



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.

Luke's stories on some of the new works that he created during his residency in Basel:

'Dark Night White Cloud'

黑夜白雲：

幾年前，Angelika 把我的作品帶到 Basel 分享。其中一件是我的《樹大可成蔭，樹蔭可聚人》，她邀請了在瑞士的港人一齊做迷彩樹葉，那時我們用zoom見過面，當時我剛從芬蘭回港，還在隔離酒店。

我把酒店的床單留下，今次我把那隔離酒店床單帶來了Basel。在長時間曝光下，床單成了一朵黑夜白雲。

A few years ago, Angelika brought my works to Basel to share. One of them was my piece "A Tree Can Cast Shade, and Shade Can Gather People." She invited Hong Kong people in Switzerland to create camouflage leaves together. At that time, we met over Zoom. I had just returned to Hong Kong from Finland and was in quarantine at a hotel. I brought the quarantine hotel bed sheets to Basel. After a long exposure, the bed sheets turned into a white cloud in a black night.

'Umbrella Moon'

喜歡長時間曝光，以時間異化一個現實空間，疏離不存在的陌生感。在瑞士時常看見彩虹。

Likes long exposure to transform a physical space through time, creating a sense of estrangement from the non-existent. Often sees rainbows in Switzerland.

'Lonely Planet'

意念來自鮮浪潮導演邵知恩的《呼~》的一句對白：「那處一定會好，但你嗰度唔係依度」

在香港成為家鄉的年代，移民成了日常，香港日常無感的風景可成為往後在異地思鄉的拼圖。

我第一次做保安員在火車鐵路博物館，9年後在地鐵做清潔，今天來到 Atelier Mondial, 地上都有退役的路軌。

我在退役的路軌上寫生，也是在地球上寫生，寫生就是把視網膜的影像轉到紙上，我把長卷紙舖在地上，我看着地，也是看到地球，然後就畫了一個波，混在地上的紋理印下了座標，我在這處，掛在場上成了星球。

lonely planet 是在地球永遠旅遊的書，在我出生的那年創立。

出這 post 時，香港的朋友大概都睡了。

The line 'That place will definitely be fine, but there is not here' comes from a dialogue in the film '呼~' and in English, 'Simon says, Simon says' by the young Hong Kong director Siu Chi Yan. This provides inspiration for 'Here's not there'.

In the era when Hong Kong becomes a homeland, immigration became an everyday occurrence. The everyday scenes of Hong Kong, which often go unnoticed, become puzzle pieces of nostalgia when viewed from abroad.

I first worked as a security guard at the Hong Kong Railway Museum, and 9 years later, I did cleaning work in the subway. Today, I am at Atelier Mondial on Freilager-platz, where retired train tracks are on the ground.

I'm sketching on these retired train tracks, but I'm also sketching on the planet Earth. Sketching means transferring the images seen by the retina onto paper. I lay out a long sheet of paper on the ground, I look at the ground, and I'm also looking at the Earth. Then, I draw a sphere, and the coordinates of the texture on the ground blend with the sphere's imprint. I am here, hanging it on the wall, and it becomes a planet.

'Lonely Planet' is a book of eternal travel on Earth, founded in the year I was born.

As I post this, friends in Hong Kong are probably asleep.

Lonely Table Tennis

在 Basel. 原來也會看見戶外乒乓球枱，這種要計埋風向的街波打法估不到這裏也有，以前屋村多用石屎枱，我個人覺得很是詩意的，把石屎地升高變成 table tennis。

在 On the ground 的展覽裏，我把石屎枱壓扁回地上，並以 Narcissus 的方式對牆自己和自己打(枱上壁球)。乒乓波撞石屎的聲音好香港童年回憶。

In Basel, it turns out you can also see outdoor ping-pong tables. I never expected to find this style of street ping-pong that requires factoring in the wind direction here. In the past, the housing estates in Hong Kong mostly used concrete tables. I personally find it quite poetic, elevating concrete ground to become a table tennis surface. At the "On the Ground" exhibition, I flattened the concrete ping-pong table back onto the ground and played against the wall in a Narcissus-like manner (like using the wall for squash). The sound of ping-pong balls hitting concrete brings back fond memories of my childhood in Hong Kong.

Community Workshops in the Exhibition

(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.

The duo picked five different weeds from the border of the lawn around the Queen Victoria statue in Victoria Park. They cast these weeds in plaster and install them as an empty plot at the exhibition. This references an emptied-out Victoria Park. During the middle of the exhibition, the artists hope to offer the audience the adoption of these plaster models representing the forms of the five weeds from Victoria Park. The negative space recalls the memory of the weeds. The audience can colour these sculptures like a colouring book of the Secret Garden within the negative space. It is our hope that after being adopted, they will scatter in different places in Basel and beyond, and we will encounter them by chance.

(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.

Recent press interview:



[Hong Kong Free Press coverage of Luke Ching's practice and activism 2023](#)



[Art Asia Pacific Interview Video 2021](#)

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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