SCM | ACIM
RESEARCH

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Errant: The Kinetic Propensity of Images (Version 2), 2020
Algorithmic Video Installation
By Hector Rodriguez

Untitled (book flying and crashing), 2020
Book, Machine (Reversible Motor)
By Warren Leung

DEAN'S NOTES
ART MACHINES: PAST AND PRESENT

Art Machines Past and Present is a new exhibition that has opened at CityU's Indra and Harry Banga Gallery curated by the Dean of SCM, Richard Allen, and the former Dean, Jeffrey Shaw. It explores the extraordinary work that is being created at the intersection between art and technology here in Hong Kong, both by faculty and alumni of the School of Creative Media and the wider community of Hong Kong artists. The curators conceived the exhibition not only as an exploration and discovery of current work, much of it newly commissioned for the exhibition, but also as an occasion to contextualize contemporary machine art practice within the long history of the relationship between art and the machine since the beginning of the twentieth century.

Since artworks cannot readily be transported from abroad in this time of COVID 19, the curators evoked past practice by creating Mnemosyne or memory walls, inspired by Aby Warburg's idea of an Atlas of images that could evoke through symbolic and formal correspondences, the ineffable connections that exist between artworks across time. Four

such Mnemosynes were created. The first, Modernism and Machine Aesthetics, makes reference to the impact of the machine on everyday life in the 20th century and the response of modernist artists to it, whether they were the constructivist artist-engineers in the Soviet Union, the Dadaists of Paris rebelling against what they saw as the stifling and complacent bourgeois values, or the Purists, like French artist Fernand Léger, who saw the machine as a thing of beauty. The spirit of modernism is featured in screenings of experimental films from the 1920's entitled *The Mechanical Eye* and it haunts the remaining works in the exhibition. For example, Joseph Chan's extraordinary steam punk work of machine art, *Carnival* (2020) celebrates the beauty of machine engineering, while Warren Leung's, *Untitled* (2020) (book flying and crashing) recreates the spirit of Dadaism as a book is propelled violently by a machine against a wall.

The second Mnemosyne describes the relationship between Kinetic Art and the Rube Goldberg Machine which is staged in the first hall of the exhibition. Kinetic art is art embodying

movement and it has already been introduced to the visitor in Louis Nixon's *Rolling Barrel* (2020), which is featured in the elevators that lead to the exhibition. At the centerpiece of the first hall is Jeffrey Shaw's *The Spatial Pendulum* (1990/2020) that re-imagines a work from 1990 as a sphere that traverses 3-dimensional space in any direction the visitor chooses. This hall also features glass and 3D printed sculptures, one environmentally reactive (*Common Datum, 2020*), the other a work of kinetic sculpture (*Blood Work 2.0, 2020*), by Tobias Klein, Jane Prophet, and Pok Yin Victor Leung, and a highly imaginative work by Tomas Laurenzo entitled *Be Water* (2020), in which machine learning software reads the heartbeats of visitors which are then converted into ripples on stretched nylon surface that resembles water. These kinetic works are surrounded by examples of Rube Goldberg Machines drawn from popular movies and the internet. Rube Goldberg was a popular cartoonist who, alongside Edward Heath Robinson in the UK, created fantastical devices to do improbable things. The point of this hall is to stage a dialogue between the modernist and popular practices of kinetic art, which are perceived to form part of a common tradition.

The third Mnemosyne combines computer installation art with computer graphics and animation and charts the emergence of computer art in collaborations between scientists and engineers in the 1960s. This leads us into the central hall of the exhibition which features two language-based generative installations, one by Ip Yuk Yiu entitled *False Words* (2019), and another by Daniel Howe entitled *Radical of the Vertical Heart* (2020), together with a robotic light painting installation by Miu Ling Lam and Kaho Albert Yu entitled *Dis/integration* (2020). This hall also stages a number of interactive artworks, including a facial recognition work by Bryan Chung entitled *iFaceDQ* (2020); Jeffrey Shaw's AR work *Safe House*, which meditates on home isolation under COVID 19; Alvaro Cassinelli and Can Liu's, *Viva Voce* (2020), an extraordinarily innovative multiple-agent work in which the words participants speak spill onto a table top where, interacting with other words, they take on a life of their own; and Maurice Benayoun's *Hong Kong Escape Views: Panoptical Memories* (2020), a VR installation that invites the visitor to meditate upon the activity of surveillance. Benayoun's piece is echoed by Elke Reinhuber's *National Flowers [Reflection]* (2020) that is featured late in the show, which is another work about surveillance.
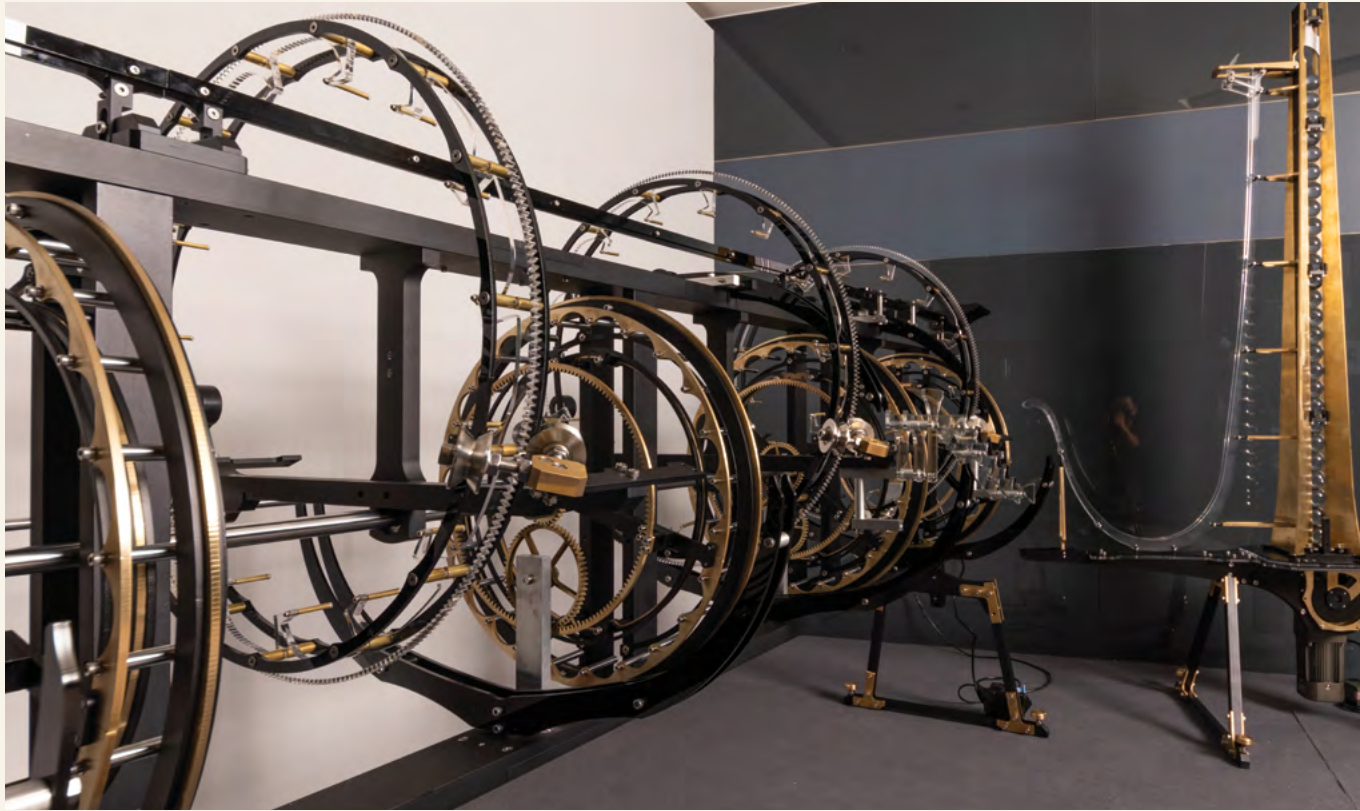
Carnival, 2020
Mixed Media
By Joseph Chan

The fourth Mnemosyne consists of Sound Art. The sound art memory wall contains not only pictures but also seven listening stations where the history of sound art can be heard. Sound Art began in the 1980s, but its pre-history stretches back to the beginnings of modernism. Sound Art is informed by the machine in three important ways as the catalogue makes clear. Machines provided a new range of sounds to experience, a new way of reproducing and hearing sound through telephone, radio, and television, and a new way of creating sound through the computer. Through exploring these new sounds, Sound Art seeks to challenge traditional compositional form and sound performance and to break down the aesthetic hierarchy between music and noise. There are three major sound works in the exhibition: Samson Young's *Possible Music #2* (2019) creates compositions from imagined musical instruments like a trumpet that is 200 times larger than an actual trumpet; PerMagnus Lindborg and Alvaro Cassinelli's *Loki's Pain* (2020), features a cave where the visitor can experience seismic data in the form of sounding bells; and Ryo Ikeshiro's *Pika! Ppeonjjeog* (2015-2016) is a futuristic immersive visualization accompanied by a Russet rhythm which creates the illusion of increasing tempo and pitch that is the sonic equivalent of Escher's staircase.

Animation and Graphic art are also strongly represented in the show. Animation pioneer and archivist Larry Cuba curated a short history of animation especially for Art Machines. The exhibition also features two animation works by Max Hattler,

Serial Parallels (2019), and a newly commissioned piece of immersive stereoscopy entitled *Voertex* (2020), and one by Vzela Kook entitled, *Orzersk Machine* (2020). There are also works of graphic art by Mike Wong (*Simplexity 02*, 2020), Carla Chan (*I Clone your Digital Soul*, 2020) and Tamás Waliczky (*Imaginary Cameras* 2016-2018). As the visitor rounds the final corner of the exhibition she enters into a more mediative space after prior immersion in sound and interactivity. A work of software art by Hector Rodriguez entitled *Errant: The Kinetic Propensity of Images* (Version 2) (2020), is featured on the right of the gallery which extracts features of movement from a film by Mizoguchi to create a contemplative experience of motion, and on the left is a reproduction of the School of Creative Media Mural made by a long-time Shaw collaborator, Tjebbe van Tijen. Finally, Stanley Wong's *Back to the Future/Tai Chi* (2014) greets us at the end of the long hall. It is a fitting conclusion to the exhibition, as we gaze at a robot's exquisite performance of the Tai Chi, providing us with the image of a harmonious, utopian synthesis between man and machine.

Art Machines will be opened until 18th April 2021 at the Indra and Harry Banga Exhibition Gallery at CityU. Please visit https://www.cityu.edu.hk/bg/visit/book-a-visit if you wish to reserve an individual or group visit. Illustrated catalogues with a text by Professor Richard Allen are available for purchase for HKD250 at the City University of Hong Kong Press website https://www.cityu.edu.hk/upress/art-machines.

ON THE COVER:

Possible Music #2, 2019
LED Lighting System, 16-channel Sound Installation: Sound, 60 min loop
By Samson Young
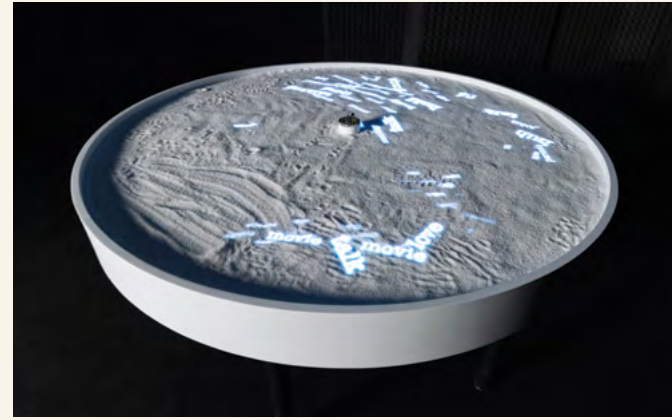
Viva Voce, 2020
Mixed Digital Media
By Can Liu, Alvaro Cassinelli

Dis/integration, 2020
Robotic Manipulator, Digital Camera, Video Projector, Custom Software
By Miu Ling Lam and Ka Ho Albert Yu

Hong Kong Escape Views: Panoptical Memories, 2020
Interactive Installation, 360 Videos, and VR Binoculars
By Maurice Benayoun

Pika! Ppeonjjeog, Pika! Ppeonjjeog / Ppiikkaa!! PPppeeoonnjjjjeeoogg, 2015-16
Immersive Audiovisual Installation with 3D-Engraving and Printing
By Ryo Ikeshiro

Safe House, 2020
Locker Cabinet, Photograph, iPad, Augmented Reality Software Application
By Jeffrey Shaw and Sarah Kenderdine
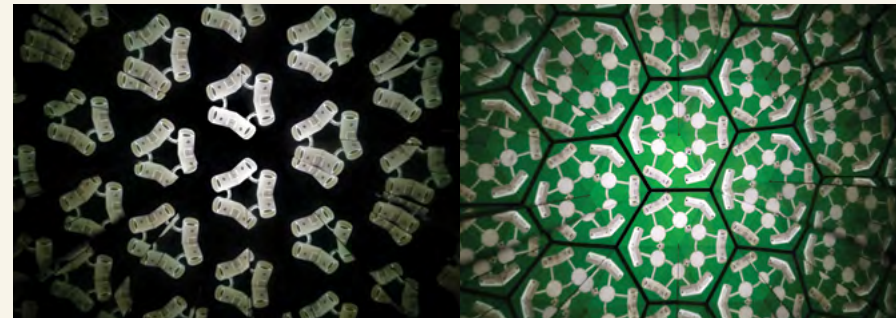
National Flowers [Reflection], 2020
Mixed Media with CCTV
By Elke Reinhuber
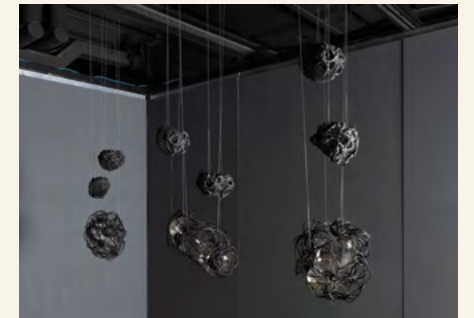
Common Datum, 2020
Nylon (black), 3D Print, Glass, Atmospheric Water Generators, Etched Brass
By Tobias Klein and Jane Prophet

Photo: rikiya nakamura
Photo courtesy of Tokyo Arts and Space

BOOK OF A HUNDRED GHOSTS 百鬼書
VR Installation / b&w and color / sound / 5:00 / 2018

To Call a Horse a Deer 指馬為鹿
video game / b&w and color / sound / 2018-

SCREEN.PLAY( )
EXPERIMENTAL MEDIA ARTIST IP YUK YIU

Ip Yuk-Yiu is an experimental filmmaker, media artist, art educator and independent curator. His works, range from experimental films, live performances, media installations to video games. He says, "I see myself mainly as a media artist. But my background and training lies in cinema, so most of my work is in some ways connected to the broader history and culture of cinema. "Screen.Play( )" is my terminology to explain my recent work which is a hybrid of video games, cinema and digital technology," he explains.

Ip's works have been showcased extensively at major international venues and festivals, including European Media Art Festival, New York Film Festival (Views from the Avant-Garde), the Image Festival, FILE Festival, VideoBrasil, Transmediale, NTT InterCommunication Center (ICC) and WRO Media Art Bienniale. He received his MFA from Massachusetts College of Art and Design (MassArt) Boston, and he has lectured widely on film, video and media arts at various institutions, including Emerson College, Massachusetts College of Art and The Hong Kong Polytechnic University. He has worked at the School of Creative Media from its very beginnings. He is currently an Associate Professor at the School.

Ip also has extensive curatorial experience in film, video and media arts, and is the founder of the art.ware project, an independent curatorial initiative focusing on the promotion of new media art in Hong Kong. As a curator, he collaborates regularly with the Hong Kong Arts Centre (see this issue): "At the ifva festival I was able to explore my vision of the current issues of media art," he says. "I want to introduce works to the Hong Kong audience. More can be done to promote media art in Hong Kong. I want to contribute therefore as a teacher and as a curator to introduce this field to the public. SCM is a leader in this field and I am proud to be part of the School. My curatorial work is in the form of both art promotion and art education." As well as his curatorial practice in Hong Kong, Ip also curated two media arts exhibitions in Japan entitled *PLAY. GROUND: video game art from Hong Kong,* and *False Spaces.*

He has won numerous awards for his work and recently the accolades have come thick and fast. In 2012, he was awarded the Hong Kong Contemporary Art Awards (Digital Art), and in 2019 he received the Artist of the Year award (Media Art) from the Hong Kong Arts Development Council. In 2018, his installation, *Book of a Hundred Ghosts* was selected as the Finalist (virtual art) for 12th Arte Laguna Prize

and it was shortlisted for the Robert Coover Award organised by the Electronic Literature Organization (ELO). The Robert Coover Award honours the year's best work of electronic literature, of any form or genre. In 2019, Ip followed up this success by winning the award outright for his installation, *False Words*. Regarding *False Words* one judge wrote, "I was impressed with the design and execution of this project as a visual, technical, and verbal object." Another judge added, "It is impressive in its visual design, and strikes me as important for its implicit critique of human rights offenses and censorship, all while conveying the fleeting powerlessness of words and of life. Ip observes, "Both works explore Chinese language so I was very happy about this because electronic literature in general focuses more on Western languages. I was so pleased to receive this recognition."

Recently Ip has commissioned to create a work for the outdoor space at the Asia Culture Center (ACC) in Korea, he created the video game ☜ ☞ (aka Left and Right) which consists of two distinct but related parts: a video game and a database. This playable installation will be presented at the Asia Culture Center in Korea in 2021. He has also recently produced an experimental documentary called *notes before the wind* which is a loose collection of views of Hong Kong taken in a five-year period, beginning with the Umbrella movement in 2014 and ending right before the summer of 2019 when large-scale social unrest and violent resistance erupted. The film was featured at the Image Forum Festival and ExiS festival in Seoul.

"I am very grateful to be able to work in the creative crucible of the School of Creative Media. My colleagues inspire me. David Jhave Johnston was a former colleague and he encouraged me to re-

examine my work through the lens of electronic literature. I owe him a lot. Dialogue with Olli Tapio Leino has inspired me. He has made me re-examine my work through the lens of video games. I'm so grateful for this interdisciplinary environment at SCM. Sometimes it's a very casual conversation but it really inspires me," he says.

HBG: HUMANS, BEASTS & GHOSTS 人獸鬼
video game / color / sound / 2018

Muenster Skulpturprojekte, 22 August 2017.
Source: Pierre Huyghe; Author: stephane333
from France

Charrieras, D., Mouillot, F. (Eds), *Fractured Scenes - Underground Music-Making in Hong Kong and East Asia*,
Palgrave MacMillan (in press).
Photo: artist Fiona Lee Wing-shan.
Photo credit: Damien Charrieras

Laboratory for Interventions in
Speculative Finance

Nvidia RIVA 128 ("NV3"), consumer graphics
processing units. First Nvidia chip to provide
3D acceleration for Unreal engine.
© Raimond Spekking / CC BY-SA 4.0
(via Wikimedia Commons)

MEDIA THEORY AND CULTURAL STUDIES: DAMIEN CHARRIERAS

Dr. Damien Charrieras is a cultural studies scholar and a media theorist. His work is situated in cultural studies and the current critical research on new media; at a theoretical level, he is especially interested in the potential value of process philosophy and radical empiricism to assess the new forms of knowledge and understanding that emerge through technology-based creative practices.

Charrieras is a Sciences Po Lyon graduate and he holds a PhD in Cinematographic and Audiovisual Studies from Sorbonne Nouvelle University, a PhD in Communication Studies from the University of Montreal and he has been a postdoc fellow at McGill University. He has been a visiting scholar at Brown University (Modern Culture and Media), New York University (Music) and worked as a researcher at the Institut National de l'Audiovisuel, at the Centre National de la Cinématographie (Paris) and at the Institut National de la Recherche Scientifique (Montréal).

Charrieras' main areas of research are: creative urban ecologies in contemporary societies such as new media art scenes and electronic/experimental music, cultural policies and new media art education; the politics of finance, art and technologies; media theory applied to creative software infrastructures, creative acts, and instruments in the digital age; and critical world b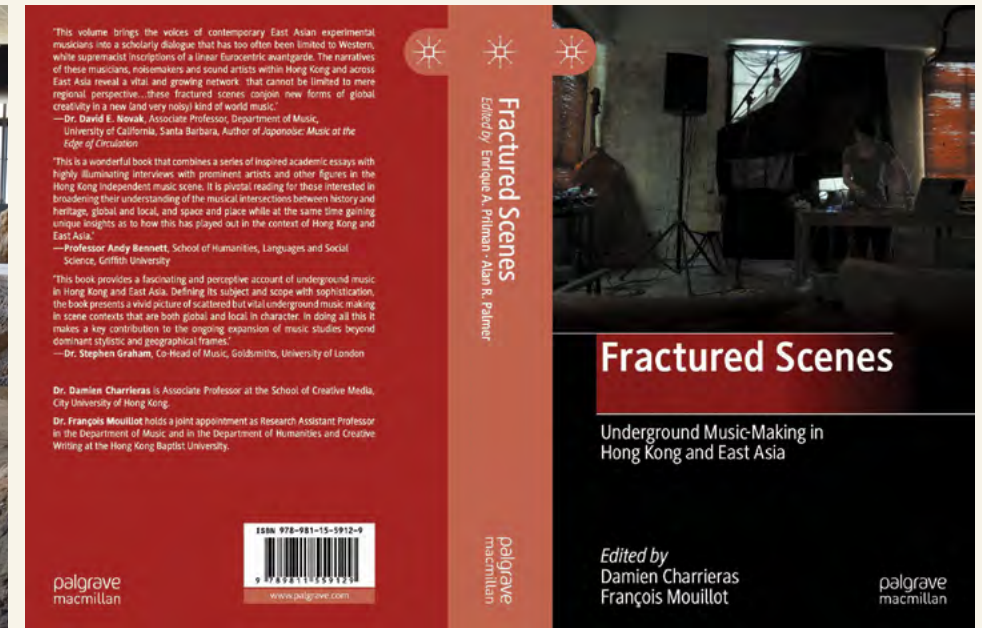uilding in narrative design. His current funded projects investigate situated forms of digital creativity in the urban setting (media arts, electronic music); the diverse technologies used to conceive 3D real time environment (especially game engines); blockchain in video games and art; discursive approaches to creative software; and new pedagogical approaches to Critical World-Building.

He is currently the Principal Investigator on two GRF funded projects "Adobe, Cloud Computing and AI: Creative Software and the Governmentalization of the Creative Act", and "The Emergence of a Videogame Production Sector on the Blockchain." With the support of a grant from CityU, he manages the project "Interactive World-Building and Narrative Universe: Sketch of an open World Experience." He is also Director at the School of Creative Media of the ACIM Laboratory for Interventions in Speculative Finance (LISF) which explores the intersection between media art and new financial technologies (algorithmic trading, blockchain technology) and more generally the complex dynamics of financialization.

Charrieras explains that his work employs different philosophical, technical and sociological notions to understand the role of creativity in contemporary societies. "Getting Out of the Black Box: Analogising the use of computers in electronic music and sound art" which Charrieras wrote together with François Mouillot, is an essay about the use of computer as instrument, was published in Organised Sound in August 2015. Together with Nevena Ivanova, Charrieras also wrote "Emergence in video game production: Video game engines as technical individuals" for Social Science Information. This article at the intersection of computer sciences and the philosophy of technology, focuses on the ways in which the use of game engines — a toolkit that offers a set of functionalities to automatize the creation of real time 3D space — enable or preclude design possibilities in video games production.

He has also written on "The shifting spaces of creativity in Hong Kong," an article which was published in Cities in 2018, in collaboration with Sébastien Darchen and Thomas Sigler. This paper focuses on how, paradoxically, artistic spaces are endangered by the commodification of Hong Kong as a creative city. In 2019, he submitted to the Policy Innovation and Co-ordination Office (PICO), Government of Hong Kong a report on "The development of a new media expertise in the creative economy of Hong Kong." He co-edited with F. Mouillot, "Fractured Scenes - Underground Music-Making in Hong Kong and East Asia," and he also co-edited "Electronic Cities - Music, Policies and Space in the 21st Century," with S. Darchen and J. Willsteed. Both books will be published by Palgrave MacMillan in 2021.

Indeed, 2020 has been a very productive year on the research front with the forthcoming publication of many papers and book chapters in his areas of research interest including on the Hong Kong Music Undergrounds in the East Asian Context; on electronic music, policies and space in the contemporary city; on electronic music cultures between Shenzhen and Hong Kong; on the evolution of the independent electronica music scene in Brisbane since the mid 1980s; and on the ecosystem of video games on the Blockchain.

Last semester, Charrieras taught "Introduction to New Media Art" and "World-Building in Digital Narrative Media." These are core courses in the media culture stream of the Master of Art in Creative Media (MACM) at SCM. As Programme Leader of the Master of Art in Creative Media, he has had an instrumental role in shaping and remodelling the MA curriculum which continues to attract a large number of qualified international applicants. In all the courses he teaches, Charrieras's research informs his teaching. He considers PhD mentoring as one of his most rewarding activities and he is dedicated to the development of the PhD in Creative Media as Deputy Programme Leader. He says, "I owe to Prof. Line Grenier from University of Montreal, who I worked with for several years, a rigorous yet creative approach to methodology in the field of Humanities."

When asked about what he plans to do next, he says: "I will continue to conduct research on the philosophical aspects of new media," and he adds "I would like to develop my research on art and finance as well as, in the future, to start new research projects on electronic music in South East Asia and Africa." He has had for many years a consuming passion in image making technologies and digital music production.

古天樂創意媒體獎

Airliner | Simulation Game
Choi Kwan Ho, Ng Tsz Yan, Tai Ko Hong

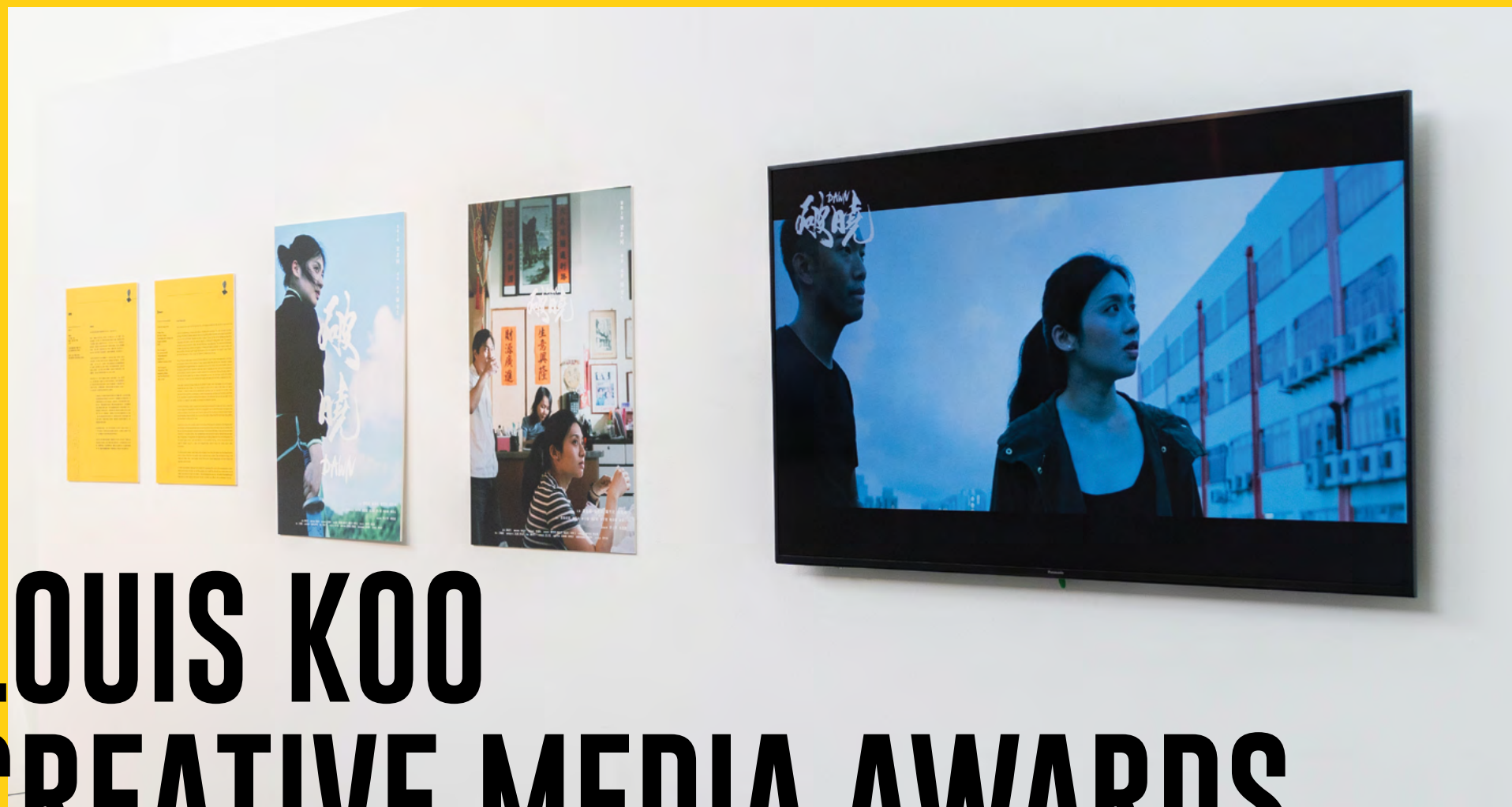*Demarcation* | Animation
Siu Wing Yi Zaberina

Peace, Imperfect Peace | Photography Artbook
Cheng Yuk Man

LOUIS KOO
CREATIVE MEDIA AWARDS

Dawn 破曉 | Fiction Film
Chan On Sang Anns

More than a Housewife 功夫 | Documentary
Kwong Hiu Yung Doris

RAY LC:
ARTIST-SCIENTIST-DESIGNER

This semester SCM warmly welcomes RAY LC as Assistant Professor in the School. RAY joins us from the College of Art, Media, and Design at Northeastern University, Boston. RAY's practice incorporates cutting-edge neuroscience research for building bonds between human communities and between humans and machines. His category-defying, anti-disciplinarity, combines interactive media with foundational scientific discoveries, applying them to transformative goals for social good. He studied computer vision at the University of California, Berkeley with Michael I. Jordan, and physiological and computational neuroscience at UCLA with Tom Otis. While conducting animal research for publication on PTSD in Japan, he turned to human interest work in interaction design, installation art, and games for change, eventually studying Design and Technology at Parsons School of Design while doing research at Cornell Tech.

RAY has been artist-in-residence at BankArt, Brooklyn Fashion BFDA, Process Space LMCC, New York Hall of Science, Saari Residence — Finland, Kyoto Design Lab, Elektron — Estonia. He has exhibited in diverse venues including Kiyoshi Saito Museum, 1_Wall Gallery Tokyo, Columbia University Macy Gallery, Java Studios, ICRA Elektra Montreal, NYSCI, ArtLab Lahore, Ars Electronica, NeON Digital Arts, New Museum, CICA Museum. His research has been presented at both academic and public settings such as the Society for Neuroscience, Forum of European Neuroscience, Falling Walls, TEDx Waseda, ISMA Computational Media Art, Creative Tech Week, and at ACM and IEEE venues. He has been supported by Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, National Science Foundation, National Institutes of Health, Microsoft Imagine Cup, Adobe Design Achievement Award, and the Davis Peace Foundation. He is a founder of VRbal.io.

When asked about his work he says "I am not just an artist, or just a scientist, designer, or engineer, despite working in each in my career. I apply psychology, technology, and creative practice to build interactive experiences that enable empathetic communication, from the multidisciplinary perspectives of neuroscience, installation art, social robotics, and storytelling." He continues, "I am also very curious about human and machine communication. We are trying to make ourselves believe something. My goal is to try to produce work that helps us know ourselves better. I create human-machine gesture dynamics with environmental intelligence to let our world talk to us, so we can empathize deeply with others and with ourselves. At the same time, I want to take this empathic approach to work to help populations in need such as refugees, the elderly, and people who have speech anxiety etc. I wish to empower them to tell their own stories."

The titles of his recent artworks convey a sense of RAY's current creative interests: *Machine Gaze, Look at me, Think of me, Secret Lives of Machines,* and *AI Artistic Intelligence. Machine Gaze* was an interactive exhibition and workshop at NYSCI that explored how computer vision detects faces using a knowledge base and movement. A supermarket security camera was refurbished and connected with machine learning and motors to show audiences how interactions with intelligent machines in the future will depend on human perception.

"Look at me, Think of me" used EEG technology to illustrate our obsession about ourselves. A two-way mirror was constructed, based on Moritz Wehrmann's *Alter Ego* installation, but it involves interaction with voice as well as brain attention signals from EEG headsets. It shows people how the more we talk and think about ourselves the more we see ourselves, and others see us.

Instead of simplifying in the digital realm, the digital was adapted to humans by creating smart devices and spaces that evoke emotional reactions in *Secret Lives of Machines*. RAY says, "Machines are becoming specialized and hard to understand. They can be caring, flaky, trusty, nagging, attention-craving, occasionally angry, and mildly jealous. A harmonious future involves machines that are part of human ecology rather than opposing it."

In "AI Artistic Intelligence," Machine Learning has been employed to extend human abilities in image and speech processing. Instead of using machine learning for data mining, RAY instead took machine learning agents as part of human ecosystems, applying them to unexpected forms of interactions that subvert what we think machines ought to do, and creating situations where machine learning goes beyond human expectation of what machine intelligence should mean.

In 2019, RAY was awarded the A' Design Award in Social Design and he curated "Technology and Social Good" which is an Art exhibition on the power to create change.

Last year he collaborated to produce the film, *Decertainfy*, which was presented at Burning Man BRCvr {Cyber Dream}, Ars Electronica Global Gallery, and Angewandte Festival Vienna. He also collaborated in the project on Immersive Storytelling of the Rohingya refugee experience to record and retell their experience in a different way. *SHAMIMA: Memory in My Heart* was chosen for the New York Short Documentary Film Festival (2020).

RAY is excited to be joining the interdisciplinary environment of SCM. In addition to teaching basic courses in physical computing and introduction to creative media, RAY, who is trained and published in neuroscience, says that he would like to teach about psychology and neuroscience: "How can we use these disciplines to inform design and art practice?"

More about RAY's work can be found at RAYLC.org

Machine Gaze, 2019 @ New York Hall of Science

Agents of Spatial Influence, 2020 @ Cornell Tech

The Skin of Our Sheath, 2019 @ New Museum Edge Cut

SHAMIMA: Rohingya Refugee Experience, 2019
@ Ars Electronia, ArtLab Lahore, NeON Digital Arts,
NYC Short Documentary Film Festival.

FLORA: Network Intelligence, 2018 @ CICA Museum, Java Studios

ARTS-BASED RESEARCH PRACTICES AT THE SCHOOL OF CREATIVE MEDIA

The School of Creative Media PhD programme seeks to cultivate interdisciplinary research on digital technologies. More than half of SCM's PhD students work on projects situated between the arts, humanities, and digital technologies, and for some of them, creative practice forms a significant part of their overall research design. Here, we profile two recent graduates of our programme and three current students whose topics demonstrate the expansive creativity of our doctoral students.

Screenshot from Lithium Hindsight 360 (Engenia Kim's research)

Eugenia Kim completed her PhD in 2020, and is now a lecturer at the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts. At SCM, Eugenia developed a framework and a prototype for creating movement-based virtual reality (VR) pathographies about bipolar disorder. Her highly original project connected medical humanities, dance, and VR technology, in order to develop a new medium to express and communicate the condition of bipolar disorder to a wider audience. Her research has resulted in one journal article, one book chapter, four conference proceeding articles, and more than ten conference presentations. She is now extending her research into movement-based meditative VR experience.


The Data Stones, data visualisation and animation (Peter Nelson's research)

Peter Nelson completed his PhD in 2019, and is now an assistant professor at Hong Kong Baptist University, with a joint appointment in the Academy of Visual Arts and the Creative Media Practice/Research Cluster. Peter's doctoral research focused on landscapes generated in computer games. Drawing on both landscape studies and game studies, he combined play-based phenomenological analysis and critical theory to investigate both the cultural meanings of game landscapes and the experiences of actual players. His study focused on the valve source engine gaming platform and part of his research involved actually using this platform to build navigable gaming landscape modelled on Hong Kong's WW2 tunnels. At SCM, Peter was also an ACIM Student Fellow where he studied how computer-generated landscapes relate to historical landscape theory from both Chinese and European perspectives. In addition to academic research, Peter continues to create beautiful artworks — for example, The Data Stones — which have been exhibited widely in Hong Kong and beyond.


A poster of epiphytes' symbiotic co-living community. It is part of Ji Yun's artistic research practice to engage with multispecies relationships

Ji Yun Park entered the PhD programme in 2019, after completing her MFA at SCM. She is using different film technologies — time-lapse, microscopic, and 360-degree filming — to study the relationship between species, more specifically orchids and their companion species, fungi, insects, and other plants. Her research leverages both biological sciences and environmental humanities, and it will contribute to the ecological thinking that we urgently need in order to address the global climate and ecological emergency.
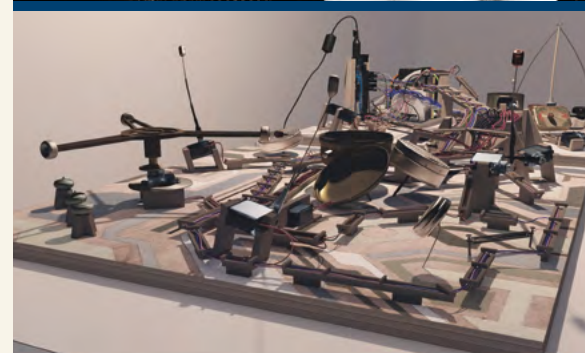
The Musicians V2, a 3D digital reconstruction of a previously existing art installation in the process of regaining a new 'digital life' as first an animated and idealized version of its original self. Work in progress. 2017 - ongoing. (Anton Maslic's research)

Anton Maslic came to our PhD programme with substantial creative experience producing interactive robotic sound installations. A personal trauma — losing consciousness for ten hours after a seizure — motivated him to study theories of consciousness. His dissertation research involves exploring possibilities and probabilities of developing artificial consciousness in art objects and uses scientific theories of the mind in conjunction with speculative fiction in order to model and build an imagined artificial consciousness. In 2020, he presented research papers at two international conferences, in Finland and Czech Republic.
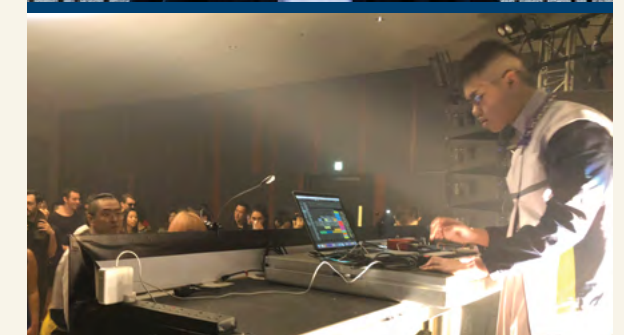
Kelvin T's music is one of many deconstructed club examples that challenges the pre-existing notion of genres circulates on the internet in digital format. Such data not only is being consumed as a product for listening but also builds materialistic relationships with other music through digital platforms

Alex Yiu, also a second-year student, is studying Deconstructed Club Music (DCM), to answer the larger question as to how music culture is being transformed through the internet. Yiu is himself a DJ and curator of deconstructed club music with extensive professional experience both in Hong Kong and elsewhere. His research combines ethnography and auto-ethnography in order to explore the complex relationship between the global and local that internet-mediated music affords. He observes that "the propagation of DCM is highly dependent on digital infrastructure," and that "social media and platform economy serve as the foundation of a trans-local scene and epitomize the transformation of club culture." In 2020, he presented his research at two international conferences, in Berlin and in London.

SCM's doctoral students are as international as our faculty. Eugenia is from the US, Peter from Australia, Ji Yun from Korea, Anton from Cyprus, and Alex from Hong Kong. Their diverse cultural backgrounds as well as creative experiences further strengthen SCM's role as an innovative hub of global relevance. They are drawn to SCM because of our interdisciplinary approach, and our commitment to exploring and understanding from a critical perspective the current role and future potential of cutting-edge digital technologies in our social life.

The Master of Fine Arts in Creative Media is the first of its kind in Hong Kong. The origins of the MFA lie as a terminal degree in conservatory-based arts programmes in European and American universities and fine arts academies. Since the 1960s, the MFA has become the standard terminal degree in programmes specializing in more technology-intensive media arts fields, including computer-based media production. The Master of Fine Arts in Creative Media (MFACM) at the School of Creative Media (SCM) is founded upon the integration of the Arts, Science, Culture and Technology into a holistic, interdisciplinary programme. With a focus on creative practice, the MFA provides intensive and advanced training in digital audiovisual Media and Cultures, Animation, Computer graphics, Film & Video production, Interactive Media and Digital Fabrication. The programme aims to develop the artistic and intellectual competence required for contemporary artists and future leaders of the media and creative industries. In its 14-year history, SCM's MFA has developed an international reputation as a cutting-edge media art programme with a global vision and as a hub for creative exchanges and professional collaboration both regionally and internationally.

For the past few years the MFA programme has been led by renowned Hong Kong media artist Leung Chi Wo, who helped oversee the internationalization of the programme in collaboration with Shared Campus, a consortium of international art and design programmes (**see issue 6**). Under Leung's leadership, the programme also saw, for the first time, scholarships being established, and this has led to a growing number of transdisciplinary applicants, rich with talent, vision and international outlook. Larry Shuen (MFA 2019) says, *"I think the MFA offers a great opportunity to widen horizons in the art field. Previously classically trained as a composer, I felt such novelty when I came across concepts that are not often discussed in the classical music field, such as narrativity, interactivity, physicality, time-and-space, and so on, which gave me new perspectives even when I am composing music."*

In 2020, Deputy Programme Leader, Dr. Tobias Klein assumed leadership of the MFA and led a restructuring of the curriculum that has provided greater focus and identity. The programme continues the path of internationalization and interdisciplinary established by Leung and retains the practical studio/thesis project, which, by allowing students to develop their individual projects under the supervision of a faculty mentor, forms the backbone of the MFACM. However, in order to strengthen the technical foundations of the curriculum Klein has added to the already established core course on theory and history, New Media Arts — Theories, Technologies, Aesthetics, a second core course, Introduction to Digital Fabrication Methods, that will provide an introduction into production methods for new Media (Film, Photography, Subtractive Manufacturing, Physical Computing and 3D printing).

At the core of the programme reform lies in an innovative elective curriculum that is organized into three main clusters focusing upon both the medium and the methods of creation. The "Interactive" cluster aims to foster engagement with interactive media content. The aim of the cluster is to articulate an artistic understanding of interaction and a technical ability to translate concepts into up-to-date media forms (including VR, AR, and Physical Computing). The "Worlding Media" cluster comprises more traditional media related courses, and contains Animation, Film and Photography, and Sound Art courses. The third cluster, "Fabrication," is dedicated to the translation of digital media into physical form and shape. It focuses on Digital Manufacturing as method and content and involves the use and development of Smart Materials, additive and subtractive digital manufacturing and sensory based physical computing. Each student has to choose two clusters and take three courses in each of the chosen clusters – a total of 18 credit units in the two years of MFACM study. The remaining 12 credit units can be freely taken in the third studio cluster or in the "Media and Culture" courses that draw from the MACM curriculum.

The MFACM curriculum is designed to nurture diverse, reflexive, and creative practitioners and to foster dialogue, collaboration, and critical reflection. Tian Macleod Ji (MFA 2016) reflects, *"The MFA degree was a fantastic experience. I was able to pursue my passion for filmmaking under the guidance of excellent professors from different artistic disciplines. I believe the most important aspect of the programme was gaining solid theoretical training while developing independent projects."* The MFACM seeks to enable the next generation of media professionals, artists and industry leaders to create works that expand the dimensions from the "what," the ontology of making, to include the "how," the principles, methods and techniques, or techne, behind creative media. Kathleen Mcdermott (MFA 2014) says, *"At the MFA programme at SCM I was immersed in new media art and design. The programme helped me transition from a more traditional sculpture background to a creative technology trajectory."*
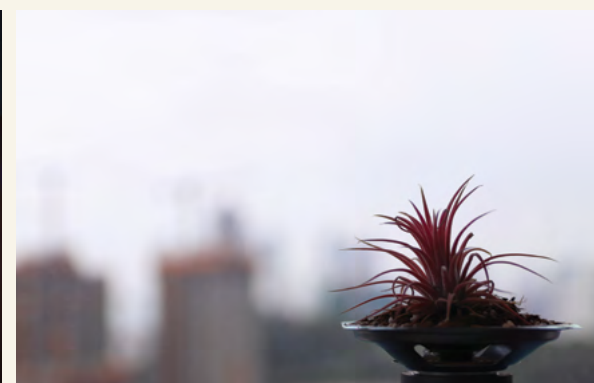

Room on Mars, 2019,
Wayfarers Gallery, Brooklyn, NY

Urban Armor #7: The Social Escape Dress, 2016
By Kathleen McDermott (MFACM, 2014)

Doolittle Raiders: A China Story (2017), Cinematographer, Edited and Co-directed by Tian Macleod Ji (MFACM, 2016)

Space Within Space is a 4-channel video installation, by Choi Sai-Ho (MFACM, 2008)
Photo credit: Tsang Ming-Kin Kenneth

Every Small Sky at MFA graduation exhibition 2019, by Larry Shuen (MFACM, 2019)

(Third from the right) Guided Tour and Artist Sharing by Mr. Ip Yuk Yiu (Associate Professor, SCM), curator of ifva

SCM CREATIVE PARTNER: AN INTERVIEW WITH CONNIE LAM, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, HONG KONG ARTS CENTRE

Hong Kong Arts Centre and School of Creative Media have developed collaborative art projects over the years to promote and support the broad development of the arts in Hong Kong. I had the privilege to interview Connie Lam, Executive Director of Hong Kong Arts Centre to discuss Hong Kong's art development and the role of Hong Kong Arts Centre in the art and cultural scene in Hong Kong. This is the edited transcript of our conversation.

IYY: Ip Yuk Yiu (Associate Dean and Associate Professor, SCM)
CL: Connie Lam

IYY: Can you tell us something about the flagship programs at the Arts Centre?

CL: We have curated a number of flagship programmes which have been intentionally planned to be run annually or biannually as well as making an impact locally and internationally. Our flagship programmes not only focus on promoting local artists but Asian art as a whole. On visual art, we have the Flagship Exhibition series, where in each edition one Asian curator was featured, and we've done 8 editions already. These experiences led to our upcoming research project on the development of the Asian contemporary art scene and we believe that it will bring benefit to Hong Kong artists.

In the area of moving image and new media art, we have ifva, an integrated programme of competition, screening, exhibition and carnival, with 26 years of history, in which we promote moving images and new media art to a wider audience through lots of outreach programmes alongside the cultivation of future artists, supporting mid-career artists for breakthrough, encouraging cross-cultural exchanges, and creating a platform to showcase the creativity of Asian artists with purpose.

IYY: The Arts Centre is known as a hub of creative collaboration. How do you see creative partnership yourself?

CL: Partnership and collaboration have always been our favourite approach, because collaboration will bring about cross-disciplinary experiment, idea exchange, dialogues and even R&D (research & development). To us, partnership is more than getting the job done with more help, but rather an opportunity to sharpen our creativity and critical thinking.

IYY: Over the years, the Arts Centre has worked with many faculty, alumni and students from the School of Creative Media in both a personal and professional capacity. How do you see this coming about?

CL: HKAC sees the uniqueness of the School's education on moving images, new media art and visual art, which we find very compatible with our programme direction. All along we've been working together with programmes in which many of the School faculty, alumni and students were involved. Some of the alumni even became our staff. We would like to highlight the long-term partnership that we have with you as our guest curator, you are like our dancing partner. We develop programmes together in a very complementary manner.

IYY: We all had a very challenging year in the past year owing to Covid19 and other factors. How does the Art Centre respond to these challenges and difficulties?

CL: For the past 43 years, HKAC has been facing different challenges and difficulties and every time HKAC will turn the limitation into creativity. The pandemic really prompted us to do everything we can to come up with new solutions in our programme delivery. Thanks to the modern technology, we can get all programmes online and live. We also believe these challenges and difficulties will bring people together to produce sincere works that touch people's heart.

IYY: As the Executive Director of the Arts Centre, how do you see your role in contributing to the broader art and cultural scene in Hong Kong?

CL: Apart from serving in my own organisation, I also contribute to the local art scene by serving as chairperson or board member of different art organisations, in which I contribute by sharing both my successful and unsuccessful experiences. Recently I have also spent time to meet with young art practitioners individually as well as to serve as a mentor in mentorship schemes for knowledge exchange. At the same time, I also try to learn more about artists groups with special needs as I believe art plays an important role for expression, releasing stress and anxiety. What's more important is that I try to encourage bottom-up projects and give my teammates freedom to curate programmes that meet the present need. I support them to gain exposure in international collaborations so as to prepare for more cultural exchanges and international dialogues.

IYY: What will be your words to students and young practitioners who aspire to advance their career and exploration in the field?

CL: An art practitioner has to be purpose-driven with strong beliefs and passion in art. On a career path, one must stay open and be curious to everything, but not just her/his own discipline. In addition, she/he must develop good communication skills so as to get connected with patrons, partners and audiences.

IYY: What are some future plans for the Arts Centre?

CL: Art is not merely for art's sake but also one of the factors to develop local cultures and groom the appreciation of our daily living. Cultivating future audiences is one of our priorities. We want them to be more than just a passive audience but active art participants that influence their peers and bring art into their daily life as we truly believe art and culture are not commodities for consumption but lifestyle that transforms life. We also want to integrate our heritage and culture as nutrition for creativity as well as inspiration of making new creations. Transforming ICH (intangible cultural heritage) into "ICH+" will be another focus in the upcoming few years. Creating the future on the foundation of the past will help to develop sustainable projects that are relevant to our time.

Connie Lam

Cinema 2.0 exhibition: Hard Cinema
Artists: Rosa Barba (IT/DE), Peter Holden (UK/DE), Gebhard Sengmüller (AU)
Hong Kong Arts Centre, 2015
Curated by Mr. Ip Yuk Yiu

Space in Hong Kong, Cultural Masseur
Project of Hong Kong Arts Centre, 2018

ART MACHINES

11.24 2020

4.18 2021

PAST/PRESENT
藝術機器
過去/現在

PRESENTED BY CITY UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
INDRA AND HARRY BANGA GALLERY
18/F LAU MING WAI ACADEMIC BUILDING, CITY UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

香港城市大學
般哥展覽館
主辦
香港城市大學劉鳴煒學術樓18樓

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