

27 April 2023

Press Release

CHAT pays tribute to Hong Kong cultural icon Rebecca Pan Exploring heritage via contemporary lens through artist's life and career



(Hong Kong, 27 April, 2023) CHAT (Centre for Heritage, Arts and Textile) is honoured to present *With the Sun, She Quells the Night – A Tribute to Rebecca Pan*, an exhibition on the Hong Kong cultural pioneer whose career spans across entertainment, music and art, and who continues to inspire emerging talents today. Taking place from **10 June to 23 October 2023**, the exhibition was conceived in close collaboration with the artist herself to explore the defining moments of transformation in her life and career. Bringing together archive materials from images, costume, music records, news clippings and more, the exhibition examines and reimagines the iconic star through the lens of contemporary art.

Journey through Rebecca Pan's Star-Studded Life and Career

Starting with a large-scale installation suspended in mid-air at The Hall of The Mills, visitors will be greeted by lenticular photo portraits of Rebecca Pan's defining moments that capture her many transformations, from a young girl to self-assured star, impressionable entertainer to original artist. At CHAT's gallery space on the second floor, visitors will meander through exhibits that tell the story of Pan's life and career, from portraits taken in the golden era of the 1960s at the height of her career, to the revolutionary landmark project of *Pai Niang Niang* – her seminal production from 1972 which is regarded as Hong Kong's first musical in the Chinese language and which brought together the first collaboration of renowned composer Joseph Koo and lyricist James Wong.

The exhibition display and event programming also depict wider entertainment and travel cultures that shaped and were negotiated by Rebecca, including highlights of

her travels to Bangkok, Tel Aviv, Phnom Penh, Singapore, Colombo, Beirut, Rotterdam, Honolulu, Taipei and West Berlin as a cabaret singer and entertainer, as well as her role in promoting Hong Kong through her international performances and events organised by the Hong Kong Tourism Association (the predecessor to Hong Kong Tourism Board).

Beneath the Glamour: Significance of Heritage Through Contemporary Art

Beyond a retrospective, the exhibition rejuvenates the many archival materials from Pan's life through the intervention and interpretation of contemporary art. In addition to working closely with artist Enoch Cheng to shape the exhibition experience, CHAT will unveil Cheng's large-scale commissioned film installation that reimagines Pan as the legendary White Snake from her musical production *Pai Niang Niang*. Archival materials from the 1972 production will be exhibited in juxtaposition with new remixed renditions of songs from the musical. Elsewhere and throughout the exhibition, previously unseen footage of Pan's personal and professional life recorded by long-time pupil Chan Chung Ki will be displayed to animate all facets of the gleaming star. Just as Pan's visionary musical initiatives and costumes was radical for audiences in her days, so too does CHAT forge new and exciting ways to present cultural heritage to contemporary audiences.

A tribute exhibition like no other, *With the Sun, She Quells the Night* not only recounts the three decades of Pan's illustrious career but also depicts her as a multifaceted and transdisciplinary figure who is at once creative, honest, at times uncertain, but above all courageous. Considering Pan's role in bringing Hong Kong's music culture to the international stage as early as the late 1950s, she was a pivotal figure who cast an early transnational influence on the music and entertainment industry, and set the precedence for creating music that combines Chinese tunes with English lyrics in a blend of East-meets-West.

Rebecca's artistic visions resonate with the founding principles and mission of CHAT and The Mills. In her letter to the Nan Fung Group, Rebecca writes, 'Textiles are most remarkable among the various Chinese crafts. As a ground-breaking and visionary institution, The Mills brings to mind my adventurous days as a travelling singer in the 1950s and 60s, when I'd perform in *qipao* that daringly merged Chinese elements with Western silhouettes. This inventive and Hong Kong spirit was further carried on to the costume designs of my first musical, *Pai Niang Niang*.' As a transdisciplinary museum for heritage and the arts, CHAT puts into dialogue the past and present to engage visitors, in particular younger generations, with heritage through celebrating this unique cultural pioneer.

Other must-see events happening during the exhibition period include a community performative experience titled Paddle Forward: Dragon Boating with *Pai Niang Niang* to bring the works on display to life.

Wang Weiwei and **Bruce Li**, the co-curators of the exhibition, remark, '*With the Sun, She Quells the Night* turns towards Rebecca, her musical journey and works for inspiration and imagination once again: How can we navigate our circumstances with similar dynamism, grace and tenacity to become the best version of ourselves? We

hope the cross-disciplinary nature of the exhibition affords you much expansive thought, reflection and dialogue – there is yet more to hear and learn from our dearest star, Ms Rebecca Pan.’

During the preparation of the exhibition, **Rebecca Pan** continues to encourage and support the CHAT curatorial team and artists, and strives to remain in dialogue with younger generations. ‘Throughout the years, I have had the fortune to meet and become friends with many 30-year-old youngsters at the prime of their lives. Many of the curatorial team members and the audiences of CHAT are also at that wonderful stage in life. To you all, I wish for you to not think of the elderly as antiquated, unfashionable and unable to adapt. Classical music, literature, theatre and the arts from the past are things to be cultivated over time, but may be difficult to grasp at first. In this light, I welcome our coming together to forge new, innovative paths.

Exhibitions Details:

Title: With the Sun, She Quells the Night – A Tribute to Rebecca Pan
Date: 10 June – 23 October 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
Exhibition Date: 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

Private Opening Reception and Preview:

Date: 9 June 2023 (Friday)
Time: 5:00-8:00pm
(Opening Ceremony at The Hall between 5:00-5:30pm)
Venue: CHAT, The Mills, 45 Pak Tin Par Street, Tsuen Wan, Hong Kong
RSVP: By Invitation Only

Special Display: CHAT at The Mills Details

Date: 10 June – 9 July 2023
Opening Hours: 10:00am-10:00pm
Venue: The Hall, The Mills, 45 Pak Tin Par Street, Tsuen Wan, Hong Kong

Media Preview Details:

Date: 9 June 2023 (Friday)
Time: 3:30-5:00pm (Registration at 3:15pm)
Venue: CHAT, The Mills, 45 Pak Tin Par Street, Tsuen Wan, Hong Kong
Remarks: Private Opening Reception and Preview:
5:00-8:00pm
(Opening Ceremony at The Hall between 5:00-5:30pm, media members are invited)
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 on the 2/F 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 and heritage.

General Enquiries:

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RSVP for events at rsvp@mill6chat.org

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APPENDIX 1: CHAT Summer Programme 2023 Schedule

Category	Date	Time	Event Details
Talk	10 June, 1 July, 5 August, 2 September, 7 October 2023 (Saturdays)	3:00-4:00pm	Event: Curator Tour: Rebecca Pan and the World Venue: CHAT Language: English and Cantonese or Putonghua Curators: Wang Weiwei, Bruce Li Admission: HK\$50, RSVP via mill6chat.org Description: In-depth tour of exhibition led by curators
Talk	18 June 2023 (Sunday)	3:00-5:00pm	Event: Red Wine and <i>Pai Niang Niang</i> : Revisiting Rebecca Pan Venue: The D. H. Chen Foundation Gallery Language: Cantonese with simultaneous interpretation into English Speakers: Ng Chun Hung and Wong Chi Chung Admission: HK\$50, RSVP via mill6chat.org Description: Talk by scholar and cultural practitioners to discuss the artistic career and life journey of Rebecca Pan
Talk	11 June 2023 (Sunday)	5:00-6:30pm	Event: CHAT with Artist: Enoch Cheng Venue: The D. H. Chen Foundation Gallery Language: Cantonese and Putonghua with simultaneous interpretation into English Speakers: Enoch Cheng and Wang Weiwei Admission: Free, RSVP via mill6chat.org Description: Talk on conception of exhibition and commissioned video installation by Enoch Cheng
Workshop	3 June, 17 June 2023 (Saturdays)	11:00am- 1:00pm (3 June, 17 June); 3:00-5:00pm (3 June)	Event: Indigo Dip & Resist Dye Experiential Workshop Venue: CHAT Studio Language: Cantonese and English Admission: HK\$480, RSVP via mill6chat.org Description: Dyeing experience using CHAT's traditional Japanese fermentation indigo vat
Workshop	17 June, 9 September 2023 (Saturdays)	3:00-6:00pm (17 June); 11:00am- 2:00pm (9 September)	Event: Make Your Own Chinese Flower Buttons Venue: CHAT Lab Language: Cantonese and English Collaborator: Hong Kong Cheongsam Association Admission: HK\$580, RSVP via mill6chat.org Description: Workshop making a flower button accessory inspired by cheongsam and the exhibition

Workshop	24 June 2023 (Saturday)	2:00-6:00pm	Event: Venue: Language: Admission: Description:	Make Your Own Stencil: Indigo Dyeing Experience CHAT Studio Cantonese and English HK\$780, RSVP via mill6chat.org Make a stencil to be used in resist dyeing with indigo in the workshop
Workshop	8 June to 14 September 2023 (Every other Thursday)	3:00-6:00pm	Event: Venue: Language: Admission: Description:	Making Thursdays: Sew Much Fun! CHAT Lab Cantonese and English HK\$300, RSVP via mill6chat.org Open lab session to complete or start sewing projects using CHAT's facilities and expert advice

APPENDIX 2: Biographies

About Rebecca Pan

Rebecca Pan was born in Shanghai in 1930 as Pan Wan Ching, relocated to Hong Kong in 1949 and has established herself as a cross-cultural pioneer of Chinese popular music.

Known to be the first singer combining Chinese tunes with Western lyrics, Pan began her professional singing career at the age of 27, recorded her first LP within two years and has released 16 records. In 1964, Pan became the first Hong Kong singer to sign with EMI London. As the first Chinese singer to perform in Europe, North America and in the Middle East, Pan has promoted Hong Kong on numerous occasions. In 1967, Pan served as an inaugural host of the TVB programme *Enjoy Yourself Tonight*.



Image courtesy: MAN LAM

In 1972, Pan invested and performed in *Pai Niang Niang*, Hong Kong's first musical in the Chinese language adapted from the classic Chinese folklore 'The Legend of the White Snake'. Directed by Lo King Man and with music composed by Joseph Koo, the musical was a landmark performance that broke many traditions.

In recent years, Pan has been featured in the films of Wong Kar Wai, where she has assumed various roles exemplifying a woman hailing from Shanghai.

About Enoch Cheng

Artist Enoch Cheng received his MA in Creative Writing at Goldsmiths, London. His practice spans moving image, installation, curating, dance, events, theatre, writing, fashion, performance and pedagogy. His works explore the boundaries and connections between various disciplines and traditions, with recurrent themes of belonging, travel, care, memory, migration, etc. His most recent works include *TO ARRIVE* (2022, Hong Kong City Hall 60th Anniversary Performance), *Handle with Care* (2022, Museum of Arts and Design, New York)



Image courtesy: Enoch Cheng

About Chan Chung Ki

A film director based in Hong Kong and London, Chan Chung Ki graduated from the Hong Kong Polytechnic University. Chan has produced special effects and telefeatures for RTHK, Scorpio film, STAR TV, and also documentaries for AXN, Phoenix Chinese Channel, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department of Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Tourism Board. In 2013, chosen among the best emerging talents in the industry, Chan was honoured as one of five innovative directors to create a short film titled *Pupil* for Lexus and The Weinstein Company and which premiered at the Cannes Film Festival in 2013.



Image courtesy: Chan Chung Ki

APPENDIX 3: Reference Images

Please visit this [link](#) to download high resolution photos

	
<p>Image courtesy: Lo Yin Shan</p>	<p>Image courtesy: Lo Yin Shan</p>
	
<p>Rebecca Pan in the costume of the <i>Pai Niang Niang</i> (1972) musical Image courtesy: Rebecca Pan</p>	<p><i>Pan Wan Ching Sings The Four Seasons</i>, Rebecca Pan's first record released in 1960</p>