

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

“Tale of the Wonderland”

Featured artists: Amy Cheung, Isaac Chong Wai, Chow Chun Fai, South Ho Siu Nam, Sarah Lai, Lam Tung Pang, Leung Chi Wo, Pak Sheung Chuen

19 September – 11 November 2017

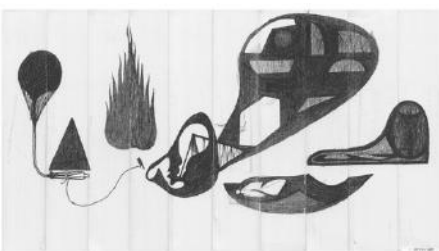
Opening Reception: 16 September 2017, Saturday, 4 – 6:30 pm

Artists will be present.

Performance by Isaac Chong Wai will take place at 4:30 - 5:00pm.

Venue: Blindspot Gallery (15/F, Po Chai Industrial Building, 28 Wong Chuk Hang Road, Wong Chuk Hang, Hong Kong)
Opening Hours: Tuesday to Saturday, 10am to 6pm (Sunday and Monday by appointment only);
closed on public holidays

Blindspot Gallery is delighted to present “Tale of the Wonderland”, a group exhibition that borrows *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* (1865), the Victorian fantasy novel written by Lewis Carroll, as the framework to construct a collective narrative of the 20 years of post-colonial Hong Kong. Having bid adieu to the colonial era, she was thrown into the rabbit hole, and in 20 years she had to re-learn how to position herself in face of an uncertain future. Her beliefs about her identity and understanding of reality collapse in Wonderland, as she approaches such identity displacement in terms of a fairy tale.



The exhibition is divided into eight chapters, each abstracting elements from the storyline of *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*. Each chapter is represented by the works of eight respective artists, who employ different methodologies and diverse mediums to interpret and realise the respective ideas. The eight chapters are “White Glove” (Sarah Lai), “The Rabbit Hole” (Lam Tung Pang), “Drink Me” (South Ho Siu Nam), “Who in the World am I” (Isaac Chong Wai), “Pool of Tears” (Leung Chi Wo), “Alice’s Adventures” (Amy Cheung), “White Rose Red” (Chow Chun Fai), and “Book – A Speechless Goodbye” (Pak Sheung Chuen).

The exhibition opens with Sarah Lai’s painting, titled *White Glove*, and a video work. With her signature low-contrast pale palette, Lai depicts a waving hand in a white glove. The gloved hand is devoid of warmth and ambiguous in intention: is the waving hand greeting, declining or bidding farewell? Through the symbolism of white glove, Lai reflects on the hypocritical nature of colonialism and the undecidability of politics. At the same time, Lai satirises Hong Konger’s idealised memory of the British rule during the colonial period.

Lam Tung Pang revisits a self-portrait, titled *Folding* (2017), created ten years ago whilst studying in the UK. The work resembles a folding screen, in which the artist upholds his empty palms, seemingly holding a cloud of air. Ten years later, Lam reinterprets this work by drilling holes on the wooden panels, visualising the unspeakable voids accumulated in a decade of emptiness. Another work of Lam’s is *The Sinking World No.6* (2014), an elegant landscape on wooden panel in which weightless human figures fall without gravity.

South Ho Siu Nam's installation titled *drunken life dreaming death*, which includes two kinds of beer brewed by the artist himself, a wooden table split and recombined, as well as dim illumination from hand-made lanterns. The work is a metaphor for people's divergent memories of the past. Ho uses the bitter-sweet taste of beer as medium, creating a communal experience through the audience's drinking, sharing, interacting, and participating. In addition, the artist has custom made a camera lens filter that contains liquid beer, transforming the tipsy state into a photographic eye to see the world.



Isaac Chong Wai painted the phrase "Is the World Your Friend?" on canvas as a response to a traumatising attack by a stranger on the street in a foreign country, which led him to contemplate one's position in the society and in the world. Two other video works, *Falling Exercise* and *Help! Help? Help*, document the collective performances of falling and aiding. Through the cyclical processes of falling and standing up, and the reciprocal role of helping and being helped, Chong uses his performances to investigate the formation of individual and collective consciousness, as well as the consolidation of societal norms. Another featured work is an installation titled *Hong Kong and Hong Kong*, in which a recording plays the gentle humming of the Chinese national anthem, while a Hong Kong SAR flag is "frozen" in a resin crystal.

Leung Chi Wo's *Untitled Waterscape* series captured the variably colourful surfaces of the Victoria harbour in different seasons and times of the day, recording the temporal and mnemonic impressions unperceivable by the naked eye. Leung's other work, *Before Sunrise*, is a set of 6 photographs that documents the artist's response to Yoko Ono's performance *Morning Peace*. Set to the accompaniment of *Im Abendrot (At Sunset)*, one of the Four Last Songs Richard Strauss wrote before his death, the artist and attending audience witnessed together the twilight of sunrise.

Amy Cheung's work documents a performance she enacted, titled *72 Hours*, lasting the duration of three days starting on 30 June 2017, the day before the 20th anniversary of the handover of Hong Kong, until 2 July 2017, the day after. During the performance, the artist blindfolded herself and relied on the physical guidance of a different participant each hour to walk, trace and verbalise his or her respective narratives about self and society in the past 20 years, weaving individual stories together into a collective memory.



Chow Chun Fai will install an artwork consisting of 2046 flags, as a metaphor for the discolouration and distortion in the authoritarian rule of the Red Queen. Also featured are signature paintings of Chow's that take their subject matters from local Hong Kong news reports, depicting scenes of iconic moments and speeches made by the various Chief Executives in the past 20 years, along with insightful subtitles.

Pak Sheung Chuen's work *Adult Library Series: LXB* originates from the *Library Series* during Pak's residency in New York in 2008. The artist sees the listing of the year of birth and year of death of an author in the library system as a metaphorical memorial to an author. Pak's work thus acts as a commemorative gesture to a recently deceased writer, while reflecting on the definition of "banned books", as well as the porously indefinable and permeable border between Hong Kong and China.

The eight featured artists began their conceptual creation at the intersection between realism and fantasy, reflecting on the coexisting dialectics of self and collective, power and freedom, reality and fiction, and past and future.

Interviews with artists are welcome and can be arranged.

About Blindspot Gallery

Set up in 2010, Blindspot Gallery is a Hong Kong-based contemporary art gallery. The gallery began with a primary focus on contemporary photography and image-based art, and has evolved to include diverse media in contemporary art. The gallery represents both emerging and established artists, mainly from Hong Kong and the region but also beyond.

For enquiries and media interviews, please contact Ms. Lesley Kwok at 2517 6238 or by email info@blindspotgallery.com

Image Captions:

Pak Sheung Chuen, *LXB-573.07-7263-ZGDDZZYZGZSFZ-42-A1A10*, 2017, Archival inkjet print, 57 x 102.5 cm, Edition of 7 + 3AP

Isaac Chong Wai, *Help! Help? Help*, 2016, Video, 1'53", Edition of 5

Amy Cheung, *72 Hours*, 2017, Dual-channel video, Edition of 5

(Image courtesy of artists and Blindspot Gallery)