

15 September 2022

Press Release

CHAT celebrates the beauty of blue in Winter Programme 2022 First-ever comprehensive show of Japanese natural indigo works by BUAISOU



Image courtesy: BUAISOU; Photo: Nishimoto Kyoko

(Hong Kong 15 September, 2022) CHAT (Centre for Heritage, Arts and Textile) is proud to present a series of exhibitions and displays under its Winter Programme 2022, respectively titled ***Absolute Blue: BUAISOU Works with Japanese Natural Indigo***, ***Seed to Textile***, and ***Patternways: Visualising Hong Kong in Transition***. ***Absolute Blue*** is the first comprehensive exhibition to introduce the works by BUAISOU, a young craft collective working with Japanese natural indigo. The exhibition will feature immersive installations of BUAISOU's indigo works and introduce their unique farm-to-closet practices and innovative techniques through a display of their dyed works, tools and recreated studio space.

Infusing Traditional Japanese Craftsmanship with Contemporary Aesthetic

Based in Tokushima, Japan's largest producer of traditional indigo dye, BUAISOU pursues the craft of Japanese natural indigo dye through traditional fermentation methods. From cultivating, processing and fermenting indigo, to dyeing, most of their production procedures are performed manually using traditional methods.

While upholding the revered traditions of the centuries-old craft, BUAISOU has pushed the boundaries of Japanese natural indigo dyeing beyond textiles to furniture items like stools. Effectively transforming this time-honoured craft, BUAISOU communicates with contemporary audiences through diverse collaborations with international brands and designers from Jimmy Choo, Tory Burch, NIKE, to Artek and more. In particular, Hong Kong audiences will be able to view their cross-industry collaborative works with Jimmy Choo and NIKE in person.

Sustainability as the Backbone of Winter Programme

This exhibition will highlight BUAISOU's unique working model and ethical production. The remarkable shades of BUAISOU indigo blue is achieved through natural fermentation processes, without the use of industrial chemicals. Material recycling is a key feature of their practice from their tools, which are customised and handmade, to the studio they work in.

Aside from our seasonal programme exhibition, CHAT will be showcasing the research and artistic results of our long-running programme Seed to Textiles. With its roots in 2019, the **Seed to Textile** project brings together an environmentally conscious community to cultivate and dye with locally grown indigo. Visitors to the Winter Programme will be able to view the results of the collaborative artistic explorations by Breakthrough Art Studio, Eastman Cheng, Elizabeth Briel and Hao Lap Yan Benjamin, Ma Wing Man, our community partners and the general public.

CHAT, With, For and By the Community

As with many of CHAT's programmes, the general public are invited to personally take part in the exhibition and the many affiliated workshops of the programme. A large-scale installation of indigo-dyed fabrics will transform The Hall of The Mills and immerse visitors into a lush textile landscape with swaths of blue-green fabrics spanning across the pillars. In CHAT's gallery on the second floor, not only will visitors see a 1:1 recreation of the design studio, a visually striking work consisting of more than 70 indigo-dyed ropes also awaits their interaction. A range of hands-on workshops will be hosted throughout the season for visitors to take part in the transformative action of indigo dyeing.

From 9 October, the thematic display at The D. H. Chen Foundation Gallery will be renewed to '**Patternways: Visualising Hong Kong in Transition**'. Featuring 4 patterns found in Hong Kong, from department store wrapping paper, transnational silks, designer knits, to the lesser known but vibrant and historically rich wax print fabrics, the display spotlights patterns in their design and context. Through an in-depth look into this resonating application of textile, the display will guide audiences through the myriad patterns found in daily life. Bruce Li, the curator of the exhibition, says, 'The exhibition display investigates each pattern as a designed product and the way they are circulated, and in the process, they connect Hong Kong with mainland China, Japan, the United Kingdom, the United States, all the way to Ghana and Nigeria. By connecting us with other places, patterns reveal Hong Kong as a city constantly open to and defined by change.'

Takahashi Mizuki, Executive Director and Chief Curator of CHAT, says, 'I am delighted to showcase BUAISOU's inspiring and innovative contemporary Japanese indigo works to Hong Kong audiences. Through this exhibition, we invite visitors to reflect on the value of labour woven into the familiar textiles we use daily. In Seed to Textile, we unveil the outcomes of co-creation by Hong Kong artists and communities, made throughout CHAT's past summer season. The annual changeover of The D. H. Chen Foundation Gallery display will present undiscovered stories of textiles found in Hong Kong. I am confident that this exciting set of exhibitions will definitely stimulate our visitors' curiosity!'

Exhibitions Details:

Title: Absolute Blue: BUAISOU Works with Japanese Natural Indigo
 Date: 29 October 2022 – 5 February 2023
 Opening Hours: 11:00am-7:00pm (Closed on Tuesdays)
 Venue: CHAT, The Mills, 45 Pak Tin Par Street, Tsuen Wan, Hong Kong

Title: Special Display: CHAT at The Mills
 Date: 29 October – 27 November 2022
 Opening Hours: 10:00am-10:00pm
 Venue: The Hall, The Mills, 45 Pak Tin Par Street, Tsuen Wan, Hong Kong

Title: Seed to Textile
 Date: 29 October 2022 – 5 February 2023
 Opening Hours: 11:00am-7:00pm (Closed on Tuesdays)
 Venue: CHAT, The Mills, 45 Pak Tin Par Street, Tsuen Wan, Hong Kong

Title: 'Patternways: Visualising Hong Kong in Transition'
 Opening Date: 9 October 2022 (On display until end of 2023)
 Opening Hours: 11:00am-7:00pm (Closed on Tuesdays)
 Venue: CHAT, The Mills, 45 Pak Tin Par Street, Tsuen Wan, Hong Kong

Media Preview Details:

Date: 28 Oct 2022 (Friday)
 Time: 2:00-4:00pm (Registration at 1:45pm)
 Venue: CHAT, The Mills, 45 Pak Tin Par Street, Tsuen Wan, Hong Kong
 RSVP: Mandy Chan | mandy@chancecomm.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 a community museum 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 Winter Programme 2022 Schedule

EVENT DETAILS

Category	Date	Time	Event Details
Tour	30 October 2022 (Sunday)	3:00-4:15pm	<p>Event: Curator Tour of <i>Absolute Blue: BUAISOU Works with Japanese Natural Indigo</i></p> <p>Venue: CHAT</p> <p>Language: English with Cantonese interpretation</p> <p>Curators: Takahashi Mizuki</p> <p>Admission: Free with HK\$50 deposit, RSVP via mill6chat.org</p> <p>Description: Curators to share insights on the exhibition and highlighted works</p>
Workshop	19 November 2022 (Saturday)	3:00-5:00pm	<p>Event: Story of Blue: Family Creative Reading Workshop</p> <p>Venue: CHAT Lounge</p> <p>Language: Cantonese</p> <p>Collaborator: Rolling Books</p> <p>Admission: HK\$280, RSVP via mill6chat.org</p> <p>Description: Through storytelling and artistic creation, families will learn about indigo dyeing and the relationship between nature and human</p>
Workshop	19 November 2022 (Saturday)	2:00-6:00pm	<p>Event: Make Your Own Xmas Gift: Upcycled Bucket Hat</p> <p>Venue: CHAT Lab</p> <p>Language: English & Cantonese</p> <p>Admission: HK\$480, RSVP via mill6chat.org</p> <p>Description: Upcycle old denim jeans to make a reversible bucket hat</p>
Workshop	10 December 2022 (Saturday)	3:00-5:00pm	<p>Event: <i>Roundabout</i> Festive Macramé Workshop</p> <p>Venue: CHAT Lab</p> <p>Language: Cantonese, with informal English interpretation</p> <p>Artist: Ma Wing Man</p> <p>Admission: HK\$280, RSVP via mill6chat.org</p> <p>Description: Create a mini Christmas tree with macramé and recycled materials</p>
Workshop	17 December 2022 (Saturday)	1:00-3:00pm & 4:00-6:00pm	<p>Event: Natural Botanical Dyes</p> <p>Venue: CHAT Lab</p> <p>Language: English & Cantonese</p> <p>Admission: HK\$150, RSVP via mill6chat.org</p> <p>Description: Turn food waste into natural dye and dye old garments using CHAT locally grown indigo</p>

Workshop	18 September 2022 (Sunday) 5 November 2022 (Saturday) 21 January 2023 (Saturday)	2:00-6:00pm	Event: Make Your Own Skirt in Marimekko Fabric Venue: CHAT Lab Language: English & Cantonese Admission: HK\$780, RSVP via mill6chat.org Description: Make a versatile skirt in iconic Marimekko fabric
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APPENDIX 2: About BUAISOU



Image courtesy: BUAISOU; Photo: Nishimoto Kyoko

BUAISOU was founded in 2015 in Kamiita-cho, Tokushima prefecture, a place known for traditional Japanese indigo dye. From farming *ai* (Japanese natural indigo), to fermenting *sukumo* (dye) and dyeing, BUAISOU have conducted diverse practices using Japanese natural indigo dye, dyeing not only yarn and fabric but also furniture with hard materials. From the very beginning of their establishment, they have been making their original workers' clothing line. In 2018, they were able to realise their dream of making hand-dyed indigo jeans.

APPENDIX 3: Reference Images



BUAISOU's indigo farm in Tokushima
Image courtesy: BUAISOU
Photo: Nishimoto Kyoko



BUAISOU working on indigo dyeing
Image courtesy: BUAISOU
Photo: Nishimoto Kyoko



Blue colour grading by BUAISOU
Image courtesy: BUAISOU
Photo: Nishimoto Kyoko



Holding cotton
Image courtesy: BUAISOU
Photo: Nishimoto Kyoko



BUAISOU's Jeans
Image courtesy: BUAISOU
Photo: Nishimoto Kyoko