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Institute for
Australian and Chinese
Arts and Culture

CULTURAL CARTOGRAPHY:

Creating Art at the Intersection of Cultures



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Institute

of Culture



NC Qin (Nancy Yu)



Cindy Yuen-Zhe Chen



Chris Yee



Christina Huynh



Anney Bounpraseuth

13 January – 20 February 2022

Bankstown Arts Centre

5 Olympic Parade Bankstown NSW 2200

24 February – 24 April 2022

Institute for Australian and Chinese Arts and Culture

Building EA.G.03, Parramatta South Campus

Western Sydney University



Jointly presented by

Bankstown Arts Centre

Institute for Australian and Chinese Art and Culture
at Western Sydney University

CULTURAL CARTOGRAPHY:
Creating Art at the Intersection of Cultures

Curator:

Guan Wei

Exhibiting Artists:

Anney Bounpraseuth
Cindy Yuen-Zhe Chen
Christina Huynh
NC Qin (Nancy Yu)
Chris Yee

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Nicholas Ng

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INTRODUCTION

The Institute for Australian and Chinese Arts and Culture at Western Sydney University supports cultural and artistic diversity. One of our commitments is to champion young artists of culturally diverse backgrounds through special exhibitions and community engagement. We are therefore delighted to partner with Bankstown Arts Centre in presenting this joint exhibition 'Cultural Cartography: Creating Art at the Intersection of Cultures' featuring NC Qin, Christina Huynh, Anney Bounpraseuth, Chris Yee and Dr Cindy Yuen-Zhe Chen. These five very fine and gifted young artists all come from migrant families, and showcasing their devotion to artistic creativity and their early successes as young artists is both uplifting and inspiring.

To give these emerging artists the opportunity of working with a role model, we have specially engaged Australian art legend Guan Wei to curate the exhibition. Guan Wei himself is a migrant, and has recently been awarded an Honorary Doctor of Creative Arts by Western Sydney University in recognition of his long-standing and exceptional contributions to the Australian and international contemporary art scenes. Dr Guan Wei is the first Chinese Australian artist to receive such an honour from an Australian university.

In this exhibition, you will see that all five artists draw from their respective cultural backgrounds resulting in artworks that are unique, distinctive and impactful. NC Qin is a glass sculptor of Chinese background. In her works, she explores ancient histories, Chinese myths and Daoism through a cultural perspective that has been shaped by both Western and Eastern influences. Christina is a muralist and illustrator of Vietnamese-Chinese heritage. She finds inspiration in storytelling, human emotion, wayfaring and the legacy of people and place. Anney is an artist of Laotian heritage. In her paintings and textile works, she reinterprets matriarchal traditions, asserts self-determined identity and explores new purpose in life. Chris is a multitalented artist working as an illustrator, designer and animator. His creative work is greatly influenced by the Chinese, Korean and Australian cultures he has grown up with in suburban Sydney. Cindy received her PhD in art, design and media from the University of New South Wales in 2020. Her artistic practice is framed within the context of the agency of her Malaysian-Chinese heritage in shaping her relationships within Australia and around the world.

You are warmly invited to join us in celebrating these young creative minds and their works, which contemplate on and reflect the diversity, complexity and dynamics of contemporary humanities and lifestyles in Australian society.



Professor Jing Han

Director, Institute for Australian and Chinese Arts and Culture
Western Sydney University



CURATOR'S STATEMENT

Guan Wei

German physicist Werner Heisenberg, one of the key pioneers of quantum mechanics, states in his influential book *Physics and Philosophy* that “in the history of human thinking the most fruitful developments frequently take place at those points where two different lines of thought meet. These lines may have their roots in quite different parts of human culture, in different times or different cultural environments or different religious traditions”. A similar remark was made by the late Australian art critic Robert Hughes, who observed that some of the most interesting phenomena in history and arts have occurred at the intersection of cultures.

It is interesting to note that one statement is made in the field of science, and the other in the arts. Both Heisenberg and Hughes arrived at the same conclusion that new creation and innovation often happen at the intersection of two or more different thoughts and cultures.

In the last twenty years or so, this intersection of different cultures has become a critical base for cultural creation and innovation in multicultural Australia, as particularly demonstrated in the artistic expressions of second generation artists

of Chinese and Asian heritage. While they grew up and have been educated in mainstream Western culture, these artists have also learnt and have been greatly influenced by their cultural heritage. From the vantage point of seeing both cultures from their individual perspectives, they have the knowledge, capability and confidence to bring out some of the most interesting or distinctive parts from both cultures and integrate them into their own unique artistic creations and styles.

This second generation of artists focus on the diversity, complexity and dynamics of contemporary humanities and lifestyles. Their artworks reflect their strong interest in and sharp thoughts of the present-day human conditions, expressing their concerns, anxieties, pain, joy and pleasure of the world they are living in. In the meantime, they have achieved a unique infusion of the two cultures they grew up with, articulated in a great variety of artistic media and genres. They have many things in common including their passion for and commitment to innovative expressions. Yet they are also clearly marked by their individual styles and pursuits.



ABOUT GUAN WEI

Guan Wei graduated from the Department of Fine Arts at Beijing Capital University in 1986. From 1989 to 1992, he completed art residencies at the University of Tasmania, Australian National University and Museum of Contemporary Art in Sydney. In 1993, he immigrated to Australia. In 2008, Guan Wei set up a studio in Beijing. He now lives and works in Beijing and Sydney.

Guan Wei has held more than 70 solo exhibitions in Australia and internationally, and has been included in many important international contemporary exhibitions, such as the Shanghai Biennial, China; the 10th Havana Biennial, Cuba; the Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art, Australia; the 3rd Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art, Australia; the Osaka Triennial, Japan; and the Gwangju Biennial, South Korea. He has been awarded in many art competitions, including: 2002 Sulman Prize at Art Gallery of NSW; 2015 Arthur Guy Memorial Prize, and Bendigo Art Gallery in Victoria.

Guan Wei's work has a profoundly felt, if implicitly ironic, moral dimension. In their complex symbolic form, his subjects potently embody current social and environmental dilemmas. They are equally the product of his rich cultural repertory of symbols and his informed socio-political awareness and art-historical knowledge.



ANNEY BOUNPRASEUTH

About the Artist

Anney Bounpraseuth is an Australian-born artist of Laotian heritage. She describes herself as a ‘third culture kid’, who grew up somewhat removed from her Australian and Laotian identities as a Jehovah’s Witness until her departure from the faith at the age of 30.

Bounpraseuth describes her kitsch, vivid and intensely patterned aesthetic as Cabracadabra or ‘South East Asian mum-style’ in honour of her mother Chockeo who came from Laos to Australia as a refugee migrant, raising her family in Cabramatta of South West Sydney.

Bounpraseuth cites her mother’s clashing wardrobe and interior decorating style with fake flowers, imitation antiques and mismatched textiles as her main artistic influence. Like many migrant women in the Laotian community in the 1980s, Bounpraseuth’s mother was a machinist outworker - sewing garments from home for well-known fashion labels for as little as five cents per garment. As a child, Bounpraseuth would select floral and lace fabrics from

claustrophobic Asian fabric stores that her mother would sew into puffed sleeved flower girl dresses to wear to the local Kingdom Hall. An underlying thread in Bounpraseuth’s work is the tension between motherly love and a daughter’s desire for approval and autonomy. .

Bounpraseuth has been featured on ABC TV and iView, ABC Radio National, FBI Radio’s Canvas program and Frankie Magazine. In 2019, she was a finalist for the Hidden Rookwood Sculpture Exhibition and Prize. She has presented in various galleries across NSW with solo exhibitions at Fairfield City Museum and Art Gallery and Bankstown Arts Centre. In 2018, she curated the February ARTBAR at the Museum of Contemporary Art.

In addition to being an artist, Bounpraseuth has also been a recreational art educator since 2004 with experience in public and education programming.



Alien Nation (series of 3)
Acrylic on canvas
2011

Photos by Alex Wisser



ANNEY BOUNPRASEUTH

Artist Statement

Bounpraseuth reinterprets matriarchal traditions through painting, textiles, and sculpture to assert self-determined identity. In creating her textiles influenced work, Bounpraseuth cuts up painful histories and complex relationships, salvaging remnants of the past to create new narratives as a form of repair or personal healing.

Bounpraseuth's current practice is concerned with how the concept of a present paradise in contemporary textile art can generate healing after the traumatic loss of an eschatological faith. More broadly, Bounpraseuth aims to counteract the baneful and hypersexual misrepresentation of apostates in art history, the world they inhabit, and the fulfilling lives they can lead. Drawing from personal spiritual narratives, Bounpraseuth creates iconography that shifts utopic representations of earthly paradise from the past and future into the "perfectly imperfect" present reality through the medium of salvaged, upcycled textiles.

Expanding on *femme* of the 1970s, Bounpraseuth calls her process and textile works "cr-applique" along with her own parameters:

"A cr-applique is a self-coined neologism for a narrative applique that utilises painting and textile waste or 'crap', be it personal crap and/or other people's crap, in the conversion of negative subject matter, also known as 'life's crap', into something tangible or visible, purposeful, positive, beautiful, and true to life's realities but tempered with a sense of humour. The aim is to create a work that is not crap in the eyes of its maker, irrespective of subjective criticism regarding its crappiness."

For Bounpraseuth, the garden is a metaphoric place of freedom, healing, growth, and creating and exploring a new life of one's own. As a recovering apostate, Bounpraseuth's work posits the notion that a purposeful life without god and religion is imaginable in both material and immaterial forms.

Artist website:
<http://www.anneyb.com.au/>



The Garden of Re-Birth and Celebration, mixed media "cr-applique"
H: 241cm x W: 295cm (ex. hanging device)
2020

Photos by Simon Hewson



CINDY YUEN-ZHE CHEN

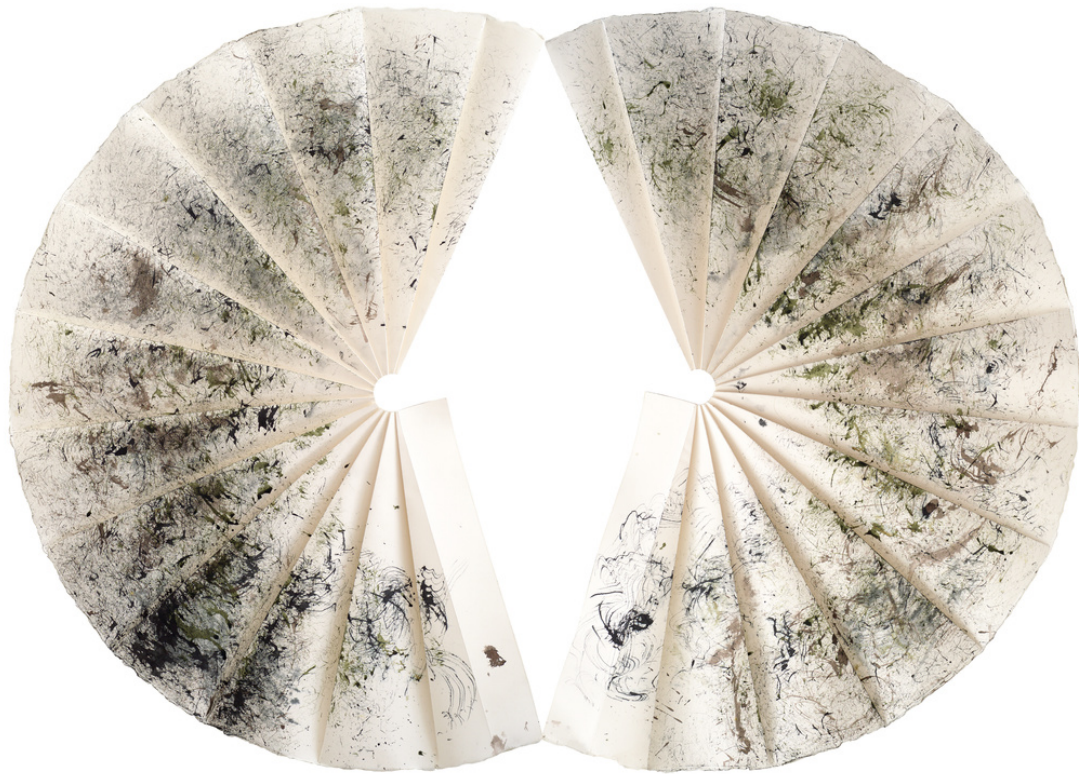
About the Artist

Dr Cindy Yuen-Zhe Chen lives and works in Sydney on unceded Darramuragal and Gadigal lands. Her artistic practice examines how embodied listening and sounding can extend experimental drawing as a multi-sensory, emplaced process. Through interactions with the sounds, surfaces, people and atmospheric contingencies of places, Chen develops drawing, listening and sounding as interconnected practices that engender connections and enact distinct senses of places. As a part of these processes, she critically examines how her context as a female artist of migrant Malaysian-Chinese heritage shapes her relationships within Australia and internationally.

Chen was recently selected as a finalist for the 2021-22 NSW Visual Arts Emerging Fellowship. As a recipient of the University Postgraduate Award, Chen completed a Doctor of Philosophy in Art, Design and Media at the University of

New South Wales Art and Design in 2020. In 2019, Chen was selected to present her work at a drawing research conference at Loughborough University in England. She was then invited to present her research at Ningbo University in conjunction with a solo exhibition and residency at Ningbo Museum of Art in China in 2018. In 2017, her work was selected by a panel of international and Chinese curators for inclusion in Art Nova 100, an exhibition of the top one hundred global Chinese artists under the age of thirty, at Today Art Museum in Beijing. She has undertaken residencies at Akiyoshidai International Art Village in Japan, Hill End in Australia and was recently a resident studio artist at Parramatta Artists' Studio in 2020-21.

Dr Cindy Yuen-Zhe Chen is represented in New South Wales by Art Atrium.



Fluvial Dynamics: Rain, Wind, People
Ink on Wenzhou paper
Dimensions variable: approx. H125 x W145 x D80cm
2020

Image courtesy of the artist.



Fluvial Dynamics: Rain and Foraging Birds
Dimensions variable: approx. H125 x W145 x D80cm
Ink on Wenzhou paper
2020

Image courtesy of the artist.

CINDY YUEN-ZHE CHEN

Artist Statement

Two interlaced notions of fluidity weave through this collection of works: the watery cycles of rivers, rain and harbours, and the fluid dynamism of places that are constantly evolving. This understanding emerged as I responded to the contingent vitality of Middle Harbour, Lane Cove River and Parramatta River through the seasons of winter, spring and summer in 2020, a year shaped by volatility. The drawings, sound and video installation of Fluvial Dynamics and Resonant Flows articulate my body's interaction with the atmospheric, sonic and social occurrences that enliven these littoral spaces. These works explore the interdependent relationships that exist between our bodies, places and water, and draw attention to the meaningful connections that we create through our actions.

My expanded approach to drawing can be seen in three paper Möbius loops of 'Fluvial Dynamics' which mediated my engagements with the rain, wind, sounds, animals and people of Parramatta River, Lane Cove River and Middle Harbour. These looped paper scrolls are imbued with ink that have been diffused by rain; the paper shaped by actions of walking, sitting, listening

and drawing along the pathways, riverbank and shoreline. The interconnected processes of drawing, listening and sounding that underpin these works emphasise our entanglement within places as they unfold.

'Resonant Flows: Parramatta River, Lane Cove River, Middle Harbour' is an installation of sound and video that articulates moments of embodied listening at each of these places. In the Sound Feedback Drawing compositions, the sounds of people, building construction, birds, waves and insects were recorded and reflected off the curved hollows of sandstone rocks, tidal pools and stairwells. My gestural responses 'caught' these sounds to generate high and low frequency sound feedback using microphones and speakers, in a process that allowed me to 'draw' with the pitch, timbre and volume of sound unfolding through air. The instability of handheld video footage in the three channel video speaks of the physical strain of crouching low to listen closely to patterns of flowing water. Situating my body within the landscape and acknowledging the partiality of this position enables me to reflect upon the impact of my presence upon these places.

Artist website:
<https://cyzchen.com/>



Sounding Langshi: Mountain, River,
Bamboo
Dimensions "Binaural Sound Study -
Bamboo," Chinese and Japanese ink on
Arches watercolour paper, W75 x
H98cm, 2017
Paper, Li River water, undetermined
dematiaceous hyphomycetes
undetermined lichens, soil particles, ink,
sound feedback recording, 2018

Installation view at AD Space, Sydney,
Australia, 2020
Image courtesy of the artist



Fluvial Dynamics and Resonant Flows
featured in Air Water Love
Group Exhibition curated by Nicholas
Tsoutas, China Cultural Centre, Sydney,
Australia



CHRISTINA HUYNH

About the Artist

Christina Huynh is a muralist and illustrator based in Western Sydney who paints under 'STYNA'. Her art practice explores muralism, illustration and picture books from watercolour, ink and pen to aerosol and acrylic. Christina creates stories in her work that express her everyday thought, experience and memory. She finds inspiration in storytelling, human emotion, wayfaring and the heritage of people and place.

Christina has a Bachelor of Design in Visual Communication from Western Sydney University. In 2013, she won RawSydney's 'Visual Artist of The Year' with prizes, including painting a mural on the side of Eat Art Truck and an exhibition titled 'A Fragile Kingdom' at the m2 gallery in Surry Hills, which marked her first solo exhibition.

In 2016, Christina travelled to Europe for art residency at La Porte Peinte International Arts centre in Noyers, France. In Europe, she attended

the Pictoplasma Conference in Berlin, which further sparked a love of illustration and character design. In 2017, Christina was approached by the National Library of Australia to create the drawings for Grandma's Treasured Shoes by Coral Vass. The book was published in 2019.

In 2018, Christina was granted the Dale Parade Mural Project with Canterbury Bankstown Council, her first public art project. This year also saw her reach the milestone of becoming a full-time muralist and illustrator. Today, Christina works within local councils and schools, focusing on art-for-purpose, place-based projects and collaborations. Her most recent works include an invitation to work as one of eighteen commissioned artists as part of the Canal to Creek Public Art Program by Cultural Capital for WestConnex Transurban and the mural entitled Unfolding for the new Western Sydney University Bankstown campus.

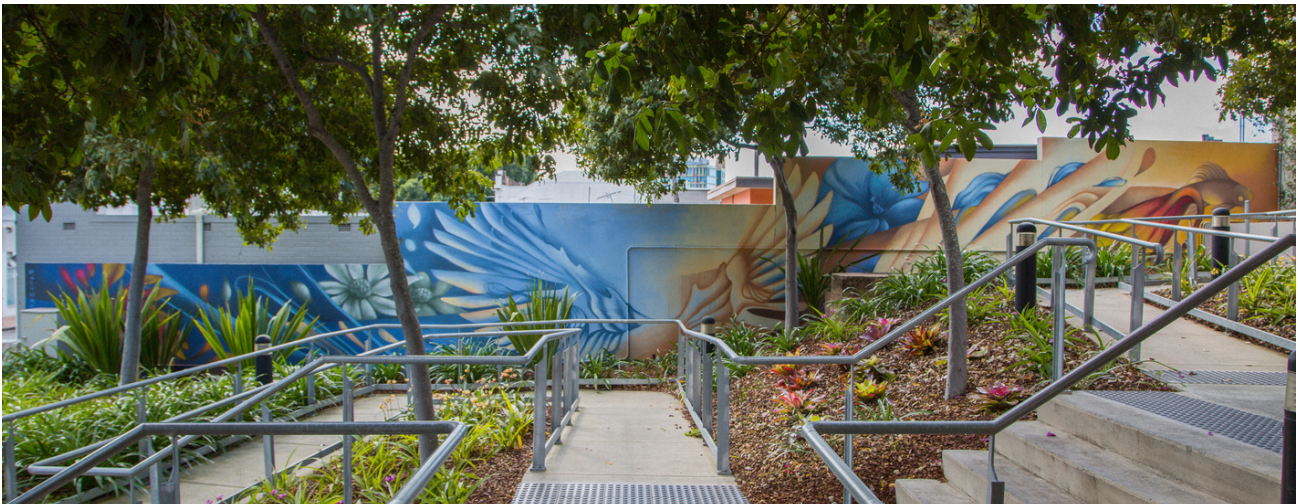


Unfolding

W 57m x H 2.1m

2021

Commissioned by Walker Group for the new Western Sydney University Bankstown campus, Unfolding by Christina Huynh is a 50m mural that depicts a stack of books that gradually unfold into scenes of everyday life. The giant stack of books reoccurring throughout the hoarding is a lighthearted play on the future Western Sydney University Bankstown building architecture. At its essence, 'Unfolding' is inspired by the everyday people of Bankstown and the greater Canterbury region.



Finding Light in the Shadow

W 15 x H 1.8m

2020

Finding Light in the Shadow is a piece created for Brisbane Street Art Festival's Ipswich program which currently resides at Studio 188 in Ipswich, Queensland. The work explores the balance between lightness and the dark, and how one cannot exist without the other. In life, we often negate from the things that make us feel uncertain, discomfort or at risk. Still, by embracing our vulnerabilities, we experience growth, moments that take us by surprise, while nurturing and practising the act of courage (whom my hero, Maya Angelou says is the most essential virtue of them all).

CHRISTINA HUYNH

Artist Statement

This body of work is encapsulated by four paintings titled: Meeting of the Giants Pt I, Meeting of the Giants Pt II, Love and Symphony. These pieces were birthed intuitively by the prompts within each title. All the works are characterised by colour palettes that inspire a wide range of emotions ranging from warm creams to dull blues. Another element that binds each piece is the theme of life's aspects, which they represent in some form: nurture, family, abundance, and flow.

The works drew inspiration from Einstein's quote, 'Imagination is everything. It is the preview of life's coming attractions.' I intend to create pieces that explore what it would be like to be among something greater than we are as represented through the giants.

The 'Symphony' piece reflects my love for music and the wonder of seeing fish swim in unity and synchronisation. There is also an underlying theme of abundance and what it means to be part of a collective and the importance of connections.

'Meeting with the Giants Pt I' is a work inspired by

the curiosity of the creatures that dwell beneath us as well as a homage to my family roots. Huge beings exist in such places one would never expect. The scene draws parallels from the seaside where my family grew up and lived in Rach Gia, Vietnam. There is a theme of searching for a new home as the giants follow the canoe in search of a new place.

'Meeting with the Giants Pt II' further unpacks this journey to a new home, modelled off the idea of the sacrifices of the family within the journey to build a more fruitful life. The giants nurture and protect their young so that they can live with abundance. This was reflective of my family's journey to ensure the better life of future generations.

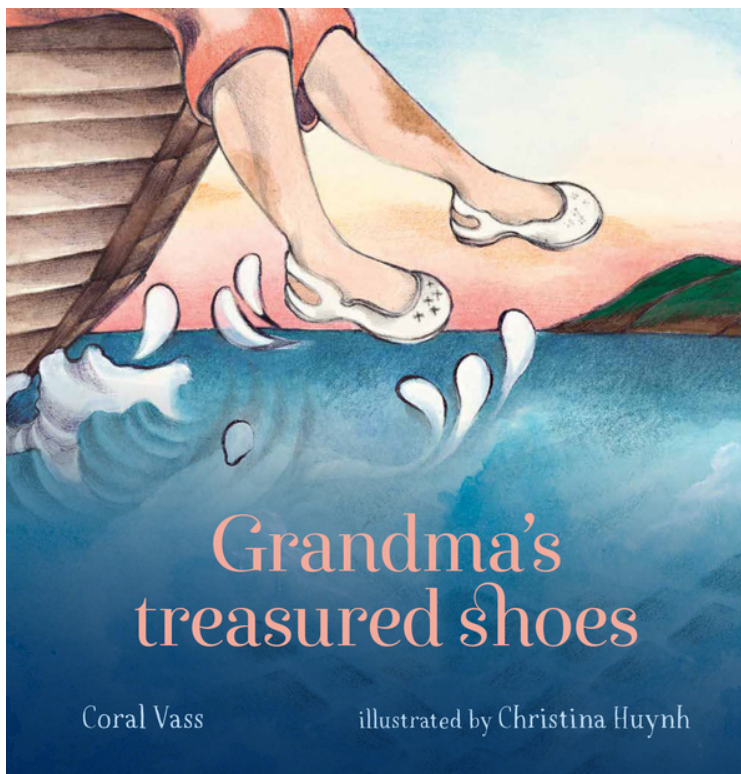
'Love' is reminiscent of a familial love as the two giants protect the little one and act as a guardian figure encircling and watching over. This is reflective of our hardworking guardians who sacrifice their time and efforts into raising and walking us through life.

Artist website:
<https://christinahuynh.com.au/>



Things Seen, Things Remembered
2.4m x 2.4m triptych
2019

A triptych mural inspired by everyday scenes, experiences and the vast Chinese-Vietnamese Australian heritage of my family. This work was created for George's River Council and Hurstville Museum and Gallery's Chinese Lunar New Year festival in 2019.



Grandma's Treasured Shoes
2019

Grandma has oodles and oodles of shoes. So why are these scratched and dusty ones so special?

Written by Coral Vass, illustrated by Christina Huynh and published by the National Library of Australia. 'Grandma's Treasured Shoes' is a picture book about a grandmother's journey from Vietnam to Australia as a little girl. This is a refugee story told through gentle illustrations and a rhythmic story.

This sensitively told story encourages children to understand the plight felt by refugees, in the past and today, and to appreciate the contribution that refugees have made in shaping this nation.



NC QIN (NANCY YU)

About the Artist

NC Qin is an award-winning artist and a graduate from The Sydney College of the Arts. She works with her primary medium of glass for its symbolic association with fragility as a lens into personal and cultural histories as well as psychological spaces. Her work alludes to global epics and philosophies that reflect her interests as a Chinese-Australian woman as she explores how myths change the value systems of today.

Nancy has exhibited in spaces including Griffith Regional Gallery, First Draft Gallery, 107 Projects, Sydney Contemporary Art Fair and installed works in sculpture walks such as HIDDEN in Rookwood Cemetery and Fisher Library, University of Sydney. Her series 'Head Case' exhibited at the National Museum of Glass as the winner of the National Emerging Art Glass Prize (2020) and at the Ashmolean Museum of Art and Architecture (Oxford, UK) as a finalist of IDENTITY: an art and design prize (2019). In 2021, Gallery Lane Cove commissioned her solo

exhibition for Lunar North Confluence exhibition.

Her series 'Phantom of Ego' is named after a Nietzschean concept exploring constructed social identities. The glass armour and battle artefacts are charged with references to Chinese legendary and heroic history deferring to the weight and pride placed on these objects. However, stripped of their function through their forming with glass, these objects are unable to fulfill what they were intended for: protection and battle. Our understanding of these chosen objects is subverted with this neutered form revealing vulnerability in places where imperviousness should stand. This, in turn, reflects the complex relationships with the qualities that may no longer be applicable in a changed world but still function in the shadows of its heritage.

NC Qin is represented by Art Atrium.



Compass Broken
 Cast Blackwood Crystal Glass, Marble, Steel, Light
 44 x 56 x 43 cm
 2021



Intent, Phantom of Ego/Armour Series
 Cast Blackwoods Crystal
 20 x 65 x 5 cm
 2020

NC QIN (NANCY YU)

Artist Statement

A glass armory of ancient battle artefacts emerge in this collection of works exploring themes of vulnerability, appearance and heritage. Most of them allude to real heroes and famous weaponry that have appeared in various times of Chinese history, but each has been given a new life and meaning in this series.

'Portal', a jade gate, modeled after the tower shield (Shuang Hu Dun) found in Emperor Qin's terracotta warriors tomb, stands forebodingly with its cracks and ethereality. It is a door to an inner or buried world within the psychology of the artist. The works that it guards behind it are glimpses into lived and diasporic anecdotes told in symbolism.

The artist reinterprets well known Chinese myths such as the epic "Romance of the Three Kingdoms" (which depicts the rise and fall of heroes during

the Three Kingdom period 169-280AD) through a cultural perspective that has been shaped by both Eastern and Western influences. There is an acknowledgement of the cultural heritage that is a source of pride and meaning to many Chinese people and their descendents, but also a realization of this heritage being a possible burden to members of this contemporary, changed world. The works explore how the ideology exemplified in these myths still influence the values in Chinese Australian culture today and the possible ramifications. One of the values that remains central to this body of work is pride and the pursuit of living up to an ideal. Through investigations grounded in the European analytic tradition (Freudian and Nietzschean), the glass armour asks are these ideals a source of protection to uplift the individual or burdens that may eventually injure and crush the bearer?

Artist website:
<https://www.ncqin.com/>



Flow: River of Knives
Hammered and Rusted Steel,
Fused and Carved Plate Glass,
Magnets
80 x 185 x 7 cm
2021



The Glass Armour is still a work in progress as of 2021, eventually it will be part of a performance whereby I, the artist, will be wearing the full suit of glass armour (estimated 80 - 100kgs) until collapse from fatigue.



Portal: The Closed Door
Cast Recycled Glass, Brass, Steel, Silicone, Plaster
110 x 80 x 12 cm (without plaster base)
2021
Winner of the Vicki Torr Prize 2021



CHRIS YEE

About the Artist

Chris Yee (b. 1989) is based in East Ryde, Sydney where he works as an Illustrator, Designer & Animator specialising in traditional “pen and paper” methodologies. Initially majoring in graphic and textiles design, Chris believes in the power of character and storytelling and is heavily drawn to constructing narratives ranging from the humorous to the monstrous and macabre. Inspired by Comics, Wrestling, K-pop, punk and 2000s rap, it is the Hyperreal and grey area within these genres, the blurring believability between reality and fiction that he finds most engaging. Growing up in Ryde of the 1990s and living in Eastwood, he has been raised at the cultural crossroads of Chinese, Korean and Australian suburbia and is a proud member of the evolving Asian-Australian creative identity. He strongly believes that there is a unique character and original narrative found within this ever-changing community.

Outside his art practice, Chris is a designer and animator who has produced work for some of

Australia's best-known brands, including VIVID Festival Sydney, Apple, Sony Australia, EstéeLauder, Samsung, Sydney Opera House, Vans, Red Bull, Universal Music and Marvel comics. Chris was invited to speak at Sydney's 2019 Semi Permanent Festival on Future creative youth and industry. In 2019, he created his first Permanent Heritage Artwork, 'Tumbalong' for Chinatown, Haymarket, Sydney.

Selected exhibitions include:

- 52 Artists 52 Actions, Artspace, 2021, Sydney.
- Hi MEDUSA! 2019, 4a Centre of Contemporary Asian Art, Chinese Garden of Friendship, Sydney.
- No Más (with Andrew Yee), 2018, Wedge Gallery, Sydney;
- SOFT, 2016, Superchief Gallery, Los Angeles;
- Mad Love, 2015, Japan Foundation, Sydney;
- Panorama, 2015, Kind Of- Gallery, Sydney;
- Goliath Ballroom (with James Jirat Patradoon), 2015, Goodspace, Sydney;
- Menace, 2013, Kind Of- Gallery, Sydney



Mirror ball
Woven Cotton Yarn
183 cm x 137 cm or 72 x 54 inches
2021

Angels in play
Woven Cotton Yarn
183 cm x 137 cm or 72 x 54 inches
2021



Crossing line
Woven Cotton Yarn
183 cm x 137 cm or 72 x 54 inches
2021

CHRIS YEE

Artist Statement

The three artworks “Crossing Line”, “Angels in Play” and “Mirror Ball” are a collection of new Bespoke tapestries produced as a further study into Yee’s experiments with the woven form and storytelling of the Chinese diasporic communities around Sydney. With the works he chooses to recontextualise traditional graphic sensibilities, architectural forms and decorative embellishments to bridge the gap between cultural generations and shared stories of change within his local ‘Ryde’ community.

The process of works begin from Yee’s graphic and textile design background, illustrating with ink, digitally scanning and selecting colour palettes. The digital created image is then communicated through a selective cotton weaving process to take physical form.

Graphically the works interpret modern personal experiences in his community but he believes that by restoring these digital images to a woven form, with studied traditional textile design reference, he can help communicate the blurring of cultural storytelling through synthesising the look of traditional textiles with contemporary artistic expression.

‘Crossing Line’ refers to his immediate living community of Eastwood, Sydney. He is fascinated by the geographical train station acting as the dividing line between the

generational Korean and Chinese Communities. As he lives between and has been influenced by both communities, he wishes to harmonise the relationship between the two borrowing from mixed cultural ornamentation and composition referencing the principles of national flag and colour.

‘Angels in Play’ is a manifestation of young Asian-Australian communities trying to grasp the complex ideals of religion, culture and what it meant to be Australian in a developmental stage. Yee reflects on the cluelessness of ‘track pant’ wearing boys, from various cultural backgrounds funnelled into Scripture during high school not understanding any of the concepts put forward to them. He states at the time, friendships were about play, ignoring these religious values. Graphically he has interpreted these experiences basing the composition on a children’s ‘hopscotch’ design, colours and design based on Strained Glasses windows of a church and fusing Asian Ornamentation within the patterns.

‘Mirror Ball’ is a humorous translation of the traditional Lion Dance mixing composition and ornamentation with modern Rave Culture of the West. A contemporary style of music made completely digitally, Yee tries to reflect this through infusing geometry of microchips and rasterised symmetry amongst the Chinese pattern and characters.

Artist website:
<https://yeetheeast.com/>

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The Chey scholarship is a competitive scholarship for a commencing student enrolled in the Master of Cross-Cultural Relations degree program. It aims to encourage more people to consider a career in the arts or cultural management and media, or in related academic work. It recognises that the world is ever more connected across cultures, and that cultural exchanges promote creativity and innovation as well as friendship. This scholarship is named for the Foundation Director of IAC, Jocelyn Chey, and her late husband Moon Lin Chey.

Enquiry: iac@westernsydney.edu.au

Back Cover Background Image: Things Seen, Things Remembered by Christina Huynh 2019



MASTER OF CROSS-CULTURAL RELATIONS

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