonese and English</p> <p>Admission: Free, walk-in</p> <p>Description: Series of performative experiences featuring local talents at the Special Display: CHAT at The Mills</p>
August – September 2021	To be announced	<p>Event: CHAT Meets</p> <p>Venue: Zoom</p> <p>Language: English</p> <p>Description: A series of talks inviting curators, artists and academics to contextualise Yee I-Lann's works from multiple perspectives</p>
11 September & 3 October (Saturday and Sunday)	2:30-4:00pm	<p>Event: Dye with CHAT Homemade Indigo</p> <p>Venue: CHAT Studio</p> <p>Language: Cantonese</p> <p>Collaborator: Makie Chang (Makie Mori)</p> <p>Admission: 10, HK\$300, RSVP via CHAT website</p> <p>Description: Participants will dye a cross body bag with indigo locally produced by CHAT</p>
18 September 2021 (Saturday)	3:00-6:00pm	<p>Event: Botanical Eco-Printing</p> <p>Venue: CHAT Studio</p> <p>Artist: Beatrix Pang</p> <p>Language: Cantonese and English</p> <p>Admission: 8, HK\$180, RSVP via CHAT website</p> <p>Description: Participants will dye and print with local plants</p>
23 October 2021 (Saturday)	3:00-6:00pm	<p>Event: Wax Resist Dyeing</p> <p>Venue: CHAT Studio</p> <p>Artist: Benjamin Hao</p> <p>Language: Cantonese and English</p> <p>Admission: 8, HK\$230, RSVP via CHAT website</p> <p>Description: Participants will wax-resist dye a <i>furoshiki</i> fabric</p>

APPENDIX 2: About Yee I-Lann



Courtesy of the artist

art pieces with indigenous materials and techniques. At the same time, she serves as a board member for Forever Sabah and Tamparuli Living Arts Center (TaLAC), non-profit organisations established for Sabah's nature conservation and sustainability efforts as well as the preservation and promotion of cultural activities.

Born and currently lives and works in Kota Kinabalu in the Malaysian Borneo state of Sabah, Yee I-Lann has been involved in various cultural sectors including film industries, the art academy and the music scene in Kuala Lumpur after completing her studies of visual art in Adelaide, Australia. Since 2017, Yee has lived and worked in her homeland of Kota Kinabalu and started working in collaboration with sea-based and mountain-based communities to create

Known for her photo-imagery-based practices, Yee has been addressing the modern history of the Malay Archipelago and its colonial past and postcolonial present. Interrogating the nature of photographic imagery, which often subconsciously capture power structures such as hegemony, hierarchy and gender inequality embedded in societies while preserving them as memory or documentation, Yee has been disentangling historical narrative from a single perspective, presenting complex cultural identities and socio-political matters formed by multiple ethnicities throughout the geopolitical history of Southeast Asia.

Her works are included in the collections of prominent international art institutions including Minneapolis Institute of Art, Minneapolis, USA; Mori Art Museum, Tokyo, Japan; National Art Gallery of Australia, Canberra, Australia; Singapore Art Museum, Singapore; National Art Gallery, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; UBS Art Collection, London, UK and the Kadist Foundation, Paris, France.

APPENDIX 3: Featured Artworks



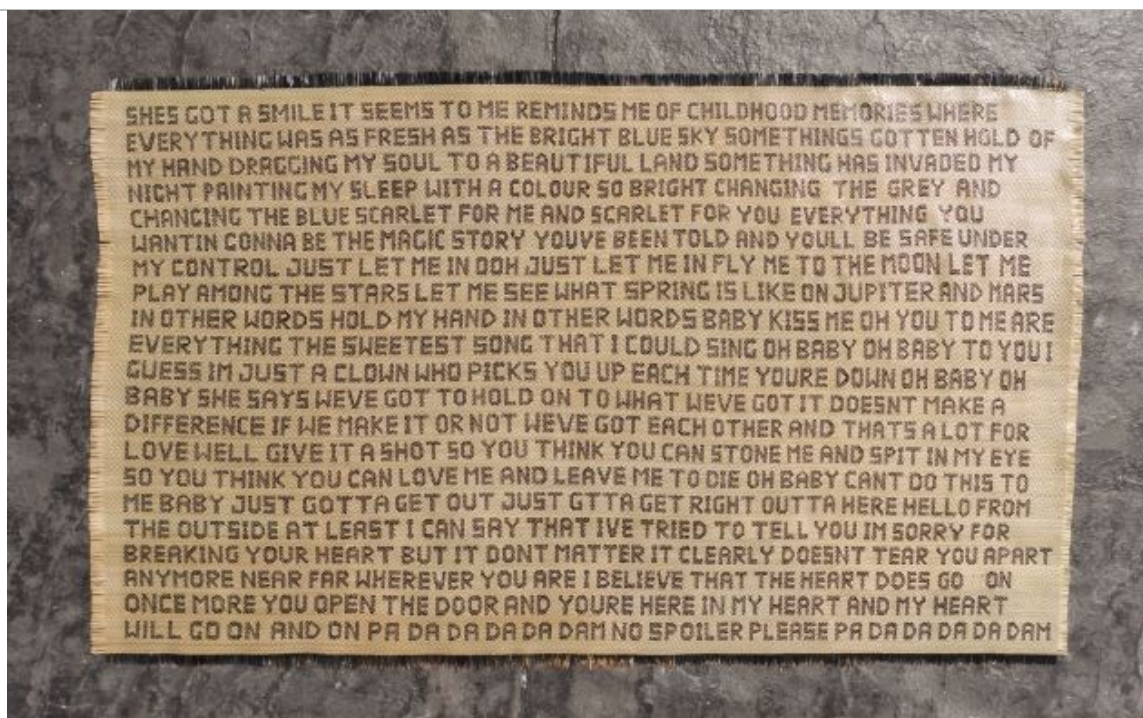
Yee I-Lann, *The Orang Besar Series: Empires of Privateers and Their Glorious Ventures*, 2010
Image courtesy: The artist and Mind Set Art Center, Taipei



Yee I-Lann, with weaving by Kak Sanah, Kak Kinnohung, Kak Budi, Kak Kuoh, Kak Turuh, Makcik Lokkop, Abang Barahim, Abang Tularan, Adik Darwisa, Adik Alisya, Kak Daiyan, Adik Dayang, Adik Tasya, Adik Dela, Adik Enidah, Adik Norsaida, Makcik Bobog, Kak Roziah, Abang Latip, *Tikar/Meja* (Edition 2/2), 2020 (Detail)
Courtesy of the artist



Yee I-Lann with weaving by Julitah Kulinting, S. Narty Raitom, Julia Ginasius, Hollyvia Kimin, *Mansau Ansau (to walk and walk without knowing where you are headed)*, 2021
Courtesy of the artist



Yee I-Lann with weaving by Lili Naming, Siat Yanau, Shahrizan Bin Juin, Juraen Bin, Sapirin, S. Narty Raitom, *hello from the outside*, 2019
Courtesy of the artist



Yee I-Lann, with weaving by Lili Naming, Siat Yanau, Shahrizan Bin Juin; choreography & dancers: Tagaps Dance Theatre; cinematography: Huntwo Studios, *PANGKIS*, 2021 (Video still)
Image courtesy: Huntwo Studios