

8 September 2021

Press Release

CHAT cultivates community through Seed to Textile and residency programme



Cultivating *indigofera tinctoria* for Seed to Textile project

(Hong Kong 8 September, 2021) CHAT (Centre for Heritage, Arts and Textile) has successfully launched *Yee I-Lann: Until We Hug Again*, the first solo exhibition in Hong Kong by internationally acclaimed contemporary artist Yee I-Lann from Sabah, Malaysia. In addition to the many happenings over the summer period, CHAT is also pleased to launch two initiatives to engage the public and activate discussion on the textile industry.

Seed to Textile: Artistic Explorations of Indigo with Local Communities

This season, CHAT proudly presents Seed to Textile, a year-long community project that explores textile manufacturing in all stages of production through the cultivation and processing of indigo with local participants. Taking place from 1 September to 7 November, 2021 in tandem with CHAT's Summer Programme, Seed to Textile launches an exhibition showcasing the artistic explorations of indigo by two local artists, Benjamin Hao and Beatrix Pang, and invites public participation through a series of indigo-related workshops.

The origins of the project traces back to Summer Programme 2019, when collaborators from Mysore, India introduced to CHAT an ecosystem of operation, from growing, producing to selling their products of indigo-dyed cotton garments to local farmers and dyers. This inspired CHAT to similarly embark on an indigo journey. In Spring Programme 2020, participating artist Kato Izumi incorporated true indigo (*Indigofera tinctoria*) into his commissioned work at The Park of The Mills, which was harvested and made into CHAT's first locally produced jar of indigo pigment.

Since then, CHAT partnered with The Mills and local farming education hub Sangwood – Kids Club to further cultivate the plant, recruiting like-minded learners (also known as ‘Seeders’) to experiment together and explore artistic interpretations of the relationship between human and nature. After a year of labour and experimentation, CHAT presents the results through the exhibition *Seed to Textile* and public engagement workshops with the locally grown and processed indigo dye, from eco-printing, wax resist dyeing and more.

A brand-new CHAT Originals product, the Seed to Textile: Indigo bag, is also launched as a result of the project. Made with CHAT’s homemade indigo with graphic designs by local designer UUendy Lau, this product is the culmination of the efforts of many, and aligns with the goal of the Seed to Textile project to gather and localise knowledge from different places and disciplines with the aim to foster an ecologically minded community.

Seed to Textile will occur simultaneously with The Mills’s *Colours of the Earth* exhibition, which is a part of the In Time Of programme.

Artist-in-Residence 2021: Research-Based Artist & Writer Ho Rui An

CHAT welcomes artist and writer Ho Rui An as its 2021 Artist-in-Residence. Based in Singapore and Berlin, Ho works at the intersections of contemporary art, cinema, performance and theory across the mediums of lecture, essay and film.

During his residency in Hong Kong, he will be examining the history of the development of the textile industry and its many afterlives through interactions with local textile workers. His research on the shifting relations between labour, capital and technology within the Greater China region will culminate in a media work to be debuted next year.

Since launching in December 2015, CHAT’s Artist-in-Residency programme encourages artists to achieve artistic development through collaborations with locals, artist talks and workshops, fostering cross-cultural exchanges of ideas and innovations. By drawing inspirations Hong Kong’s textile history and culture, artists are invited to create artworks, which will be presented in exhibitions hosted by CHAT and other international art institutions.

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

Title: Seed to Textile
Date: 1 September – 7 November 2021
Opening Hours: 11:00am-7:00pm (Closed on Tuesdays)
Venue: CHAT Lounge, The Mills, 45 Pak Tin Par Street, Tsuen Wan, Hong Kong

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

SEED TO TEXTILE EVENTS

Category	Date	Time	Event Details
Workshop	11 September & 3 October 2021 (Saturday and Sunday)	4:00- 5:30pm	Event: Dip-and-Dye Experience Venue: The Deck, The Mills Language: Cantonese Admission: HK\$50, RSVP via CHAT website Description: Participants will upcycle an old garment with indigo dye
Workshop	11 September & 3 October 2021 (Saturday and Sunday)	2:30- 4:00pm	Event: Dye with CHAT Homemade Indigo Venue: CHAT Studio Collaborator: Makie Chang Language: Cantonese Admission: HK\$320, RSVP via CHAT website Description: Participants will make their own CHAT Originals Seed to Textile: Indigo bag
Workshop	18 September 2021 (Saturday)	3:00- 6:00pm	Event: Botanical Eco-Printing Venue: CHAT Studio Artist: Beatrix Pang Language: Cantonese and English Admission: HK\$180, RSVP via CHAT website Description: Participants will dye and print with local plants
Workshop	23 October 2021 (Saturday)	3:00- 6:00pm	Event: Wax Resist Dyeing Venue: CHAT Studio Artist: Benjamin Hao Language: Cantonese and English Admission: HK\$230, RSVP via CHAT website Description: Participants will wax-resist dye <i>furoshiki</i> fabric

SEASONAL EVENTS

Category	Date	Time	Event Details
Performance	4 September – 16 October 2021 (Saturdays and Sundays)	3:00- 5:00pm	Event: Come Closer Open Stage @ <i>Tikar Emoji</i> Venue: The Hall, The Mills Language: Cantonese and English Admission: Free, walk-in Description: Series of performative experiences featuring local talents at the Special Display: CHAT at The Mills
Talk	8 September – 2 October 2021	Varied	Event: CHAT Meets Venue: Zoom Language: English Admission: Free, RSVP via CHAT website Description: A series of talks inviting curators, artists and academics to contextualise Yee I-Lann's works from multiple perspectives

Workshop	18 September & 2 October	2:30- 4:30pm	Event: Venue: Language: Admission: Description:	Weave-Your-Bag Workshop CHAT Lab Cantonese with informal English interpretation HK\$200, RSVP via CHAT website Participants will learn basic weaving skills to make a woven bag
Tour	25 September & 17 October 2021 (Saturday and Sunday)	4:00- 5:15pm	Event: Venue: Curator: Language: Admission:	Curator Tour of <i>Yee I-Lann: Until We Hug Again</i> CHAT Takahashi Mizuki English Free with HK\$50 deposit, RSVP via CHAT website

APPENDIX 2: Seed to Textile



Cultivation of *Indigofera tinctoria*
Image courtesy: Sangwood – Kids Club



CHAT team and Seeders checking out the indigo plants at The Deck, The Mills
Image courtesy: CHAT (Centre for Heritage, Arts and Textile), Hong Kong



Indigofera tinctoria grows fast in spring and summer seasons, taken in June 2021
Image courtesy: CHAT (Centre for Heritage, Arts and Textile), Hong Kong



First step of pigment extraction: Indigo leaves are submerged in water to undergo fermentation until 'mermaid water' (greenish-blue) is achieved
Image courtesy: CHAT (Centre for Heritage, Arts and Textile), Hong Kong



Experimenting with processes of indigo dye extraction
Image courtesy: Elizabeth Briel



Indigo paste yielded through rounds of trial and error from September 2020 to May 2021
Image courtesy: CHAT (Centre for Heritage, Arts and Textile), Hong Kong



Seed to Textile: Indigo bag
Image courtesy: CHAT (Centre for Heritage, Arts and Textile), Hong Kong

APPENDIX 3: About Artists

SEED TO TEXTILE

Hao Lap Yan Benjamin

Hao Lap Yan Benjamin was born and is currently based in Hong Kong. He considers himself as an interdisciplinary artist who spends half of his time in urban Hong Kong and half in rural. Hao received his BFA from RMIT and Hong Kong Art School in 2011 and gained his interdisciplinary art MFA from University of Hartford in 2018. His practice examines the relationships between human beings, nature and society, prompting reflections and reimagination to allow for diverse narratives and understanding of the world. His works and projects have been exhibited and taken place in gallery spaces, communities and outdoors in Hong Kong, Mainland China, Macedonia, Iceland and USA.



Beatrix Pang

Beatrix Pang is a visual artist and an independent publisher whose early practice revolved around photography, lens-based medium and performance. Inspired by image reproduction in photography, they founded Small Tune Press which publishes and produces artists' books and zines for Hong Kong art and cultural creatives. In addition, they are active in planning and conducting various cultural exchanges and educational programmes. In recent years, Pang founded the zine collective ZINE COOP to promote Hong Kong zine culture, and Queer Reads Library, a reading platform to create space for multi-gendered inclusivity and visibility.



ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE

Ho Rui An

Based in Singapore and Berlin, Ho Rui An is an artist and writer working in the intersections of contemporary art, cinema, performance and theory. Working primarily across the mediums of lecture, essay and film, he probes into the ways by which images are produced, circulate and disappear within contexts of globalism and governance. He has presented projects at the Bangkok Art Biennale (2020), Musée du quai Branly – Jacques Chirac, Paris (2020), Asian Art Biennial (2019), Gwangju Biennale (2018), Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven (2018), Jakarta Biennale (2017), Sharjah Biennial (2017), Haus de Kulturen der Welt, Berlin (2017), NTU Centre for Contemporary Art Singapore (2017), Para Site, Hong Kong (2015) and Kochi-Muziris Biennale (2014). In 2019, he was awarded the International Film Critics' (FIPRESCI) Prize at the International Short Film Festival Oberhausen, Germany. In 2018, he was a fellow of the DAAD Berliner Künstlerprogramm.



Image courtesy: Ho Rui An

During his residency, he will be researching the shifting relations between labour, capital and technology by examining a hundred-year history of the development of the textile industry and its many afterlives within the Greater China region.