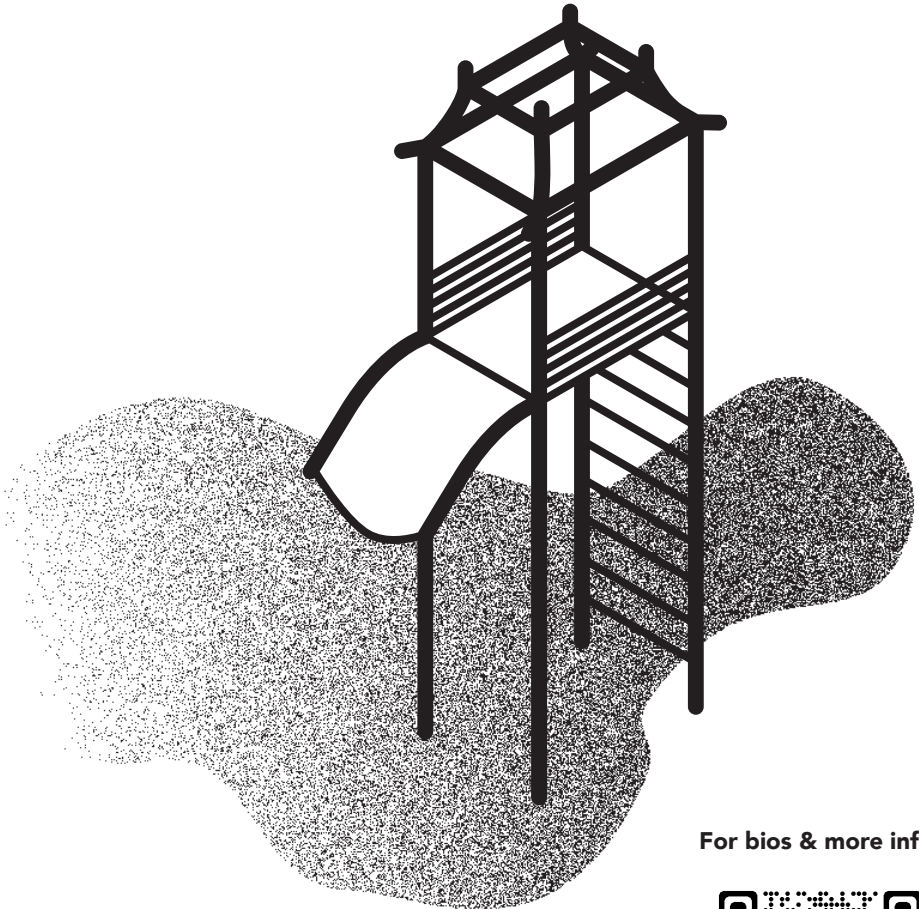


Present Tense:

Perilous Playground

冒險極樂園



For bios & more info



Project Background

The urban spaces of San Francisco's Chinatown anchor the history of the American West: In 1846, soldiers from the USS Portsmouth seized land here to form the settlement that became San Francisco. The park at the heart of Chinatown, Portsmouth Square, is named after that battleship, and is now known as the "living room" for our low-income community— one of the few public spaces in the densely populated neighborhood. Moreover in the near future, Chinatown infrastructure will change drastically: the Square faces major reconstruction and years of closure, the city will remove the vital pedestrian bridge that connects the Square, and a new Subway station has opened— projecting hope and threats.

In response, Chinese Culture Center of San Francisco (CCCSF) initiates a multidisciplinary group exhibition, titled "Present Tense: Perilous Playground," to explore different artistic approaches that reflect on systemic power, exclusionary development and policies, and people's unruly interventions. C & G Artpartment, whose artistic and curatorial practises in Hong Kong over the last decade have been focusing at community and public art, is invited by CCCSF to be the curatorial unit for this exhibition from August, 2023 to August 2024. As urban (re)development is a common topic addressed by contemporary artists in different regions, C & G takes the opportunity to invite artists from the West Coast, as well as from Hong Kong, Taiwan and Singapore, in order to facilitate artistic dialogues and knowledge sharing on the topic in the exhibition. Each artist unit is be invited to revisit the specific sites in their art projects and make one more response with their preferable art media in 2023 for the exhibition in "present tense."

Curatorial Statement

C & G Artpartment

Urban (re)development never stops in modern societies and metropolis. Living in big cities, we are undoubtedly the "beneficiaries" of urbanisation which, at the outlook, provides the convenience for everyday lives and improves our living standards. When the living standard becomes satisfactory, it seems natural for one to try to achieve even more. In other words, to progress. However, before any progress is made, is it possible to keep up the current standard? The planning for urban development and redevelopment in many places has long been a top-down process, where the people in power insert their grand directions and inject their political influences. Despite numerous social movements against this kind of top-down planning and more attempts by different governments to incorporate citizens' voices in the planning in recent years, many communities are still being dispersed amid development and gentrification projects, especially the more vulnerable ones. Dispersion of a community often means the erasure of the community and its history as well. It seems that urbanisation in our times has reached a point where, before any more progress is made, regress appears. We benefit from urbanisation and urban (re)development, but also suffers from it.

Urban (re)development, as a social issue, affects certain social groups directly and personally, yet seem non-relevant to some others. The current exhibition invites artists to exhibit the "blind spots" in the on-going urban (re)development process. When the hidden problems can be visualised, different residents in a society can better understand how these problems are related to them and become more willing to brainstorm and prepare for possible solutions.

Upholding criticality and creativity, contemporary artists are often very sensitive to social injustice. It is not difficult to see the presence of artists at different social events and movements to protect the endangered communities. Some of the artists help out at protests, some help with documentation, some make artworks in response etc. More importantly, many of these art practises emphasise the relationships and collaborations amongst the community members, and, therefore, help sustain the community spirit and resilience in the aftermaths of outraging protests and the displacement of communities.

Problems caused by urban (re)development may not be easily seen. Sometimes, it is because the problems are hidden purposefully. Sometimes, it is because the people involved pretend not to see at all. "Perilous Playground" invites the audience to contemplate and confront the problems behind the urban system they live in. Although it may in turn endanger their own status quo, the "beneficiaries" of urbanisation who enjoy urban lives like children in playgrounds, indeed, should be responsible to take the risk to question the system itself.

	1	5	6	10		
entrance			4			13
				9		
	2	3	7	8	11	12
						14

1. Walking Grass Agriculture Two Suns, 2023
Inflatable sculpture, video

Engaging local beliefs and agricultural production, the “Two Suns” series explores the relationship between Neiwei (locality in Kaohsiung) and the Sun Lord at Sinjhuangzih Taoist Temple, and the connection between water chestnut, taro, and the area of Tsô-kong-tsûn. In dialogue with “Early Spring in the Peach Garden (桃子園早春)” in the collection of the Kaohsiung Museum of Fine Arts, the piece revisits Taiwan under Japanese rule and the transformation of local landscapes before and after the Second World War.

2. Wang Chau Tin Yuen Farmer’s Market Table, 2017
Printed matter, leaf, resin, metal keyring, photographs, video, table, tablecloth, and two stools, watercolor painting

Wang Chau Tin Yuen’s (橫洲田園) installation resembles a stall, arranged similarly to their tables at farmers’ markets and at events following the village eviction in April 2021. The table displays books, zines, handicrafts and objects that share Wang Chau’s history and different villagers’ stories. The wall displays photos and posters (such as the four jackfruit festivals) and a video by a disbanded news media. Some printed matter is available in the gift shop, with profits going towards Wang Chau Tin Yuen’s work in caring for the land outside the destruction zone and future events such as Wang Chau Fruity Solidarity.

3. Post-Museum Bukit Brown Index #133: Triptych of the Unseen (Redux), 2020
Chair, Virtual Reality (VR) goggles, Joss Paper, Pencil on Paper

Bukit Brown Index #133: Triptych of the Unseen (Redux) features objects and a Virtual Reality (VR) video work resulting from Post-Museum’s twelve-year involvement in the campaign to save Bukit Brown, a contested cemetery and nature space in Singapore. On a wall of joss paper, drawings of news articles are presented with a video work which encapsulates the struggle for space, as seen through the perspectives of 3 characters—Ghost, Activist, and Bureaucrat. This is not just a story set in Singapore but a story of development perpetually enacted in every city.

4. South Ho Heaviness and Lightness, 2021
EVA foam

The shape of the work is to imitate the bricks laid on the footpath in Hong Kong, using foam as a material to transform the originally heavy object & memories into light-weight works. In 2023, audience members can write words on the bricks to leave their feelings of belief, hope, anger, fear.

5. South Ho Defense & Resistance, 2013
Archival Inkjet Print

In 2013, I created a photographic work “Defense and Resistance” that documented my performance in which I surrounded myself with building bricks on the shore of Victoria Harbor in Hong Kong. In surrounding myself with building bricks to form a wall, I explored the social contradictions that began to emerge in Hong Kong due to Chinese tourists at that time, and the myth of “bricks” (buying a living house). Until the social movement that occurred in 2014, bricks transformed from denoting “eggs and high walls” into a symbol of citizens and government. At the opening of an exhibition, I once again performed the performance of breaking out of the wall.

6. South Ho #20191118, 2019
Archival Inkjet Print

Years later, in 2019, bricks have once again transformed their role and become an iconic obstacle in the street protests of social movements.

7. Felix Quintana Cruising the Street and Alleyway, 2023
Mixed media collage on found vinyl banner

Cruising through alleyways is a large-scale collage on a found banner that explores San Francisco and Los Angeles Chinatown, weaving memory and connection between California, AAPI, and Latinx experiences. This work includes photographic images from Google Street View, documentary photography, and found imagery. The blue tone is created through cyanotype printing, a 19th century photographic process, transforming everyday public spaces such as alleyways, street corners, and important communal sites such as the International Hotel and Portsmouth Square. The work becomes a blueprint for those who historically lack power, a witness to elders, youth, and everyday people taking up necessary space.

8. Kuang-Yu Tsui Invisible City: Liverpool Top 9, 2006
Single Channel Video

This film was commissioned by Liverpool Biennial and

shown in Tata Liverpool in 2006. In the process of exploring Liverpool urban transformation, we can find in the old urban plan a lot of spaces and facilities that are vaguely defined and planned. These weird spaces are like mysteries scattered over the city, waiting to be disclosed or changed at an appropriate time. This project continues the core concept of city spirit – through observation and behavioral interposition, the possibilities of the coexistence of city and surroundings are brought forward.

9. Kuang-Yu Tsui The Shortcut to the Systematic Life: City Spirits, 2005
Action Video / Single Channel Video

This work was developed during a residency at Gasworks in London, with shooting finished later in Taipei, Taiwan. I explore the social dynamics of urban spaces in a series of actions that test and subvert the invisible norms that govern our use of public spaces. I am using a series of actions to re-discover and re-present the city from a different perspective, one that absurdly challenges the use of spaces and makes us think about how we deal with them.

Kuang-Yu Tsui’s work is supported by  台新銀行文化藝術基金會
HSBC Bank Foundation for Arts and Culture

10. Bijun Liang Free Pigeon, 2023
Inflatable Installation

Free Pigeon is an interactive free-roaming installation in which inflatable pigeons act as the carrier connecting the people within and outside the exhibit. Pigeons are flown out of their nest based within the Chinese Culture Center, while visitors outside the gallery space are asked to guide our traveling pigeons are home. Pigeons have long been associated with the delivery of messages, as homing pigeons during wartime and as the key postal system in Chinese mythology. In recent times, pigeons are also one of the top populations impacted by the upcoming renovation of the nearby Portsmouth Square Park, a gathering place for many in Chinatown today.

11. Lucky Rabbit Pictures Bridge to Everywhere, 2023
Animation Film

From the wandering minds down the Rabbit Hole – Bridge to Everywhere is an animated odyssey transcending the glass of the screen. When a serendipitous and otherworldly event shakes a street corner of San Francisco’s Chinatown, an unsuspecting Portsmouth Square pigeon becomes an immortal conduit of time and space.

12. Weston Teruya Home in Moving Parts (carried with us), 2023
Paper sculpture (paper mache, found and recycled cardboard, cast paper, papers gathered in Chinatown), furniture dollies, ratchet straps, wood, lamp components, full spectrum bulb, and gathered ephemera

With the pending demolition of the pedestrian bridge, can we imagine this not as an end, but a diffusion, where benches that served as a place of rest live on in other iterations? In conversations, former CCC Artist-curator Heesoo Kwon informed me that due to the bridge’s global fame as a skateboarding spot, segments of the sloped brick walls and concrete benches have already been replicated in competition courses, practice ramps, and trendy commercial street furniture. Playing off of that spirit, I envision these mobile sculptures as malleable receptacles for neighborhood memories of gathering, even as the original site is reconfigured.

13. Ting Ying Han Invisible Landscape (bilingual st. signs), 2023
Oyster sauce, sweet bean paste, black bean paste, soy glaze on paper, reclaimed shipping boxes, concrete block and galvanized steel

Invisible Landscape (Barry, Community Table, McGee Ave & Oregon St.), 2023
Archive pigment print, Charcoal and graphite and OSB board

Intrigued by the city’s history and the transformative impact of urbanization on social fabric and community identities, the artist finds inspiration in the vibrant street names, reminiscent of colorful history book pages. In the course of researching community displacement, she chanced upon bilingual street signs in San Francisco’s Chinatown. Recognizing these signs as a formal tribute to the Asian-American community’s invaluable contributions and the neighborhood’s cultural fabric, the artist laments their gradual disappearance. To honor the neighborhood’s identity and poetically portray displacement, they creatively flip the English street names, incorporating Chinese cooking sauces in the printing process, symbolizing cultural resilience, and weaving vibrant narratives into the city streets.

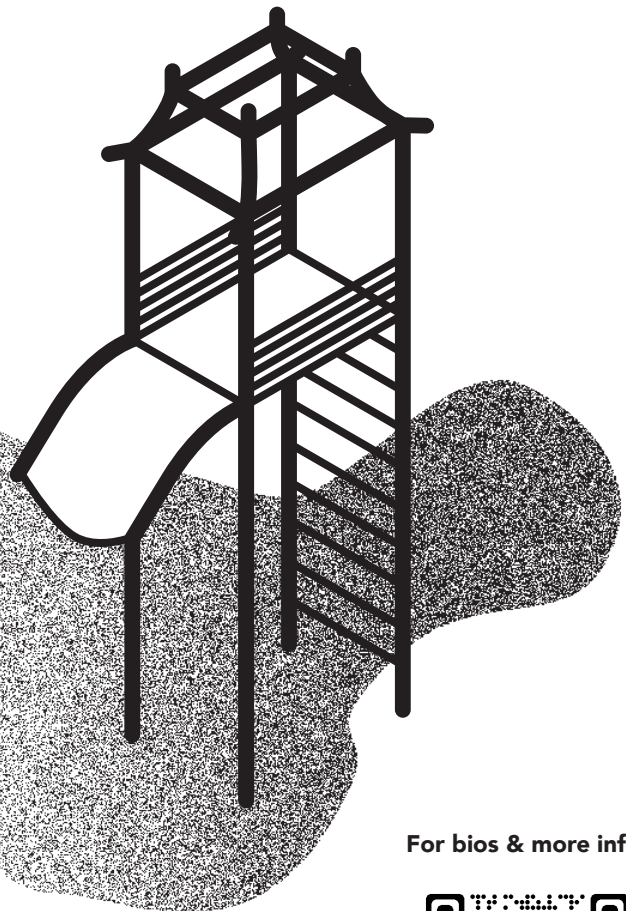
15. Anson Mak From the Factories, 2015
Web-site and board for text of updates of 2023

In 1954, the British Hong Kong government reclaimed land for industrial use, and Kwun Tong had become the largest industrial area and a unique community. In 2010, Revitalisation Policy of Factory Buildings was launched and brought drastic changes. Rents have skyrocketed and the community has fallen apart. In 2013-15, we did a research project on artists’ studios in Kwun Tong factories and research data was released in the form of a web-based documentary. We visited 21 studios (woodwork, leather/jewelry design, music, dance, photography, theater, painting etc.). They need factory space, and surely also the mutual support in the community networks. Ten years have passed, and I would like to take this opportunity to update the situation of the artists, hence to go on the discussion of urban redevelopment.

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計劃背景

三藩市華埠一帶的市區空間發展一直與美國西部歷史緊密相關：1846年，樸茨茅斯戰艦 (USS Portsmouth) 登陸併佔了這片土地，後將它命名為三藩市。位於華埠中心的公園「花園角」(Portsmouth Square) 正因這艘戰艦而得名。「花園角」是華埠這個高密度社區內少數公共空間之一，更被當地的低收入社區人士稱之為社區「客廳」。在不久的將來，華埠一帶基建空間將面臨巨變：「花園角」即將因大幅重建而關閉多年，一直連接「花園角」的行人天橋會被清拆，新地鐵站也已經開放。

為此，「舊金山中華文化中心」將應時舉辦一項多媒介、多元文化的藝術聯展，題為：《現在時：冒險極樂園》，希望以藝術去回應城市發展中權力制度、(對少數族裔的)排斥性政策、草根創意型反抗等議題。2023年4月至12月，中華文化中心特地請到近十年在社區和公共藝術領域活躍的資深香港藝術組織——「C & G 藝術單位」——來策展。由於各地的當代藝術家都常在創作中呼應城市發展議題，C&G借此機會請到了來自美國西岸、香港、臺灣、新加坡的數位藝術家，以促進展覽中的藝術對話和知識分享。每一位參展藝術家或團隊都被邀重返他們作品提及的地點，然後自選媒介、以“現在時”為軸，再為展覽創作一件作品。

策劃概念

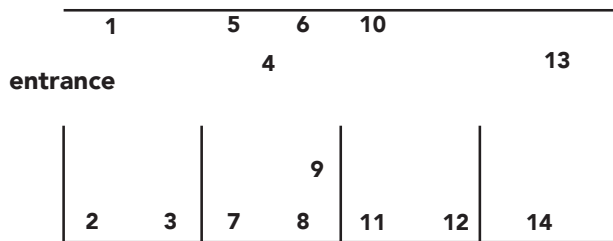
C & G 藝術單位

城市(再)發展於現代社會、大城市無間斷出現，身處大城市、大都會的我們，無疑是城市化發展的得益者，享受著衣食住行的便利和生活水平的提高。而當生活水準達到人們滿意的程度，人們又會不自覺地想再超越、再進步。但我們有超越的前提、或者說我們能維持現有水平嗎？城市發展的規劃過程，普遍都是由上而下，有當權者把控著大方嚮、仗著政權施壓。就算民眾對這種自上而下的權力遊戲做出反抗、就算政府近年有讓民間參與城市規劃，許多社區還是在城市發展和士紳化的沖擊下被瓦解，尤其弱勢社區。拆散一個社區就意味著湮沒一段歷史。在這樣前提下，莫說超越，連維持也辦不到，似乎都市化發展到某一個點，就不免迎來倒退。所以都市化的運行，民眾是得益者，同時也是受害者。

都市化作為一個社會議題，之於一些人是切身大事，之於另一些人卻無關痛癢。是次展覽請藝術家揭露都市化(再)發展過程中的盲點，將隱形的問題可視化，讓居民大眾認識到問題的迫切併作出準備應對、解決。

作為藝術工作者，創造力超前是必須的，對社會不公提出質疑及批評也是指定動作。在各種與都市化抗衡、保衛弱勢社區的社運中，都不難找到藝術家的身影。他們有的參與示威遊行、有的進入事件現場記錄、有的以藝術回應。更重要的是，這些藝術家都很注重社區內的關繫和合作，因此能幫助在抗議和被迫搬遷後，維繫社區精神和堅韌力。

城市(再)發展帶來的問題不易窺見，有時是因為故意隱瞞，有時是因為參與者視而不見。「冒險極樂園」邀請大家來直面併反思他們身處的都市體繫背後的危機。作為都市化的“得益者”，既然能把城市玩自己的樂園，就應當不畏顛覆現狀，鋌而走險對都市化提出質疑。



1. Walking Grass Agriculture 走路草農藝團
Two Suns 兩個太陽, 2023
Inflatable sculpture, video

「兩個太陽」系列作品，從台灣地方信仰與農業物產出發，關注高雄內惟與新庄仔太陽星君與菱角、芋頭之於曹公圳之間的關係，並與高雄市立美術館的典藏品《桃子園早春》一作對話，重探台灣經歷日治、戰前戰後地方風景的變化。

2. Wang Chau Tin Yuen 橫洲田園
Farmer’s Market Table, 2017
Printed matter, leaf, resin, metal keyring, photographs, video, table, tablecloth, and two stools, watercolor painting

橫洲田園的裝置作品效仿了農貿市場的攤檔，桌上擺放了書、獨立刊物、手工製品和有關橫洲歷史和村民故事的物件。牆上則展示了海報（如大樹菠蘿節）、相片和已解體的新聞媒體的視頻。一部分書刊有在禮品店出售，收益會幫助橫洲田園護理拆毀區周邊的土地以及未來活動。

3. Post-Museum, Bukit Brown Index #133: Triptych of the Unseen (Redux), 2020
Chair, Virtual Reality (VR) goggles, Joss Paper, Pencil on Paper

「武吉佈朗索引#133:無形三聯畫」由實物和虛擬現實視頻組成，取自Post Museum為保護武吉佈朗（又名咖啡山）墓園髮起、長達12年的運動。糊滿紙錢的牆上，新聞臨摹和視頻同時出現，從三個角色——鬼、民權鬥士、官僚——的角度敘述土地糾紛。故事講的不單是新加坡，也是每個正在經歷都市發展的城市。

4. South Ho 何兆南
Heaviness and Lightness 沉重與輕浮, 2021
EVA foam

作品外觀上效仿人行道上的地磚，材料上卻是用泡沫代替磚頭，變重為輕。沉重的記憶被轉化為輕巧的物品。2023年這一版本歡迎大家在磚塊上留言，觀眾可選擇留下或帶走他們的信唸、希望、憤怒和恐懼。

5. South Ho 何兆南
Defense & Resistance 防衛與抵抗, 2013
Archival Inkjet Print

我2013年做過一組攝影作品，記錄我在香港維多利亞港的一次行為表演。我建了幅圍牆給自己，以磚頭堆砌的牆把自己圍在內，一是反映香港在大陸旅客出現後派生的社會矛盾，二是圓了“bricks”（砌活房子）的說法。直到2014年社運，有了“雞蛋與高牆”的比喻，磚就成了政府的代稱。在一次展覽中，我又做了第二回行為表演，這次是我破牆而出。

6. South Ho 何兆南
#20191118, 2019
Archival Inkjet Print

後來到了2019年，磚又添一層含義，成為抗議和社運裡處處可見的路障。

7. Felix Quintana, Cruising the Street and Alleyway, 2023
Mixed media collage on found vinyl banner

Cruising through alleyways 是在現成橫幅上創作的大型拼貼畫，內容是三藩市和洛杉磯兩地的華埠，穿插、串聯了加州、亞太裔和拉丁裔的經歷，結合了Google街景、紀實攝影和拾得圖片。作品用19世紀發明的藍印攝影法，用藍色色調，記錄了小巷、街角，以及洲際酒店、花園角等公共空間。它成為歷史上受壓迫者的藍圖，見證了長者、青年和普通人的空間使用權。

8. Kuang-Yu Tsui 崔廣宇
Invisible City: Liverpool Top 9, 2006
Single Channel Video

本片由利物浦雙年展委約創作，2006年曾在泰特利物浦放映。我們在調查利物浦城市改造時發現，舊版城市規劃對許多空間和設施都沒有明確劃分和用途。這些怪誕的空間像迷一樣遍佈全市，等待着某人某日去揭露、改建。作品延伸了“市魂 (city spirit)”的概念，通過觀察和行動介入，試探都市和週邊共存的可能性。

9. Kuang-Yu Tsui 崔廣宇
The Shortcut to the Systematic Life: City Spirits, 2005
Action Video / Single Channel Video

本片在倫敦煤氣廠拍攝，後又到台北取景。公共空間的使用通常都存在隱性規則，而我在作品中做出一系列挑戰和顛覆常規的行為，來探索都市的社會動態。我以這種荒謬的行為，質疑我們對空間的使用和處理，從另一角度重新發現和呈現都市。

Kuang-Yu Tsui’s work is supported by  台新銀行文化藝術基金會
Taiwan Bank Foundation for Arts and Culture

10. Bijun Liang 梁璧君
飛鴿傳書, 2023
Inflatable Installation

「飛鴿傳書」是分佈多處的互動裝置藝術，用充氣鴿子，在展廳內外的人之間「通信」。鴿子從中華文化中心的巢中飛出，再由展廳外的人帶路歸巢。飛鴿傳書有悠久的歷史，戰亂時期有信鴿，中國神話里也常用鴿傳信。近排，華埠聚集地花園角即將翻新，鴿子是最受影響的群體之一。

11. Lucky Rabbit Pictures
Bridge to Everywhere, 2023
Animation Film

兔子洞底出神時所作——Bridge to Everywhere是一次超越屏幕的動畫歷險。三藩市華埠的街角發生一起靈異事件，同時，花園角的一隻鴿子無意間成為了不朽的時空導線。

12. Weston Teruya
Home in Moving Parts (carried with us), 2023
Paper sculpture (paper mache, found and recycled cardboard, cast paper, papers gathered in Chinatown), furniture dollies, ratchet straps, wood, lamp components, full spectrum bulb, and gathered ephemera)

我們能否把行人天橋的清拆不看作一個終結，而是一種衍生，譬如那些供人休息的座位，它們有來世嗎？前CCC藝術家策展人權希樹告訴我，因為天橋是聞名世界的滑板地點，它那弧型的磚壁和混凝土座位常被複製，用於比賽場、訓練坡和時髦街道設施。因此，我把我這些流動雕塑看作有張力的容器。這樣一來，就算原址被擾亂，它們還能裝着人們匯聚的記憶。

13. Ting Ying Han 韓婷穎
Invisible Landscape (bilingual st. signs), 2023
Oyster sauce, sweet bean paste, black bean paste, soy glaze on paper, reclaimed shipping boxes, concrete block and galvanized steel

Invisible Landscape (Paul, Community Table, McGee Ave & Oregon St.), 2023
Archive pigment print, Charcoal and graphite and OSB board

藝術家Ting Ying Han對本地歷史和都市化對社會架構和集體身份的影響深感興趣。作品的靈感來自華埠五花八門的街名，走在街上就如同在翻看一本多彩的歷史書。在研究逼遷這一都市現象時，她偶然留意到三藩市華埠的中英雙語路標。這些路標代表著亞裔的貢獻和華埠的文化脈絡，它們的逐漸消失讓藝術家十分痛心。為紀念社群身份、詩化逼遷記憶，她將英文街名倒置，然後將中式調味醬運用到印刷工程中，以這樣的方式象徵社區堅韌力，為觀者道來城市街道的故事。

14. Anson Mak 麥海珊
From the Factories, 2015
Web-site and board for text of updates of 2023

1954年，英屬香港政府大規模填海做工業用地，觀塘成為香港最大的工業區。2010年政府推出活化工廈政策，為本來是工業區的觀塘帶來巨變。租金爆升，生存困難。2013-15年，我們做了一個研究計劃，和網上記錄片，走訪了21個工作室（木工、皮革/手飾設計、音樂、跳舞、攝影、畫畫等等），他們都需要工廈的空間，當然還有重要的互相支援和社區網絡。十年過去，藉這次展覽的機會，做一個資料更新，繼續關於社區重建的討論。