



PF25 cultural projects August 2023 Programme
Residency, Community Projects, Workshops, Exhibition, BASEL

'On the Ground' 在地上
Luke Ching in collaboration with Mei Cheung
curated by Angelika Li

Exhibition Part I:

Wed 16 - Sat 19 August 2023 12-18h

Community Workshops each day from 14-17h

(1) Secret Garden: Know the Weeds

(2) Easy to Learn Cantonese: Farewell

(3) Folk Art Series: Cockroach

Reserve your workshop by email: celine@PF25.org

Venue: Salon Mondial, Freilager-Platz 9, 4142 Münchenstein/Basel

Exhibition Part II:

Fri 25 - Sun 27 August 2023

Secret Garden Adoption Night: Fri 18-20h

Opening hours: Sat - Sun 11-18h

Part of Kunsttage Basel 2023

Venue: PF25 cultural projects, Pfeffergässlein 25, 4051 Basel

[Entrance at Nadelberg 33]

About 'On the Ground'

The act of embarking on a journey involves slowly distancing oneself from the familiar environment and transforming into a stranger in a new place. This process is essential in evoking one's sense of place and sharpening one's sensibilities and power of observation, as well as recalling the natural desire to communicate with people upon first encounter. By taking advantage of the benefits that come with a break from daily routines, 'On the Ground' showcases Luke Ching's ongoing projects and new collaborations with Mei Cheung during their one-month PF25 residency in Basel.

Through a combination of videos, installations, and workshops, the exhibition explores the experiences of language, folk arts, urban weeds, and music that connect us to a place, whether it is the artists' hometown or the city they are about to get acquainted with. 'On the Ground' invites viewers to reflect on their own sense of place and the relationships they form with new environments, ultimately prompting a deeper understanding and appreciation of the communities and cultures that shape our world.

'On the Ground' Community Projects / Workshops

(1) Secret Garden: Know the Weeds

Unattended, widespread, sometimes invisible but never disappeared, weeds quietly witness the life of a place. Each place has its unique combination of weeds with the stories of people living in the neighborhood embedded in. By getting to know the weeds in a particular place, we can develop a sense of attachment to that place.

Derived from 'Remember a Weed. Bid a Farewell', a community art activity led by Luke Ching and Mei Cheung in Tai Po, Hong Kong in September 2022, the duo plans to introduce a selection of Hong Kong weeds to the people of Basel and engage them in a sculpture-making and installation process to learn about the unique weed combinations in Basel. Through this, they hope to create a connection between the two cities through the shared language of plants.

Interestingly enough, *Bauhinia × blakeana*, the flower emblem of Hong Kong, is in fact belonged to a genus named after the Bauhin brothers Gaspard and Johann, pioneering Swiss botanists in the 16th century born and lived in Basel.

(2) Easy to Learn Cantonese: Farewell 再見

'Easy to Learn Cantonese' is an ongoing art project that was first conceived by Luke Ching during his artist-in-residency program at New York's P.S.1 in 1999. The project was later brought to Fukuoka Asian Arts Museum's artist-in-residence program in 2006, with Mei Cheung participating as the Cantonese tutor in both versions. Over the past twenty-four years, the project has attracted more than five hundred participants, and the artist finds it increasingly relevant today, especially given the recent wave of emigration from Hong Kong.

For this new version of the project, the artist will teach the word 'Joy Gin' (farewell) to new friends met during the residency. In Cantonese, the word 'Joy Gin' means "to meet again" and is especially poignant given the current circumstances. The class will conclude when each participant can pronounce the word perfectly, fully conveying its meaning. The learning process will be documented in a short film and screened alongside videos from the previous two versions, offering a glimpse into the evolution of the project over time.

(3) Folk Art Series: Cockroach 甲由

Folk handicrafts are popular souvenirs to give when meeting someone for the first time. Luke Ching has developed a cockroach craft using modern urban materials since the 1990s. This unique folk art represents modern Hong Kong in a humorous way and has been introduced to people around the world through cockroach workshops in different cities such as Fukuoka, Manchester, Blackburn, Singapore, and Taipei. Ching will teach this skill to people in Basel by conducting masterclasses and workshops.

Human beings are the only animals in the world that intentionally create objects of fear for themselves. Despite being afraid of cockroaches himself, Luke Ching created them purely from his imagination. At the exhibition, a video titled 'Panic Disorder' will be screened, showing Ching's hands performing the cockroach-making process without holding any materials.

About the artists

Ching Chin-wai obtained his MA in Fine Arts from The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) in 1998. In 2001, after completing the P.S.1 Contemporary Arts Center Studio Program in New York, he returned to his hometown and began exploring experimental art projects that bridge the gap between art and daily life. He received the Hong Kong Contemporary Art Biennial Awards in 2005 and 2016, as well as the Artist of the Year (Visual Art) award from the Hong Kong Arts Development Council in 2016. In 2009, he co-founded Wooferten, an independent arts space, with a vision to involve the community in experimental artistic pursuits.

Since 2013, Ching has actively engaged in social activism, focusing on labour rights, and has taken on the role of an artist. His 'Undercover Worker' project was among the ten finalists for the Visible Award 2019, an international award that recognises socially engaged artistic practices in a global context. Currently, he works as a part-time lecturer, teaching Arts in Public Space in the Department of Fine Arts at Chinese University of Hong Kong and Creative Citizenship of Social Design Program at the School of Design, Hong Kong Polytechnic University. In addition, he also works as a part-time cleaner in subway stations.

[A recent Hong Kong Free Press coverage of Luke Ching's practice and activism](#)

CHEUNG Mei is a graduate of the Journalist and Communication Department at The Chinese University of Hong Kong and the John W. Draper Interdisciplinary Master's Program in Humanities and Social Thought at New York University. She has worked as an arts and culture journalist for several local publications, including Hong Kong Economic Journal, Ming Pao Daily, Xpressions Arts Magazine, Hong Kong Economic Times, Ming Pao Daily, and Scarecrow Quarterly, for many years. In 1999, she was awarded the Lee Hysan Foundation Fellowship from the Asian Cultural Council.

CHEUNG is now a freelance writer and artist who actively participates in various community art projects. Her past projects include A Date with Plants (Make a Difference Institute), Mountain No Mountain (No Discipline Limited), Make A Wish Return: Cookery and Art Practice (Black Moon and Wan Chai District Council), Well Done Artist Cooking Class (A Page A Wish, XCHANGE, Oi!), and Community Arts Maps Visual Arts Publication Project (HKADC Arts Ambassadors-in-School Scheme).



About PF25 cultural projects

Pfeffergässlein 25, 4051 Basel, Switzerland

PF25 cultural projects is a Basel-based non-profit organisation which aims to build mutual understanding, to develop an intercultural network and to generate creative energies between Hong Kong and Basel - extending to other regions in Switzerland. Our cultural exchange and research approach is on-the-ground and about daily life, observed and engaged through a wide range of activities. We bring people together in workshops, talks, screenings, exhibitions, field trips, interviews, pop-ups, publications and more. This allows PF25 to foster dialogues and deepen understanding between the two city-regions, welcoming diverse stories and wide perspectives across generations.

We strive to discover connections through reflections, to expand our spectrum of imagination and to explore possibilities of living for the future.

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Programme details: www.PF25.org

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